

Clean Water Action / Clean Water Fund Presentation to:



**Environmental Commission Regular Meeting
September 18, 2019 at 6:00 P.M.**

Clean Water Action:

- 501(c) 4 advocacy organization established 1972
- Lobbies for strong laws and their enforcement
- Endorses ballot initiatives and candidates to public office

Clean Water Fund:

- 501(c) 3 research and educational organization established 1978
- Secure clean, safe and affordable drinking water
- Protect and conserve land and water resources



Door-to-Door Canvassing In Austin Since 1988



National Focus: Stop Rollbacks of Landmark Environmental Laws



- ❑ Restore Clean Water Act protections to intermittent streams and wetlands
- ❑ Headwater and seasonal streams are drinking water source for 177 million Americans & 11.5 million Texans
- ❑ Clean Water Rule Repealed by Trump administration

Travis County and City of Austin Resolutions on 'Dirty Water Rule', 2018

Travis County Commissioners Court



Resolution

Travis County, Texas Waters of the United States Resolution – April 2019

Resolution of Travis County, Texas, to Comment on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) proposed *Revised Definition of "Waters of the United States"* to urge the Agencies to preserve the 2015 Clean Water Rule, which included wetlands, headwaters, and intermittent and ephemeral streams in the definition of "Waters of the United States."

Whereas, on December 11, 2018 the Environmental Protection Agency and the Army Corps of Engineers proposed amendments to the Clean Water Rule adopted in 2015 that establishes a revised definition of the "waters of the United States" that more narrowly restricts those waters subject to federal jurisdiction and authority under the Clean Water Act; and

Whereas, the proposed December 2018 Rule would replace the Rule adopted in 2015 by the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers and the pre-2015 regulations; and

Whereas, the Clean Water Act is the fundamental federal law protecting the Waters of the United States from pollution, degradation, and destruction; and

Whereas, the goal of the Act is "to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters;" and

Whereas, this goal cannot be met unless headwater, ephemeral, and intermittent streams, and wetlands are considered "Waters of the United States," because these resources have the potential to impact the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of larger, permanently flowing water bodies; and

Whereas, more than 1,000 peer reviewed scientific studies have confirmed that headwater, intermittent, and ephemeral streams and wetlands affect the quantity and quality of water in larger bodies of water downstream; and

Whereas, excluding certain streams and wetlands from Clean Water Act protections puts all of the Nation's waters at risk because polluting or destroying these resources has the potential to impact the water quality of rivers and larger water bodies downstream; and

Whereas, as a community we are concerned that the new Rule will apply to tributaries that feed our urban creeks such as Walnut, Onion, Waller, Shoal, Barton and other creeks in Travis County. These tributaries are dry during certain parts of the year but flow into the Colorado River and Highland Lakes which supply our drinking water; and



Bond Initiatives Through the Years 1998 - 2018

Vote **FOR** The City of Austin Bond Propositions! Affordable housing, water quality, flood control, and safer streets

Prop A: Affordable housing for low-to-moderate income families and seniors

Prop B: New libraries and improvements to museums and cultural centers

Prop C: New parks and park improvements

Prop D: Water quality protection and flood control

Prop E: Health and human services

Prop F: Renovation of fire and EMS stations

Prop G: Pedestrian safety, urban trails, and sidewalk, road and bridge repairs



Vote Tuesday, November 6! Vote EARLY Monday Oct 22 – Friday Nov 2!



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November 2019 Election

Support Three Constitutional Amendments:

- ✓ Prop. 2: \$200 million in funding for water - wastewater projects in economically distressed communities
- ✓ Prop. 5: Increase funding for state parks by devoting all proceeds from sales tax on sporting goods
- ✓ Prop. 8: \$1.7 billion from state's 'rainy day fund' for flood mitigation projects including 'nature-based' approaches such as purchases of land and conservation easements

And

- ✓ SW Travis County Groundwater Conservation District



*There's a
better way!*

- ☐ 'No Dumping Sewage' coalition to ban discharge of sewage effluent into waterways in Edwards Aquifer Contributing Zone.
- ☐ Effluent contains high levels of nitrates, phosphates that can lead to algae blooms, fish kills.
- ☐ Promote alternatives like properly managed land application (TLAP permits) and beneficial re-use to and stretch limited water supplies

Conduct Inventory of Lead Service Lines in Austin

- ❑ AWU has inventoried its records for ca. 41,000 service lines in older parts of town
- ❑ Some 31,000 deemed lead free on city side
- ❑ BUT – records inconclusive for ca. 10,000 city lines AND no records for lines on customer side of the meter
- ❑ AWU planning to replace all water meters with 'smart meters', issuing contract(s) soon
- ❑ Meter replacement plan offers opportunity to inspect lines on both sides of meter (Ft. Worth already doing this)

Build Resilience to Climate Change in Austin Through the LDC and Water Forward



Local Impacts of Climate Change

Climate Change Projections for Austin

Toward a Climate-Resilient Austin: May 1, 2014) Report to Council

Category	Current	Projected*
Avg. annual temps		+ 9 to 10°
Summer avg. high temp.	94°	98 - 103°
No. summer days over 100°F	13	35 - 80
No. summer days over 110°F	0 (rare)	1 - 20
Annual avg. precipitation	32"	32-33"
No. days/year > 2" rainfall	2	3
Max. 5 day rainfall	6"	8"
Max. consecutive dry days (no precip.)	52	70 - 75

* Projected by end of this century (2071-2100).

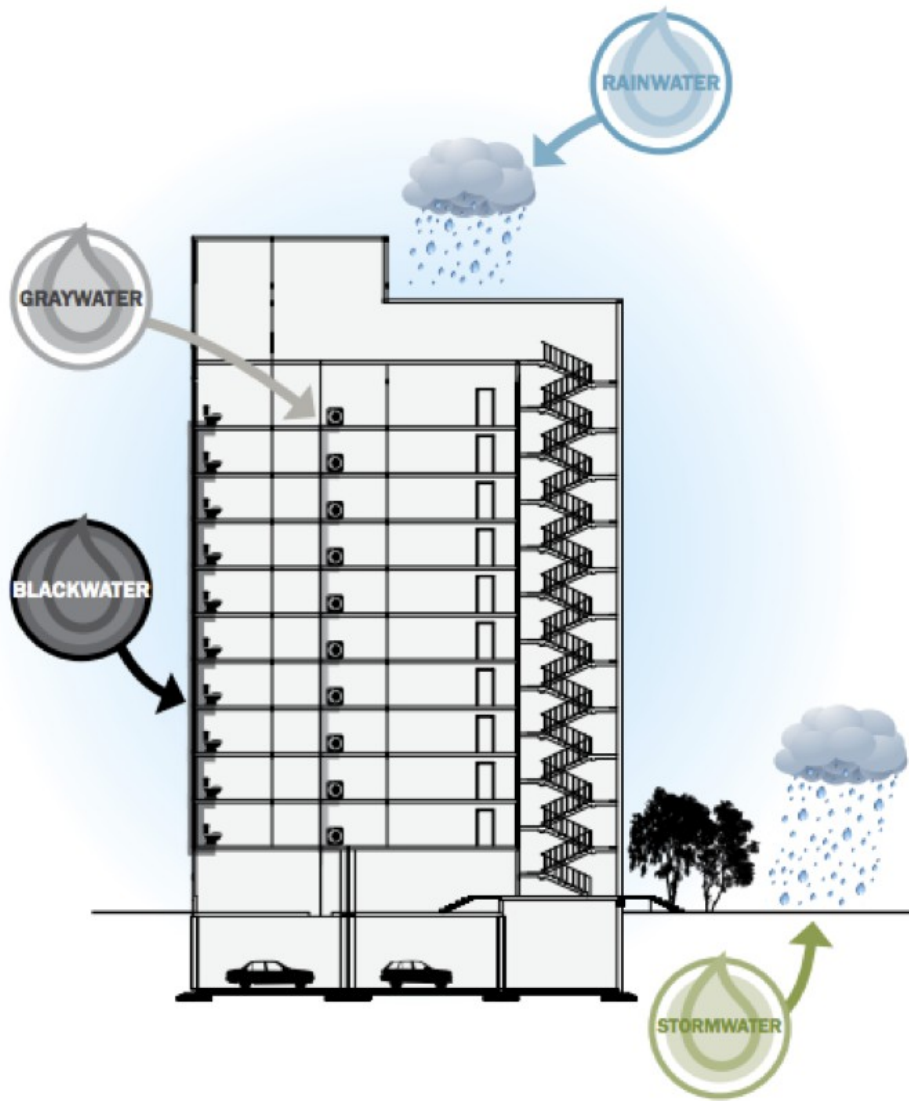
Source: http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Sustainability/Climate/Toward_a_Climate_Resilient_Austin.pdf

Building Resilience in Austin's Land Development Code

- ☐ Preserve tree protections, parkland dedication and protections for Barton Springs Recharge Zone.
- ☐ Lower trigger for water quality controls from 8,000 to 5,000 sq ft of impervious cover
- ☐ Require new developments / redevelopments along corridors and in town centers to 'soften up' hard surfaces and reduce impervious cover with bioswales, green roofs, large-scale rainwater harvesting, etc.
- ☐ For 'missing middle' projects, assure that increases in impervious cover do not increase stormwater runoff or harm water quality.

Building Resilience through Austin's “Water Forward” Plan

- ☐ One-sided reliance on surface reservoirs subject to evaporative losses
- ☐ Aquifer storage and recovery
- ☐ Deepen commitment to conservation – eg landscape transformation ordinance
- ☐ Expanded use of city's reclaimed 'purple pipe' water
- ☐ 'Alternative water' via dual plumbing of new buildings & use of AC condensate, rainwater, stormwater, treated greywater and black water onsite
- ☐ Timeline is the key, sooner is better



Growth as
part of the
solution:
'Sync up' the
LDC and
Water
Forward



Thank you!

Contact David Foster at 512-474-2046

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www.CleanWaterAction.org/tx

