

Jody Askins

October 10, 2026
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
Edwards Aquifer Protection Program
Attn: Monica Reyes
San Antonio Regional Office
14250 Judson Road
San Antonio, Texas 78233-4480

RE: Edwards Aquifer Protection Program Annual Hearing

Dear Commissioners:

My name is Jody Askins, and I am submitting these comments as an individual and on behalf of Save Salado Creek, a community organization dedicated to safeguarding the health of Salado Creek through science-based practices, sustained advocacy, and community engagement.

Save Salado Creek strongly supports the comments submitted by Dirk Aaron on September 22, 2026, requesting that TCEQ initiate the process necessary to evaluate extending Edwards Aquifer protections to the scientifically supported northern extent of the Edwards Balcones Fault Zone Aquifer in Bell County. Mr. Aaron brings decades of experience in groundwater management in Bell County. His comments make an important case for beginning this process now.

We are running out of time.

Bell County is experiencing substantial growth, and that growth is projected to continue for decades. The Texas Demographic Center's current projections anticipate continued population growth in Bell County through 2060. At the same time, the Salado area is experiencing increasing development pressure, including new residential development and the infrastructure and wastewater demands that accompany it.

For Save Salado Creek, protecting the Edwards Aquifer and protecting Salado Creek are interconnected parts of protecting our watershed. Decisions being made today about development, wastewater infrastructure, stormwater, and land use can have consequences for our surface water and groundwater for generations.

We do not oppose responsible development. We believe growth and environmental protection can and must occur together. But protections are most effective when they are established before sensitive areas are extensively developed and water-quality problems occur.

For that reason, Save Salado Creek supports Mr. Aaron's request that TCEQ begin the scientific, hydrogeologic, mapping, stakeholder, and rulemaking process necessary to determine appropriate protections for the northern Edwards Aquifer in Bell County.

We also support his recommendation that this process be collaborative and transparent and that the ultimate boundaries be determined by the best available science rather than predetermined in advance.

Salado Creek and the Edwards Aquifer are irreplaceable natural resources. Bell County will continue to grow. The window in which we can plan for that growth while proactively protecting these resources is narrowing.

We respectfully ask TCEQ to begin this process now.

Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to comment.

Respectfully submitted,

Jody Askins
Save Salado Creek
Salado, Texas

