January 27, 2015

Contact: Annalisa Peace - 210-275-9336
Executive Director, Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance

Request for Coverage

Citizens Rally to Support Reauthorization of Props 1 & 2

When: Thursday, January 29th at 9:00 am
Where: City Council Chambers, San Antonio Municipal Plaza Building, 114 W. Commerce
What: City Council will vote on reauthorization of Propositions 1 & 2 for inclusion in the May 9th Ballot Item # 4 on the Agenda

Citizens will join the Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance and others to address the Mayor and City Council in support of the reauthorization of the 1/8 cent sales tax to protect the Edwards Aquifer and expand the City's Greenway system.

A vote on May 9, 2015 to approve Proposition 1, the Aquifer Protection Initiative, will continue the successful program for protecting the aquifer and our drinking water for the future.
•Proposition 1 re-authorizes a 1/8-cent sales tax in San Antonio to raise $90 million for land acquisition to permanently protect significant portions of the watershed that contribute to the aquifer.
•An additional $10 million will be authorized for a recharge area/recharge feature protection demonstration projects program.
•Land protected for the aquifer protects wildlife habitat, preserves our Hill Country heritage and sustains our economic base, while preserving water quality.
•To date, San Antonio has purchased land and easements on 130,000 acres, which is roughly 6% of the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone.

A vote to approve Proposition 2 for Creekways Hike & Bike Trails will continue the successful program for creating linear parks along San Antonio's creeks and rivers.
•Proposition 2 re-authorizes a 1/8-cent sales tax in San Antonio to raise $80 million for land acquisition and construction to expand our spectacular trail system San Antonio's creekways and their tributaries, including Leon Creek, Salado Creek, Apache Creek, Alazan Creek, Martinez Creek, San Pedro Creek, Medina River and San Antonio River, and for improvements and additions to the municipal parks and recreation system.
•Expansion of greenways to the city's West Side creeks will help revitalize surrounding neighborhoods and provide important drainage improvements.

The Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance is pleased to add our endorsement to those of the San Antonio River Authority, the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce, Joint Base San Antonio, and others who have announced their support for reauthorization.

"Bills are being filed in the Texas Legislature, like SB 360 by Estes, which would severely curtail the ability of by municipalities, the Edwards Aquifer Authority, or the state to protect the Edwards Aquifer." said Annalisa Peace, executive director of the Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance. "Should this bill pass, purchasing land and easements may be the only strategy left to protect our water supply."

We are grateful to Councilman Ron Nirenberg and Mayor Ivy Taylor for their leadership in putting this item before City Council, and for crafting a program that expands protection of the Aquifer to include water quality protection for urban areas of the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone.

"My number one priority has been to make sure that the conservation easement program continues at its current pace," Councilman Nirenberg said, because the city has the data to show the program works and has an impact."

XXX