



February 22, 2018

Jeff Walker
Texas Water Development Board
1700 North Congress
Austin, Texas 78711-3231

Re: Hydrologic Variance Requests for Water Availability Determination of Current Surface Water Supplies in Far West Texas (Region E)

Dear Mr. Walker:

The Far West Texas Region is located within the Rio Grande Basin. Surface water supplies are obtained from the Rio Grande River and Pecos River, a tributary of the Rio Grande.

As intended by Senate Bill 1, the assessment of surface water availability in the Far West Texas Region will be conducted to accurately reflect water supplies that are available for use. This assessment will include updates to new water right permits and current operating policies and/or contractual agreements. As required by the planning guidelines, we will provide information on firm yields for all water supply sources.

In accordance with regional planning rules and guidelines, the Far West Texas Region intends to use the Full Authorization Run (Run 3) of the TCEQ-approved WAM for determining surface water availability in the region. However, to most accurately reflect the current conditions and operations of the region, the following variances are requested. Please note that most of the requested variances are identical to the assumptions used in previous Region E water plans.

Far West Texas (Region E) Variance Requests

1. The supply from the Bureau of Reclamation's Rio Grande Project, which includes releases from Elephant Butte and Caballo Reservoirs, as well as run-of-the-river flows entering Texas from New Mexico, will be based on the lowest annual historical allotment delivered and available to these entities. Please note that this does not include return flows, which will be evaluated separately. Entities include El Paso Water Utilities and El Paso County Water Improvement District #1.
2. The demand pattern for irrigation rights above Fort Quitman will be modified so that diversions only occur from March through October. This change is to be consistent with actual operation of the Rio Grande Project.
3. The 2018 Rio Grande WAM has not been updated to reflect adjudicated water rights above Fort Quitman. As a result, some claims and permits that were abandoned or cancelled in the adjudication process are still in the WAM. All cancelled or abandoned claims and permits will be removed from the WAM. At this time we are verifying with TCEQ which water rights should be

taken out of the WAM or modified to reflect adjudicated amounts. We do not anticipate any water rights will be added to the WAM.

Also, the Far West Texas Region proposes including variances and error corrections proposed by Region F in the Balmorhea area in Reeves County in the Pecos Basin. These changes are related to San Solomon Springs and Giffin Springs flows, which in the current TCEQ WAM are currently being passed downstream instead of being used by the water rights dependent on those springs. Correcting this error could potentially impact the available supplies in Terrell County in Region E. These changes have not been included in previous water plans for the Far West Texas Region.

No other variances are anticipated at this time.

Please call me if you have any questions regarding our request.

Sincerely,



Jesus Reyes
Chair, Far West Texas Water Planning Group

cc: Tom Barnett, TWDB Project Manager
Jennifer Herrera, WSP
John Ashworth, WSP
Keeley Kirksey, Freese and Nichols, Inc.
John Albright, Freese and Nichols, Inc.