



Conservation Insider

October 2023

Hello, CCCA Friends, Partners, and Volunteers,

Words can't express my sincere gratitude for all of your support during the month of September. This month we saw an amazing swell of enthusiasm during our Community Program which featured Katherine Romans and her take on the unprecedented growth of the Texas Hill Country and the strain that growth is putting on the natural systems which sustain our communities. We also saw outpouring of support for the Comal County Land Fund during this year's Big Give. Dozens of our supporters rallied together and raised nearly \$9,000 to support land conservation

here in Comal County. As we enter the full season of Fall and of gratitude, I want to thank you for remaining steadfast in your support of Comal County Conservation Alliance and our mission to preserve, land, water, and wildlife here in Comal County.

Don't forget - October has two very special events. On **October 10th, 2023**, CCCA and the League of Women Voters of Comal County are hosting a "Conservation Town Hall" to highlight two critical propositions on this year's ballot. On **October 24, 2023**, CCCA and the Tye Preston Memorial Library are showing "Deep in the Heart" an incredible film about the unique ecology of Texas. Both events are great opportunities to engage with our work and meet like-minded neighbors.

As always you can find more information about our work and sign up to [volunteer](https://www.comalconservation.org) at www.comalconservation.org. Thank you for everything you do. I appreciate it.

Ryan K Spencer

Executive Director



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## CCCA NEWS

### Community Programs

Join CCCA and the League of Women of Comal County at the McKenna Center on Tuesday, October 10th, for a Town Hall Meeting about two of the propositions that will be on the November Ballot. Colin McDonald, Senior Policy Analyst with the Teas Water Foundation, and Kevin Good, President of Texans for State Parks will be present to answer questions and explain how the two propositions, if approved, would benefit Comal County.



COMAL COUNTY  
**CONSERVATION**  
ALLIANCE



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF COMAL AREA

# Town Hall Meeting

## NOVEMBER BALLOT PROPOSITIONS

Texans will be asked to vote on the fate of 14 amendments to the Texas State Constitution. In this Town Hall the Comal County Conservation Alliance and League of Women Voters - Comal Area, are highlighting two amendments that, if passed, would invest \$1 billion in the development of new water sources and \$1 billion in State Parks.

### **Proposition 6**

Provides for the creation of a New Water Supply for Texas Fund. Local governments can apply for these funds to develop water supply projects that create new water sources for their communities.

### **Proposition 14**

Provides for the creation of the Centennial Parks Conservation Fund to be used for the purpose of acquiring real property for the creation and improvement of publicly accessible state parks.

### **WHEN**

Tuesday, October 10, 2023  
6:00 PM-7:30 PM

### **WHERE**

McKenna Event Center  
801 W. San Antonio Street  
New Braunfels

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**

[WWW.COMALCONSERVATION.ORG](http://WWW.COMALCONSERVATION.ORG)

Another special program we're offering this month, in partnership with the Tye Preston Memorial Library in Canyon Lake, is a showing of the acclaimed nature documentary "*Deep in the Heart.*" Narrated by Matthew McConaughey, the film features stunning cinematography and an inspiring message that showcases the unique wildlife and habitats of Texas. Come early to meet and chat with Josh Winkler, the film's producer!



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# Documentary

Presented by CCCA and the Tye Preston Memorial Library

*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.



## WHEN

Tuesday, October 24, 2023  
5:30 – Meet & Greet  
Josh Winkler, Associate Producer  
6:15 PM! – Showing

## WHERE

Tye Preston Memorial Library  
16311 S Access Rd  
Canyon Lake

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**

[WWW.COMALCONSERVATION.ORG](http://WWW.COMALCONSERVATION.ORG)

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## Join the Team!

Want to get involved with CCCA in a more active way? We need your help with:

- graphic design - to make our flyers
- website maintenance - to keep our website updated

If you have the skills and some time to help with either of these important tasks, please contact Executive Director Ryan Spencer ([ryan@comalconservation.org](mailto:ryan@comalconservation.org))

It takes a village, so please join in and share your skills!

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## CCCA Activities

Stop in at CCCA's outreach booth at these fun community events! Better yet, volunteer to help at the booths and spread the word to our friends and neighbors about the importance of balancing growth with preservation of our natural environment. Protecting land protects water!

- **Saturday, October 21:** 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. - [New Braunfels Community Arbor Day](#) at Landa Park
- **Saturday, October 21:** 11a.m. to 2 p.m. - [Monarch Festival](#) at Fischer Park Amphitheater
- **Saturday, October 28** 1 – 3 p.m. [Fall Fun with the Heritage Museum of the Texas Hill Country](#) at the Tye Preston Memorial Library

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## CCCA H-Z OCTOBER COLUMN

### "Your Vote is Needed!"

**By Frank Dietz, for the H-Z September 30/October 1, 2023**

As August moved toward September, we received Senior Portrait proofs from our granddaughter. When I remarked that she would have a challenge from many lovely options, her response was "Yes, and I also registered to vote!" I then urged that she encourage her twin brother to be sure to register as well, not just for the draft (selective service) but so he can vote. The time urgency dictates getting it done since we vote THIS NOVEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup> and not just in 2024. My explanation continued that there are two "propositions" which are Amendments in Texas to the Constitution, PROPOSITION 6 "The Texas Water Fund" item and PROPOSITION 14 "the Centennial Parks Conservation Fund." Other measures may prove important as well, but these two provide a one-time opportunity with a rare surplus in state funds to do something for our future long term. Allow me to explain.

Since we vote Tuesday, November 7, 2023, there will be a period in every County in Texas for early voting as well during late October and the first days of November. In Comal County those early voting dates will be from October 24<sup>th</sup> through November 4<sup>th</sup>. Watch for announcements of times & locations. Whether early or on the date set aside, DO VOTE!

**PROPOSITION 6:** A YES vote on PROPOSITION 6 will support a constitutional amendment establishing the TEXAS WATER FUND using \$1 Billion of the state's surplus funds to create a revenue stream to be administered by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB).

The 2022 State Water Plan projects a population increase of 73% between 2020 and 2070! The fund would provide funding for loans and grants that assist communities across the state with water supply and wastewater projects. This new fund creates a New Water Supply for Texas Fund designed to implement innovative strategies such as marine and brackish water desalination; oil and gas produced water treatment projects; and aquifer storage and recovery projects. All of these measures are needed NOW! A detailed and more technical description of Proposition 6 and the new Texas Water Fund is available on our website at [comalconservation.org](http://comalconservation.org) or on the TWDB website.

**PROPOSITION 14:** A YES vote on PROPOSITION 14 will support a constitutional amendment establishing the CENTENNIAL PARKS CONSERVATION FUND using \$1 Billion of the state's surplus funds to help secure new parks for future generations of Texans to explore and enjoy without a tax increase. The fund will allow the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to purchase land from willing sellers when unique properties become available. Such investing for the public interest, when possible, with private donor partners, protects Texas' quality of life so future generations can enjoy our land, water, and natural beauty beyond existing properties. Previously voters dedicated in 2019 the Sporting Goods Sales Tax to provide for ongoing support toward maintenance, staffing and upkeep of our park system. The Centennial Parks Conservation Fund focuses on the future, dedicated solely to acquiring and then improving land for new parks to add to the system. As our state is ranked 35<sup>th</sup> nationally in State Park acreage per capita with approximately 640 acres today, only 0.37% of Texas' acreage is set aside for parks. As our state is home to 7 of the top 15 most rapidly growing cities in the nation, the priority to act now is dramatic! Currently Texas loses nearly one quarter million acres of farms, ranches and open space to further development annually.

CAN WE COUNT ON YOUR VOTE FOR THESE EFFORTS? PLEASE, YES!

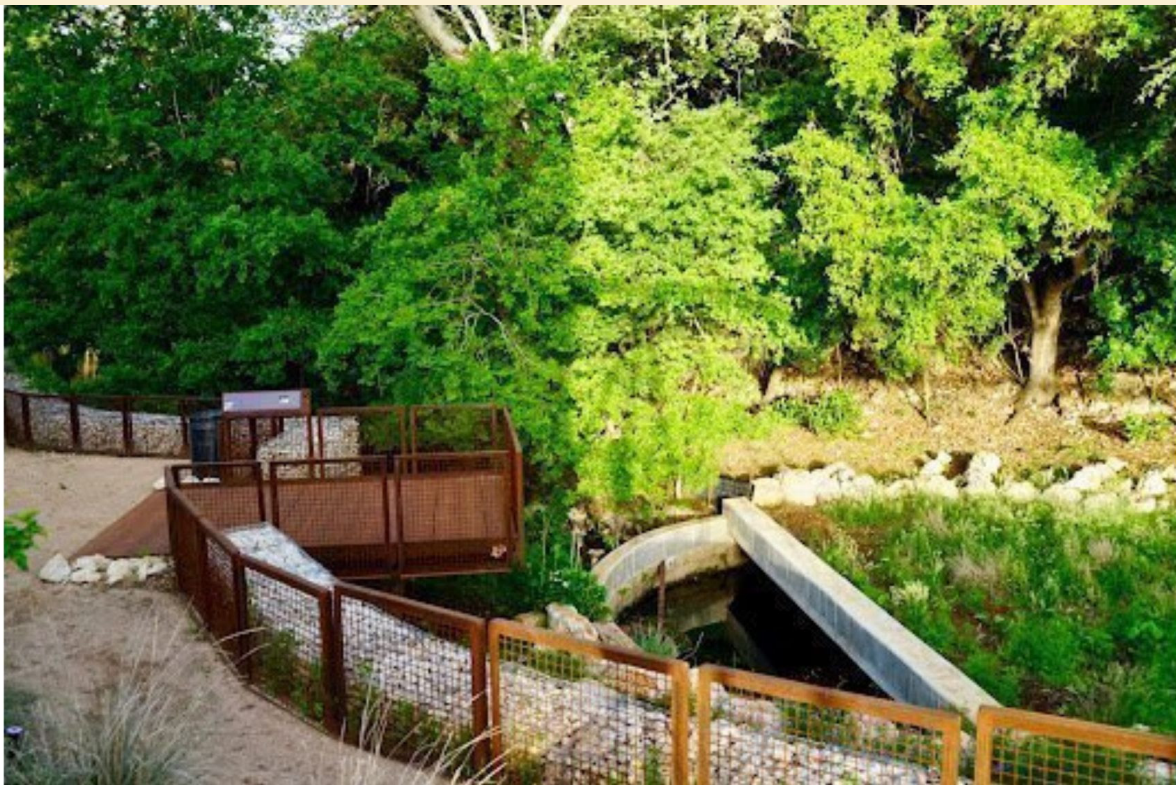
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## IN OTHER NEWS

**WHEN:** Wednesday, October 18th from 5:00 pm to 7:00 p.m.

**WHAT: "Comal County Water Talk"** - The Texas Water Development Board will be talking about water issues in Comal County - who is responsible for what at the state level and how these decisions work their way down to the local level. Read more below.

**WHERE:** The Bulverde Mammen Family Public Library, [131 Bulverde Xing Rd, Bulverde, TX 78163](#)



HEADWATERS  
AT THE COMAL

### Oct 18 Comal County Water Talk: Managing Our Groundwater !

From providing drinking water to sustaining our springs and rivers, groundwater is the lifeblood of Comal County. In the last year, we've seen drought threaten the health of our aquifers. At the same time, growth in the county means more people will rely on groundwater than ever before.

Please plan to attend this presentation with Natalie Ballew, Groundwater Division Director at the Texas Water Development Board, to learn more about Comal County's groundwater, how its managed, and how you can get involved.

Presentation will cover:

- Groundwater 101:
- Aquifers in Comal County
- Roles in Groundwater Management
- Groundwater Planning & How to Get Involved

The presentation is designed specifically for Comal County and the Trinity Aquifer Group and will include education on water wells in our area and the differences between the Trinity and the Edwards. Lots of good information, hosted by the Comal Trinity Groundwater Conservation District. To RSVP for this free event [click here](#).

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**Lights Out, Texas** is a statewide campaign of education, awareness, and action to address the problem of bird fatalities caused by the abundance of artificial lights on the ground.

**Peak Migration in Texas is from Sept. 6 to Oct. 29.** Each year during fall and spring migrations, nearly two billion birds travel through Texas navigating by the night sky in one of the planet's great wildlife spectacles.

However, as they pass over big cities on their way, they can become disoriented by bright artificial lights and skyglow, often causing them to collide with buildings or windows, or simply becoming exhausted from the confusion.

Visit [Birdcast](#) to see how many birds are flying over Comal County right now and see a map of the entire U.S. Fall migration.

**LET'S BE PART OF THE SOLUTION!**

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## Balancing Growth and Conservation: The Water Crisis in Central Texas

By Kaitie Moore Underwood, Blue Collar Commercial Group, *News You Can Use*, Sept. 2023

Central Texas is at a critical juncture, facing an unprecedented water crisis driven by extreme heat, prolonged droughts, and rapid population growth. As a conservation-minded commercial real estate agency, we believe it's imperative to understand the gravity of this situation and

champion sustainable solutions for climate-focused water management. Natural springs, such as San Marcos Springs and Comal Springs, are at historic lows, posing a significant threat to the region's rich heritage.

To combat this crisis, many advocate for lawn irrigation reduction, embrace the "One Water" approach, invest in infrastructure, and support Proposition 6 to establish a state water fund. Your commitment to responsible water management can help preserve Central Texas's unique landscapes and ensure a sustainable future. Dive deeper by clicking [Here](#).

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## **Water Reuse in the Hill Country: Analyzing Opportunities in Comal County**

New Report released by GEAA's Policy Director Rachel Hanes. September 2023

The Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance is excited to be releasing a report outlining the opportunities present in the Texas Hill Country to use recycled water to alleviate the burdens placed on the Edwards and Trinity Aquifers by focusing on the present and (hopeful) future state of recycled water use in Comal County. Water reuse – using reclaimed and treated wastewater – is an integral step in ensuring that counties in the Hill Country will have the water supplies they need to ensure the health, safety, and quality of life of residents in the years to come.

The status of water reuse in Comal County underscores both the long way Hill Country counties have to go in implementing water reuse systems and the unique opportunities present to do so within their boundaries.

Based on our findings in the report, GEAA recommends that, in preparation for the 2025 Legislative Session, the Texas House of Representatives Natural Resources Committee conduct an interim study for the creation of wastewater reuse districts for irrigation use in the fast-growing areas of Comal County and the Texas Hill Country and for industrial use at sites such as aggregate production operations. The study should analyze the possibility of implementing multiple water reuse districts with flexible boundaries throughout the study area, given variations at different locations in the volume of potential reuse water generation and the need for that water.

As evidenced by the state of water reuse in Comal County, this source of water is a vastly underutilized tool in the fight to manage the Hill Country's water supplies in the face of prolonged drought and presents a clear opportunity to better preserve our natural resources for the generations to come.

You can view the press conference presentation [here](#).

You can view the full report [here](#).

A summary of the report is available [here](#).

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***Working to preserve land, water, and wildlife in Comal County!***

***Supporting Nature so Nature can support us!***

**Comal County Conservation Alliance**

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

[Info@comalconservation.org](mailto:Info@comalconservation.org)



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