



Dear GEAA members and friends in San Antonio and the surrounding areas,

We invite you to attend a press conference to be held at the SAWS HQ at noon on Monday, July 21st at SAWS HQ (2800 U.S. Hwy 281 North) in front of the building where SAWS Board Meetings are held. We will be asking the SAWS Board to call a moratorium on issuing new Utility Service Agreements on the Edwards Recharge Zone. (see press release below)

By approving these Utility Service Agreements, SAWS opens new areas of highly sensitive Aquifer lands to high-density development. Gene Dawson, President of Pape-Dawson Engineers, Inc. sums up the issue quite succinctly in an April 9th article in the San Antonio Express News, *Business in, waste out*, stating that "Organized wastewater collection is what drives development." When SAWS provides water and sewer service it enables much higher density, usually as high as 4-6 lots per acre. Housing developments of this density bring increased traffic, thoroughfare construction, sewage infrastructure installed within streams that recharge the Aquifer, and other related impacts, all leading to non-point source pollution of the Aquifer. For this reason, the Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance (GEAA) has consistently opposed SAWS wastewater service contracts over the Edwards Aquifer Recharge and Transitions zones, and the contiguous Contributing Zone.

Feel free to send this message on to your friends. The more the merrier. You are welcome to bring signage and bring or wear means of identifying your affiliation with GEAA and other organizations. We would really like to have a big crowd to show SAWS that we are serious about our request that they stop encouraging new development of the Edwards watershed. The message is simple: **GEAA opposes the acquisition of the Vista Ridge water supplies if those supplies are to be used to expand service on the Recharge Zone.**

Following the press conference, all are invited to attend the SAWS Board Policy and Planning meeting to be held at 12:30 at the SAWS Customer Service Building further up the hill.

I hope to see you on Monday!

Annalisa Peace, Executive Director, Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance

## **Request for Coverage**

### **GEAA Calls for Moratorium on New Development on the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone**

**While the Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance defers taking a position for or against the merits of the Vista Ridge water supply project until more details are forthcoming, the fifty one member groups of the Alliance unanimously oppose the acquisition of these new supplies if they are to be used to provide water utility service to new areas over the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone. The fifteen local member groups of the Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance call on San Antonio Water System (SAWS) to adopt a moratorium on SAWS Utility Service Agreements to provide service to new developments on the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone, Transition Zone, and five miles into the contiguous Contributing Zone until such time as an effective plan to regulate growth over these areas is implemented.**

**When: Monday, July 21st at Noon**

**Where: the Parking Lot of SAWS Headquarters (2800 U.S. Hwy 281 North)**

**As we near the 20th anniversary of San Antonio's water quality ordinances, we still see new development on the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone grandfathered from complying with those ordinances. SAWS continues to contribute to high density development by providing water and sewer service to grandfathered and other inappropriate developments on the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone. GEAA research indicates that current development practices are not sustainable. Water quality monitoring reflects low levels of chlorinated solvents, unmetabolized drugs, and other constituents that should not be present if the current rules were adequately protecting the aquifer.**

**GEAA is calling on SAWS to amend State permits to exclude the entire Recharge Zone from the area where they are required by law to provide service. Additional recommendations include requiring adequate buffer zones to protect streams, springs and recharge features, prohibiting discharge of treated effluent into waterways that recharge the Edwards, prohibiting installation of sewage infrastructure in creek beds of intermittent streams that recharge the Edwards, more effective rules for the design and installation of engineered structures required to protect the aquifer, and other measures and strategies that we believe are needed to protect our water quality.**

**GEAA has stated opposition to the Vista Ridge water supply project if these additional supplies are to be used to expand service into new areas of the Edwards Aquifer watershed. SAWS is recommending that the City of San Antonio annex all areas within the current extraterritorial jurisdiction, which would vastly increase high density development on the Recharge and Contributing zones under current City regulations. We urge the City and the SAWS Board to devise and adopt policies and**

**regulations that will adequately protect this irreplaceable groundwater resource before entering into any agreements to purchase additional water supplies from the Vista Ridge Consortium.**

**xxx**

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**and, you can mail contributions to support GEAA to PO Box 15618, San Antonio, Texas 78212**