



Dear GEAA members and friends,

[As mentioned](#) in an earlier message, The City of Dripping Springs has applied for a direct discharge wastewater permit from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to discharge treated sewage into Onion Creek. TCEQ already issued a [draft permit](#) which would allow Dripping Springs to discharge 995,000 gallons per day into this creek that supplies 40% of the flow to Austin's Barton Springs.

GEAA was among six environmental organizations that wrote to the Austin City Council on Tuesday urging the City of Austin not to settle on negotiations with the City of Dripping Springs unless the result was no direct discharge into Onion Creek. Read more [here](#).

Save Barton Creek Association is asking City of Austin residents to write to their City Councilmembers and TCEQ at www.savebartoncreek.org/onioncreekeffluent. There will also be a [Rally for Onion Creek](#) on Friday, October 28th at Barton Springs Pool.

We have plenty of documentation, including [this report](#), to bolster support for prohibiting this practice, which is a chronic threat to the Edwards Aquifer. In fact, San Antonio Water System joined GEAA and the San Geronimo Valley Alliance in successfully opposing a [similar permit](#) in 2010.

GEAA has been pushing for legislation that would prohibit direct discharge of sewage effluent into waterways that recharge the Edwards Aquifer for years. In 2007, and again in [2009](#), on our behalf Representative David Leibowitz and Senator Leticia Van de Putte sponsored [bills to prohibit this filthy practice](#). [Here](#) is the 2009 version of the bill, which was refined based upon recommendations of the House Natural Resource Committee. We could find no sponsors for the bill in 2013 or 2015, and are currently out begging State representatives and senators from our region to file the bill on our behalf. A note from you urging your legislators to do so would not be amiss. Stay tuned for Legislative alerts that will be tailored for your representatives.

GEAA is also working with local citizens to oppose four such permits (see more information [here](#).) and we are very concerned about this latest permit to discharge into Onion Creek. We will continue to work with [Save Barton Creek Association](#) and [Protect Our Water Now](#) to oppose the Dripping Springs Discharge Permit, and with our other local allies to contest permits for discharge into Lewis Creek, Cibolo Creek, and Dry Comal Creek.

We anticipate a whole lot more development within the Edwards Region during the coming years, which will increase the number of applications for permits to discharge treated sewage effluent directly into our creeks and streams. While we continue to oppose permits on a case by case basis, [legislation](#) is needed ASAP to stop TCEQ from issuing permits for a practice that scientists agree is not safe for our karst aquifers here in Central Texas. Such a prohibition would promote, we hope, reuse of effluent for watering lawns through the installation of [purple pipes](#) as part of the infrastructure in all new Hill Country developments – and other ideas that drought prone areas are incorporating into their codes.

And, speaking of new ways to develop that promote water conservation and water quality while minimizing flooding, stay tuned for my report on several great presentations from [SXSW Eco](#).

Thank you and, have a great weekend!

Annalisa Peace
Executive Director
[Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance](#)

PS. We rely on your support for our legislative efforts. Please consider making a contribution to GEAA today.

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

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