

Attachment A, 2016 CFC Campaign

The Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance is headquartered in San Antonio, Texas with dedicated office space at 1809 Blanco Road. The office is open from 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance (GEAA) service area includes (from west to east) Valverde, Kinney, Edwards, Uvalde, Real, Kerr, Bandera, Gillespie, Medina, Kendall, Blanco, Bexar, Guadalupe, Hays, Comal, Mills, Lampassas, Burnet, Travis, Williamson, and Bell counties. These counties comprise the three segments of the Edwards Aquifer, and also include sections of the Trinity Aquifer formations. These counties also cover many major, non-contiguous metropolitan areas of the Texas Hill Country: San Antonio, Austin, New Braunfels, San Marcos, Del Rio, Castroville, and Hondo.

Specific services provided and counties served in 2016 include:

Val Verde County, population 48,705 – GEAA works with local residents and the City of Del Rio to preserve spring flows of San Felipe Springs, preserve riparian habitat along San Felipe Creek, and advises on allocation of groundwater resources.

Kinney County, population 3,598 – GEAA works with local residents to preserve spring flows at Las Moras Springs, and to protect habitat of the endangered Devil's River Minnow.

Uvalde County, population 26,405 – GEAA collaborated with local residents, local government agencies, and civic organizations to preserve groundwater resources of the Uvalde pool of the Edwards Aquifer.

Medina County, population 46,765 - GEAA works with citizens, land owners, and governmental agencies to secure permanent protection of land within watersheds critical to the preservation of high quality recharge to the Edwards Aquifer. GEAA also provides technical information as needed regarding specific projects.

Kendall County, population 35,956 – GEAA partnered with the Cow Creek Groundwater District in implementing their Watershed Protection Plan that teaches area well owners on how to best preserve groundwater resources. GEAA also provides technical information as needed regarding specific projects.

Bexar County, population 1,786,000 – GEAA works with local media, citizens, and policy makers to highlight the impact of urban development on the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone, to devise policy and practices to mitigate adverse impacts, and to promote Low Impact Development practices to preserve the integrity of the natural system. GEAA also provides technical information as needed regarding specific projects.

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Hays County, population 168,990 - GEAA works with local media, citizens, and policy makers to highlight the impact of urban development on springflows at San Marcos Springs, to devise policy and practices to mitigate adverse impacts, and to promote Low Impact Development practices to preserve the integrity of the natural system. GEAA also provides technical information as needed regarding specific projects.

Comal County, population 114,384 - GEAA participated in stakeholder processes to preserve surface water quality, to preserve springflows at Comal and Hueco springs, and to create a groundwater conservation district for the unregulated portion of Comal County. GEAA's technical staff has served extensively in an advisory capacity in the creation of local ordinances to protect ground and surface water quality and a stormwater management plan. GEAA also provides technical information as needed regarding specific projects.

Williamson County, population 456,232 - GEAA works with local media, citizens, and policy makers to highlight the impact of urban development on local water resources, to devise policy and practices to mitigate adverse impacts, and to promote Low Impact Development practices to preserve the integrity of the natural ecosystem. GEAA also provides technical information as needed regarding specific projects.

Travis County, population 1,096,000 - GEAA works with local media, citizens, and policy makers to highlight the impact of urban development on the Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone, to devise policy and practices to mitigate adverse impacts, and to promote Low Impact Development practices to preserve the integrity of the natural ecosystem. GEAA also provides technical information as needed regarding specific projects.

Statement of Health and Human Services

Water is essential to human health. GEAA advocates measures to preserve and protect water quality of the regions groundwater, rivers and streams, and surface water reservoirs. We have been active in researching, drafting regulations, and promoting best practices regarding optimal management of the Edwards and Trinity aquifer recharge and contributing zones. GEAA works with small municipalities to advise on matters concerning water quality, and to secure funding for needed water infrastructure upgrades. We work on the State level, with local and county governments, and with the region's groundwater conservation districts to adopt regulations and practices proven to protect water quality and insure fair allocation of water resources.

GEAA's Technical Research Program is a resource relied upon by local governments and policy makers throughout the region to provide accurate, site specific, up to date information on the impacts of development on our groundwater resources.

GEAA actively promotes water conservation measures such as rainwater harvesting, gray water reuse systems, xeriscaping, critical period management plans, and a host of other means to insure that the populace of Central and South Texas have adequate water supplies that are in balance with riparian requirements and preservation of native endangered and threatened species.

Given that much of our region is subject to flash flooding, GEAA promotes low impact development practices and other methods designed to protect water quality and enhance groundwater recharge while mitigating flooding.

During the past ten years, GEAA has provided approximately eight hundred area teachers with educational materials, lab exercises, and training to enable them to conduct classes that explain the unique characteristics of our karst aquifer systems and why these systems are so vulnerable to pollution. GEAA staff goes into the classrooms, teaching thousands of children and college students about the Edwards Aquifer. Our educational DVD, "Inner View of the Edwards Aquifer", is shown in classrooms throughout the region, and is aired on San Antonio's local public television station as part of their educational offerings.

GEAA's outreach programs educate the general public about what they can do to protect the region's ground and surface water resources. GEAA staff and group leaders are featured on television and radio programs, at churches and meetings to speak about what individuals can do – and not do – to reduce non-point source water pollution. GEAA is a presence at major events throughout the region, distributing information and talking to individuals about our precious water resources.

GEAA promotes cultural and eco-tourism events that highlight the unique aspects of the Texas Hill Country. We work with our member groups to chronicle the history of the many small towns and settlement of the region, and to promote recognition and preservation of natural, recreational, cultural, and historic aspects unique to the Texas Hill Country.

GEAA endeavors to publicize the connection between scarce water resources and the needs of the areas farmers and ranchers. We advertise local farmers' markets on our website and in messages to our membership to promote access to locally grown produce, highlighting the idea that urban dwellers need to choose whether water will be used to grow carpet grass in cities or food crops.

Through our permanent protection program, GEAA advocates funding, conducts research, and assembles plans to purchase land and development rights that will protect the environmentally sensitive areas of the Edwards Aquifer Recharge and Contributing zones. Preservation of these watersheds is the most secure way to ensure that our population continues to enjoy potable water of the highest quality. Preservation of natural habitat also improves air quality and provides opportunities to exercise in a healthy environment.