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For Immediate Release

Controlling brush helps save water supply

STANTON, Texas (August 9, 2013) - Many of us drive by these every day. They sit in the pastures covered in thorns and their branches twist up and out in every direction. The infamous mesquite tree of West Texas can be seen as iconic for dry, arid climates or as a nuisance invading the land.

Throughout history, mesquite trees have always been known for absorbing high quantities of water. According to an article from Scenic Hills Nursery, it is estimated that mesquite, cactus and cedar species consume about 10 million acre-feet of water every year, which is two-thirds of what Texas residents consume. The article also states a mesquite plant consumes 20 gallons of water per day.

The total number of water consumed by invasive brush can add up quickly, especially in severely dry conditions. Being in a continual drought for two, going on three, years, has brought water supply concern to the forefront of many peoples' minds. Invasive brush can add to the already depleting Ogallala Aquifer's decline, which really affects all of us.

In fact, the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board has developed a State Brush Control Plan to manage invasive brush species like mesquite and salt cedar. Keeping high water using brush species managed and under control is a key focus of the state's plan.

As this region still faces severe drought conditions, it has never been more critical to manage water resources in every type of consumption. For more information regarding water conservation and the Ogallala Aquifer, visit our website at www.pbuwcd.com.

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The Southern Ogallala Conservation & Outreach Program is the education and public relations division of the Permian Basin UWCD. SOCOP's mission is to spread underground water awareness and encourage water conservation practices. For more information, visit savingsh2o.org.