

Hays County Commissioner

Precinct 4



Walt Smith

195 Roger Hanks Parkway, Dripping Springs, Texas 78620

August 4, 2021

Ruben Becerra

Hays County Judge

111 E. San Antonio Street

San Marcos, Texas 78666

Dear Judge Becerra,

As you are aware, our county and state are suffering through one of the most brutally hot summers of record. With that heat, a rash of fires have beset Hays County and taxed our resources as well as those of our emergency service districts, citizens and partner municipalities.

The current Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) used to determine extreme drought conditions measures Hays County at a score of 734 with us considered to be in Extreme Drought Conditions. With sustained and continuing weather in the high 90s to over 100 degrees, there is little hope at this point of the extended rains needed to ease our current situation.

From providing storage for displaced animals to the depletion of manpower and supplies to our first responders, the demands on the county and our partnering agencies and municipalities have quickly depleted the ability to respond and stretched our resources to their fullest. It is for these reasons and on behalf of these entities that I request you act immediately and declare a county-wide state of emergency for drought and wildfire. This action would allow our partners to apply for, and hopefully receive, additional funding, aid, and resources from governmental entities outside the county for which they otherwise may not qualify.

I've had the privilege of watching our first responders in action, seen our Citizens Emergency Response Team (CERT) assist them, and volunteers and communities from throughout Texas and as far away as Tennessee and Florida come to our aid over the last month. They understand the dire need for this designation and the situation our community is facing and I hope you do as well.

Thank you for this consideration and I trust your response will be as quick as those who are working to save our county each time these fires appear.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Walt Smith", written over a horizontal line.

Walt Smith

Hays County Commissioner, Precinct 4