



**TEXAS
LIVING
WATERS
PROJECT**



WATER & CLIMATE STORIES

to watch at the 88th Texas Legislative Session



National Wildlife Federation
Texas Coast and Water Program



**SIERRA
CLUB**

The Nature
Conservancy

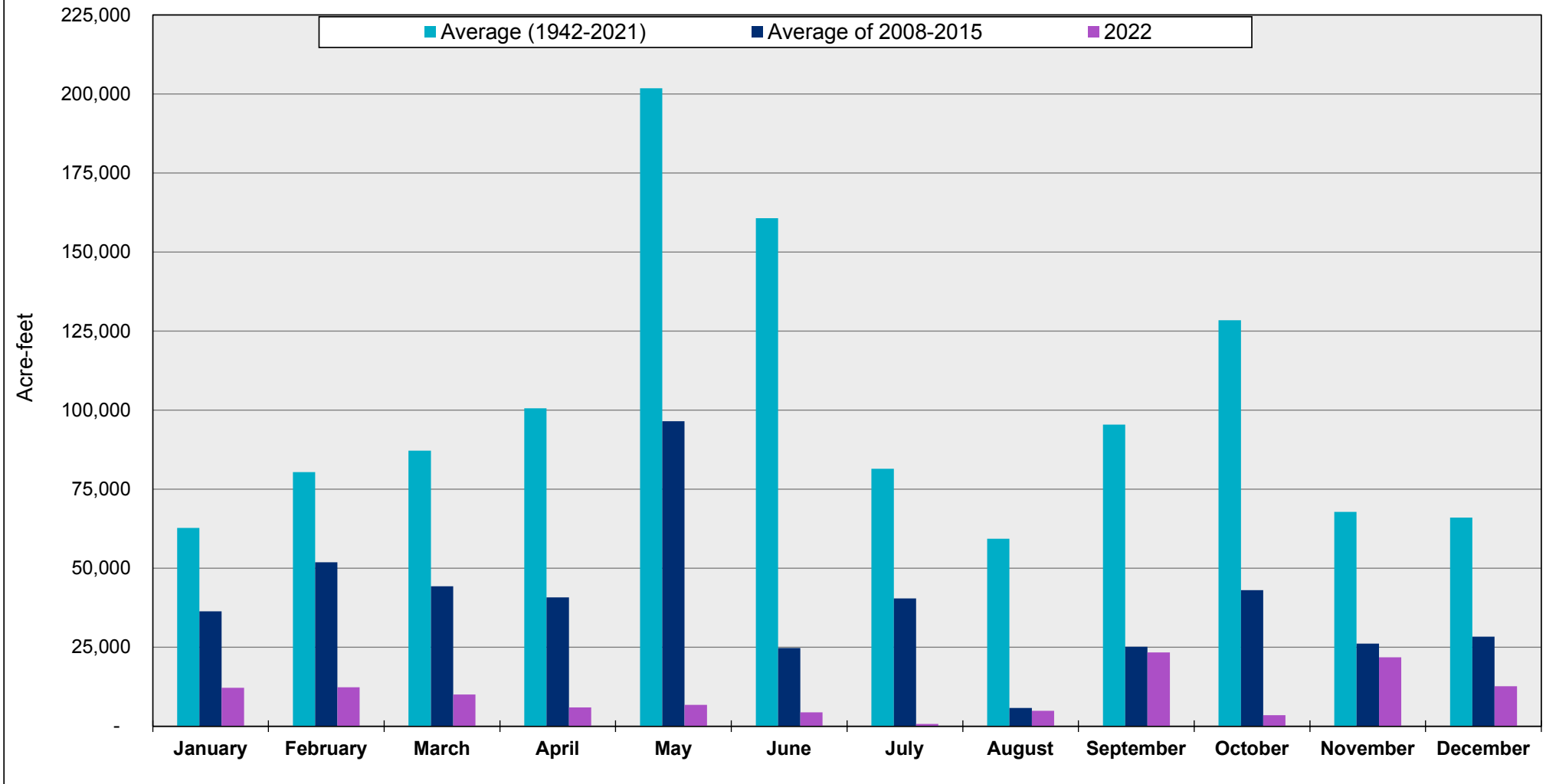


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Water Flowing Into Lakes Buchanan and Travis

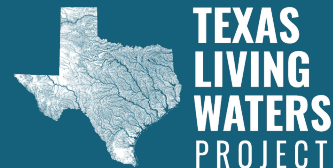


Inflows: the estimated amount of water flowing into lakes Buchanan and Travis from rivers and streams.

Data for 2021 and 2022 is preliminary and subject to change.

Period: December
 Since 1942, December Average (acre-feet): 66,000
 2008-2015, December Average (acre-feet): 28,334
 December 2022 (acre-feet): 12,635

Source: Lower Colorado River Authority



Top 10 Counties in Numeric Growth: July 1, 2020 to July 1, 2021

Rank	State	County	April 1, 2020 (Estimates Base)	July 1, 2020	July 1, 2021	Numeric Growth
1	Arizona	Maricopa County	4,420,568	4,438,342	4,496,588	58,246
2	Texas	Collin County	1,064,465	1,073,149	1,109,462	36,313
3	California	Riverside County	2,418,185	2,422,764	2,458,395	35,631
4	Texas	Fort Bend County	822,779	828,632	858,527	29,895
5	Texas	Williamson County	609,017	615,266	643,026	27,760
6	Texas	Denton County	906,422	913,900	941,647	27,747
7	Florida	Polk County	725,046	729,233	753,520	24,287
8	Texas	Montgomery County	620,443	624,938	648,886	23,948
9	Florida	Lee County	760,822	764,679	787,976	23,297
10	Utah	Utah County	659,399	663,143	684,986	21,843

Source: Census.gov



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TEXAS LIVING WATERS PROJECT

Will Texas drawdown federal infrastructure funds?

Texas water infra grades from American Society of Civil Engineers for 2021:

- Wastewater: D
- Drinking water: C-
- Flood risk mitigation: C-
- Levees: D
- Dams: D+

For context, the electric grid received a B+

\$2.9b in federal funds for Texas water infrastructure over the next 5 years.

State must provide a match to access funds. Required Texas match = \$125m for 2024 and 2025.

Infrastructure Storylines

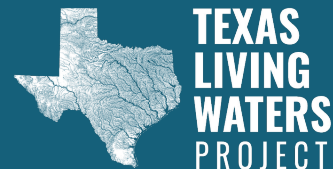
State Agencies Under Review

Climate Hazards

Nature

Bills in progress

Q&A



Will economically distressed areas receive needed funding?

For more than 30 years, the **Economically Distressed Areas Program** has allowed historically underserved communities to secure potable water and wastewater services.

The legislature will need to appropriate **\$5.3m in general revenue** funds to allow the Texas Water Development Board to issue the remaining \$100m in EDAP funds.



Infrastructure
Storylines

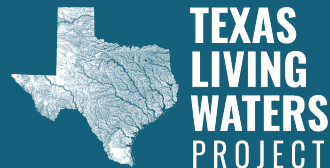
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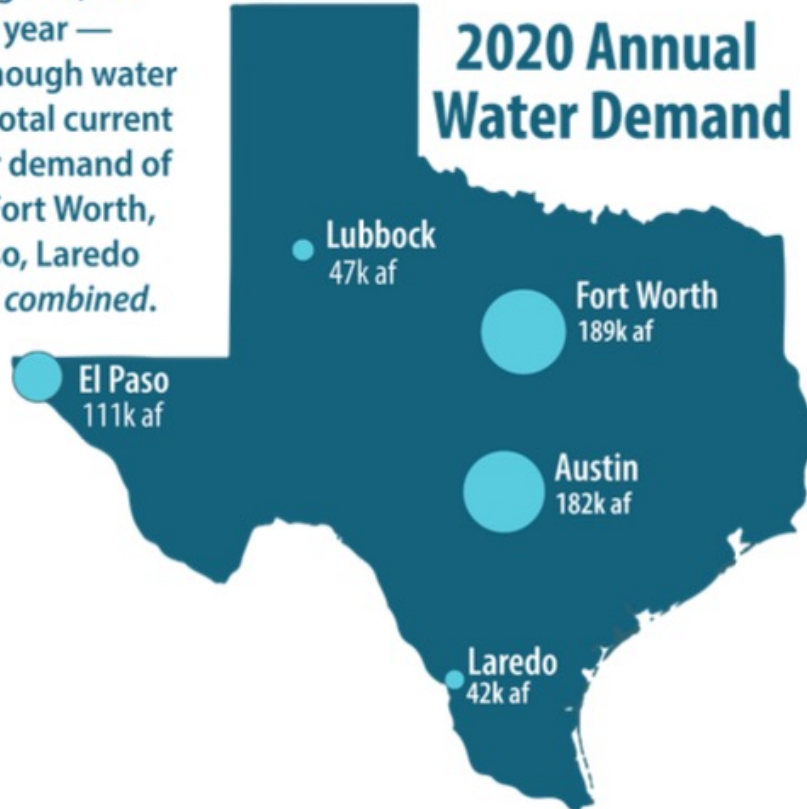
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Q&A



Water loss is an urgent issue

Texas is losing 572,000 acre-feet per year — more than enough water to meet the total current annual water demand of the cities of Fort Worth, Austin, El Paso, Laredo and Lubbock combined.



2020 Average Annual Water Loss in Texas



Infrastructure Storylines

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Q&A

What changes will sunset review bring to the Texas Water Development Board?

Climate change and state water planning

- Coordination with the State Climatologist's office

Strengthening financial assistance programs

- Analysis of applicants and recipients of funds
- Large-scale outreach planning to ensure programs are sufficiently meeting the needs of communities – especially disadvantaged communities



Infrastructure
Storylines

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Q&A

What changes will sunset review bring to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality ?

Contested Case Hearings

Restoring the ability of TPWD to participate in contested case hearings

TPWD has vital expertise to aid in protecting public lands and fish and wildlife

Environmental Flows

Continuing the Bay and Basin Advisory Stakeholder Committees, and Bay and Basin Expert Science Teams, and drafting biennial work plans regarding adaptive management.

Goal: to encourage voluntary conversions of existing water rights to flow protection, and ensure administration and enforcement of water rights.

Infrastructure
Storylines

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Q&A

Water Quality and Surface Water Quality Standards

Pre-production plastic / nurdle pollution

- Reaffirming authority from the Clean Water Act
- Prohibiting discharge of nurdles into Texas waters

Protecting and Restoring Texas's Coastal Salinity Gradients

- TCEQ has been "studying" coastal salinity for 25 years
- No numeric criteria have ever been established
- TCEQ's capability to protect estuarine-dependent wildlife is unclear
- Understanding coastal salinity is integral prior to the widespread use of desalination



Infrastructure
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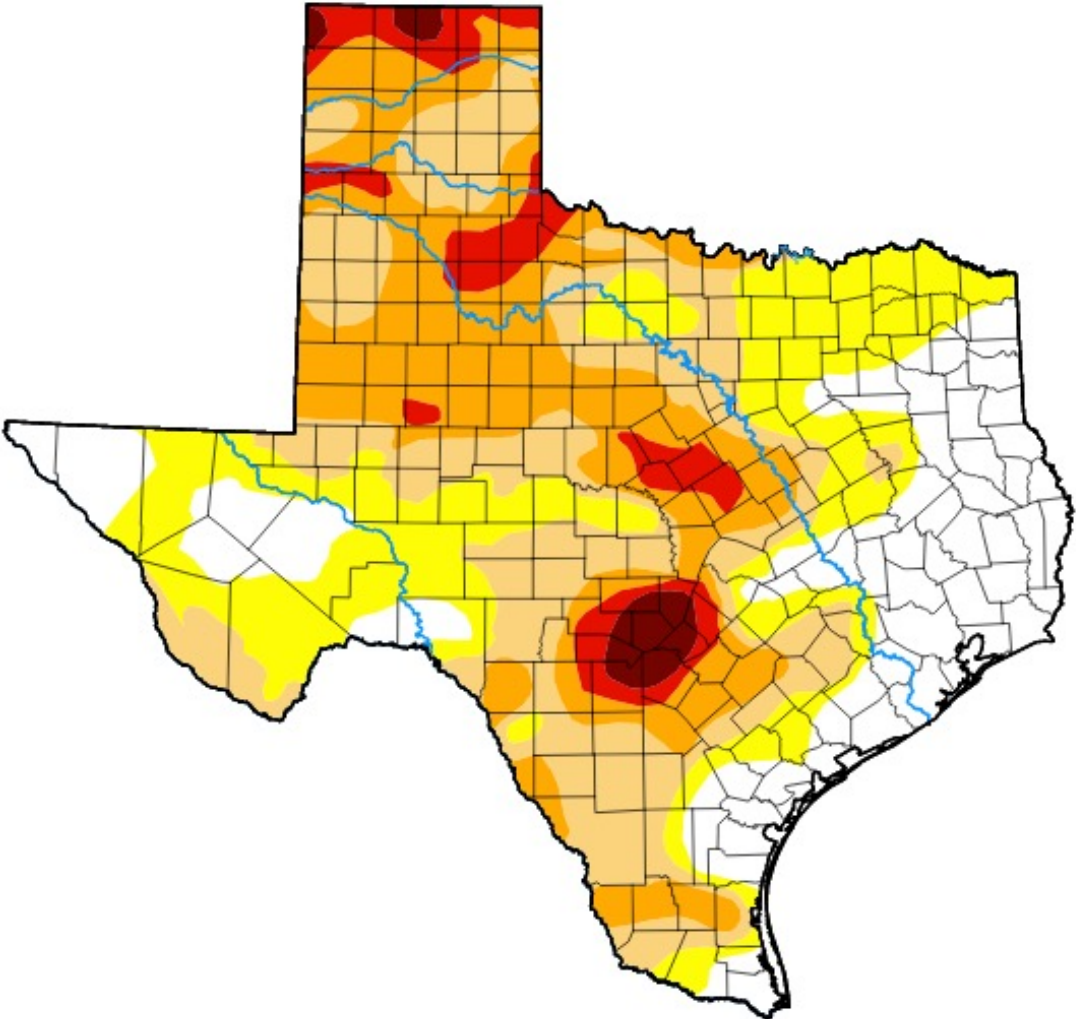
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Q&A

Map released: Thurs. January 19, 2023

Data valid: January 17, 2023 at 7 a.m. EST



Intensity

- None
- D0 (Abnormally Dry)
- D1 (Moderate Drought)
- D2 (Severe Drought)
- D3 (Extreme Drought)
- D4 (Exceptional Drought)
- No Data

Authors

United States and Puerto Rico Author(s):
Deborah Bathke, National Drought Mitigation Center

Pacific Islands and Virgin Islands Author(s):
Brad Rippey, U.S. Department of Agriculture

*The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying **text summary** for forecast statements.*

Infrastructure
Storylines

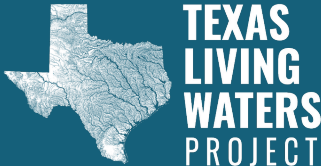
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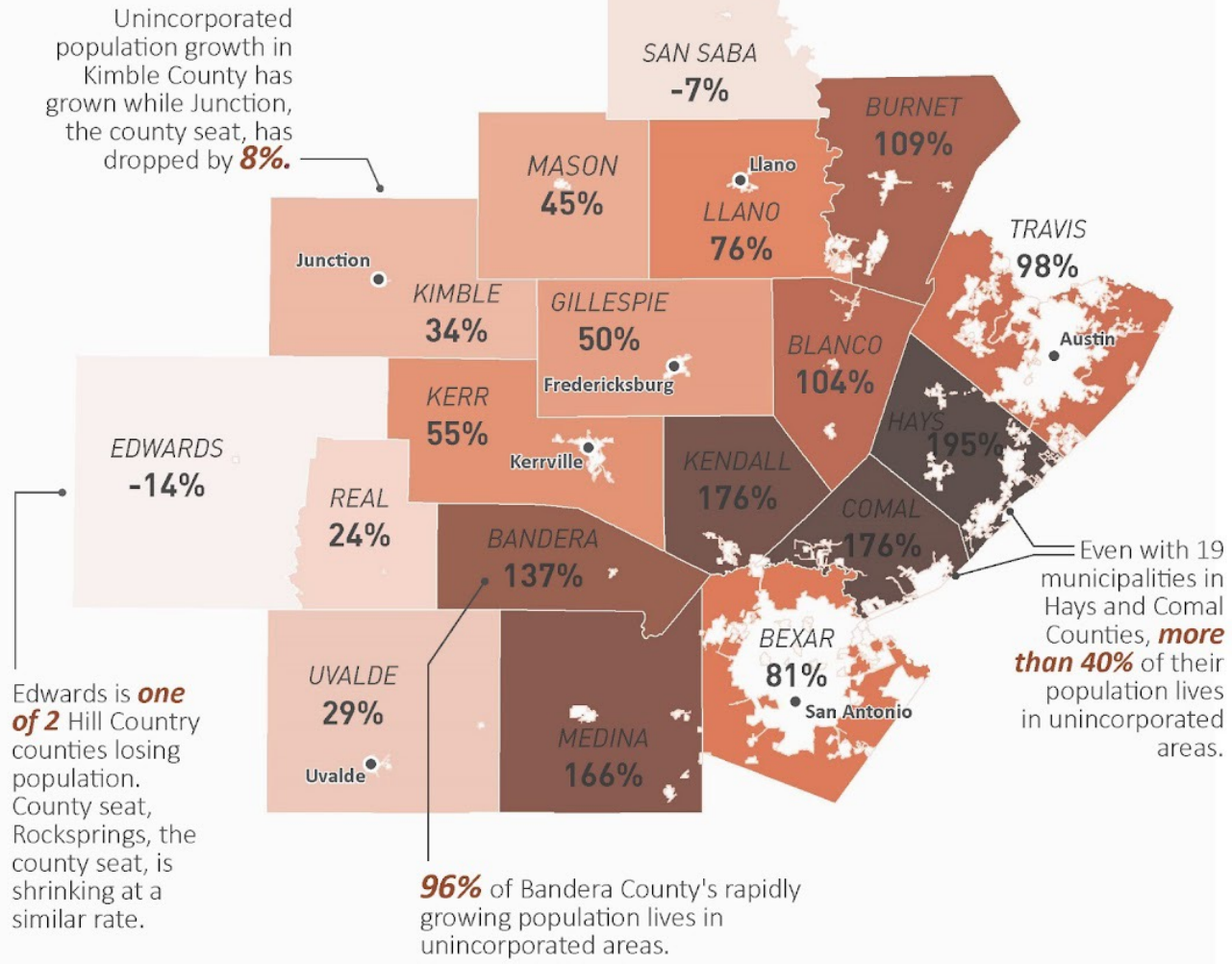
Q&A



POPULATION GROWTH IN UNINCORPORATED AREAS, 1990 - 2020



The Hill Country population in unincorporated areas has grown by **103%** since 1990. **Darker shades** indicate faster growth rates by county.



White spaces indicate incorporated areas.

Infrastructure Storylines

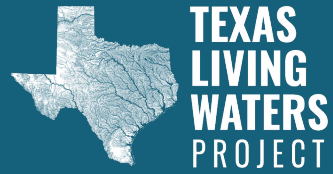
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Q&A



Texas Conservation Fund Initiative

Land | Water | Wildlife | Parks

Permanent state funding source for enhanced conservation efforts across Texas.

Long term dedicated fund of up to \$200m annually

Projects will benefit watersheds, working lands, wildlife, and public access to parks and open space.

Infrastructure
Storylines

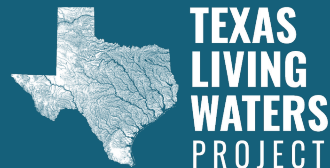
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Nature as Infrastructure

Nature-based solutions (NBS) protect, restore, and incorporate natural features or processes into the built environment.

NBS protect and restore natural landscapes like flood plains, riparian corridors, and barrier islands or engineered structures such as living shorelines, constructed wetlands and green stormwater infrastructure.

Integrate natural function to protect natural systems from development, flooding, extreme heat and drought.



Infrastructure
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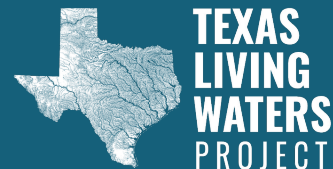
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Bills in Progress

Moving us forward:

Climate change

HB 570 (Raymond)
HB 57 (Zwiener)
HB 846 (Reynolds)

Water rights

HB 874 (Bowers)
SB 296 (Perry)

Infrastructure

SB 40 (Zaffirini)
SB 226 (Eckhardt)

Wrong direction:

Legal

HB 1372 (Harris)
SB 471 (Springer)

Limits on local control

SB 149 (Springer)
SB 494 (Hughes)

Infrastructure
Storylines

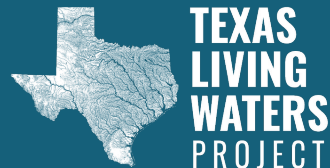
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Coastal Barrier

Largest civil engineering project in U.S. history. Currently estimated to cost \$34 billion.

Water Resources Development Act in late 2022 approved the Coastal Texas Study but did not grant any funding.

Expecting a push for funding in Texas legislative session. Already a \$500 million ask in Senate Bill 1.

Deserves close monitoring. Need for much broader public education.



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Questions?



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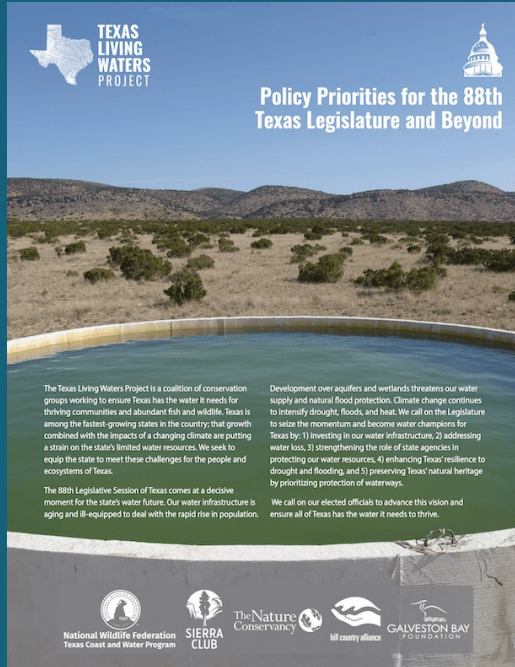


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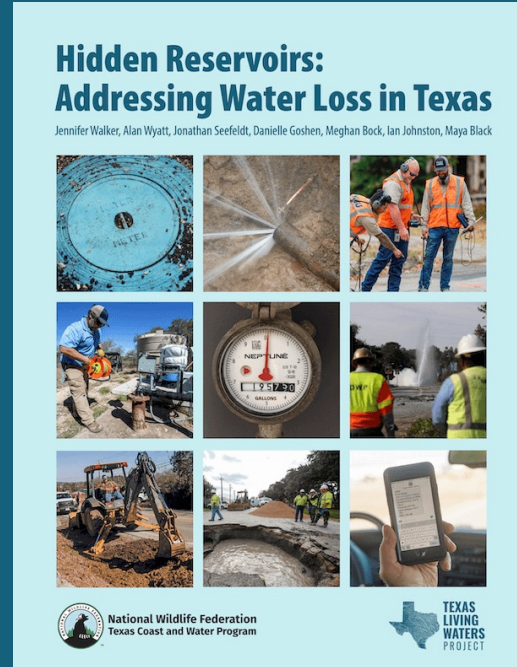


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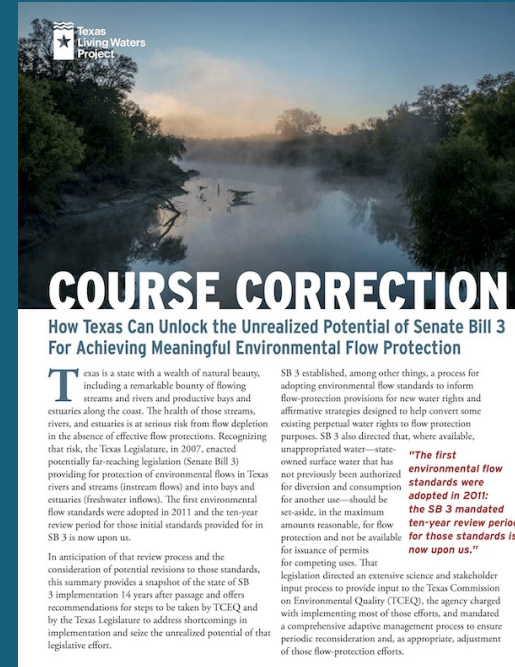
Resources:



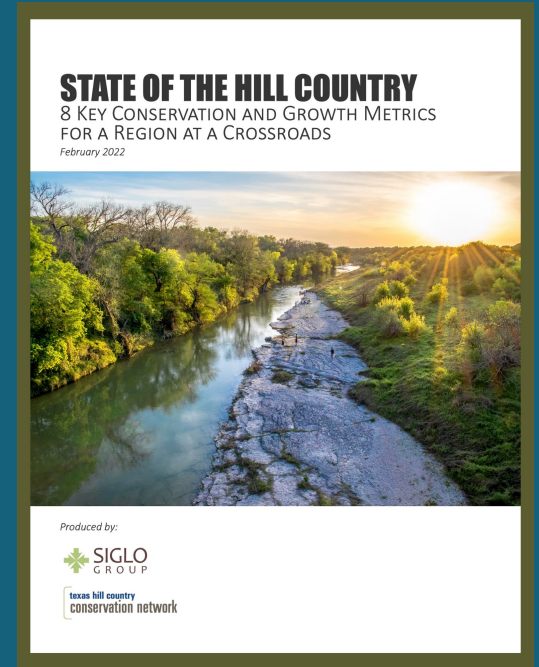
Legislative Priorities



Water Loss

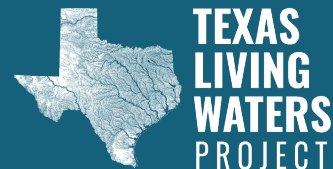


Environmental Flows



State of the Hill Country

Download these & more at:
texaslivingwaters.org/publications



Events:

Meet with water experts at the Capitol

Jan 30-31 and Feb 6

Texas Living Waters policy experts will be available for interviews at the Capitol

2023 Central Texas Water Conservation Symposium

Wed, Feb 22, 2023 | San Antonio Botanical Gardens

is.gd/ctwcs23

Hill Country Alliance Spring Water Revival

April 2023 | Various locations

hillcountryalliance.org/events/spring-water-revival/

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