

**The Guadalupe-Blanco  
River Trust--Working to  
Save Texas' Open Spaces**

# Water Resources

*A publication of the* **GUADALUPE-BLANCO RIVER AUTHORITY**

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# GBRA Highlights

## The Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust--Working to Save Texas' Open Spaces

**B**ecause the Guadalupe River is one of the most biologically diverse in the United States -- stretching from the springs and canyons of the Texas Hill Country to the marine environment of the Gulf Coast wetlands and San Antonio Bay - keeping a balance between open space and development is critical to its health.

"Amazingly, in Texas where land is so plentiful, we are losing open spaces more rapidly than in any other state," says Todd Votteler, executive director of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust. For that reason, the Trust was developed in 2001 to help conserve land in the Guadalupe River Basin for its natural, recreational, scenic, historic and productive value.

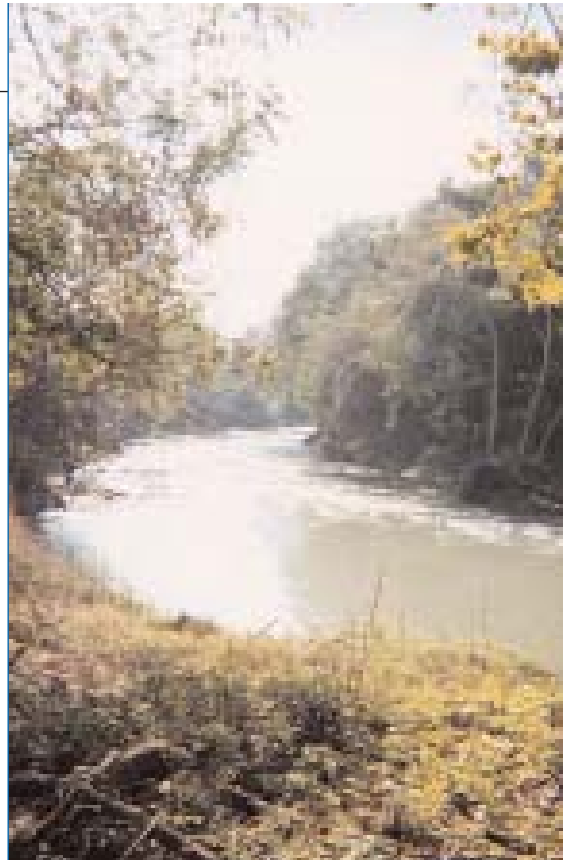
The Trust is managed by a dedicated group of individuals who are committed to carrying out its mis-



...sion to promote and encourage the conservation, stewardship and enjoyment of the land and water resources of the Guadalupe River Basin, while maintaining its unique and irreplaceable natural heritage.

Trust Executive Director **Todd Votteler** has a B.S. in Natural Resources from The University of the South, in Sewanee, TN; an M.S. in Natural Resources from the University of Michigan School of Natural Resources, in Ann Arbor, MI; and a Ph.D. in Environmental Geography from Texas State University (TSU). He has worked as a research scien-

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### New Name--New Format

We are proud to present GBRA's revised newsletter - Water Resources. We hope that our former, as well as our new readers, will enjoy the updated magazine-style design. Water Resources will be published quarterly and will also be available on our website at [www.gbra.org](http://www.gbra.org). Please send your comments, ideas for article topics, and other suggestions to us at [info@gbra.org](mailto:info@gbra.org).

# GBRA Highlights

## Trust Builds New Partnership

**T**In October 2004, the UGRA Board of Directors voted to formally establish a partnership with the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust, creating what Trust executive director Todd Votteler describes as "a unique conservation organization within the State of Texas."

UGRA's decision to partner with the Trust was immediately approved by the GBRA Board of Directors. "We recognize that the flow of clear, quality water in the Upper Guadalupe is directly dependent upon the health of the entire watershed," said Votteler. "Our new partnership will create a land and water trust that is supported by both river authorities and is devoted to the conservation of the entire river."

GBRA was created by the Texas Legislature in 1933 and the UGRA was established six years later, in 1939. Both river authorities are conservation and reclamation districts, and each is governed by a board of nine directors appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Texas Senate.

According to Greg Etter, UGRA General Manager, "the partnership will create synergies and be of substantial benefit to the Upper Guadalupe River and Kerr County. Voluntary conservation and sound land management by private

landowners are the keys to protecting and enhancing water quantity and quality in this area."

Trust President Pam Hodges thanked the UGRA for their support of the Trust. "We have a commonality of interests and purpose revolving around stewardship of the watershed. Working together, the three organizations will be more effective in that mission."

Like GBRA, the UGRA has a strong commitment to conservation and protection, and began several major environmental projects in 2004. A Spill Containment Initiative was developed in consultation with local fire departments and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). Containment equipment will be stored at selected volunteer fire department locations and will be available for use by all seven of the County's volunteer fire departments in the event of a spill to the River. A second project in cooperation with the City of Kerrville is a joint brush control program at Kerrville Schreiner Park that is designed to study and demonstrate good brush management practices. A third program - the Cypress Restoration Initiative - will contribute to the reforestation of sites by planting 100 trees to replace old-growth Cypress trees lost due to construction along the River, reduction of shallow-perched

Todd Votteler, Trust Executive Director

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*The partnership between GBRA and the UGRA creates "a unique conservation organization within the State of Texas."*



water tables, or natural factors such as floods, lightning and disease.

On December 15, 2004 the UGRA Board of Directors appointed vice-president A.L. "Curg" Starkey, III to serve on the Board of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust. "I'm very pleased to have the opportunity to serve on the Trust's Board," said Starkey. "The Trust is dedicated to conserving the Guadalupe watershed through the voluntary actions of private property owners and has a great future in Kerr County."

The Trust facilitates the voluntary conservation of resources within the Guadalupe watershed, which is under increasing pressure from development and fragmentation. Further information about the Trust, which was established by GBRA in 2001, can be found at [www.gbrtrust.org](http://www.gbrtrust.org).

# GBRA Highlights

## The Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust-- Working to Save Texas' Open Spaces

(continued from page 2)

tist at the Battelle - Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, in Washington, D.C.; as the assistant to the Federal Court Monitor during Sierra Club et al. v. Babbitt et al.; and as the Special Master for U.S. District Court Judge Lucius Bunton during the Endangered Species Act litigation, Sierra Club v. San Antonio et al. Votteler has published a number of articles about Texas' water resource issues and taught in the Department of Biology at TSU as an Assistant Professor. He joined GBRA in June 2000, where he also serves as Director of Natural Resources and Special Assistant to the General Manager.

The voluntary board of directors includes:

**Bill Block**, who ranches along the Guadalupe River near Bergheim, Texas. Block has a B.A. from MacMurray College in Jacksonville, Illinois and J.D. and L.L.B. degrees from the Southern Methodist University School of Law. Block worked as an Associate Attorney at Baker,



Shaw, & Foreman in Dallas, served on the Board of Trustees of the Hockaday School in Dallas, as Chair of the University of Texas McDonald Observatory/Department of Astronomy Board of Visitors, and Chair of the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center Board of Directors. He is a member of the University of Texas Chancellor's Council and the University of Texas Littlefield Society.

**Catherine "Kay" McHaney**, a native of Victoria, has a Bachelor's degree from the University of Texas at Austin. She is Secretary/Treasurer



and co-owner of the Victoria Advocate newspaper. She serves on the boards of Victoria College, the Victoria College Foundation, the Victoria Symphony Endowment Trust and the Museum of the Coastal Bend Victoria Fine Arts Association. McHaney served two terms on the GBRA Board of Directors following appointments in 1994 by Governor Ann Richards, and in 1997 by Governor George W. Bush. She served

as Board Chair during her tenure.

**John P. Schneider, Jr.** received a B.B.A. degree from Texas A&M Uni-



versity and is President of Schneider & Associates, Inc., specializing in

commercial, farm and ranch real estate in Central and South Texas. He belongs to the Texas Society of Range Management, the Austin Real Estate Council, the Society of Texas A&M Real Estate Professionals, and the Texas Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association. He is a past Chairman of the Texas Real Estate Center Advisory Committee the Executive Committee of the Texas Agriculture Summit, the A&M College of Agriculture Development Council, the Association of Former Students and is a board member of the Twelfth Man Foundation. He is also a former member of the State Executive Committee and former Austin Chapter President of the Coastal Conservation Association. Schneider assists in managing the family cow-calf operation. He was appointed to the GBRA Board of Di-

# GBRA Highlights

## The Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust Working to Save Texas' Open Spaces

nually at Texas State University. Thornton has a Bachelor's degree from Texas A&M University and an M.B.A. from Troy State University. In 1964, he began a long and distinguished career in the U.S. Air Force as a pilot in Vietnam, eventually retiring in 1995 as Vice-Commander of Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio. Thornton has continued his public contributions by serving on key municipal commissions in San Marcos, including the Planning and Zoning Commission.

**A. L. 'Curg' Starkey** represents the Upper Guadalupe River Authority (UGRA) on the Trust Board,



and is currently involved in the management of commercial real estate as President of The Six S Family Ltd. Partnership. He was previously engaged in the home building and real estate sales businesses. Mr. Starkey is a Kerr County native with a long history of community activities. He served on the State Board of Plumbing Examiners, City of Kerrville's Comprehensive Plan

Advisory Committee, is a graduate of Leadership Kerr County and is a member of the Tivy Athletic Booster Club and the Rotary Club of Kerrville. Mr. Starkey has served on the UGRA Board since 2002 and is currently Vice-President of the Board and Chairman of the Human Resources Committee.

GBRA employee Janet Thome serves as Trust Coordinator and is responsible for the daily operations of the Trust, including working with landowners and other agencies. Thome studied Graphic Design at Texas State University in San Marcos, worked on projects in conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service California Conservation Corps program prior to coming to the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority in 2000, and has been with the Trust since its inception in 2001.

"Basically, the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust is a land trust," said Votteler. "A land trust is a local, regional or national nonprofit organization that protects land for its natural, recreational, scenic, historic or productive value. Land trusts have varying conservation objectives. Some work in specific geographic areas or concentrate on protecting different natural or cultural features. Land trusts that accept conservation easements are responsible for monitoring that property

and ensuring that the terms of the easement are followed. The land trust is responsible for stewardship of the conservation easement as long as the easement exists."

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust welcomes the support of corporate sponsors, charitable foundations and individuals to conserve the Guadalupe River. To help provide for the stewardship of the Guadalupe River and its associated tributaries, springs and lands, there are several conservation options available to protect land encumbered with tax burdens or other issues that may require the sale of a farm or ranch that is part of a family heritage, while helping to retaining ownership of the land.

Information about the Trust is available at [www.gbrtrust.org](http://www.gbrtrust.org). To make a donation to help sustain the natural resources of the Guadalupe River Basin, contact the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust, 933 East Court Street, Seguin, Texas, 78155 or at the following numbers: Toll Free (800) 413-4130 or Fax (830) 379-7478.

# GBRA Highlights

## Meet GBRA'S Newest Directors

In 2004, two new directors were appointed to six-year terms on the GBRA Board of Directors by Governor Rick Perry.

**Margaret M. "Meg" Grier**, a resident of Boerne, represents Kendall County and replaces former director Pamela M. Hodges. She graduated from Muskingum College with



a degree in Economics and History, and completed graduate work in Public Affairs at

George Washington University. Grier is the author of *Grassroots Women* and owner of the Wingscape Press. She has served on the Kendall County Advisory Board, the Friends of Cibolo Wilderness, and the Boerne Public Library Foundation. She currently serves on the board of National Federation of Republican Women, and the Hill Country Daily Bread. Grier is also an elder for St. Mark's Presbyterian Church in Boerne.

**Clifton L. Thomas, Jr.** replaces Catherine R. McHaney as Victoria County representative to the GBRA Board. He graduated from Texas



A & M University with a degree in education, and is founder and CEO of C.L. Thomas, a wholesale (Thomas Petroleum, Ltd.) and retail (Speedy Stop Food Stores, Ltd.) corporation. He serves on the DeTar Hospital and Wells Fargo Bank Boards of Directors and currently resides in Victoria with his family.

GBRA is governed by a board of nine directors, appointed by the Governor of the State of Texas and confirmed by the Senate. The ten counties in GBRA's statutory district are represented on a rotating basis. Each director serves a six-year term with three directors appointed or re-appointed every two years. Previously appointed directors who currently serve include chair John P. Schneider, Jr, Caldwell County; vice-chair Stephen F. Wilson, DVM, Calhoun County; secretary/treasurer Myrna P. McLeroy, Gonzales County; Frank J. Pagel, Refugio County; Jack R. Gary, Hays County; Frederick 'Fritz' Schlather, Guadalupe County; and Kathleen A. Devine, Comal County.

### Johnson Ranch, *(continued from page 9)*

"We're hearing from more and more people as they become familiar with these first projects," said Votteler. "They're either owners who have a long family history with their property or they're relatively new owners of smaller pieces of property. They all want to preserve the natural beauty of their land and they understand that if we don't start doing that, the environment that we grew up with in most of Texas - the open space, the wide horizons - will be lost altogether."

"The problem isn't so much how to restore land to its natural state," said Votteler. "Restoration happens if you let nature take its course and you can help speed it along with a little effort like reseed-ing. The bigger problem is what happens to the land you save once you're not there anymore. Texans are starting to see that a conservation easement can allow them to stay on the land, take advantage of some tax benefits and ensure that their stewardship isn't wasted in the long run. We're excited about the role the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust will play in the effort to save some of our open spaces for future Texans."



# Programs and Projects

## Grant Awarded to Develop Regional Wastewater Plan for Hays County GBRA Project Updates

**H**ays County, located along the rapidly-growing I-35 corridor, has some of the highest growth rate projections for Texas. Its location just south of the Austin/Travis County metroplex, and an abundance of beautiful Hill Country acreage, makes it a destination of choice for suburban residential growth and the commercial and industrial services needed to support this growing population.

Numerous developments have been proposed in or near the cities of Kyle, Buda, Niederwald and Umland. As the area continues to grow, water availability and water quality issues become increasingly important to the residents and businesses in the area.

GBRA and Hays County have been awarded a Texas Water Development Board Regional Facility Planning Fund Grant to develop a regional wastewater facility plan for the eastern portion of Hays County.

The project will evaluate existing and proposed wastewater treatment facilities as to their location, capacity and ability to expand to meet the needs of the explosive growth being experienced in this area of Hays County.

The Austin-based consulting firm of PBS&J is performing the

study. During the process, they will collect baseline information, formulate conceptual development scenarios, analyze the effects of conceptual development options, develop a regional water quality protection plan; and recommend watershed management practices on the project area.

To ensure that the process received public input, a stakeholder committee consisting of area residents, developmental interests and representatives of local and state governmental entities has met twice during the study period. A draft report should be ready for review by the committee in February 2005.

### Project Updates:

GBRA is actively involved in the following efforts to help meet current and future water needs in the Guadalupe watershed and region:

The **Western Canyon Water Supply Project**, which is scheduled to go online in late 2005, will provide a firm supply of treated surface water to portions of Comal and Kendall counties. It will also conserve groundwater by reducing pumping from wells drilled into the supplies of the Edwards and Trinity Aquifers.

Current Status: All contracts have been awarded, including the

water treatment and membrane filtration plant which is 50% complete, the raw water intake at Comal Park, two remote pump stations, the raw water and the treated water pipelines, and a SCADA-Control system. Construction is well underway on the plant site and work has started on the intake structure. The notice to proceed on the first phase of the raw and treated water system has been issued, and approximately 95% of the right of way has been acquired.

The **IH-35 Water Supply Project** will deliver treated water by late 2005 from the San Marcos Water Treatment Plant (SMWTP) to northern Hays County. Contracts have been completed with the cities of Kyle and Buda and with Go Forth Water Supply Corporation.

Current Status: Title research, surveys, appraisal and acquisition of rights of way are in process, and contracts have been awarded for the pump station and the first phase of the water transmission main. Bids will be opened for the second phase on February 4.

The **Luling-Lockhart Project** is a cooperative effort between the cities of Luling and Lockhart. It will use the excess treated drinking water capacity at the Luling Water Treatment Plant to supplement the

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# Classroom Corner

## Children's Archeology Fair, (continued from page 13)

Another factor in the Fairs' success was timing. The date coincided with the students' study of early Texas history, thus complementing the school curriculum. GBRA provided teachers with ideas for classroom activities and educational materials to prepare for the Fair, including the Texas Historical Commission's Texas Archeology in the Classroom, the Texas Archeology Month Calendar of Events, and TAM posters.

Numerous hands-on activities enlivened the event. "You can't just have demonstrations," Schroeder said. "You have to get the kids involved as well. That really drives home the message that this is neat stuff. The kids feel they actually get to do something rather than just sit and listen to someone talk about it."

This year, approximately 750 students attended from McQueeney Elementary, Vogel Elementary, Weinert Elementary, Jefferson Elementary, Koennecke Elementary, Ball Elementary, and Patlan Elementary in Seguin, and from Bill Brown Elementary and Hoffman Lane Elementary in New Braunfels.

The two-hour program for each group consisted of a series of "stations" along a wooded nature trail near Geronimo Creek. The first was a mock dig. Using handouts pro-

vided by the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory (TARL) that described five Texas archeological contexts - historic, prehistoric coastal, prehistoric central, prehistoric Panhandle, and Northeast Texas - students sifted through soil and artifacts in laundry-basket-sized bins and determined which area each represented. They also learned the importance of in-situ documentation of archeological materials.

At the beginning of the trail, the students surveyed a second mock archeological site, but in this case it was one that had been looted, showing that the information gathered from the first mock dig would be impossible to obtain from a disturbed site.

Then it was on to demonstrations and activities at the flintknapping, hot-rock cooking, and pottery-making stations. Additional stations gave students an opportunity to participate in atlatl throwing (a type of spear), and listen to Native American storytellers.

"Teachers and students alike seemed to have a wonderful time," Thomas-Jimenez said. "The main challenge for them was funding buses." To overcome this obstacle, GBRA paid for the students' transportation.

Though the event was undeniably fun, it had a serious purpose. "We wanted to leave a message with the local community that archeological sites are resources worthy of protection and that they can be economic attractions to the community," Schroeder said. The message must have gotten through because as one of the kids put it, "we learned a lot of new things about what happened long ago."

# Get to Know GBRA

**A**s part of GBRA's program to encourage our employees to increase their professional skills and knowledge, many hold more than one professional certification. Congratulations to the following employees for their accomplishments:

Calhoun County: Ryan Boedeker - "C" Wastewater  
Hydroelectric: John Manchack - "D" Water  
Rural Utilities: Joel Heideke - "B" Wastewater and "C" Groundwater  
Victoria: Carlton Hoefling - "C" Wastewater  
Water Resources: Michael Urrutia - "C" Surface

GBRA welcomes the following new employees who have joined our organization since last summer:

Luwana Gilmore (General)  
Joe Long (San Marcos)  
Daphne Larko (General)  
Michael Green (Hays/Caldwell)  
Jonathan Bode (Seguin Lab)  
Keelyn Underwood (Victoria)  
Susan Hubbert (General)

## Water Resources

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**Editor:** Judy Gardner  
**Assistant Editor:** Tammy Beutnagel  
**Graphic Design:** Connie Rothe

**Our Vision:** *The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority is a widely recognized leader in managing water resources that benefit both people and the environment.*

**Our Mission:** *The mission of GBRA is to protect, conserve, reclaim and steward the resources of the district, and provide leadership in regional cooperation, in order to enhance quality of life for those we serve.*

*GBRA Statutory District: Kendall, Comal, Hays, Caldwell, Guadalupe, Gonzales, DeWitt, Victoria, Calhoun and Refugio counties.*

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