

February 1, 2011

For Immediate Release

Local Environmental Groups Laud Resolution Adopted by SAWS

At their meeting today, the Board members of the San Antonio Water System (SAWS) voted to unanimously adopt:

A Resolution directing System staff to submit Amendments to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to reduce the geographical area of five previously submitted applications to expand the Certificate of Convenience and Necessity to the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction boundary of the City of San Antonio.

This action by the Board ended a five year long legal dispute between SAWS and the Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance, the Helotes Heritage Association, the City of Grey Forest, the San Geronimo Valley Alliance, and the Hill Country Planning Association, who opposed SAWS applications to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality for Certificates of Convenience and Necessity (CCN) that would have designated SAWS as the sole provider of water and sewer services for over a hundred thousand acres of Northwestern Bexar and Medina counties designated as critical watershed and recharge areas for the Edwards Aquifer. The groups argued that becoming the sole service provider for this area would deprive SAWS of the ability to deny or negotiate requests for service from inappropriate developments in the Edwards Aquifer Recharge and Contributing zones, thereby opening this environmentally fragile area to an onslaught of high density development.

Those opposing the original applications today appeared before the board to urge them to support this resolution to amend the application for CCN to provide sewer service to 110,200 acres by removing 77,430 acres from the original application, and 35,538 acres from the CCN application to expand water service to 36,437 acres.

"I am glad these matters could be resolved without further litigation that would have been expensive for all parties involved." said Eric Allmon, attorney who represented those opposing the original applications. "GEAA will work with both SAWS and the TCEQ to ensure that this decision can be implemented as quickly and efficiently as possible."

Annalisa Peace, Director of the Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance, thanked the board for "the transparency of the process through which SAWS staff came to propose this resolution. All of us who initially opposed the applications feel that the action recommended by SAWS staff represents good public policy and will result in enhanced protection of our precious water resources. We are very grateful to the SAWS Board and staff for their considerable part in arriving at this solution."

The amended applications:

SAWS CCN applications for Sewer Service:

Application 355668-C, TCEQ Docket No. 2007-0950-UCR, SOAH Docket No. 582-07-3765

Application 35569-C, TCEQ Docket No. 2007-0951-UCR, SOAH Docket No. 582-07-3763

SAWS CCN applications for Water Service:

App. 35484-C, TCEQ 2007-0477-UCR, SOAH Docket No. 582-07-3140

App. 35445-C, TCEQ 2007-0719-UCR, SOAH Docket No. 582-07-3141