

Dear GEAA members and friends,

At their meeting today, the Board members of the San Antonio Water System (SAWS) voted unanimously to adopt a Resolution directing staff to reduce the geographical area of five previously submitted applications to expand water and sewer service within the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction boundary of the City of San Antonio.

This action by the SAWS Board ended a five year long legal dispute between SAWS and the Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance, the Helotes Heritage Association, the City of Grey Forest, the San Geronimo Valley Alliance, and the Hill Country Planning Association, who opposed SAWS applications to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality for Certificates of Convenience and Necessity (CCN) that would have designated SAWS as the sole provider of water and sewer services for over a hundred thousand acres of Northwestern Bexar and Medina counties designated as critical watershed and recharge areas for the Edwards Aquifer. The groups argued that becoming the sole service provider for this area would deprive SAWS of the ability to deny or negotiate requests for service from inappropriate developments in the Edwards Aquifer Recharge and Contributing zones, thereby opening this environmentally fragile area to an onslaught of high density development.

Those opposing the original applications appeared before the board to urge them to support this resolution to amend the application for CCN to provide sewer service to 110,200 acres by removing 77,430 acres from the original application, and 35,538 acres from the CCN application to expand water service to 36,437 acres.

GEAA thanks the member groups and citizens who went to considerable effort and expense to achieve a big win for the aquifer. Without their hard work and contributions to GEAA for legal fees, one of the most prolific recharge areas for the Edwards would have been severely compromised.

We also thank the SAWS Board members and staff for the transparency of the process through which SAWS staff came to propose this resolution. All of us who initially opposed the applications feel that the action recommended by SAWS staff represents good public policy and will result in enhanced protection of our precious water resources. We are very grateful to the SAWS Board for their leadership in arriving at this solution. And, last but not least, we are most grateful to each of you for your continued support that made this victory possible.

Yahoo!

Annalisa Peace, Executive Director