9.0 Recommendations

Each previous section has concluded with recommendations on how we evaluate projects and work regionally and on measures for water quality protection and supply acquisition. These are summarized here for convenience.

9.1 Regional Planning and Management

- SAWS should coordinate with other Bexar County area purveyors and cities to jointly pursue completion of existing supply strategies as well as groundwater and existing surface water supplies.
- SAWS and others representing Bexar County interests should participate in SB 1 regional planning activities and develop strong relationships with others in the region to select and develop projects.
- SAWS should monitor local, state and federal proposed legislation and rule making and pursue changes to existing legislation (SB 1477/SB1) that limits San Antonio/Bexar County's access to water supplies.
- SAWS should continue to support the activities of the EAA in Edwards Aquifer management.
- SAWS should participate with other agencies to study the potential of increasing the limit on Edwards pumping if sufficient flow can be provided for endangered species and downstream needs.
- SAWS should aggressively defend its application for its historic pumping volume.
- SAWS should take the lead in forming and strengthening regional coalitions and partnerships.

9.2 Water Quality

- SAWS should maintain an aggressive water quality protection program based on sound science and technical data.
- SAWS should seek to improve state rules and enforcement regarding water quality protection.
- SAWS should continue the property acquisition program to ensure protection of the most sensitive properties. Partners such as the Bexar Land Trust, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, other governmental and non profit agencies should be sought to maximize the effectiveness of this program.
- SAWS should implement the Watershed Management Plan and coordinate with other city functions such as drainage regulation and maintenance, land use planning and site design requirements.
- SAWS should continue to develop the expertise to design and maintain drinking water treatment facilities in anticipation of additional supplies being integrated into the system.

9.3 Demand Management

- SAWS should continue to use the TWDB population and water demand projections as a baseline for estimating future water demand requirements.
- SAWS should adjust the TWDB projections to account for water savings through conservation at the local level to ensure that supplies that are not needed are not acquired.
- SAWS should encourage the entire region to pursue conservation standards when determining future supply requirements.
- SAWS should expand its aggressive conservation plan over time.

- SAWS should re-estimate demand projections in the annual assessment of the Water Resources Plan and formally update these projections at least every three years to account for changes in population trends as well as refinements in consumption patterns estimations.

9.4 Water Supplies

9.4.1 Current Water Supplies

- SAWS should take all necessary steps in the EAA permit adjudication process to obtain the maximum amount of Edwards Aquifer groundwater pumping right allowed by SB 1477 and the EAA permitting rules.
- SAWS should acquire limited amounts of other Edwards Aquifer groundwater pumping rights according to the SAWS' Edwards Acquisition Policy.
- SAWS should support the study of Aquifer Optimization by the Edwards Aquifer Authority with both staff and funding.
- SAWS should complete the Recycled Water Project.
- SAWS should complete the Canyon/Bulverde Project.

9.4.2 Possible Future Water Supplies

- SAWS should conduct studies to evaluate potential cultural, economic, social and water resource impacts of alternative new water supplies in order to avoid or minimize these impacts.
- SAWS should initiate and complete feasibility studies of other groundwater sources available, in cooperation with other interested agencies.
- SAWS should pursue opportunities that arise to acquire other groundwater sources.

- SAWS should pursue negotiations to acquire existing surface water supplies that might fit into a comprehensive and balanced water supply strategy.
- SAWS should pursue the developing opportunity with GBRA to assess the Guadalupe Basin for available supplies and move toward contract development for these supplies.
- SAWS should seek out and pursue other opportunities in more distant river basins despite the limitations on interbasin transfers in SB 1.
- SAWS should begin planning now for one or more new surface water storage projects, in recognition of the 10 to 30 year project development time. This planning activity should not be taken as a commitment to build a project. Commitment should come only after considerable scrutiny of the project by the evaluation and decision-making process described in Section 3.0. Any new surface storage project also must be subjected to full evaluation and inclusion in the Region L plan before SAWS can commit to build a project.
- SAWS should continue to study the feasibility of ASR as a potential water supply management tool.
- SAWS should pursue well field development and the necessary transmission lines for ASR if the study results in a favorable recommendation.
- SAWS should consider partnerships for promising sites that will benefit not only San Antonio but also others in the region.
- SAWS should explore using existing facilities in Bexar County for storage to meet seasonal peak demands.

9.5 Financial Considerations

- SAWS should use a combination of revenue sources to fund future water quality and supply development measures.
- SAWS should pursue federal grants and low interest loans to finance the recommended portfolio of projects.
- SAWS should develop regional coalitions so that participating partners contribute their fare share.
- SAWS should develop a "price affordability index" to ensure that its rate structure provides "lifeline" rates for low water users and those on fixed incomes.
- SAWS should work with the City of San Antonio to consider establishing recreation fees to help finance new surface storage projects.
- SAWS should work with the City of San Antonio to explore the use of impact fees to help finance new supplies.
- SAWS should recognize the "cost avoidance" benefits of conservation and recycling in future cost-benefit analyses performed to evaluate specific projects.
- SAWS should continue to pursue measures to contain costs for daily operations while maintaining high quality service.