

RESOLUTION 2023-02

RESOLUTION BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE HEMPHILL COUNTY UNDERGROUND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT TO RECOGNIZE AND SUPPORT SEEKING FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR AN UPDATE OF THE 1982 SIX STATE HIGH PLAINS-OGALLALA AQUIFER REGIONAL RESOURCES STUDY AND IF SUCH REPORT SUPPORTS THE FEASIBILITY; SEEK FEDERAL AND OTHER SUPPORT FOR THE IMPORT OF WATER RESOURCES TO THE SIX STATE HIGH PLAINS REGION

WHEREAS, the High Plains region is highly dependent on groundwater coming from the Ogallala aquifer which is its primary water source; and

WHEREAS, groundwater withdrawals outpace recharge causing depletion of the Ogallala aquifer; and

WHEREAS, farmland in the High Plains region, which includes Texas, produces nearly 1/5 of the wheat, corn and cotton in the United States each year; and nearly 1/2 of the sorghum and cattle in the United State each year; and

WHEREAS, the High Plains region produces approximately \$35 billion in crops every year; and

WHEREAS, despite aggressive efforts to conserve water in the region, depletion continues and without a new source of water, the region will eventually be without a source of water, for human use or agriculture; and

WHEREAS, a Six State High Plains-Ogallala Aquifer Regional Resources Study of depleting water supplies in the region was approved in 1976 by the United States Congress; and the study was completed in 1982 and updated in 2015; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the 2015 update was to evaluate the various merits and impacts such a project would have for Kansas identified as Route B in the 1982 Study which could possibly be extended to the lower High Plains states; and

WHEREAS, diverting Missouri River excess flood waters, which has a long history of severe flooding, could be an effective strategy to mitigate Missouri River flooding and offset the depletion of the Ogallala aquifer; and

WHEREAS, the 1982 Study further examined the feasibility of water transfer from the Missouri River basin to the High Plains region; and as early as 1967, water transfer plans were proposed to divert excess flood water to supply the foregoing High Plains states.


WHEREAS, a project of this nature could help solve the Missouri River basin flooding by diverting the excess flood water to the High Plains and, thereby mitigate the High Plains aquifer depletion issues; and

WHEREAS, such a project is important to the District because, if determined to be feasible, moving water from the Missouri River Basin to the High Plains will help ensure the continued economic and social viability of the Ogallala region, and will promote the development of projects and infrastructure to deliver water from areas on the Missouri River which are highly prone to flooding to other areas in the arid west, including those within the Texas High Plains which are also in need of additional water to support the production of high value irrigated crops..

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Hemphill County UWCD Board of Directors supports the efforts to seek federal legislation to improve the water resources available to the Texas Panhandle region and the six state region described here, including an update to the 1982 Study and if determined to be feasible to seek federal funding to implement a surface water import project for the High Plains.

CONSIDERED AND APPROVED THIS 25 **DAY OF** May **2023.**

ATTEST: 
Elizabeth Light, Secretary/Treasurer


Marty Carr, President
Hemphill County UWCD Board of Directors