

NEWS RELEASE

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West Texas Water Partnership secures long-term water source for Abilene, Midland, and San Angelo

ABILENE, Texas – What began a decade ago as a collaborative effort by the cities of Abilene, Midland and San Angelo to address long-term water needs culminated today with the signing of a multi-generational groundwater supply contract.

The cities negotiated a 50-year agreement with Fort Stockton Holdings, the owner of substantial groundwater rights in far West Texas, for groundwater pumped from the Edwards-Trinity aquifer.

The aquifer is recognized as one of the most prolific sources of groundwater in Texas, giving the cities access to a supply that is capable of withstanding substantial droughts.

When the three cities started the West Texas Water Partnership (WTWP), there were high hopes that great things could come from the alliance. The charge from the beginning was to turn every stone, take every call and listen to every idea presented to the group that could bridge each city's individual water supply deficits and provide multi-generational water security for the West Texas region.

"This is a historic and proud day for Abilene, Texas," Abilene Mayor Anthony Williams said. "Water security has always been a priority for us, as seen with former Mayor Norm Archibald's effort to partner with our neighbors of Midland and San Angelo in the West Texas Water Partnership. Today we have the opportunity to see years of work come to fruition in an agreement that will provide water security for West Texas for generations to come. I am proud to be part of a team that has worked together to provide for our communities in this monumental way."

"As a city council and mayor, we are excited to be able to invest in this partnership for the long term, critical water needs of our city," Midland Mayor Patrick Payton said. "The future of our great city is even more promising because of the ability to secure water for growth and opportunity. We are thankful for the hard work, critical and effective negotiations and ultimate conclusion of this stage in the process of water security."

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“In the 1970s, our City leaders worked to secure additional water supply from the Hickory aquifer for the next generations,” San Angelo Mayor Brenda Gunter said. “That’s exactly what we’re doing now with this additional source of water. We are ensuring that there will be a reliable water supply for generations to come.”

The WTWP has considered many options over the past decade and, as a result of the group’s hard work, diligence and patience, they have found in Fort Stockton Holdings a supply of water that meets the fundamental criteria: affordability, quantity, quality, sustainability and reliability.

The Fort Stockton Holdings supply is for 28,400 acre-foot per year. This amount is permitted for export in the Middle Pecos Groundwater Conservation District. The annual volume is being split in a manner that addresses each city’s needs:

Midland: 15,000 acre-foot per year
Abilene: 8,400 acre-foot per year
San Angelo: 5,000 acre-foot per year

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