

Dear GEAA members and friends,

Seems like every day when I come to work, my in-box holds messages from Texans throughout the Hill Country who are being abused under State law.

This morning was no exception. I received [this press release](#) from GEAA member group, Medina County Environmental Action Association that Vulcan is moving forward to bisect lands belonging to 56 ranchers to build the Southwest Gulf Railroad, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Vulcan Materials Company. GEAA has been working with MCEAA since 2004 to put a stop to the travesty of a private concern taking ranch lands solely for its own benefit.

Next in my in-box came [this opinion piece published in the New Braunfels Herald Zeitung](#) – an affirmation of concerns of our friends in Medina County. Meanwhile, [one of the nastiest cases](#) of abusing your neighbor drags on in the courts as the Lux and Graham families continue to grapple with attempts by the Johnson Ranch subdivision to commandeer their land so it can build more houses.

Following was [a message](#) from Sabrina Hauser, owner of the lovely Dry Comal Creek Vineyard. Sabrina and her neighbors are fighting a permit that would allow discharge of sewage effluent into an intermittent creek that runs through her property. GEAA shares her concerns because water flowing in this stream recharges the Edwards Aquifer.

GEAA is engaged in fighting the good fight with all these folks, and with many more throughout our region who are fighting similar battles. This past Saturday, several of them joined the GEAA staff and board to devise our list of priorities for 2016.

Among the strategies that we agreed to make top priority this year:

We are asking Doug Miller, District 73, to file legislation prohibiting discharge of sewage effluent into waterways that recharge the Edwards Aquifer. As the legislator representing Comal County, where permits are pending to cumulatively discharge over 1 million gallons/day into streams and creeks that recharge the Edwards, and as former Chair of the Edwards Aquifer Authority, we believe he has the gravitas to push this bill forward in 2017. [Click here](#) to learn more and to sign the petition asking Representative Miller to support this much needed reform.

We also agreed to resurrect [legislation that gives limited land use powers to Hill Country counties](#). Since the Hill Country is now the fastest growing region in the nation, this measure is long overdue. Read more [here](#).

Both bills have been filed twice before. And both passed approval of the committees to which they were assigned. We are hoping that the third time is the charm as we prepare for this 85th Legislative Session.

All attending Saturday's meeting agreed that we have our work cut out for us this year. I am extremely gratified that GEAA is in touch with, and counts as members, so many Texans who truly value the land that contributes to our aquifers. Working together is the surest way to turn things around.

Stay tuned for more – we will all be working hard to send some good news your way.

Annalisa Peace  
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[Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance](#)