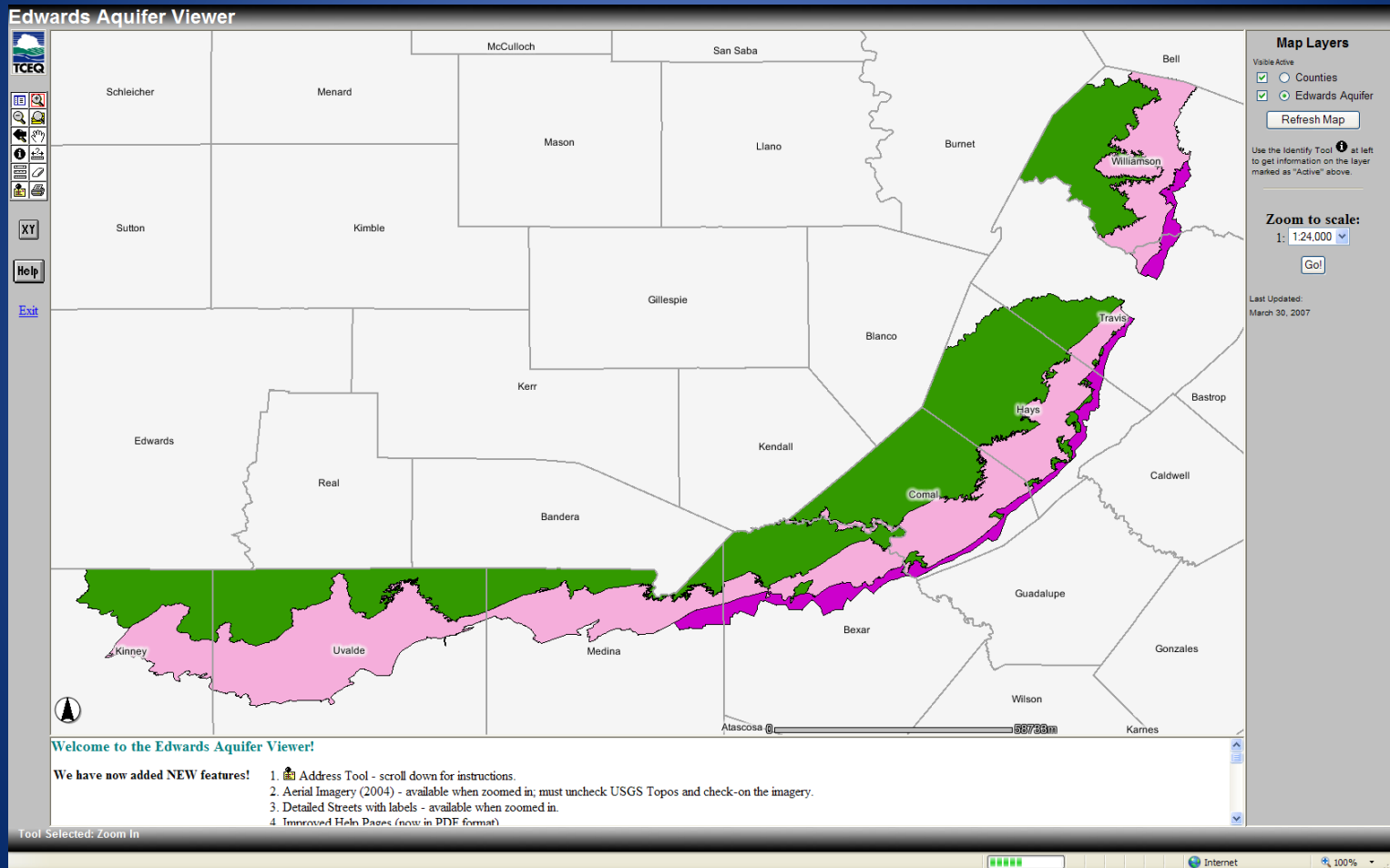


EDWARDS AQUIFER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

The Edwards Aquifer



Comal Springs



San Marcos Springs



Fountain Darter



Thomas, Bonner, and Whiteside 2007



Thomas, Bonner, and Whiteside 2007

San Marcos Salamander





Texas Blind Salamander



Peck's Cave Amphipod



Dryopid Beetle



Comal Springs Riffle Beetle





Texas Wild Rice



San Marcos Gambusia





San Marcos Gambusia





THE LAWSUIT:

- In 1991, the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club filed a lawsuit against the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service claiming the Service was not adequately protecting endangered species that depend on the aquifer.



The Edwards Aquifer Authority

S.B. No. 1477

AN ACT

relating to the creation, administration, powers, duties, operation, and financing of the Edwards Aquifer Authority and the management of the Edwards Aquifer; granting the power of eminent domain; authorizing the issuance of bonds; providing civil and administrative penalties; and validating the creation of the Uvalde County Underground Water Conservation District.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Texas:

“EARIP”

- In late 2006, FWS brought together stakeholders from throughout the region to participate in a unique collaborative process to develop a plan to contribute to the recovery of federally-listed species dependent on the Edwards Aquifer. This process is referred to as the Edwards Aquifer Recovery Implementation Program ("EARIP").



Senate Bill 3

S.B. No. 3

AN ACT

relating to the development, management, and preservation of the water resources of the state; providing penalties.

Be it enacted by The Legislature of the State of Texas:



Time Passes . . .

- The 26 member “Steering Committee” meets officially from September 2007 through December 2011.
- A Program Manager is hired.
- Several subcommittees are formed to address specific portions of the process
 - The Science Subcommittee issues their report, and supporting modeling runs indicate an 86% pumping reduction is necessary to meet minimum flow requirements during Stage I.



Time Passes . . .

- Facilitators are hired.
- Contractors are hired.
- Additional studies are commissioned and completed.
- Many ideas are explored and evaluated.
- Many aquifer simulations are run.

Time Passes . . .

- A “bottom up” approach is determined to be the most satisfactory approach.
- A draft HCP is prepared, and adopted after much discussion by the participants.
- Program documents are submitted to USFWS for the approval process in early January 2012.



The Habitat Conservation Plan

- The HCP will be implemented in two phases.
 - Phase I - Habitat minimization and mitigation measures, and measures to maintain continuous minimum springflow during a repeat of the drought of record, will be put into place.
 - Phase II - An Adaptive Management Program will provide modifications to both components of Phase I as necessary.



The Habitat Conservation Plan

- Flow Protection Measures:
 - Emergency Stage V Critical Period Management Reductions
 - SAWS ASR Trade Off
 - Regional Water Conservation Program
 - Voluntary Irrigation Suspension Program Option (VISPO)



The Habitat Conservation Plan

- Habitat Protection Measures:
 - Measures to Reduce the Impacts of Drought and Enhance the Viability of the Listed Species at San Marcos Springs
 - Measures to Reduce the Impacts of Drought and Enhance the Viability of the Listed Species at Comal Springs



The Habitat Conservation Plan

- Habitat Protection Measures:
 - Environmental Restoration and Protection Area at Comal Springs
 - Gill Parasite Control
 - Wild Rice Restoration and Maintenance at San Marcos Springs



The Habitat Conservation Plan

- Other Measures:
 - Riparian Habitat Restoration
 - Household Hazardous Waste Programs
 - Water Quality Protection and Monitoring
 - NFHTC Refugia



What's Next?

- Processing the application
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- Issuing the Incidental Take Permit
- Adaptive Management

For More Information:

<http://earip.org/>