



Land Owners, We Need Your Help to End Wastewater Discharge in the Edwards Contributing Zone!

The surface waters of the Texas Hill Country are world renowned, providing exceptional recreational opportunities for Texans throughout. These clear flows add enormous value to ranches, parks and the quality of life of local Hill Country communities. Unfortunately, government adversely impacts that value by imposition of wastewater (sewage system) discharges directly into these same streams and rivers, resulting in degradation of water quality, devaluation of waterfront property, and damage to recreational opportunities.

Hill Country flows are the primary source of recharge of the Edwards Aquifer through cracks and fissures in limestone river and creek beds. Scientists confirm surface waters degraded by sewage system effluent also degrade the Edwards Aquifer, damaging pure water supplies. Senate Bill 1796 (Menendez) and House Bill 3036 (King) propose to end wastewater discharges in streams and rivers in the contributing zone of the Edwards Aquifer and, by amendments, replace that outmoded practice with the modern practice of land applications systems that recycle and reuse wastewater effluent.

These Discharge Bills Head to Committee Next Week

TAKE ACTION: ATTEND THE HEARINGS - OR EMAIL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

SB1796 will be heard in the Senate Ag, Water and Rural Affairs Committee on Monday (4/10) at 2:00 PM or upon adjournment of the Senate.

HB3036 will be heard on Tuesday (4/11) in the Environmental Regulations Committee at 8:00 AM.

If you can't make it to the Capitol, please consider contacting committee members. You can use the key talking points below to craft your email.

Senate Committee on Agriculture, Water, and Rural Affairs

Senator Charles Perry	charles.perry@senate.texas.gov
Senator Jose Rodriguez	Jose.Rodriguez@senate.texas.gov
Senator Brandon Creighton	Brandon.Creighton@senate.texas.gov
Senator Bob Hall	Bob.Hall@senate.texas.gov
Senator Juan Hinojosa	Juan.Hinojosa@senate.texas.gov
Senator Lois Kolkhorst	Lois.Kolkhorst@senate.texas.gov
Senator Borris Miles	Borris.Miles@senate.texas.gov

House Committee on Environmental Regulations

Representative Joseph Pickett	joseph.pickett@house.texas.gov
Representative Ed Thompson	ed.thompson@house.texas.gov
Representative John Cyrier	john.cyrier@house.texas.gov
Representative Tony Dale	tony.dale@house.texas.gov
Representative Kyle Kacal	kyle.kacal@house.texas.gov
Representative Brooks Landgraf	brooks.landgraf@house.texas.gov
Representative J.M. Lozano	j.m.lozano@house.texas.gov
Representative Ron Reynolds	ron.reynolds@house.texas.gov
Representative Eddie Rodriguez	eddie.rodriguez@house.texas.gov

Key Talking Points

The Edwards Aquifer is a critical sources of pure water for ranchers and communities in the Texas Hill Country.

The TCEQ definition of the Edwards Aquifer Contributing Zone is not the entire contributing zone. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality defines the [contributing zone of the Edwards Aquifer](#), but it does not include all of the watershed that feed streams in the contributing zone.

The quality of water in the aquifer is driven by the quality of surface water in the contributing zone. During dry periods, streams in the contributing zone may naturally stop flowing. With wastewater discharge, the only water in streams under those conditions would be wastewater effluent so no dilution of contaminants would occur.

Scientific evidence clearly demonstrates the sensitivity of the Edwards Aquifer to wastewater discharge. Streams in the contributing and recharge zones of the Edwards Aquifer currently have exceptionally high water quality and clarity due to low nutrient levels, and are [very sensitive to wastewater discharge](#). Even highly treated wastewater will have extreme

adverse water quality impacts due to phosphates and nitrates in treated effluent. These chemicals function as “fertilizer” in clear streams and rivers, causing microbial growth, algae blooms and choking moss beds. Additional contaminants like pharmaceutical and personal care products in wastewater effluent may impact human health but are not currently regulated by the EPA or TCEQ.

There is no prohibition on wastewater discharge in the contributing zone. Although there are rules prohibiting wastewater discharges in the recharge zone, there are currently no prohibitions on discharge in the contributing zone of Edwards Aquifer. The TCEQ has the authority to approve discharge permits over the objections of downstream landowners and ranchers. Contesting a wastewater discharge permit application is a daunting task for a downstream property owner, consuming large amounts of time and money.

Land application is the primary alternative to direct discharge of wastewater. Land application of wastewater effluent is more protective of water quality than discharge due to the infiltration of effluent on land and the absorption of the nutrients in effluent by green spaces. Land application of treated wastewater effluent is currently required for wastewater disposal in the contributing zone of the Barton Springs Segment of the Edwards Aquifer and in the vicinity of the Highland Lakes. **Thank you!**

You can also [Click here to sign the petition](#) that will be sent to Committee members. We only need 200 more signatures to make it to 2,000. **Please sign and forward the petition to everyone you know.**

Over the past decade Hill Country citizens have spent millions of dollars fighting these Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits to discharge into surface water or dry creek beds. We actually have a chance at putting a stop to [this filthy practice](#) forever.

Thank you for everything and, have a great weekend!

Annalisa Peace

Executive Director
[Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance](#)

You can donate to GEAA [on line](#) or mail a check to PO Box 15618, San Antonio, Texas 78212

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