

2018 WCAC Legislative Report Recommendations

1. Enhanced data collection, management, and accessibility

The Council recommends that, subject to available state revenue for the 2020-2021 biennium, the Texas Legislature increase appropriations to the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) to enhance existing data collection, management, and accessibility efforts and to ascertain what cities and water utilities need to do to begin collecting the necessary information.

2. Funding a statewide water conservation public awareness program

The Council recommends that, subject to available state revenue for the 2020-2021 biennium, the Texas Legislature appropriate up to \$3 million per year to the TWDB to implement a statewide water conservation public awareness program as directed by the Texas Legislature in 2007 with the passage of Senate Bill 3 and House Bill 4.

3. Maintain funding for agricultural water conservation and research programs

The Council recommends that, subject to available state revenue for the 2020-2021 biennium, the Texas Legislature should maintain funding levels for agricultural water conservation research, education, training, conservation programs with best management practices that reduce evapotranspiration, and financial assistance programs focused on improving water use efficiency in agricultural irrigation.

4. Funding to enhance the accuracy and value of water loss audits

The Council recommends that, subject to available state revenue for the 2020-2021 biennium, the Texas Legislature appropriate \$500,000 for the biennium to the TWDB for an expanded water loss program (including three additional FTEs) to assist water utilities in the design and conduct of water loss audits and another \$500,000 for the biennium to the TWDB for competitive grants for up to six utilities of varying sizes to conduct pilot projects for validation of their water loss audits.

5. Continue funding for the Texas Ag Water Efficiency Education & Demonstration Project.

The Council recommends that, subject to available state revenue for the 2020-2021 biennium, the Texas Legislature fund this project for the education, research, and development of agricultural water conservation initiatives at \$150,000 to \$200,000 per year, through general revenue appropriations deposited and distributed through the TWDB's Agricultural Water Conservation Grants Program, and establish this level of annual funding through baseline general revenue appropriations to the TWDB in future years.