

A Close Look at the Vista Ridge Water Pipeline: What is it Good For?

Alamo Sierra Club

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Save our Springs Alliance
Austin's water watchdog since 1992



Key Questions about Vista Ridge:

- * What is the Vista Ridge project?
- * Does San Antonio need it?
- * Are there better alternatives?
- * Is it affordable and equitable?
- * Is it sustainable and reliable?
- * Is it fair to neighbors and to future generations?
- * Does it help protect the Edwards Aquifer?
- * Does it promote water conservation?
- * What do we do about it?

Key Questions about Vista Ridge:

- * Are there better alternatives? The preliminary answer is “yes.” When the Ecosystem Economics study is complete, we’ll have a more thorough answer.
- * Is it sustainable and reliable?
- * Is it fair to neighbors and to future generations?
- * Does it help protect the Edwards Aquifer?

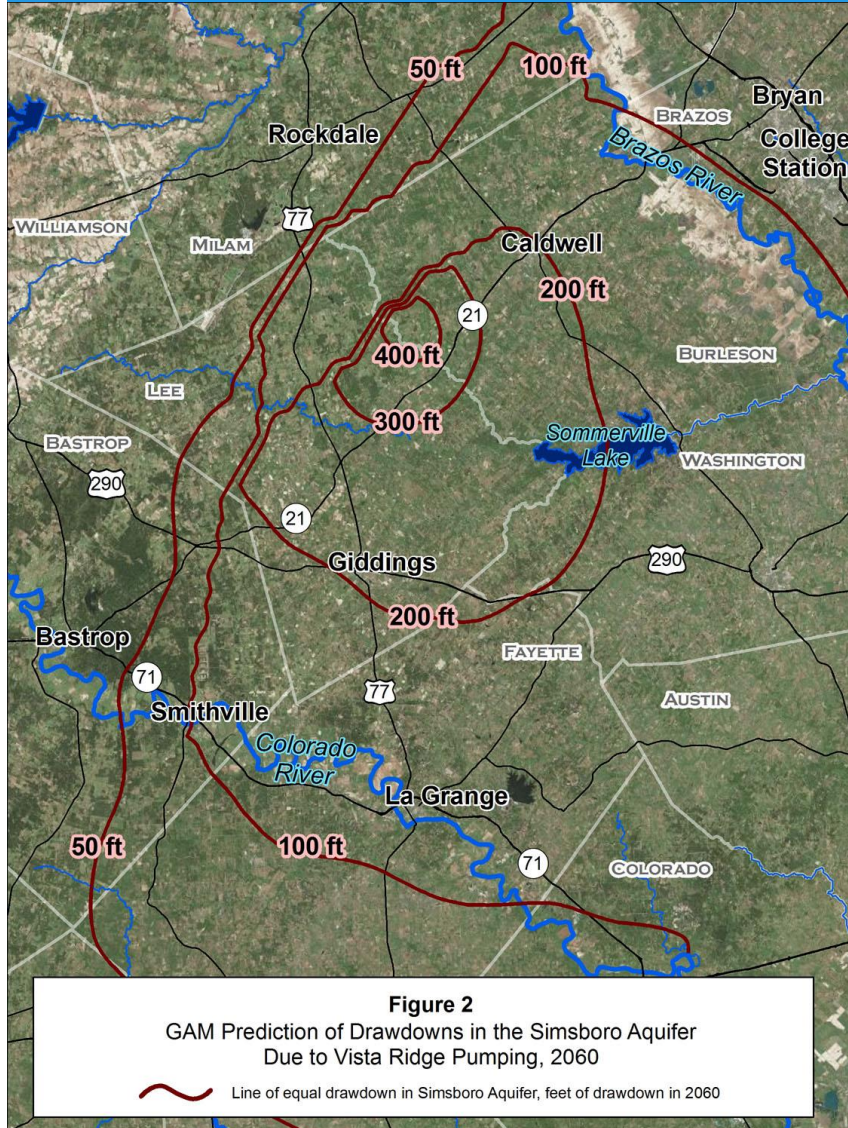
- * What do we do about it?

Are there Better Alternatives to Vista Ridge? Ecosystem Economics study

* **Objective:**

Complete a brief assessment of the economics of the Vista Ridge project, particularly in comparison to the other alternative previously analyzed as part of the SAWS master planning process - the expanded local brackish desalination project coupled with a continued commitment to greater water efficiency, reuse, and other small-scale water supply strategies.

Is Vista Ridge water sustainable and reliable?



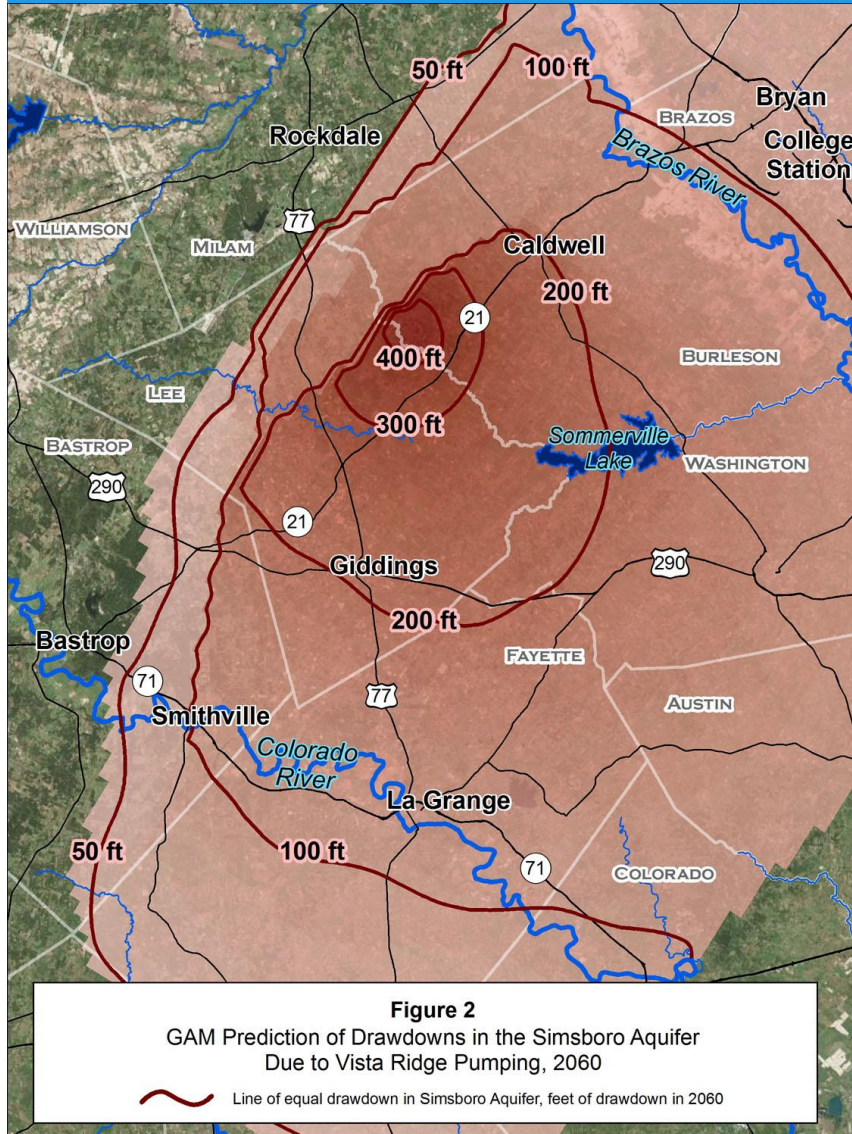
GAM Prediction of Drawdowns in the Simsboro Aquifer Due to VR Pumping, 2060

400 feet within 1 mile
300 feet within 5 miles

Drawdown of 100 feet into surrounding counties:

Burleson	Brazos
Milam	Colorado
Bastrop	Austin
Lee	Fayette
Washington	Gonzales

Is Vista Ridge water sustainable and reliable?



GAM Prediction of Drawdowns in the Simsboro Aquifer Due to VR Pumping, 2060

Only shows drawdown from 50,000 AFY of VR pumping

Does not include baseline pumping:

	2000	2060
POSGCD	12,200	48,500
LPGCD	11,300	40,400

Does not include other proposed mega-permits:

Forestar Inc.	12,000/45,000 AFY
End Op L.P.	46,000 AFY

GAM Predictions of Average Drawdowns in the Simsboro Aquifer from 2000 to 2060

Groundwater Conservation District	Desired Future Conditions (ft)	Baseline drawdown (ft)	Baseline plus Vista Ridge drawdown (ft)
Lost Pines GCD (Bastrop and Lee counties)	237	209	320
Post Oak Savannah GCD (Burleson and Milam counties)	300	279	402

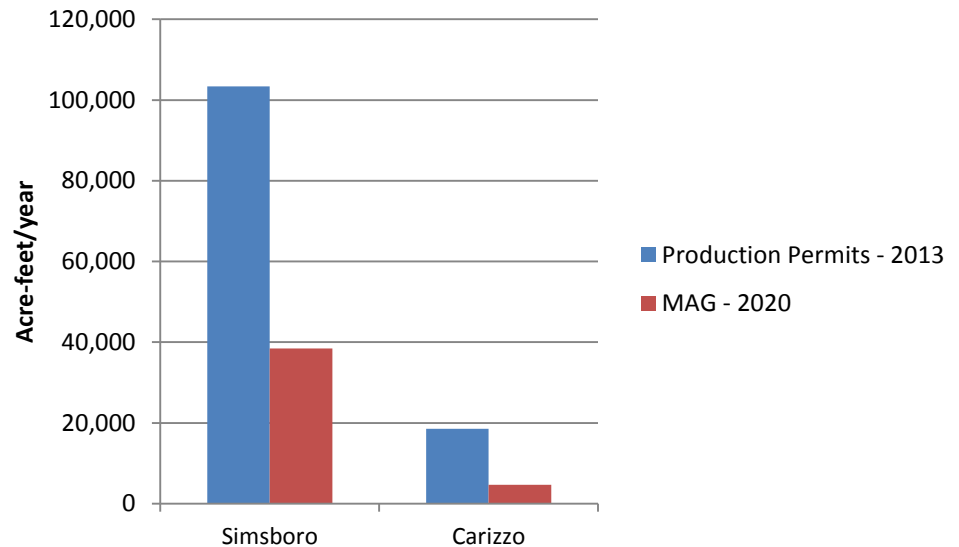
Dr. Curtis Chubb's "Petition for Inquiry" challenging Post Oak Savannah's Rules

1. The Post Oak Savannah GCD's rules are not designed to achieve the DFCs or protect the groundwater.
2. The District's "permit everything" policy has led to extreme over-permitting of the Simsboro and Carrizo Aquifers.
3. The District's lack of monitoring and enforcement has led to unchecked over-pumping already – over-pumping that will only get worse with Vista Ridge.

POSGCD's rules will not achieve the DFCs or protect the groundwater.

- * Rules allow everyone 2 acre-feet/year per acre of land
- * The district has issued production permits which exceed MAG-2020 by:
 - * 169% for the Simsboro
 - * 294% for the Carrizo.

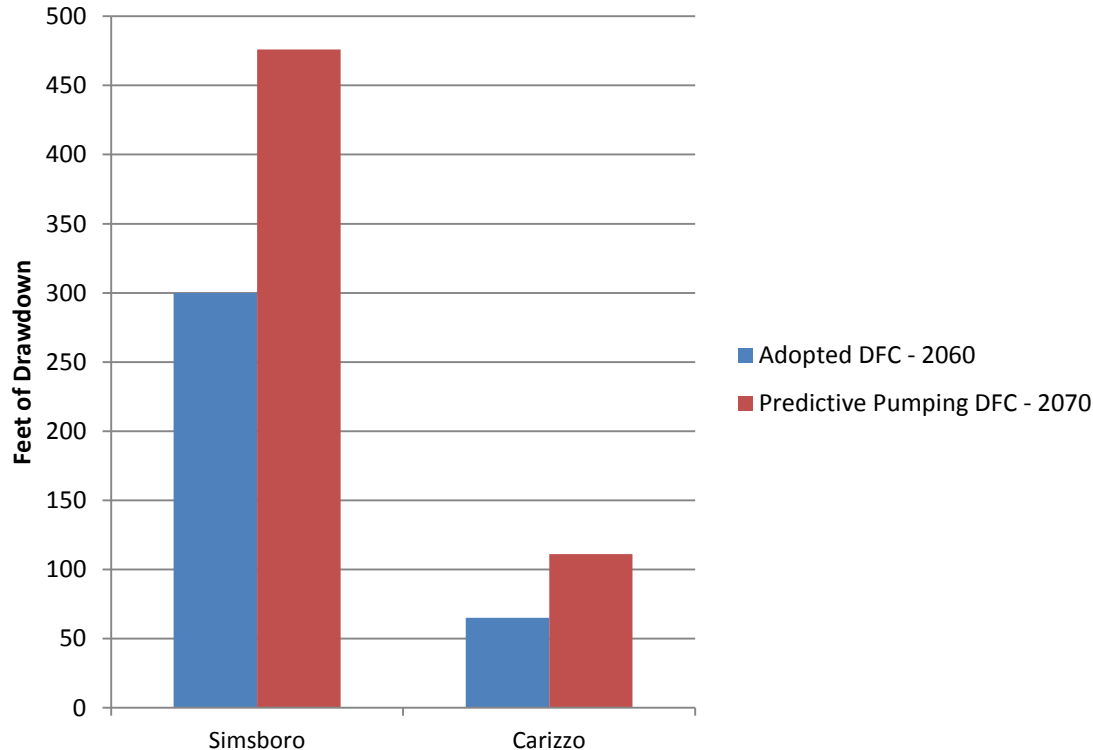
Simsboro and Carrizo Aquifers



Comparison of Production Permits and MAG for the Simsboro and Carrizo Aquifers within the District. The Production Permits totals were calculated using the District's Permits and Pumping July 2013 File. MAG-2020 was determined from the GAM Runs and GTA Assessment cited for Table 8-1 of the District's Management Plan. **NOTE:** The Production Permits totals for the two aquifers may be higher than displayed because the source aquifer for 10,291 acre-feet/year of production permits is not identified in the District's Permits and Pumping July 2013 File.

Predicted Drawdowns Greatly Exceed Adopted DFCs

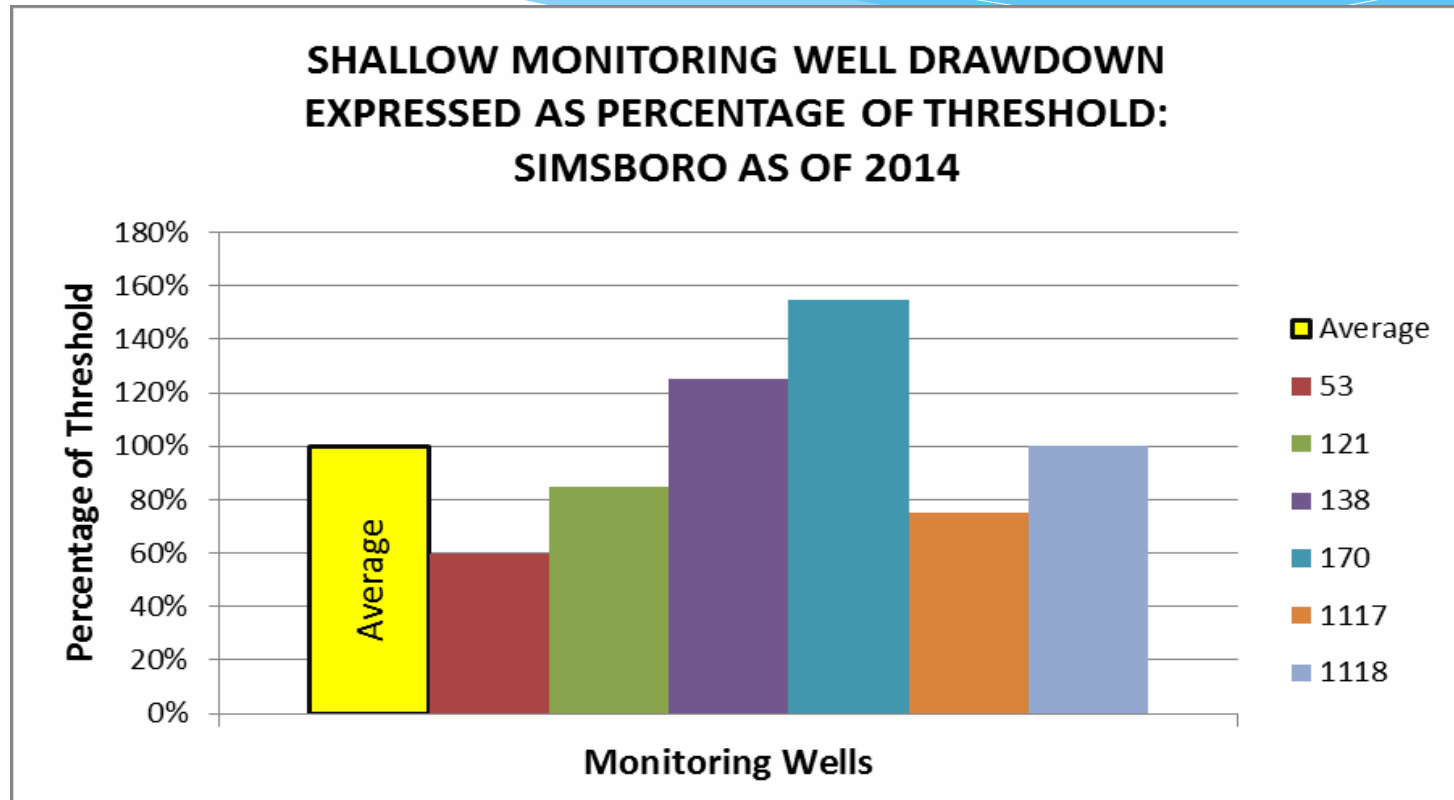
Simsboro and Carrizo Aquifers



The adopted DFCs for 2060 for the Simsboro and Carrizo Aquifers are 300-foot and 65-foot drawdowns, respectively.

Comparison of 'Adopted DFC-2060' and a DFC based on predictive pumping.

Monitoring wells have already reached threshold levels



The drawdowns of six monitoring wells in the Simsboro shallow management zone expressed as percentage of the threshold value which is 20 feet in the year 2059.

Is the Vista Ridge project fair to neighbors and to future generations?



- * The truth is - Vista Ridge is a Regional Project, not just a San Antonio Project.
- * This basic truth was hidden and communities across the affected region were excluded from the process.



Is Vista Ridge project fair to neighbors and to future generations?



The project will cross seven counties and require easements on approximately 475 private parcels.

It will deplete the source aquifers.

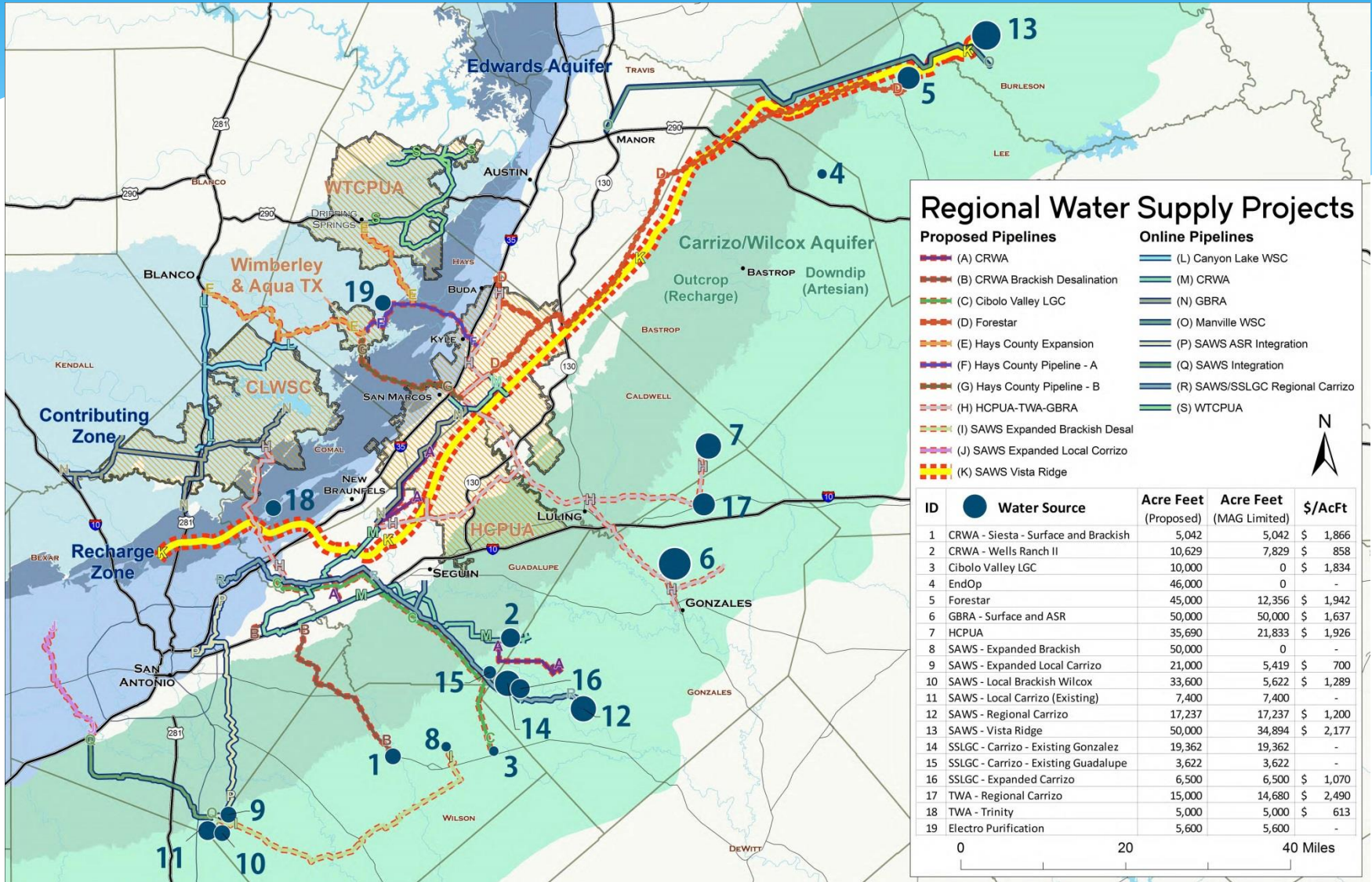
And it will harm the climate with its huge energy demands.

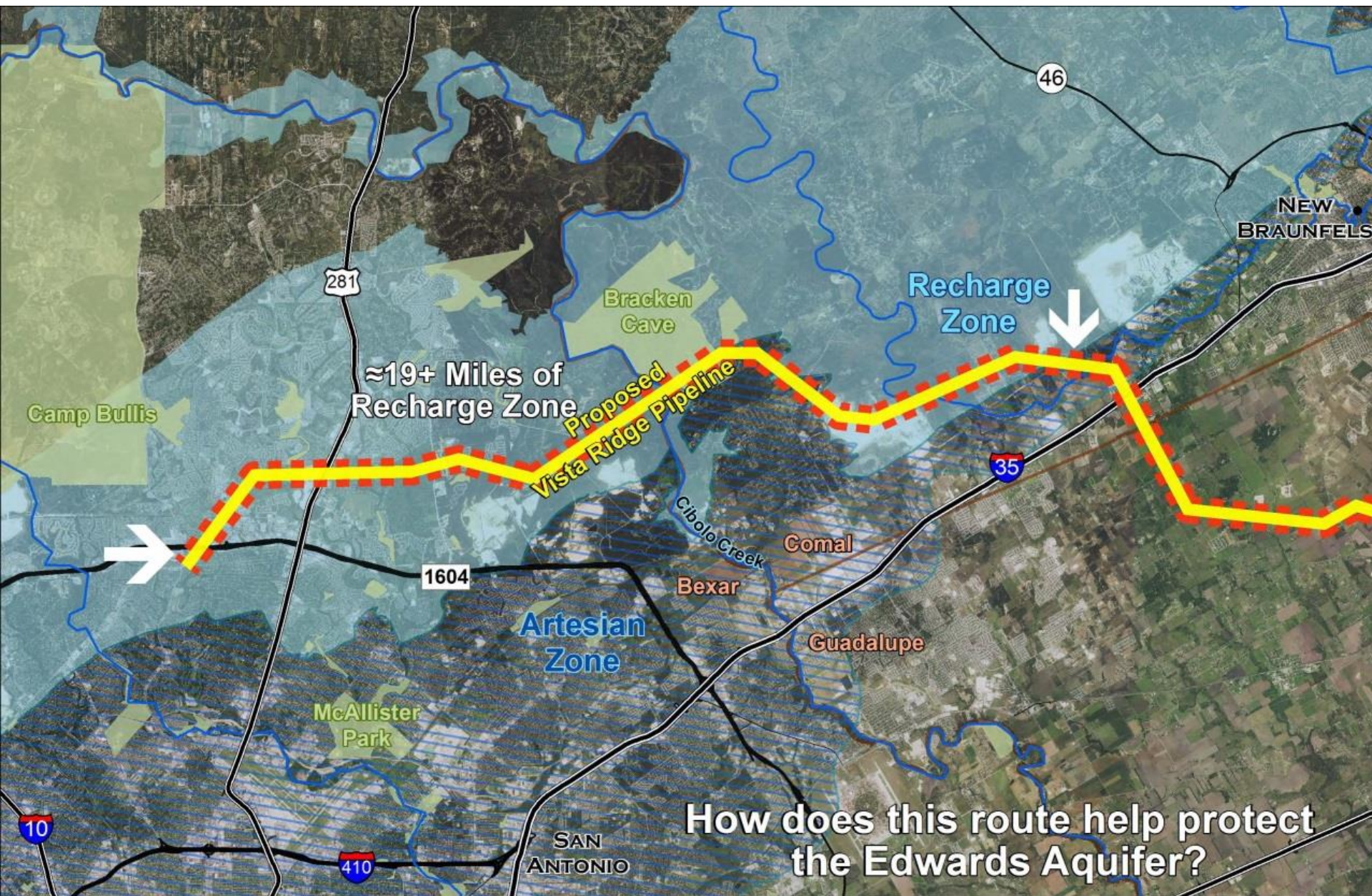
This is NOT water for our grandchildren.

San Antonio Water System

http://www.saws.org/your_water/waterresources/projects/vistaridge/

Does Vista Ridge help protect the Edwards Aquifer?





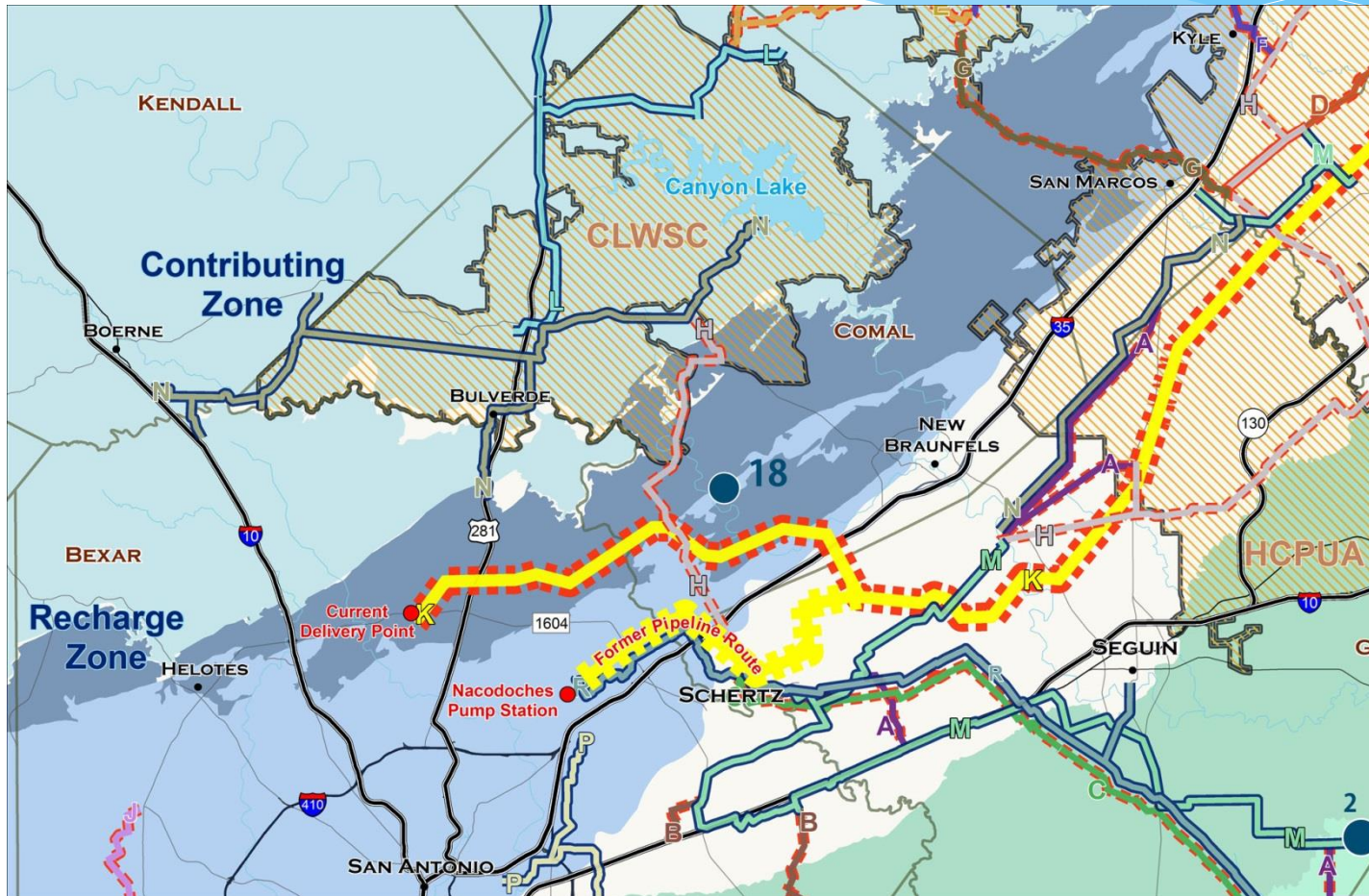
≈19+ Miles of Recharge Zone

Recharge Zone

Artesian Zone

How does this route help protect the Edwards Aquifer?

Vista Ridge is designed to carry water to new water-intensive development



This route pits selling water to reduce costs against protecting the aquifer.

"The idea of infinite or unlimited growth, which proves so attractive to economists, financiers and experts in technology ... is based on the lie that there is an infinite supply of the earth's goods, and this leads to the planet being squeezed dry at every limit."



Photo: Alfredo Borba

What do we do about it?

- * Oppose the rate hikes! (Yay, Alamo Sierra Club!)
- * Tell City Council to abandon Vista Ridge.
- * If they won't abandon the project now, ask City Council to take the full 30-month option period to conduct a fully-transparent due diligence analysis.

Demand due diligence before the *May 2017* deadline

A Complete Due Diligence Analysis Should Include:

- * Full federal environmental impact study
- * Climate impact study
- * Cost/benefit study
- * Public hearings along the entire corridor for public input

Just say “No Thank You” to Vista Ridge!

Contact me:

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