



Vista Ridge Pipeline

A new game-changing water project has been proposed for San Antonio. For the next 30 years and beyond it would provide the largest non-Edwards Aquifer supply in our city's history.

Water is the basis for San Antonio's prosperity. New water supplies will move the city forward for decades to come.



We have to support our community's expansive growth and diverse economy while also protecting the Edwards Aquifer. That's why we need to provide non-Edwards water supplies that are not only sufficient, but abundant for years to come.



— Heriberto "Berto" Guerra Jr.
SAWS Chairman



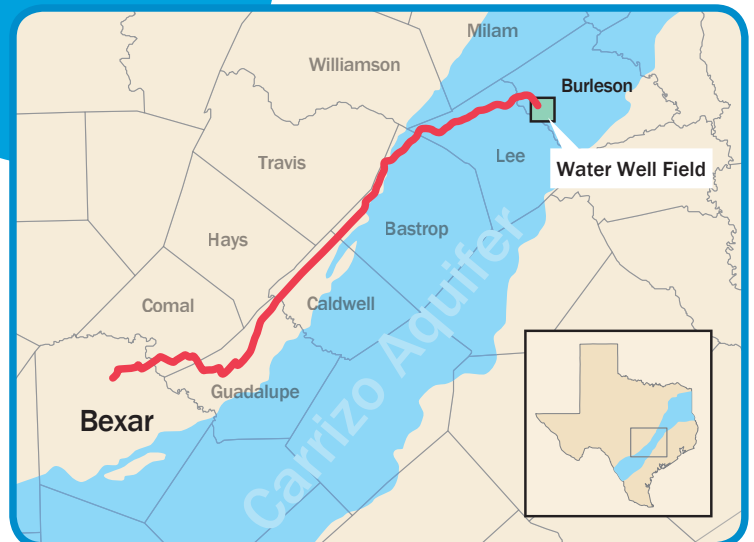
*Enough water
for 162,000
new families.*

*20 percent more water
for San Antonio.*

*Delivered to
San Antonio
by 2020.*

**142 miles of pipeline
will transport water
from Burleson County
to San Antonio.**

*Protection for the
Edwards Aquifer
during drought.*





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Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Does San Antonio need this water?

A: Yes. This new non-Edwards Aquifer supply is needed for three important reasons:

1. **To protect the Edwards Aquifer.** In the 1990s the Sierra Club won a lawsuit to protect Edwards Aquifer spring flow habitat for endangered species. During Stage 5 of drought, San Antonio's access to the Edwards is cut by 44 percent. The Vista Ridge Pipeline project will provide water that we don't have to pump from the Edwards, helping us protect endangered species during drought.
2. **To prepare for drought.** Experts predict hotter and drier summers in the years to come, so water from this project is what is needed for San Antonio. It is a drought-proof supply that will be delivered even in the deepest drought.
3. **To support future prosperity.** A recent economic impact study reports that if we fail to increase our water supply in San Antonio, we will lose billions in economic impact and thousands of jobs due to running out of water. New non-Edwards supplies are needed to support the growing demand of 20,000 new people every year, to secure our quality of life and to help ensure future economic prosperity for our children and grandchildren.

Q: How much will the Vista Ridge Pipeline project cost?

A: San Antonio boasts the lowest water bill of any major city in Texas. It is currently estimated that the average residential bill will be approximately \$88 in 2020, of which no more than \$12 will be needed to pay for the water provided through this project.

Most importantly, however, is that San Antonio will only pay for water that is delivered. That means any risk to the delivery of water falls on the private developer, not on the SAWS ratepayer.

Q: What will SAWS do to keep water affordable?

A: A "lifeline" rate for water service is being studied by the Rates Advisory Committee, or RAC, a citizens' panel appointed by City Council to recommend rate structure changes. The RAC will finalize its recommendations in time for our next rate proposal next fall. This is also when we anticipate City Council will be asked to approve rates needed for Vista Ridge.

The lifeline rate will be based on volume, not income. Residents who conserve water and use less than 300 cubic feet (3 ccf) during their monthly billing cycle will be billed at a lower rate. Three ccf equals 2,244 gallons per month, or about 75 gallons per day. Residents can qualify for this every month of the year, and those who exceed 3 ccf per month would be billed at normal rates.

In addition to the lifeline rate, SAWS will enhance and boost its affordability programs for low-income customers.

Q: Why do we need to buy this water now?

A: This water will cost much more if we do not act now. With the recent ongoing drought, cities across Texas are competing for scarce water resources. That means the cost of water supplies will continue to climb in the future.

As an example, San Antonio rejected an opportunity in 1976 to purchase Canyon Lake water for \$33 per acre-foot. Today, Canyon Lake water costs over \$1,000 per acre-foot.

The Vista Ridge Pipeline project is tomorrow's needed water at today's prices. This water will supply San Antonio for decades without significant cost escalation over the next 30 years.

Q: Is this project environmentally friendly?

A: Yes. One of the reasons this project is needed is to help protect the Edwards Aquifer and its spring flow habitat for endangered species (see above).

SAWS does not view this project as a green light for development over the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone. A review of Bexar Appraisal District and San Antonio Planning Department records indicates that 90 percent of the recharge zone in Bexar County is already developed, master-planned or protected. So this new supply will also be available for every part of our city, distributed from Stone Oak in the north to our Mission Pump Station in the south.

Q: Is the source of this water reliable?

A: Yes. The Carrizo and Simsboro aquifers in Burleson County are not, and have never been, under drought restrictions. The aquifers are full and are considered drought resistant, containing over 12 times the amount of water in all Texas lakes combined. The source of water is protected by a local water district and permitted for 30 years through more than 3,400 leases with local landowners in Burleson County.

Q: Will San Antonio abandon water conservation?

A: No. SAWS commits that it will not abandon its water conservation ethic. By 2020 and every year thereafter, we will save additional water equal to one-and-a-half times the annual demand of New Braunfels. When times are wet we can utilize this new supply while also storing Edwards Aquifer water in preparation for the next drought.

Q: Will we still have water restrictions?

A: When on line, the Vista Ridge Pipeline project will help ensure San Antonio can avoid the need for extreme (Stages 3 and 4) watering restrictions for the foreseeable future.

Q: Who is selling us this water?

A: Local individual landowners in Burleson County have signed over 3,400 leases to provide their water from the Carrizo and Simsboro Aquifers in that county. This project is a true example of Texan helping Texan through a win-win deal that benefits San Antonio and the local landowners who are leasing their private water rights.

The project was proposed by the two partners of the Vista Ridge Consortium. Abengoa Water USA will build the 142-mile pipeline from Burleson County, using its experience building a wide range of water treatment and infrastructure projects around the world. Blue Water Systems, L.P., has leased the Burleson County water supply from the local landowners, utilizing its years of experience identifying and developing demonstrably secure long-term water supply solutions.

For more information: saws.org/VistaRidge