

June 14, 2024



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UWBF
01/17/2024
10:30
am
JMO 6-17-24

Brazos Valley Groundwater Conservation District Board
112 W 3rd St.
Hearne, TX. 77859

Re: Public Input Request Concerning UW Brazos Valley Farm, LLC
Permitting for 48 New Transport Wells in Robertson County

Dear Board:

My name is Ermine Dieckman. My husband and I own the Double E Ranch in Robertson County, which is comprised of two pieces of property, one on Gourdneck Loop, serviced by Twin Creek Water Supply and one on Bishopville Road, supplied by Robertson County Water Services. We raise cattle and hay.

I am here today to contest possible over-pumping and depletion of the aquifer underneath Robertson County with the applications for 48 new transport wells by UWBF. These new wells, in addition to the already permitted and contracted Epcor wells, have the potential to deplete the aquifer to the point of low water access or even having wells run dry.

While Texas law clearly establishes water rights for the landowner or water supply company, it is unclear whether an entity has the right to deplete an aquifer to the point that all landowners have to either redrill their wells or go without water.

Epcor already has a contract with the City of Georgetown to pump 32 million gallons per day of treated groundwater with initial delivery by 2030.

Although permitting money goes to landowners who may be affected by these transport wells through deepening or redrilling as the aquifer goes down, anyone who has priced the drilling and completion of a water well might wonder if the permitting money available could meet landowner needs.

Thankfully, the Brazos Valley Groundwater Conservation District is tasked with managing the aquifer, and while this will hopefully ensure that the DSR will not fall below curtailment measures, who is to say that the “flood” of permitting applications will not overwhelm the aquifer?

I propose, if it has not already been done, an independent study of the effects of existing and proposed transport wells on the aquifer, not just at present, but projected out over time.

Hopefully this has been done and the study is available to the public. If so, I would respectfully request a presentation to the public that will spell out in layman’s terms what will happen to the aquifer and the consequences over time.

I am concerned that if transport wells continue to be drilled as a way to mine the acquifer without concern for how much it will affect our water supply, we could end up with an aquifer like the Ogallala in West Texas, which has been depleted so much that the once extensive cotton and other agricultural products have had to be severely curtailed, forcing many farmers and ranchers out of business so the water could be transported to population centers.

Surely foresight in this matter is preferable to hindsight.

Sincerely,

Ermine Michael Dieckman