

Fight Against Sewage Discharge Continues

Clean Water Action and our allies in the No Dumping Sewage campaign are continuing efforts to secure a ban on the discharge of sewage effluent into waterways within the Edwards Aquifer Contributing Zone. The effort continues even after the city of Dripping Springs agreed to settle with most of its adversaries over its plans to dump up to 995,000 gallons of treated sewage a day into a tributary of Onion Creek. The compromise settlement would prohibit discharge for five years, reduce the daily maximum to 800,000 gallons, and set up a public commission to explore alternatives. The agreement still needs final approval from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

Even when treated, sewage effluent contains nitrogen and phosphorous that can cause algae blooms that reduce water quality, depress oxygen levels, and endanger fish and other aquatic species. The effluent also contains numerous “contaminants of emerging concern” (i.e. chemicals from pharmaceutical and personal care products) that can find their way into aquifers, creeks, and well water. Cost-effective alternative disposal methods are readily available, such as land application to vegetated fields specifically designed to treat wastewater, and beneficial re-use, where treated effluent is used for irrigation. Beneficial re-use has the added benefit of reducing potable water needs.

Even with the Dripping Springs settlement, the campaign remains urgent. The population of the I-35 corridor continues to swell, and new subdivisions need to manage their sewage. Other discharge permits are in play, and without a ban more will be brought forward. The City of Blanco for example seeks a permit to discharge up to 1.6 million gallons per day into the Blanco River. Silesia Properties, LP intends to discharge up to 500,000 gallons per day into a tributary of Honey Creek.

Conventional methods of sending sewage via long pipelines to distant treatment plants are ill-suited to the region, with much of it lying above the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone, which has thin soils that provide only minimal filtration of contaminants. Leak-prone sewage lines would need to cross numerous creeks on their way to treatment plants like the one Dripping Springs and Blanco plan to build.

Our coalition has already collected over 3,500 petition signatures calling for a ban. Click [here](#) to add your name!



Onion Creek near Del Valle, Texas.

PHOTO: © 2016 LARRY D. MOORE CC BY-SA 4.0

Make a Plan to be a Clean Water Voter!

Many races in this year's election are expected to be incredibly close and turnout from environmental voters could make the difference. We deserve members of the U.S. Congress and Texas Legislature who put the interests of our water, air, and public health above the interests of corporate polluters. We need a Congress that will stem the flood of anti-environmental measures from the Trump administration. We need a Texas legislature that will embrace a clean energy future, allow cities to protect trees and regulate plastic bags as they choose, and focus on real problems like public education instead of "bathroom bills".

What's a stake? Protections for streams, wetlands, and drinking water, rules that reduce the amount of methane oil and gas companies can waste and emit, safeguards that keep coal plant waste out of our water, our leadership on climate change. The list goes on and on.

Clean Water Action proudly urges our members to vote for these candidates in this year's congressional and state legislative races. All of the incumbents our endorsed congressional candidates are challenging earned rock-bottom scores of 0% to 3% on our [environmental voting scorecard](#).

Beto O'Rourke for U.S. Senate: Beto's spirited campaign has set off alarm bells among corporate polluters across the land. He is an environmental champion with an A+ voting record as a U.S. Congressman, including 97% on our newest Congressional scorecard, in stark contrast to Ted Cruz's flunking 0. Sending Beto to the Senate will send a powerful message that Texas no longer tolerates the politics of division and corporate greed.



U.S. CONGRESS: Control of the U.S. House of Representatives is at stake, and in these closely watched races Clean Water Action endorses:

District 10: Mike Siegel	District 23: Gina Ortiz Jones	District 31: M.J. Hegar,
District 21: Joseph Kopser	District 25: Julie Oliver	District 32: Colin Allred

TEXAS SENATE: These races will determine if Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick preserves his supermajority in the Senate that allows him to move extremist bills forward. Clean Water Action endorses:

SD 5: Meg Walsh	SD 10: Beverly Powell
SD 16: Nathan Johnson	SD 25: Steven Kling

TEXAS HOUSE: These races will help decide whether the next Speaker packs powerful committees with anti-environmental zealots. Clean Water Action endorses:

HD 45: Erin Zwiener	HD 52: James Talarico	HD 112: Brandy Chambers
HD 46: Sheryl Cole	HD 105: Thresa Meza	HD 114: John Turner
HD 47: Vikki Goodwin	HD 107: Victoria Neave	HD 136: John Bucy III

Learn more about these candidates [here](#). Find your districts [here](#) and learn where you can vote [here](#).

Vote Tuesday, November 6!

Vote EARLY Monday Oct 22 – Friday Nov 2!

Pol ad. paid for by Texas Vote Environment PAC, 600 W. 28th St # 202, Austin TX 78705, 512-474-2046.

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or mail 600 West 28th St., Suite 202, Austin, TX 78705 or 1444 Eye Street, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20005



City of Austin Endorsements:

While races for Congress and the state legislature have been getting most of the attention, this year's local elections in Austin are also vital to our democracy and our environment. We're proud to endorse Mayor Steve Adler for re-election, along with a slate of city council candidates and recommendations on ballot propositions.

Remember, local races are non-partisan, so a straight party vote does not register in city elections. Be sure to vote all the way down to the bottom of the ballot!



Clean Water Action supports these candidates for November 6:

Steve Adler for Austin Mayor

Steve is a leader among U.S. mayors on climate change and is committed to integrating improved flood-control and water quality provisions into future land use regulations. Major accomplishments include contracting for 400 megawatts of energy from west Texas solar farms, setting a goal to add 60,000 affordable housing units within 10 years, and securing voter approval of investments in transit, bikeways, sidewalks, and more efficient roads. Future plans include passing a regional mass transit plan that uses electric vehicles running in dedicated pathways.

Vincent Harding, District 1: Vincent has a deep knowledge of this district and is committed to bringing more affordable housing, health care, and transportation options to its residents.

Susana Almanza, District 3: As the long-time director of People Organized in Defense of Earth and her Resources (PODER), Susana has worked tirelessly to combat environmental racism in East Austin and protect families from displacement and gentrification.

Ann Kitchen, District 5: Ann has a distinguished record in both the state legislature and on city council, with strong pro-environment credentials dating back to the founding of Austin's Save our Springs movement.

Bobby Levinski, District 8: Bobby gained valuable experience as a staffer for three pro-environment council members and as an attorney for the Save Our Springs Alliance, and is the best candidate to represent the district that includes Barton Springs.

Kathie Tovo, District 9: Kathie has proven herself a champion on clean water and renewable energy during her two terms on council, and was the chief sponsor of the resolution that set up Austin's Water Forward process to secure future water supply in a sustainable, environmentally-friendly manner.

Vote FOR the City of Austin Bond Propositions:

We endorse these seven propositions that will promote affordable housing, water quality, flood control, and safer streets.

Prop A: Affordable housing for low-to-moderate income families and seniors

Prop B: Libraries, museums and cultural centers

Prop C: New parks and park improvements

Prop D: Water quality and flood control

Prop E: Health and human services

Prop F: Fire and EMS stations

Prop G: Pedestrian safety, urban trails, and sidewalk, and road and bridge repairs

Vote AGAINST Proposition K:

This so-called "efficiency audit" proposition is in reality a stealth attack on Austin programs that protect the environment, worker safety, and public health. The Prop. K petition drive was financed with anonymous dark money funneled through an organization with close ties to the Koch brothers and far-right organizations. Austin already has an auditor directly answerable to city council.

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Austin's 'Water Forward' Plan Heads to Council

A council-appointed [task force](#) has now given its blessing to *Water Forward*, a 100-year water supply plan for Austin. City council will consider approval on November 15.

Water Forward acknowledges the dire need to ramp up conservation and diversify supply to lessen dependence on reservoirs. These reservoirs fell to just over 30% capacity during the last drought, and experts project central Texas will suffer more severe droughts in the coming decades. Water Forward envisions increased investments in reclaimed water (where treated sewage is used for non-potable needs) and aquifer storage and recovery (ASR). Austin's ASR program would pipe water from the Colorado River during rainy periods and store it underground for retrieval during drought. *Water Forward* also proposes tapping into distributed sources of water on a huge scale, such as air conditioner condensate, greywater, rainwater, and stormwater. Water streams usually viewed as nuisances to be piped away would now be valued as resources.

Clean Water Action supports *Water Forward* with some caveats. The plan is visionary in its reliance on distributed and local sources of water, but implementation of the distributed options needs to be accelerated so that Austin can take full advantage of the ongoing construction boom. Properly designed buildings can help create a more climate-resilient, affordable city.



Farmers Branch Gets Serious About Conservation

The Dallas suburb of Farmers Branch is making a water conservation kit available to its residents that includes faucet aerators, efficient showerheads, and more. Clean Water Fund is working with Mayor Robert Dye, council members, and staff to shape this and possible additional strategies, such as a toilet replacement program. Most homes here pre-date modern plumbing standards, and upgrading toilets can save tremendous amounts of water. Programs like these will also help keep water bills in check and serve as examples for similar communities.



Clean Water Fund is a proud member of EarthShare of Texas, a network of environmental organizations working to protect our natural resources and human health. Many employers offer green giving options, and fall is the time to enroll for these payroll contributions. Learn more at www.earthshare-texas.org

**TEXAS
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