



Creek State Natural Area

Honey

Dear GEAA members and friends,

Summer is the time when we here in Central Texas treasure our swimming holes. What's better when the weather tops 100 degrees than packing the cooler and heading out for a day of swimming or tubing?

This week, I got news that made me think we had better enjoy these treasures while we can. Two of the best swimming holes in Texas could soon be threatened by contamination from waste water systems.

The mayor and city council of Wimberley seem to have forgotten that you don't build your outhouse next to your well. They are considering a contract with Aqua Texas to provide centralized sewer service to downtown Wimberley by running a sewer line through [Wimberley's Blue Hole Regional Park](#) and under Cypress Creek. Aqua Texas has a history of leaks in other systems they manage, including a 100,000 gallon spill into Plum Creek in 2012.

In a [report from the Texas Tribune](#), spokesperson for Aqua Texas tried to assuage concerns that a sewage leak would threaten the popular Blue Hole at Cypress Creek by observing, "It's ironic, but if indeed there was a leak, the leak would go down, not up." Does this joker not realize that Cypress is a spring fed creek?

This quote alone should be enough to dissuade the Wimberley City Council from hiring Aqua Texas. The Wimberley Fault runs under the bridge where Aqua Texas plans to locate the pipeline. Wimberley Water Supply wells sit along the fault about a mile downstream; a leak "going down" could contaminate Wimberley's entire water supply.

Citizens of Wimberley have mounted an effort called [No Aqua Texas](#) to stop the plan. You can sign their petition [here](#).

Wimberley Blue
Hole



This week I also received notice that Silesia Properties, LP has applied for a permit to discharge up to 500,000 gallons/day of sewage effluent from a [wastewater treatment plant](#) in Spring Branch via pipe into “a dry tributary: thence to Honey Creek; thence to the Guadalupe River” near the [Honey Creek State Natural Area](#). You can read the permit application by clicking [here](#) and entering permit #WQ0015688001.

The two watersheds in the Honey Creek State Natural Area are in the catchment area of the Edwards Aquifer about 25 miles north of San Antonio. The catchment area, adjacent to the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone, comprises the upper parts of drainage basins of streams that lose water to the Edwards Aquifer as the streams cross the recharge zone. The watersheds are drained by ephemeral, first order streams that are tributaries to Honey Creek, a tributary to the Guadalupe River. You can read more [here](#) and [here](#).

GEAA has a [long history](#) of opposing such [permits](#), and we hope to join with local residents to contest this permit. But, Texas stacks the deck in favor of the applicant; contesting these cases is expensive and exhausting.

That is why we plan to go to the Texas Legislature again to request that they pass [legislation that prohibits direct discharge of sewage effluent on the Edwards Aquifer Contributing Zone](#). If [SB 1796 / HB 3036 / HB 3467](#) had passed in 2017, we would not have to fight the Honey Creek permit. We are already working hard to get this legislation passed in 2019.

You can help by [signing a petition](#) calling for a ban on the filthy practice of discharging sewage effluent into waterways that recharge the Edwards Aquifer. We are really close to 3,000 signatures but, we need lots more.

Despite this unsettling news, we urge you to enjoy your [favorite watering hole](#) this summer and rest assured that we are working hard to ensure that your children and grandchildren will be able to do the same.

Stay tuned for more, stay hydrated, and have a great weekend!

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

You can always keep up with interesting water news on [GEAA's Face Book page](#)