

Does the **SWIFT**
hold **Water**

for Rural [REDACTED]?



[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



ISSUE SUMMARY

1. List course(s) in which instruction occurred.

- Energy and Natural Resources Technology (44 students) – studied the water cycle, processes used to purify water, and water shortages. Charted major aquifers across Texas and explored Texas law regarding ground and surface water. Examined potential sources of pollution in our community. Demonstrated factors influencing groundwater contamination and natural filtering of groundwater to 7th grade students using a rainfall simulator.
- Wildlife, Fisheries, and Ecology Management (56 students) – tested water samples for pH, iron, lead, nitrates, and chlorine. Examined the interrelation of various elements of a habitat. Identified government agencies that regulate our environment.
- Horticulture Science (12 students) – set up an experiment in the greenhouse testing three different water application methods and monitored plant health as well as water waste due to runoff.
- Biology (97 students) – collaborated with the science department to perform a laboratory activity using various materials to make a water filter. We graded the filters on speed and effectiveness.
- Professional Communications (8 students) –utilized sound interviewing etiquette and developed oral presentation and written communication skills.
- Business Information Management (22 students) – covered online research techniques, source credibility, and the use of Microsoft PowerPoint® software.

2. Why is this issue important now?

Texas is just starting to emerge from five abnormally dry years, one of which was the worst single year drought experienced by any state in recorded history (Nielsen-Gammon, 2011). During this same time period, our state added 2.4 million people (Texas Department of State Health Services, 2014). Texas is growing twice as fast as the national average (United States Census Bureau, 2014). As more people have sought to use a diminishing resource, we have seen water shortages across the state. As of August 14, 2014, seven million Texans remained under mandatory water restrictions (Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, 2014) and 211 of Texas' 254 counties were eligible for USDA drought disaster relief assistance (United States Department of Agriculture, 2014). With the state population predicted to increase to 46.3 million by 2060 (Texas Water Development Board, 2012), forecasters warn water shortages will only get worse. Without new supply sources, Texas is expected to be short 8.3 million acre feet by 2060. Under this scenario, water shortages would have an economic impact of 12 billion dollars annually and 1.1 million Texas jobs would cease to exist (Texas Water Development Board, 2012).

3. What is the nature of the issue?

Recognizing this urgent need for new water supply sources, the Texas Legislature passed House Bill 4 during the most recent legislative session (Texas Legislature Online, 2013). This new law created the State Water Implementation Fund for Texas or SWIFT, a dedicated state fund for water projects (Ritter, 2013). Voter approval was sought to authorize a two billion dollar transfer from the Economic Stabilization (Rainy Day) Fund as start money for the SWIFT (Johnson, 2013). Thus, Proposition 6 was on the November 2013 ballot. As we performed numerous forums in our community last fall, we helped citizens go to the polls better prepared to make an informed decision. Even with the passage of Proposition 6 however, the issue is far from being put to rest. Public input meetings regarding the implementation of SWIFT have been held across the state and will continue through the end of August 2014. Citizens can influence regional water planning groups' prioritization of projects (Texas Water Development Board, n.d.). SWIFT funds will not be awarded until the fall of 2015 and the update process for the state water plan will be conducted in 2016 (Sutton, 2013). As many decisions will yet be made regarding the allocation of this new funding, it is imperative that rural Texans stay informed and actively involved in Texas water planning.

4. Who is involved in the issue?

The Texas Water Development Board is directly charged with the task of administering the SWIFT. Loans can be granted to any water district, river authority, or municipality wishing to build or upgrade any water supply project found in the state water plan (Sutton, 2013). Agricultural producers have a large stake in this issue as 80% of all groundwater and 55% of total water extracted state-wide is used for agricultural irrigation and livestock production (Texas Department of Agriculture, n.d.). Thus, any decision regarding water availability can seriously influence agriculture production. Ten percent of the SWIFT is required to be used for rural water projects and a mandate that twenty percent of the SWIFT be used for conservation may help farmers update irrigation equipment (Barnett, 2013). Any property owner can be impacted if rural acres are taken to build new reservoirs or by the selling of easements for water pipelines (Bailey, 2014). Urban areas are also part of this debate as cities can more readily build water infrastructure with this new funding and will be competing with

rural areas for SWIFT loans (Ashby, 2013). In reality, this topic involves all Texans because everyone needs water and because general tax revenue will be used to support the administrative costs of maintaining and dispersing the fund (Parks, 2013). The interrelation of these factors means that every Texas resident will be impacted, positively or negatively, by the decisions that have and will be made regarding the SWIFT.

5. How can the issue be defined?

This forum falls under the topic area of "Agricultural Policy Issues" as listed in the *Focusing on Agricultural Issues* instructional materials (The Council for Agricultural Education, 2013). The issue can be defined in its simplest terms by asking: Will the SWIFT solve the water problems of Texas? This simple question, however, has spurred a flurry of public opinions on both sides. Supporters feel the SWIFT will allow for faster and easier funding of water projects. They believe water suppliers will be more willing to build supply if they can obtain financing at a lower interest rate than can be obtained through selling bonds. However, some question whether public funds should be used when private bonding authority is readily available. This plan does risk public money on regional projects that are built to make a profit. Opponents also worry about the administrative costs and that the structure of the SWIFT favors urban needs above rural (Dickson, 2013). Does the SWIFT hold water for rural Texas? The question is simple, but the answer is not.

6. What is the historical background of the issue?

Significant dates relevant to our discussion of the impact of the SWIFT on rural Texas are:

- 1957 – The Texas Water Development Board is created on the heels of the worst extended drought in state history (Texas Water Development Board, 2012).
- 1961 – The first state water plan is released. Chapter 16 of the Texas water code requires a new plan to be released every five years (Texas Water Development Board, 2012).
- November 2001 – Texas voters grant two billion in bonding authority to the Texas Water Development Board (Texas Water Resources Institute, n.d.).
- November 2011 – Texas voters raise the debt cap, allowing six billion in bonding authority by the Texas Water Development Board (Texas Water Resources Institute, n.d.).
- May 22, 2013 – House Bill 4 passes the Texas Legislature (Texas Legislature Online, 2013).
- May 28, 2013 – House Bill 4 is signed by Governor Perry (Texas Legislature Online, 2013).
- November 5, 2013 – 73.37% of Texas voters approve the transfer of two billion dollars from the Rainy Day fund to the SWIFT (Water News of Texas, 2013 and Buchele and Henry, 2013).
- February to August, 2014 – Public comment meetings are held to develop rules for scoring loan applications. An implementation report will be submitted to the governor by December 1, 2014 (Texas Water Development Board, n.d.).
- Spring 2015 – Loan applications will be accepted with funds awarded in the fall (Sutton, 2013).

7. What caused the issue?

Very little water infrastructure has been built in Texas in the last three decades (American Society of Civil Engineers, 2013). For example, only nine reservoirs were built in Texas during the last thirty years, while 126 were built during the previous thirty years (Texas Water Development Board, 2012). As existing supplies continue to diminish due to sedimentation, pollution, drought, and pumping restrictions, supplies have not been able to keep up with the growing population and increasing demand for water. Texas currently uses 18 million acre feet of water annually but can only store 17 million acre feet in existing supply systems (Texas Water Development Board, 2012). Debates over how to best fund new water supply projects to bridge this gap between supply and demand are what led to the creation of the SWIFT and the controversy over Proposition 6.

8. What are the risks?

Opponents of the State Water Implementation Fund for Texas:

- Believe that Texas should use existing bonding authority instead of risking public money to fund water projects.
- Argue that the SWIFT will require high, reoccurring administrative costs.
- Allege that rural Texans will receive significantly less funding from SWIFT than urban areas.
- Maintain that local citizens have little voice in contributing to the state water planning process.

9. What are the benefits?

Supporters of the State Water Implementation Fund for Texas:

- Emphasize that building new water projects is essential to the well-being of our state.
- Stress that agriculturists will benefit directly from water funding for rural projects and indirectly as there is less competition for existing water supplies.
- Applaud the regional planning groups who seek local involvement in water planning.
- Declare the costs of water shortages will far exceed administrative costs of the SWIFT.



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LOCAL FORUM PRESENTATIONS

When	Where	To Whom	# Present
October 17, 2013	Madisonville, TX	Madison County Farm Bureau Board	11
October 17, 2013	Madisonville, TX	Republican Party Meeting / Rep. Trent Ashby	15
October 22, 2013	Fairfield, TX	Mid-East Texas Groundwater District Board	12
October 23, 2013	Waco, TX	State Farm Bureau Headquarters	4
October 24, 2013	Austin, TX	Texas Water Development Board	9
October 24, 2013	Austin, TX	Texas Farm Bureau State Policy Office	14
October 24, 2013	Austin, TX	Independent Texans Member Robert Baker	1
October 25, 2013	Madisonville, TX	Madison County Beef and Forage Committee	10
October 28, 2013	Madisonville, TX	Madisonville CISD School Board	26
November 1, 2013	Madisonville, TX	Daughters of the Republic of Texas	19
November 3, 2013	Madisonville, TX	Methodist Church Breakfast Meeting	29
November 4, 2013	Madisonville, TX	KMVL Radio	2 + Listeners
November 4, 2013	Madisonville, TX	Bedias Creek Soil and Water Conservation District	13
November 5, 2013	Madisonville, TX	Community Open House	95
November 7, 2013	Madisonville, TX	Lions Club	12
November 11, 2013	Madisonville, TX	Alpha Delta Kappa Sorority	14
November 20, 2013	Midway, TX	Parten Operating Regional Meeting	56
November 21, 2013	Temple, TX	Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board	53
December 2, 2013	Conroe, TX	San Jacinto River Authority	11
December 5, 2013	Conroe, TX	Lone Star Groundwater Conservation District	37
December 6-7, 2013	Huntsville, TX	*State FFA Contest	Approx. 60

Madison County Farm Bureau Board of Directors
October 17, 2013 – Farm Bureau Office, 7:00 P.M.
Number in Attendance: 11



Our local board consists of farmers and ranchers. This helped us better understand the concerns of local ag producers. Mr. Parten, the chair, is also our city mayor.



402 W Main St
 Madisonville, TX 77864-1911 O 936.348.2753
 F 936.348.3267

Dear Judges of the FFA Ag Issues Contest:

We were honored to have Madisonville FFA present an informative program on water and funding water projects. When challenged with questions, the students stood by their research and were able to speak very intelligently on the topic with our Board of Directors at our monthly meeting, held October 17, 2013. Eleven were in attendance for the 7:00 P.M. presentation at the Madison County Farm Bureau Office. We hope to have Madisonville FFA students as our guests again in the near future.

Sincerely,

William Parten

Madison County Farm Bureau Board of Directors Chair

State Representative Trent Ashby and County Republicans
October 17, 2013 – Madison County Courthouse, 8:00 P.M.
Number in Attendance: 15



Rep. Ashby served on the Natural Resources House Committee and was a major supporter of the bill in the legislative session. We loved discussing HB4 with him.



STATE OF TEXAS
 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRENT ASHBY
 District 57

Dear Madisonville FFA Ag Issues Team:

It was a pleasure to see you at the Madison County Republican Party meeting at the Madison County Courthouse on October 17, 2013 at 8:00 P.M. I believe the topic of Proposition 6 and the issue of funding our state water plan is an excellent one to highlight. The presentation was well orchestrated and there's no question that hearing both sides of that debate got the meeting's fifteen attendees thinking about issues such as private property rights, water supply, and water law, just to name a few.

I congratulate you on an impressive performance and wish all of you much success throughout your competitions ahead.

Trent Ashby
 State Representative

Mid-East Texas Groundwater Conservation District Board
October 22, 2013 – Freestone County Courthouse, 6:00 P.M.
Number in Attendance: 12



The METGCD would be an example of a group that could apply for SWIFT funding. David Bailey is also a voting member on the Region H Planning Group Board.



Mid-East Texas Groundwater Conservation District
 P. O. Box 477
 Madisonville, TX 77864
 Phone: 936-348-3212

RE: Ag Issues Forum Team – 2013

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the professionalism and poise that the Ag Issues Forum students exemplified at our Board Meeting on October 22, 2013 at 6:00 PM. The students were well prepared and seemed passionate about the subject they were debating.

At this particular meeting held at the Freestone County Courthouse there were 12 people in attendance. All were very impressed by the students' command of information and the ability to answer all questions quickly and decisively.

Good luck in your quest for excellence in this endeavor. Based on the attitude and skill the students portrayed, there is no doubt they will go far in this competition.

David M. Bailey
 General Manager, METGCD

State Farm Bureau Headquarters
October 23, 2013 – Waco Farm Bureau Office, 2:00 P.M.
Number in Attendance: 4



Coleburn Davis helped assemble staff members that could help us understand why Farm Bureau was actively campaigning for the passage of Proposition 6.



KEITH BIERSCHE
 President

DAVID STEELEFIELD
 Vice President

RUSSELL W. EDWARDS
 Executive Director

SEN. P. WISSE
 Chairman

ROBERT GORDON
 Chairman

DAVE E. SMITH
 Chairman

MICHAEL K. HITE
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SEN. P. WISSE
 Chairman

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 Chairman

DAVID STEELEFIELD
 Vice President

DAVE EDWARDS
 Chairman

SEN. P. WISSE
 Chairman

ALBERT THOMPSON
 Chairman

RONNIE FLEMMING
 Chairman

EDD REED
 Chairman

RUSSELL W. EDWARDS
 Chairman

Dear Ag Issues Team:

On behalf of the four staff members present, I would like to commend the work of your team on your presentation about Proposition 6 and the water issues facing our state, which you presented on October 23rd at 2:00 p.m. This is a topic that is very much at the forefront of agricultural issues, and I want to commend you for choosing such an important topic. We all enjoyed your presentation regarding this timely and important issue. I really appreciate that you considered the Texas Farm Bureau headquarters a worthwhile training ground. Thanks again and good luck!

Coleburn Davis
 Director of Organization Programs

Texas Water Development Board
October 24, 2013 – Austin TWDB Office, 9:00 A.M.
Number in Attendance: 9



We were glad to meet with the agency that will be administering the SWIFT fund. They discussed the changes in the agency and how funds would be disbursed.



Texas Water Development Board

P.O. Box 13231, 1700 N. Congress Ave.
 Austin, TX 78711-3231, www.twdb.state.tx.us
 Phone (512) 463-7847, Fax (512) 475-2053

Dear Judges of the Ag Issues FFA Contest:

On October 24, 2013, at 9:00 a.m., nine staff members of the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) participated in a meeting with the Madisonville FFA team at our office in Austin. We listened and provided feedback as they presented a forum on the impact of the creation of the State Water Implementation Fund.

The tremendous pressure being placed on our water supply is of great concern. Without strategic planning, our state can never hope to meet future water demands. Decisions regarding the construction of new water supply sources will greatly impact our entire state, now and for generations of new Texans. We congratulate these youth for taking an interest in an issue so critical to our future.

With Best Regards,

Comer Tuck Jr. P.E.

Comer Tuck Jr., P.E.

Director of Conservation Division

State Farm Bureau Policy Office in Austin
October 24, 2013 – Farm Bureau Policy Office, 12:00 P.M.
Number in Attendance: 14



We met with Billy Howe and three other legislative staff members as well as the Ag Issues team from Austin-Bowie High School. We learned more about the Rainy Day Fund.



TEXAS FARM BUREAU

KENNETH DIERSCHKE President	ROBERT GORDON Deputy	DAN E. SHELTON Deputy	ALBERT THOMPSON Marketing
DAVID STUBBLEFIELD Vice President	DAN B. SMITH Lockney	DAVID STUBBLEFIELD Corktown City	RONNIE MUENNIAR Hance
RUSSELL W. BOENING Secretary/Treasurer	MICHAEL WHITE Wesley	DAVE EDMISTON Brady	BOB REED Gay City
	BEN F. VIBBLE Shenandoah	NEIL K. WALTER Aubrey	RUSSELL W. BOENING Palm

Dear Judges of the Ag Issues FFA Contest:

On October 24, 2013, at 12:00 p.m., four members of Texas Farm Bureau State Legislative staff participated in a meeting with the Madisonville FFA Team at our office in Austin, TX. The students presented to full staff and 10 guests regarding the state impact of Proposition 6. Upon conclusion, Farm Bureau staff was allowed to critique the presentation and discuss questions concerning the SWIFT and the impact on Texas. We believe that House Bill 4 and Proposition 6 will create a self-sustaining account to finance water for the next 50 years. Texas Farm Bureau would like to commend the Madisonville FFA Team on their eagerness to deliver information on a matter so essential to the future of Texas.

Billy Howe

State Legislative Director

Billy Howe

Robert Baker with Independent Texans
October 24, 2013 – Texas FFA Building, 3:30 P.M.
Number in Attendance: 1



Independent Texans is the group responsible for the "Nix Prop. 6" campaign. We wanted to meet with someone who could give us insight into the con perspective.



512-535-0989

ljcurtis@
indytexans.org

As a representative of Independent Texans, I met with Madisonville FFA students on October 24, 2013. I met these students at 3:30 P.M. at the Texas FFA Building in Austin on behalf of Linda Curtis, who was unexpectedly called out of town.

Independent Texans is actively working to defeat Texas Proposition Six. Using public funds that are not guaranteed to be repaid is bad business and only encourages wasteful water use. Until our state is willing to get serious about water conservation, more money will not fix our problems. It was a pleasure to discuss our position with these students.

Robert Baker

Robert Baker

Madison County Beef and Forage Committee
October 25, 2013 – County Extension Office, 11:30 A.M.
Number in Attendance: 10



The Beef and Forage Committee talked at length about eminent domain and rural reservoirs. There were concerns about rural property owners being treated fairly.



Madison County AgriLife Extension Service
 300 W. School St. Ste. 101
 Madisonville, TX 77864-3280
 Phone: 936-348-2234 Fax: 936-348-9685

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
 EXTENSION

Thank you to the Ag Issues Team for attending the Madison County Beef and Forage Meeting on Friday, October 25, 2013. The meeting was held at the Madison County Extension Office at 11:30 A.M. with ten people present. We appreciate the information that the team brought as well as a willingness to learn from those present. We know these students are working to prepare themselves to become strong leaders and advocates in the industry of agriculture. We are proud of their efforts. Keep up the good work!

Leslie Lazenby
 Asst. CEA, Madison County

Leslie Lazenby

Madisonville CISD School Board
October 28, 2013 – MCISD Administration Office, 5:30 P.M.
Number in Attendance: 26



The school board asked great questions about reservoirs and land valuation. We enjoyed presenting to the board and the many guests present.



MCISD



MUSTANGS

Keith Smith
 Superintendent

Dr. Robert Cape
 Assistant Superintendent

Dr. Keith West
 Assistant Superintendent

To the esteemed judges of the Ag Issues FFA Competition:

The Madisonville Consolidated Independent School District Board of Trustees was honored on Monday, October 28, 2013 to have the 2013 Madisonville FFA Ag Issues Forum Team present at the monthly school board meeting held at the MCISD Administration Building at 5:30 P.M. The discussion truly made an impression on the twenty six people present that evening with the debate concerning the pros and cons of Proposition Six. The presentation was very informative and the team was extremely genuine in assuming the roles of key players in the debate. The members of the MCISD Board of Trustees and the staff commend you for your hard work. We are proud of each of you and wish you well in future competitions.

God Bless and Go Mustangs!

Keith W. Smith

Keith W. Smith
 Superintendent

P.O. Box 879 • Madisonville, Texas 77864 • Phone (936) 348-2797 • Fax (936) 348-2751

THE MADISONVILLE METEOR

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2013
 The Madisonville FFA Ag Issues team of Clayton Fraley, Mason Terry, Shalee Turner, Lydia Crow, Zulema Parga and Jewel Smith gave a de-

bate presentation on Proposition 6, which will go to vote next week. Proposition 6 is a constitutional amendment that establishes a State Water Implementation Fund for Texas, or SWIFT.

Daughters of the Republic of Texas
November 1, 2013 – Madison Co. Museum, 10:00 A.M.
Number in Attendance: 19



These ladies are very civic minded and involved in our community. They asked specific questions about water reservoirs. County Judge Art Henson also attended.



Daughters of the Republic of Texas

On behalf of the Rev. John Haynie Chapter of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, I want to thank the Madisonville FFA Ag Issues team for the wonderful program you presented at our Stephen F. Austin birthday celebration on November 1, 2013 at 10:00 A.M. at the Madison County Museum. The material presented was well researched and showed a remarkable understanding of the water problems facing Texas. The team responded quickly to questions posed by an audience of nineteen persons. Thank you again.

*Marie Thomas, Vice President
 Rev. John Haynie Chapter, DRT*

Methodist Men Prayer Breakfast
November 3, 2013 – Methodist Church, 7:30 A.M.
Number in Attendance: 29



We loved the questions we received from this group. They asked about various aspects of the state water plan and how to conserve water.



Subject: November 3, 2013
 FFA Agricultural Issues Presentation – 29 Present
 First United Methodist Church – Prayer Breakfast, 7:30 A.M.

Thank you for your passionate presentation of the issues surrounding the management of water in Texas. Water is a threatened resource which is in a critical stage due to the extended drought.

The "Ag Issues" team demonstrated the conflicting demands needing to be addressed in order to sustain sufficient availability of water for all consumers.

The highlight was the question/answer period following the prepared presentation. The team's responses demonstrated excellent understanding of the issue. We are proud to support this FFA program which provides the major building blocks for the development of educated and capable citizens.

Jim Madole
 Jim Madole, November Meeting Chair

KMVL Radio
November 4, 2013 – KMVL Station, 8:00 A.M.
Number in Attendance: 2 + Listeners



We had the opportunity on the day before the election to review the pros and cons of Proposition 6 with the listening audience.



102 West Main Street
 Madisonville, Texas 77864
 (936) 348-9201
 FAX (936) 348-9201

To whomever it may concern:

Please be advised that Madisonville FFA Ag Issues Team members were guests on KMVL's morning show from 8:00 A.M. to 8:30 A.M. on Monday, November 4, 2013. They participated in a live broadcast from the KMVL studio with morning show hosts, Paul Wright and Bill Cavill. The students provided information on Proposition 6 and funding water projects in Texas, particularly highlighting the potential impacts on agriculture production.

Thank you,
 Paul Wright *Paul Wright*

Bedias Creek Soil and Water Conservation District Board
November 4, 2013 – Madisonville City Hall, 9:00 A.M.
Number in Attendance: 13



This presentation was followed with a lively discussion concerning the administration of the SWIFT and rural vs. urban potential to receive funding.



BEDIAS CREEK
SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT #428
 120 South Elm, Suite #110, Madisonville, Texas 77864 (936) 348-2173
 Post Office Box 217, Centerville, Texas 75833 (903) 536-2940

Dear Ag Issues Team Members,

The **Bedias Creek Soil & Water Conservation District** would like to thank you for your presentation titled **"Does the SWIFT Hold Water for Rural Texas?"** at our Board Meeting on Monday, November 4, 2013 at the Madisonville City Hall at 9:00 A.M. The team was very well researched in each point of view; well articulated in their expression of those points and gave a wonderful informative presentation. The 13 individuals that were present were honored to hear the presentation and were edified by visiting with your team.

Thank you again!
 George Delfeld
 Chairman *George Delfeld*

Community Open House
November 5, 2013 – MHS Ag Building, 6:00 P.M.
Number in Attendance: 95



We had a very large attendance at our open house. We were able to answer questions regarding the appointment of the commissioners and the program administration.



To the Judges of the Ag Issues FFA Competition:

One of the highlights of attending the Madisonville FFA Community Open House on November 5, 2013 at 6:00 P.M. in the High School Ag Building was seeing the Ag Issues Team discuss the water amendment that will have such a large impact on Texas, particularly rural Texas. As a rancher, I appreciated the look at how the state water planning process influences agriculture. The young people exhibited poise in the face of some very difficult questions from the 95 community members present. I compliment this group on an excellent presentation.

Gary Baker *Gary Baker*

Madisonville Noon Lions Club
November 7, 2013 – Woodbine Hotel, 12:00 P.M.
Number in Attendance: 12



The Lions Club visited with us about the growing population of Texas and what types of water resources could supply the growing need for water.



MADISONVILLE NOON LIONS CLUB

On November 7, 2013 the Madisonville FFA Ag Issues team members were the guest speakers of the Madisonville Noon Lions Club at our weekly meeting held at the Woodbine Hotel. During the meeting the team presented their research to twelve members of the Lions Club over the impact the recent passage of Proposition 6 will have on our state. The presentation was both enlightening and entertaining. The students should be commended for their hard work and an excellent presentation.

Sincerely,

David W. Stiver
 David W. Stiver

Madisonville Noon Lions Club Representative

Alpha Delta Kappa Sorority
November 11, 2013 – MHS Library, 4:15 PM
Number in Attendance: 14



This was a great set of questions for us. These ladies asked for detailed information on the new TWDB commissioners and how projects are selected.



Dear Ag Issues Leadership Team,

The Texas Epsilon Gamma Chapter of Alpha Delta Kappa wants to say a big thank you for coming to our November 11th meeting and presenting your discussion on water issues facing Texas and the creation of the SWIFT.

Fourteen members of our chapter were blessed to hear a group of young people who are well informed about a serious subject. The team presented the issue with confidence giving each of those present information we can use to be better citizen participants in Texas water planning.

Sincerely,
 Dena Abernathy

Dena Abernathy



Parten Operating Inc., Regional Meeting
November 20, 2013 – Midway Community Center, 11:00 AM
Number in Attendance: 56



This was a great chance to better understand how water shortages impact industrial users. This group had serious concerns about future taxation for water projects.



Parten Operating Inc. held a regional meeting at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, November 20, 2013. The meeting was held at the Midway Community Center and 56 were in attendance.

Madisonville FFA Ag Issues students presented a lively debate over water funding in Texas. We recognize the controversial nature of this issue and appreciated the interest the young people took in learning the struggles that are faced by our industry in securing the water we need without stifling government regulation.

Thank you,
 Troy Sheppard

Troy Sheppard

Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board Meeting
November 21, 2013 – Holiday Inn, Temple, TX, 8:00 AM
Number in Attendance: 53



We were in a room with the best “water minds” in the state.
We spoke with the TSSWCB Executive Board as well as
several other state agencies.



Marty H. Graham, *Chairman*
 Scott Buckles, *Vice-Chairman*
 Jose Pedier, Jr., *Member*
 Jerry D. Nichols, *Member*



Barry Mahler, *Member*
 Joe L. Ward, *Member*
 Larry D. Jacobs, *Member*
 Rex Isom, *Executive Director*

TEXAS STATE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION BOARD
Protecting and Enhancing Natural Resources for Tomorrow

This letter is in response to the Madisonville FFA Ag Issues Team presentation at our Board Meeting on November 21, 2013 at 8:00 a.m. in Temple, Texas with 53 people in attendance.

Those in attendance were from our agency (Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board), Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts, USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Texas Water Development Board, Office of the Attorney General, and a private company.

We commend these young people for their dedication to learning and understanding the future of our water supply. They were very impressive.

Respectfully,

Rex Isom
 Executive Director

San Jacinto River Authority
December 2, 2013 – SJRA Office, Conroe, TX, 3:00 PM
Number in Attendance: 11



We jumped at the chance to visit a major municipal water supplier and to tour a water treatment facility under construction. The SJRA manages Lake Conroe Reservoir.



San Jacinto River Authority

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
 P.O. Box 329 • Conroe, Texas 77385
 (713) 558-3111 • (713) 558-3013

On December 2, 2013 at 3:00 p.m., the Madisonville Ag Issues Team visited with eleven individuals at the San Jacinto River Authority office in Conroe, Texas. As part of their visit, they discussed the challenges of supplying Texans with water with representatives from the San Jacinto River Authority. We concluded the visit with a video presentation and tour of the surface water treatment facility that is currently under construction.

Matt Corley
 Customer Service & Compliance Supervisor

Lone Star Groundwater Conservation District
December 5, 2013 – LSGCD Office, Conroe, TX, 10:00 AM
Number in Attendance: 37



Mrs. Jones saw us at a previous forum and invited us.
We gained insight into municipal struggles as the LSGCD
manages one of the fastest growing counties in Texas.



Lone Star Groundwater Conservation District

It was with great enthusiasm we welcomed members of the Madisonville FFA Ag Issues Team as our guests at the December 5, 2013 board meeting of the Lone Star Groundwater Conservation District. The 37 individuals in attendance were all edified by their presentation on the contrasting views and perspectives of Proposition 6. The tremendous pressure being placed on our water supply is of great concern. Without strategic planning, our state can never hope to meet future water demand. Decisions regarding the most productive use of this resource and meaningful action to make sure we are using water in the most efficient manner are critical. We congratulate you for taking an interest in an issue so critical to our future.

Kathy Turner Jones
 Manager – Lone Star Groundwater Conservation District

