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For Immediate Release

Controlling Brush to Help Save Water

Anywhere you go water demands are on the rise. This is due to the rapid increase in population and industry growth. We are living in a time when every drop of water counts. This is why the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board has developed a State Brush Control Plan to rid the land of water sucking trees and brush in order to conserve water to better benefit the land and crops.

Invasive brush such as mesquites, juniper, and salt cedars are using as much as 10 million acre-feet (AF) of water in Texas each year. This is two-thirds of what Texas residents consume. The mesquite plant alone consumes 20 gallons of water per day. Due to the increase of water demands, highly-concentrated research on brush water use is becoming even more crucial to local ranching and farming producers. When mesquite, juniper and salt cedar brush species are managed, benefits can be seen in the water quantity, erosion, and in some cases water quality.

Modeling efforts from comprehensive studies suggest that removing brush should create water savings by increasing ground and surface water supplies. Most of the studies conducted showed that removing brush reduced the amount of water used and also helped reduce erosion in the examined areas. The idea is that by removing brush there would be less interception of rainfall which would provide more runoffs to streams, or that by clearing brush there would be more infiltration of rainfall into the ground which would cause higher flow in small springs and seeps that feed the recharge stream.

Invasive brush can add to the aquifer decline, which affects us all. Keeping high water using brush species managed and under control should continue to be a key focus for Texas.

For more information regarding brush control, the Permian Basin Underground Water Conservation District invites you to visit their website at www.pbuwcd.com or call them at 432-756-2136.