



GUADALUPE-BLANCO RIVER AUTHORITY  
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## **Regional water resource information center to be unveiled at UTSA meeting March 17**

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SEGUIN.....A regional water resource information center to serve an area from the Texas Hill Country to Northern Mexico is being developed at the Center for Water Research, University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA).

UTSA President Ricardo Romo and Center Director Dr. Weldon Hammond, Jr. will unveil a new image and emphasis for the Center for Water Research at a meeting on Friday, March 17 from 10 a.m. to 12 noon in Room 2.01.12 of the Science Building on the Loop 1604 UTSA Campus. The event is open to the public and is co-sponsored by the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) and the Center for Water Research, UTSA.

Featured speakers will include Dr. Hammond; Jay Millikin, Comal County Commissioner and TAWPG chair; State Senator J. E. "Buster" Brown; Craig Pedersen, executive administrator of the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB); and Dr. Robert Mace, TWDB Groundwater Availability Modeling Unit leader.

The Center was established in 1987 with a grant from the National Science Foundation. It is a non-profit organization funded by UTSA and various public and private research projects whose primary goal is to provide water resource technical support and research to the San Antonio/South Texas/Texas Hill Country region. It also assists individuals and community groups with their efforts to educate the general public about water issues and is an important component of the UTSA College of Science and Engineering.

Hammond is excited about the Center's potential to serve as a coordinating resource for public and private studies conducted throughout the region, including research into vital areas that are currently not considered to be economically feasible.

Friday's meeting is the second in a series designed to address water-planning issues that affect the region. The first meeting was held at UTSA on January 14 when representatives from the Hill Country Priority Groundwater Management Area (PGMA) gathered to discuss current state laws and policies covering groundwater management and protection for the Trinity Aquifer area.

According to Hammond, increased population growth and demand for water in Texas were important factors in the passage of Senate Bill 1 in 1997. Currently, 16 regional planning groups are studying water supply options that will be submitted to the Texas Water Development Board to develop a comprehensive plan for the Texas Legislature in 2002.

(more)

Senate Bill 1 has helped to focus public awareness and attention on the challenges we face concerning water management,” explained Hammond. “The Center will emphasize a multi-disciplinary approach to research and planning that will produce objective and accurate study information useful to everyone from the scientific community to the individual homeowner and rancher. It is vital that we continue to learn everything possible about our water resources, including the Trinity Aquifer.”

A highlight of Friday’s meeting will be a presentation by the TWDB of a state-of-the-art computer model that simulates the flow and storage of groundwater in the Hill Country portion of the Trinity aquifer, including the upper and middle Trinity aquifer in all or parts of Bandera, Bexar, Blanco, Comal, Gillespie, Hays, Kendall, Kerr, and Medina counties. The model was developed as a tool to assess different water management strategies and to predict water level declines in response to increasing demands and potential droughts.

Demands developed by the Regional Water Planning Groups (South Central, Plateau, and Lower Colorado) have been placed into the model, under drought-of-record conditions, to identify areas where water-level declines may affect groundwater availability over the next 50 years.

Groundwater risk areas likely to have critical groundwater problems within the next two decades were officially identified by the state in 1985. In 1992, the legislature established rules for these critical areas, which were renamed Priority Groundwater Management Areas by Senate Bill 1.

The Hill Country PGMA was formally established in 1990. Because the PGMA encompasses three large and diverse water planning regions, the GBRA and the Upper Guadalupe River Authority sponsored a meeting in Kerrville in February 1998 to develop a coordinated planning approach for this area. This resulted in the creation of the Trinity Aquifer Water Planning Group (TAWPG) to protect and focus attention on the Trinity Group Aquifers that face unprecedented growth and urbanization of unincorporated areas. These tremendous pressures affect the quantity and quality of water.

TAWPG, which serves as an advisory committee to the TWDB, has been actively involved in the development of the Trinity water modeling project. It also helped originate draft legislation that resulted in the creation of water conservation districts in all but two PGMA counties.

According to Dr. Hammond, the Center will also introduce a new logo that emphasizes its enhanced role in the interaction between groundwater and surface water. The logo was designed and donated by Larry Clark of Bender, Wells, Clark Design in San Antonio.

“These accomplishments are just the first in a series of expansions for the Center,” said Hammond. Construction is under way to expand our facilities and we hope to have our interactive web site completed in the near future”.

Future events include a workshop at UTSA on Tuesday, May 30 that will feature opportunities for the public to engage in a ‘hands-on’ interaction with the computer simulation.