

ATTACHMENT 8

Edwards Aquifer Habitat Conservation Workplan Review						
Comment / Response Form						
Date: 6/11/14						
Comment No.	Comment	Comment Submitted by	HCP Comment/Response	Responsible Responder	Comment Incorporated? Y/N	Permittee Comments
1	There is a paragraph in the 2015 Regional Water Conservation Work Plan that is incorrect and requires removal to obtain SAWS support for this measure. The paragraph is on page one and states that "There is an exception to the proportional return rule." However, there is no exception within the Initial Commitment Contracts between the various parties and the EAA for proportional return of the initially committed Edwards permits.	SAWS	Referred to EAA	EAA	Y	EAA agrees with the comment and has removed the sentence. "There is an exception to the proportional return rule" and has added new language that describes the proportional model that is contained in all three Initial Commitment Contracts. See revised 2015 Regional Water Conservation Work Plan.
2	In the 2015 Regional Water Conservation Work Plan, SAWS requires a goal in acre-feet of on-the-ground water savings to be developed and added to the Target Performance Measures for 2015.	SAWS	Referred to EAA	EAA	Y	The goal of obtaining 10,000 acre feet in the Groundwater Trust by the end of 2015 was added to the Target Performance Measures. See revised 2015 Regional Water Conservation Work Plan.
3	Concerning the 2015 Regional Water Conservation Work Plan, SAWS does not support Target Performance Measure number seven (identify non-Edwards supply sources), as it is duplicative of the South Central Texas Regional Water Planning Group's efforts. SAWS would rather the focus be on achieving on-the-ground water conservation, rather than planned alternate water sources.	SAWS	Referred to EAA	EAA	N	In EAA's view this effort complements, not duplicates, Region I efforts to identify non-Edwards Aquifer water sources. If entities are already working toward non-Edwards Aquifer solutions, those activities and the water saved should be accounted for. The Regional Water Conservation Monitoring Advisory Committee has endorsed this concept and the Implementing Committee was presented this concept with no objection.
4	In Target Performance Measure number ten of the 2015 Regional Water Conservation Work Plan, SAWS notes that this is a performance measure with no on-the-ground results required - an e-mail or phone call would suffice to satisfy this measure. SAWS would like to see a more robust Target Performance Measure developed.	SAWS	Referred to EAA	EAA	N	The existing contract between EAA and Texas AgriLife includes the activity of working with communities to develop a water conservation program. Its purpose is to achieve the overall goal of the Regional Water Conservation Program of obtaining 10,000 acre feet into the Groundwater Trust. See response to comment #2.
5	The first sentence of the 2015 Work Plan for the Voluntary Irrigation Suspension Program Option (VISPO) is again troubling to SAWS. SA WS again requests that the scientific evidence that satisfies the current wording be presented or the first sentence revised to be scientifically accurate.	SAWS	Referred to EAA	EAA	Y	Sentence removed. See revised 2015 VISPO Work Plan.
6	Given the problems discussed in the Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) Leasing Program Work Plan, SAWS submits that it is time for the Implementing Committee and the EAA to establish a policy rejecting enrollment of any further Unrestricted Irrigation Groundwater (UIG), referring the interested enrollee to the EAA's agent as a potential lessor for Tier One lease or Tier Two option. Since Tier Two essentially accomplishes the same effect as a VISPO enrollment, it should be an attractive option. The policy should further prohibit the renewal of UIG until the ASR Leasing problem has been ameliorated. Please place this item on the agenda of the next feasible Implementing Committee meeting, given the requirements for notice, etc.	SAWS	Referred to EAA	EAA	N	The response to this comment is beyond an edit to a work plan. It should be formally discussed by SAWS with EAA (permittee responsible for VISPO and ASR) or brought up for consideration as a future agenda item with the full Implementing Committee.
7	The 2015 Work Plan for Biological Monitoring includes Water Quality Sampling. SAWS has some concern that there is some degree of overlap and is contemplating requesting a future Work Group to compare and contrast the Bio-monitoring, EAA, Texas State, and HCP water quality monitoring in search of monetary savings. SAWS experts on water quality have recommended waiting for additional data on 2014 water quality sampling activities before requesting the Implementing Committee to seat this Work Group. However, SAWS does have some specific questions regarding Water Quality Sampling for the Bio-monitoring program: - What is the rationale for the 18 stations at the San Marcos system, and the 12 stations of the Corral system? Does any of the data collected over the past decade of monitoring support discontinuing data collection at this many sampling sites? - Who makes the determination that the additional sampling for nitrates, total nitrogen, etc., is warranted? Upon what factors is that determination based? - Along the same line, the scientists have already achieved a well-calibrated temperature model of each spring system. Temperature data has been documented for years. What is the rationale for having 11, 13, or 20 thermistors in each system? Could some be eliminated for cost savings?	SAWS	Referred to EAA	EAA	N	The EAA staff and Board believe it is a good idea to continue a consistent long term data set synergistic with data collection that was started during the Variable Flow Study (including temperature data). Additionally, the National Academy of Sciences is currently reviewing the Water Quality and BioMonitoring Programs. Comments from NAS should be used when making future decisions about the Biological Monitoring and Water Quality Monitoring Programs. SAWS comments are noted and the EAA agrees that redundancy not scientifically justified should be avoided.
8	In the same budget for implementing the 2015 Bio-monitoring, SAWS would like to include as an additional attachment an itemized breakdown of costs for the program that can be used to identify potential changes to bring the budget back in line with Table 7.1 of the HCP.	SAWS	Referred to EAA	EAA	Y	EAA has included the complete budget for the Biological Monitoring program in Attachment #5 of the BioMonitoring Work Plan. See revised 2015 Biological Monitoring Work Plan.
9	The 2015 Water Quality Monitoring Program Work Plan is very well presented and structured. SAWS has the following comments on this Work Plan: - In the Sediment Sampling, how would subsequent years of sampling determine whether it was sampling intervals older than the 2015 samples previously collected, or simply redeposited recent deposits? - Again, in the Sediment Sampling, additional information on the sample site locations should be presented or a map developed as an attachment. For example, there is not enough information for SAWS to determine whether the sample sites occur in river bends or backwater areas. - In the Real Time Instrument Data Logging for the springs, how can SA WS obtain information on the maintenance plan for the probes, particularly on the dissolved oxygen probe? - SAWS would like to review the EAA's Field Sampling Plan, but cannot find it on the EAA's website. Could a copy for each spring system be made available for review and potential comment? - SAWS desires clarification on pages seven and eight of the Work Plan. On page seven, the continuous water quality monitoring stations are described as being operated and maintained by the EAA. Yet on page eight, in changes to Work Plan from the 2014 plan, funding is requested for maintenance and replacement and other fees.	SAWS	Referred to EAA	EAA	Y and N	1) Regarding sediment samples: The sediment sampling program is designed to be a screening level effort. Meaning that sediment is evaluated with regard to general presence or absence of contaminants. Sediment samples in years 2013 and 2014 were collected from the surface to 18-inches below the surface. This interval is then homogenized in the laboratory and analyzed. The proposed change is to look at smaller intervals (three-inch intervals versus 18-inch intervals) to ascertain the possibility that contaminants are being missed because of the long sample interval. However, the sediment sampling program is not currently designed to ascertain sediment loading, or changes in the sediment profile within each system. If the science committee desires an evaluation of sediment loading for each system and the development of a subsequent sampling program to accommodate potential changes in the sediment profile, it would require approval from the science and implementing committees. Therefore, in response to the comment, the sediment sampling program is not designed to evaluate changes in sediment depth or profile at each sample point, but rather is designed to evaluate general sediment quality in each system at each sample point. If a significant contaminant concentration is detected during the screening process, the science committee may propose a more in-depth sediment sampling program. 2) A location map for the sediment samples was included in the initial work plan. A more detailed map will be provided. 3) Regarding calibration of Real Time Instrumentation: These instruments are calibrated in accordance with the recommendations of both the TCEQ Surface Water Quality Manual (Chapter 8) and the manufacturers recommendations (Eureka). Where the general guidelines of the TCEQ manual differ from a manufacture recommendation, the manufacture recommended procedure is followed. 4) A copy of the EAA's Field Sampling Plan will be provided upon request. The EAA Field Sampling Plan is based on the US EPA and the Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence guidelines. The EAA Field Sampling Plan is an internal EAA document that is not subject to review by the EAHCP process. However, should any Permittee have specific concerns with methodology in the EAA Field Sampling Plan, EAA staff would be glad to discuss those concerns with them. 5) EAA personnel are servicing the continuous monitors but no funds were provided to maintain or replace the probes in the 2014 work plan budget. Currently, there is one replacement probe available. Considering that these probes will be approaching three years in age in 2015, the requested funds are to replace probes as necessary. Also, funds requested in 2015 will be used to purchase hardware for the one new site that was approved by the Science Committee. At no time shall funds be used to pay EAA staff salaries.
10	SAWS reserves the opportunity to comment on the 2015 Ecological Modeling Work Plan until Attachment I is available for review. After the May 12, 2014, meeting of the National Academies of Science Committee to Review the EAHCP, SAWS learned of some changes to the approach approved for 2014 and is interested in reviewing further.	SAWS	Referred to EAA	EAA	Y	EAA has replaced the summary of the Ecological Modeling Work Plan with a complete, detailed Work Plan. See revised Work Plan. This complete Work Plan/scope of work was approved by the Science Committee and Implementing Committee in April 2014. The National Academy of Sciences is currently reviewing and may recommend changes based upon their review.
11	Concerning the 2015 Applied Research Work Plan, SAWS requires additional information on the algae dynamics study. Algae are one of the most well-studied organisms in science. Since algae are dependent on temperature and nutrients, and a temperature model already exists, precisely what factor is this study meant to parameterize for the ecological model that cannot already be determined from existing studies? SAWS noted the Science Committee highly prioritized this study; however, observations at the meeting indicated this was not the unanimous ranking by those on the Science Committee, and a number of the scientists ranked this study lower.	SAWS	Referred to EAA	EAA	N	The Algae Dynamics Work Plan was not edited, however, EAA has included with the Work Plan the following additional information that should address the concern: the Algae Dynamics research proposal - which is the basis for the Work Plan - and the Science Committee's input on the key elements/rationale for this proposal.
12	Also in the 2015 Applied Research Work Plan, SAWS believes the intent of Table 7.1 included both applied research and utilities/minor operations and maintenance requirements for the experimental channel. Therefore, it seems appropriate that the \$75,000 for the Freeman Aquatic Building should be considered part of the \$450,000, not an addition to the \$450,000 in Table 7.1.	SAWS	Referred to EAA	EAA	Y	EAA will re-evaluate the estimated operating costs, \$75,000, for the Freeman Aquatic Building and will make appropriate adjustments in the budget.