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## concerns

**By Annalisa Peace, For the Express-News**

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Like much of Texas, San Antonio is no stranger to flooding as seen here in 2017. Proposition 8 would provide crucial state funding to expedite flood control projects.

Photo: JERRY LARA /San Antonio Express-News

If you've recently moved to the San Antonio metropolitan area, you may not know you reside in Flash Flood Alley, a region of Central Texas that includes San Antonio and the Hill Country.

The region has been designated by the National Weather Service as the most flash flood prone in North America, leading in the number of flash food and river flooding-related deaths annually. Longtime residents will recall when rainfalls of 8 to 15 inches fell in a few hours, causing rivers to rise 11 to 15 feet in some cases.

On Nov. 5 (early voting starts Monday) we have the opportunity to vote for Proposition 8: "The constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the flood infrastructure

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planning, seeking permits for or constructing flood-related projects. If approved by voters, the flood infrastructure fund would be created at the start of 2020.

This flood infrastructure fund will require no new taxes or bonds as money will come, appropriately enough, from a one-time distribution from the state's rainy day fund, which currently stands at \$11 billion. The fund would be distributed to local governments through loans or, in some cases, grants. As loans are repaid, money would become available for new projects.

Funded projects would require cooperation among all impacted parties. A local government would receive funds only if it worked with other regional entities and hosted public meetings to hear stakeholder concerns. This provision to incorporate public input into the process for prioritizing funding will contribute substantially to the success and usefulness of flood control projects as local residents are usually most familiar with the impacts of stormwater on their communities and are thus able to provide valuable expertise.

The Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance and our allies across the state have been working hard to ensure that the funding will be administered equitably and used wisely. Thanks to concerted efforts, green infrastructure and opportunities to purchase land and conservation easements to mitigate flooding are eligible for funding under Proposition 8. In some instances, purchase of land and/or conservation easements may be the most cost-effective strategy for flood control. We are delighted legislators recognized the role privately held lands play in providing ecological services to mitigate flooding.

Additionally, as proponents of water conservation, we supported provisions to require that applications for funding include an analysis of whether the proposed flood project could use floodwater capture techniques for water supply purposes, including floodwater harvesting, detention or retention basins, aquifer storage and recovery, or other methods of capturing storm flow or unappropriated flood flow.

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incorporates green and gray infrastructure, riparian preservation and restoration, and strategic preservation of land to recharge groundwater supplies.

With increased development in the Texas Hill Country comes increases in impervious cover. Already, cities such as Boerne and Bulverde wrestle with torrents of stormwater flowing into ephemeral streams to flood previously unaffected properties. This scenario, complicated by predictions of even more severe storms on the horizon due to changing climate, will lead to tragedy if not addressed. Comprehensive planning for flood control projects that considers entire watersheds is long overdue.

Early voting begins Monday. We urge all Texans to vote for Proposition 8.

*Annalisa Peace is the executive director of the Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance, a nonprofit uniting 52 member organizations to advocate wise management of our water resources within 22 counties in Central Texas.*

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