



A sinkhole cave on land in Medina County

EDWARDS AQUIFER PROTECTION PROGRAM

NEWS AND UPDATES

The City's aquifer protection program was busy this quarter, protecting 3,141 acres of land within the Seco Creek watershed in Medina County in the month of February. Additionally, the San Antonio City Council unanimously approved the acquisition of 2,789 acres of conservation easement land in Bexar, Medina and Uvalde Counties on April 17, which will bring the grand total of protected land under the program to 122,614 acres.

In April, program staff and members of the Conservation Advisory Board presented their annual report to the San Antonio City Council, providing Council members with an overview of the program as well as findings from a 2014 program sustainability study, conducted by national research firm LMI. The [B-Session meeting was covered](#) by local TV news stations KSAT-12 on April 9. To supplement the program's annual report, District 8 Councilman Ron Nirenberg wrote an April 16 [op-ed article for the San Antonio Express-News](#) calling for future support of the program.

The program also will be featured in the Spring/Summer issue of the [TX-H2O Magazine](#) from the Texas Water Resources Institute.

CONSERVATION ADVISORY BOARD

Dr. Francine Romero, CAB Chair
Parks & Recreation Advisory Board

Xavier Urrutia, Director
City of San Antonio Parks & Recreation

Brock Curry
Edwards Aquifer Authority

Jim Blair
San Antonio River Authority

Chris Holm
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

Scott Halty
San Antonio Water System

Matthew Myers
San Antonio Economic Development
Foundation

Clayton Binford
Medina County Board Member

John Dodson
Uvalde County Board Member

CONTACT

City of San Antonio
Edwards Aquifer Protection Program
Municipal Plaza Building
114 W. Commerce St, 2nd Floor
San Antonio, TX 78205

Grant Ellis, Special Projects Manager
Phone: (210) 207-2815
Email: Grant.Ellis@sanantonio.gov

Susan Courage, Management Analyst
Phone: (210) 207-2162
Email: Susan.Courage@sanantonio.gov

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

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





IN THIS ISSUE

<i>Texas News</i>	2
<i>Spring in San Antonio</i>	2
<i>Edwards Aquifer Updates</i>	3
<i>Rainwater Harvesting</i>	3
<i>National Conservation News</i>	3
<i>Calendar of Events</i>	3
<i>Water Supply Enhancement Program</i>	4
<i>Wetlands</i>	4
<i>Did you Know?</i>	4



TEXAS NEWS

NEW TWDB WATER DATA FOR TEXAS WEBSITE

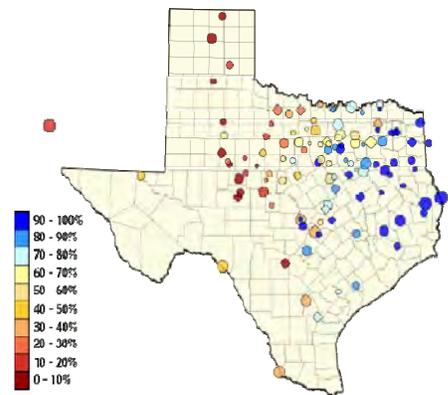
The Texas Water Development Board's Water Data for Texas website was launched in 2012 and now features information on the state's groundwater resources. TWDB announced in March that their Water for Data website will also provide visitors with groundwater data, in addition to the standard information on surface water and drought.

According to TWDB, the key has been increased participation in the statewide program. TWDB presently has 184 groundwater well recorders in 79 counties throughout Texas, a number that has increased significantly over the last decade. A complete list of currently active wells can be seen at the Water Data for Texas website link below.

The TWDB's Water Data for Texas site also contains valuable information on state supply reservoirs as well as existing and projected drought conditions for the state.

More information can be found at the TWDB website: waterdatafortexas.org.

Water Supply Reservoirs in TX



Source: Texas Water Development Board



SPRING IN SAN ANTONIO

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Spring forward with these fun-filled activities for the whole family:

- Cibolo Nature Center — Near Boerne, this nature center has bird watching and other activities for kids.
- Fisherman's Corner — Near Canyon Lake, your whole family can fish with no license needed.
- Children's Vegetable Garden Program — At the San Antonio Botanical Garden, this program is an opportunity for children to grow their own vegetables and ornamental plants.
- San Antonio Museum of Art — SAMA offers First Sundays for Families, which includes activities such as sketching, painting, storytelling, films and more for the whole family.

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

Cibolo Nature Center:
<http://www.cibolo.org>

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

Fisherman's Corner:
<http://www.canyonlakefishing.com>

San Antonio Museum of Art:
<http://www.samuseum.org/learn>



Source: Edwards Aquifer Authority

EDWARDS AQUIFER UPDATES

GROUNDWATER LEVELS ON THE DECLINE

Groundwater levels in the Edwards Aquifer are declining, according to both the Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District (BSEACD) and the Edwards Aquifer Authority (EAA).

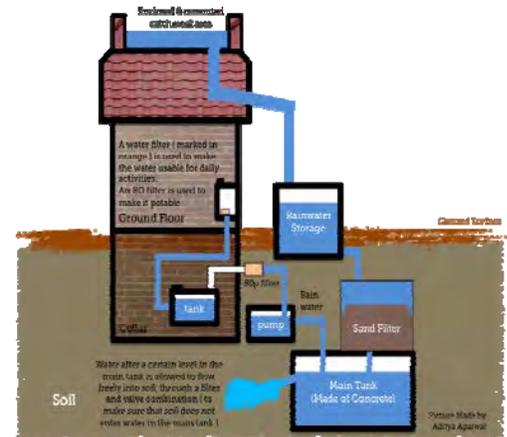
In their April newsletter, BSEACD released the findings of a recent study which suggests that, despite late winter and early spring rains, the aquifer has not seen the levels of recharge in the Barton Springs segment of the aquifer needed to hold off predicted drought restrictions for the region. For more information, visit: <http://www.bseacd.org/>

Additionally, the EAA has already gone into Stage 3 water restrictions, much earlier in the year than expected or hoped. Under Stage 3, EAA requires all Edwards groundwater permit holders to reduce their annual authorized pumping by 35 percent in order to help stabilize aquifer levels until more rain arrives. For more information on the EAA's regulations, visit: <http://www.edwardsaquifer.org/>

RAINWATER HARVESTING

A PATHWAY TO SUSTAINABLE WATER MANAGEMENT

A building-scale rainwater harvesting system is one of a limited number of options for suburban and rural areas where intensive future development is expected. Building designs incorporated with rainwater harvesting systems consist of a collection area, such as a roof print, water storage container or cistern, and filtration/disinfectant system. Water that is collected from these systems can be reused or recycled on building sites, which can reduce a significant portion of water demand. This approach can also accommodate development without the costs and other liabilities of large-scale water transfers or building new reservoirs. In 2011, the Texas Water Development Board compiled a report to the 80th Texas Legislature on "Rainwater Harvesting Potential and Guidelines for Texas", which stated that rainwater harvesting is a valid and pertinent water supply strategy in Texas. The report emphasized the importance of such systems to reduce the stress to the Edwards, Trinity, and other aquifers where rural and suburban areas are slated for development.



Source: Meadows Center for Water and the Environment

Useful Links

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

Texas State Soil and Water
Conservation Board
<http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/>

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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

UPCOMING 2014 SPRING & SUMMER EVENTS

2014 workshops are right around the corner! Don't miss out on these informative events regarding water and land conservation related issues:

- 2nd Annual Health & Built Environment Conference - San Antonio — May 7
- Grand Opening of the Jacob's Well Natural Area - Wimberley — May 10
- 2014 Texas Water Summit - Austin — May 19
- Water Reuse in Texas: Extending our Water Frontier - Houston — July 18
- TCEQ 2014 Water Quality & Storm Water Seminar - Austin — September 16-17



Invasive woody plants in the Texas Hill Country

WATER SUPPLY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

REVISED RULES ON BRUSH REMOVAL PROJECTS

Since the mid-1990s, Texas has implemented a brush control program to remove water demanding plants, such as juniper, mesquite, and other invasive woody species with the goal to enhance water supply.

In 2011, the program was re-structured and named the Water Supply Enhancement Program (WSEP), which is implemented by the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB). According to the TSSWCB, the new objectives of the program focus on water supply projects that have the greatest conservation need with the highest water yield. In 2013, the TSSWCB approved a revised policy on implementing program goals, funding allocation, and criteria for water project proposals. According to the TSSWCB, consideration for WSEP funds is now based on projects that have completed a feasibility study that includes a watershed-specific computer-model with a water yield component. Although this new requirement may not approve every proposed watershed project for funding, other federal programs are available to landowners seeking assistance with brush clearing.

For landowners participating in the City's aquifer protection program, financial assistance with brush clearing may be available from the Edwards Aquifer Authority or the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), as long as a City approved Brush Management Plan has been implemented. For more information on these programs, visit: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/equip/> and http://data.edwardsaquifer.org/display_programs_services_s.php?pg=range_management.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Wetlands are a unique ecosystem, which benefit from the flow of water, cycling of nutrients, and energy of the sun. They are characterized by their hydrology, soils, and vegetation.
- Although wetlands are usually wet, a wetland may not be wet year-round.
- Wetlands are often called "Nurseries of Life" because they provide habitat for numerous species of aquatic and terrestrial plants and animals.
- The United States loses about 60,000 acres of wetlands each year.
- Habitat loss for species dependent on wetlands has been a leading cause of species extinction since the 1970s.

Source: Environmental Protection Agency

WETLANDS

WHERE WATER MEETS THE LAND

Wetlands are part of our natural water resources and contribute significantly to the health of a watershed. Wetlands have a number of positive functions, including slowing floodwaters, trapping sedimentation and pollution, contributing towards downstream waters, recharging groundwater, and providing aquatic and terrestrial habitat.

Wetlands are essential to the functioning of waterways and are a vital part of the City's aquifer protection program. Wetlands include marshes, swamps, and bogs, but can vary drastically due to differences in soils, vegetation, hydrology, and other factors. A number of wetlands have been protected through the City's aquifer protection program, which have helped to slow floodwaters, filter excess runoff and sedimentation, and assist in downstream and groundwater recharge. Watersheds within the City's target area have directly benefitted from preservation of such wetlands. The Blanco Creek watershed, in particular, consists of several wetlands rich with aquatic and terrestrial life. Most of these wetlands are adjacent to the watershed, however, some are free-standing water bodies. Although not connected to the watershed, these isolated wetlands contribute significantly to groundwater recharge.



Wetland located on a City-held Conservation Easement in the Blanco Creek Watershed