

WIMBERLEY VALLEY WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

A N N U A L  
R E P O R T



2018 & 2019



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Photo By: Ashley Waymouth

## Director's Letter

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In the 30 years since I came to the Wimberley Valley and was first drawn to the treasures of Jacob's Well and Cypress Creek, I have observed many changes. I have seen the well stop flowing during periods of great drought and I have seen boulders moved during periods of flood.

Like our watershed, our organization has also fluctuated over the years. 2018 & 2019 have been big years for us. It saw the dawn of one of the greatest threats the Wimberley Valley has ever seen with the proposed Permian Highway Pipeline and the dangerous precedent it sets. It also saw the beginning of a great victory in the approval of Texas' first One Water School in Wimberley.

Like the Trinity and the Edwards Aquifers, our challenges and our accomplishments are connected. As an organization, we realize that in order to have the greatest impact in our communities we must find the right balance between investing energy in protecting against threats and setting an example for what is possible when we do things in a sustainable way.


This year has been especially revealing with regards to how we can evolve in the near future to serve our greater community even better and have more powerful and lasting impacts.

Thirty years ago, I was just a landowner who was concerned about protecting the spring on my land for my children. I created WVWA to give people like me a voice and to give them the power to make a difference in their community. We have created a powerful network of scientists, specialists, representatives, non-profit partners and most importantly our invaluable community. It is our supporters, our donors and the people of Wimberley who are the driving force behind everything we do.

This next year is going to be one of the biggest for us to date. We having some exciting things coming up. Thank you for standing with us.

David Baker



A high-angle photograph of a person swimming in a clear, rocky pool. The water is a deep blue-green color, and the surrounding area is lush with green trees and bushes. The pool is bordered by a concrete wall on one side and a rocky edge on the other.

**WVWA's Mission** is to ensure that communities are aware of their connection and responsibilities to the watershed and are supported in implementing water policies and practices that will ensure ecological sustainability for future generations.

**WVWA's Vision** is to create a greater understanding of the many benefits that flow from a respectful relationship with the land: human health, ecological health, economic sustainability, enriched community life, and the renewal of the human spirit.







Photo By: Ashley Waymouth



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489 Acres of Land in Conservation



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70,000 Visitors to Jacob's Well



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16 years of Water Quality monitoring with the Clean Rivers Program at 13 sites on the Cypress Creek & Blanco River



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7,989 New Supporters



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\$5.3 Million Raised by the Texas Hill Country Conservation Network



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10,000 Community Members reached through Informal Education



In 2018 & 2019, WVWA has been at the forefront of several efforts to protect rivers and streams from the release of direct wastewater discharge, to stop water mining and exporting in Wimberley, and to stop a natural gas pipeline from damaging the sensitive aquifers and recharge features found throughout the Hill Country. Working with our regional network, community leaders, and landowners allows us to make the greatest impact by understanding issues and threats from the inside-out. Our goal is to find agreements and compromises that are amenable to all stakeholders.

## WISD One Water Elementary School

In November 2018, WVWA worked with the Meadows Center and WISD to approve Texas’ first One Water School, which will be located at RR12 & Winters Mill Parkway. By valuing water at every step of the water cycle, this school will reduce groundwater needs by 90%! WVWA is proud of the efforts of the WISD School Board, the Meadow’s Center for Water & the Environment, the engineers, and designers for their roles in bringing this vision to life! The One Water School officially broke ground in July 2019 and is on track with its construction and completion by Spring 2020.

This school will feature cutting edge green infrastructure, such as:

- Wastewater treatment with onsite beneficial reuse
- Rainwater harvesting
- A/C condensate reuse
- Green stormwater infrastructure
- Permeable pavers
- Rain gardens
- Enhanced One Water educational components



## Jacob’s Well Groundwater Management Zone

The Jacob’s Well Groundwater Management Zone has been over a decade in the making. The JWGMZ is located in the upper Cypress Creek Watershed and would cover approximately 32 square miles located around and north of Jacob’s Well – a major part of the Well’s recharge zone – and would apply a series of “best practices” to ensure Jacob’s Well, the source of Cypress Creek, will continue to flow even in drought or heavy usage conditions.

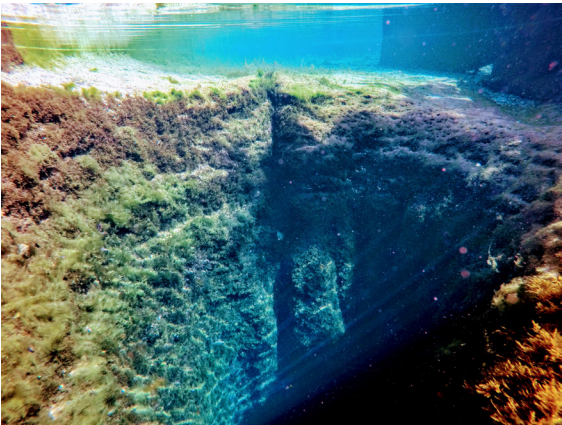
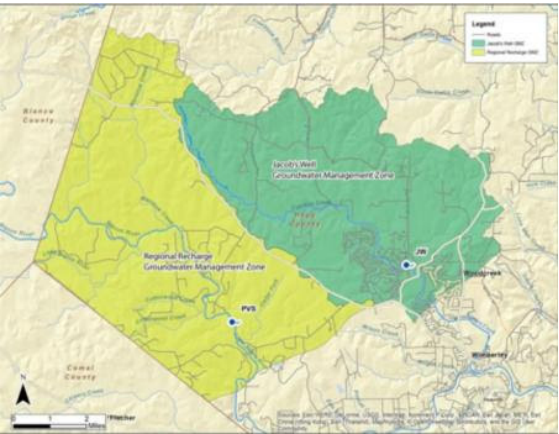
The 35 member volunteer task force was established in August last year and began work in October. The group was selected and invited by HTGCD President Linda Kay Rogers and included landowners, developers, community leaders, government representatives, environmental advocates, technical, science and education professionals and business leaders, including representatives of Aqua Texas and Wimberley Water Supply Corporation. Meetings were run by professional facilitator Robin Rather.

The best practices would include: cutbacks on pumping in the zone from permitted water wells based on spring flow “triggers” measured from Jacob’s Well during dry times with low flows; protection measures for the spring and current water supplies would include conditional permits for newly permitted wells, restricting pumping from the Middle Trinity section of the Trinity Aquifer (but allowing permits in the Lower Trinity and also identifying alternative water supplies such as rainwater harvesting); and new incentives for conservation development will be developed by Hays County.

Maintaining spring flow into Cypress Creek and the Blanco River is essential for our local economy and for the health of our regional ecosystems,” said Wimberley Valley Watershed Association (WVWA) Executive Director David Baker, also a member of the task force. “Establishing management zones is something the WVWA has been advocating for since 2010, when an unsustainable 30 feet of drawdown was adopted as a policy by Groundwater Management Area 9 (GMA-9). Just 1-2 feet of drawdown in the Middle Trinity cause Jacob’s Well and Cypress Creek to stop flowing.”

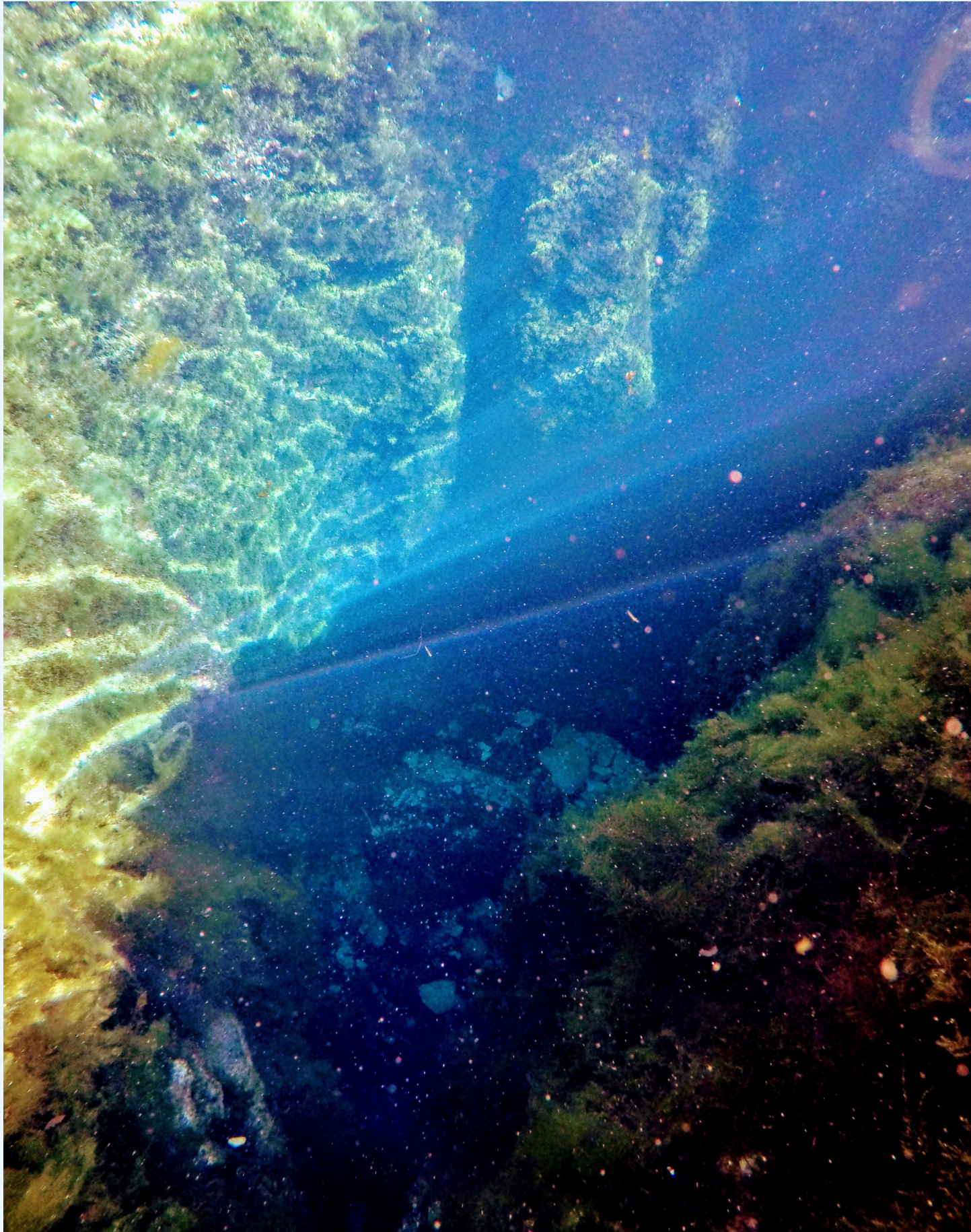
“We were already over-pumping the aquifer in 2000 when Jacob’s Well stopped for the first time in recorded history. Even developers and water utilities represented on the task force recognized that keeping the springs flowing at Jacob’s Well and Pleasant Valley – and keeping the water clean and healthy – is a benefit to everyone.”

The HTGCD Board adopted the JWGMZ at their September 2019 meeting - a huge victory for Jacob’s Well and water conservation in the Texas Hill Country.



On left: image displaying the JWGMZ in green & the Pleasant Valley Spring recharge area in yellow from the JWGMZ scientific report. On right: image looking into Jacob’s Well, photo by Ashley Waymouth.





# The Texas Hill Country Conservation Network

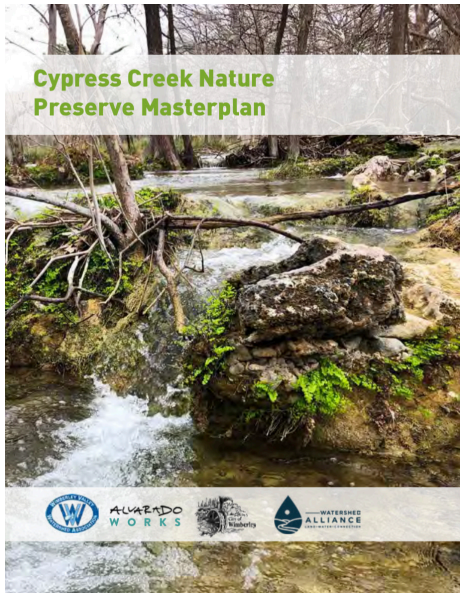
WVWA was one of the driving forces behind the founding of the Texas Hill Country Conservation Network in 2015, with a mission to maximize the protection of the Hill Country’s natural resources through enhanced collaboration.

In 2018, the network made several significant achievements: THCCN received a \$5.15M pledge from the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, which is part of the USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service. This is one of the largest awards ever given to the Hill Country and will support the Hill Country Headwaters Conservation Initiative, which will provide funding to private landowners performing land stewardship best practices and ensuring longterm conservation of sensitive agricultural lands.

In 2019, the Network hired a non-profit consultant to ensure that THCCN had an appropriate governance model and as a major step - hired the first Texas Hill Country Conservation Network Manager. WVWA & THCCN see this as an excellent beginning to scaling conservation impact across the Hill Country and look forward to continued success, increased funding, and furthering engagements with Hill Country landowners.

# Cypress Creek Nature Preserve Master Plan

In 2018, WVWA embarked upon creating an official master plan for the Cypress Creek Nature Preserve. Daniel Alvarado of AlvaradoWorks held 4 stakeholder meetings, conducted evaluations, and studiend the flow of people through the preserve before completing the plan. In coordination with the City of Wimberley and the Wimberley Parks and Recreation Department, the master plan was completed with public approval. Projects such as these would not be possible without the support of our volunteer groups and dedicated citizens who love and vlaue the Cypress Creek Nature Preserve. WVWA looks forward to continuing to enact the recommendations in the master plan to ensure that this preserve is stewarded, protected, and enjoyed for generations to come.





## Education & Land Restoration

In March 2018, the Green Crew from the Texas Conservation Corps and AmeriCorps came out to WVWA and worked together with the Earth Repair Corps (ERC) to refine a trail system along the escarpment above and adjacent to Cypress Creek and Jacobs Well. This team of 15 young adults were given a unique opportunity to camp on the land for 10 days while they worked, which is an experience many of them said they would never forget. WVWA taught the Green Crew about the history of Jacob’s Well and its importance to the local community. They were also given lessons on the local ecology of the Hill Country, and they even had the opportunity to create natural art along the trails and swim in Jacob’s Well for the first time.

In 2019, WVWA partnered with Earth Repair Corps to complete and install:

- 26,000 gallon rainwater collection system and additional storage
- Pervious parking lot and Rain Gardens
- Pergola and Trail Improvements

## Coleman’s Canyon Aquisition

For the last decade, WVWA has been working closely with the Coleman Family in Wimberely to purchase and preserve their 150+ acre family ranch. This land sits directly above Jacob’s Well spring and is a critical component to its springshed and recharge. Finally, in September of 2019, WVWA secured the purchase with the help of a generous donation from the Willett’s Foundation. Projects such as these are critical and essential to maintaining the health and flow of not only Jacob’s Well, but also of Cypress Creek and the Blanco River. If we want to protect our waterways, we need to start by protecting our land. WVWA is grateful for all of the support that we received from the Coleman Family, the WVWA Board, our surveyors, title company, and others who were a part of this process.





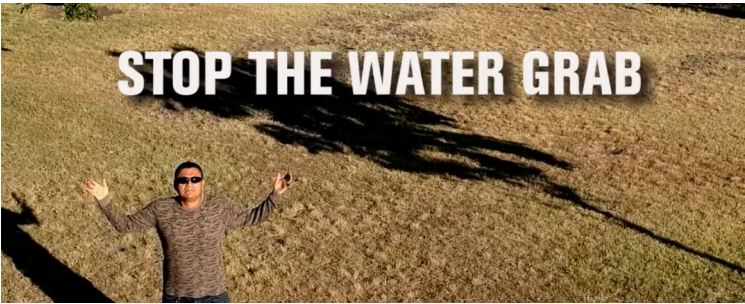
# No Dumping Sewage

No Dumping Sewage was formed in early 2018 as a collaborative project between Save Barton Creek Association, WVWA, Clean Water Action, and other regional organizations to oppose the practice of discharging wastewater into Hill Country rivers and streams. Currently, NDS is circulating a petition that already has nearly 5,000 signatures. The organization continuously works to determine methods for achieving more robust protections for the waterways in this region. NDS has been at the forefront of many of the wastewater permit applications in 2019 and has held several community events to increase awareness and education about why Hill Country rivers and streams deserve greater protections.



## Our Water Rights

Our Water Rights is a coalition of organizations and community members in the Wimberley Valley who have come together to oppose the daily pumping of 2.5 million gallons of water (for 30 years) out of the Middle Trinity Aquifer by a private business called Electro-Purification. WVWA was one of the founding members of this group and helped to inform this region about the immense impacts such a water grab would have on surrounding waterways like Jacob's Well and Cypress Creek. Within 2 weeks, we gathered 3,346 signatures on our petition, had over 300 public comments were submitted to Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer Conservation District. More than 100 hours were dedicated to public outreach and education.



# Protect Our Blanco

Protect Our Blanco was formed by WVWA and Blanco community members in response to the City of Blanco's request to release, on a daily basis, 1.6 million gallons of wastewater into the Blanco River. When WVWA heard about the request, we were among the first to submit comments, request a contested case, and mobilize public input. Very quickly, we gathered 2,039 signatures on a petition and over 700 comments to submit to TCEQ. POB is currently collaborating with engineers, hydrogeologists, legal staff, community members, and elected officials to work with the City of Blanco in finding an alternative solution for discharge that will satisfy the city's projected growth.





## Permian Highway Pipeline

The Kinder Morgan Permian Highway Pipeline is currently planned to be built through the Hill Country (less than 1.5 miles from Jacob's Well), and will directly impact 82 properties in Hays County. This oil & gas pipeline threatens our rivers, creeks, streams, aquifers, springs, and drinking water supply.

WVWA has been at the forefront of the response in the Wimberley Valley and collaborated with landowners and organizations across Hays County, Blanco County, and Gillespie County to have the project rerouted through less sensitive terrain. A major part of our efforts in hoping to achieve this was through a new campaign: **Move the Pipeline - Save the Water.** Through this medium, WVWA sent out daily emails to a mailing list of over 10,000, including many who were directly involved with the Permian Highway Pipeline.

Through these collaborative efforts, over \$500,000 was raised to fight to Kinder Morgan in multiple avenues through the public domain, through scientific reports, and in the courtroom. WVWA published over 10 op-eds, appeared on 6 radio shows, delivered dozens of presentations, numerous articles, and engaged over 30,000 community members. As a small non-profit, we are very proud of our efforts in taking on this multi-billion dollar industry in an effort to protect that resource which we swore to protect 24 years ago, water.



## Texas Brewshed® Alliance

**Our Mission:** The Texas Brewshed® Alliance inspires communities all across Texas through fun educational events and engages them in taking action to steward their local lands and waters which are vital for brewing exceptional craft beer.

The Wimberley Valley Watershed Association designed the Texas Brewshed® Alliance Initiative to illuminate the overlapping interests between the conservation and beer communities. Protecting Texas lands and waters preserves the unique beauty of Texas for generations to come and also protects our top-notch downstream craft beer.

Craft brewers have a great appreciation for water as an essential component of the beer they brew. We are at a time in Texas' history where land fragmentation, outdated water laws, extreme droughts, devastating floods, and incredible population growth are putting a strain on our resources. Our water prices are steadily rising and at this current trajectory, water quality will certainly be impacted.

Great craft beer begins with clean water. Brewers with foresight understand that to protect their beer they have to help protect the beautiful Texas lands and waters that make that beer possible.





## Texas Clean Rivers Program & the Wimberley Water Advisory Group



Since 2003, WVWA has been the only nonprofit in the State of Texas to collect water quality data that is quality assured. WVWA takes quarterly samples from 11 different locations along Cypress Creek and the Blanco River. This information is then used to determine the health of these waterways and ensure they are meeting the federal Clean Water Act standards.

## Cypress Creek Watershed Protection Plan: Rainwater Harvesting



In August 2018, a 29,000 gallon rainwater harvesting tank was installed at WVWA's offices, located just above Jacob's Well. This was made possible by funding through the Cypress Creek Watershed Protection Plan and the expertise at Harvested Rain Solutions. By the end of 2019, we hope to completely eliminate our reliance on groundwater by having our facilities served by 100% rainwater.

## Rebecca Springs Aquatic Life Monitoring



Summer 2018, WVWA worked with the Guadalupe Blanco River Authority (GBRA) to conduct the first Aquatic Life assessment at Rebecca Springs in Comal County. While we didn't find any mussels, we did find varieties of gambusia, bass, catfish, & perch! These studies are necessary to give scientists insight into the resilience of the aquatic communities in this unique location.

## Dye Trace Study at Racoon Cave



WVWA collaborated with several organizations to conduct a dye trace study at Racoon Cave in Wimberley in order to better understand the waterflow in the Trinity Aquifer. While the results were inconclusive about the Cave's connection to Jacob's Well, studies like this are essential opportunities to discover and understand the complexities and intricacies of how water flows through the aquifer.

## Jacob's Well Community Garden



WVWA has been the steward of the JWCG land since its inception in 2005. This organic, community-driven project has breathed new life into an old tennis court and is a gathering place for many nearby residents. In 2018, the garden expanded to 30 beds, with a waiting list, and has donated over 600 pounds of produce to the Crisis Bread Basket in 2 years.

## The Cypress Creek Nature Preserve: Chimney Swallow Project



The Cypress Creek Nature Preserve is a natural area right in the heart of Wimberley. These 8 acres provide a serene, undisturbed piece of nature for the residents and tourists of Wimberley. The WVWA has maintained a conservation easement on this property for 14 years and works closely with the City of Wimberley and the Parks Department to maintain this treasure.

## Group Visits & Community Events



Over the course of 2018 & 2019, WVWA hosted dozens of groups and over 500 people at the Watershed property for meetings, guided hikes, community gatherings and educational events. Additionally, we hosted several community events in Wimberley and Austin, with over 1000 people in attendance.

## Fish Views: 360 Tour of Cypress Creek



WVWA, together with the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment, partnered with Fish Views to create a 360 degree tour of Cypress Creek. Viewable online at WVWA's website, this tour will allow users to travel down the entirety of the creek from Jacob's Well to the Blanco River and take in the surroundings while also learning about the water quality in each location.



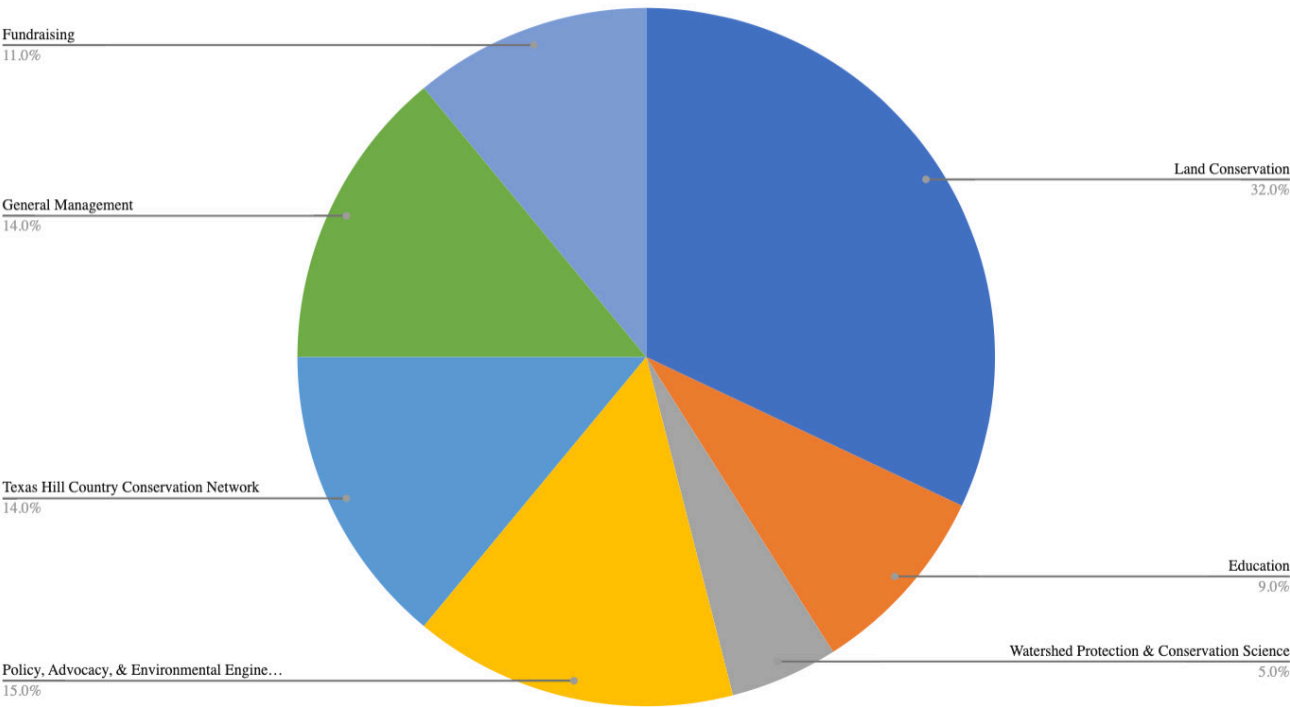
2018 and 2019 have been very active fiscal years for WVWA. In addition to hiring new staff members, WVWA has also created several organizations and serves as the fiscal sponsor for these groups.

- \$50,000 has been raised for Protect Our Blanco
- \$300,000 has been raised for Move the Pipeline-Save the Water
- \$10,000 has been raised for the Texas Brewshed Alliance
- \$5,000 has been raised for Our Water Rights

WVWA has raised \$500,000 to support our continued work with the Texas Hill Country Conservation Network, Watershed Protection and Conservation Science, Environmental Planning, Policy and Advocacy, Land Conservation, and Education and Outreach.

WVWA continued to monitor our currently held conservation easement lands, including the Cypress Creek Nature Preserve on the Wimberley Square. WVWA commissioned a master plan for the Cypress Creek Nature Preserve, which has been made available on the website. WVWA also purchased Coleman’s Canyon, a 150 acre tract of land above Jacob’s Well spring, and a 30 acre tract nearby.

2018 Financial Allocations



Our work would not be possible without the generous support from our donors and partners. We would like to thank EVERYONE who donated to us in 2018 & 2019. Your contributions are invaluable to our work in the Hill Country.

A Special Thank  
You to WVWA’s  
Exemplary Donors

Harry L Willett Foundation

Jennifer Clark

The Dallas Foundation

Scenic Texas

Laughlin-Beers Foundation

Hill Country Alliance

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Thelma Pickett  
Tyler Edmunds

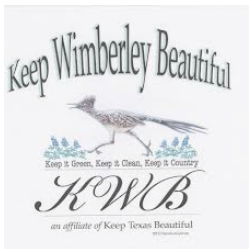


Walter Holland  
Steve Englander  
Alexandra Nava  
Bernard Mollberg  
Katherine Howard  
Mary Cartwright  
Mary Grier  
Robert Tinstman  
David N Dornak  
Andrew Hardin  
Barbara Naydeck  
Benjamin Tautfest  
Brent Pulley  
Catherine Sitton  
Christopher Cockle  
David Badal  
Donald Kaye  
Elizabeth E Lucero  
James Geister  
James Ramsey  
Jeanette K Flexer  
Joseph Ehardt  
Karen Swartz  
Linda Whitlow  
Margie Vaughan  
Nell Clowder  
Robert & Linda Reed  
Robert Eby  
Robert Reed  
Rodney Weinand  
Sandra Gieseler  
Sarah Jackson  
Scott Cove  
Sean Hall  
Sean Hanko  
Stan Barron  
William Taegel  
Kelsey Meisenheleer  
Phoebe Romero  
Anne Brown  
Deana Pinales  
Jan Jackson  
Rae Collins  
Ariadyn Hansen  
Frankie Bayne  
Kylie Shanks  
Mark Kennedy  
Reginald Stephey  
Doug Norman  
Billee Bayou  
Bonny Krahn  
Cindy Wright  
Clay Routh  
Diane Purcell  
Gregg Vunderink

Henry Hobbs  
Karen Collier  
Keeton & Kyle Coleman  
Kira Holt  
Nan Hanus  
Quincy Kennedy  
Rebecca Allen  
Rene Barker  
Rusty Middleton.  
Ryan Adams  
Tammy Noel  
Zack Chapman  
Jody Cross  
Alexis Ramirez  
Carol Ramirez  
Cyndi Jackson  
James Talbot  
Jessica Frye  
Jolie Templer  
Lisa Raines  
Marina Porcelli  
Mario Perez  
Mary Cell  
Matt Atchison  
Michael McNoldy  
Rachel Blake  
Robin Hadac  
Tiffany Roma  
Will Mederski  
Sophie Kruip  
Allyson Remak  
Barnett Cline  
Linda Ivey Nash  
Jenna Pinkston  
Animo Weng  
Beverly Grossman  
Byron Olinick  
Chris Elliott  
Christian Gamboa  
Cyndi Alvarez  
Dalton Albus  
David & Marjorie Parmer  
Debra Dupont  
Guillermo Zamorano Aristi  
Hays County.  
James Harris  
Jennifer Catherine-Oines  
Jeremiah Lee  
Jessica Oldag  
Jimmy Alan Hall  
Kelsey Lee  
Kenneth & Joanne Marshall  
Lesley Rubin  
Linda Ellis  
Maureen Gibson

Michael Maloney  
Rick Nation  
Zachary Chilcote  
Karen Ford  
Cheryl Green  
Jason Hodge  
Jennifer Gomez  
Jessica Thibodeaux  
Lynn Williams  
Savannah Parks  
Shannon Brown  
Val McMahon  
Beverly Gavenda  
Dafna Cuellar  
Venetia Abron

WVWA recognizes the importance of working together with other groups and organizations that share our values and goals across the region.  
We would like to thank our following partners for their dedication to our community and our watersheds.





## The 2018 & 2019 WVWA Board of Directors:

Malcolm Harris, President  
Vanessa Puig-Williams, Treasurer  
Jason Pinchback, Secretary  
Pokey Rehmet  
Dorothy Knight  
Parc Smith  
Scott Price



From left to right: Jason Pinchback, David Baker, Vanessa Puig-Williams, Malcolm Harris, Dorothy Knight, Parc Smith, Pokey Rehmet (not pictured: Scott Price)

## Honoary WVWA Volunteers

Joe C. Day, Senior Advisor

Robin Rather, Facilitator & Advisor



David Baker, Executive Director

David founded the Wimberley Valley Watershed Association 22 years ago shortly after his family moved to Jacob's Well. Since that time, he's been our fearless leader, in-house expert, and vision holder.



Ashley Waymouth, Managing Director

Ashley began with working with WVWA at the start of 2018. She has a Master's of Science in Environmental Education and brings a decade of experience in community outreach and programming to the Watershed.



Ellen Evans, Operations Coordinator

Ellen has been working with WVWA for the last decade in multiple capacities. These days she's the dream holder and operations extraordinaire.



Thomas Waymouth, Texas Brewshed Alliance Director

Thomas began working at WVWA in 2019 as the first Texas Brewshed Alliance Director. He is also responsible for all of the monthly newsletters that go out to our members.



Fletcher & Leila, Public Outreach

Fletcher & Leila enjoy meeting new people, going out on long walks and swimming in Hill Country Springs & Rivers. Their favorite treats are biscuits, ripe apples, and boiled eggs.



# 2020 Goals

Looking forward to 2020, WVWA has a lot of work to do to ensure that our watersheds remain resilient. Here are a few of our main goals:

- Ban all future pipeline projects from crossing the Trinity Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zones in the future through the establishment of new legislation.
- Establish an Environmental Defense Fund of \$10,000,000 to challenge the Permian Basin Highway Pipeline, Electro Purification permit, the City of Blanco Discharge permit and all other proposed stream discharge permits across the Trinity Edwards Aquifers.
- Work with the TCEQ, the City of Blanco and Protect Our Blanco to implement a no-discharge, non-potable reuse solution for their wastewater treatment plant.
- Work with the city, MCWE and other partners to develop a comprehensive regional plan featuring a One Water management framework in order to promote prudent land use and thoughtful water resource planning and management.
- Stop EP permit through support of TESPAs contested case hearing
- Increase public outreach efforts for TESPAs, Protect Our Blanco, Our Water Rights
- Develop feasibility study for regional Co-Op water utility model
- Petition TCEQ for stricter regulations on discharge water quality standards and more incentives to encourage beneficial reuse at the municipal and subdivision scale
- Install solar pumps and increase rainwater storage capacity at the Jacob's Well Community Garden
- Rebrand WVWA as the Watershed Alliance
- Push for a water-focused legislative agenda
- Continue Clean Rivers Program water quality monitoring
- Host and participate in the Art of the Sacred Springs
- Host community-centered workshops





Thank You to Everyone who made our 2018 & 2019 a  
SUCCESS!

We are honored to have your continued support!  
Here's to looking forward to 2020!





A photograph of a river scene with people and a dog. In the foreground, a large, fluffy, light-brown dog is looking towards the camera. Behind it, a woman with long brown hair and a man are standing on a rocky bank, looking down at the river. The river flows through a lush green landscape with many trees. In the distance, a small group of people is gathered on a wooden platform in the water. The sky is overcast with grey clouds.

Wimberley Valley Watershed Association

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