



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Our January 2024 Member Spotlight features GEAA member [Preserve Our Hill Country Environment](#)

Preserve Our Hill Country Environment (PHCE) was formed in 2017 over a Battle with Vulcan Construction materials and the Texas Commission for Environmental Quality (TCEQ) regarding a proposed aggregate quarry in south-central Comal County.

What started as a fight focused on a TCEQ air quality permit and concerns around contamination, has now expanded into other issues including, but not limited to water, sensitive features (caves), and endangered species.

Natural resources are abundant on the proposed quarry site, formerly known as the White Ranch. White Ranch, 1,500 acres (2.3 square miles) of pristine Texas Hill Country rangeland, sits in the middle of Comal County amidst caves, rivers and streams, wildlife, and fauna. The ranch sits under the migratory paths of bats, monarch butterflies, and whooping cranes.

Numerous legacy ranches and homesteads are nearby, along with Indigenous remains and artifacts on neighboring properties and in adjacent caves. This land is one of the largest pieces of undeveloped property in the county and is in unincorporated territory midway between New Braunfels and Bulverde.

Of the utmost concern, White Ranch sits entirely atop the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone (EARZ).

The most likely next step for Vulcan is to obtain a Water Pollution Abatement Plan (WPAP). Fortunately, Vulcan must prepare and apply for a WPAP under the TCEQ's Edwards Aquifer Protection Plan (EAPP) which outlines the best management practices that will be implemented and maintained to reduce the amount of contaminants reaching the Edwards Aquifer.

In a recently published [Herald Zeitung article](#), PHCE President and CEO, Milann Guckian, further explains where they currently stand and where they're headed in the ongoing battle.

GEAA stands with PHCE in the importance of creating an understanding that aggregate product is essential to the growth of Texas, BUT it is best produced in an industrial setting using common-sense, environmentally protective practices.

Not only has PHCE been fighting Vulcan, but they are also a co-founding member of Texas for Responsible Aggregate Mining (TRAM), a statewide alliance that is trying to make changes to the Aggregate Product Operations (APO) industry and TCEQ permitting processes at the legislative level.

We are exceptionally proud of the progress they have made over the last 6 years and all the work they are continuing to do today!

1/30/24