

# Revisions to the Lower Big Blue Groundwater Management Plan

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The water committee's goal in revising the districts groundwater management plan was the protection of existing municipal, domestic and irrigation wells and the protection of the districts groundwater and economic viability.

The main revisions related to six main areas:

- 1) Setback of high capacity wells
- 2) Test well requirements
- 3) Ranking system for new well permits
- 4) Certification of acres
- 5) Transfers
- 6) Comingled wells (wells in a series)

**Setback of irrigation wells from domestic wells** – *In order to minimize conflicts between new and existing wells, a 500 foot spacing is required from a domestic well.*

**Test Hole Requirement** – *In order to provide the needed information for the well permit ranking system, a test hole log is required. Test holes must be drilled within 300 feet of proposed well location.*

**Ranking system for the evaluation of new well permits** – *A ranking system was implemented for new well permits to determine well performance and water availability at the proposed well location.*

- New wells are to meet a threshold of acceptability based on hydrogeologic parameters as well as proximity to existing wells. Evaluation criteria include thickness of the aquifer, transmissivity, well density around the proposed new well, and proposed irrigation method.
- The score generated by the ranking system must reach 200 points for the proposed well to be permitted. An additional 25 points are awarded for the use of a pivot, and 50 points are awarded for the use of sub-surface drip irrigation with the new well.

**Certification of Acres** – *In order to effectively manage groundwater quantity concerns, the district will require certification of irrigated acres throughout the District. By knowing the location and number of irrigated acres and the amount of water applied to those acres, groundwater management decisions can be made to ensure that the groundwater resources are being used efficiently and effectively.*

**Groundwater Transfers – Revised Plan** - *In order to manage water use across the District, groundwater transfer permitting requirements have been revised.*

- Transfers are limited to an adjacent section
- A transfer must be no more than 3000 feet from the source

- Transfer of equal or less amount of acres from source well permitted
- Total irrigated acres in a transfer is limited to 160
- The source and destination section must be within District
- May deny transfer of groundwater into surface water impoundments

**Wells in a series** - *No more than two irrigation wells will be approved to apply water in a series.*

**Groundwater Management Areas** – *The language of the groundwater management areas from the existing plan changed from control and management areas to Phase I, II, and III, but the same triggers were used from the original plan. Language was included to specify when an area could come out of the different Phases. Additional management options were made available to the board in Phase II. Options available to the board include: well spacing, flow meter requirements, water allocation, crop rotation, and other options.*

**How these rules affect new well applications:**

- 1) A new application will require a test hole to be drilled. Information from the drillers log will be used to rank the proposed well's impact on surrounding wells
- 2) The application will be evaluated with the ranking calculator and must meet the 200 point threshold.
- 3) The proposed well location must meet the 500' spacing requirement from a domestic well and 1000' from any other irrigation well.
- 4) Flow meter will be required on the new well
- 5) Transfers are limited to 3000' from the source
- 6) A maximum of 160 acres can be transferred
- 7) No transfers out of District will be allowed.

--The revisions allow for variances to be approved by the board