

# The Bandera PROPHEET

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Groundwater District moves county to severe drought status

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The Bandera Prophet

Although beneficial rain has fallen over the last several days, Bandera County is still too dry. As of January 2, the Bandera County River Authority and Groundwater District (BCRAGD) moved the county into severe drought status, which includes water and irrigation restrictions.

“Looking at the river, I’d put it closer to extreme,” General Manager Dave Mauk said during their regular quarterly meeting earlier this month, adding in December, .29 inches of rain was recorded.

Mauk said the district is closely monitoring eColi levels at English Crossing. He theorized the possibility that animals may be congregating in that area and the water flow is insufficient to wash their waste away, however staff will continue to take samples every 100 yards to see if there is a point source that can be addressed.

“We keep getting back results that are higher than they should be,” Mauk said. “With it being this cold, it’s a little concerning.”

Despite the issues with the river, Mauk said the lake is holding steady.

As of Jan. 22, the water level at Medina Lake was 77.2 percent full.

“It’s amazing what it’s like when the gates are shut,” Mauk said.

In other business, BCRAGD directors took care of some board housekeeping.

The district’s general fund balance sits at \$150,848.59. Of that, \$71,282 is committed to approved expenditures. The remaining \$79,566 is available for spending at the board’s discretion. Mauk said he does not anticipate any problems with the annual budget.

“We’re tracking right where we want to be at this time,” Mauk said.

The only significant issue was a \$2,000 budget amendment for arundo control. Mauk said \$1,500 was originally budgeted, but changes on the state level affected funding for controlling the non-native invasive brush. Statutory changes will also influence the current district rules, Mauk said. He told directors that he and district attorney Richard Mosty are drafting some statutory rule changes.

“We’re basically just cleaning up issues, mostly due to legislative mandates and vague wording,” Mauk said. “We need to do it by March.” Mauk said the board will have time to review the proposed changes well in advance of its adoption.