



Member Organizations

Alamo, Austin, and Lone Star chapters of the Sierra Club
Bexar Audubon Society
Austin, Bexar and Travis Green Parties
Bexar Grotto
Boerne Together
Bulverde Neighborhood Alliance
Bulverde Neighbors for Clean Water
Cibola Nature Center
Citizens for the Protection of Cibola Creek
Comal County Conservation Alliance
Environment Texas
First Universalist Unitarian Church of San Antonio
Friends of Canyon Lake
Friends of Dry Comal Creek
Friends of Government Canyon
Fuerza Unida
Green Society of UTSA
Guadalupe River Road Alliance
Guardians of Lick Creek
Headwaters at Incarnate Word
Helotes Heritage Association
Hill Country Planning Association
Kendall County Well Owners Association
Kinney County Ground Zero
Leon Springs Business Association
Medina County Environmental Action
Native Plant Society of Texas – SA
Northwest Interstate Coalition of Neighborhoods
Preserve Castroville
Preserve Lake Dunlop Association
Preserve Our Hill Country Environment
San Antonio Audubon Society
San Antonio Conservation Society
San Geronimo Valley Alliance
San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance
San Marcos River Foundation
Save Barton Creek Association
Save Our Springs Alliance
Scenic Loop/Boerne Stage Alliance
Securing a Future Environment
SEED Coalition
Signal Hill Area Alliance
Solar San Antonio
Sisters of the Divine Providence
Texas Cave Management Association
Trinity Edwards Spring Protection Association
Water Aid – Texas State University
Wildlife Rescue & Rehabilitation
Wimberley Valley Watershed Association

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April 19, 2021

House Natural Resources Committee:

FOR HB 1143

Dear Chairman King and members of the House Natural Resources Committee,

I submit this letter of support of HB 1143 by Representative Ramon on behalf of the 54 member organizations of the Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance (GEAA).

With summer coming up many Texans and tourists will be flocking to enjoy a dip in our natural fresh water amenities. It is incumbent on the State to ensure that these water bodies are safe and can provide a great experience for those who visit.

Last summer, several pets succumbed to the lethal effects of blue-green algae (cyanobacteria), which has been found over the past several years in the Highland Lake areas, including the confluence of Barton Creek and Lady Bird Lake, and in other Texas water bodies. Some of these cyanobacteria blooms have been found to contain cyanotoxins that are harmful to humans and can be deadly to pets, notably dogs who happen to frequent these waters.

As Texas waters become warmer due to climate change, and local waterways suffer higher nutrient levels from wastewater discharge and non-point sources, it is conceivable that cyanobacteria and resulting cyanotoxins could eventually become a problem that necessitates public access to data from available monitoring data and assessment results related to pathogens and pathogen indicators in lakes, bays, springs, rivers, streams, creeks, inlets, and other bodies of fresh water commonly used for swimming, fishing, or other recreation. We urge you to vote FOR this bill that will require the Texas Commission for Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to publish this information on the TCEQ Internet website, where it will be easily accessible to the public and to media outlets that may wish to report whether or not local water bodies are safe for contact recreation. Publication of this information would also serve to inform research organizations on possible cumulative impacts of additional permitted activities.

The Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife publishes information on the safety of fish consumption (<https://tpwd.texas.gov/regulations/outdoor-annual/fishing/general-rules-regulations/fish-consumption-bans-and-advisories>). The availability of information published by TCEQ, as required by this bill, would provide similar protections as regards contact recreation.

Please vote FOR HB 1143. We urge you to send this excellent bill on its way to becoming law. Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments. Should you have any questions or wish to discuss this further, please contact me at your convenience.

Respectfully,

Annalisa Peace
Executive Director
Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance