

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE DISTRICT

History

The primary concern of the residents of this area of the State regarding groundwater is the potential contamination of the groundwater from leaking oil and gas wells. For this reason, the residents introduced legislation in the 70th Regular Legislative Session (1987) for creation of the District. In November 1987, the residents confirmed the district and also voted to fund the district operations through local property taxes. It became an active district on November 1, 1988. On January 2, 1989, the district adopted a 10-year Management Plan and in February 1989 adopted Rules and By-Laws which became effective March 6, 1989. The District rules were amended on March 6, 2000 and our current rules were amended on August 4, 2004.

In May of 2000, a petition signed by landowners residing outside the district was submitted to the District board of directors. This petition requested annexation of the territory in Tom Green and Concho Counties not currently in a groundwater district and all of Runnels County. Following proper notice and hearings on the petition, the District board adopted an annexation resolution on March 7, 2001 and called for an election to be held to ratify the annexation on May 5, 2001. The annexation was ratified by a vote of 225 for and 189 against.

The District is governed by a seven member locally elected Board of Directors - two members from Concho County, two members from Runnels County, two members from Tom Green County, and one member-at-large from the District as a whole. Elections are held every two years. The directors serve staggered four year terms - the directors from Concho and Runnels Counties are elected in one election and the directors from Tom Green County and the director at-large are elected in another. By having a Local Board of Directors, the District is very responsive to voters' approval or disapproval of the local management of their groundwater and/or the services provided by the District.

Location and Extent

The Lipan-Kickapoo WCD has an areal extent of approximately 2,262,464 acres or 3,535 square miles and is located in the center of the State of Texas. The USGS geographic center of Texas monument is located within the District and is approximately 13 miles southeast of Vancourt, Texas.

The District's economy is based primarily on agriculture with some oil and gas production. The agricultural income is derived primarily from cotton, grain sorghum, wheat, corn, alfalfa as well as sheep, goats, and beef cattle production. Income is also obtained from cattle and sheep feedlots and dairies. Recreational hunting leases also contribute to the income of the area.

Prior to the May 5, 2001 election, the water district was located in Tom Green and Concho Counties generally southeast of San Angelo, south of the Concho river to approximately 5 miles west of Eden. It covered approximately 579,200 acres or 905 square miles (Fig. 1).

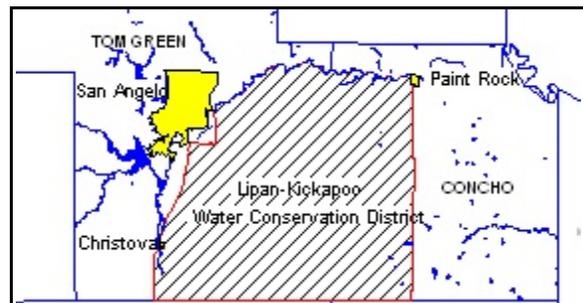


Figure 1. Location of the Lipan-Kickapoo Water Conservation District 1987 to May 5, 2001 Special Election.

After the May 5, 2001 election, the boundaries of the water district generally include: All of Tom Green, Runnels, and Concho counties not currently within the boundaries of the Hickory Underground Water Conservation District. The cities/towns of Winters, Ballinger, Rowena, Miles, Paint Rock, San Angelo, Christoval, Grape Creek, the Red Creek Municipal Utility District, and the area northwest of San Angelo north of the Middle Concho River and south and west of US Highway 87 north to the Coke County line (Fig. 2) are excluded from the district. Most of these towns and cities within these counties were excluded because they get their water supply from surface water that belongs to the state and is regulated by the state. Therefore, there are no major municipalities within the District boundaries.

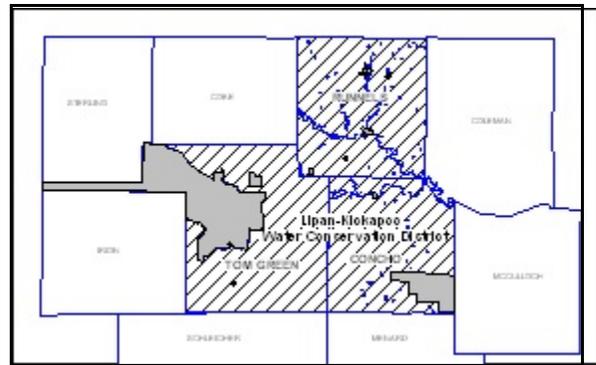


Figure 2. Location of the Lipan-Kickapoo WCD after May 5, 2001 showing excluded areas.

Tom Green County

The total population of the county is approximately 103,079.¹ The largest city in Tom Green county is San Angelo (also the County Seat) with a population of approximately 88,439 people. It is not a part of the District and is located northwest of the District. Other communities in Tom Green County not in the District are: Christoval, Grape Creek, Water Valley, and the Red Creek MUD with a combined population of approximately 9,886. There are 7 small communities within the District in Tom Green county: Vancourt, Wall, Veribest, Mereta, Carlsbad, Knickerbocker, and Harriet. The total estimated population within the District in Tom Green County is 4,693.

The majority of the land use in the county is for agricultural purposes with a total of 958,722 acres of which 217,069 acres is crop or farm land and the balance of 741,653 acres is range land.² The crop land is located primarily in the center of the county over the Lipan aquifer while the range land is located on the north, west, and south portions of the county over the Edwards-Trinity aquifer. Irrigation covers approximately 44,296 acres of the county's crop land. Pivot irrigation systems are the primary method of applying irrigation water.

Concho County

The total population of the county is approximately 3,917.³ The largest city in Concho county is Eden with a population of approximately 2,561. It is located within the Hickory UWCD boundaries. Paint Rock, the County Seat, has a population of approximately 320 and is not a part of the District. There are several other small communities within the District in Concho county:

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, 4700 Silver Hill Road, Washington DC 20233-0001 - 2001- Population Estimate.

² U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service - 1997 Census of Agriculture.

³ U.S. Census Bureau, 2001- Population Estimate.

Eola, Vick, Lowake, Live Oak, and Millersview. The total estimated population within the District in Concho county is 973.

The majority of the land use in the county is for agricultural purposes with a total of 635,584 acres of which 129,083 acres is crop or farm land and the balance of 506,501 acres is range land.⁴ The crop land is located primarily in the west central portion of the county over the Lipan aquifer while the range land is located on the north, east, and south portions of the county over the Edwards-Trinity and Hickory aquifers. Irrigation covers approximately 3,974 acres of the county's crop land. The principle method of irrigation is through pivot irrigation systems with some drip irrigation.

Runnels County

The total population of the county is approximately 11,089.⁵ The largest city in Runnels county is Ballinger (also the County Seat) with a population of approximately 4,243 people. This town is not a part of the District. Other communities with larger populations not in the District are: Winters with approximately 2,880 people, Miles with approximately 850 people, and Rowena with approximately 380. Other small communities in the District include: Olfen, Norton, Hatchel, Crews, and Wingate. The total estimated population within the District in Runnels county is 2,770.

The majority of the land use in the county is for agricultural purposes with a total of 581,139 acres of which 293,074 acres is crop or farm land and the balance of 288,065 acres is range land.⁶ The crop land is located primarily in the west central and southwestern portion of the county over the Lipan aquifer while the range land is located on the north and east portions of the county. Irrigation covers approximately 2,403 acres of the county's crop land. The principle methods of irrigation are furrow irrigation, pivot irrigation, and drip irrigation.

The total estimated population of these three counties is 118,085.⁷ However, since the District covers the area generally outside the cities and towns, the total estimated population in the District is 8,436.

Overall land use in the District is for agricultural purposes of which approximately 634,226 acres are crop or farm land and 1,249,505 acres are range land. The crop land is located primarily in the central portion of the District over the Lipan aquifer while the range land is located along the boundaries of the District over the Edwards-Trinity and Hickory aquifers. Irrigation covers

⁴ USDA, 1997 Census of Agriculture.

⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, 2001- Population Estimate.

⁶ USDA, 1997 Census of Agriculture.

⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, 2001- Population Estimate.

approximately 50,673 acres of the District's crop land.⁸ The principle method of irrigation has been furrow irrigation. However, within the last 4 to 5 years there has been a large scale change to more highly efficient pivot and drip irrigation. There are an estimated 200 + pivot systems currently operating within the District with new systems being installed.

Topography and Drainage

The District lies within the Colorado River Basin with much of the area known as the Concho Valley of Texas. Two major rivers, the Colorado-with its headwaters beginning on the South Plains and the Concho-with its headwaters located in the counties to the north, west, and south of Tom Green county, traverse the District and converge at the O.H. Ivie Reservoir on the Concho-Runnels-Coleman County lines. There are numerous creeks which are tributaries of these two rivers. Drainage is generally in an eastward direction. Springs flowing from the Edwards-Trinity aquifer form the headwaters for the South Concho river, Lipan Creek, and the Kickapoo Creek. Topographically, the District consists of the Lipan Flats in the center of the District southeast of the city of San Angelo to rolling plains in the remainder of the District in Concho, Runnels, and Tom Green Counties.

⁸ USDA, 1997 Census of Agriculture.