

Dear GEAA members and friends,

The Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance (GEAA) endorses the position stated jointly by the Lone Star Sierra Club and the National Wildlife Federation - [Meeting Texas Water Needs.](#)

Recognizing the need for the 83rd Legislature to address our water needs, GEAA supports Representative Ritter's HB 4 and HB 11 authorizing a one-time allocation of \$2 billion from the State's "Rainy Day" funds to capitalize a new, dedicated revolving fund for use in financing water projects in the State Water Plan. HB 4 especially recognizes two very important principles that the environmental community and others have flagged as critical to our water future: the need to prioritize projects for state financial assistance and the fact that water conservation is a key component of meeting water needs.

GEAA will be working to insure that half of this funding is dedicated to projects that conserve water, and advocating that the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) devote funding to state wide conservation efforts that might succeed in significantly lowering water use. TWDB grant funding for large projects should be contingent on the applicant having achieved State adopted conservation goals and establishing an effective drought management plan.

The TWDB needs to make funds available to fix leaks in municipal water systems, especially for small municipalities that do not have the tax base to float bonds for this purpose. Figures on leak ratios for small service providers State wide are very high, some has high as 25%. TWDB should also add funding for conservation projects for small municipalities and can explore whether there are Federal funds to augment these efforts. Making the water conservation programs, similar to those implemented by San Antonio, available to smaller systems statewide could yield significant savings and are worthy of funding at the State level. Likewise, water conservation efforts targeted at exempt well owners state wide could yield significant aggregate savings of groundwater.

We look forward to working with Representative Ritter and other state legislators to assure that Texas takes an effective and comprehensive approach to addressing all of our state's water needs through conservation, drought response, environmental flow protection, and water and wastewater infrastructure*.

Annalisa Peace
Executive Director