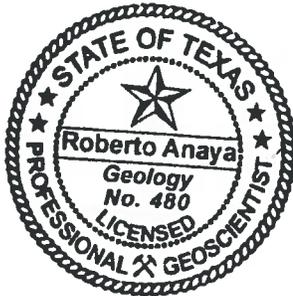


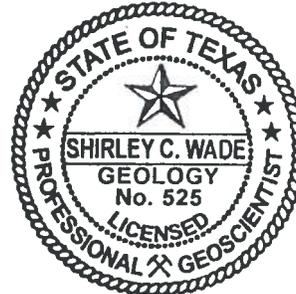
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# GAM RUN 14-001: NORTHERN TRINITY GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT MANAGEMENT PLAN

by Roberto Anaya, P.G. and Shirley C. Wade, Ph.D., P.G.  
Texas Water Development Board  
Groundwater Resources Division  
Groundwater Availability Modeling Section  
(512) 463-6115  
March 31, 2015



*Roberto Anaya*  
3/31/2015



*Shirley C. Wade*  
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## ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:***

Texas State Water Code, Section 36.1071, Subsection (h), states that, in developing its groundwater management plan, a groundwater conservation district shall use groundwater availability modeling information provided by the executive administrator of the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) in conjunction with any available site-specific information provided by the district for review and comment to the executive administrator. Information derived from groundwater availability models that shall be included in the groundwater management plan includes:

- the annual amount of recharge from precipitation to the groundwater resources within the district, if any;
- for each aquifer within the district, the annual volume of water that discharges from the aquifer to springs and any surface water bodies, including lakes, streams, and rivers; and
- the annual volume of flow into and out of the district within each aquifer and between aquifers in the district.

This report (Part 2 of a two-part package of information from the TWDB to Northern Trinity Groundwater Conservation District) fulfills the requirements noted above. Part 1 of the two-part package is the Estimated Historical Water Use/State Water Plan data report. The district will receive, or received, this data report from the TWDB Groundwater Technical Assistance Section. Questions about the data report can be directed to Mr. Stephen Allen, [Stephen.Allen@twdb.texas.gov](mailto:Stephen.Allen@twdb.texas.gov), (512) 463-7317.

The groundwater management plan for the Northern Trinity Groundwater Conservation District should be adopted by the district on or before April 10, 2015 and submitted to the executive administrator of the TWDB on or before May 10, 2015. The current management plan for the Northern Trinity Groundwater Conservation District expires on July 9, 2015.

This report discusses the methods, assumptions, and results from a model run using the recently adopted groundwater availability model (approved by the TWDB executive administrator on November 21, 2014) for the Trinity (northern portion) and Woodbine aquifers, version 2.01 (Kelley and others, 2014). This model run replaces the results of GAM Run 08-65 (Oliver, 2008) that used version 1.01 of the groundwater availability model for the Trinity (northern portion) and Woodbine aquifers (Bené and others, 2004). Tables 1 and 2 summarize the groundwater availability model data required by statute to be included in the district's groundwater conservation management plan, and Figures 1 and 2 show the areas of the model from which the values in the table were extracted. If after review of the figures, Northern Trinity Groundwater Conservation District determines that the district boundaries used in the assessment do not reflect current conditions, please notify the TWDB at your earliest convenience.

### ***METHODS:***

In accordance with the provisions of the Texas State Water Code, Section 36.1071, Subsection (h), the updated groundwater availability model for the northern portion of the Trinity Aquifer and Woodbine Aquifer (Kelley and others, 2014) was used for this analysis. Water budgets for the Northern Trinity Groundwater Conservation District were extracted for the historical model periods (1980-2012) using ZONEBUDGET Version 3.01 (Harbaugh, 2009). The average annual water budget values for recharge, surface water outflow, inflow to the district, outflow from the district, net inter-aquifer flow (upper), and net inter-aquifer flow (lower) for the portion of the aquifers located within the district are summarized in this report.

### ***PARAMETERS AND ASSUMPTIONS:***

#### ***Northern portion of the Trinity Aquifer and Woodbine Aquifer***

- We used the updated groundwater availability model for the northern portion of the Trinity Aquifer and Woodbine Aquifer. See Kelley and others (2014) for assumptions and limitations of the updated groundwater availability model.

- The groundwater availability model includes eight layers, that generally correspond to:
  - the surficial outcrop area of the units in layers 2 through 8 and the younger formations overlying the downdip portions of the Woodbine Aquifer and Washita and Fredericksburg groups (Layer 1),
  - the Woodbine Aquifer (Layer 2),
  - the Washita and Fredericksburg groups (Layer 3),
  - the Paluxy Aquifer (Layer 4),
  - the Glen Rose Formation (Layer 5),
  - the Hensell Sand (Layer 6),
  - the Pearsall Formation (Layer 7), and
  - The Hosston Formation (Layer 8).
- The Trinity Aquifer is the major source of groundwater in the Northern Trinity Groundwater Conservation District. Most of the Trinity Aquifer occurs as subcrop within the district boundaries. A small amount of the aquifer outcrops in the northwest portion of the district. All of the eight numerical layers in the model are designated as active in the Northern Trinity Groundwater Conservation District. The Trinity Aquifer is represented by Model Layers 1 through 8 in the outcrop area and by Model Layers 4 through 8 in the subcrop area. These layers were combined to calculate water budget values for the Trinity Aquifer in the district.
- Groundwater in the Trinity Aquifer within Northern Trinity Groundwater Conservation District is primarily fresh water, with total dissolved solids concentrations less than 1,000 milligrams per liter (see Figures 4.4.11 through 4.4.15 in Kelley and others (2014)).
- The Woodbine Aquifer is considered a minor source of groundwater in the Northern Trinity Groundwater Conservation District. Most of the Woodbine Aquifer outcrops in a north-south trend through the eastern portion of the district. A lesser amount of the aquifer is present as subcrop along the eastern district boundary. The Woodbine Aquifer is represented by Model Layers 1 and 2 in the outcrop area and by Model Layer 2 in the subcrop

area. These layers were combined to calculate water budget values for the Woodbine Aquifer in the district.

- Groundwater in the Woodbine Aquifer within Northern Trinity Groundwater Conservation District is generally fresh water, with total dissolved solids concentrations less than 1,000 milligrams per liter (see Figures 4.4.11 through 4.4.15 in Kelley and others (2014)).
- The model was run with MODFLOW-NWT (Niswonger and others, 2011).

## **RESULTS:**

A groundwater budget summarizes the amount of water entering and leaving the aquifer according to the groundwater availability model. Selected groundwater budget components listed below were extracted from the model results for the Trinity and Woodbine aquifers located within the district and averaged over the duration of the calibration and verification portion of the model run, as shown in Tables 1 and 2.

- Precipitation recharge—the areally-distributed recharge sourced from precipitation falling on the outcrop areas of the Trinity Aquifer or Woodbine Aquifer (where the aquifers are exposed at land surface) within the district.
- Surface water outflow—the total volume of water discharging from the aquifer (outflow) to surface water features such as streams, reservoirs, and drains (springs).
- Flow into and out of district—the lateral flow within the aquifers between the district and adjacent counties.
- Flow between aquifers—the net vertical flow between aquifers or confining units. This flow is controlled by the relative water levels in each aquifer or confining unit and hydraulic properties of each aquifer or confining unit. In the Northern Trinity Groundwater Conservation District, this net vertical flow represents the net groundwater flow between the Trinity Aquifer and the immediate geologic unit overlying the aquifer in the subcrop area or the net groundwater flow between the Woodbine Aquifer and the immediate geologic units overlying and underlying the aquifer in the subcrop area.

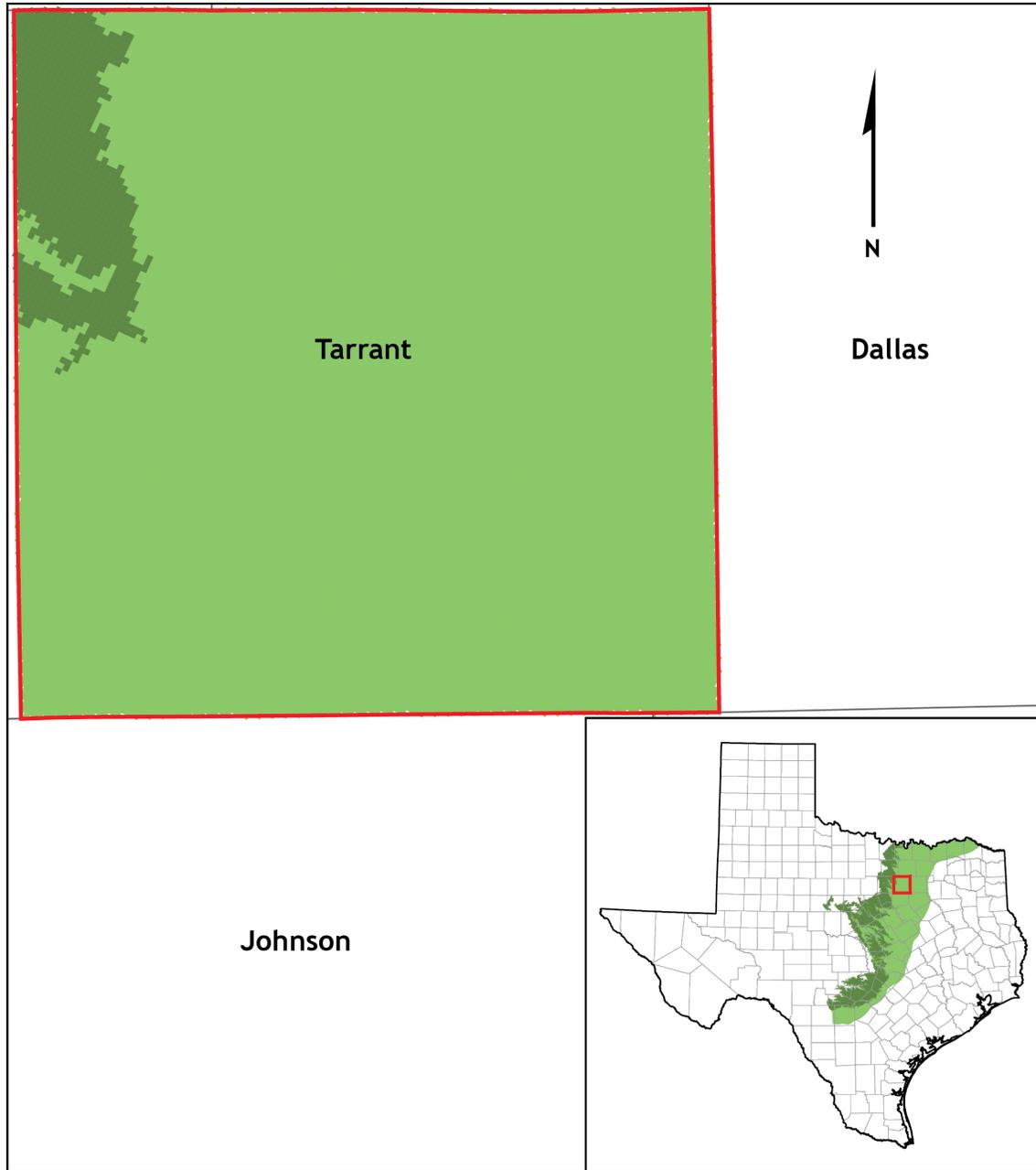
The information needed for the Northern Trinity Groundwater Conservation District's management plan is summarized in Tables 1 and 2. It is important to note that sub-regional water budgets are approximate. This is due to the size of the model cells and the approach used to extract data from the model. To avoid double accounting, a model cell that straddles a political boundary, such as a district or county boundary,

is assigned to one side of the boundary based on the location of the centroid of the model cell. For example, if a cell contains two counties, the cell is assigned to the county where the centroid of the cell is located (Figures 1 and 2). Please note that the results of this model run are different from the results of the model run 08-65 that were obtained from the older groundwater availability model. The changes can be attributed to several characteristics of the new model, such as differences in model layering, geologic boundaries, hydraulic properties distribution, and the use of different MODFLOW modeling packages.

**TABLE 1: SUMMARIZED INFORMATION FOR THE TRINITY AQUIFER THAT IS NEEDED FOR THE NORTHERN TRINITY GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT'S GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN. ALL VALUES ARE REPORTED IN ACRE-Feet PER YEAR AND ROUNDED TO THE NEAREST 1 ACRE-FOOT.**

<i>Management Plan requirement</i>	<i>Aquifer or confining unit</i>	<i>Results</i>
Estimated annual amount of recharge from precipitation to the district	Trinity Aquifer	3,735
Estimated annual volume of water that discharges from the aquifer to springs and any surface water body including lakes, streams, and rivers	Trinity Aquifer	4,560
Estimated annual volume of flow into the district within each aquifer in the district	Trinity Aquifer	13,750
Estimated annual volume of flow out of the district within each aquifer in the district	Trinity Aquifer	5,785
Estimated net annual volume of flow between each aquifer in the district	From overlying Washita and Fredericksburg Confining Units into the Trinity Aquifer	7,228
	From Trinity Aquifer into underlying Older Units	n/a*

\* n/a: Not Applicable. The model assumes a no flow condition at the base of the Trinity Aquifer.



**Legend**

County Boundary

Northern Trinity Groundwater Conservation District

Trinity Aquifer (North) Active Model Cells (outcrop)

Trinity Aquifer (North) Active Model Cells (subcrop)

0 5 10 Miles

*GCD Boundary Date = 05/01/2014*

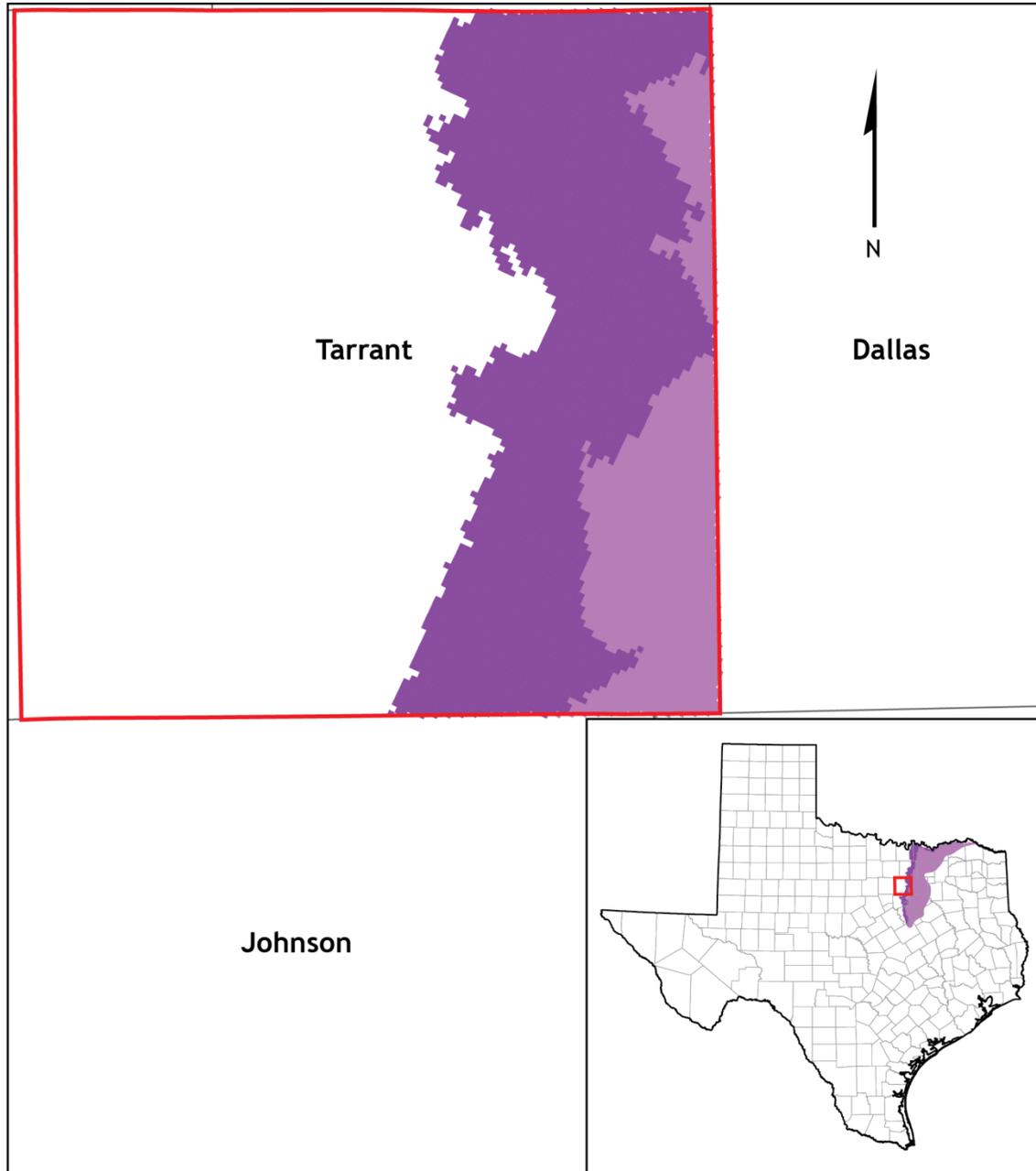
*County Boundary Date = 02/02/2011*

*trnt\_n Grid Date = 02/25/2015*

**FIGURE 1: AREA OF THE GROUNDWATER AVAILABILITY MODEL FOR THE NORTHERN PORTION OF THE TRINITY AQUIFER AND WOODBINE AQUIFER FROM WHICH THE INFORMATION IN TABLE 1 WAS EXTRACTED (THE TRINITY AQUIFER FOOTPRINT EXTENT WITHIN THE DISTRICT BOUNDARY).**

**TABLE 2: SUMMARIZED INFORMATION FOR THE WOODBINE AQUIFER THAT IS NEEDED FOR THE NORTHERN TRINITY GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT'S GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN. ALL VALUES ARE REPORTED IN ACRE-FEET PER YEAR AND ROUNDED TO THE NEAREST 1 ACRE-FOOT.**

<i>Management Plan requirement</i>	<i>Aquifer or confining unit</i>	<i>Results</i>
Estimated annual amount of recharge from precipitation to the district	Woodbine Aquifer	16,545
Estimated annual volume of water that discharges from the aquifer to springs and any surface water body including lakes, streams, and rivers	Woodbine Aquifer	14,276
Estimated annual volume of flow into the district within each aquifer in the district	Woodbine Aquifer	1,135
Estimated annual volume of flow out of the district within each aquifer in the district	Woodbine Aquifer	1,916
Estimated net annual volume of flow between each aquifer in the district	From overlying Younger Confining Units into the Woodbine Aquifer	70
	From Woodbine Aquifer into underlying Washita and Fredericksburg Confining Units	1,816



**Legend**

-  County Boundary
-  Northern Trinity Groundwater Conservation District
-  Woodbine Aquifer Active Model Cells (outcrop)
-  Woodbine Aquifer Active Model Cells (subcrop)

0 5 10 Miles

*GCD Boundary Date = 05/01/2014*

*County Boundary Date = 02/02/2011*

*wdbn Grid Date = 01/23/2015*

**FIGURE 2: AREA OF THE GROUNDWATER AVAILABILITY MODEL FOR THE NORTHERN PORTION OF THE TRINITY AQUIFER AND WOODBINE AQUIFER FROM WHICH THE INFORMATION IN TABLE 2 WAS EXTRACTED (THE WOODBINE AQUIFER FOOTPRINT EXTENT WITHIN THE DISTRICT BOUNDARY).**

## **LIMITATIONS**

The groundwater model used in completing this analysis is the best available scientific tool that can be used to meet the stated objectives. To the extent that this analysis will be used for planning purposes and/or regulatory purposes related to pumping in the past and into the future, it is important to recognize the assumptions and limitations associated with the use of the results. In reviewing the use of models in environmental regulatory decision making, the National Research Council (2007) noted:

*“Models will always be constrained by computational limitations, assumptions, and knowledge gaps. They can best be viewed as tools to help inform decisions rather than as machines to generate truth or make decisions. Scientific advances will never make it possible to build a perfect model that accounts for every aspect of reality or to prove that a given model is correct in all respects for a particular regulatory application. These characteristics make evaluation of a regulatory model more complex than solely a comparison of measurement data with model results.”*

A key aspect of using the groundwater model to evaluate historic groundwater flow conditions includes the assumptions about the location in the aquifer where historic pumping was placed. Understanding the amount and location of historic pumping is as important as evaluating the volume of groundwater flow into and out of the district, between aquifers within the district (as applicable), interactions with surface water (as applicable), recharge to the aquifer system (as applicable), and other metrics that describe the impacts of that pumping. In addition, assumptions regarding precipitation, recharge, and interaction with streams are specific to particular historic time periods.

Because the application of the groundwater models was designed to address regional scale questions, the results are most effective on a regional scale. The TWDB makes no warranties or representations related to the actual conditions of any aquifer at a particular location or at a particular time.

It is important for groundwater conservation districts to monitor groundwater pumping and overall conditions of the aquifer. Because of the limitations of the groundwater model and the assumptions in this analysis, it is important that the groundwater conservation districts work with the TWDB to refine this analysis in the future given the reality of how the aquifer responds to the actual amount and location of pumping now and in the future. Historic precipitation patterns also need to be placed in context as future climatic conditions, such as dry and wet year precipitation patterns, may differ and affect groundwater flow conditions.

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