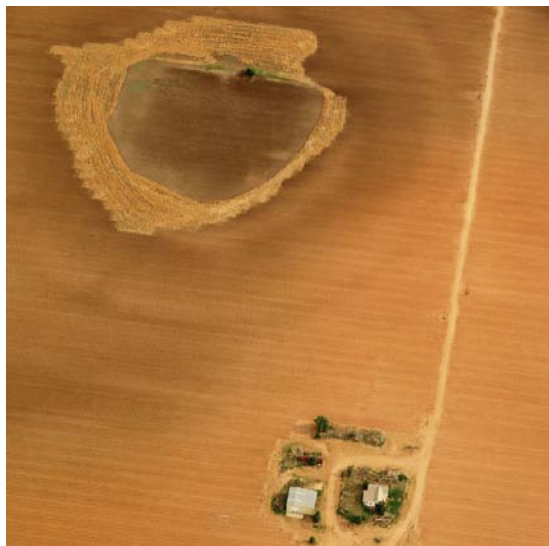


Can the playa lakes help recharge the Ogallala?



Playa lakes are a major source of recharge to the Ogallala Aquifer and are an important part of the High Plains ecosystem. But currently there is no comprehensive program to monitor how much water they collect year to year or to measure how much water goes to recharge and how much is lost to evaporation.

The Texas Water Development Board seeks to identify ways to enhance recharge from the playa lakes, but we need more information on when, where, and how much water they collect so that agriculture, wildlife, and the aquifer can all share the benefits.

It's your land, your water, your future, and we need your help planning for it.

Landowners can choose to participate in the research at several different levels:

Basic Playa Monitoring: The TWDB will install a sensor to record water levels, with semi-annual visits for maintenance and data download, and a one-time topographic survey of the playa basin.

Advanced Monitoring: Includes basic monitoring plus installation of a small tripod-mounted meteorological station and subsurface sensors to track water movement underground. A cellular modem will transmit results to the research team on a weekly basis.

Playa Modification Assessment: This option includes monitoring and playa modifications designed to increase recharge. Modifications may include wetland restoration with sediment removal and buffer strip planting, re-vegetation of playa basins with deep-rooted forage plants to loosen heavy soils, or physical modification by deep plowing or V-ditching. NRCS staff and landowners will be involved in the selection, final design, and implementation of all playa modifications. All costs of the playa modifications will be covered by the project. All modifications will be designed to require minimal maintenance and to provide short-term benefits, such as forage production, in addition to long-term recharge to the Ogallala aquifer.

Volunteer Today!

Contact the Texas Water Development Board or your local Groundwater Conservation District for more information.

TWDB: Andrew Weinberg 512- 463-3210

High Plains Underground Water Conservation District #1: Jim Conkwright 806-762-0181

Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District : C. E. Williams 806-883-2501

North Plains Groundwater Conservation District : Steve Walthour 806-935-6401



TEXAS WATER DEVELOPMENT BOARD