

Preserve and protect aquifers, springs, rivers, and natural habitats

Texas has been blessed with one of the purest and most abundant natural sources of water to be found anywhere in the world - the Edwards Aquifer. It is the source of the largest springs in Texas and the primary source of drinking water for more than 1.8 million Texans. This incomparable resource is being threatened by pollution from inappropriate land uses, resulting in increased downstream flooding, reduction of recharge capacity, and degradation of the quality of our water. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) has named the Edwards Aquifer as the major aquifer in the state most vulnerable to pollution. This combination of size and fragility adds particular significance to efforts protecting the Edwards Aquifer.

GEAA receives requests for technical assistance on a regular basis on a wide range of issues from individual landowners, regional municipalities, and governmental agencies soliciting public comment on programs and policies relating to the region's ground and surface water systems. The expertise of contracted and salaried technical staff is critical to expanding our capacity to promote adequate protection of our water resources and is essential to accomplishing our goals. We rely upon the largess of several experts who have volunteered their time and expertise as needed on specific projects. Because of the recognized excellence of our work, GEAA is regularly called upon to research specific issues, comment on proposed projects, rules and programs, generate policy and regulatory recommendations and remedies, and weigh in on specific projects and developments. Additionally, GEAA continues to work with municipalities within the Edwards Region to promote the adoption of sustainable development techniques into the codes of municipalities and into State recommended Best Management Practices.

By working with local citizens on specific issues we have enlarged our base of supporters and have been able to educate diverse populations on the fragility of our karst aquifer system. In our experience, many

people have become engaged in aquifer protection because they were first opposed to a project or development due to perceived negative impacts to their property values. Engaging them in our issues by helping them with theirs has been very fruitful, and is resulting in a legion of people region wide that is supportive of our agenda. It has also resulted in significant contributions of funds from individuals that have been dedicated to specific efforts to protect our water resources.