GAM Run 10-028 MAG

by Melissa E. Hill, Ph.D., P.G. and Wade Oliver

Edited and finalized by Shirley Wade to reflect statutory changes effective September 1, 2011

Texas Water Development Board
Groundwater Availability Modeling Section
(512) 936-0883
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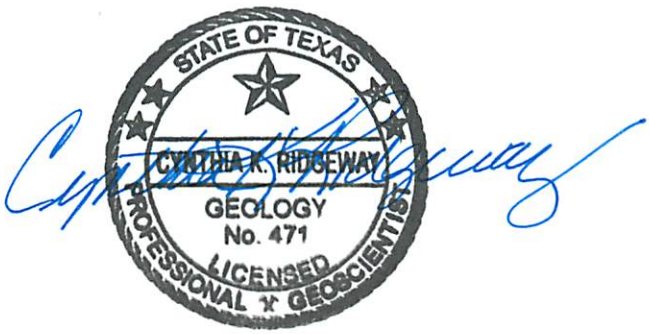

Cynthia K. Ridgeway, the Manager of the Groundwater Availability Modeling Section and Interim Director of the Groundwater Resources Division, is responsible for oversight of work performed by employees under her direct supervision. The seal appearing on this document was authorized by Cynthia K. Ridgeway, P.G. 471 on November 18, 2011.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The modeled available groundwater for the Gulf Coast Aquifer as a result of the desired future conditions adopted by the members of Groundwater Management Area 15 is approximately 488,000 acre-feet per year. This is shown divided by county, regional water planning area, and river basin in Table 1 for use in the regional water planning process. Modeled available groundwater is summarized by county, regional water planning area, river basin, and groundwater conservation district in tables 2 through 5. The estimates were extracted from the simulation documented in Table 7 of Groundwater Availability Model Run 10-008 Addendum, which meets the desired future conditions adopted by Groundwater Management Area 15.

REQUESTOR:

Mr. Neil Hudgins of the Coastal Bend Groundwater Conservation District on behalf of Groundwater Management Area 15

DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST:

In a letter dated July 15th, 2010 and received July 30th, 2010, Mr. Neil Hudgins provided the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) with the desired future condition (DFC) of the Gulf Coast Aquifer for Groundwater Management Area 15. The desired future condition for the Gulf Coast Aquifer, as described in Resolution 2010-01 and adopted July 14, 2010 by the groundwater conservation districts (GCDs) within Groundwater Management Area 15, are described below:

> *An average drawdown of the Gulf Coast Aquifer within the* [Groundwater Management Area] *15 boundary of 12 feet relative to year 1999 starting conditions in accordance with Table 7* of [Groundwater Availability Model] *Run 10-008 Addendum.*

In response to receiving the adopted future condition, the Texas Water Development Board estimated the modeled available groundwater for each groundwater conservation district within Groundwater Management Area 15.

METHODS:

Groundwater Management Area 15 lies within the domain of the groundwater availability model for the central portion of the Gulf Coast Aquifer in Texas. The location of Groundwater Management Area 15, the Gulf Coast Aquifer, and the groundwater availability model cells that represent the aquifer are shown in Figure 1. The Gulf Coast Aquifer System is comprised of the Chicot, Evangeline, and Jasper aquifers. The Burkeville Confining Unit lies between the Evangeline and Jasper aquifers (Waterstone Engineering Inc. and others, 2003).
The previously completed Groundwater Availability Model (GAM) Run 10-008 (Hutchison, 2010), its addendum GAM Run 10-008 Addendum (Wade, 2010), GAM Run 09-010 (Anaya, 2010), GAM Run 08-56 (Anaya, 2009), GAM Run 07-43 (Donnelly, 2008b), and GAM Run 07-42 (Donnelly, 2008a) document the model results reviewed by members of Groundwater Management Area 15 when developing the desired future condition. The results presented in this

report are based on the model simulation shown as the "12 foot scenario" shown in Table 7 of GAM Run 10-008 Addendum (Wade, 2010).

PARAMETERS AND ASSUMPTIONS:

The parameters and assumptions for the model run using the groundwater availability model for the central portion of the Gulf Coast Aquifer are described below:

- Version 1.01 of the groundwater availability model for the central portion of the Gulf Coast Aquifer was used for this analysis. See Chowdhury and others (2004) and Waterstone Engineering Inc. and others (2003) for assumptions and limitations of the groundwater availability model.
- The model includes four layers representing: the Chicot Aquifer and shallow surface alluvial deposits (layer 1), the Evangeline Aquifer (layer 2), the Burkeville Confining Unit (layer 3), and the Jasper Aquifer including portions of the Catahoula Formation (layer 4) as described in Waterstone Engineering Inc. and others (2003).
- The mean absolute error (a measure of the difference between simulated and measured water levels during model calibration) in the entire model for 1999 is 26 feet, which is 4.8 percent of the hydraulic head drop across the model area (Chowdhury and others, 2004).
- The recharge, evapotranspiration, and streamflows for the model run represent average conditions between 1981 and 1999 in the historical-calibration period of the model (Chowdhury and others, 2004).
- See Wade (2010) for a full description of the methods, assumptions, and results of the groundwater availability model run.

Modeled Available Groundwater and Permitting

As defined in Chapter 36 of the Texas Water Code, "modeled available groundwater" is the estimated average amount of water that may be produced annually to achieve a desired future condition. This is distinct from "managed available groundwater," shown in the draft version of this report dated November 10, 2010, which was a permitting value and accounted for the estimated use of the aquifer exempt from permitting. This change was made to reflect changes in statute by the 82nd Texas Legislature, effective September 1, 2011.

Groundwater conservation districts are required to consider modeled available groundwater, along with several other factors, when issuing permits in order to manage groundwater production to achieve the desired future condition(s). The other factors districts must consider include annual precipitation and production patterns, the estimated amount of pumping exempt from permitting, existing permits, and a reasonable estimate of actual groundwater production under existing permits. The estimated amount of pumping exempt from permitting, which the

Texas Water Development Board is now required to develop after soliciting input from applicable groundwater conservation districts, will be provided in a separate report

RESULTS:

The modeled available groundwater for the Gulf Coast Aquifer in Groundwater Management Area 15 consistent with the desired future conditions is approximately 488,000 acre-feet per year. This has been divided by county, regional water planning area, and river basin for each decade between 2010 and 2060 for use in the regional water planning process (Table 1).

The modeled available groundwater is also summarized by county (Table 2), regional water planning area (Table 3), river basin (Table 4), and groundwater conservation district (Table 5). Note that some small differences exist between the results shown in Table 2 of this report and Table 7 of Wade (2010) due to a re-assignment of grid cells to be more consistent with previous and known interpretations of political boundaries. The most significant of these adjustments is in Fayette County, where 339 acre-feet per year of pumping from the Gulf Coast Aquifer was previously reported as existing in Groundwater Management Area 12 (Wade, 2010). Since the groundwater management area boundary was originally delineated along the Gulf Coast Aquifer boundary in this area, this pumping is now associated with Groundwater Management Area 15.

In Table 5, the modeled available groundwater among all districts has been calculated both excluding and including areas outside the jurisdiction of a groundwater conservation district. Though a small portion of Corpus Christi Aquifer Storage and Recovery Conservation District falls within Groundwater Management Area 15, results are not shown for this area below because no model cells representing the Gulf Coast Aquifer fall within the district.

LIMITATIONS:

The groundwater model used in developing estimates of modeled available groundwater is the best available scientific tool that can be used to estimate the pumping that will achieve the desired future conditions. Although the groundwater model used in this analysis is the best available scientific tool for this purpose, it, like all models, has limitations. In reviewing the use of models in environmental regulatory decision-making, the National Research Council (2007) noted:

> "Models will always be constrained by computational limitations, assumptions, and knowledge gaps. They can best be viewed as tools to help inform decisions rather than as machines to generate truth or make decisions. Scientific advances will never make it possible to build a perfect model that accounts for every aspect of reality or to prove that a given model is correct in all respects for a particular regulatory application. These characteristics make evaluation of a regulatory model more complex than solely a comparison of measurement data with model results."

A key aspect of using the groundwater model to develop estimates of modeled available groundwater is the need to make assumptions about the location in the aquifer where future pumping will occur. As actual pumping changes in the future, it will be necessary to evaluate the amount of that pumping as well as its location in the context of the assumptions associated with

this analysis. Evaluating the amount and location of future pumping is as important as evaluating the changes in groundwater levels, spring flows, and other metrics that describe the condition of the groundwater resources in the area that relate to the adopted desired future condition(s).

Given these limitations, users of this information are cautioned that the modeled available groundwater numbers should not be considered a definitive, permanent description of the amount of groundwater that can be pumped to meet the adopted desired future condition. Because the application of the groundwater model was designed to address regional scale questions, the results are most effective on a regional scale. The TWDB makes no warranties or representations relating to the actual conditions of any aquifer at a particular location or at a particular time.

It is important for groundwater conservation districts to monitor future groundwater pumping as well as whether or not they are achieving their desired future conditions. Because of the limitations of the model and the assumptions in this analysis, it is important that the groundwater conservation districts work with the TWDB to refine the modeled available groundwater numbers given the reality of how the aquifer responds to the actual amount and location of pumping now and in the future.

REFERENCES:

Anaya, R., 2009, GAM Run 08-56: Texas Water Development Board GAM Run 08-56 Report, 63 p.

Anaya, R., 2010, GAM Run 09-010: Texas Water Development Board GAM Run 09-10 Report, 30 p.

Chowdhury, A.H., Wade, S., Mace, R.E., and Ridgeway, C., 2004, Groundwater availability model of the Central Gulf Coast Aquifer System: numerical simulations through 1999 Model Report, Texas Water Development Board, 108 p.

Donnelly, A.C., 2008a, GAM Run 07-42: Texas Water Development Board GAM Run 07-42 Report, 51 p.

Donnelly, A.C., 2008b, GAM Run 07-43: Texas Water Development Board GAM Run 07-43 Report, 51 p.

Hutchison, W.R., 2010, GAM Run 10-008: Texas Water Development Board GAM Run 10-008 Report, 9 p.

National Research Council, 2007, Models in Environmental Regulatory Decision Making. Committee on Models in the Regulatory Decision Process, National Academies Press, Washington D.C., 287 p.

Wade, S.C., 2010, GAM Run 10-008 Addendum: Texas Water Development Board GAM Run 10-008 Addendum Report, 8 p.

Waterstone Engineering, Inc., and Parsons, Inc., 2003, Groundwater availability of the central Gulf Coast Aquifer: numerical simulations to 2050 Central Gulf Coast, Texas-Final Report: contract report to the Texas Water Development Board, variously p.

Table 1. Modeled available groundwater for the Gulf Coast Aquifer in Groundwater Management Area 15. Results are in acre-feet per year and are summarized by county, regional water planning area, and river basin.

County	Regional Water Planning Area	Basin	Year					
			2010	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060
Aransas	N	San Antonio-Nueces	1,862	1,862	1,862	1,862	1,862	1,862
Bee	N	Nueces	30	30	30	30	30	30
		San Antonio-Nueces	9,484	9,484	9,460	9,460	9,408	9,408
Calhoun	L	Colorado-Lavaca	361	361	361	361	361	361
		Guadalupe	17	17	17	17	17	17
		Lavaca	2	2	2	2	2	2
		Lavaca-Guadalupe	2,574	2,574	2,574	2,574	2,574	2,574
		San Antonio-Nueces	41	41	41	41	41	41
Colorado	K	Brazos-Colorado	10,464	10,464	10,464	10,464	10,464	10,464
		Colorado	16,058	16,058	16,058	16,058	16,058	16,058
		Lavaca	22,431	22,431	22,431	22,431	22,431	22,431
Dewitt	L	Guadalupe	10,613	10,548	10,548	10,548	10,548	10,548
		Lavaca	2,932	2,932	2,926	2,915	2,912	2,912
		Lavaca-Guadalupe	417	417	417	417	417	417
		San Antonio	739	739	739	739	739	739
Fayette	K	Brazos	17	17	17	17	17	17
		Colorado	6,254	6,123	5,961	5,956	5,952	5,924
		Lavaca	2,933	2,933	2,927	2,922	2,917	2,915
Goliad	L	Guadalupe	4,417	4,417	4,417	4,417	4,417	4,417
		San Antonio	6,121	6,121	6,121	6,121	6,121	6,121
		San Antonio-Nueces	1,161	1,161	1,161	1,161	1,161	1,161
Jackson	P	Colorado-Lavaca	23,615	23,615	23,615	23,615	23,615	23,615
		Lavaca	41,927	41,927	41,927	41,927	41,927	41,927
		Lavaca-Guadalupe	10,844	10,844	10,844	10,844	10,844	10,844
Karnes	L	Guadalupe	12	12	12	12	12	12
		Nueces	78	78	78	78	78	78
		San Antonio	3,069	3,061	3,056	3,052	3,048	2,944
		San Antonio-Nueces	84	84	84	84	84	82
Lavaca	P	Guadalupe	41	41	41	41	41	41
		Lavaca	19,944	19,944	19,944	19,944	19,937	19,932
		Lavaca-Guadalupe	400	400	400	400	400	400
Matagorda	K	Brazos-Colorado	23,055	23,055	23,055	23,055	23,055	23,055
		Colorado	4,179	4,179	4,179	4,179	4,179	4,179
		Colorado-Lavaca	18,662	18,662	18,662	18,662	18,662	18,662
Refugio	L	San Antonio	1,522	1,522	1,522	1,522	1,522	1,522
		San Antonio-Nueces	27,806	27,806	27,806	27,806	27,806	27,806

Table 1. Continued.

County	Regional Water Planning Area	Basin	Year					
			2010	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060
Victoria	L	Guadalupe	14,617	14,617	14,617	14,617	14,617	14,617
		Lavaca	217	217	217	217	217	217
		Lavaca-Guadalupe	19,924	19,924	19,924	19,924	19,924	19,924
		San Antonio	936	936	936	936	936	936
Wharton	K	Brazos-Colorado	34,020	34,020	34,020	34,020	34,020	34,020
		Colorado	31,406	31,406	31,406	31,406	31,406	31,406
		Colorado-Lavaca	11,624	11,624	11,624	11,624	11,624	11,624
		Lavaca	1,690	1,690	1,690	1,690	1,690	1,690
	P	Colorado	441	441	441	441	441	441
		Colorado-Lavaca	11,549	11,549	11,549	11,549	11,549	11,549
		Lavaca	87,763	87,763	87,763	87,763	87,763	87,763
Total			**488,353**	**488,149**	**487,946**	**487,921**	**487,846**	**487,705**

Table 2. Modeled available groundwater for the Gulf Coast Aquifer summarized by county in Groundwater Management Area 15. Results are in acre-feet per year.

County	Year					
	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060
Aransas	1,862	1,862	1,862	1,862	1,862	1,862
Bee	9,514	9,514	9,490	9,490	9,438	9,438
Calhoun	2,995	2,995	2,995	2,995	2,995	2,995
Colorado	48,953	48,953	48,953	48,953	48,953	48,953
Dewitt	14,701	14,636	14,630	14,619	14,616	14,616
Fayette	9,204	9,073	8,905	8,895	8,886	8,856
Goliad	11,699	11,699	11,699	11,699	11,699	11,699
Jackson	76,386	76,386	76,386	76,386	76,386	76,386
Karnes	3,243	3,235	3,230	3,226	3,222	3,116
Lavaca	20,385	20,385	20,385	20,385	20,378	20,373
Matagorda	45,896	45,896	45,896	45,896	45,896	45,896
Refugio	29,328	29,328	29,328	29,328	29,328	29,328
Victoria	35,694	35,694	35,694	35,694	35,694	35,694
Wharton	178,493	178,493	178,493	178,493	178,493	178,493
Total	**488,353**	**488,149**	**487,946**	**487,921**	**487,846**	**487,705**

Table 3. Modeled available groundwater for the Gulf Coast Aquifer summarized by regional water planning area in Groundwater Management Area 15. Results are in acre-feet per year.

Regional Water Planning Area	Year					
	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060
K	182,793	182,662	182,494	182,484	182,475	182,445
L	97,660	97,587	97,576	97,561	97,554	97,448
N	11,376	11,376	11,352	11,352	11,300	11,300
P	196,524	196,524	196,524	196,524	196,517	196,512
Total	**488,353**	**488,149**	**487,946**	**487,921**	**487,846**	**487,705**

Table 4. Modeled available groundwater for the Gulf Coast Aquifer summarized by river basin in Groundwater Management Area 15. Results are in acre-feet per year.

Basin	Year					
	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060
Brazos	17	17	17	17	17	17
Brazos-Colorado	67,539	67,539	67,539	67,539	67,539	67,539
Colorado	58,338	58,207	58,045	58,040	58,036	58,008
Colorado-Lavaca	65,811	65,811	65,811	65,811	65,811	65,811
Guadalupe	29,717	29,652	29,652	29,652	29,652	29,652
Lavaca	179,839	179,839	179,827	179,811	179,796	179,789
Lavaca-Guadalupe	34,159	34,159	34,159	34,159	34,159	34,159
Nueces	108	108	108	108	108	108
San Antonio	12,387	12,379	12,374	12,370	12,366	12,262
San Antonio-Nueces	40,438	40,438	40,414	40,414	40,362	40,360
Total	**488,353**	**488,149**	**487,946**	**487,921**	**487,846**	**487,705**

Table 5. Modeled available groundwater for the Gulf Coast Aquifer summarized by groundwater conservation district (GCD) in Groundwater Management Area 15. Results are in acre-feet per year. UWCD refers to Underground Water Conservation District.

Goundwater Conservation District	**Year**					
	2010	**2020**	**2030**	**2040**	**2050**	**2060**
Bee GCD	9,504	9,504	9,480	9,480	9,428	9,428
Calhoun County GCD*	2,995	2,995	2,995	2,995	2,995	2,995
Coastal Bend GCD	178,493	178,493	178,493	178,493	178,493	178,493
Coastal Plains GCD	45,896	45,896	45,896	45,896	45,896	45,896
Colorado County GCD	48,953	48,953	48,953	48,953	48,953	48,953
Evergreen UWCD	3,243	3,235	3,230	3,226	3,222	3,116
Fayette County GCD	9,204	9,073	8,905	8,895	8,886	8,856
Goliad County GCD	11,699	11,699	11,699	11,699	11,699	11,699
Lavaca County GCD*	20,385	20,385	20,385	20,385	20,378	20,373
Pecan Valley GCD	14,701	14,636	14,630	14,619	14,616	14,616
Refugio GCD	29,328	29,328	29,328	29,328	29,328	29,328
Texana GCD	76,386	76,386	76,386	76,386	76,386	76,386
Victoria County GCD	35,694	35,694	35,694	35,694	35,694	35,694
Total (excluding non-district areas)	**483,486**	**483,282**	**483,079**	**483,054**	**482,979**	**482,838**
No District	1,872	1,872	1,872	1,872	1,872	1,872
Total (including non-district areas)	**488,353**	**488,149**	**487,946**	**487,921**	**487,846**	**487,705**

*Lavaca County and Calhoun County GCDs are pending confirmation as of the date of this report

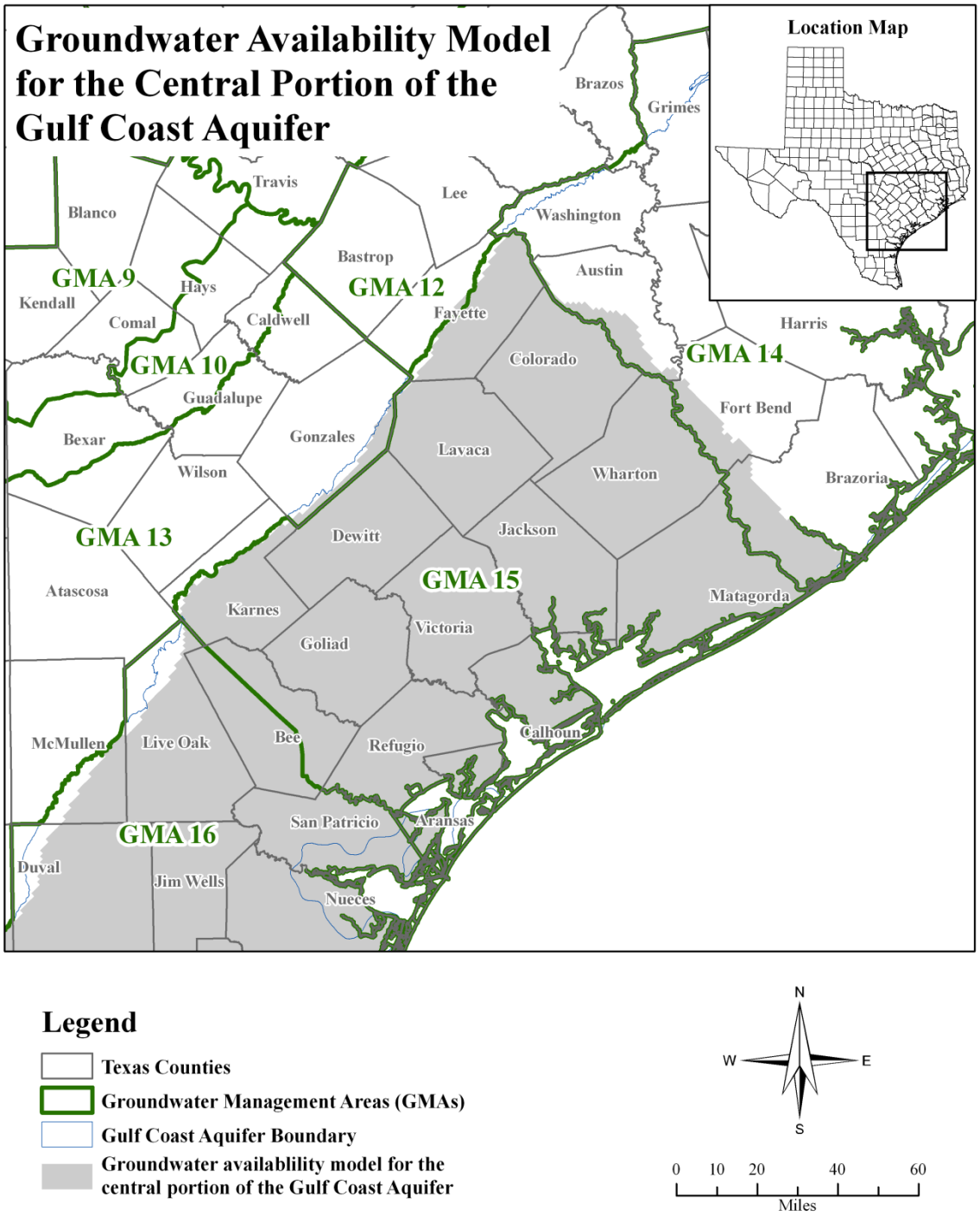

Figure 1. Map showing the areas covered by the groundwater availability model for the central portion of the Gulf Coast Aquifer in Groundwater Management Area 15.

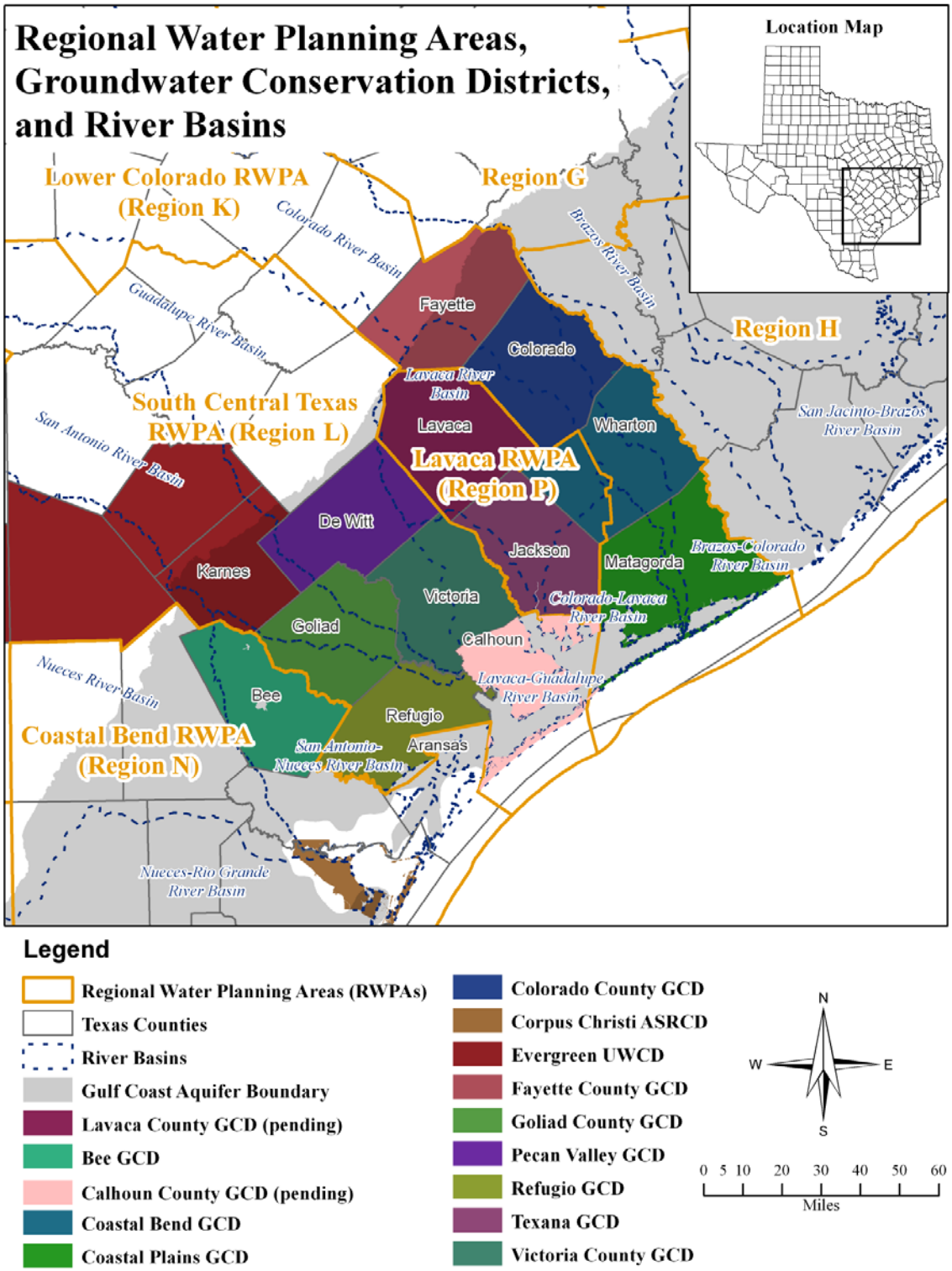

Figure 2. Map showing regional water planning areas, counties, river basins, and groundwater conservation districts (GCD) in and neighboring Groundwater Management Area 15.