

## **2014 EDWARDS AQUIFER AUTHORITY AQUIFER STORAGE AND RECOVERY**

Section 5.5.1 of the Edwards Aquifer Habitat Conservation Plan (EAHCP) assigns leasing of water permits for use in the San Antonio Water System (SAWS) Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) to the Edwards Aquifer Authority (EAA). SAWS will operate the ASR infrastructure and retain control of day-to-day operations of the ASR facility related to EAHCP water injection and recovery. The EAA will ensure compliance with EAHCP requirements through management of the ASR contract, currently being negotiated by SAWS and the EAA. This contract will outline the responsibilities of both parties, including administration and implementation and, thus, may affect the details of this work plan.

**Long-term Objective:** To acquire 50,000 acre-feet of Edwards Aquifer unrestricted agricultural, municipal, and industrial water leases to be used as source water for injection into the ASR, for the purpose of reducing pumping stress on the aquifer during times of drought. Stored water in the ASR will be used by SAWS to offset SAWS Edwards Aquifer pumping.

**Assumptions:** The successful execution of an ASR contract between EAA and SAWS. Successful enrollment of Tier I ASR leases in 2013 of 16,667 acre-feet.

**Target for 2014:** To begin or continue injection of EAHCP water into the ASR. To continue to utilize the San Antonio River Authority (SARA) as a leasing agent for acquisition of 50,000 acre-feet of Edwards Aquifer water leases.

### **ASR Program**

Description of the SAWS ASR: The SAWS Twin Oaks ASR is an underground storage reservoir in the Carrizo sand aquifer in Southern Bexar County. As a SAWS Water Management Project, it is designed to store Edwards water when demand is less than available supply. The stored water is returned to San Antonio for use when demand is high and Edwards supply is restricted by Critical Period Management and other drought related limitations.

The capacity and capabilities of the SAWS ASR are such that it can be used to meet SAWS ratepayer expectations and, if operated as described in the EAHCP, will play a significant role as a Phase I activity to protect the Covered Species at Comal and San Marcos Springs.

### Operations

*Injection:* Water to fill the ASR in 2014 will be provided by the EAA's lease of 16,667 acre-feet of water. The rate and timing of injection will be established in the ASR Contract.

*Recovery:* Recovery of water from the ASR will occur when the ten-year rolling recharge average is less than 500,000 acre-feet and aquifer levels measured at the J-17 index well drop below 630 feet mean sea level (MSL). The annual amount of water recovered during a repeat of the drought of record will be established in the contract.

Leasing: The EAA will continue to use SARA to acquire leases for the ASR program. The initial target acquisition is 16,667 acre-feet. Once that goal is reached, and current market

conditions are assessed, a strategy will be determined as to how to structure the leases for the remaining 33,333 acre-feet.

**ASR Regional Advisory Group:** Per section 5.5.1, a 12-person Regional Advisory Group will meet quarterly to advise SAWS as it makes decisions relating to the operation of the ASR facility relevant to the EAHCP. Membership on the Regional Advisory Group will include: four representatives from the San Antonio Water System, the EAHCP Program Manager; one representative each from the EAA, EAA permit holder for irrigation purposes, small municipal pumpers, the Spring cities, environmental interests, industrial pumpers, and downstream interests.

### **Monitoring**

The EAA will actively manage the ASR contract with SAWS. The contract will outline specific deliverables that will be tracked by EAHCP staff. The EAHCP staff will additionally continue to work with SARA in leasing efforts and monitor progress made towards lease fulfillment. Status reports and updates will be provided regularly to the Implementing Committee.

**Budget**      **\$6,953,000<sup>1</sup>**

Actual expenditures for 2014 will be determined by the terms of the ASR contract depending on the quantity of water injected or recovered, the amount of water leased, and the cost of eligible operation and maintenance activities. Budgeted money that is not spent will be placed in the reserve fund.

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<sup>1</sup> \$4,759,000 (lease acquisition and payment) + \$2,194,000 (ASR O/M) = \$6,953,000