



Dear San Antonio GEAA members and friends,

I'm sad to report that SAWS has refused to pass a resolution of support for [three bills](#) that would go a long way towards protecting San Antonio's primary source of water. [SB 1796](#) and its companion [HB 3467](#) would prohibit the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) from authorizing the discharge of domestic sewage effluent into any water in the contributing or recharge zones of the San Antonio or Barton Springs segments of the Edwards Aquifer. [HB 3036](#) extends that protection into the entire Edwards Aquifer Contributing Zone.

We also heard that the City of San Antonio is reluctant to pass a resolution of support and we have yet to hear from Bexar County Commissioners Court. We are especially puzzled by this lack of support from our local government agencies since [Bexar County filed a resolution of support](#) for an identical bill filed in 2009 - and in 2007 SAWS joined with GEAA and the San Geronimo Valley Alliance to contest a permit for direct discharge of sewage effluent into San Geronimo Creek, citing concerns about negative impacts on SAWS public supply wells. For two years, [the San Antonio Water System fought the plan](#), saying the development -- the Hills of Castle Rock subdivision -- would be too close to the Edwards Aquifer and San Geronimo Creek.

SAWS recently sent the following to Mayor Taylor and members of City Council, "...the legislation will either cause further proliferation of un-regulated septic systems over the recharge zone, which we do not favor because of the lack of protections and oversight, or that it will drive further and quicker expansion of our sewer collection system into the Recharge/Contributing zone areas. While that may be good in certain instances, it would increase pressure on SAWS to extend and oversize our pipelines into areas of Northern Bexar and Southern Comal Counties. This would add additional costs to SAWS, with resulting rate increases, and this could also have the result of causing higher-density development over the recharge zone, which is what the proponents have often opposed. SAWS believes that this additional step will add unnecessary burden to SAWS."

We find this answer to be offensively disingenuous in that SAWS fails to mention the option for beneficial reuse of sewage effluent through land application, a very common practice in Comal County. Several applications for direct discharge permits, such as those this bill is meant to prohibit (including by Pape Dawson Engineers) have been converted to land application permits in negotiated settlement agreements.

One thing we all agree on is that disposal of sewage effluent is a problem for the Edwards region. **We have an opportunity this year to eliminate one of the most noxious threats to water quality threatening San Antonio with these bills and we need the City of San Antonio and Bexar County Commissioners to support this legislation.**

Please contact Mayor Taylor (Mayor.IvyTaylor@sanantonio.gov), your [City Council representative](#) (ex: District1@sanantonio.gov) and your [County Commissioner](#) to let them know that you support SB 1796 / HB 3467 and HB 3036 – and that you expect them to do the same.

Thank you,

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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