



PRESS RELEASE

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UGRA Opposes Kerr County Water Grab

Kerrville, TX, August 28, 2009 – The Upper Guadalupe River Authority (UGRA) Board of Directors unanimously voted to appeal the Texas Water Development Board's (TWDB) groundwater allocation to Kerr County for the Edwards Plateau Aquifer and to support the Plateau Water Planning Group's (PWPG) appeal of the same. In addition, UGRA voted to register its opposition to federal legislation, the Clean Water Restoration Act, which extends federal jurisdiction over surface water.

House Bill 1763 set the stage for groundwater to be allocated for each county. Small groups of counties were placed into planning areas called groundwater management areas (GMAs). Kerr County was placed in GMA 9 along with eight other counties. When GMA 9 moved to set the criteria to establish water availability in the Edwards Plateau Aquifer in Kerr County, Kerr County voted "no", but was outvoted eight to one. Since the water availability determination has far reaching implications, the legislature has established an appeal process in order to review the decisions made by the GMAs. According to state statute, a legally defined interest in the groundwater within the GMA may challenge the GMAs decision. To that end, UGRA joined with the Kerr County Commissioners' Court and PWPG in filing separate appeals to the TWDB. UGRA also voted to support the PWPG's appeal in concert with the Kerrville City Council.

"There are a number of concerns with the process GMA 9 used to determine Kerr County's permitted water use. The 2006 regional water plan included a study that showed Kerr County, while still providing for spring flow, could use over 16,000 acre-feet of groundwater from the Edwards Plateau Aquifer. The criteria recently established by GMA 9 only allows for 1,200 acre-feet of permitted use for Kerr County. This discrepancy is alarming and the potential socio-economic impacts are great. We believe that an appeal is warranted to ensure that the proper process is used so that Kerr County is not short changed on groundwater," said Lana Edwards, UGRA President.

In other action, the UGRA Board of Directors opposed Senate Bill 787, the Clean Water Restoration Act, currently in the U.S. Senate. "This bill threatens the current Federal Water Pollution Control Act and will allow for federal regulation of virtually all water in the state," said Ray Buck, UGRA General Manager. "It grants federal regulators new and expanded authority over tributaries, intermittent streams, and ponds among other water previously under local or private control."

"It is time for Kerr County to stand up and to stand together in order to protect and provide water resources for our future," said President Edwards. "We appreciate and support the positions taken by the Kerr County Commissioners' Court, the Plateau Water Planning Group, and the Kerrville City Council."

The Upper Guadalupe River Authority is the respected, efficient, responsive, and forthright steward of the Upper Guadalupe River and its tributaries.

Let's Keep Our River Clean