

Angelo Seeks To Pump Water From Aquifer

A story in the January 26 edition of the *Brady Standard* ran under the headline "Angelo Acts To Suck Up Brady Water."

It told about a notice which had been published in the Brady paper wherein the City of San Angelo was seeking to produce 15,011 acre feet of water per year from the Hickory Underground Aquifer. (The legal notice was also published in the *Mason County News* January 24).

The story follows:

"City Manager Dennis Smith says the City of San Angelo has asked the Hickory Underground Water District to execute permits to allow the usage of nine existing wells in McCulloch County and the development of 13 more.

"Smith indicated that San Angelo petitioned to pump at least 15,011 acre/feet of water per year.

" 'Most folks don't understand,' Smith said, 'but that is approximately 13.5 million gallons per day.'"

" 'The City of Brady would be severely impacted over the next 10 to 30 years if San Angelo were to utilize its options to the fullest extent.

" 'The initial impact would be on the "outcrop area" of the aquifer near Llano and Voca. Water availability and usage is a major part of growth and development in the state,' " Smith said.

"He also noted that many other areas are already experiencing bitter water rights disputes.

" 'A perfect example is the San Antonio area. The reliability of future water supplies will be essential to the economic well-being of communities and ranchers alike,' " Smith explained.

"Smith's concern began when a notice that San Angelo had filed the applications which ran in Tuesday's *Brady Herald*.

"A hearing will be held before the board of directors of the Hickory Uncerground Water Conservation District No. 1 on all applications at 10 a.m. Friday, Feb. 9, in the courtroom of the McCulloch County Courthouse in Brady.

"The hearing will determine whether to grant one or more of the applications.

"Smith has suggested that all interested and concerned citizens of Brady and McCulloch County attend the meeting. Evidence and commitments will be accepted and witnesses will be heard, he noted.

"Prior to the meeting, copies of applications may be reviewed in the district's offices Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

" 'This could mean a lot to us, and I am sure interest in the applications would be to our benefits,' " Smith said."

The City of Mason, as well as farmers and ranchers in the area could be affected by a severe drawdown of the aquifer.

Since this is not the first time that San Angelo has sought the water from our underground aquifer it brings up the memory of a time when a large city continually sought to have a certain court moved from one of the small counties about 50-60 miles away.

Of course the larger city drew many customers and shoppers from the smaller city so bumper stickers were printed and a campaign was started to boycott the large city when it came time for an out of town shopping trip.

The campaign was successful.