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TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Protecting Texas by Reducing and Preventing Pollution

February 7, 2012

The Honorable Richard Dolgener
County Judge
County Courthouse
201 North Main
Andrews, Texas 79714

Re: Water Rights No Longer Suspended in the San Saba River Watershed of the Colorado River Basin

Dear Judge Dolgener:

By letter dated August 8, 2011, you were notified that certain non-municipal diversions in the San Saba River watershed with priority dates of 1900 or later had been suspended due to multiple priority calls on surface water from domestic and livestock water users.

In response to improved conditions in the San Saba River watershed, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) is no longer enforcing the priority calls, and water rights in the San Saba River watershed are no longer suspended. Water right holders may resume diversion and impoundment according to the terms and conditions of their water rights. A copy of the correspondence being sent to the previously-suspended water right holders is enclosed for your reference.

The TCEQ continues to monitor the situation closely and strives to balance protection of senior and superior surface water rights while attempting to minimize the impact to junior water right holders, within TCEQ's authority. Please note that should another priority call be made or should drought conditions persist or worsen, suspensions of junior water rights may again be necessary.

Multiple program areas at the TCEQ are actively engaged in the oversight of available water supplies statewide. We are monitoring drinking water supplies, both groundwater and surface water. We are also working with municipalities that face potential shortfalls of available drinking water. There is a common understanding in all of our programmatic efforts that our decisions have profound impacts on the people of Texas. We are weighing our decisions judiciously, paying particular attention to those potential impacts.

The TCEQ is soliciting your help in disseminating appropriate information to affected parties in the San Saba River watershed communities. If this drought cycle worsens, it will be very important that all residents living and working in the San Saba River watershed are well informed. The TCEQ has established a drought web page to provide additional information and address questions and concerns. The drought web page is located at: <http://www.tceq.texas.gov/response/drought>. We have also activated the TCEQ Drought Hotline at 1-800-447-2827.

Should you have questions or need additional information, please contact L'Oreal Stepney, P.E., Deputy Director, Office of Water at 512-239-1321.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Zak Covar".

Zak Covar
Deputy Executive Director
Enclosure