SAN SABA COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT

DEGREE OF INTENSITY/GUIDELINES FOR BEEKEEPING

Beekeeping is an agricultural use and shall qualify for agricultural use productivity valuation if used for pollination or for the production of human food or other tangible products having a commercial value. (Sec. 23.51(2) Tax Code)

Acreage requirement: the State of Texas has set a minimum of five (5) acres and a maximum of (20) acres to qualify beekeeping as an agricultural use.

The property needs to have been previously in an agricultural process or the owner needs to be able to show a five year history of Bees or AG use. Bees can be used to establish history with supporting documentation. Hives must be maintained and kept alive. Flowering plants must be planted to support hives **IF** the hives are in an area where there is limited vegetation that requires pollination.

Degree of Intensity for Honey Bee: (first 5 acres 6 hives as per Section 131.001 Texas Agriculture Code's definition of an "Apiary"). "Apiary" means a place where six or more colonies of bees or nuclei of bees are kept. "Colony" means the hive and its equipment and appurtenances including bees, comb, honey, pollen, and brood.

5 acres.....6 active hives
7.5 acres.....7 active hives
10 acres.....8 active hives
12.5 acres.....9 active hives
15 acres.....10 active hives
17.5 acres.....11 active hives
20 acres.....12 active hives

Hives must be active.

Production value used for Bees will be the same as current land use category.

QUALIFER: NATIVE BEES (MASON BEES, LEAF-CUTTER BEES, MINING BEES, ORCHARD BEES, BUMBLE BEES, ETC.)

INTENSITY LEVELS:

1. Minimum number of "facilities" per acre shall be 3 or equivalent.
2. Facility size or length shall be 2 feet long each or total of 6 feet equivalent.
3. Hole size, diameter and depth: diameter-specie specific if managing for a single specie or various diameters if managing multiple species. Typical diameters are ¼ to ⅜. Depth of 3 inches minimum.
4. Minimum number of chamber/holes: 24 per foot or equivalent depending on type of "facility". Number of tubes placed inside covering such as PVC pipe for example shall be 24 per foot or equivalent. This may vary depending on diameter of tubes or specie managed for.
5. Facilities shall be weather protected by some type of roof overhang for protection from rain.
6. Facilities shall be attached to sub-strate such as trees, building, etc. in a manner so there is no movement of the facility by the wind.
7. Facilities shall be distributed around the property so there is maximum spread, unless you are raising single specie for sale which requires protection. In this instance they may be in one area, under cover, inside a barn, etc.
8. If you file under pollination there must be commercial crops to be pollinated within 2 miles of your property or you shall plant native perennials (requiring pollination and providing nectar and/or pollen) on your property at the rate of 2,500 sq. ft. per acre.
9. Mowing should also be restricted to the very end of the flowering season to maximize availability of native flowering perennial resources for native bees.
10. All facilities shall show signs of occupation within 2 years of placement.
11. If managing for bumble bees: minimum artificial facilities required is 1 per acre.

Other requirements for bumble bees include numbers 7, 8, 9, and 10 above.

Beehives/Apiary:

A beehive is an enclosed structure in which some honey bee species live and raise their young. Natural beehives are naturally occurring structures occupied by honeybee colonies, while domesticated honeybees live in man-made beehives, often in an apiary. These man-made structures are typically referred to as "beehives". Several species of *Apis* live in hives, but only the western honey bee and the eastern honey bee are domesticated by humans.

A natural beehive is comparable to a bird's nest built with a purpose to protect the dweller. The beehive's internal structure is a densely-packed matrix of hexagonal cells made of beeswax, called a honeycomb. The bees use the cells to store food (honey and pollen) and to house the "brood" (eggs, larvae, and pupae).

Artificial beehives serve two purposes: production of honey and pollination of nearby crops. Artificial hives are commonly transported so that the bees can pollinate crops in other areas.

An apiary (also known as a bee yard) is a place where beehives of honey bees are kept. Traditionally beekeepers (also known as apiarists) paid land rent in honey for the use of small parcels. Some farmers will provide free apiary sites, because they need pollination, and farmers who need many hives often pay for them to be moved to the crops when they bloom.

Pollination: is the process by which pollen is transferred in the reproduction of plants, thereby enabling fertilization and sexual reproduction.

Remember bees forage in a 3 mile radius from the hive. I would survey the areas around you to see what is available for them to forage on. You don't want to over saturate the area with bees as they will be competing with themselves.