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New Jacob's Well Groundwater Management Zone

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On March 5, 2020, the Hays Trinity Groundwater Conservation District Board of Directors passed a new rule—Rule 15, Jacob's Well Groundwater Management Zone—to better protect water resources and springflow during drought. This action comes in response to community requests for additional protections in Wimberley Valley's Cypress Creek Watershed.

Rule 15 establishes the Jacob's Well Groundwater Management Zone (GMZ), limits new permits within the GMZ, and incorporates monthly pumpage monitoring for drought restrictions for permit holders with over 2 acre-feet per year annual production. The new rule will require these larger users in the 39 square mile GMZ to reduce pumping when the flow of Jacob's Well falls below 6-cubic feet per second. Pumping reductions will increase as flow diminishes.

"I believe the intent of the Jacob's Well Groundwater Management Zone is not only to protect the flow of Cypress Creek, but also to protect the resources and property of the citizens that reside in the Wimberley Valley." --Hays County Commissioner Precinct 3, Lon Shell

The District's drought-response rules, including Rules 15 and 16 (Regional Recharge Study Zone), were developed after a comprehensive scientific study and lengthy stakeholder vetting process. The multi-agency, technical committee was led by hydrogeologists from the Edwards Aquifer Authority, Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District, and the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment and published the scientific findings in July 2019. A deliberate, year-long stakeholder process sought consensus and management guidance to develop these rules. Stakeholder participants including Hays County Precinct 3, local water utilities, developers, Wimberley Valley Watershed Association, Blue Hole, the Villages of Wimberley, Woodcreek and Wimberley, local business owners, and others reached accord on large-volume, commercial pumping limitations during drought.

Hays Trinity GCD Board President, Linda Kaye Rogers, says, *"The District recognizes that these rules are not designed to guarantee local spring flow at Jacob's Well -- but rather to prolong healthy aquifer conditions and help protect local water wells during drought conditions."*

"There is nothing the District can do to create new water during drought," explains District Manager Charlie Flatten. *"Rule 15 gives us tools to help coordinate conservation, limit new pumping in the most sensitive area of our District, and help protect groundwater resources, Jacob's Well springflow, and Cypress Creek streamflow for all users and residents."*

Useful links:

- District Management Zone webpage: www.haysgroundwater.com/management-zones-draft-rules
- Rule 15: [www.haysgroundwater.com/files/Rules/20200305Rule15\(JWGMZ\)\(DRAFT\).pdf](http://www.haysgroundwater.com/files/Rules/20200305Rule15(JWGMZ)(DRAFT).pdf)
- Evaluation for the Development of a Jacob's Well Groundwater Management Zone in Hays County, Texas technical committee report: http://haysgroundwater.com/files/Documents/JW-Mgmt-Zone-Report_7.30.19.pdf

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