

Section 7
Consistency with Long-Term Protection of the State's Water Resources, Agricultural Resources, and Natural Resources
[31 TAC §357.7(a)(13) and §357.14(2)(C)]

The 2011 Llano Estacado Regional Water Plan (2011 Plan) is consistent with long-term protection of the state's water resources, agricultural resources, and natural resources and is developed based on guidance principles outlined in the Texas Administrative Code Chapter 358-State Water Planning Guidelines. The 2011 Plan was produced with an understanding of the importance of orderly development, management, and conservation of water resources and is consistent with laws applicable to water use for the state and regional water planning areas. In the case of groundwater, the 2011 Plan recognizes principles for groundwater use in Texas and the programs of groundwater conservation districts within the Llano Estacado Region. The rules of groundwater conservation districts in the region and the programs of water conservation districts were followed when determining groundwater availability.

The 2011 Plan identifies actions and policies necessary to meet the Region's projected municipal, industrial, steam-electric power, mining, and livestock needs, by developing and recommending water management strategies to meet their needs with reasonable cost, and good water quality. However, even with an irrigation water conservation water management strategy, it was not possible to meet all of the projected needs of irrigated agriculture. A socioeconomic impact analysis was performed to estimate the economic loss associated with not meeting these needs (Appendix C).

The 2011 Plan considered environmental information resulting from site-specific studies and ongoing water development projects when evaluating water management strategies. A list of endangered and threatened species in the Llano Estacado Region for each county was obtained from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and these possible habitats were considered for each water management strategy (Appendix A).

The 2011 Plan consists of water conservation initiatives, and initiatives to respond to drought conditions by the municipal water user group, and the use of water conservation best BMPs in the irrigation water use group was described in terms of how these BMPs have resulted in high water use efficiency by this WUG.

The LERWPG conducted several meetings during the 2011 planning cycle, with meetings open to the public, and the LERWPG's decisions were based upon the best available information. The Region coordinated water planning and management activities with local, regional, state, and federal agencies and cooperated with Region A (Panhandle Region) to identify common needs. The LERWPG considered recommendations of stream segments with unique ecological value by Texas Parks and Wildlife. At this time, the LERWPG recommends that no stream segments or reservoir sites with unique ecological value be designated. The Planning Group developed policy recommendations for the 2011 Plan including improved water demand and water supply data, continued support for the Rule of Capture as modified by the Rules and Regulations of existing underground water conservation districts, continued funding for regional water planning, and especially that the Legislature provide adequate funding for the implementation of water management strategies of the plan.