Comments provided to GMA 12 on behalf of Jay Wilder,
Board President, Post Oak Savannah GCD
November 9, 2026

The passage of house bill 1763 in 2005 was the beginning of an effort to result in regional management of shared groundwater resources. The Senate had long expressed concerns and desires for regional management, and this legislation and ensuing process was designed to accomplish that. The process was never described as a process that would be easy for the groundwater conservation districts (GCDs) involved in groundwater management areas (GMAs). That is the entire reason that a 2/3 supermajority is required to adopt desire future conditions.

By it's very nature this process was designed to not only encourage, but in many cases, force, negotiation, and cooperation. The reason for this is quite simple: it is because in shared aquifers what happens in one district often affects its neighbors and vice versa. There is no place in the State of Texas where this is more evident than GMA 12.

Through scientific evaluations the evidence is overwhelming that what happens in the three central districts in this GMA, Brazos Valley GCD, Post Oak Savannah GCD, and Lost Pines GCD, have effects and consequences on each other. Further, it is also evident and indeed necessary that cooperation and negotiation carry the day among these three districts.

Following adoption of proposed desired future conditions (DFCs) on April 27, 2026, which included DFCs in the Simsboro which were known to be unachievable, each district in this GMA held public hearings and at least a 90 day comment period. Post Oak Savannah received many of the same comments that others in our GMA received. Those comments ranged from, "continue with the same DFCs," to, "allow more impacts and more production to meet the needs of the state," as well as, "satisfy permits that had already been issued in all of the groundwater conservation districts in GMA 12."

Because of these comments, the Board of directors at Post Oak Savannah directed our staff and consultants to incorporate these comments into a pumping file which would result in achievable DFCs, which, by our estimation made a genuine and sincere effort to incorporate the majority of comments received. During this process I reached out to the general manager of Lost Pines and on several occasions received assurance that there were no objections from him and that the Lost Pines Board would be supportive of Post Oak efforts so long as reductions in those pumping files were similar to Lost Pines and would include reductions in both the Carrizo and Simsboro formations. This pumping file has been submitted for your consideration as "proposed GAM Run PS 4–4." Important point- under no circumstances should the pumping file for Post Oak Savannah be understood to be "preferred" outside of its use in Proposed PS 4-4.

Proposed PS 4–4 is an important opportunity to responsibly achieve the goals of regional planning. In the most recent PS 4–2 v.8 the Lost Pines District had removed some

of its pumping from its own pumping files in previous efforts of GAM Run PS4-1, but what was missing was adjustments to pumping in the other two of the three central districts in GMA 12. In the estimation of staff and consultants at Post Oak Savannah, the only way to achieve balance and share the burden of conservation to achieve the desired results was to also reduce pumping in the pumping files from Post Oak Savannah GCD and Brazos Valley GCD.

Through scientific evaluations, it has been proven that if you are unwilling to adjust the production from the pumping files in Brazos Valley you cannot achieve reduction of impact in the other two districts. Simply put, and reiterated several times earlier this year at GMA 12 meetings, when Post Oak Savannah and Lost Pines reduce their pumping it simply makes more water available for Brazos Valley to produce. For any meaningful conservation and reduction of impacts to take place in these other two districts there must be a similar action at Brazos Valley. This is not an attack on Brazos Valley, but rather simply the way that this aquifer performs. It is a fact that this aquifer performs in this manner so it is necessary when any adjustments are made that they be made across the three central districts in the GMA, otherwise adjustments are not effective in accomplishing management goals.

This is the part of negotiation and cooperation that was envisioned when this entire process was first conceived, and the reason that a 2/3 supermajority is required to adopt DFC's. While one district may not support adjustments made to its own pumping file, the needs of the entire GMA must be considered as more important so that regional management and cooperation prevail, even though there may not be unanimous approval. This is necessary, again, simply because of the way this aquifer performs. You simply cannot find balance without making adjustments across the entire area.

Again, this is supported by best available science and thorough evaluations performed by Post Oak Savannah consultants. The changes made to pumping files in PS 4–4 were not taken lightly. They were also well thought out. Maybe the most important point in the adjustments that were made in this file is that only a fraction of the permits issued by Brazos Valley were adjusted or removed. When considering the total amount of production available to that district moving into the future, there is still available to them more than 100,000 acre feet of water above and beyond what has ever been produced in a single year. This allows Brazos Valley more than ample opportunity to continue to grow and responsibly manage the resources within its district. Run 4–4 also allows Lost Pines and Post Oak Savannah to do the same.

Further, PS 4–4 leaves completely intact and untouched the Lost Pines pumping file from PS 4-2v.8, as they reiterated multiple times in public GMA 12 meetings, and also does not change the pumping files for Fayette County GCD or Mid-East Texas GCD. Proposed PS4-4 provides the best opportunity to achieve the balance as described in TWC 36.108 (d-2) and (d-3) of all model runs presented to date.

Following submission of the summary of comments from Post Oak Savannah to GMA 12, which included run PS 4–4, Lost Pines responded to Post Oak Savannah's effort. That response included another gam run, "proposed PS4–5," which simply took the reduction from Post Oak pumping and added it into the Lost Pines pumping file. As previously stated, under no circumstances should the pumping file for Post Oak Savannah be understood to be preferred outside of its use in Proposed PS 4-4. This effort by Lost Pines did not reflect regional cooperation but rather resulted in negative consequences of increased impacts on landowners in both districts. Even though for the past five years Lost Pines has asked for a reduction of impacts in the Carrizo aquifer, their efforts in PS 4–5 seem to belie their stated desires because the impacts which these adjustments cause will simply continue to exacerbate the previously identified negative consequences of landowner's wells being affected. This would unfortunately be a repeat of what happened five years ago in the last round of joint planning when Post Oak Savannah requested it's pumping file reflect less production in the Carrizo, and yet was outvoted by the other districts, including Lost Pines, and forced to allow more pumping which affected more wells in both districts. Frankly, this made no sense then, and it makes no sense now, and is an unfortunate effort proposed by the Lost Pines district which will result in continued impacts to their own land owners and those land owners' property rights.

As I stated earlier, this process was never envisioned to be easy, but sometimes the most difficult road is the road which must be traveled to achieve the proper results. Gentlemen, for the sake of all landowners in GMA 12, and to set a proper example for the great State of Texas, please adopt DFCs resulting from Proposed PS-4-4.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Westbrook
General Manager, Post Oak Savannah GCD