

PANHANDLE WATER NEWS

JANUARY 2025

PGCD SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN

For over 22 years, the Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District (PGCD) has offered a scholarship opportunity to graduating seniors from across its District. Each year applicants are challenged and encouraged to think about water conservation on a greater level.

The 2024-2025 essay topic:

Water is an important part of our daily lives, and it is becoming a limited resource in many areas, including the Texas Panhandle. What conservation strategies should county governments, municipalities, and water districts implement to be the most effective in our area?

Please help us spread the word about our scholarship opportunity. The deadline to apply is **March 14, 2025**. To apply, visit our website at www.pgcd.us/pgcd-scholarship.

Testimonials from past winners:

"The Panhandle Groundwater Scholarship has been very helpful during my college years. I am grateful for this scholarship, which helps with the expenses of going to a university. College is full of new experiences, and I'm thankful for the help from my home area. Thank you, PGCD!" - **Keeley H., 2022 PGCD Scholarship Winner**

"The PGCD scholarship has been pivotal in enabling me to pursue my double major in neuroscience and philosophy while excelling in research on neuroregeneration and participating in EMT training. Without the financial constraints, I've been able to fully dedicate myself to academic excellence and hands-on learning experiences that prepare me for a future in medicine and innovation." - **Ja'Zhana M., 2024 PGCD Scholarship Winner**



PANHANDLE GROUNDWATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

POINTS OF INTEREST

PGCD Upcoming Election Information

TWDB Ag Loan Available

Emerging Legal Issues in Groundwater

Education Presentations Available

"Conserving Water for Future Generations"

PGCD BOARD OF DIRECTOR UPCOMING ELECTION

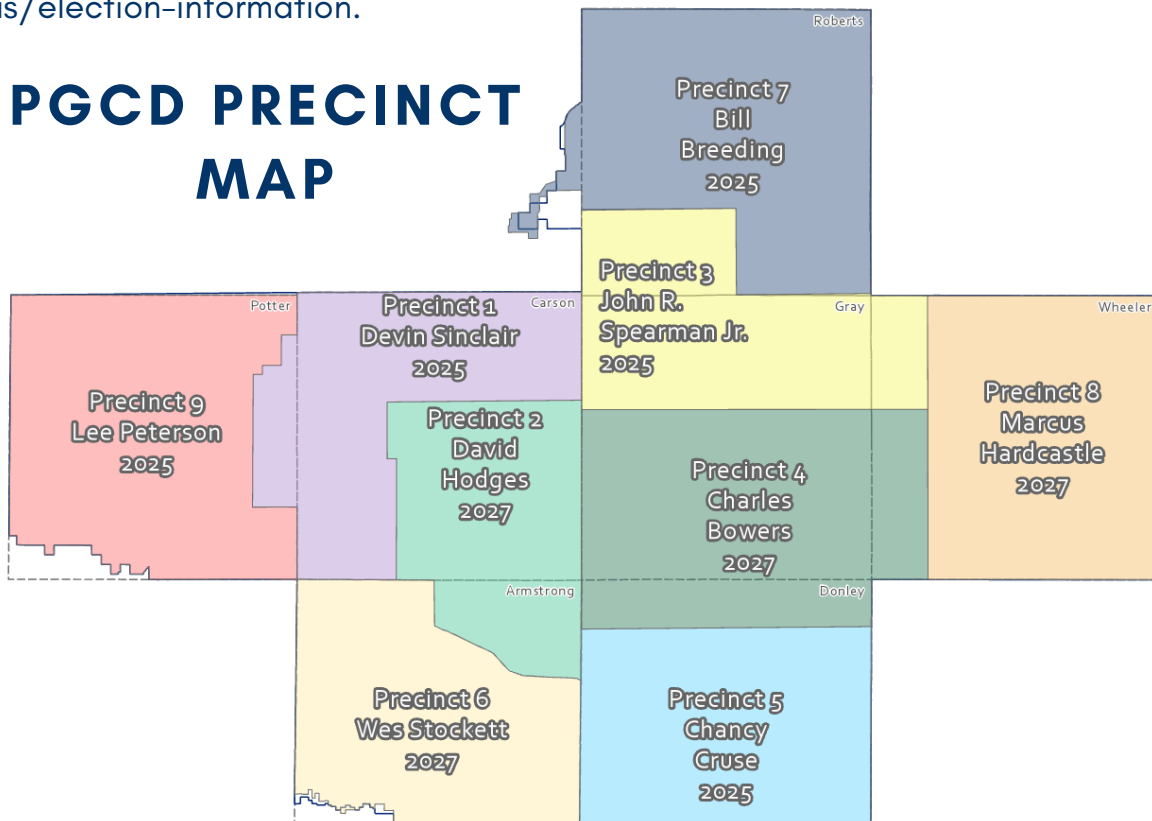
DEADLINE TO FILE AN APPLICATION ON THE BALLOT FOR THE MAY 3, 2025 ELECTION

The application period to file a place on the ballot for the upcoming Board of Director election is January 15, 2025 through February 14, 2025. Applicants can apply in person at the District office in White Deer or may request an application by email, mail, or fax by calling 806-883-2501.

Applicants must reside within the Precinct they intend to run. The following Board members' terms expire this year: Devin Sinclair, representing Precinct 1, John R. Spearman, Jr., representing Precinct 3, Chancy Cruse, representing Precinct 5, William (Bill) Breeding, representing Precinct 7, and Lee Peterson, representing Precinct 9.

***Please note, if any person runs unopposed (meaning there is only one application to be put on the ballot), the governing body has the statutory authority to cancel the election as directed in the Texas Election Code. More information and all required postings are available at www.pgcd.us/election-information.

PGCD PRECINCT MAP



TWDB AGRICULTURE LOAN NOW AVAILABLE

PGCD has received an agricultural conservation loan from the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) in the amount of \$1,000,000 to help local producers purchase center pivot sprinklers, drip irrigation systems, soil moisture probes, and other water-saving equipment. Applications are reviewed on a first come, first served basis. The current interest rate is 5.23% with an eight-year payback term. For more information, please contact Katie Hodges at 806-883-2501 or by email at kh@pgcd.us.

MASTER IRRIGATOR REGISTRATION OPEN

The Master Irrigator Program is an irrigation management curriculum made up of 32 hours of intensive irrigation education conducted over four one-day sessions to show producers how to maximize advanced conservation irrigation management. North Plains Groundwater Conservation District (NPGCD) is opening the program to areas outside its District. PGCD is excited about this opportunity and is sponsoring producers to participate in the program. Sponsorship is on a first come, first serve basis and spots are limited. All classes will be at the Water Conservation Center near Dumas, Texas.

Save the Dates & Topics

February 19th - Agronomics

February 26th - Irrigation Scheduling

March 5th - Systems

March 12th - Systems & Special Tools

Registration closes on February 10, 2025. For more information, contact Britney Britten at 806-883-2501 or by email at britney@pgcd.us.

TEXAS GROUNDWATER LEGAL UPDATES

Two Texas federal courts recently issued rulings in favor of groundwater conservation districts, upholding the districts' rules and enforcement of fines for overproducing the permitted production allowable. Groundwater districts are created by the Texas Legislature to conserve, protect, and preserve aquifers and adopt rules to manage those resources. PGCD prefers to resolve enforcement issues amicably, rather than initiating an enforcement matter.

However, permit and rule enforcement is necessary to minimize as far as practicable the drawdown of the water table so that the area's aquifers remain viable as a water source for future generations of the Panhandle.

Judge Matthew J. Kacsmark, a United States District Judge for the Northern District, Amarillo Division, ruled in favor of the NPGCD on several claims. The Plaintiff, who grows potatoes irrigated with groundwater from the Ogallala Aquifer, exceeded the Allowable Annual Production in its permits issued by the district under its adopted rules. The district issued significant fines for the overproduction and was sued for an unconstitutional regulatory taking of its real property. The Court ruled in favor of the district on motions for summary judgment, as there was no genuine dispute of material fact and the district was entitled to judgment as a matter of law on the takings, due process, and other claims.

In Central Texas, a federal court in the Western District, Austin Division, ruled in favor of the Hays Trinity Groundwater Conservation District and dismissed claims from a retail public utility challenging the district's authority to issue fines for exceeding its production permits. The Court dismissed the issue, citing to § 36.102 of the Texas Water Code, which allows groundwater districts to enforce its rules through fines and injunctions.

BLF Land, LLC v. N. Plains Groundwater Conservation Dist., 2:23-CV-133-Z (N.D. Tex. Nov. 13, 2024).

Aqua Tex. v. Hays Trinity Groundwater Conservation Dist., 1:23-CV-01576-DII (W.D. Tex. Sept. 23, 2024).

UPCOMING EVENTS

- PGCD Board Meeting is set for Thursday, January 23, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.
- Candidate filing for upcoming Board of Director Election: 1/15/2025-2/14/2025
- Scholarship Applications Due on Friday, March 14, 2025

PANHANDLE GROUNDWATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
P.O. BOX 637
WHITE DEER, TEXAS 79097

PRESORTED
STANDARD
US POSTAGE
PAID
AMARILLO, TX
PERMIT NO. 227

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

DISTRICT OFFICE

201. W. Third St, PO Box 637
White Deer, TX 79097
Phone: 806-883-2501
Fax: 806-883-2162
Website: www.pgcd.us

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chancy Cruse, President
Devin Sinclair, Vice President
Lee Peterson, Secretary
Charles Bowers, Director
Marcus Hardcastle, Director
William Breeding, Director
David Hodges, Director
John R. Spearman, Jr., Director
Wes Stockett, Director

Britney Britten, General Manager

Panhandle Water News is published quarterly.
Subscriptions are free, upon request.

EDUCATION PRESENTATIONS AVAILABLE

At PGCD we understand that every group or organization has unique needs, and we're here to help make learning both enjoyable and informative. Whether you're a teacher looking for classroom enrichment, a civic group planning an informative session, or a homeowner's association wanting to engage your neighbors, we offer a range of water conservation related educational presentations designed to meet your specific goals. Our staff members can speak on a variety of topics including the the water cycle for our younger audience, to depletion management, or rainwater harvesting systems. We believe that learning is most effective when it's relevant, engaging, and aligned with the interests and needs of the group.

If you're interested in booking a presentation, don't hesitate to reach out. We look forward to working with you to create an enriching experience that leaves a lasting impact on your group!

Please reach out to Korri Packard at 806-883-2501 or at kpackard@pgcd.us for more information.