UGRA Strategic Plan
Goals, Action Steps, and Necessary Tasks
(Amended May 2025)

Goal 1: Preserve the health of the Guadalupe River watershed in Kerr County

A. Promote beneficial land stewardship practices

A-1. Share information through seminars, workshops, and presentations

- During this reporting period, beneficial land stewardship practices were discussed during numerous presentations given by UGRA staff. Special community events highlighting stewardship practices included a series of riparian workshops for flood impacted landowners hosted by the Hill Country Alliance and sponsored by UGRA, the 4-H Texas Water Ambassadors field trip, and over 30 site visits conducted by UGRA staff.
- Also, during this reporting period, UGRA Board and Staff were invited to lead the Kerr Together Long-Term Recovery River Working Group which is focused on developing projects and securing funding for efforts to restore the riparian area in Kerr County in the aftermath of the July 2025 flood. Through the efforts of the working group, over six thousand pounds of seeds have been distributed, long term tree planting efforts have been initiated, landowner educational seminars have been held, and park enhancements have been planned.
- See also Goal 4 Section B-2.

A-2. Demonstrate beneficial watershed stewardship practices

- Demonstration projects were started on the UGRA riparian park property in June 2025 and have since expanded in scope. During this reporting period, cypress logs were added to the property to create terraces that slow runoff, large portions of the property were seeded, and many invasive plant species were removed from the property.
- The UGRA EduScape and the Dietert Center slope restoration projects continue to demonstrate beneficial watershed stewardship practices.

A-3. Acquire parkland for the purpose of demonstrating beneficial watershed stewardship practices and educating the public about our watershed, stewardship, and water resource issues

- During this reporting period, the UGRA riparian park property was purchased and the transaction closed on May 21, 2025.

B. Participate in the Guadalupe River Conservancy

B-1. Partner with the Guadalupe Conservancy to host events and workshops

- In 2026, Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust changed its name to Guadalupe River Conservancy.

- Two UGRA Board members currently serve as GRC Trustees and make regular reports to the UGRA Board. UGRA contributes $5,000 annually to GRC for their support of conservation in the upper Guadalupe River watershed.
- During this reporting period, the GRC Executive Director was invited to participate in the Kerr Together River Working Group.

B-2. Provide information about the Guadalupe River Conservancy to interested members of the public.

- Links to the GRC website are maintained on the UGRA website. Brochures from the Texas Land Trusts Council are available in the UGRA lobby and at UGRA information booth events.

C. Preempt potential pollution problems

C-1. Monitor, notify, and communicate issues with the potential to cause water quality problems.

- Results of UGRA water quality monitoring programs are compared to state standards for water quality or internally developed benchmarks for parameters that do not have state standards.

C-2. Implement programs to reduce pollution.

- During this reporting period, the following programs to reduce pollution continued:
    - Routine crossings clean ups were conducted at 13 crossings as scheduled. 28 clean ups were conducted.
    - Summer litter patrol in partnership with Kerr County was conducted through June 2025 but discontinued for the rest of the summer. Two licensed peace officers spent 35 hours visiting Hunt Crossing, Ingram Dam, Center Point Lions Park, and Brinks Crossing.
    - Mesh waterway cleanup bags were stocked during most of the year in the dispenser at Ingram dam. After debris cleanup started, UGRA staff collected the dispenser to reinstall following the completion of the barge activities on Ingram Lake. An estimated 163 bags were used at Ingram dam. UGRA staff used many of the mesh bags during cleanups throughout the year.

D. Initiate and/or support legislation to protect water quality

D-1. Stay abreast of legislative issues and communicate with legislators

- UGRA monitors legislative efforts through the Texas Water Association's legislative service and participates in TWA's managers meetings and other events.
- During this reporting period, the 89th Texas Legislature passed HB 1615which presented changes to codifying laws pertaining to UGRA in Chapter 8515 of the Special District Local Laws Code. HB 1615 was signed by the Governor and will go into effect on April 1, 2027. During the 89th Texas Legislature Second Special session, Senate Bill 3 was enacted. It aimed at improving local

preparedness for future flood events in flash flood-prone counties. The bill directs the Texas Water Development Board to administer a grant program to assist with installing outdoor warning sirens and to develop rules and best management practices for their operation. Additionally, UGRA staff and Board members were invited to testify during the special legislative sessions following the July 2025 flood.

E. Encourage water conservation in the community

E-1. Continue programs to support rainwater harvesting

- UGRA's Rainwater Catchment Rebate Program was initiated in 2011. During this reporting period, 50 rebates were issued totaling $18,439.41.
- UGRA's Rainwater System Grant Program was initiated in 2022. During this reporting period, an application was received from the Hunt Volunteer Fire Department and approved for funding by the UGRA Board of Directors.

F. Implement water enhancement programs

F-1. Construct and monitor water and sediment control basins

- Nine water and sediment control basins have been completed to date.
- Immediately following the July 2025 flood, brief inspections of all the structures were conducted, and a few of the sites were damaged by the flood waters. UGRA has initiated conversations with NRCS to evaluate any possible structural damage that can be repaired through funding from the Emergency Watershed Program. Plans are in place to repair and replace damaged sensing equipment in the next reporting period.

F-2. Continue Water Enhancement Cost Share Program

- UGRA's Water Enhancement Cost Share Program was initiated in 2010. During this reporting period, UGRA processed 5 applications and reimbursed landowners $19,757.45 for brush management activities on 255 acres.
- The program was paused in September 2025 to evaluate effectiveness.

F-3. Promote best practices for brush management

- UGRA's website contains resources on brush management practices.
- The topic of brush management is often highlighted during presentations about land stewardship practices. See also Goal 3 Section A-1 and Goal 4 Section B-2.

F-4. Monitor effectiveness of water enhancement programs

- Water level sensors have been installed on eight water and sediment control basin structures to monitor changes in the volume of water impounded by the structures. Rainfall sensors are also in place at seven of the structures.

G. Collaborate with partners to address concerns for healthy river habitats

G-1. Work with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to implement the Healthy Creeks Initiative in Kerr County

- In FY18, UGRA began a partnership with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) to provide no cost management of *Arundo donax* to Kerr County landowners through the Healthy Creeks Initiative. During this reporting period, 58 out of the 151 Kerr County parcels enrolled in the program were treated by the sprayers Portions of the spraying were conducted in June and October 2025.
- In coordination with TPWD, UGRA applied for and received grant funding from the Community Foundation of the Texas Hill Country for an expansion of the Healthy Creeks Initiative in Kerr County over the next three summers. Based on the predicted proliferation of *Arundo donax* following the flood, the grant will cover the costs of an additional staff member to survey during June and July as well as additional spray hours for the crew of sprayers currently contracted by TPWD.

G-2. Participate in regional efforts to address concerns for freshwater mussels and other endangered species.

- In 2022, UGRA began investigating the concept of using Permit 5394D as a potential mitigation strategy in a Habitat Conservation Plan for endangered species.
- The UGRA Board HCP Ad Hoc Committee continues to coordinate between GBRA and local entities and landowners to facilitate participation in GBRA's Habitat Conservation Plan.
- During this reporting period, it was determined that the participation of landowners with low head dams in the HCP was not an appropriate approach and the committee is exploring the option of using a dedicated Aquatic Resource Relocation Plan to mitigate impacts on endangered species.

G-3. Promote management of feral hogs

- In FY18, UGRA partnered with Kerr County to initiate a feral hog tail bounty in the Guadalupe River watershed in Kerr County.
- During this reporting period, 1,021 tails have been reported to the bounty program and $12,252 have been issued in bounty payments (combination of UGRA and Kerr County funds).

G-4. Monitor invasive species

- In FY16, UGRA installed three zebra mussel traps at lakes in the county that are checked quarterly. UGRA also worked with the City of Kerrville to install three additional traps in Nimitz Lake that their staff checks quarterly. All traps were displaced during the July 2025 flood. Traps will be reinstalled following the work of the debris removal barges rotating through the Kerr County lakes.

- During presentations about landowner stewardship and riparian areas, the topic of invasive species management of Ligustrum and Chinaberry is often covered. See also Goal 3 Section A-1 and Goal 4 Section B-2.

H. Document changes in the watershed over time

H-1. Annually complete the river corridor flyover video

- Since 2009, UGRA has worked with a local videographer to produce a river corridor video annually. During this reporting period, the corridor was filmed in February and March 2026 and the 2011 - 2026 footage can be viewed with an updated viewer on the UGRA web page. UGRA uses the footage as a resource to identify land use changes and assist with water quality investigations.

H-2. Routinely summarize water quality metrics

- Results of UGRA water quality monitoring programs are compared to state standards for water quality or internally developed benchmarks for parameters that do not have state standards.
- A post flood water quality update was presented to the UGRA Board at the August 27, 2025, board meeting.

I. Implement activities outlined in Bacteria Reduction Plan for the Upper Guadalupe River

I-1. Continue education programs promoting awareness of potential sources of fecal bacteria pollution (i.e., stormwater runoff, waterfowl, roosting birds, pet waste, OSSFs)

- Awareness of potential pollution sources continues to be included in nearly all UGRA presentations. Public service announcements on these topics are currently airing on four local radio stations.

I-2. Continue monitoring bird deterrent structure installed on SH 16 Bridge

- Inspection of the bird deterrent structure is conducted during the monthly animal recreators surveys or more frequently if needed. Netting was inspected following the July 2025 flood and damage was identified. Staff are currently determining an appropriate approach for repair since the netting has exceeded its anticipated life span.

I-3. Continue routine animal and recreators surveys

- Surveys continue to be conducted once per month at 7 sites to note wildlife type and abundance. Location and activities of recreators are also recorded.

I-4. Continue to partner with Kerr County Environmental Health Department to disseminate information for homeowners with OSSFs

- The materials for homeowners with OSSFs continue to be made available to the public through UGRA and Kerr County Environmental Health Department.

I-5. Continue to partner with local agencies to manage non-native waterfowl populations in riverside areas

- UGRA designed and purchased signs discouraging the feeding of waterfowl and distributes them to local agencies as requested.

I-6. Continue to assist local entities with supplies for existing pet waste stations and evaluate need for additional stations

- A total of 56 pet waste stations have been purchased or facilitated by UGRA and are in use in Kerr County. UGRA continues to purchase refill pet waste station supplies for Kerr County and replacement signs, and trash cans as needed. The City of Kerrville purchases their own refill supplies.

J. Promote use of nature-based infrastructure strategies to reduce stormwater runoff

J-1. Administer incentive program to support use of nature-based infrastructure strategies

- During this reporting period, the City of Kerrville Public Safety Facility project was completed for the Water Resources Preservation Grant Program. Two projects approved by the UGRA Board, with Kerr County and the Guadalupe River Center, are still pending completion.
- Staff participates in the City of Kerrville Development Review Committee and shares information about the grant program to potentially eligible applicants as appropriate.

J-2. Build pilot projects that demonstrate nature-based infrastructure strategies

- The UGRA EduScape constructed in 2018 continues to demonstrate nature-based infrastructure strategies.
- During this reporting period, no additional pilot projects were constructed.

J-3. Provide guidance on design, construction, operation, and maintenance of nature-based infrastructure practices

- The Water Resources Preservation Grant Program guidelines include technical design guidance, example designs, and general maintenance requirements. All program documents are available on the UGRA website.

J-4. Educate local design professionals on low impact development practices like nature-based infrastructure

- During this reporting period, staff spoke individually with design professionals about the practices, but no formal training was held.

Goal 2: Build scientific knowledge base for springflow, river flow and water quality

A. Monitor spring flow

A-1. Continue springflow measurement program

- Starting in 2008, UGRA contracted with USGS to measure flow at 5 locations to estimate the impact of springs and spring groups to the flow of the Guadalupe River. UGRA staff expertise and equipment are currently at a level where this task can be done in-house. UGRA staff took over the data collection for this program in October 2017, and it has continued without interruption since. The funds to USGS for this program were reallocated to install a high intensity rain gauge at the Hunt streamflow monitoring station.

B. Monitor surface water flow

B-1. Continue streamflow gaging station program with the United States Geological Survey

- UGRA contracts annually with USGS to fund the operation of four streamflow gauges in Kerr County. The City of Kerrville shares the costs for two gauges.
- UGRA takes streamflow measurements at 14-18 sites to support data collection for the Clean Rivers Program and County Wide Goal Based Monitoring Program.
- During this reporting period, plans to develop a streamflow gaging station with precipitation on the upper South Fork were initiated.

C. Monitor and evaluate water quality

C-1. Continue participation in the Texas Clean Rivers Program (CRP)

- UGRA is in the first year of a 2-year subcontract with GBRA for CRP. UGRA participated in all CRP conference calls and meetings. UGRA contributed information to the annual CRP Basin Highlights report. UGRA conducts water quality sampling and testing for the Clean Rivers Program which also includes sampling locations previously covered under the Bacteria Reduction Plan.

C-2. Conduct routine water quality monitoring of tributaries and the mainstem Guadalupe River through the County Wide Goal Based Monitoring Program

- Monitoring plan has been implemented. The results are compared to state standards for water quality or internally developed benchmarks for parameters that do not have state standards.

C-3. Conduct the Summer Swimability Program to evaluate swimming holes throughout Kerr County

- UGRA conducts water quality sampling and testing for the summer swimability program. During this reporting period, the summer swimability program was suspended during July and the first part of August.

C-4. Continue monitoring of previously impaired areas

- Sites previously monitored under the Bacteria Reduction Plan grant were moved to the Clean Rivers Program contract starting in FY15. The sites in the previously impaired area continue to be monitored monthly.
- Promoting green infrastructure is a management measure included in the Bacteria Reduction Plan for the Upper Guadalupe River. In 2023, the Water Resources Preservation Grant Program was launched with supporting documentation on the website. See also Goal 3 Section J-1.

D. Respond to complaints concerning surface water quality

D-1. Promptly investigate spills, pollution reports and other water quality complaints

- During the reporting period, staff investigated 19 complaints involving numerous field visits for data collection. Of those 19 complaints, 13 of the investigations involved coordination with other entities to resolve the concern.
- Staff tested lead and arsenic in water and soil samples at the Hill County Shooting Sports Center at least annually from 2005 - 2020. Since no concerns were ever identified, testing frequency has been revised to once every 5 years. A sampling event was conducted during this reporting period, and the next set of samples will be scheduled for 2030.

D-2. Supply appropriate spill equipment to volunteer fire departments or other agencies

- UGRA continues to maintain spill containment supplies and will purchase them for any interested local entities.

Goal 3: Raise public awareness of the UGRA mission, the importance of the Upper Guadalupe River and the need for conservation.

A. Continue "Let's Keep Our River Clean" Campaign

A-1. Promote concept through radio PSAs, newspaper, promotional items, presentations

- The slogan is currently included in all UGRA press releases, the monthly Currents article, the UGRA website, all UGRA brochures, and radio and TV ads.
- The slogan is printed on bumper stickers, bottle stickers, water bottles, rain gauges, mini notebooks, reusable shopping bags, and pet waste bags used as promotional giveaways at special events.
- The concept was promoted in regularly airing public service announcements on FM 92.3, FM 96.5, FM 99.1, FM 103.7, FM 104.9, FM 106.1, FM 94.3, FM 93.9, FM 106.5, FM 104.3, FM 102.1, and Texas Public Radio.

B. Facilitate the understanding of water issues, including water conservation, and water quality, and programs relevant to Kerr County

B-1. Provide information resources to the public

- UGRA produces a column titled "Currents" which is published routinely in the Hill Country Community Journal, the Kerrville Daily Times, and in the West Kerr Current. The articles focus on relevant water quality and stewardship topics.
- UGRA staff developed and produced brochures which are provided to the public.
- UGRA staff also make available to the public over 15 pieces of literature produced by other agencies. Info is placed in the GBNRC lobby and distributed at events as appropriate.
- UGRA's webpage is routinely updated to facilitate ease of use, encourage visitation, and enhance information dissemination.
- In FY23 a social media campaign was launched through Facebook and Instagram to further water resource education messaging and event announcements.
- During this reporting period 72 posts were made, and the combined accounts have approximately 1,628 followers.

B-2. Disseminate information to public via media and in person presentations at least once per month

- For this reporting period, staff made 44 in person and virtual presentations, reaching 3,114 people ranging in age from school-age children to adults.
- UGRA held an information booth at 6 events and spoke with 378 people.
- During this reporting period, 3 press releases were distributed to the local newspapers.
- Radio ads are featured on the Rev 94.3 FM, Mike FM 103.7, 99.1 The Buck, and 104.9 Encore stations. Live radio interviews aired on the Ranch 92.3, the Fox

106.5, the Patriot 104.3 FM and 102.1 FM, the River 106.1, the Buck 99.1, 103.7 Mike FM, 94.3 Rev FM. In FY24 staff started doing live interviews on the Raptor 96.5 FM and 93.9 FM. Daily water conservation tips are featured on Texas Public Radio.

- A weekly ad, "UGRA Weekly News," is printed in the Kerrville Daily Times, Hill Country Community Journal, and West Kerr Current.
- UGRA staff also regularly contributes to articles with a focus on water issues produced by newspaper staff. During this reporting period, UGRA was mentioned or featured in 81 articles apart from UGRA sponsored articles.
- Summer Swimability Study is conducted from Memorial Day to Labor Day with 21 sites tested weekly for bacteria. Results are posted on the UGRA website and provided via telephone to interested members of the public. In FY22, staff enhanced an interactive map displaying the location of the swimability sites, low water crossings, local streams, and watersheds. To date, the map has been viewed over 225,000 times.
- The UGRA EduScape continues to be utilized for self-guided and group tours. During the reporting period, UGRA staff led two in-person tours. The Hill Country Master Naturalists continue to maintain the pollinator garden portion of the EduScape.

B-3. Work with volunteers in the community to monitor water quality

- UGRA's Volunteer Summer Study program had 30 participants in 2025, and they collected 148 samples at 40 locations. The summer 2025 program was suspended in July 2025 but is scheduled to resume in June 2026.

B-4. Provide opportunities for students to gain hands-on experience

- One undergraduate student completed 183.5 hours during the summer by assisting Natural Resources staff and helping in the lab. A high school student is scheduled to intern during the summer of 2026.

B-5. Participate in relevant activities organized by other agencies and organizations

- UGRA participated in various public school and community activities including B.T. Wilson Outdoor Education Camp, Land & Ranch Expo, Kerrville ISD 4th Grade Science Day at Riverside Nature Center, UGRA 2nd Grade Science Day at Riverside Nature Center, Louise Hays Park 75th Anniversary Event, Water Street Festival, Riverside Nature Center Sprouts, Hill Country Master Naturalists new class training, and Kerrville Board of Realtors.
- UGRA works with other local and state agencies in reporting and investigating complaints (also noted in Goal 2 section D.1).
- UGRA's modified river clean ups during this reporting period were done in close coordination with the City of Kerrville.
- UGRA currently serves as the political entity that administers contracts for the Plateau Water Planning Group. UGRA staff time is used in administering the contracts and funding, maintaining the PWPG website, and providing technical support during the meetings in lieu of cash to support the administration of the PWPG.

- UGRA staff serves the community through affiliation with the following organizations or committees: Kerr Together Board of Directors, Kerr Together Guadalupe River Flood Warning and River Working Groups, Plateau Water Planning Group Board, Guadalupe Basin Regional Flood Planning Group, City of Kerrville Development Review Committee, Kerr County Aggregate Production Operations Advisory Council, Interregional Planning Council for the Texas Water Development Board, Kerr County Women's Chamber, Executive Women's Club, Riverside Nature Center, Texas Master Naturalists, and Texas Lions Camp.
- Staff provide supplies to community groups conducting roadside clean ups as requested. During this reporting period seven additional groups requested clean-up supplies and conducted a total of 7 clean-ups with 115 participants.

B-6. Collaborate with other agencies and organizations to extend outreach

- UGRA partnered with the Hill Country Alliance to sponsor a series of riparian restoration workshops for flood impacted landowners that included partners from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and Texas A&M Forest Service.
- UGRA also partnered with the Hill Country Alliance to host a series of community conversations throughout Kerr County about water quality and land stewardship concerns.
- UGRA partnered with the Riverside Nature Center on many outreach programs throughout the year.
- UGRA presented to Leadership Kerr County for their annual environmental day where they learned about local natural resources and the development of the Guadalupe River Flood Warning System

B-7. Continue Annual River Clean Up event

- UGRA's 2025 Annual River Clean Up was cancelled following the July 2025 flood, and in its place, UGRA partnered with the City of Kerrville to host two cleanups along the River Trail in Kerrville. The two River Trail Cleanups had a combined 286 participants who collected a large amount of trash from along the trail and in the river.
- The 2026 cleanup is scheduled for 7/25/26 with the option to also conduct your own cleanup at any time during the year.

B-8. Develop and distribute UGRA Year in Review publication annually to include UGRA activities and priority educational topics

- UGRA developed and published a 6-page Year in Review publication in February 2026. Approximately 7,200 copies were distributed via inserts in the local newspapers. Additional copies (approximately 1,000) are distributed at outreach events throughout the year.

B-9. Relay a call to action to the community to prompt engagement in addressing water resource issues

- Due to above average rainfall during summer 2025, UGRA did not distribute letters or publish articles addressing water conservation during this reporting

period. Drought and water resources continue to be a frequent topic in presentations.

C. Evaluate and refine outreach and education approach at end of year

C-1. Measure effectiveness of action steps by number of persons reached and feedback from participants

- UGRA staff records the number of participants reached by all UGRA presentations (also noted in 1.3.1).
- UGRA utilized responses by River Clean Up participants to an online survey to modify the format of the cleanup.
- UGRA also utilized an online survey to modify the Volunteer Summer Study.

Goal 4: Evaluate and implement resources for flood warning in the Guadalupe River watershed

A. Share flood awareness resources with the community

A-1. Utilize UGRA's "Be Flood Aware" video

- Prior to July 2025, the video was displayed on a kiosk in the GBNRC lobby for visitors to view. It is also provided as an educational resource on the UGRA website.
- Prior to July 2025, UGRA staff showed the video during presentations with information about flooding, and it was recommended in outreach materials like the weekly news ads and social media posts.
- To date, the video has over 50,000 views.

A-2. Promote resources developed by other partners

- Information about flood safety is included in the Education Center of the website and resources like CodeRED by Kerr County are offered during presentations including flood topics.
- Flood awareness resources and social media posts produced by the Texas Floodplain Managers Association are also shared and promoted.

B. Enhance Kerr County flood warning resources

B-1. Fund GBRA rainfall network in Kerr County

- The FY26 budget continues UGRA financial support for the maintenance of a rainfall gauge network owned by GBRA in Kerr County. Data from the rainfall gauge network is accessible through UGRA's website.

B-2. Work with local partners to develop Kerr County flood warning system

- In January 2017, UGRA partnered with Kerr County in a FEMA flood warning implementation grant request for $980,000. The project was not selected for funding and most of the funds went to communities impacted by Hurricane Harvey.
- In FY18 the USGS installed a high intensity precipitation gauge at the streamflow site on the Guadalupe in Hunt included in the agreement with UGRA.
- In FY24, a pre-application for a county wide flood warning system was submitted to the Texas Water Development Board Flood Infrastructure Fund. The project was invited to submit a complete application, but UGRA declined due to the low (5%) match offered through the grant.
- UGRA participated in the update to the Kerr County Hazard Mitigation Action Plan which addresses hazards including flooding. The final plan was submitted to FEMA in April 2025.
- Numerous efforts were initiated during this reporting period:
    - UGRA contracted with KISTERS North America to develop a software solution to integrate existing rainfall and water level data

sources. The resulting data viewer is available to local emergency managers to improve their access to information about flooding. After the July 2025 flood, the scope of that project was expanded to provide additional information that was needed for the development of a comprehensive flood warning system.

- In September 2025, UGRA Board and staff were invited to join the Kerr Together Long-Term Recovery Group Board and to lead the Guadalupe River Flood Warning System Working Group. Through the working group, a development team compiled requirements for the flood warning system, a telecommunications team worked with numerous regional partners to secure funding to expand a private LTE network in western Kerr County, and a public safety team developed procedures and plans to respond to flooding.
- The 89th Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 3 during the second special session which created a program to fund a flood warning system using sirens as a notification method. Once the Texas Water Development Board released the program agreements defining how the funding would be allocated, UGRA and Kerr County executed an Interlocal Agreement for UGRA to develop a flood warning system within the SB3 guidelines for Kerr County. The agreement also defined that the program funding would be passed through from Kerr County to UGRA to administer.
- UGRA hired a grant management firm and an engineering firm to assist with the implementation of the SB3 system.
- An initial siren system consisting of eight sirens to broadcast over west Kerr County youth camps was designed and equipment was purchased.

C. Participate in regional flood planning efforts

C-1. Contribute to Guadalupe Regional Flood Planning Group

- UGRA's General Manager represents River Authorities as a voting member of the Guadalupe Regional Flood Planning Group.
- The planning group selected a UGRA sponsored Flood Management Evaluation for small communities projects to receive priority funding. The project will evaluate both structural and nonstructural flood control strategies and should be completed by Spring 2027.

Goal 5: Provide environmental laboratory service to internal and external customers

A. Maintain accreditation through the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP) as implemented by The NELAC Institute (TNI) and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)

A-1. Pass biannual NELAP audits and address any identified deficiencies

- A third-party contractor assessed the lab in February 2026. All corrective actions have been initiated.

A-2. Perform two rounds of proficiency testing annually in general chemistry and microbiology

- All PT tests are current per NELAP requirements. We have now completed 16 years of microbiology and general chemistry testing with a 98% or greater success rate for each study.

A-3. Maintain laboratory documents in compliance with the current TNI Standard (i.e., standard operating procedures, quality manual)

- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are utilized for all certified tests. SOPs are updated for clarity or as regulations change. The Quality Manual is reviewed annually and updated as needed.

B. Maintain superior customer service

B-1. Work with local Texas Water Utilities Association (TWUA) to offer continuing education classes

- During this reporting period, staff gave a presentation on the SETH (Student Education and Training in Hydraulics/Water) program to the local TWUA chapter. SETH is a free, 22-hour training course designed for Texas high school students to become certified Class D Water Operators.

B-2. Assist customers to comply with testing requirements of third-party agencies (i.e., DSHS, TCEQ, lenders)

- UGRA maintains good relations with our customers by providing timely and high-quality service and providing answers to numerous inquiries and questions. We attach a survey to each email report to request feedback from customers and to give us the opportunity to improve our service.
- UGRA staff work with our customers to ensure their testing meets the requirements of third-party agencies. This often involves developing individual pricing quotes and researching appropriate subcontractors for testing that is not conducted at the UGRA Lab.

C. Maintain competitive fee schedule

C-1. Routinely evaluate fee schedule

- Lab testing fees for several in-house analyses were increased for FY25 due to increases in supply and operational costs. Subcontract testing fees were raised in FY25 as subcontracted labs increased their prices.

C-2. Survey other area labs and adjust UGRA lab fees as appropriate

- The survey was completed as part of the process to determine a new fee schedule for FY25. Our prices are not the lowest in the area, but we have not lost customers due to recent price increases.

D. Maintain capital equipment

D-1. Maintain inventory and replacement schedule to consider in annual budget preparation

- The Fund Balance Policy approved by the board in March 2023 includes an assigned fund balance for laboratory capital improvements.
- Capacity and condition of equipment have been evaluated to determine the necessity for replacement. Needed replacements are considered during the development of the annual budget. All equipment purchased in FY25 is in use. New equipment for FY26 includes a new UV Light for the microbiology lab, new pipettes, and equipment needed to implement corrective actions from the most recent assessment response.

E. Reduce cost of analyses

E-1. Purchase and/or upgrade lab equipment which will create a positive cost/benefit ratio by reducing personnel time needed per test

- Equipment is upgraded as needed to extend capacity or replace aging/failing equipment.
- Three pieces of equipment have been replaced this year.

E-2. Aggressively seek competitive vendors for best lab supply prices

- Multiple quotes are sought, and items purchased in bulk to minimize costs.
- Suppliers used are annually reviewed and approved.

F. Compare actual laboratory performance versus targeted goals

F-1. Prepare routine reports evaluating actual number of tests and generated revenue compared to targeted test and revenue goals necessary to meet budget target

- Test and revenue reports are generated for each UGRA Board Meeting and included in the Lab Manager staff report. These include a comparison of monthly revenue to target revenue and frequency of most common tests. Current FY26 total revenue is less than this time last year. One of our larger customers has switched to using another lab that will collect and process their samples for their convenience. In 2025, lab staff processed over 24,900 tests

for regulated and non-regulated customers which is a slight decrease from 25,000 tests in 2024.

G. Modify laboratory business plan as needed

G-1. Examine cost/benefits of running certain tests

- Cost/benefit analysis was completed for primary tests as part of approved fee adjustment in 2024.
- UGRA currently subcontracts wastewater ammonia testing due to the staff time required to perform the analysis. The lab still maintains accreditation for ammonia and runs the test quarterly for the Natural Resources Department.

G-2. Determine which analyses can be expanded with current staff

- Current lab staffing is adequate for currently ordered tests, but expansion to new tests would require additional staff.
- We determined that the expansion of presence/absence test for bacteria is likely limited by available customers and not by lab capabilities. We experienced an increase in requests for presence/absence analysis when the Kendall County WCID lab discontinued service in 2018. The demand has since plateaued.

G-3. Survey market to determine practicality of expanding analyses

- We started accepting samples for Lead and Copper Rule testing in FY16 and Water Quality Parameters in FY19 due to a change in drinking water monitoring regulations. Even though the testing is subcontracted, we assist our customers by providing bottles and instructions and by shipping the samples. Staff have been trained in the sample acceptance requirements for these tests to better assist our customers. Our subcontract fee covers UGRA staff costs for shipping and handling the samples and our customers are happy to have a local lab who can facilitate this complicated testing process for them.

G-4. Develop profitability plan

- Lab staff have minimized costs and retain customers by providing excellent customer service.
- Over the last five fiscal years, lab profitability has improved.

H. Provide for redundancy in staffing

H-1. Ensure lab maintains technical managers and deputy technical managers for chemistry and microbiology for continued operations per TNI Standard

- TCEQ recognized Nicole Shepherd as lead technical manager for chemistry and microbiology and Tara Bushnoe as deputy technical manager for microbiology. Ben Braeutigam has been recognized as a deputy technical manager in microbiology and chemistry. Reagan Boles has been recognized as deputy technical director in microbiology.

H-2. Maintain cross training in laboratory testing and operational tasks

- Laboratory staff are being trained in quality control and management duties. The general chemistry analyst has been trained in all microbiology testing. The microbiology analyst has begun cross-training in the chemistry lab.

Goal 6: Continue efficient management of UGRA

A. Maintain fiscal integrity

A-1. Continue use of Purchase Order Policy, Service Agreements, and Credit Card Policy

- Incorporated purchase order policy terms into Procurement Policy approved in November 2023.
- Approved POs are required prior to every purchase (must be approved by General Manager or Assistant General Manager).
- Competitive price comparisons and signed service agreements are used for services as appropriate.
- UGRA's credit card policy is enforced and monitored monthly.
- Outside bookkeeping checks and balances are provided through Seymour Business Services.
- UGRA financials are audited annually by an independent auditor and presented for Board approval.
- Laboratory Payment Policy and Customer Credit Agreement are in use, which has led to the elimination of large write-offs for bad debt. During this reporting period, no receivables over 90 days exist.
- The board continues to annually review the UGRA Investment Policy per the Public Funds Investment Act.

A-2. Adopt and implement management recommendations included in 2022 Sunset Advisory Commission Staff Report

- Develop and maintain a complaints system and make information on complaint procedures available to the public: Complete. A system to develop and maintain complaints has been implemented. A link to a form is posted at www.ugra.org/public-information/transparency and the submissions are anonymous. Staff received training on the procedure for documenting complaints and a document outlining the procedure. The procedure is reviewed with staff at least annually. Complaints are reviewed by the Human Resources Committee at least annually.
- Improve contracting processes to ensure sufficient consistency and transparency: Complete. The procedure for contractor selection is outlined in the Procurement Policy which was approved by the UGRA Board in November 2023. The policy outlines contractor selection, contractor evaluation, purchasing, conflicts of interest, and other procedures to improve consistency. Forms to document the process have been developed as appropriate.
- Adopt a reserve fund balance policy: Completed and approved by the UGRA Board in March 2023. This policy was incorporated into the Administrative Policies in November 2023.
- In FY25, UGRA was audited by the State Auditor's Office to review compliance with the management recommendations included in the 2022 Sunset Advisory Commission Staff Report. Additionally, the Sunset staff audited UGRA's

implementation of the statutory changes included in UGRA's Sunset Bill (HB 1555, 88th Legislature).

B. Develop upkeep and maintenance schedule

B-1. Survey and prioritize building needs

Ongoing maintenance is considered during annual budget development. During this reporting period, the following building maintenance projects were completed: replaced another 4 HVAC units, touch up painting throughout building. All 14 HVAC units have now been replaced.

B-2. Dedicate portion of tenant revenue to building upkeep and maintenance

- Four offices are currently leased by: 1. US Congressman Chip Roy; 2. Headwaters Groundwater Conservation District; 3. Kerr Basin Paleozoic Groundwater Team; and 4. Kerrville Genealogical Society.

C. Optimize tenancy use

C-1. Advertise available rental facilities and vacancies

- The GBNRC is promoted as a meeting facility on the UGRA website.
- In addition to contracted tenants, the lecture hall and classroom were used 241 times (day use) during this time. Of the 241 times used, 159 uses were paid for; the remaining 82 were free. Use is up from last year, which had a total of 192 uses.

C-2. Investigate and implement potential facility upgrades to attract day use clients

- Building improvements are considered during annual budget development. During this reporting period, the following building improvement projects were completed: wireless microphones were replaced in the lecture hall.

Goal 7: Retain and develop quality staff

A. Offer competitive compensation packages

A-1. Develop salary and benefit ranges commensurate with positions

- This is an ongoing process involving annual review. No formal salary survey has been conducted, but data is collected from local and similar institutions during annual budget development.
- Note that four employees have served 15+ years, one employee has served 10+ years, and three employees have served 5+ years.
- The Human Resources Committee reviews salaries and benefits during annual budget development.

B. Provide continuing education opportunities

B-1. Budget for classes, seminars, and certification necessary for proper job performance

- The FY26 budget contains funding for continuing education for all staff except the part-time janitorial staff. During this reporting period, staff attended 21 training events (in person or online) on topics including: hillside stewardship, the Cagle's Map turtle, Central Texas mussel species listing, fish and mussel, surface water quality monitoring, field sampling methods, sonde calibration, the Open Meetings Act, the Public Information Act, cyber security, conflict resolution, accounting, retirement, land management, work safety, Texpool investments, data integrity, Sage software, legislative session priorities, time management, human resources considerations, and new equipment operation.

B-2. Cross-train routinely to ensure continuous operation in event of absences

- Small staff size and specialties make this task a challenge, but to date all positions have been managed well during absences.
- Both the general chemistry analyst and the lab manager can run all chemistry and microbiology tests. The microbiologist analyst is learning to run general chemistry tests.

C. Provide employment structure

C-1. Provide orientation to new employees

- An orientation schedule is used for onboarding new employees.

C-2. Routinely provide information to employees on new and existing policies and benefits

- All employees received and signed the Personnel Policy Manual upon hire.
- Personnel policies are routinely discussed during the monthly staff meetings.

D. Annual reviews

D-1. Annually prepare performance evaluation for employees or more frequently during first year of employment

- During the first year of hire, all employees receive a 90-day evaluation and a 180-day evaluation. Thereafter, all employees receive an annual evaluation. During this reporting period, nearly all evaluations were completed on schedule.

E. Proper staff alignment

E-1. Annually review staffing needs and task requirements

- UGRA staffing needs are discussed annually with the Human Resources Committee during annual budget development.