

**2016 Edwards Aquifer Authority_
2016 Regional Water Conservation Program Work Plan**

5.1.3 Regional Water Conservation Program

Table 7.1 Budgeted Amount: \$1,973,000

~~Proposed~~Budgeted Amount: \$1,813,000

Amended Work Plan Amount: ~~\$1,813,000~~\$4,640,750

Long Term Objective:

To reduce withdrawals from the Edwards Aquifer by 10,000 acre-feet, realized through implementation of conservation measures that will ~~save~~conserve 20,000 acre-feet of water.

Discussion:

Conservation is one of four ~~flows~~springflow protection measures of the Edwards Aquifer Habitat Conservation Plan (EAHCP) intended to reduce aquifer withdrawals, and subsequently increase aquifer level and springflow. The concept is to reduce aquifer withdrawals by 10,000 acre-feet and the EAHCP contemplates using a Regional Water Conservation Program (RWCP) to achieve the goal in the following manner:

- An initial donation of 10,000 acre-feet is solicited from Edwards Aquifer Authority (EAA) permit holders to remain in the EAA Groundwater Trust for a period of ten years.
- The donated water is returned to the original donors through the implementation of conservation initiatives and technical assistance provided by the EAHCP. As conservation savings accrue, one-half of the savings are realized by the party participating in the RWCP and the other half is placed in the Groundwater Trust for ~~a period of 15 years~~ (the remaining term of the EAHCP); ITP; allowing the original donors to have their donated water returned on a pro-rata basis. Consequently, 20,000 acre-feet of conservation savings are necessary for full return of the original donations.

In order to provide an immediate benefit to the aquifer and springflow, several entities within the EAA jurisdictional area have agreed to reduce their authorized withdrawals. As of January 2015, the initial donations are 8,400 acre-feet. This initial contribution of water rights were placed in the Groundwater Trust for a period of ten years (see Table below):

Table 1: Initial Commitment Contracts.

Entity	Acre-Feet of Water Donated
San Antonio Water Supply	8,000
City of San Marcos	300
Texas State University	100
TOTAL	8,400

Loaned water rights will be returned to the loaning entity at the end of 10 years or when an equal amount is identified as conserved and in reserve by the RWCP. Loaned water will be returned to the donor entity in a proportion equal to their contribution.

At the September 18, 2014 Implementing Committee, a RWCP work group was appointed to review the progress of conservation initiatives and make recommendations to achieve the goal of reducing aquifer withdrawals by 10,000 acre-feet. The work group had an initial meeting on October 15 and met five times, concluding on December 11. A final report was presented to the January 15, 2015 Implementing Committee with nine recommendations:

1. 1—Implement an outreach program to ensure all permit holders are aware of the RWCP.
2. 2—Look for opportunities to pay permit holders for permanent conservation of historically unused permitted water.
3. 3—Expand the search for reuse and industrial technology opportunities in the EA Region and offer incentives for their excess capacity.
4. 4—Look for opportunities to create flexible agreements with program participants (i.e. varying terms).
5. 5—Provide settlement opportunities for permit holders who over-pump their permit.
6. 6—Offer incentives and assistance to encourage municipalities to promote landscape conservation, especially during peak demand.
7. 7—Create a conservation incentive program for exempt well owners.
8. 8—Explore partnerships with land trusts.
9. 9—Target conservation measures to producers that use flood irrigation.

In 2013 and 2014, twenty communities and utilities within the EAA jurisdiction were ranked, based on Gallons per Capita per Day, and thirteen were contacted to determine interest. Only two ~~have~~ agreed to participate with the EAHCP and their total savings, and commitment to the Groundwater Trust has been ~~less than 200 acre feet. The drought that has persisted since the EAHCP was approved and the requirement to place one half of the estimated conserved water in the Groundwater Trust for 15 years severely deterred participation in the RWCP. Unfortunately, after two years, only two percent of conserved water has been realized. The EAA has determined that it will be more beneficial to utilize a portion of the RWCP funds to add staff to the EAHCP team to pursue initiatives for reduced aquifer withdrawals. This concept was presented and approved at the January 15, 2015, Implementing Committee meeting approximately 200 acre-feet.~~

Revised December 15, 2015

In late 2015, a leak repair program with the San Antonio Water System (SAWS) was negotiated and executed, successfully fulfilling the goal of the 10,000 acre-foot goal in the RWCP's Groundwater Trust by 2020. The contract is for a 5-year period and is estimated to conserve almost 20,000 acre-feet.

Table 2: SAWS – EAA 5-year water savings commitment and fiscal obligation.

<u>Water</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Estimated Savings (AF)</u>	<u>4,745</u>	<u>4,745</u>	<u>4,745</u>	<u>4,745</u>	<u>632</u>	<u>19,612</u>
<u>Commitment to the Groundwater Trust (AF)</u>	<u>2,372.5</u>	<u>2,375.5</u>	<u>2,372.5</u>	<u>2,372.5</u>	<u>316</u>	<u>9,806</u>
<u>Payment</u>	<u>\$4,507,750</u>	<u>\$4,507,750</u>	<u>\$4,507,750</u>	<u>\$4,507,750</u>	<u>\$600,400</u>	<u>\$18,631,400</u>

With the payment of \$950 per acre-foot of water conserved that has been used as a standard for other RWCP participants, the contract will cost \$18,631,400 and commit the remaining 9,800 acre-feet into the Groundwater Trust to complete the 10,000 acre-foot goal.

Target Performance Measures for 2016:

FiveAfter execution of the contract with SAWS, the RWCP has approximately \$400,000 budgeted to be utilized throughout the region for the remainder of the ITP in order to fund additional conservation initiatives.

Nine Performance Measures were identified for ~~2015~~2016:

1. Obtain additional staff and resources to pursue measures that will reduce aquifer withdrawals;
2. ~~Consider~~Pursue the recommendations presented by the RWCP work group;
3. Find a more efficient means of coordinating with the Department of Defense;
4. Pursue direct communications parties that have been specifically targeted, such as the Texas Aggregate and Concrete Association and the San Antonio Zoo;
5. Continue to develop innovative ways to reduce withdrawals from the aquifer ~~by 10,000 acre-feet; and;~~
6. Build synergy between existing conservation programs to achieve success in other aspects of the springflow protection measures.
- ~~6-7.~~7. Convene a meeting of the Regional Conservation Monitoring Committee.

Target Performance Measures for 2016:

8. ~~In order~~Move conserved water to achieve the goal of 10,000 acre feet in the Groundwater Trust ~~by the end of 2016, the EAA will continue, and hopefully expand, the initiatives began~~

~~in 2015.~~

9. Proportional return of initial commitments back to each permittee shown in Table 1 as water is received.

Methodology:

This work plan will be implemented by EAA staff with limited assistance from other contractors as needed.

Budget for Implementing 2016 Regional Water Conservation Work Plan: ~~The requested budget for the Regional Water Conservation work plan is \$1,813,000 (see Table).~~

The requested budget for the Regional Water Conservation work plan is \$4,640,750 (see Table 3). The increase in funds from Table 7.1 of the EAHCP for this effort will be provided from the EAHCP fund balance for 2013-2015 as well as redistributing the program budget for the remainder of the ITP (to 2027). There will be approximately \$400,000 remaining to be utilized for other RWCP initiatives after the funding obligation to SAWS is fulfilled.

Table 3: Final 2016 Budget

<u>OutsideSAWS Year-1 Contract Costs</u>	<u>Funds Allocated for Communitythe City of Uvalde Program Implementation</u>	<u>Table 7.1 Revised Budget</u>	<u>Total 2016 Budgeted Funds- (AmountTable 7.1)</u>	<u>Amended 2016 Budget</u>
\$- <u>40,0004,507,750</u>	\$1,773 <u>133,000</u>	\$- <u>1,813973,000</u>	\$1,973 <u>813,000</u>	<u>\$4,640,750</u>

Monitoring:

- Parties that have elected to contract with the EAA for program implementation will be required to provide an accounting of low flow devices (i.e. low flow toilets, and showerheads) or other means that have been used to reduce demands. EAA staff will provide photo documentation of the implementation of the program through routine visits of parties and distribution centers, etc.

- ~~Move conserved water in Uvalde to the Groundwater Trust.~~

Science Committee Review: Not applicable to this work plan

Regional Conservation Monitoring Committee Review: Does require review of the work plan.