Central Texas Groundwater Conservation District

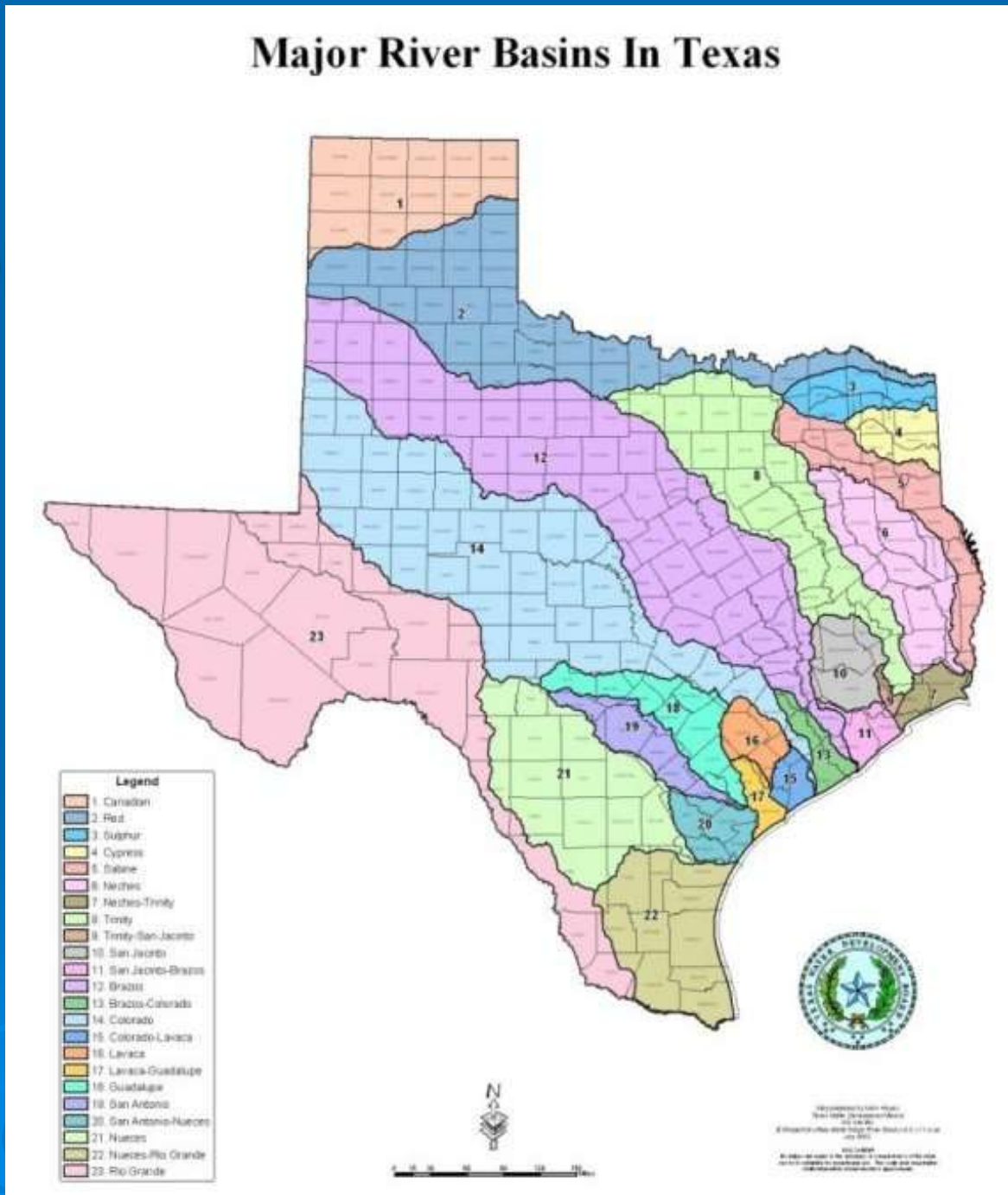
Richard Bowers
General Manager

Water Management in Texas

- Surface Water (regulated by the State through TCEQ by River Authorities)

- Groundwater (Regulated by Local Groundwater Conservation Districts)

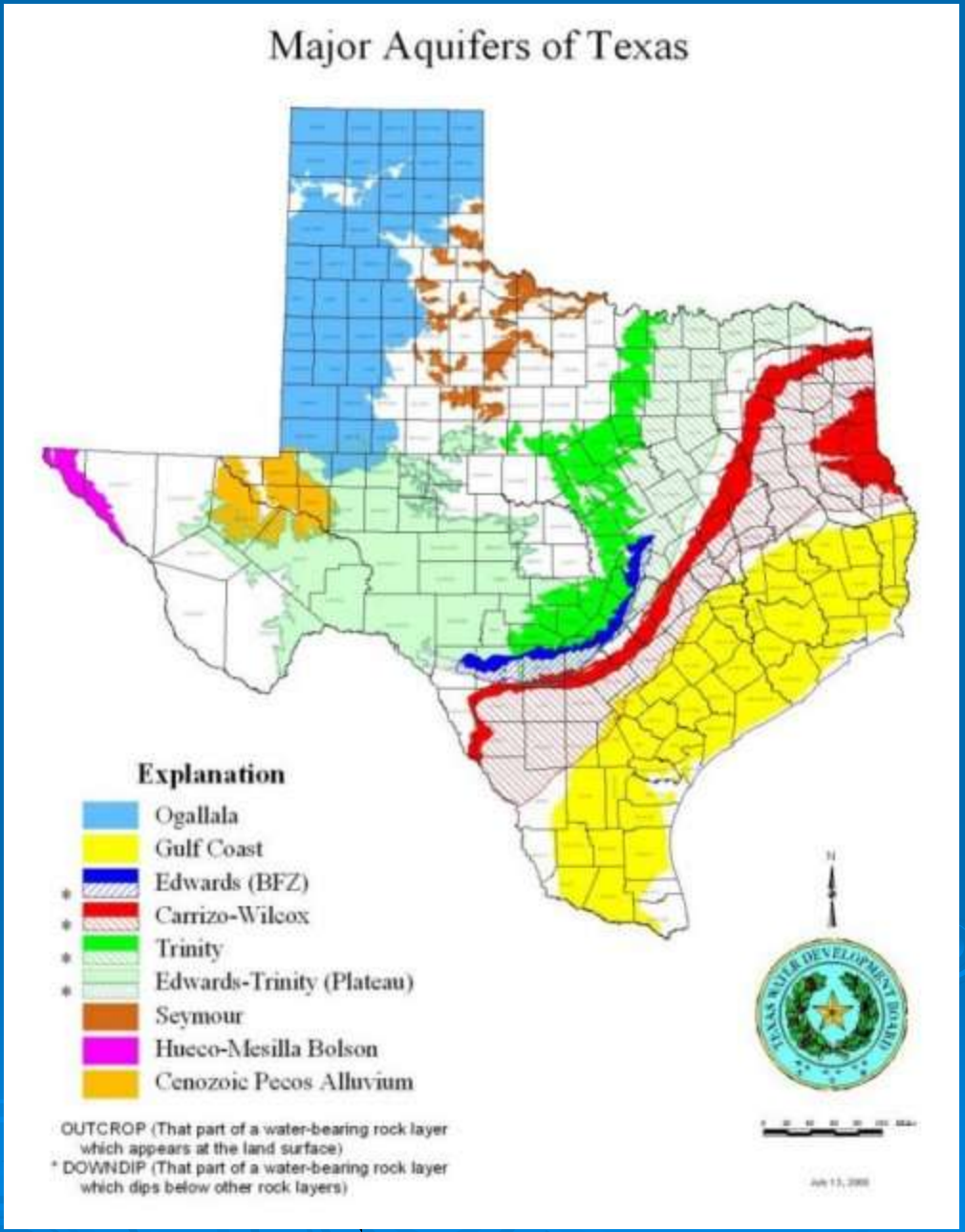
Surface Wate



Groundwater Supplies

9 Major Aquifers

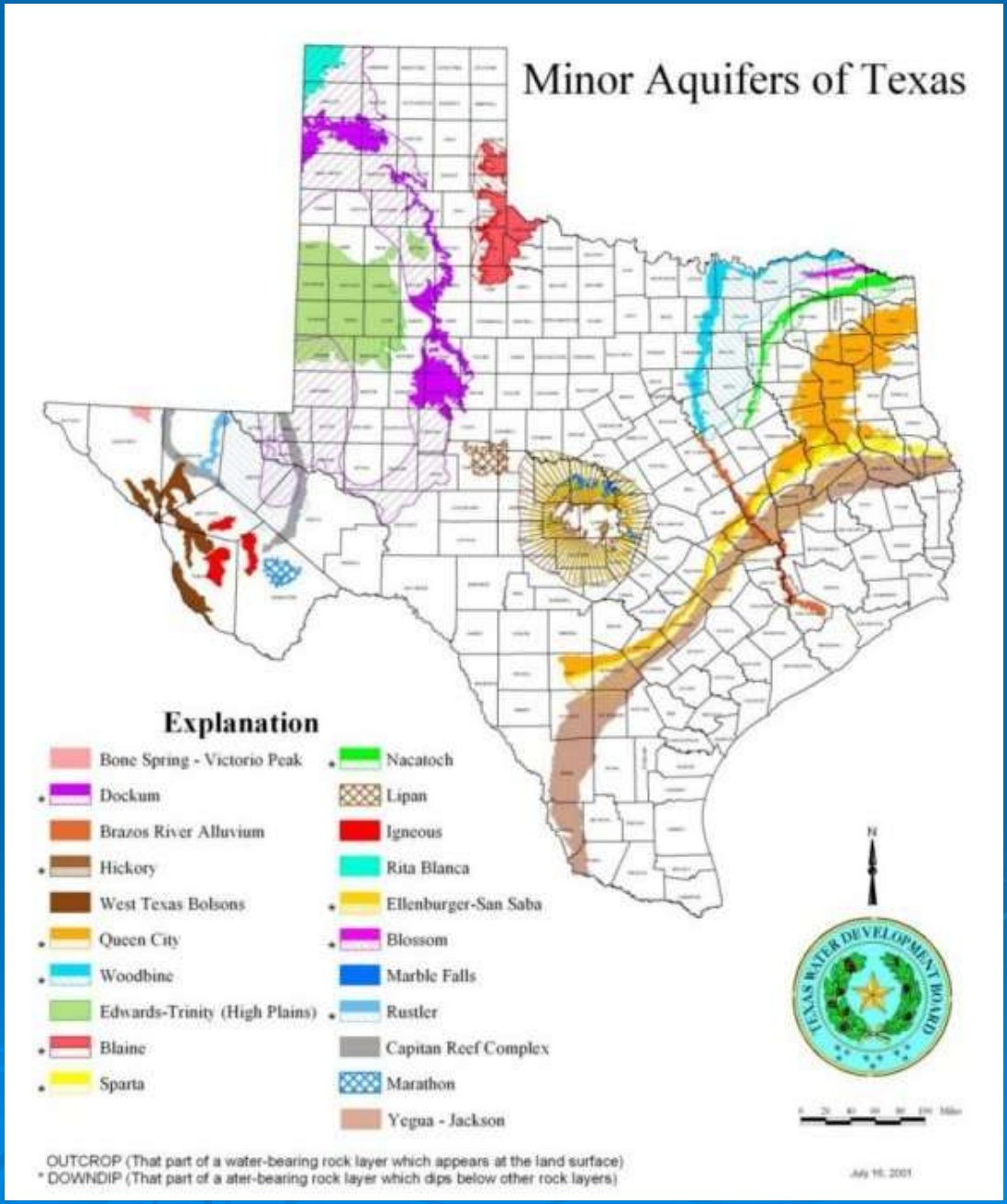
Yields large quantities of water in a comparatively large area of the State.



Groundwater Supplies

21 Minor Aquifers

Yield large quantities in small areas or relatively small quantities of water in large areas of the State.

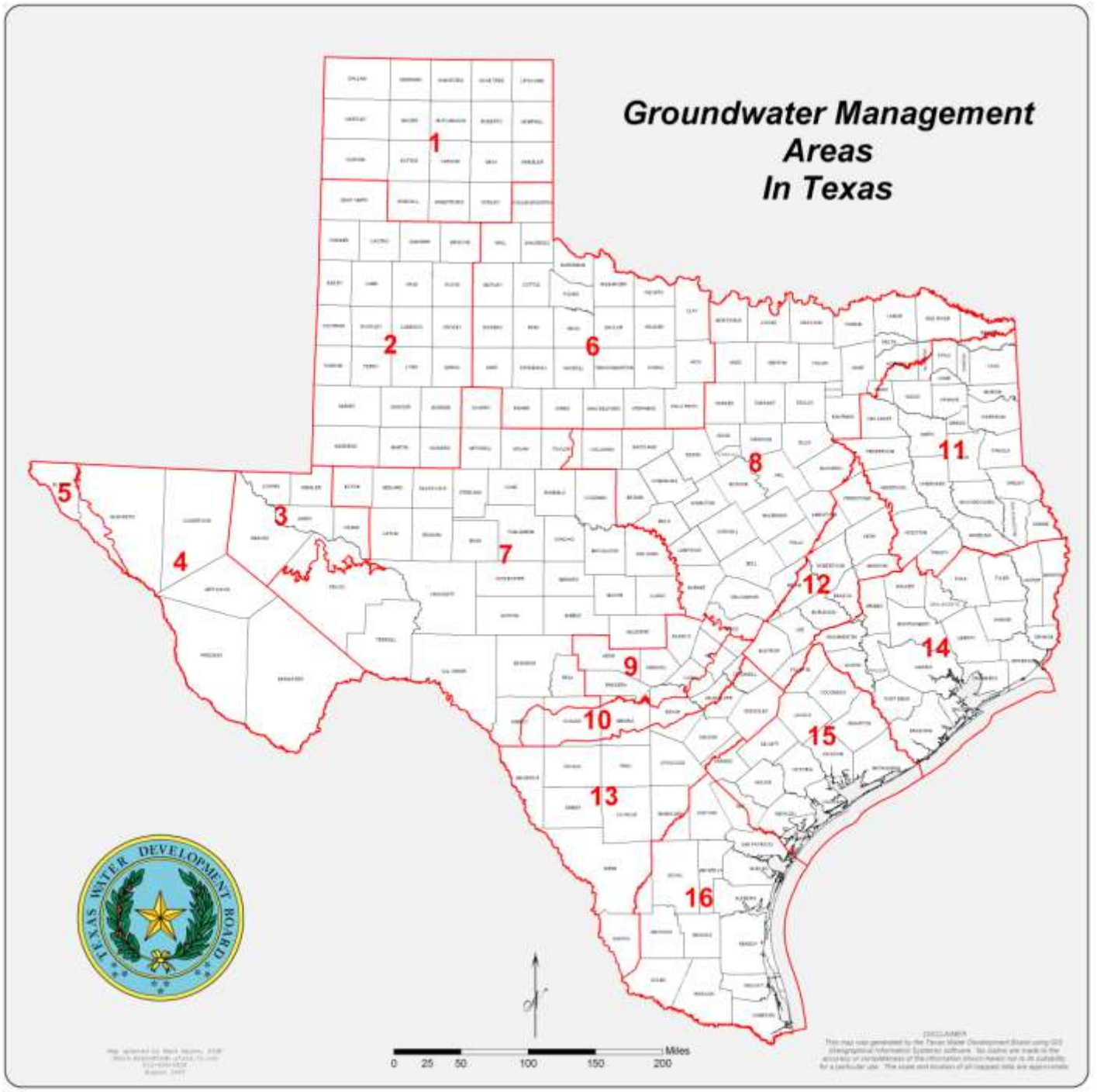


State Water Planning

Through Senate Bill 1

and Senate Bill 2

Groundwater Planning After House Bill 1763



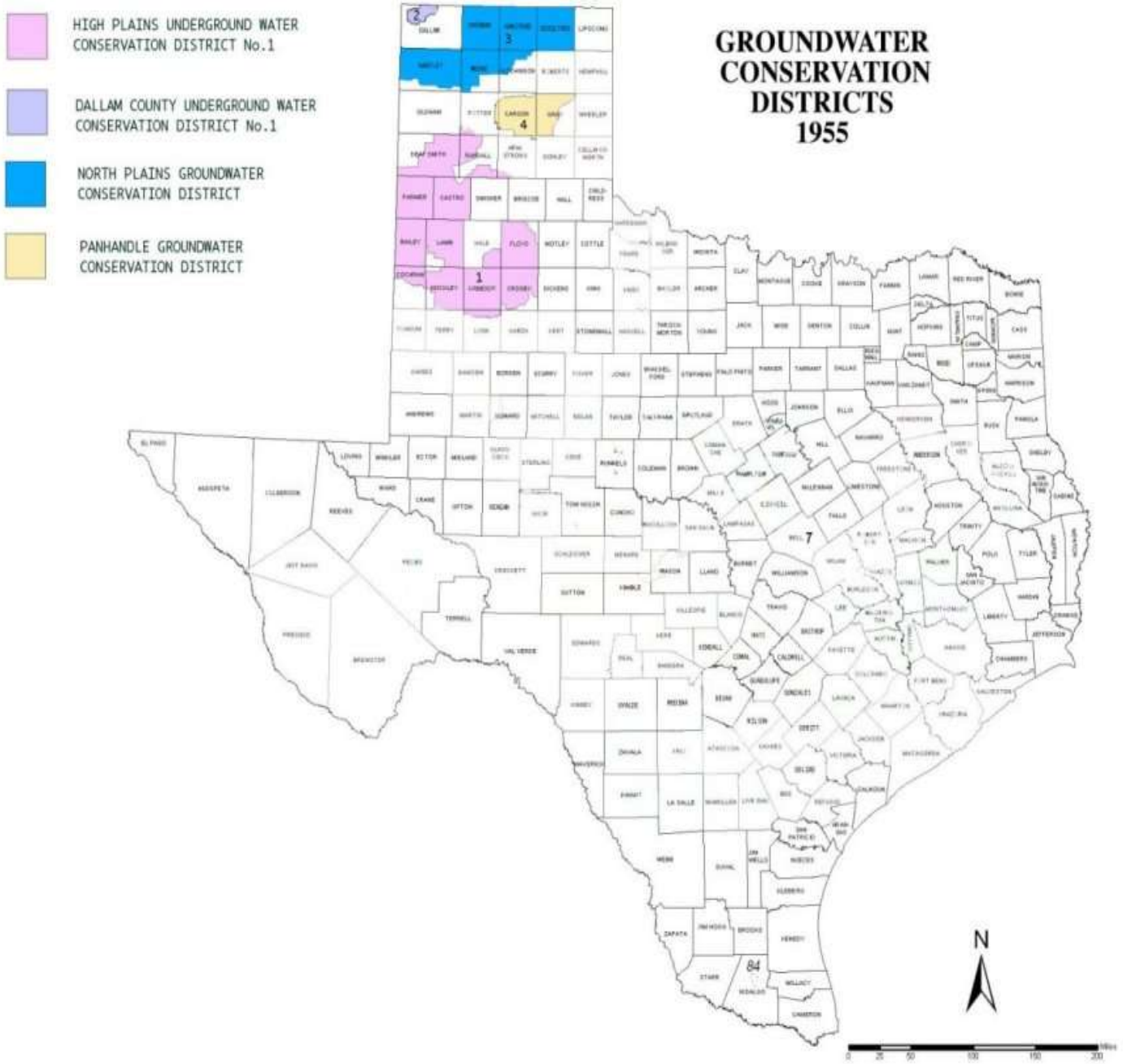
Groundwater Management Areas

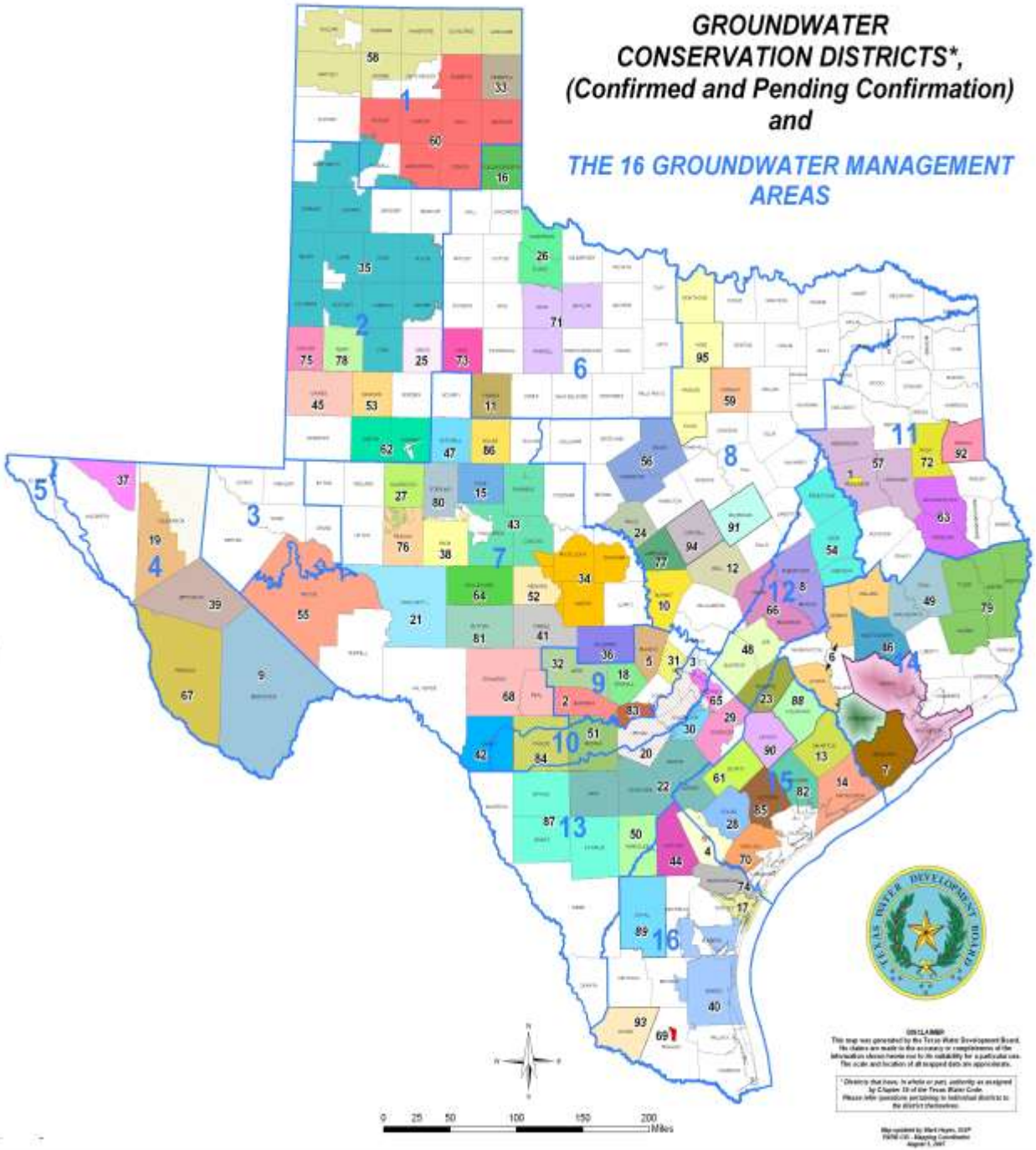
- The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) designated groundwater management area boundaries in response to legislation passed in 2001 (Senate Bill 2).
- Originally, the areas were useful for determining which districts needed to coordinate joint planning by sharing their management plans.
- In 2005, the legislature changed the direction of groundwater management (House Bill 1763).

House Bill 1763

Requires Groundwater Conservation Districts (GCD) to not only Coordinate Groundwater Management and Regulations but also to adopt DESIRED FUTURE CONDITIONS.

Groundwater Conservation Districts Then and Now:


HIGH PLAINS UNDERGROUND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT No.1
DALLAM COUNTY UNDERGROUND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT No.1
NORTH PLAINS GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
PANHANDLE GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS 1955
N


GROUNDWATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICTS*,
(Confirmed and Pending Confirmation)
and
THE 16 GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AREAS
0 25 50 100 150 200
Miles

Regional Water Planning after HB 1763

- (1) regionalizing decisions on groundwater availability,
- (2) requiring regional water planning groups (RWPG) to use groundwater availability numbers developed from the groundwater management area process, and
- (3) requiring a permitting target for groundwater production.

Regionalized Decisions on Groundwater Availability

Before H B 1763, groundwater conservation district defined their own groundwater availability in their groundwater management plans under the name "total usable amount of groundwater."

Districts are now required to work together in each groundwater management area (GMA) to develop "desired future conditions" for their groundwater resources.

RWPGs Required to use GMA Numbers

- RWPGs are now required to use managed available groundwater for their groundwater availability estimates.
- Managed available groundwater is defined by the desired future conditions.
- Groundwater conservation districts, working collectively within each GMA, define groundwater availability for the regional water planning process.

Desired Future Conditions

The desired, quantified conditions of groundwater resources (such as water levels, water quality, spring flows, or volumes) at a specified time or times in the future or in perpetuity.

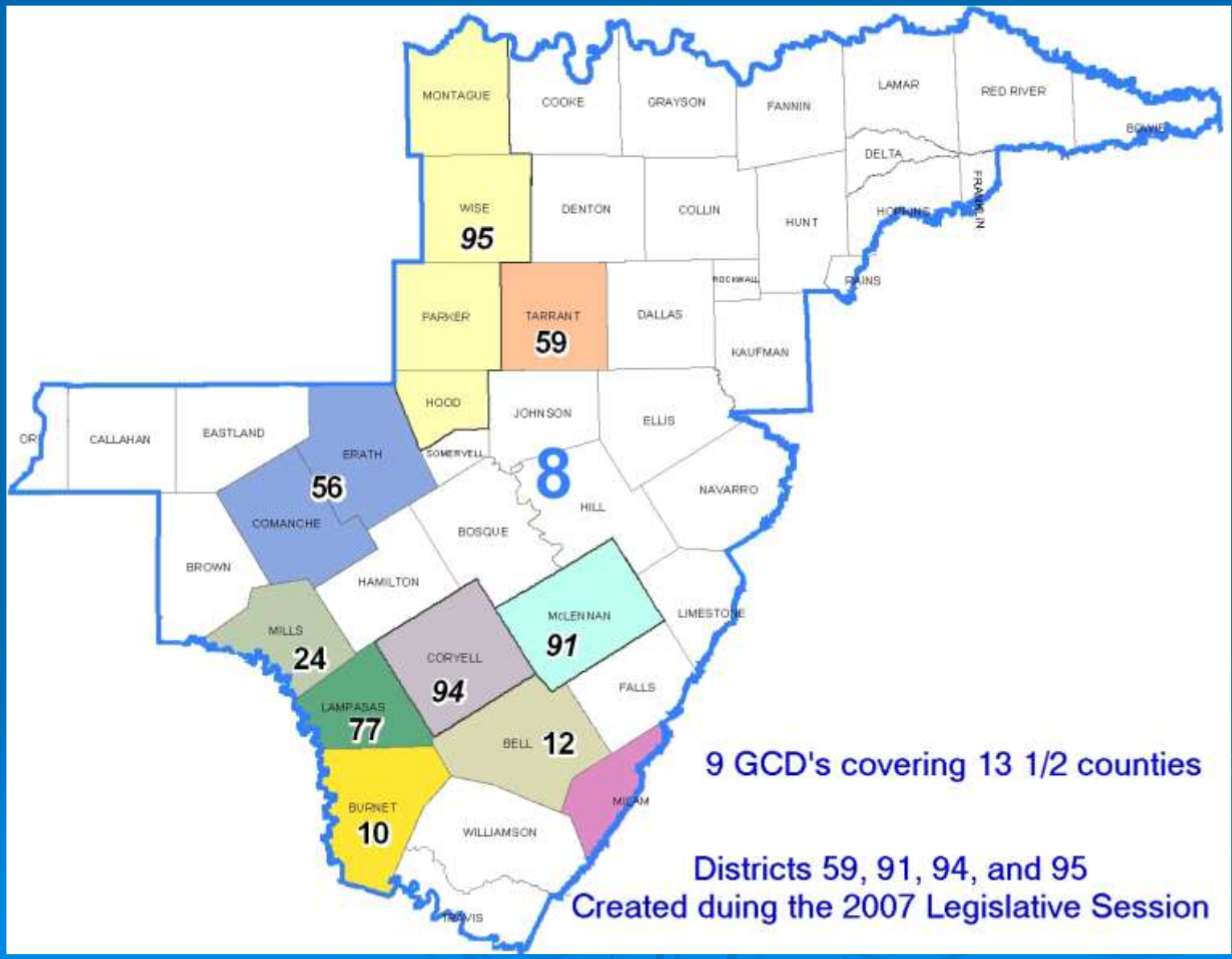
Managed Available Groundwater

The amount of water that may be permitted by a district for beneficial use in accordance with the desired future condition of the aquifer.

How the Process Works

- **Districts in GMAs decide Desired Future Conditions and deliver to TWDB**
- **TWDB provides estimates of Managed Available Groundwater to districts and regions**
- **Districts and regions include Managed Available Groundwater in plans**

GMA 8 Part or all of 44 Counties



Groundwater Management Area Frequently Asked Questions

http://www.twdb.state.tx.us/GwRD/GMA/faqgma.htm#gma1

What happens to the areas in a GMA that do not have a GCD?

Statute does not provide representation to areas in a GMA that lie outside of a GCD. Thus, any area outside of a district does not have representation in GMA matters.

Do areas outside GCDs have representation in the GMA?

Some GMAs are including nonvoting representation from areas without districts.

GMA 8 Notifies County Judge of Meetings.

Do areas outside GCDs have a reason to be represented?

Desired future condition statements will be used to calculate managed available groundwater for the entire groundwater management area, including areas with no groundwater conservation districts. Managed available groundwater values will be used by regional water planning groups in their plans.

We will see additional groundwater conservation districts created in the very near future.

WHY?

Groundwater outside a Groundwater Conservation District has very little value in today's water planning and/or water market.

AUSTIN AMERICAN-STATESMAN
Sunday, October 14, 2007

Ironically, water experts say, the lack of government regulation — rather than encouraging a land rush for water rights — makes it too risky for thirsty cities or even private water developers to bring the water to market.

Few, including Wall Street, are willing to gamble millions on pipelines and wells without knowing the rules.

Texas Water Code 36.0015. Purpose

Groundwater conservation districts are the state's preferred method of groundwater management through rules developed, adopted, and promulgated by a district in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.

Groundwater Conservations Districts

§ 36.002. Ownership of Groundwater

The ownership and rights of the owners of the land and their lessees and assigns in groundwater are hereby recognized, and nothing in this code shall be construed as depriving or divesting the owners or their lessees and assigns of the ownership or rights, except as those rights may be limited or altered by rules promulgated by a district.

Purpose of Groundwater Conservation Districts

To provide for the conservation, preservation, protection, recharging, and prevention of waste of groundwater consistent with the objectives of the Texas Constitution.

Questions and/or Comments.