



*Jim Darling, *Chairman*
Rio Grande Regional Water Authority

*Sonny Hinojosa, *Vice-Chairman*
HCID #2, San Juan,

*Donald K. McGhee, *Secretary*
Hydro Systems, Inc., Harlingen

*Frank Schuster
Val Verde Vegetable Co., McAllen

*Nick Benavides
Nick Benavides, Company, Laredo

Glenn Jarvis
Attorney, McAllen

Marilyn D. Gilbert, MBA
Brownsville PUB

Tomas Rodriguez
Public, Laredo

Carlos Garza, P.E.
AEC Engineering, LLC., Edinburg

Joe Rathmell
Zapata County Judge

Jaime Flores
Arroyo Colorado Partnership, Weslaco

Dale Murden
Texas Citrus Mutual, Mission

Neal Wilkins, Ph.D.
East Foundation

Jorge Flores
Eagle Pass Water Works

David L. Fuentes
Hidalgo County Commissioner

Tom McLemore
Harlingen Irrigation District

Debbie Farmer
Wintergarden GCD, GMA 13

Robert Latham
Magic Valley Generating Station

Steven Sanchez
North Alamo Water Supply Corp

Louie Pena
Brush Country GCD, GMA 16

***Executive Committee**

To: Rio Grande Regional Water Planning Group Voting and Non-Voting Members, Mayors, County Judges, Water Districts, Water Systems, Regional Water Planning Groups, County Clerk's Office, Water Rights Holders and Interested Entities

From: Jim Darling, Chairman

Date: April 17, 2025

Subject: Notice of Public Hearing for the Initially Prepared Plan (IPP) for the Rio Grande 2026 Regional Water Plan

Regional Water Planning in the State of Texas is the local process that guides conservation and water projects. The Regional Water Plans, upon approval by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB), are used to help develop the State Water Plan which guides state funding of water projects. For additional information on the regional water planning process, please visit the TWDB website at:

<http://www.twdb.texas.gov/waterplanning/rwp/index.asp>.

The Rio Grande Regional Water Planning Group (RGRWPG) approved and adopted the Initially Prepared Plan (IPP) for the Rio Grande 2026 Regional Water Plan on February 5, 2025. The Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council (LRGVDC), as the designated political subdivision approved by the RGRWPG, submitted the IPP to the TWDB for review on March 3, 2025. The Rio Grande Regional Water Planning area encompasses Cameron, Hidalgo, Jim Hogg, Maverick, Starr, Webb, Willacy, and Zapata Counties.

Notice is given that the RGRWPG will be conducting an in-person/virtual public hearing on the IPP as follows:

Stewards of water resources from Amistad to the Gulf

Public Hearing Date: May 22, 2025
Time: 2:00 p.m.
Location: Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council
301 W. Railroad St.
Weslaco, Texas 78596

Virtual Meeting Link: <https://meet.goto.com/581851189>
Call in #: United States: +1 (571) 317-3122
Access code: 581-851-189

The RGRWPG is accepting comments on the IPP at the Public Hearing or in writing until July 22, 2025. The RGRWPG will consider all submitted comments and documentation of submitted comments. The RGRWPG's responses will be provided to the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB). The public can submit written comments to:

Jim Darling, Chairman
Rio Grande Regional Water Planning Group
301 W. Railroad St.
Weslaco, TX 78596
Email: Outreach_RegionM@BlackandVeatch.onmicrosoft.com

This notice will be published in newspapers no later than April 20, 2025. The Initially Prepared Regional Water Plan can be found digitally on the Region M website at <http://www.riograndewaterplan.org/>, and the LRGVDC website at <http://www.lrgvdc.org/water.html>. Hard or electronic copies will be available for review by the general public at the following locations by April 21, 2025:

LRGVDC
301 W. Railroad St.
Weslaco, TX 78596
(956) 682-3481

Cameron Co. Clerk's Office
835 E. Levee St., 3rd Floor,
Brownsville, TX 78520
(956) 544-0815

Brownsville Public Library
2600 Central Blvd.
Brownsville, TX 78520
(956) 548-1055

Hidalgo Co. Clerk's Office
100 N. Closner Blvd.
Edinburg, TX 78539
(956) 318-2100

McAllen Public Library
4001 N. 23rd St.
McAllen, TX 78504
(956) 681-3000

Jim Hogg Co. Clerk's Office
102 E. Tilley St.
Hebbronville, TX 78361
(512) 527-4031

Notice of Public Hearing for the Initially Prepared Plan
(IPP) for the Rio Grande 2026 Regional Water Plan

Jim Hogg County Library
210 N. Smith Ave.
Hebbronville, TX 78361
(361) 527-3421

Eagle Pass Public Library
589 E. Main St.
Eagle Pass, TX 78852
(830) 773-7323

Maverick Co. Clerk's Office
500 Quarry St., Suite 2
Eagle Pass, TX 78852
(830) 773-2829

Rio Grande City Public Library
591 E. 3rd St.
Rio Grande City, TX 78582
(956) 487-4389

Starr Co. Clerk's Office
401 N. Britton Ave., Rm 201
Rio Grande City, TX 78582
(956) 716-4800

Webb Co. Clerk's Office
1110 Victoria St., Suite 201
Laredo, TX 78040
(956) 523-4266

Laredo Public Library
1120 E. Calton Rd.
Laredo, TX 78041
(956) 795-2400

Reber Memorial Library
193 N. 4th St.
Raymondville, TX 78580
(956) 689-2930

Willacy Co. Clerk's Office
576 W. Main Ave., Rm 153
Raymondville, TX 78580
(956) 689-2710

Zapata Co. Clerk's Office
200 E. 7th Ave., Suite 138
Zapata, TX 78076
(956) 765-9915

Zapata County Library
901 Kennedy St.
Zapata, TX 78076
(956) 765-5351

For questions or additional information regarding the public hearing, please contact Mrs. Melisa-Gonzales Rosas at (956)682-3481 ext.163 or melisa.gonzales@lrgvdc.org, or at the physical address for LRGVDC listed above.

Agenda

2:00 p.m. Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Presentation on the 2026 Initially Prepared Regional Water Plan

Public Comment Period Begins

ADJOURN when last person completes their verbal comment.

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If you would like to submit a formal verbal comment as public testimony during today's IPP Hearing –

- **In-Person:**
Sign up to speak at front table.
- **Virtual:**
If you are online, please let us know you want to make a comment by adding your name, affiliation, and email address to the chat and you will be called on.

If you are calling in on a phone, wait until phone call comments are requested, and state your name, affiliation, and email address before making your comment.

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Any time through July 22, 2025, you may submit written comments:

- By Mail:

Jim Darling, Chairman
Rio Grande Regional Water Planning Group
301 W. Railroad St.
Weslaco, TX 78596



- By Email:

Outreach_RegionM@BlackandVeatch.onmicrosoft.com

<http://www.riograndewaterplan.org/> is where you can find the IPP

The Final 2026 Regional Water Plan will be submitted to the Texas Water Development Board by October 20, 2025, for approval and integration into the 2027 State Water Plan.

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05/22/2025



Rio Grande (Region M) 2026 Initially Prepared Regional Water Plan

Jaime Burke, Black & Veatch

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Presentation Topics

- A. Regional Water Planning Overview
- B. Description of Rio Grande Regional Water Planning Area
- C. 2026 Regional Water Plan Process & Highlights

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TOPIC **A**

Regional Water Planning Overview

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Regional Water Planning in Texas

- First initiated under Senate Bill 1 of 75th Legislature in 1997 in response to:

Drought

Population
Growth

Limits of
Existing Water
Supplies

- Administered by Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)
- “Bottom Up” approach to water planning
- First Regional Water Plan submitted in 2001, with updates every five years following

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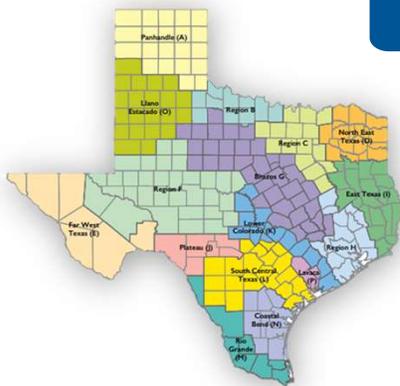
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Regional Water Planning in Texas

16 Regions

Develop
Regional Water
Plans (RWPs)

State Water Plan
is created from the
16 Regional Water
Plans



- Planning areas follow political boundaries, river basins, or other geopolitical boundaries
- Funded and managed by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)
- Plan is administered by a government entity

16 Planning Areas in Texas

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Regional Water Planning in Texas



- Volunteers with various levels of experience in the water industry
- Representatives from diverse interests:
 - Public
 - Counties
 - Municipalities
 - Industries
 - Agriculture
 - Environment
 - Small Business
 - Power Generation
 - River Authorities
 - Water Districts
 - Water Utilities
 - Groundwater Management Area
- Local political subdivision acts as an administrative agent for the planning group
- Assisted by teams of consultants

About the Planning Groups

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Regional Water Planning in Texas

"The regional water plan shall provide for the orderly development, management, and conservation of water resources and preparation for and response to drought conditions..."

- Texas Administrative Code



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Regional Water Planning in Texas

Study and consider:

Population and demand growth;
Drought of Record water supply projections; and
Impacts of water management strategies

- Financial cost
- Environmental, agricultural, and socioeconomic impacts



"The regional water plan shall provide for the orderly development, management, and conservation of water resources and preparation for and response to drought conditions..."

- Texas Administrative Code



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Regional Water Planning in Texas

Study and consider:

Population and demand growth;
Drought of Record water supply projections; and
Impacts of water management strategies

- Financial cost
- Environmental, agricultural, and socioeconomic impacts



A Drought of Record is
"the period of time when historical records indicate that natural hydrological conditions would have provided the least amount of water supply."

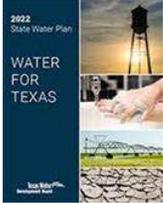
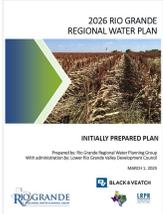
-TAC Title 31, Part 10, Chapter 357, Subchapter A, Rule 357.10

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Planning Cycles

- Regional and State Water Plans are prepared in 5-year cycles, for 50-year planning horizon
 - First Plan completed in 2001
 - Updated in 2006, 2011, 2016, and 2021
- 2026 Region M Water Plan
 - Work began in late 2021
 - Meetings are held each quarter
 - Draft plan was submitted to Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) on March 3, 2025
 - Final plan will be submitted to TWDB by October 20, 2025


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TWDB Interactive State Water Plan

<https://www.twdb.texas.gov/mapping/index.asp>



[Home](#) [Board](#) [Financial Assistance](#) [Water Planning](#) [Groundwater](#) [Surface Water](#) [Flood](#) [Drought](#) [Conservation](#) [Innovative Water](#) [Data & Apps](#)

STATE WATER PLAN	REGIONAL WATER PLANNING	PLANNING DATA	WATER USE SURVEY
Interactive State Water Plan	Planning Group Meeting Schedule	Regional Water Planning Database	Online Water Use Survey
2022 State Water Plan	Planning Group Information	Planning Data Dashboard	Printable Water Use Survey
2017 State Water Plan	6th Planning Cycle Information (2026 RWPs)	Population & Water Demand Projections	Historical Water Use Estimates
2012 State Water Plan	2021 Regional Water Plans & Previous Plans	Socio-Economic Impact Analysis	Water Use Summary & Dashboards
2007 State Water Plan	Educational Information	Other Data Resources	Historical Groundwater Pumpage
2002 State Water Plan	Frequently Asked Questions		Service Boundary Editor
1997 State Water Plan	Interregional Planning Council		FAQs and Guidance Videos
1992 State Water Plan	Regional Water Planning Related Research		
1990 State Water Plan	Water Planning Rules & Statutes		
1984 State Water Plan			
1968 State Water Plan			
1961 State Water Plan			
WATER BANK & TRUST	TRAINING VIDEO RESOURCES		
Water Bank	Regional Water Planning Data Entry Application Training		
Water Trust	Water Use Survey (WUS) Training		


 conditions and up-to-date information for flooding in your area.


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TWDB Interactive State Water Plan

2022 Texas State Water Plan

View data for: All of Texas

TEXAS

Population

40,000,000

0 2020 2030 2040 2050 2060 2070

SHOW DATA TABLE

This website lets water users statewide take an up-close look at the 2022 State Water Plan data and how water needs change over time by showing:

- projected water demands,
- existing water supplies,
- the relative severity and projected water needs (potential shortages),
- the water management strategies recommended to address potential shortages, and
- recommended capital projects and their sponsors.

Development of the state water plan is central to the mission of the Texas Water Development Board. Based on 16 regional water plans, the plan addresses the needs of all water user groups in the state – municipal, irrigation, manufacturing, livestock, mining, and steam-electric power – during a repeat of the drought of record. The regional and state water plans consider a 50-year planning horizon: 2020 through 2070.

Totals by Decade (acre-feet/year)

20,000,000

■ Demands ■ Existing Supplies
■ Needs (Potential Shortages) ■ Strategy Supplies

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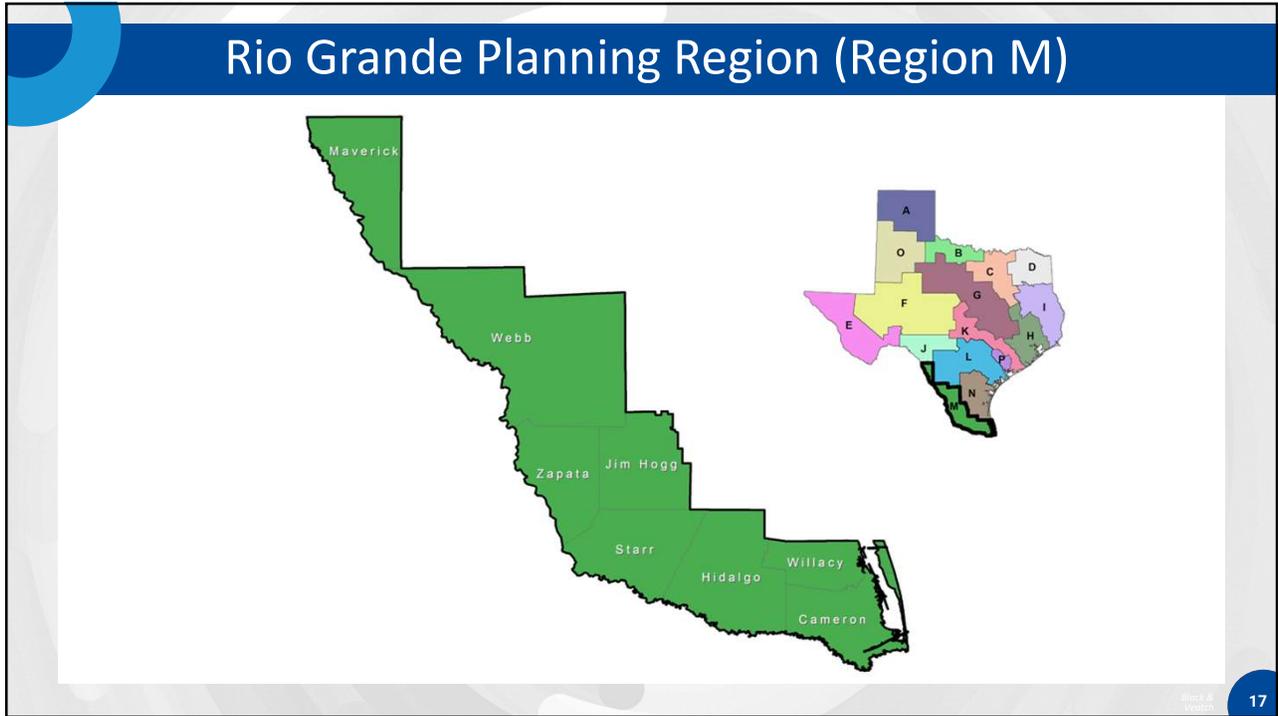
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TOPIC B

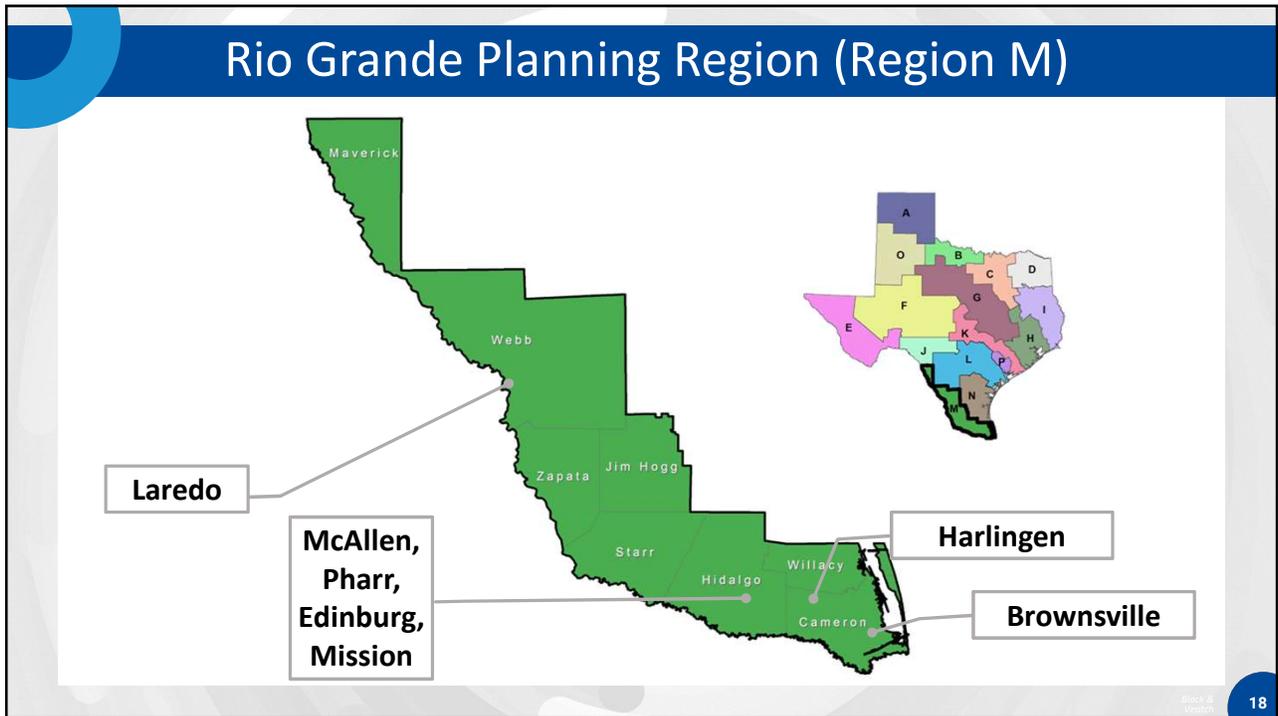
Description of Rio Grande Regional Water Planning Area

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Interests Represented by the Rio Grande (Region M) Regional Water Planning Group (RGRWPG)

- Public
- Counties
- Municipalities
- Industries
- Agriculture
- Environment
- Small Business
- Electric Generating Utilities
- River Authorities
- Water Districts
- Water Utilities
- Groundwater Management Areas
- Other

20 Voting Members; Non-voting members from certain State Agencies

Region M Planning Group Voting Membership

INTEREST	NAME	COUNTY
Public	Tomas Rodriguez	Webb
Counties	Joe Rathmell County Judge	Zapata
	David L. Fuentes Precinct 1 Commissioner	Hidalgo
Municipalities	Jorge Flores, Eagle Pass Water Works	Maverick
	Marilyn Gilbert Brownsville PUB	Cameron
Industries	Donald K. McGhee Hydro Systems, Inc	Cameron
Agriculture	Neal Wilkins, Ph.D., East Wildlife Foundation	Jim Hogg
	Dale Murden Texas Citrus Mutual	Hidalgo
Environmental	Jaime Flores	Hidalgo

INTEREST	NAME	COUNTY
Small Business	Carlos Garza, AEC Engineering, LLC	Hidalgo
	Nick Benavides, Nick Benavides Co.	Webb
Electric Utilities	Robert Latham Magic Valley Generation Station	Hidalgo
River Authorities	James Darling, Chairman Rio Grande Regional Water Authority	Hidalgo
Water Districts	Sonny Hinojosa, HCID No. 2	Hidalgo
	Tom McLemore Harlingen Irrigation District	Cameron
Water Utilities	Steven Sanchez North Alamo Water Supply Corporation	Hidalgo
GMA	Louie Pena Debbie Farmer	GMA 16 GMA 13
	Glenn Jarvis, Attorney	Hidalgo
Other	Frank Schuster Val Verde Vegetable Co.	Hidalgo

Public Participation

- Quarterly public meetings
 - All planning group materials are posted on Region M website (<http://www.riograndewaterplan.org/>)
 - Meetings open to the public
 - Public comments are accepted at beginning and closing of meetings
- Public hearings for the draft plan and other important milestones

Public involvement is integral to regional water planning process

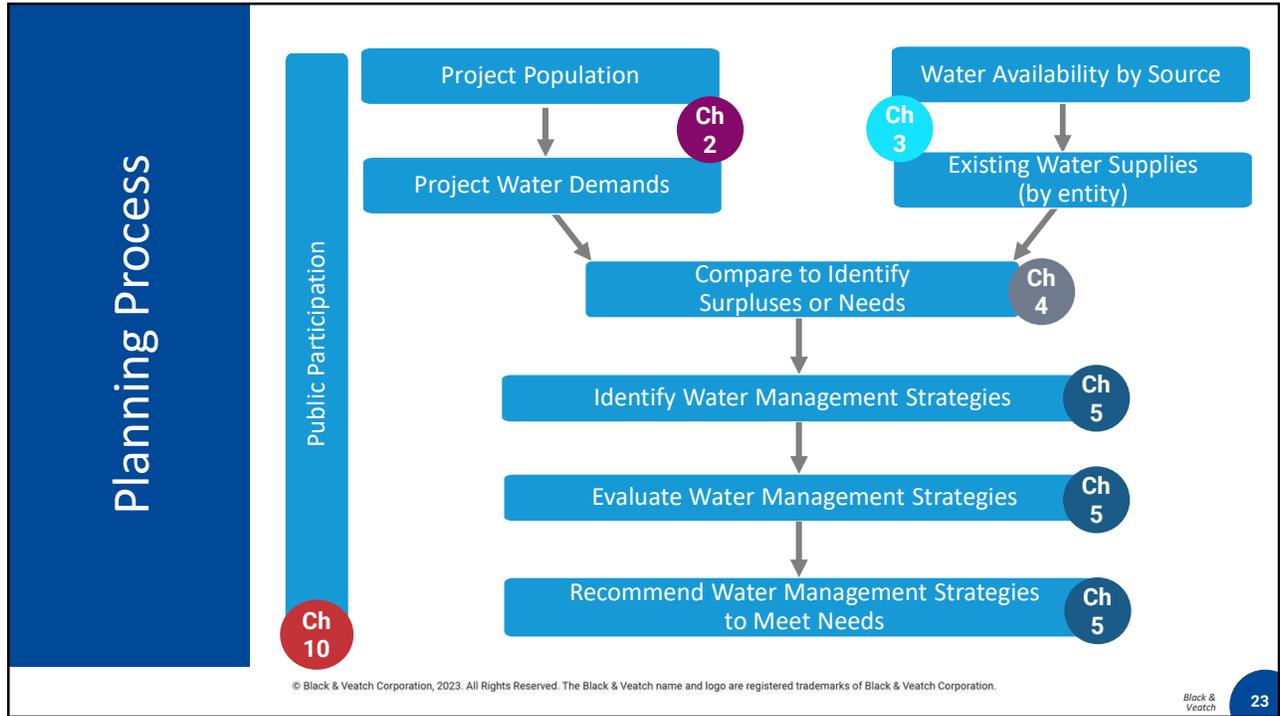
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TOPIC



2026 Regional Water Plan Process & Highlights

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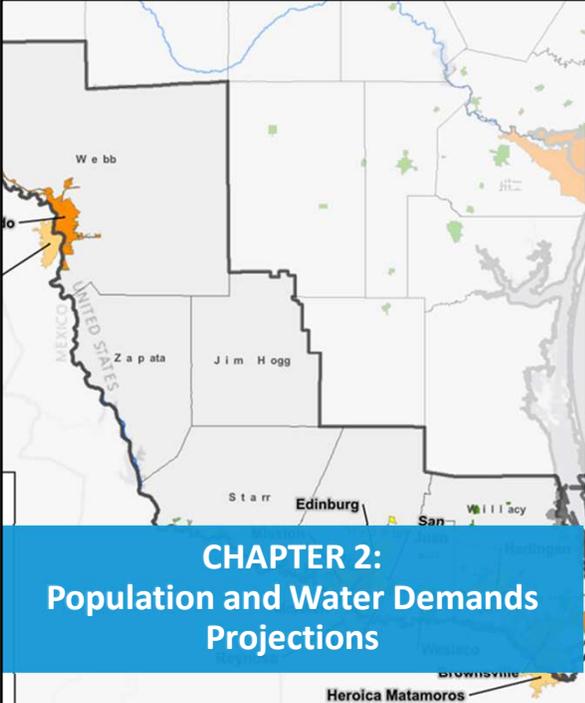


CHAPTER 1

Provides an overview of the Rio Grande Regional Water Planning Area including:

- Climate
- Water Resources
- Natural Resources
- Agricultural Resources
- Economy
- Current Water Use and Major Demand Centers
- Water Loss Audits

**CHAPTER 1:
Description of the Regional Water Planning Area**



CHAPTER 2

Includes Population and Water Demand Projections for the following Water Use Categories:

- Municipal
- Irrigation
- Livestock
- Manufacturing
- Mining
- Steam-Electric

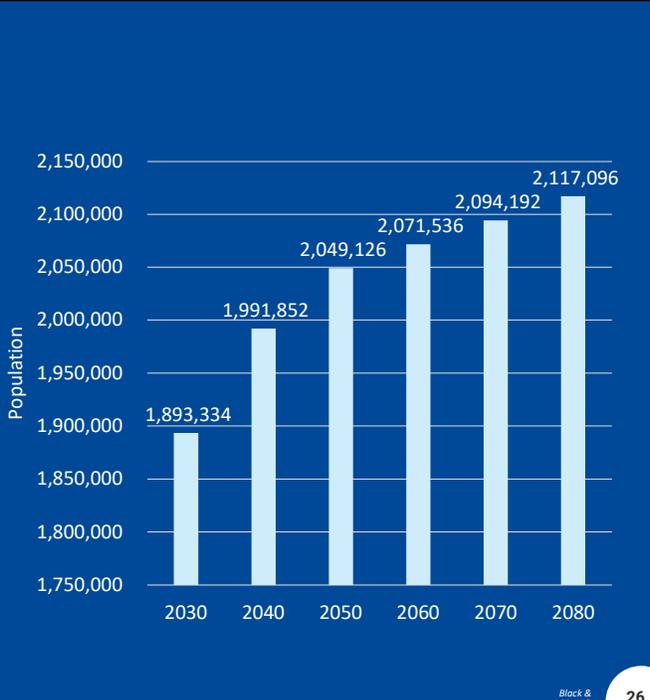
Identifies Major Water Providers

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Region M Population Projections (2030 – 2080)

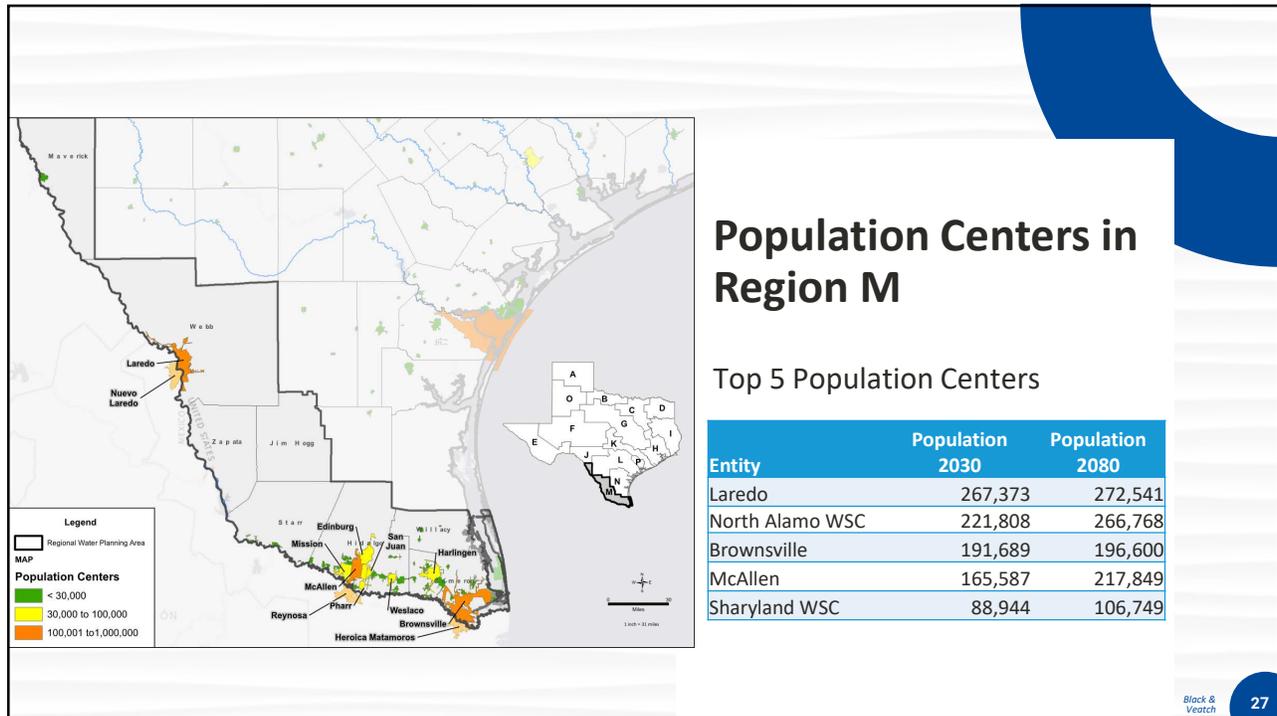
- Population estimates are based on 2020 Census data
- Over the 50-year planning horizon, the region’s population is expected to grow by 12%, reaching 2.1 million people by 2080
- 5% growth estimated between 2030 and 2040 decades



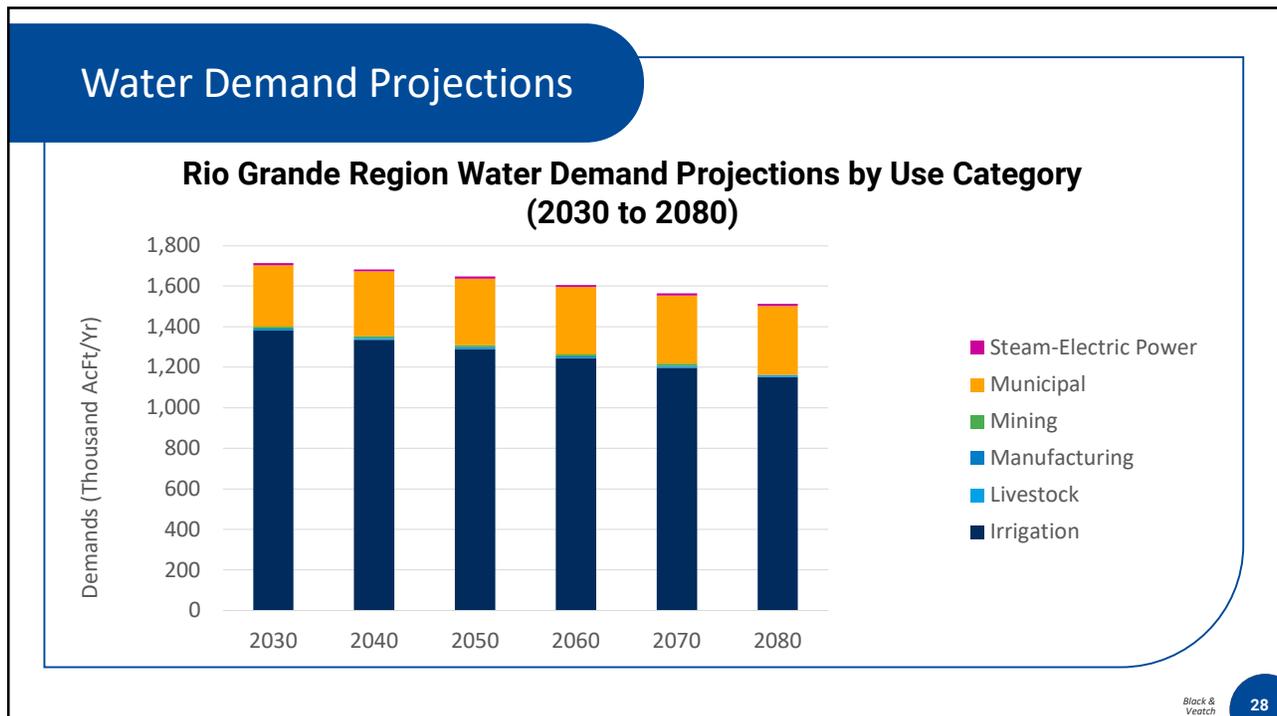
Year	Population
2030	1,893,334
2040	1,991,852
2050	2,049,126
2060	2,071,536
2070	2,094,192
2080	2,117,096

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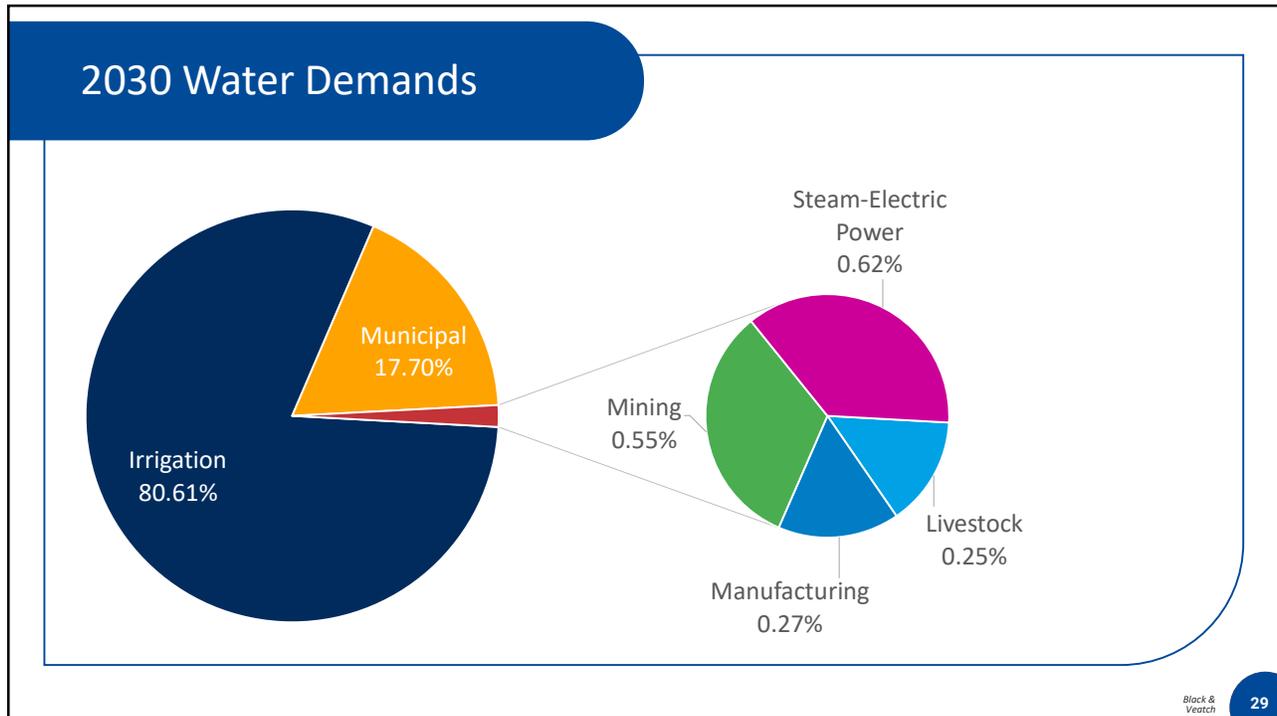
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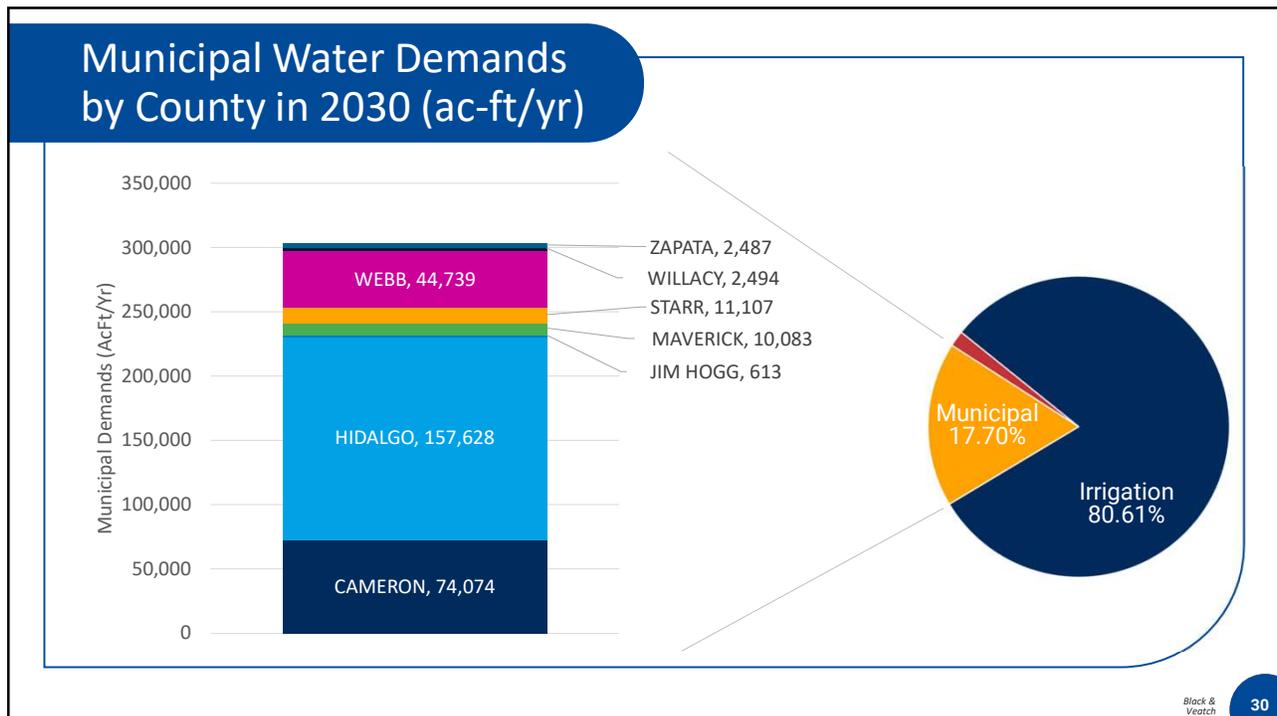
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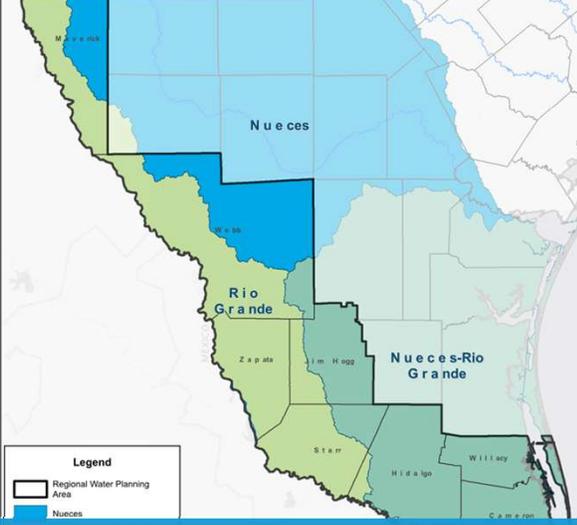
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CHAPTER 3

Describes water sources and provides estimates of drought-year water availabilities and existing water supplies for:

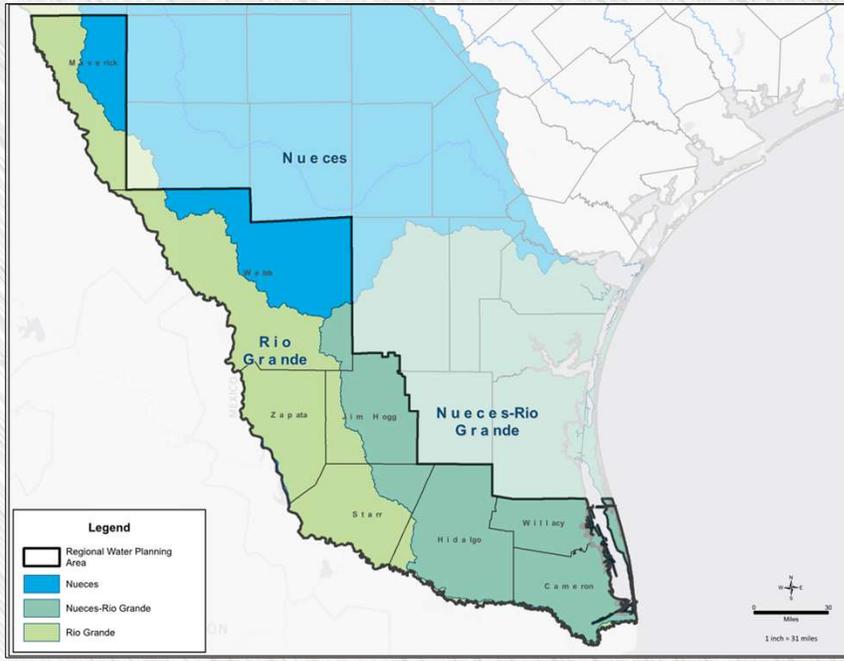
- Surface Water
 - Run-of-River
 - Reservoirs
 - Local Surface Water
- Groundwater
- Reuse

**CHAPTER 3:
Water Availability and Existing Water Supplies**

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River Basins



Legend

- Regional Water Planning Area
- Nueces
- Nueces-Rio Grande
- Rio Grande

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Amistad-Falcon Reservoir System

- Total available water is 1.0 million acre-feet per year
- 1 acre-foot = 325,851 gallons
- Surface water availability modeling used to determine decadal amounts
 - Incorporation of projected reservoir sedimentation
- In general, it is the amount of water that is available yearly during a repeat of the conditions of the worst drought on record

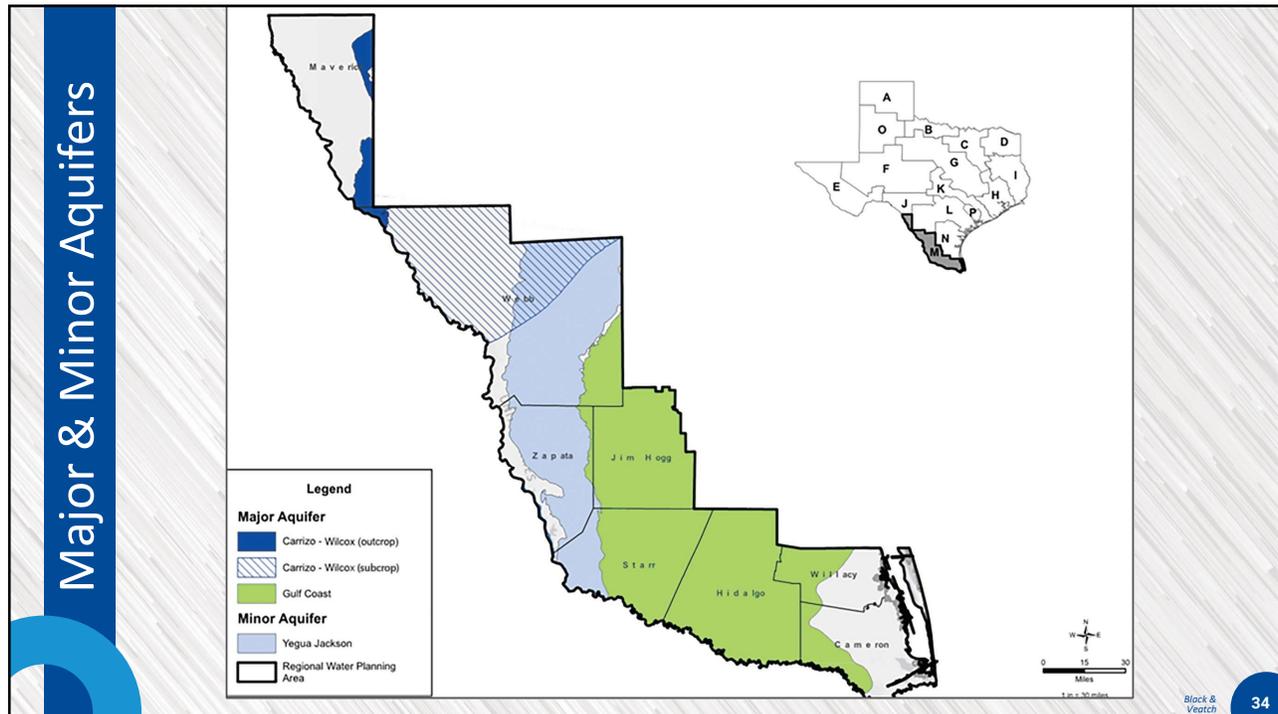


Amistad International Reservoir
Photo Courtesy of TWDB

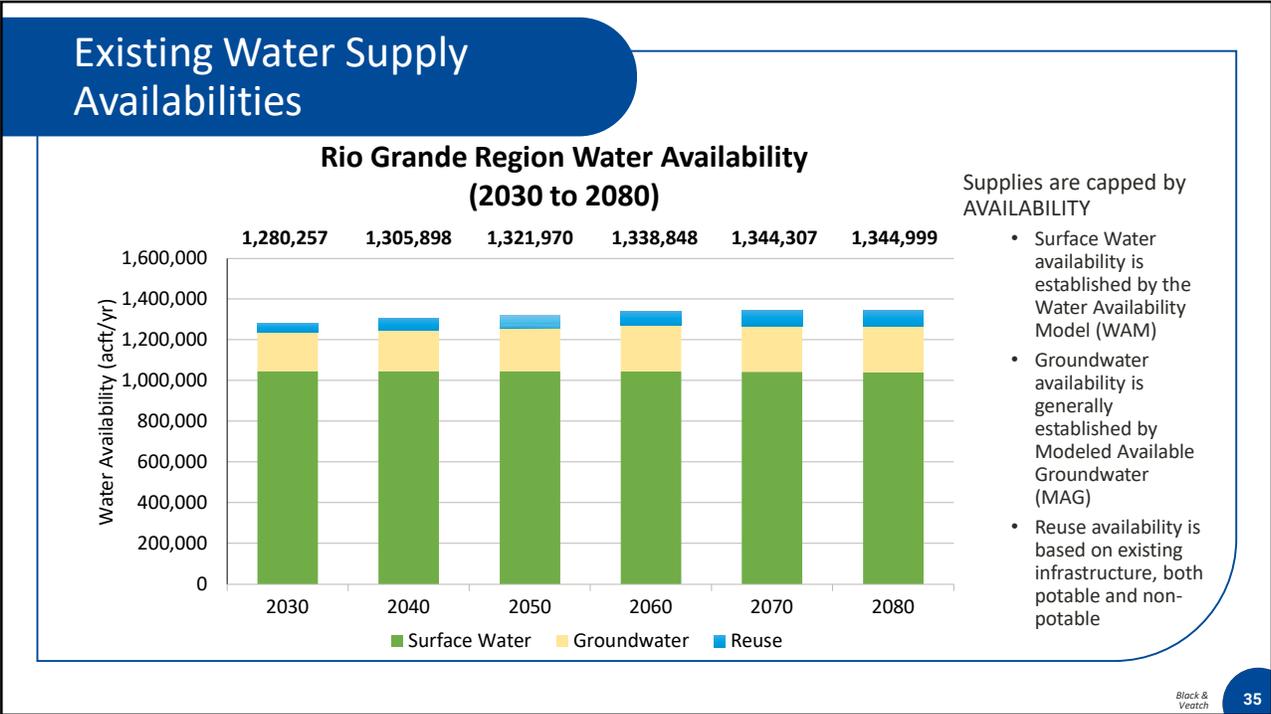


Falcon International Reservoir
Photo Courtesy of TWDB

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CHAPTER 4

Summarizes the evaluation and results of the water needs (shortages) analysis and secondary needs analysis for WUGs and major water providers (MWP)

Supplies

—

Demands

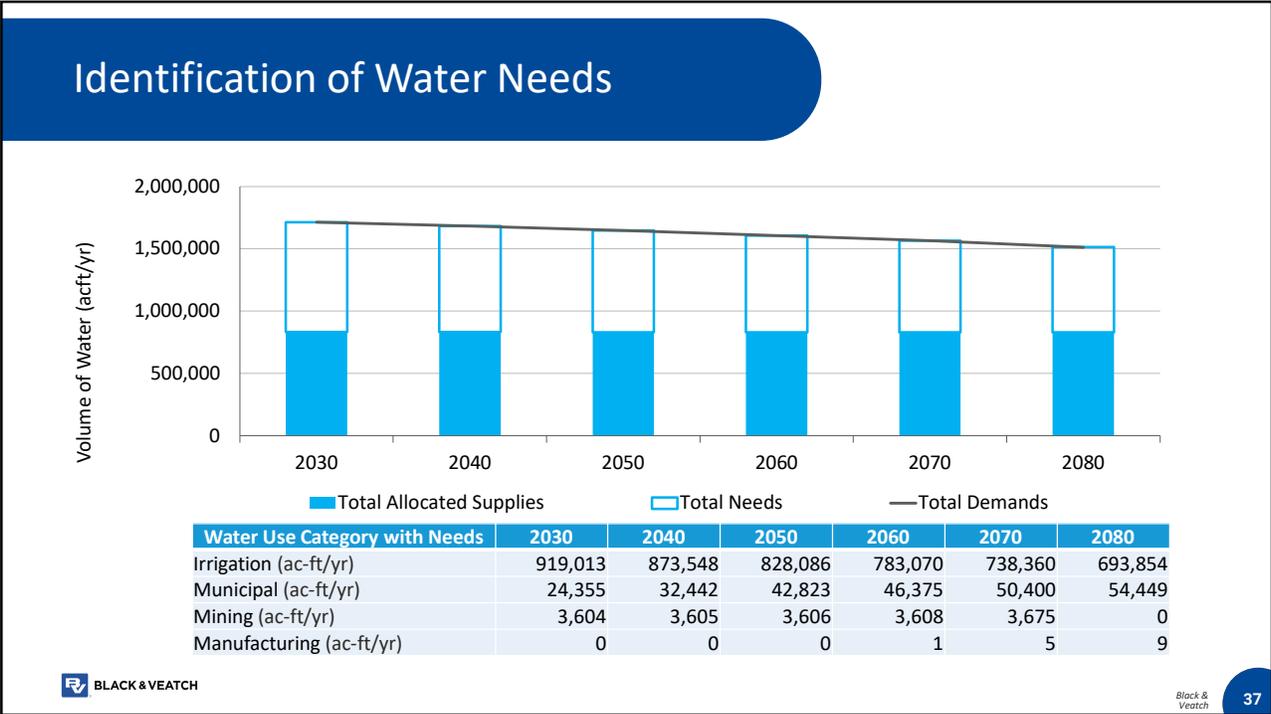
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Surplus (Needs)

CHAPTER 4:
Identification of Water Needs

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CHAPTER 5

Includes the following information:

1. Identification of Potentially Feasible WMSs
2. Evaluation of WMSs
3. Recommended and Alternative WMSs
4. Water Conservation Recommendations (as a separate subchapter)

**CHAPTER 5:
Water Management Strategies**

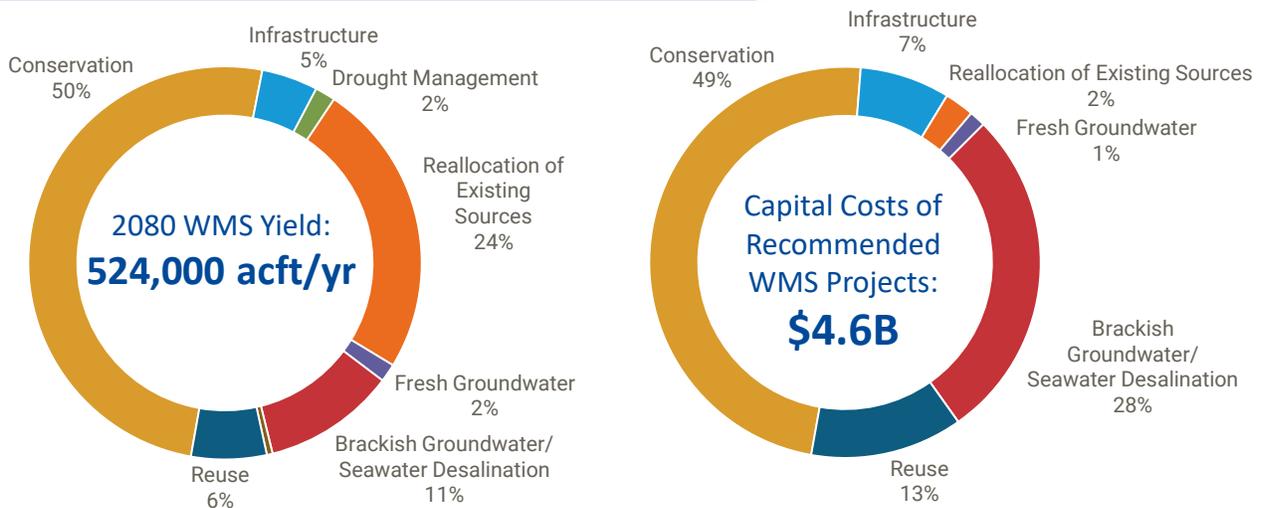
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Water Management Strategies (WMSs) Evaluated

1. Advanced Municipal Conservation
2. Irrigation District Conservation
3. Agricultural Conservation
4. Industrial Conservation
5. Conversion of Water Right Classification
6. New or Expanded Surface Water Treatment
7. New or Expanded Distribution and Transmission Facilities Resulting in Increased Supplies
8. Update to Off-Channel Storage
9. New or Expanded Fresh Groundwater Supply
10. New or Expanded Brackish Groundwater Desalination
11. Seawater Desalination
12. Reuse
13. Biological Control of Arundo Donax
14. Drought Management
15. Aquifer Storage and Recovery
16. Regional Water Supply Facilities

Recommended Water Management Strategies (WMSs) Yield and Cost

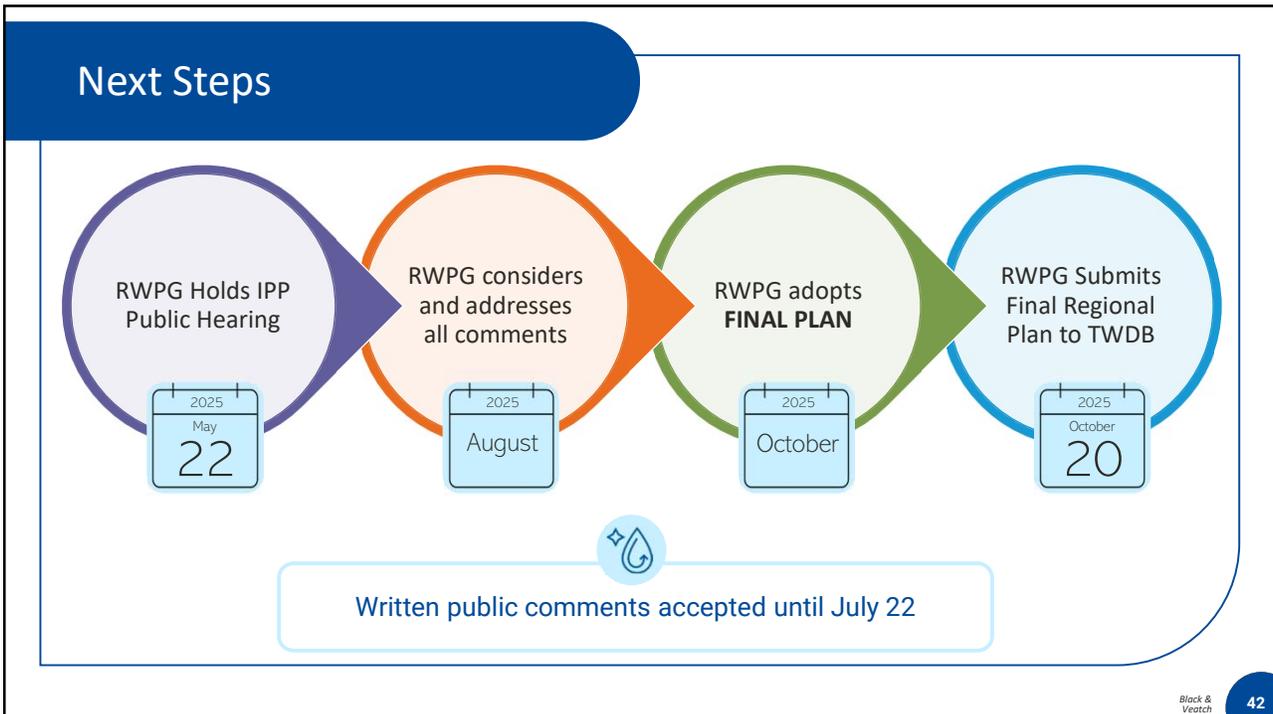




CHAPTER 6-10

Includes the following information:

- 6. Impacts of the RWP and Consistency with Protection of Water Resources, Agricultural Resources, and Natural Resources
- 7. Drought Response Information, Activities, and Recommendations
- 8. Policy Recommendations and Unique Sites
- 9. Implementation and Comparison to the Previous Regional Water Plan
- 10. Adoption of Plan and Public Participation





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Public Testimony

- 3-minute public testimony per person
- Please state your name, affiliation, and email address before providing your comment
 - In-Person:
Use the form to sign up to speak at front table.
 - Virtual:
If you are online, please let us know you want to make a comment by adding your name, affiliation, and email address to the chat and you will be called on.

If you are calling in on a phone, wait until phone call comments are requested, and state your name, affiliation, and email address before making your comment.

03:00
minutes

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Jim Darling, Chairman
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- By Email:

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