# Hays Trinity Groundwater Conservation District

**Protecting Western Hays County Aquifers Since 2001**

The Texas Hill Country is a natural landscape sculpted by drought and flash floods. Its creeks and rivers spring from aquifers, underground reservoirs that can suffer irreparable damage by unlimited pumping. Springs and water wells are protected by local Groundwater Conservation Districts through management as mandated by the State Legislature, Chapter 36 of the Texas Water Code, and the Texas Constitution. The Hill Country was declared a Priority Groundwater Management Area by the State in 1990, which is a designated area that is experiencing, or is expected to experience within 50 years, critical groundwater problems.

***In Texas, the Rule of Capture prevails unless you are protected by a Groundwater Conservation District.***

***-- No other entity has the authority and responsibility to protect your groundwater property rights --***

The health of the aquifer, springs, creeks, and water wells are important to all who live here and the folks who visit. Locals will tell you we are usually in drought. As a community, we can reduce negative impacts of drought and growth through efficient water management and planning.

Hays Trinity Groundwater Conservation District Geology and Geography:

- Covers western Hays County including Dripping Springs, Wimberley, Henly, and Driftwood
- Fastest growing county in Texas for 10+ years
- Population of the District has doubled since 2000 to over 50,000 residents
- Most of the District is 100% dependent on groundwater, with limited access to surface water in the northeast portion
- Upper and Middle Trinity Aquifers are unconfined karst limestone aquifers that outcrop
- Lower Trinity Aquifer is non-renewable, clastic, confined, deep

Funding:

- Unsustainable, growth-based, one-time fees: a Well Construction Application Fee and a Public Water Supply Connection Fee (growth-based funding)
- No ad-valorum taxes or commercial well production fees like all other Districts

Management:

- Heavy emphasis on data and science to instruct policy
- Reliance on stakeholder engagement
- Limited Chapter 36 authority compared to other Districts

Goals:

- Manage the Upper and Middle Trinity Aquifers to a sustainable yield standard
- Minimize depletion of the Lower Trinity Aquifer
- Continue reliance on science to protect aquifer viability, springflow, and groundwater-surface water interaction

**Board of Directors**

**District 1**
Keith Miller

**District 2**
Bruce Moulton
*President*

**District 3**
Carlos Torres-Verdin

**District 4**
Linda Kaye Rogers
*Vice-President*

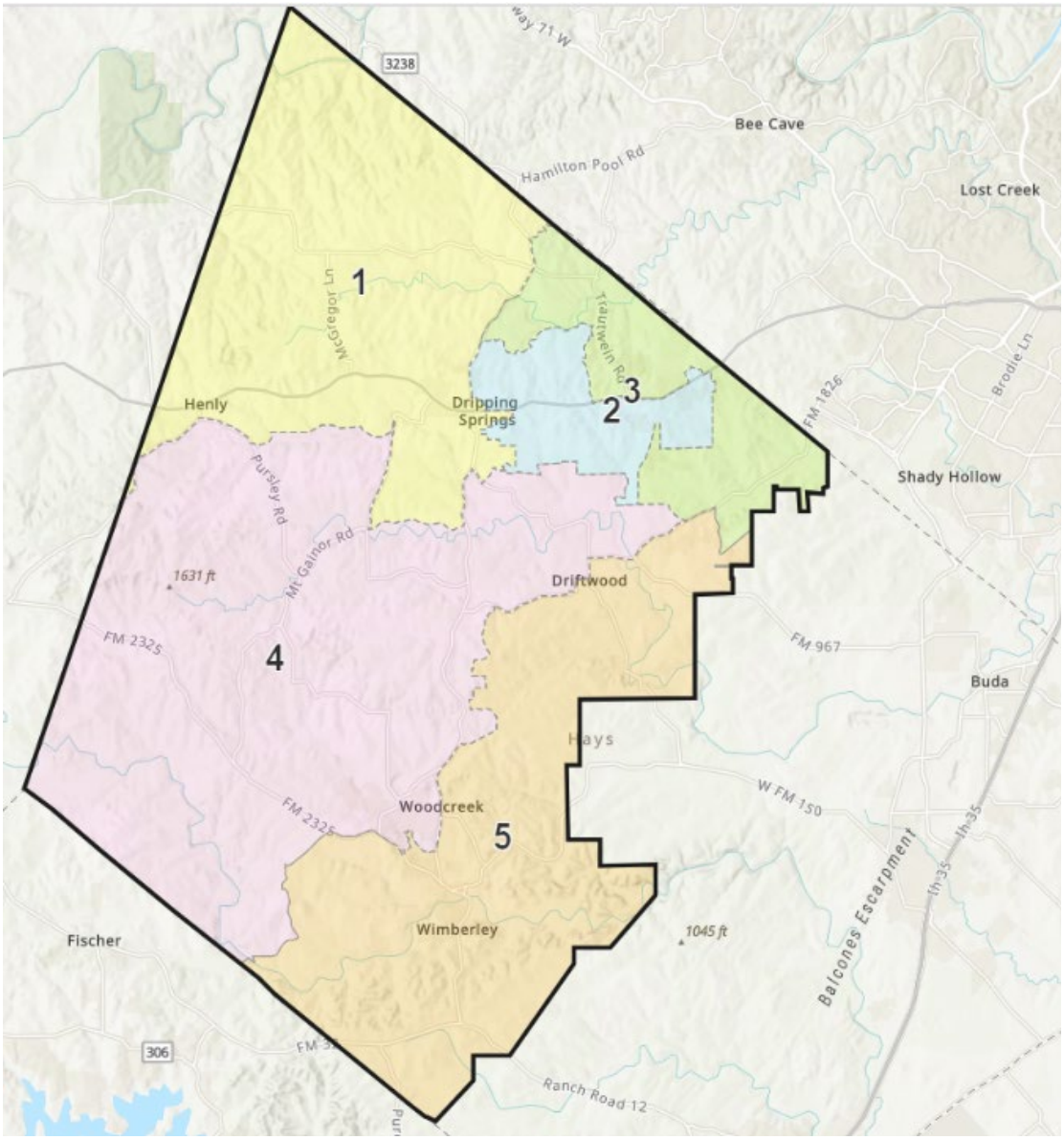
**District 5**
Marcus Gary
*Treasurer/Secretary*

P. O. Box 1648, Dripping Springs, Texas 78620 • 14101 Hwy. 290 West, Bldg. 600, Austin TX 78737
512-858-9253 • www.haysgroundwater.com

Goals, continued:

- Maximize community involvement, increase education and outreach
- Maximize interest in alternative water supplies such as rainwater harvesting and reuse so that growth and development do not deplete water resources
- Encourage responsible development of additional water resources

Challenges:

- Unsustainable, inadequate revenue mechanism
- Lack of full Chapter 36 support
- Explosive population growth without alternative water supplies
- Lack of state of the art and up-to-date planning tools
- Drought

**Mission Statement:** *Given the critical importance of water to life and of that part of the water cycle called groundwater to local families, agriculture, commerce, stream flows, and wildlife habitat, the Hays Trinity Groundwater Conservation District works to conserve, preserve, recharge, and prevent waste of groundwater within western Hays County. To help accomplish these goals the District is charged to gather information needed for sound decisions, to provide information to citizens and local agencies, and to ensure that groundwater is used efficiently and at sustainable rates.*