

The Bandera PROPHET

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Groundwater District denies 200-acre-foot permit application, approves lower pumping amount

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Standing room only was left during last week's groundwater district board meeting, with more than 25 people signed up to speak on two permit applications for a cumulative 200-acre-foot water well pumping limit.

Vanderpool Management, LP, filed two applications for an annual production limit of 130 acre-feet and 70 acre-feet, for a house and barn well already drilled on FM 337 near Mill Creek Road. The total request translates into 65,200,000 gallons of water per year.

"Water is an invested property right in Texas," Bandera County River Authority and Groundwater District General Manager Dave Mauk said on Thursday, adding the board has a balancing act, tasked with protecting the aquifer and applicants' rights.

Mauk said the management company's requested drawdown is not consistent with the GMA 9 recommended maximum of minus 30 feet, and goes against the district's desired future conditions filed with the state. However, he said every well can legally pump 28 acre-feet of water.

The board approved Mauk's recommendation of 28-acre-feet withdrawal per year per well, with maximum capacities of 80 gallons per minute for the house well and 55 gallons per minute for the barn well, totaling 56 acre feet.

In his General Manager's Report, Mauk reported the county's drought status has moved into exceptional, and was "not slowing down."