

Bryan W. Shaw, Ph.D., *Chairman*  
Buddy Garcia, *Commissioner*  
Carlos Rubinstein, *Commissioner*  
Mark R. Vickery, P.G., *Executive Director*



## TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

*Protecting Texas by Reducing and Preventing Pollution*

August 8, 2011

Re: Suspensions of Permitted State Surface Water Diversions in the San Saba River Watershed of the Colorado River Basin

Dear County Extension Agent:

By letter dated July 5, 2011, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) notified water right holders in the Colorado River Basin that certain non-municipal diversions of state surface water in the Llano River Watershed had been suspended due to a senior priority call. The TCEQ has now received multiple priority calls on surface water from domestic and livestock water users in the San Saba River Watershed of the Colorado River Basin. In accordance with the Texas Water Code (TWC), §5.013(a)(1), the TCEQ is responsible for enforcing water rights, which requires protecting senior and superior surface water rights, and must take action in response to the priority call.

With no immediate relief forecasted, the TCEQ has suspended certain diversions in the San Saba River Watershed of the Colorado River Basin. Suspended water rights include water right permits with a priority date of 1900 and later (excluding those for municipal uses and power generation), term water right permits, and temporary water right permits. Domestic and livestock diversions are not subject to this suspension. Copies of this correspondence are enclosed for your reference.

Multiple program areas at the TCEQ are actively engaged in the oversight of available water supplies statewide. We are working with municipalities that face potential shortfalls of available drinking water. There is a common understanding in all of our programmatic efforts that our decisions have profound impacts on the people of Texas. We are weighing our decisions judiciously, paying particular attention to those potential impacts.

With no immediate relief forecasted, the TCEQ is soliciting your help in disseminating appropriate information to affected parties in the Colorado River Basin communities. If this drought cycle worsens, it will be very important that all residents living and working in Colorado River Basin are well informed. The TCEQ has established a drought web page to provide additional information and address questions and concerns. The drought web page is located at: <http://www.tceq.texas.gov/agency/drought.html>. We have also activated the TCEQ Drought Hotline at 1-800-447-2827.

Should you have questions or need additional information, please contact L'Oreal Stepney, P.E., Deputy Director, Office of Water at 512-239-1321.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Zak Covar".

Zak Covar  
Deputy Executive Director

Enclosures