



The Edwards Aquifer Habitat Conservation Plan e-newsletter, "Steward," is published to highlight the efforts underway to protect the Comal and San Marcos Springs and ensure a healthy habitat for the threatened and endangered species.

Work Groups Models of EAHCP Planning



Bio Work Group, from left to right, Tyson Broad, Jacquelyn Duke, Mark Enders, Doyle Mosier and Rick Illgner.



Water Quality Work Group, from left to right, Charles Kreitler, Melani Howard, Steve Raabe, Michael Urrutia, Ken Diehl and Benjamin Schwartz.

Over the next three months, the newly-formed **Water Quality and Biological Monitoring Work Groups** will conduct a series of focused meetings designed to create the best possible monitoring system to help the Edwards Aquifer Habitat Conservation Plan (EAHCP) staff assess the ecological condition of the Comal and San Marcos springs and river ecosystems. They kicked off that effort with a joint planning meeting in March.

"We wanted to begin this process with both groups together so all would get the same background on what the Implementing Committee is looking for, and to understand that though they're working separately, the groups must complement each other in presenting recommendations," said EAHCP Program Manager Nathan Pence. "There are technical experts on the committees as well as those who know the historical aspects of the endangered species protection work. That combination of perspectives will help us produce a sound and comprehensive set of recommendations for moving forward on our water quality and biological-monitoring programs."

Pence explained to the two work groups that the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) initial review on the EAHCP suggested that all sources of information be considered in designing holistic monitoring programs to allow decision makers to plan measures that would respond to changes in ecological conditions.

As a means to create synergy between the groups, Steve Raabe of the San Antonio River Authority was designated as the chair for both groups. He will work with the outside facilitators in organizing meetings and ensuring the final report is written and submitted on time. The final draft of the report Work Groups will be presented to the Implementing Committee for approval at their June 16, 2016 meeting.