

Bryan W. Shaw, Ph.D., *Chairman*
Carlos Rubinstein, *Commissioner*
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TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Protecting Texas by Reducing and Preventing Pollution

July 20, 2012

Re: Alert for Permitted State Surface Water Diversions in the San Saba River Watershed

Dear Water Right Holder:

As you are aware, despite recent rains, Texas is experiencing widespread drought conditions. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) is closely monitoring the evolving situation. The current drought has resulted in low or reduced stream flows in many areas of the state, and these conditions could impact senior and superior water right holders. Since it is not possible to predict how long these low flow conditions will continue, you may wish to investigate alternative sources of water for your immediate needs.

This letter is to inform you that the TCEQ has recently received priority calls in the San Saba River watershed. TCEQ staff is evaluating the priority calls to determine the appropriate response and may have to suspend or adjust water rights on a priority basis within your area.

Texas water law specifies that in times of shortage, permitted water rights will be administered based on the priority date of each water right; that is, the earliest in time is senior. Additionally, certain domestic and livestock use rights are superior in priority to permitted rights.

The TCEQ is responsible for protecting senior and superior water rights, as well as for ensuring water right holders divert state water only in accordance with their permits. In order to protect senior and superior water rights, the TCEQ may need to suspend or adjust diversion of water on a priority basis in the San Saba watershed under 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Chapter 36.

General information about the drought may be found on the TCEQ's website at: <http://www.tceq.texas.gov/response/drought>. This site will be updated as the drought continues.

If you have any questions regarding this issue, please contact the Water Rights Permitting Team at (512) 239-4691.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard A. Hyde".

Richard A. Hyde, P.E.
Deputy Executive Director

Enclosure