



Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority  
933 E. Court Street, Seguin TX 78155  
www.gbra.org

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January 10, 2013

## **GBRA Supports New Water Bills Filed by Ritter**

*\* Proposed Legislation Would Allow Some Financing \* If Successful, Prepares State for Drought and Development*

### **For more information**

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SEGUIN, TX — The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority general manager voiced support of two bills designed to help insure Texas meets its future water needs filed Thursday by Rep. Allan Ritter (R-Nederland), chairman of the House Natural resources Committee. According to a statement released from Chairman Ritter's office, House Bill (HB)-4 and HB-11 would make a one-time allocation of \$2 billion from the state's Economic Stabilization Fund, often referred to as the "Rainy Day Fund," to capitalize a new, dedicated revolving fund for use in financing water projects in the State Water Plan. The legislation also would begin to set in place the fund's management and operation.

"This action by Chairman Ritter could not have come a moment too soon," William "Bill" E. West, Jr., GBRA's general manager said Thursday after the bill filings were posted. "Drought conditions the state has experienced over the past several years, along with predictions of continued drought, underscore the need for the state to get serious about supporting water infrastructure in a meaningful way, and I have to commend Chairman Ritter for his leadership and understanding of this important issue."

Just this month, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announced that 2012 was officially the warmest year on record in the contiguous 48 states based on 118 years of temperature records dating back to 1895. The news has fueled speculation that the record hot year could be a year in the middle of a record drought. NOAA's seasonal outlook indicates that for much of Texas, the drought is likely to persist or intensify through the end of March. About 97 percent of the state is experiencing drought conditions.

Adding further urgency to the state's need to address future water planning is the population boom Texas is undergoing. More than 100,000 people moved to Texas in 2011. "If we fail to tackle water infrastructure funding now, the state is not going to have enough water resources to meet the needs of its people, businesses and agriculture in serious drought conditions. A great benefit I see with this legislation is having an avenue for providing regulatory and permitting assistance to move projects from the planning stage to an implementation stage," West said, adding, "This is an excellent opportunity for Chairman Ritter and Speaker (Joe) Strauss to bring solutions to the table that will have a long-term impact on the state's economic and community development."

The GBRA was established by the Texas Legislature in 1933 as a water conservation and reclamation district. GBRA provides stewardship for the water resources in its 10-county statutory district, which begins near the headwaters of the Guadalupe and Blanco rivers, ends at San Antonio Bay, and includes Kendall, Comal, Hays, Caldwell, Guadalupe, Gonzales, DeWitt, Victoria, Calhoun, and Refugio counties.



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