



### *News from the Helotes Heritage Association*

Dear Readers,

On Sunday September 23, the Hill Country Planning Alliance brought together community groups with an interest in bringing leadership and sensible development to the Hill Country. The result of the meeting was that these groups have combined their forces to address recent challenges to NW Bexar County and beyond. This area overlies the contributing and recharges zones of the Edwards and Trinity aquifers. Sensible development of this area must be undertaken in a way that protects these extremely valuable and vulnerable natural resources. Once degraded, it will be virtually impossible to restore them to their pristine states.

At issue are plans by SAWS to extend sewer and water service past Helotes, throughout NW Bexar County, and into Medina and Bandera counties. Availability of sewer and water services would directly lead to high-density commercial and residential development. The consequence is that water recharged in high density developments will be degraded which would lead to the degradation of the highly vulnerable groundwaters in the area. This area must be developed at densities that would not adversely impact the Edwards and Trinity aquifers.

The Helotes Heritage Association (HHA) has teamed with the San Geronimo Valley Alliance (SGVA) and the Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance (GEAA) to oppose SAWS intentions to extend their sewer and water supply jurisdictions farther into the Hill Country. SAWS is attempting to extend these jurisdictions by asking TCEQ to amend their existing Certificates of Convenience and Necessity (CCNs). The HHA has taken the lead to oppose the sewer CCN while SGVA and GEAA have taken responsibility to oppose the water CCN. Most important is that all groups have agreed to jointly support these poorly advised intentions by SAWS.

Opposing SAWS plans will require concerted and diligent efforts by these groups. Such opposition typically leads to lengthy and expensive legal actions. The next actions are a preliminary hearing on October 17 in Austin to determine who has legal standing in the SAWS sewer CCN case and ongoing legal preparations by the legal team opposing SAWS water CCN. Please contact either of the above mentioned groups if you want to contribute support.

Sincerely,  
Ron Green, President  
Helotes Heritage Association