



The Verde Creek, seen here, runs through the Hilsher Ranch, which was one of 12 conservation easements the City acquired in calendar year 2014.

CONSERVATION ADVISORY BOARD

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EDWARDS AQUIFER PROTECTION PROGRAM

NEWS AND UPDATES

How time flies! It is hard to believe we are already one month into 2015. Last year at this time we were wondering if it would ever rain again. Fortunately, some much needed winter rains this season have delivered a boost to the aquifer and to all the protected lands in our program. We're still not out of the statewide drought, but it's a start.

2014 saw the City of San Antonio close on 12 conservation easements, totaling 9,582 acres of land over the Recharge and Contributing Zones. That includes the 1,521-acre high-profile Crescent Hills ranch that backs up to the Bracken Bat Cave in Comal County. Protection of the Crescent Hills tract was a unique collaboration between the City of San Antonio, The Nature Conservancy, Bat Conservation International, the Edwards Aquifer Authority and others. It is evidence of just how much we can accomplish when we work together.

This year will be no less busy for Edwards program staff, as we gear up for another possible round of funding. On May 9, 2015, the Edwards program and the City's linear parks program will be presented to the voters of San Antonio for renewal on the May election ballot. Should the voters decide to renew both programs, the City will continue to work hard to protect our most valuable water source: the Edwards Aquifer. Thank you, and stay tuned!

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For more information on the program or to receive quarterly newsletters via email, please visit our website at:

<http://www.sanantonio.gov/edwardsaquifer>

For information on upcoming Conservation Advisory Board meetings, please visit the COSA board meetings and agendas website at:

<https://webapps2.sanantonio.gov/>





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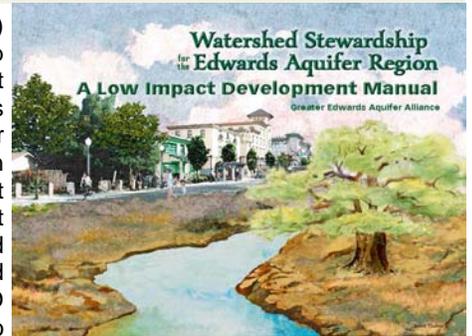
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EDWARDS AQUIFER NEWS

NEW GEAA EDWARDS AQUIFER LID MANUAL

The Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance (GEAA) recently published its “Watershed Stewardship for the Edwards Aquifer Region—A Low Impact Development (LID) Manual” in June 2014. This manual proposes several best practices for stormwater management that focus on green infrastructure with an emphasis on karst hydrogeology. According to the manual, most stormwater management focuses on flood control and not necessarily water quality and recharge, which is a primary goal of the LID manual. Another goal of the LID manual is to reduce impervious cover, which according to the manual, is a major contributor to significant flooding, water quality degradation, and ecosystem damage. The manual recommends LID systems that utilize the natural hydrologic patterns of a particular site prior to its development, which treat runoff on the site using small scale networked landscape features as opposed to conventional systems that use drains and culverts. Examples of small scale landscape features that promote infiltration and pollution prevention include landscape preservation (i.e. tree protection and preservation of stream buffers) and vegetated techniques, such as rain gardens and bioswales. The LID manual also promotes permanent preservation of land through land purchases or easements and mentions the San Antonio Edwards Aquifer Protection Program as well as other local municipalities as voter approved tax-funded programs that protect land for water preservation. For a copy of the GEAA LID manual, visit: http://www.aquiferalliance.net/Library/GEAAPublications/GEAA_Manual.pdf.



Source: Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance

WINTER & SPRING ACTIVITIES

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Enjoy these fun-filled activities for the whole family:

- San Antonio Botanical Gardens — Winter activities include “Family Flashlight Night” in February.
- 7th Annual Get Outdoors Event — Learn about outdoor recreation in our area with exhibits, hands-on-activities and educational demonstrations at Mission Park Pavilion on March 7th.
- Contemporary Art Month — Month-long art celebration in March featuring more than 400 exhibits at more than 50 venues across the city.
- San Antonio Witte Museum — Student workshops including “From River to Sink, What’s in My Drink?” for Grades 4-8 on Monday’s and Wednesday’s from 9:30 am to 11:15 am.



For more information on family fun things to do this winter and spring, please visit the websites below:

San Antonio Botanical Gardens:
<http://www.sabot.org/>

7th Annual Get Outdoors Event:
https://www.sara-tx.org/events/get_outdoors_event.php

San Antonio Witte Museum:
<http://www.witemuseum.org/>

Contemporary Art Month:
<http://contemporaryartmonth.com/>



Painting: Skiffs, by Gustave Caillebotte
Source: National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC



Source: San Antonio Water System

LOCAL WATER CONSERVATION STRATEGIES

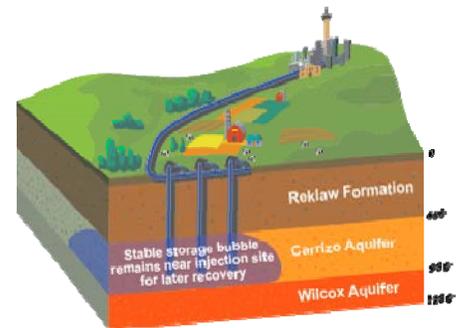
SAWS LEADING THE WAY IN WATER CONSERVATION

The City's aquifer protection program is not the only water protection game in town. Did you know that SAWS has received national attention for its water conservation efforts as well, which include a diverse portfolio of water sources, water conservation efforts, planning, and community involvement? Currently, SAWS uses nine different water sources including the Edwards Aquifer, the Medina Lake and River System, direct recycled water, the Trinity Aquifer, Canyon Regional Water Authority, the Carrizo Aquifer, and Aquifer Storage and Recovery. According to the SAWS 2012 Water Management Plan, additional water infrastructure projects are planned over the next five years to include brackish-groundwater desalination, the Vista Ridge pipeline, surface water from the Carrizo Aquifer, and Edwards Aquifer water obtained from purchasing and leasing. SAWS also excels in promoting water conservation through residential and commercial rebate, such as the *WaterSaver Landscape Coupon* and the *WaterSaver Irrigation Consultation* program. In addition to a diverse water portfolio and promoting water conservation strategies, SAWS operates the largest direct recycled-water system in the country, according to SAWS. More than 130 miles of pipeline are reportedly used to deliver high-quality recycled water to golf courses, parks, and commercial and industrial customers. For more information on SAWS projects and rebate information, visit: <http://www.saws.org/>.

TEXAS NEWS

SAWS AQUIFER STORAGE AND RECOVERY UPDATE

The Twin Oaks Aquifer Storage and Recovery Facility (ASR) is a vital water resource in times of drought. The ASR was created in 2004 as a water reservoir to store water underground for future use. From 2004 to 2010, surplus water from the Edwards Aquifer was pumped through a 25-mile pipeline to the Carrizo Aquifer in Southern Bexar County. In times of need, it is pumped back into San Antonio's water supply. In 2014, the ASR was used extensively due to the drought and according to Roberto Macias, plant manager of the Twin Oaks ASR, it was pumped almost the entire year. The water reservoir created by the ASR relieved pressure off of the Edwards Aquifer, which allowed SAWS customers to avoid facing Stage III restrictions in 2014. According to ASR personnel, water is re-directed back into the storage facility from San Antonio when water demand is slow. For more information on this fascinating resource, visit: http://saws.org/Your_Water/WaterResources/projects/asr.cfm.



Source: San Antonio Water System

Useful Links

San Antonio Water Systems
<http://www.saws.org/>

Edwards Aquifer Authority
<http://www.edwardsaquifer.org/>

TCEQ Water Homepage
http://www.tceq.texas.gov/agency/water_main.html

Texas Water Development Board
<http://www.twdb.texas.gov>

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

UPCOMING 2015 WINTER/SPRING EVENTS

Don't miss out on these informative events regarding water and land conservation related issues:

- Urban Riparian Symposium — Austin, TX — February 11-13
- EAPP Conservation Advisory Board monthly meeting — San Antonio — Feb. 25
- TLTC Texas Land Conservation Conference — Austin — March 4-6
- 2015 Gulf Coast Water Conservation Symposium — Houston, TX — March 4
- National Groundwater Association 2015 Groundwater Summit — San Antonio — March 16-18
- TALT Saving Family Lands Seminar — San Antonio — March 25
- TEXAS WATER 2015 — Corpus Christi, TX — April 14-17
- TCEQ 2015 Annual Public Drinking Water Conference — Austin — August 11-12



CONSERVATION ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER PROFILE

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WITH DR. FRANCINE ROMERO, CAB CHAIRWOMAN

Question: How long have you been in the CAB Chair position and what is your role?

Answer: It was my honor to be elected Chair in June of 2011; I have served as a CAB member since 2009.

Question: What are the responsibilities of the CAB?

Answer: The CAB is charged with serving as steward of the sales tax fund, ensuring that this public money is spent in the most efficient and effective ways, in order to best protect quality and quantity of our aquifer recharge. We make sure that only the most responsible purchases, whether for land or for conservation easements, are recommended to City Council for their final approval.

Question: Why did you decide to be involved with the EAPP?

Answer: This was my dream job (well, dream volunteer position) because I have been fascinated with the program since its inception. One of my passions is finding the key to preserving open space, but it is frustrating that so many policies aimed at achieving this goal are relatively ineffective, and at the same time introduce regulatory measures that may clash with property rights. This program is innovative, popular, and incredibly effective, and I was thrilled to be given the chance to be involved with it.

Question: How much of a difference do you think the EAPP has made towards water preservation?

Answer: It makes all the difference in the world. The program is so effective because it is based on the simplest of concepts—allowing recharge to occur as it is naturally intended, by keeping the land in an unspoiled state.

Question: Do you think the EAPP is an important tool in meeting the City's water needs?

Answer: Yes, because of the substantive reasons already mentioned and because it focuses on what will always be our primary, best, and cheapest source of water, the Edwards Aquifer. While the diversification of our water supply is also getting much needed attention, the Edwards is our star.

Question: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Answer: Thank you, San Antonio voters, for continuing to support and approve of this measure. You are visionaries!



Dr. Francine Romero, CAB Chair, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board representative

DID YOU KNOW?

- Since the early 1980s, San Antonians have reduced their water consumption by more than 25%
- Installing just two low-flow shower heads and low-flow aerators on faucets, as well as repairing or replacing leaky faucets and toilets can save your household up to 25,000 gallons of water per year!
- Drip irrigation systems for flower beds, gardens and even trees and shrubs will help prevent unwanted evaporation and save you money!

Source: San Antonio Water System (SAWS)

WATER CONSERVATION NEWS

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION: CONSERVE MORE WATER!

What were your New Years resolutions for 2015? To eat healthier? To visit the gym more often? Excellent resolutions, to be sure. But how about adding one more to the list: To conserve more water. After all, water is one of our most important natural resources, but also one that so many of us take for granted. It's easy for us to forget just how precious this resource is when it's always there if we turn on the tap.

One thing each of us can do this new year is take a step back and really think about how much water we use. By taking some very simple steps you can save up to thousands of gallons of water every year. For instance: Install low-flow shower heads and water-saving aerators. Turn the water off when you brush your teeth and shave. Don't over-water your yard, or, even better, install native, drought tolerant plants if possible. Wash only full loads of laundry, not half-full loads. The ways to conserve are countless. For more ideas on how you can better conserve water in 2015, visit <http://takecareoftexas.org/water/water-conservation>.

You'll be surprised just how much water (and money) you might save when you really put your mind to it. So what do you say, San Antonio? Let's all commit to conserve more water in 2015. Happy (slighted belated) New Year!

Fix that leaky toilet today!



Source: San Antonio Water System