



Conservation Insider

August 2021

Hello CCCA friends and volunteers!

A summer of rain, cooler temperatures, friends and family gatherings. You can't help but feel grateful after our year of isolation, illness and uncertainty. We are thankful for you, our friends and volunteers. We may not express it nearly enough, but you are what makes CCCA the organization that it is. Thank you!

"Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass under trees on a summer's day, listening to the murmur of the water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is by no means a waste of time." — John Lubbock, The Use Of Life

CCCA NEWS

Save the date! September 23 is the Big Give!

This is your chance to help save land, water, and wildlife in our beautiful Comal County. All Big Give donations to CCCA will go to our Comal Land Conservation Fund to help support projects designed to preserve natural areas in Comal County.

Jensie Madden Honored for her Contribution to Conservation

Comal County Conservation Alliance honored one of its founders on Thursday, July 22nd at Tye Preston Memorial Library. Jensie Madden was invited to meet with the CCCA Board of Directors after their Thursday board meeting to receive a token of appreciation for her efforts to create and support the local land conservation nonprofit over the past five years. More at: <https://www.comalconservation.org/board-of-directors.html>

CCCA Offering Lunch and Learn Outreach Training

Outreach Committee Chair, Diane DeSimone, put on a Lunch & Learn training event for new Outreach volunteers on July 12 at the McKenna Events Center, and is planning another one on September 1. The event included lunch, short presentations about CCCA's history, mission, and goals, and provided hands-on training of our two primary educational demonstrations - a large chunk of karst rock (named "Mother Rock") showing the porosity of our Edwards Aquifer, and an interactive "Enviroscape" model representing the watershed of the Guadalupe River and demonstrating its vulnerability to flooding and pollution.

Please contact Diane if you're interested in attending the September 1st Lunch & Learn event or want to learn more about joining our Outreach Committee. (comalccalliance@gmail.com)

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT !

VIRTUAL PRESENTATION: "Having Growth and Green Space"

On Tuesday, July 13, 2021, CCCA hosted an evening program on "Having Growth and Green Space." Guest speaker, Hays County Commissioner Lon Shell, talked about the whys and wherefores of Hays County's efforts to preserve land in the county: the Hays Regional Habitat Conservation Plan, Parks and Open Space Master Plan, and the highly successful open space bond election.

He described their planning processes and highlighted some of the wonderful parklands and natural areas to be protected as a result of these efforts. Commissioner Shell has a

well-deserved reputation for fiscal conservatism, ensuring that tax dollars are spent with the utmost respect for those who pay them. He has also been an architect and champion of land protection efforts in Hays County. To watch this informative program in its entirety go to: <https://www.comalconservation.org/past-events-2021.html>

MONTHLY SPOTLIGHT ON WATER SECURITY

For many, water availability falls very low on their list of concerns. That is until the piped water into their home doesn't come out of the tap, or the crops have failed due to drought, or perhaps Canyon Lake water levels drop and they can't launch their boat. Luckily, it is on the minds of many who look toward a day when water may not be so plentiful. That is why this month we focus our SPOTLIGHT on water sustainability to raise awareness of a resource that we need to keep clean, fresh and abundant.

Luckily, there are many ideas and articles about how we may protect our water. A few are included here, but the CCCA Website has a large library of Water articles for more information.

<https://www.comalconservation.org/water-security.html>

PRACTICING A CONSERVATION LIFESTYLE

Written by Frank Dietz for the Herald Zeitung
July 31, 2021

Our remarkably extended rainy season has given us a taste of a more tropical climate this summer. These rare episodes ease the pressures on the aquifers, surface water levels and irrigation needs. A lovely consequence is having it so green this deep into the summer experience. The grazing acres and hay surplus is impressive. The demands on yards and grounds have kept so many busy! What a summer as we move out of the deep freeze recovery and the reopening of public space from the extended pandemic of covid-19. Toddlers and summer adventurers along with fawns, kid goats and calves are exhibiting such a jolly leaping and happy time!

Our meteorologists seem almost bewildered that their seasonal attention to aquifer levels and other measures allow for other facets to their reporting. Perhaps it is just such a time that lends itself to pondering the deeper questions about water quality and availability for our local and Hill Country region. Continue reading at:

<https://www.comalconservation.org/water-security.html>

Understand Water Security

Finding Solutions for Accessible, Adequate, and Acceptable Water for the Future

By Kathy Wythe

The capacity of a population to safeguard sustainable access to adequate quantities of acceptable quality water for sustaining livelihoods, human well-being and socio-economic development; for ensuring protection against water-borne pollution and water-related disasters; and for preserving ecosystems in a climate of peace and political stability.

Working definition of water security, United Nations-Water, 2013

The term “water security” means different things to different people.

For some, water security means simply having enough clean water to drink when they turn on the faucet; for others, water security involves having existing infrastructure to deliver the water, and still for others, it means guarding a nation’s water resources against bioterrorism.

Hurricane Harvey and the resulting flooding exposed some of these different meanings and levels of water security. It also illustrated the importance of water security to the well-being of communities, states and the nation.

“That level links with sanitation issues and that links with clean water access and the complex, social and political reasons that either contribute to water security or contribute to water insecurity,” said Jepson, who has been studying household water security along the Texas–Mexico border as well as in South and Central America.

Dr. Mary Hilderbrand, senior lecturer in The Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M, said in developing countries, access to water is a huge issue, not just in rural areas but in urban communities as well. Continue at:

<https://www.comalconservation.org/water-security.html>

Texas Water: Planning for More (Texas Comptroller)

By Spencer Grubbs, Shannon Halbrook, Jessica Donald and, Bruce Wright
Published April 2019

AN EVER-INCREASING DEMAND

One challenge springing from Texas’ rapid growth is the increasing pressure it puts on

our natural resources — especially water. Texas has a huge number of municipal, agricultural, and industrial users all relying on limited sources of surface and groundwater.

As our population and economy continue to grow, the efficient management of this precious resource is becoming increasingly critical.

SUPPLY AND DEMAND

Water planners distinguish between water availability and water supply. Water availability refers to the amount of water in a source that can be withdrawn each year in a serious drought. Supply, on the other hand, represents the amount of that available water currently usable with existing infrastructure and under existing law and water agreements.

The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) projects that in 2020, our state will have about 24.7 million acre-feet of available water, about half of it groundwater and half surface water. (An acre-foot is the volume of a sheet of water with an area of one acre and a depth of one foot.) Texas' water supply amounts to about 14.7 million acre-feet, 7.2 million acre-feet in the ground and 7.5 million acre-feet representing surface water.

In 2016, Texas came close to using its entire annual supply, drawing about 14.2 million acre-feet. About 56 percent of that came from groundwater sources, while 42 percent was surface water; 2 percent came from the reuse of treated wastewater. Read more at:

<https://www.comalconservation.org/water-security.html>

Adoption of the 2022 State Water Plan

July 7, 2021

Every five years, the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) is required by Texas Water Code §16.051(a) to adopt a comprehensive state water plan that incorporates the approved regional water plans. The state water plan is to:

- provide for the orderly development, management, and conservation of water resources,
- prepare for and respond to drought conditions, and
- make sufficient water available at a reasonable cost to ensure public health, safety, and welfare and further economic development while protecting the agricultural and natural resources of the entire state.

The 2022 State Water Plan must be adopted no later than January 5, 2022 and will be the fifth state water plan developed through the regional water planning process as mandated by Senate Bill 1 in 1997 and Texas' eleventh state water plan developed since 1957.

Continue at:

<https://www.comalconservation.org/water-security.html>

Wimberley Valley Watershed Association What Future Do We Desire for the Trinity Aquifers?

Posted on July 1, 2021 Author Robin Gary

Across the Hill Country, residents and visitors depend on the groundwater stored in the Trinity Aquifers as water supply and to provide baseflow through springs that keep iconic creeks and rivers flowing. Residents have a voice through the regional planning process to discuss and set goals to guide the future we desire for the Trinity Aquifers.

Desired Future Conditions, or DFCs, are a tool to coordinate groundwater management across groundwater conservation districts. The DFC is a regional planning tool that does not supersede or take the place of local groundwater management put in place by local elected officials through groundwater conservation districts. The individual Districts tailor their Rules and Bylaws to effectively manage and protect the local groundwater resources, and currently don't have to rely on the DFC for more than a planning tool. Instead, the DFC is an agreed upon goal accepted by the groundwater conservation districts within a groundwater management area (GMA) and, it is an important part of a regional groundwater planning process that helps inform the State's Water Plan. In the Hill Country, GMA-9 is the group of groundwater conservation districts that manage the Trinity Aquifers. Currently, one of GMA-9's tasks is to reach consensus on a revised DFC for the Trinity Aquifers.

The WVWA submitted comments to the Chair and member GCDs of GMA-9 to encourage needed changes to the DFC. We look forward to continuing the dialog, so science can further inform and sharpen policy. More at:

<https://www.comalconservation.org/water-security.html>

Advancing One Water in Texas

By Rachel Cardone and Carol Howe
February 2018

If I were asked to share a photo that captured the heart and spirit of Texas, it would be the image of Jacob's Well in Wimberley, in the Hill Country near Austin. Texas summer days are filled with the gasps and laughter of children as they cannonball into cold, refreshing spring-fed swimming holes like Jacob's Well, San Solomon Springs, or Barton Springs.

The Cynthia and George Mitchell Foundation envisions a future where both Texans and the beautiful natural resources (that we depend on) thrive. The foundation's water

program aims to ensure ample, healthy waters above and below ground to support the rich, diverse ecosystems throughout Texas.

The future of these Texas icons is in jeopardy as population growth and climate change stretches thin our precious water resources....Continue at:

<https://www.comalconservation.org/water-security.html>

Texas Tech Heads Collaboration to Study Impact, Technology Necessary for Recycling of Produced Water

GEORGE WATSON JULY 8, 2021 in Texas Tech Today

The Texas Produced Water Consortium will bring together industry, stakeholders and university expertise to grow understanding, formulate research and collaborate on options for produced water use and management in Texas.

As one of the leading agricultural research institutions in the U.S., Texas Tech University will serve as the administrator for the newly created Texas Produced Water Consortium, a collaborative effort to explore options, alternatives and potential economic impacts for the billions of gallons of produced water in Texas each year. Read more at:

<https://www.comalconservation.org/water-security.html>

Council Approves Onsite Water Reuse Pilot Incentive Program

Press Release - AUSTIN, TX

April 22, 2021

Austin City Council approved Austin Water's new Onsite Water Reuse System Pilot Incentive Program. Identified as a key strategy in the Water Forward Integrated Water Resource Plan, this program will incentivize developments that incorporate systems to collect, treat, and reuse rainwater, stormwater, graywater, foundation drainage, air conditioning condensate, or blackwater for non-potable purposes onsite. Capturing and reusing these alternative sources of water will help offset drinking water demand as Austin's population continues to grow and extend core water supplies from the Colorado River and Highland Lakes facing impacts from climate change. Read more at:

<https://www.comalconservation.org/water-security.html>

As always we want to encourage you to visit the CCCA website for much more

information on this months Spotlight topic.

Stay safe, stay healthy, enjoy nature! See you next month.

Comal County Conservation Alliance

<https://www.comalconservation.org/>

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