



Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority
933 E. Court Street, Seguin TX 78155
www.gbra.org

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GBRA Unveils Short- and Long-Term Solutions to Log Jam Problem

For more information

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After high rainfall events in the months of March, April and May increased flows to the level where the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority Calhoun County Canal crews were able to break up and clear out log jams on the Guadalupe River, GBRA officials are reaching out to local landowners and federal official in an effort to devise short - and long-term plans for dealing with this recurring problem.

"The immediate concern is the log jam on the San Antonio River primarily in Refugio and Victoria counties," explained Bill West, Jr., GBRA's general manager, adding, "Funding for log jams has been a problem, but I believe we are finding ways to tackle that issue."

On April 29, GBRA officials briefed area constituents about recent log jam work on the Guadalupe River and explained some of the permitting and funding challenges that are faced in working log jams. That meeting resulted in GBRA officials pledging to develop partnerships with local, state and federal entities as well as private landowners to tackle the jam on the San Antonio River. Funding partners that GBRA is contacting include the San Antonio River Authority, Union Pacific Railroad, area county officials, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). "As a GBRA board representative, I am concerned that our constituents receive assistance with these persistent log jams both now and in the future," Dennis Patillo, GBRA Board of Director for Victoria County said. "I recognize the myriad of challenges that GBRA staff faces in trying to provide that assistance, but I am confident we will resolve the log jam problems through teamwork both out in the field and in the office."

GBRA has sought out and already received a \$150,000 grant from the USFWS to go along with \$50,000 GBRA had budgeted for log jams this year. Additional commitments are needed to cover the remaining cost of the project, which is estimated to be about \$750,000. West said, "A partnership among interested parties can serve as the catalyst to remove the San Antonio River log jam this summer, after necessary permits have been acquired from the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers."

The long-term initiative requires support from a higher level. Congressman Blake Farenthold (R-TX, Dist. 27) offered to assist. GBRA officials have requested the Congressman's assistance in working with the USACE to ensure long -term log-jam maintenance on the Guadalupe and San Antonio rivers. Congressman Farenthold said, "Out of a deep concern for the landowners unable to use their fields due to the flooding, I have offered to assist the GBRA and USACE in coming up with a mutual agreement that will resolve the issue and provide the needed relief for those affected by the log jams ." In addition to assisting in a long-term resolution for the Lower Basin log jam issue, Congressman Farenthold is engaged in discussions about a delta study to be conducted by the U. S. Geological Survey (USGS).

In March, GBRA cleared the first set of log jams in the "horseshoe" area of the Guadalupe River in Victoria and Calhoun counties. After breaking up those logs, GBRA's Calhoun County Canal crews floated those logs down to the saltwater barrier and cleared them. The second rainfall rise on the river occurred around April 22, and crews began clearing a jam upstream of the horseshoe on the Guadalupe and ferrying those logs downstream to the saltwater barrier working well into the first week of May.

"Because of recent high rainfall events, more debris may float downriver and potentially cause additional log jams to occur," GBRA's Lower Basin Manager Bryan Serold said. However, another aerial survey of the river is planned in the near future so crews will have a more complete picture of the overall log jam problem.

"GBRA is committed to completing the immediate log jam obstructions, and more importantly, working with partners to establish long-term solutions to address the log jams," West said.



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The GBRA was established by the Texas Legislature in 1933 as a water conservation and reclamation district. GBRA provides stewardship for the water resources in its 10-county statutory district, which begins near the headwaters of the Guadalupe and Blanco rivers, ends at San Antonio Bay, and includes Kendall, Comal, Hays, Caldwell, Guadalupe, Gonzales, DeWitt, Victoria, Calhoun, and Refugio counties.