

Dear Readers,

In 2005, the Texas Legislature passed HB 1763 which will require Groundwater Conservation Districts to establish "Desired Future Conditions" (DFC) regarding groundwater resources. A DFC may be defined by how much the water table can be lowered or a minimum required flow of a spring. Once the DFC is established, the Texas Water Development Board will use a groundwater computer model to make the determination of how much water can be pumped such that the DFC is met. This model is called a Groundwater Availability Model (GAM). The GAMs are made as accurate as reasonably possible, however these models have some uncertainty because information is lacking. Therefore, the specific water table elevation that is needed to insure that springs continue to flow is quite difficult to predict. Directly setting minimum spring flows is an attractive way to protect the environment and needs to be seriously considered as the DFCs for aquifers in the Hill Country.

We have an opportunity to learn more about springs in the Hill Country. Chad Norris, aquatic biologist, Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept., Water Resources Branch, will give a presentation on Texas springs: the types of springs, their distribution, number, and their state of health. He will discuss why these vanishing resources are important to Texas. His presentation will include information about his research and key findings based on gathering biological and hydrological data on springs of Bexar County and the Edwards Plateau. Mr. Norris has a B.S. in Biology from the University of Houston and a M.S. in Aquatic Biology from Texas State University.

Mr. Norris will make his presentation on Sunday, April 13, 2008, at 3-5 p.m. at the Scenic Loop Playground Club on Sherwood Trail in Grey Forest, Texas (NW Bexar County). To get to the Scenic Loop Playground Club, take Scenic Loop to the City of Grey Forest, turn east at Grey Forest City Hall, go over Helotes Creek, the clubhouse is on left. This very important presentation is being sponsored by the Hill Country Planning Association (HCPA). The HCPL expects an interested crowd so please bring a comfortable chair.

Sincerely,  
Ron Green, President  
Helotes Heritage Association