



Conservation Insider

March 2023

Hello, CCCA Friends, Partners, and Volunteers

It's March 1st and, as we watch a very atypical February draw to a close, we're not sure what March will bring! With Mountain Laurels blooming, Bluebonnets starting to pop open, and temps forecasted to reach the mid-80's – again – it appears that Spring is underway!

Spring is always full of fresh starts in flora and fauna and the same is true for CCCA this Spring. As hinted in our February *Insider*, CCCA is excited to welcome Ryan Spencer as Executive Director on March 6. We'll be introducing him at the March 14 Community Program at the McKenna Events Center and hope you'll be able to attend to meet Ryan and help welcome him to CCCA!

CCCA Welcomes Ryan Spencer as Executive Director

CCCA is excited to welcome Ryan Spencer as its Executive Director starting March 6. As Executive Director, Ryan will be responsible for managing the organization, including administration, fundraising, and program oversight and, with his excellent interpersonal skills, will serve as a spokesperson for CCCA.

Ryan brings a wide range of conservation knowledge and experience from his work at the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment, and the Children in Nature Collaborative of Austin, and his involvement with conservation groups across the Hill Country. Ryan's skills and commitment to conservation will help lead CCCA's efforts to ensure that growth in the county is balanced with the protection of open landscapes and our important water resources.

"I am absolutely thrilled to join the Comal County Conservation Alliance! I have been humbled by the generosity and encouragement that the board has given me and look forward to working with this incredible group of volunteers as we work to preserve land, water, and wildlife in Comal County." - Ryan Spencer

Fun Facts about Ryan:

- Ryan just got married to the love of his life, Katie Bendel, on February 25, 2023 and they have two dogs - named Peanut and Butters.
- He has worked at Guadalupe River State Park as a Park Ranger and worked at Schlitterbahn as a Lifeguard

Welcome to CCCA, Ryan!



SAVE THE DATE

CCCA Community Program

WHAT: CCCA Community Program “A Dive Into Honey Creek Cave” with guest speaker Michael Cicherski, Director with the Texas Cave Management Association

WHEN: Tuesday, March 14, 6:00-7:30

WHERE: McKenna Events Center, [801 W. San Antonio Street, New Braunfels, TX 78130](#)



Michael Cicherski has been caving regularly since the late 80s. He is a Fellow of the National Speleological Society and a recipient of the National Speleological Society Certificate of Merit.

Michael has personally explored Honey Creek Cave many times, a cave described by some as being “dark, creepy, and cold!” The mouth of the cave is on privately-owned land which was recently placed in a conservation easement by its owners to ensure its protection in perpetuity. With 20 miles of cave already documented, it is the longest known cave in Texas.

Please join us at the McKenna Events Center on March 14 for this fascinating look at Honey Creek Cave.

Community Survey Open Until March 17:

Share your opinion

We encourage you to fill out the [Parks, Open Space, and Natural Areas Master Plan Community Survey](#). If you think parks, open areas, and undeveloped natural areas are important in Comal County, this is the time to voice your opinion!

Access the Survey at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ComalParksPlan>

COMAL COUNTY Parks, Open Space, and Natural Areas Master Plan



COMMUNITY ONLINE SURVEY

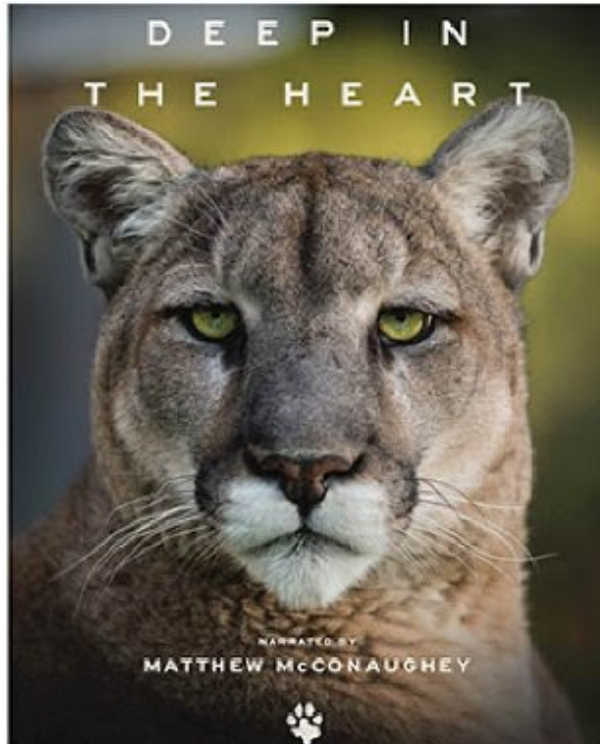


"DEEP IN THE HEART"

The Guadalupe and Lindheimer Chapters of the Native Plant Society of Texas have arranged to have a showing of the popular documentary about Texas wildlife called "Deep in the Heart" and they are inviting Friends of CCCA to join them at the historic Brauntex Theater in downtown New Braunfels on March 4th! This is an exciting opportunity to see a very special – and moving - film in the famous Brauntex Theater. Hope you'll come see it!

The links in the flyer aren't active, so please go to <https://brauntex.org/theater-upcoming-events/> to order tickets; and go [HERE](#) to see preview.

The Guadalupe and Lindheimer Chapters of the Native Plant Society of Texas are proud to present a special showing of the documentary *Deep in the Heart: A Texas Wildlife Story* at the historic Brauntex Theater on Saturday March 4th. We invite you to join us and bring your friends!



Deep in the Heart is a visually stunning celebration of Texas' diverse landscapes and remarkable wildlife found nowhere else. Narrated by Matthew McConaughey, the film aims to conserve our remaining wild places, to show the connectivity of water and wildlife, and to recognize Texas' conservation importance on a continental scale. [See the preview here.](#)

Tickets go on sale **Saturday, February 11th at 10:00 AM** and are available through the Brauntex Performing Arts Theater Box Office located at 290 W. San Antonio New Braunfels, TX 78130. [Click here to purchase tickets.](#) Ticket prices for the event are \$20 for the Main Floor, \$19 for the Mezzanine, and \$18 for the Balcony.

Doors open at 6:00 PM and the **movie starts 7.00 PM**. We will have a panel discussion after the movie with two of the movie's technical advisors, Romey Swanson and Matt Buckingham.



**COME ENJOY AN EVENING OF MUSIC AND FUN UNDER THE STARS -
BENEFITING CCCA AND THE COMAL COUNTY FRIENDS OF THE NIGHT SKY!**

LAND & Sky CELEBRATION



MAY 20TH @ 5080 PURGATORY RD. NEW BRAUNFELS
*Music * Camping * Stargazing*

GATES AT
5:00 PM

CLOSES AT
MIDNIGHT



LIVE MUSIC
7-10

SONG CIRCLE
STARGAZING
10-12

MUSICAL GUESTS

THE
RAMBLEWOODS

& John Whipple
& Friends



PRESENTED BY

Dot's Spots

FREE PARKING

FOOD TRUCK

BYOB + CAMP CHAIR

(RAIN DATE: 6/17)



HUNGRY
HIPPIE

DAY TRIPPERS EVENT ONLY \$15/PP
CAMPING + EVENT \$25/PP

Tickets



<https://tinyurl.com/LandAndSky>
21 & UP. NO FIREWORKS.

LIMITED PRIMITIVE &
DRY CAMPING AVAILABLE
INFO: 512-757-4242
PACK IN. PACK OUT.

LAND & SKY CELEBRATION

Music, Camping, & Stargazing

WHEN: 20 May. 5:00 PM - Midnight

WHERE: [5080 Purgatory Rd, New Braunfels](#)

COST: Daytrippers: \$15/pp, Campers: \$25/pp

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT: [Land and Sky Celebration \(ticketspice.com\)](#)

Get your tickets now for a "stellar" event, benefiting our local, Comal County environmental organizations and to honor our Land and Sky with music, friends and fun!

All profits go to [Comal County Conservation Alliance](#) & [Comal County Friends of the Night Sky](#).

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## IN OTHER NEWS

### RELAYING AN URGENT REQUEST FROM ONE OF OUR PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS:

The Preserve Our Hill Country Environment is asking for help getting TCEQ to hold a public hearing on yet another wastewater discharge permit in Comal County. Requests for the public hearing must be received by TCEQ by March 1 and can be made online. You can also contact Senator Donna Campbell and Representative Carrie Isaac to ask them to request a public meeting, but you'll have to act quickly. Read the details below if this is something you'd like to help with.



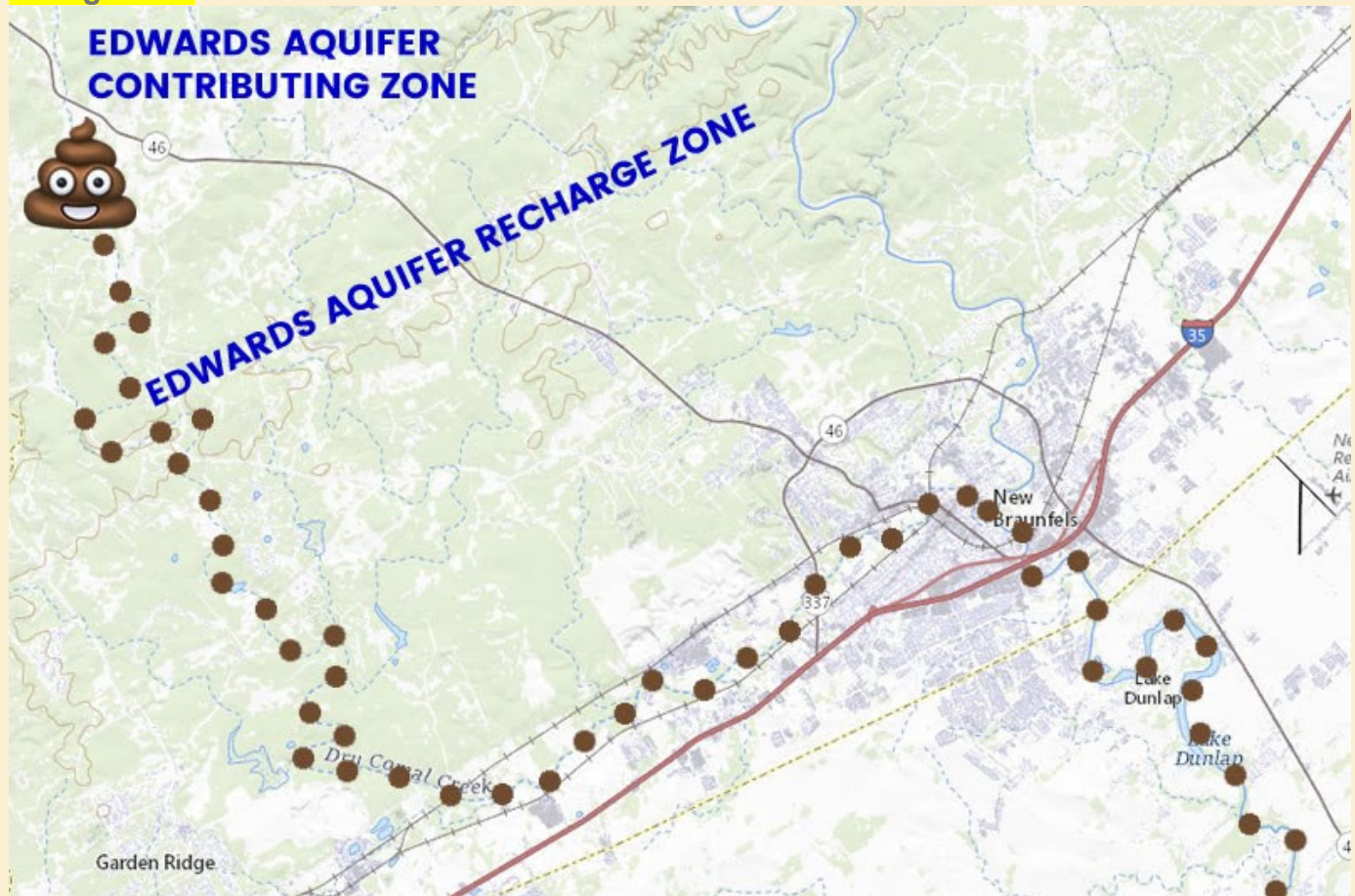


# Preserve Our Hill Country Environment

## Stop 3009 Vulcan Quarry

Permit Filed for 600,000 GPD Wastewater Discharge into Dry Comal Creek, Comal River

A **permit application** has recently been filed to dump up to 600,000 gallons of treated sewage—every day—into the West Fork Dry Comal Creek and Dry Comal Creek, which flow into the Comal River in New Braunfels. The discharge location would be just west of the proposed Vulcan quarry—right over the Edwards Aquifer contributing zone and just 2000 feet upstream from the recharge zone. At this point, **it appears that TCEQ plans to approve the permit application—without even holding a public meeting. But we can change that!**



**We need your help!** And we need to take action fast—no later than Wednesday, March 1. Here's what you can do—two easy steps:

## 1. Submit comments to TCEQ

Go to [www14.tceq.texas.gov/epic/eComment](http://www14.tceq.texas.gov/epic/eComment) and enter WQ0016211001 in the Permit Number box. Complete the form (either type in the comments box or attach a file) and click Submit to TCEQ. We suggest the following:

- Request a public meeting.

If you live in the area—especially if you are on a private well—state that you are an affected person (e.g., because of the location of your water well, you depend on water from the Edwards Aquifer, etc.) and request a contested case hearing.

Permit application should be denied.

Potential negative impact on groundwater quality (i.e., area water wells, Edwards Aquifer, Trinity Aquifer).

Potential negative impact on area streams and rivers (Dry Comal Creek, Comal River, Guadalupe River).

No plan for beneficial reuse or land application (TLAP).

Potential negative impact on area caves and caverns.

We recommend keeping your comments short and simple. But if you want a deeper dive, feel free to reference [this letter from PHCE](#) or [this letter from GEAA](#).

## 2. Contact Representative Carrie Isaac and Senator Donna Campbell

TCEQ rules state that if a state legislator representing the area requests a public meeting, TCEQ will schedule a public meeting. We have reached out to both, but so far neither Senator Campbell nor Representative Isaac has done so. Apparently they need to hear from more of their constituents!

Please call AND email both and ask them one thing: to request a public meeting on TCEQ permit WQ0016211001.

**Senator Donna Campbell**

[donna.campbell@senate.texas.gov](mailto:donna.campbell@senate.texas.gov)

**(512) 463-0125**

**Representative Carrie Isaac**

[carrie.isaac@house.texas.gov](mailto:carrie.isaac@house.texas.gov)

**(512) 463-0325**

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

Comal County Conservation Alliance

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

Info@comalconservation.org

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