



**EAHCP**  
EDWARDS AQUIFER  
HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN

# CONSERVE

This newsletter is dedicated to providing Edwards Aquifer permit holders useful information about the EAHCP springflow protection programs.

August 2025



## We Still Need More

*July 4th deluge is still helping Edwards Aquifer levels, but...*

The last issue of the Conserve Newsletter was mailed just before the record-making downpours over the 4th of July holiday weekend. In fact, we reported in that newsletter on the positive impacts of improving rainfall amounts could have on the current multi-year drought and the ASR and VISPO Springflow Protection Programs. So, more huge rains should mean great news for Edwards Aquifer levels this year, right? The answer to that question is a solid...maybe.

"The current condition of the Edwards Aquifer as of August 15 is that aquifer levels are beginning to decline, essentially giving back some of the gains we made from the recent rain events in July," said ASR and VISPO Program Manager Javier Hernandez. "At this time, the 10-day average at J-17 monitoring well in San Antonio is 628.5 feet, and with springflows at the Comal Springs and San Marcos Springs also experiencing declines, the Edwards Region went back to Stage 4 of its drought management program on August 12th. The same scenario occurred in Uvalde, and they've remained below the Stage 5 level entered in April of 2024."

The hydrologic facts are that the rain that caused the terrible flooding events occurred in the Guadalupe Basin and that basin is not the main contributor to recharge for the Edwards Aquifer like other areas west of Bexar County are. So while there were some initial increases in aquifer monitoring wells after the 4th of July, those levels soon began to settle out a few weeks later.



So how does this all impact the ASR and VISPO programs in triggering forbearance years in the future?

“Based on the past 10 years of annual recharge numbers, the aquifer needs approximately 815,000 acre-feet of recharge this year to prevent the ASR Program’s forbearance measure kicking in which would require program

enrollees to not use the amount of water enrolled in ASR beginning in 2027,” Hernandez explained. “The last time we received recharge over this amount was in 2018 when we received slightly more than 1.1 million acre-feet of recharge. In 2018, the region received 31.3 inches of rainfall and 41.35 inches in San Antonio. As of mid-August, San Antonio has received slightly more than 20 inches of precipitation. And, we won’t know the exact impacts of this year’s rainfall until spring of 2026.”

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) recently issued an update to their 2025 forecast and it predicts an above normal Atlantic hurricane season at 13-18 named storms of which 5-9 could become hurricanes including 2-5 major hurricanes. The hurricane season spans from June 1 to November 30 and historically peaks around mid-September with an additional spike in October before the number of storms decline.

“Hopefully, this weather activity predicted by NOAA will materialize into additional rain the region needs,” Hernandez commented. “We know that hurricanes and storms in general can be destructive, but they also bring rain in the amounts that can truly make a difference in moving our area out of this intense drought.”

While everyone is weather-watching, there is a matter of filling the ASR and VISPO water enrollments that go toward protecting the Comal Springs and San Marcos Springs habitats where endangered species make their homes. The ASR Program has only 428 acre-feet of open space, while the VISPO has 8,362 acre-feet of room for permit holders to enroll. The payment to participants in the ASR Program is \$100 per acre-foot of water enrolled in both stand-by and forbearance years. VISPO rates include a \$54 per acre-foot payment for standby years and an extra \$160 per acre-foot in forbearance years.

“These are some truly interesting times we’re in and there are many considerations for water rights holders to consider when weighing the benefits of becoming part of the ASR and/or VISPO Programs,” Hernandez concluded. “Fortunately, we have lots of data and information on all these options so we can accurately advise folks on how they might improve their situations by enrolling water in the programs.

**“People should also know that we are interested in discussing long term leases of both base and unrestricted water rights, preferably in larger acre-foot amounts.”**

You can contact Javier Hernandez at: 210-222-2204, ext.139, or email, [jhernandez@edwardsaquifer.org](mailto:jhernandez@edwardsaquifer.org).

