

# WATER FOR OUR FUTURE

## **Proposition 1: The Aquifer Protection Initiative Fact Sheet**

**Election Day May 7, 2005. Early Voting April 20-May 3, 2005.**

### **I. Opportunity**

- San Antonians have an opportunity now to protect the Edwards Aquifer and the city's drinking water for the future by voting to approve Proposition 1, the Aquifer Protection Initiative, on the ballot May 7.
- An investment of \$90 million through a 1/8-cent sales tax will permanently protect significant portions of the watershed that contribute to the aquifer.
- Land protected for the aquifer also protects habitat for wildlife and preserves our Hill Country heritage.

### **II. Credibility**

- Proposition 1 is an extension and expansion of a successful aquifer-protection measure approved by voters in 2000, which raised \$45 million for the city to buy nearly 6,500 acres in the Edwards Aquifer recharge and contributing zones.
- In a process that was science-based and transparent to the public, a Scientific Evaluation Team identified land important to protect, and the city bought this land at competitive prices. A community-representative Conservation Advisory Board provided oversight.

### **III. Need**

- As the city grows, more protection of the aquifer is needed to ensure the future quality and quantity of our drinking water. The San Antonio region's population is expected to increase to 2.6 million by 2030 (Texas Water Development Board).
- Our quality of life now and in the future depends on safe, reliable drinking water.
- Protection of the Edwards Aquifer is a vital component of sustainable economic development.
- Rapid urbanization in Bexar County and throughout the aquifer's recharge zone is both reducing the land available for aquifer protection and increasing the cost of securing this land.

### **IV. New Tools**

- Recent state law now allows the city to purchase land or negotiate conservation agreements with landowners outside of its extraterritorial jurisdiction. This means the city can now protect land in the part of the recharge zone west of Bexar County.
- The recharge zone in counties to the west contributes 70 percent of the water in the Edwards Aquifer. Since land values are not as high to the west of San Antonio and Bexar County, more land in the recharge zone can be protected both in and out of Bexar County.
- Conservation agreements (also called conservation easements) are an economical tool for the city that allows land to be protected at significantly less cost while remaining in private ownership and on the tax rolls.
- Through Proposition 1, the city would purchase land or conservation agreements only from willing landowners.

### **V. Our Future**

- Protecting our water now enhances our future health, economy and quality of life.
- Voting for Proposition 1 on May 7 will give San Antonians the opportunity to protect our water for tomorrow.

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