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Request for Coverage

Wells Fargo Awards Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance

\$52,650 Grant for Community Rain Gardens --Grant also includes launch of online and social media campaign aimed at educating residents on how to care for the aquifer—

When: Monday, August 3, 2015 at 1:30 p.m.

Where: San Antonio City Hall, 100 Military Plaza, in the Media Briefing room

What: Officials from Wells Fargo Bank will join Mayor Taylor, Councilmen Ron Nirenberg (District 8), and Mike Gallagher (District 10), the San Antonio River Authority, the Edwards Aquifer Authority, UTSA, and the Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance in announcing a grant of \$52,650 from the [Wells Fargo Environmental Solutions for Communities](#) project of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

In 2012, Wells Fargo and NFWF launched the [Environmental Solutions for Communities initiative](#), designed to support projects that link economic development and community well-being to the stewardship and health of the environment. This five-year initiative is supported through a \$15 million contribution from Wells Fargo that will be used to leverage other public and private investments with an expected total impact of over \$37.5 million.

“We believe that helping our communities become more environmentally sustainable will improve the long-term quality of life of our customers and team members,” said Steve Arnold, Wells Fargo area president. “We’re proud to support strategic projects like this one that supports social, economic and environmental concerns within San Antonio in alignment with Wells Fargo’s strategic philanthropy goals which aim to address demographic changes, improve the local economy and help transition communities to a ‘greener’ future.”

With funding from this grant and other sources, The Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance, the San Antonio River Authority, Edwards Aquifer Authority, City of San Antonio, and the University of Texas at San Antonio Departments of Architecture and Civil Engineering will begin collaborating on projects that will engage neighborhoods and businesses over the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone in protecting the Aquifer. The projects will encourage the use of Low Impact Development (LID) techniques to mitigate flooding and storm water pollution, and preserve our ground water resources.

Thanks to a grant from the Wells Fargo Environmental Solutions for Communities initiative and contributions of \$15,000 each from the San Antonio River Authority and the Edwards Aquifer Authority, work will commence this fall on a series of ten Community Rain Gardens specially designed to purify storm water and enhance recharge into the Edwards Aquifer.

The first of these Rain Gardens will be on the northwest Campus of UTSA. UTSA students and professors will work with experts from SARA and EAA to design LID enhancements for the campus, and will set forth criteria

for selecting the other nine sites and for successfully employing Low Impact Development on the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone.

“Under Your Feet,” also funded by the Wells Fargo Environmental Solutions for Communities award, is an on-line and social media campaign designed to teach San Antonians who live on the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone how to take care of the aquifer that is literally under their feet.

District 8 City Councilman, Ron Nirenberg, sees the award as a step forward for our city. “In a region that has too often been gripped by drought, the story of South Texas will be told by how well we secure a safe, affordable, and available source of water for future generations. This award will further the work of the Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance and its partners, recognizing that economic strength in San Antonio begins and ends with protecting our natural blessing, - and strategic advantage - the Edwards Aquifer.”

“We were absolutely delighted that the award was more than we asked for”, said Annalisa Peace, executive director of the Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance, “Still, GEAA will be working hard to secure additional sources of funding needed to match the funds from Wells Fargo,” she continued. “We are confident that the expertise and generosity of our partners will guarantee success for these pilot projects. Our ultimate goal is to inspire others to employ Low Impact Development techniques in San Antonio and throughout the entire Edwards Aquifer region.”

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About Wells Fargo

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About Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance

The Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance unites fifty-one member organizations behind a comprehensive plan to protect regional karst aquifers, their springs and watersheds, and the Texas Hill Country.

For more information visit www.AquiferAlliance.org