



Q: Why Do We Need Stage 3 Water Restrictions?

A: The Source of our Drinking Water is Shrinking.

Currently, the City of Portales only has one source of water, the High Plains (or Ogallala) Aquifer. This aquifer serves as a water source for many communities in eastern New Mexico and western Texas. As you can see on the map below, the City of Portales is located on the western edge of the aquifer, where it is the thinnest.

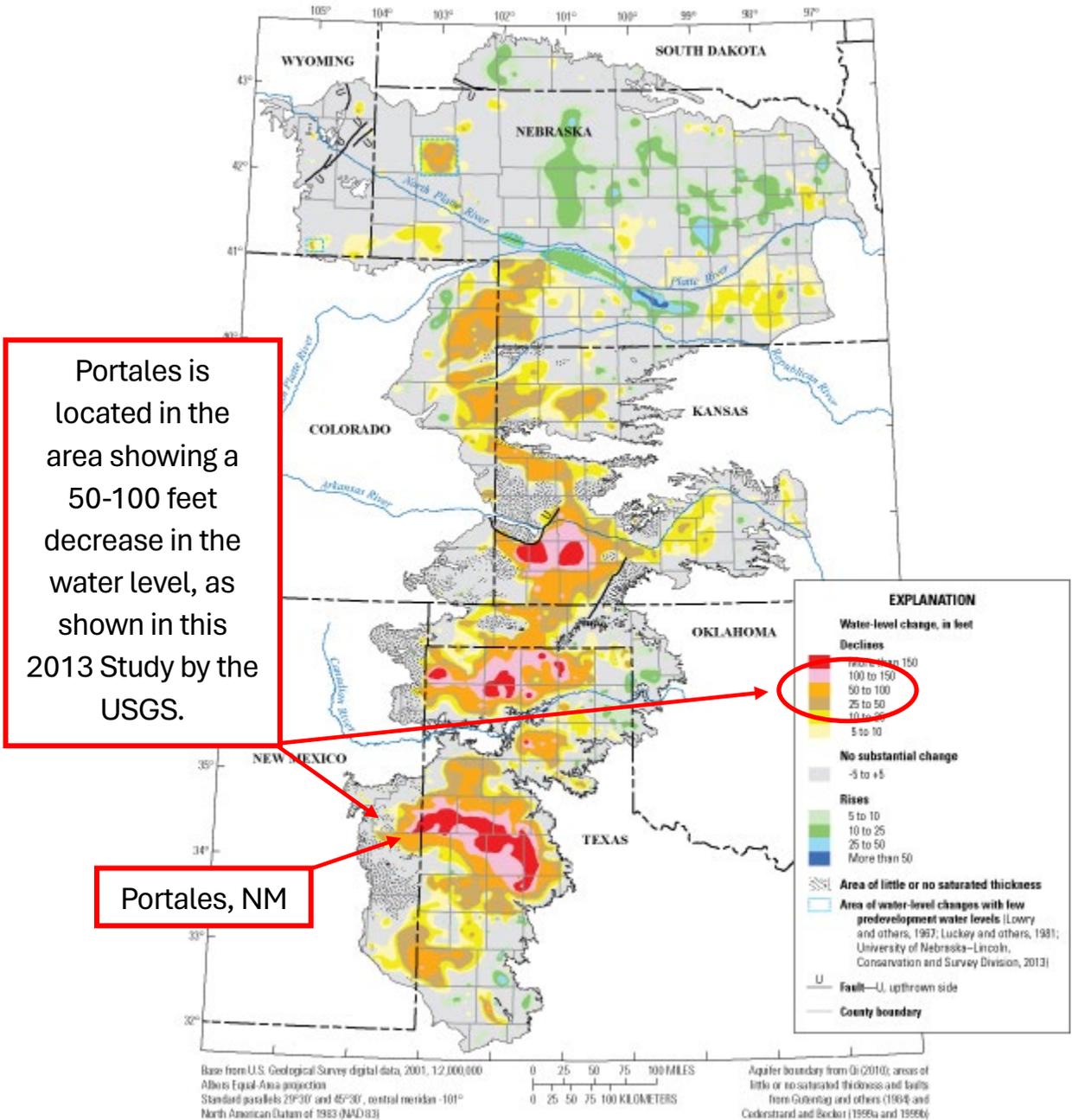
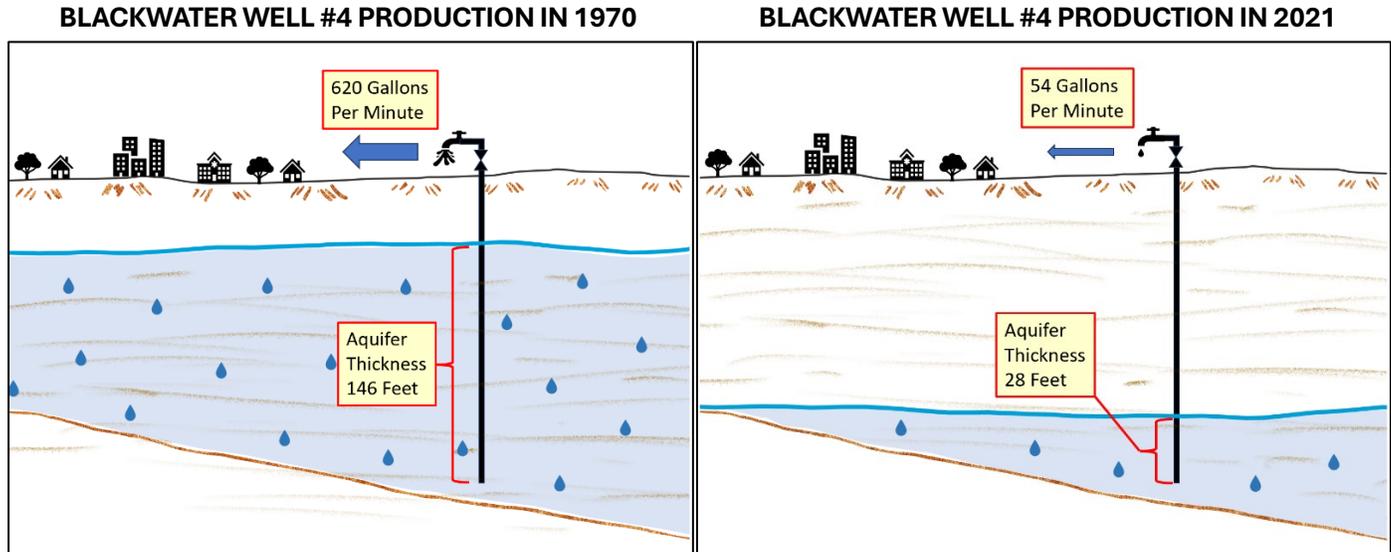


Figure 11. Water-level changes in the High Plains aquifer, predevelopment (about 1950) to 2013.

Figure 1 - Map of the High Plains (Ogallala) Aquifer.



Over time, more water is being pumped out of the aquifer than is flowing back into it, meaning less water is available for use by the City. This is shown below using information from one of the City's wells.



Q: What Else is the City Doing?

A: The City is taking several steps to ensure that the community has enough water now and in the future.

1. **Aggressively fixing leaks in the distribution system.** The total water loss for the City of Portales is 35% lower than the benchmark for municipal systems.
2. **Using reclaimed water for parks and public spaces.** The City currently uses up to 64 million gallons of reclaimed water annually, reducing groundwater pumping by 7%.
3. **Improving well production.** The City has added 24 new wells and rehabilitated 7 existing wells.
4. **Seeking other water sources.** The City is contracted to receive up to 1 billion gallons per year from the Ute Lake pipeline, which will be completed in 2030.

Q: What Else Do We Need To Do?

A: Keep Conserving Our Drinking Water.

Over the years, the community of Portales has done a great job reducing the individual water use from 232 gallons per person per day (gpcd) in 2000 down to 112 gpcd in 2021. Unfortunately, this still isn't enough. The City is currently using approximately 900 million gallons per year and our aquifer continues to shrink. The maximum pumping capacity of all City wells has fallen fifteen percent (15%) from 2020 to 2022.

Conservation Goal: 715 Million Gallons per Year. Together, we can do it.

***See our 2022 Water Conservation and Use Report for more information.*