



SAN ANTONIO
RIVER AUTHORITY

Water Brings Us Together

May 11, 2004

Col. John R. Minahan
District Engineer, Ft. Worth District
United States Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-0300

Dear Col. Minahan:

On behalf of the San Antonio River Authority (SARA) Board of Directors, I wish to express our support for the environmental restoration of the San Antonio River as detailed in the Ft. Worth District's National Environmental Restoration Plan (NER). As local sponsor for the project, SARA endorses Design Condition 3b as the locally preferred plan for the purposes of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) General Reevaluation Report on the San Antonio Channel Improvement Project. The recommended plan supports the local vision for the restoration of the San Antonio River while also improving flood protection for the area.

The NER recommendation proposes a project that is within the project budget and achieves the goals the local community has established for the restoration of the river. The project as proposed can be implemented and maintained for the mutual benefit of the USACE and the local funding partners. Additionally, the project will add much needed vegetation along the banks of the river and introduce pools and riffle structures within the river that will restore sustainable environmental habitat for many plant and fish species native to the area.

Your staff has performed exemplary work in the production of the NER and we are very appreciative of the amount of time the team has dedicated to complete this work within the defined schedule. We know that without your leadership and personal commitment to this project we would not have achieved the success we are enjoying today. We recognize that the district's commitment to this project goes beyond producing this report—you and your staff are truly invested in the project and want to see it implemented.

We have enjoyed a long and successful partnership with the USACE that has resulted in mutually beneficial projects for our agencies. This environmental restoration project moves us into the next generation of our partnership. Working

EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE

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H.B. Ruckman, III

VICE CHAIRMAN

Louis E. Rowe

SECRETARY

JC Turner

TREASURER

Adair R. Sutherland

MEMBER-AT-LARGE

Thomas G. Weaver

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GENERAL
MANAGER

Gregory E. Rothe

Col. Minahan
Page 2

together, I know we will enjoy continued success. The project still has many steps ahead. We ask that you continue to keep our staff engaged and informed as the process moves forward. Thank you again for your leadership on this very important project for our community. We look forward to continued success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H.B. Ruckman, III", with a stylized flourish at the end.

H.B. Ruckman, III
Chairman
San Antonio River Authority
Board of Directors

cc: Mike Mocek, P.E. USACE, Ft. Worth District, Chief, Programs and Project Mgmt. Div.
Eli Kangas, USACE, Ft. Worth District, Chief, Plan Formation



San Antonio River Oversight Committee

421 Sixth St., #1
San Antonio, Texas 78215

210/354-2925 Office

210/354-2964 Fax

April 26, 2004

Col. John R. Minahan
District Engineer, Ft. Worth District
United States Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-0300

Dear Col. Minahan:

We are pleased to inform you that the San Antonio River Oversight committee unanimously supports the initial recommendations of the district's National Environmental Restoration Plan (NER). The River Oversight Committee reviewed Design Condition 3b and believes that it is consistent with the local vision for the restoration of the San Antonio River as detailed in the San Antonio River Improvements Project Design Guidelines. Based upon the plans we have been presented, the committee supports Design Condition 3b as the locally preferred plan for the purposes of the General Reevaluation Report.

We also express our appreciation for the thorough technical analyses performed by your project staff. Your staff has shown diligence in their understanding of the unique characteristics of the San Antonio River and the specifics of the habitat and vegetation indigenous to the area in order to recreate a sustainable aquatic and riparian ecosystem. Although we understand the NER is the district's recommendation, we are confident that the technical work of your staff will be supported throughout the review process.

Although we are encouraged by the NER recommendations, we also recognize that the local partners have a significant role in supporting the implementation and maintenance of the restoration project. Specifically, the local sponsor must secure all required right-of-way to implement the ecosystem restoration as part of the local funding match to the project. We will continue to work with the City of San Antonio, Bexar County, the San Antonio River Foundation and the San Antonio River Authority to ensure that the local and federal components of the project proceed concurrently to support the project's successful implementation. The committee also recognizes that annual federal appropriations must continue to sustain the USACE's involvement in the project and we pledge to work with our Congressional delegation to promote the benefit of this project to our community.

Again, we support the NER recommendation of the district and will continue to serve as an advocate at the local and federal level to move this much anticipated river restoration project to completion. The River Oversight Committee looks forward to continuing our work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to achieve mutually beneficial results on the San Antonio River.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Lila Cockrell in cursive.

Lila Cockrell
Co-Chair
San Antonio River Oversight Committee

Handwritten signature of Irby Hightower in cursive.

Irby Hightower
Co-Chair
San Antonio River Oversight Committee

Cc: Eli A. Kangas, Chief Plan Formation



BEXAR COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT

BEXAR COUNTY COURTHOUSE

100 DOLOROSA

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78205

(210) 335-2555

(210) 335-2926 FAX

www.co.bexar.tx.us

NELSON W. WOLFF
COUNTY JUDGE

ROBERT TEJEDA
COMMISSIONER, PCT. 1

PAUL ELIZONDO
COMMISSIONER, PCT. 2

LYLE LARSON
COMMISSIONER, PCT. 3

TOMMY ADKISSON
COMMISSIONER, PCT. 4

May 11, 2004

Col. John R. Minahan
District Engineer, Ft. Worth District
United States Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, TX 76102-0300

Dear Col. Minahan:

The Bexar County Commissioners Court supports the recommendation of the Ft. Worth District's National Environmental Restoration Plan (NER) and endorses Design Condition 3b as the locally preferred plan for the purposes of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) General Reevaluation Report on the San Antonio River. The recommended plan supports the local vision for the restoration of the San Antonio River while also improving flood protection for the area.

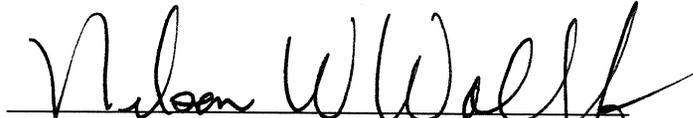
The NER plan estimates a total environmental restoration project costing \$84.9 million, without inflation. The 65% federal share is estimated at \$55.2 million with the 35% local share estimated at \$29.7 million. In addition, the USACE could invest up to \$5.5 million in recreation elements of the project. As a local funding partner, Bexar County along with the City of San Antonio is responsible for contributing the local match for the project and has joined with the San Antonio River Authority as local sponsor with the COE to implement this project. Based upon the current cost estimates to implement the recommended NER plan as presented by the San Antonio River Authority, Bexar County's proportional share of the local match requirement is within the county's capability to fund the project.

Bexar County has enjoyed a 50-year partnership with the USACE. Our partnership has resulted in significant flood control improvements within our community. We also wish to express our appreciation for the diligence exhibited by your staff in the performance of the technical analysis for the NER. We are pleased that the USACE recognizes the environmental restoration of the San Antonio River from Lone Star Boulevard to Mission

Espada is an important next step to maintain flood protection, while enhancing a valued natural community resource – our river.

The Bexar County Commissioners Court looks forward to completion of the General Reevaluation Report and is eager to proceed with the implementation of this project for the mutual benefit of both the local and federal funding partners.

Sincerely,


NELSON W. WOLFF
County Judge


ROBERT TEJEDA
Commissioner Precinct No. 1


LYLE LARSON
Commissioner Precinct No. 3


PAUL ELIZONDO
Commissioner Precinct No. 2


TOMMY ADKISSON
Commissioner Precinct No. 4



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO

ROGER O. FLORES
CITY COUNCILMAN
DISTRICT 1

May 13, 2004

Col. John R. Minahan
District Engineer, Ft. Worth District
United States Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-0300

Dear Col. Minahan:

As a member of the San Antonio City Council, I was recently briefed on the recommendation of the Ft. Worth District's National Environmental Restoration Plan (NER) and endorse Design Condition 3b as the locally preferred plan for the purposes of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) General Reevaluation Report on the San Antonio River. The project is a priority of the City of San Antonio and the USACE recommended plan supports the local vision for the restoration of the San Antonio River while also improving flood protection for the area.

The NER plan estimates a total environmental restoration project costing \$84.9 million, without inflation. The 65% federal share is estimated at \$55.2 million with the 35% local share estimated at \$29.7 million. In addition, the USACE could invest up to \$5.5 million in recreation elements of the project. As a local funding partner, the City of San Antonio, along with Bexar County, is responsible for contributing the local match for the project and has joined with the San Antonio River Authority as local sponsor with the COE to implement this project. The City of San Antonio supports this effort within the City's commitment to fund the project through budgeted funds.

The City of San Antonio is encouraged by the NER and looks forward to moving the project into implementation. Our staff indicates that the USACE project team has committed a significant amount of time and attention to the San Antonio River project and for that we are very appreciative. The San Antonio River is a vital natural resource to our community and this environmental restoration project enjoys significant public support.

The City of San Antonio looks forward to completion of the General Reevaluation Report and is eager to proceed with the implementation of this project for the mutual benefit of both the local and federal funding partners.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ROF', written over the printed name.

ROGER O. FLORES
City Councilman, District 1

Cc: Eli Kangas, Chief Plan Formation
MAILING:
P.O. BOX 839966
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78283-3966

CITY OF SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS
CITY HALL (210) 207-7279
FAX (210) 207-7027



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO

RON H. SEGOVIA
CITY COUNCILMAN
DISTRICT 3

May 13, 2004

Col. John R. Minahan
District Engineer, Ft. Worth District
United States Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-0300

Dear Col. Minahan:

As a member of the San Antonio City Council, I was recently briefed on the recommendation of the Ft. Worth District's National Environmental Restoration Plan (NER) and endorse Design Condition 3b as the locally preferred plan for the purposes of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) General Reevaluation Report on the San Antonio River. The project is a priority of the City of San Antonio and the USACE recommended plan supports the local vision for the restoration of the San Antonio River while also improving flood protection for the area.

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The City of San Antonio is encouraged by the NER and looks forward to moving the project into implementation. Our staff indicates that the USACE project team has committed a significant amount of time and attention to the San Antonio River project and for that we are very appreciative. The San Antonio River is a vital natural resource to our community and this environmental restoration project enjoys significant public support.

The City of San Antonio looks forward to completion of the General Reevaluation Report and is eager to proceed with the implementation of this project for the mutual benefit of both the local and federal funding partners.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Ron H. Segovia'.

Ron H. Segovia
Councilman, District 3

cc: Eli Kangas, Chief Plan Formation

CITY OF SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS
CITY HALL (210) 207-7064 TTY: (210) 207-4889
FAX (210) 207-7027
E-mail: rsegovia@sanantonio.gov

MAILING:
P.O. BOX 839966
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78283-3966



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO

ENRIQUE M. BARRERA

CITY COUNCILMAN

DISTRICT 6

P.O. Box 839966

San Antonio, Texas 78283-3966

(210) 207-7065

FAX: (210) 207-7027

May 13, 2004

Col. John R. Minahan
District Engineer, Ft. Worth District
United States Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-0300

Dear Col. Minahan:

As a member of the San Antonio City Council, I was recently briefed on the recommendation of the Ft. Worth District's National Environmental Restoration Plan (NER) and endorse Design Condition 3b as the locally preferred plan for the purposes of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) General Reevaluation Report on the San Antonio River. The project is a priority of the City of San Antonio and the USACE recommended plan supports the local vision for the restoration of the San Antonio River while also improving flood protection for the area.

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The City of San Antonio looks forward to completion of the General Reevaluation Report and is eager to proceed with the implementation of this project for the mutual benefit of both the local and federal funding partners.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Enrique M. Barrera', written over a horizontal line.

Enrique M. Barrera
Councilman
District 6

cc: Eli Kangas, Chief Plan Formation



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO

CARROLL W. SCHUBERT
CITY COUNCILMAN
DISTRICT 9

May 12, 2004

Col. John R. Minahan
District Engineer, Ft. Worth District
United States Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-0300

Dear Col. Minahan:

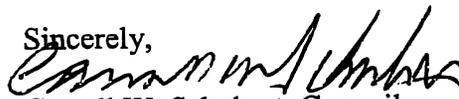
As a member of the San Antonio City Council, I was recently briefed on the recommendation of the Ft. Worth District's National Environmental Restoration Plan (NER) and endorse Design Condition 3b as the locally preferred plan for the purposes of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) General Reevaluation Report on the San Antonio River. The project is a priority of the City of San Antonio and the USACE recommended plan supports the local vision for the restoration of the San Antonio River while also improving flood protection for the area.

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The City of San Antonio is encouraged by the NER and looks forward to moving the project into implementation. Our staff indicates that the USACE project team has committed a significant amount of time and attention to the San Antonio River project and for that we are very appreciative. The San Antonio River is a vital natural resource to our community and this environmental restoration project enjoys significant public support.

The City of San Antonio looks forward to completion of the General Reevaluation Report and is eager to proceed with the implementation of this project for the mutual benefit of both the local and federal funding partners.

Sincerely,


Carroll W. Schubert, Councilman
District 9

cc: Eli Kangas, Chief Plan Formation

CITY HALL OFFICE
P.O. BOX 839966
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78283-3966
TELEPHONE (210) 207-7325
FAX (210) 207-2507

E-mail: cschubert@sanantonio.gov

DISTRICT 9 FIELD OFFICE
900 ISOM RD., SUITE 102
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78216
TELEPHONE (210) 341-2267
FAX (210) 341-2092



**San Antonio River Foundation
P.O. Box 830045
San Antonio, Texas 78283**

May 11, 2004

Col. John R. Minihan
District Engineer, Ft. Worth District
United States Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-0300

Dear Col. Minihan:

We are pleased to inform you that the San Antonio River Foundation unanimously supports the initial recommendations of the district's National Environmental Restoration Plan (NER). The SARF Board reviewed Design Condition 3b and believes that it is consistent with the local vision for the restoration of the San Antonio River as detailed in the San Antonio River Improvements Project Design Guidelines. Based upon the plans we have been presented, the SARF Board supports Design 3b as the locally preferred plan for the purposes of the General Reevaluation Report.

We also express our appreciation for the thorough technical analyses performed by your project staff. Your staff has shown diligence in their understanding of the unique characteristics of the San Antonio River and the specifics of the habitat and vegetation indigenous to the area in order to recreate a sustainable aquatic and riparian ecosystem. Although we understand the NER is the district's recommendation, we are confident that the technical work of your staff will be supported throughout the review process.

Although we are encouraged by the NER recommendation, we also recognize that the local partners have significant role in supporting the implementation and maintenance of the restoration project. Specifically, the local sponsor must secure all required right-of-way to implement the ecosystem restoration as part of the local funding match to the project. We will continue to work with the City of San Antonio, Bexar County the San Antonio River Oversight Committee and the San Antonio River Authority to ensure that the local and federal components of the project proceed concurrently to support the project's successful implementation. The SARF Board also recognizes that annual federal appropriations must continue to sustain the USACE's involvement in the project and we pledge to work with our Congressional delegation to promote the benefit of this project to our community.

Again, we support the NER recommendation of the district and will continue to serve as an advocate at the local and federal level to move this much anticipated river restoration project to completion. The SARF Board looks forward to continuing to work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to achieve mutually beneficial results on the San Antonio River.

Sincerely,



Sally Buchanan
Chair, San Antonio River Foundation

cc: Eli A. Kangas, Chief Plan Formation



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

10711 Burnet Road, Suite 200
Austin, Texas 78758
512 490-0057
FAX 490-0974

MAY 13 2004

Mr. Eli Kangas
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Fort Worth District
819 Taylor Street
Fort Worth, Texas 76102

Dear Mr. Kangas:

This letter is to provide support for the National Ecosystem Plan for the Mission Reach of the San Antonio River as described in your General Reevaluation Report (February 2004) and Alternative Formulation Briefing (AFB - April 2004). This project was developed using a broad team approach that used expertise from regional, State of Texas, and Federal entities.

Our analyses of the San Antonio River indicate that significant habitat enhancement can be realized by using a combination of waterway and edge for that habitat. Our riparian habitat assessment was made possible by the extensive involvement of Charissa Kelly of the Corps of Engineers and Kathy Boydston and Tom Heger of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. The aquatic habitat assessment developed by Jan Hoover and Jack Kilgore of the Waterways Experiment Station was a major undertaking in terms of field data acquisition and modeling.

The establishment of woody vegetation in the San Antonio River floodplain will provide benefits to both the aquatic and riparian communities. A riparian corridor with tree plantings as proposed will provide the particulate organic matter (in the form of leaves) and will greatly improve the San Antonio River habitats for invertebrates and fishes. In turn, greater riverine productivity and species diversity will benefit a variety of birds and small mammals.

In summary, we support your National Ecosystem Restoration Plan for the Mission Reach of the San Antonio River. If you have any questions, please contact Patrick Connor at (512) 490-0057 extension 227,

Sincerely,

Robert T. Pine
Supervisor

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IN AMERICA 



SIERRA
CLUB
FOUNDED 1892

Alamo Group

P.O. Box 6443

San Antonio, Texas 78209

TEL: 210 222-8195

www.texas.sierraclub.org/alamo

March 20, 2004

Colonel John R. Minahan
District Engineer, Fort Worth District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, TX 76102-0300

Dear Colonel Minahan:

I am writing to strongly support the environmental restoration projects for the San Antonio River sections: Hildebrand south to Josephine Avenue and Lone Star Blvd to Mission Espada. The destruction of natural habitat that has occurred with channelization in the past needs to be remediated.

The Alamo Group of the Sierra Club has often participated in the Basura Bash river cleanup in the southern section and has had occasional bicycle trips along the river. These events have given Club members the opportunity to observe what is present along the river. The experiences have been disappointing with regard to biological diversity for the Alamo Sierrans who have knowledge of the flora and fauna of the region.

The landscape along the river sections under consideration is rather sterile compared to the one small section of the native streambed found in the southern stretch. Native trees, grasses and perennials need to be restored to the landscape and exotics removed. It would be a pleasure to see wildflowers in bloom along the river. The stream itself should have a more meandering course with drop-offs and pools, as well as a healthier environment for the benthic communities in the stream. With restored natural habitats, there will be improved water quality resulting in healthier populations of fish, invertebrates and amphibians as well as more abundant bird life along the river. Restoring the natural habitats will provide an opportunity for visitors to interact with a stream more like the San Antonio River which historically existed.

I urge you to support the funding of the restoration study and its implementation. Thank you for your consideration and for your efforts to establish a successful restoration of native habitat.

Sincerely,

Michele Petty

Chair

Alamo Group of the Sierra Club



5.26-2

March 16, 2004

Colonel John R. Minahan
District Engineer, Fort Worth District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, TX 76102-0300

Dear Colonel Minahan:

I am writing on behalf of the Edwards Aquifer Authority (the Authority) to offer support for the proposal by the San Antonio River Authority (SARA). The proposal by SARA to restore important portions of the San Antonio River to a more natural setting, including adding vegetation and aquatic features to support habitat for fish and wildlife. In my opinion, this project would produce very positive results along this critical and historic urban ecosystem.

Healthy riparian areas along river corridors provide productive ecosystems; therefore, adding natural meanders to the river will enhance the riparian areas along the San Antonio River. Restoring the habitat to a more natural state will improve overall water quality as sediments and other contaminants are removed and filtered, enhance and sustain the biodiversity of the more extensive adjoining uplands, increase water quantity and stream flow duration by retaining water, and improve and enhance habitat for a broad range of plant and wildlife species.

In addition, to the numerous and obvious environmental benefits, there are two other benefits from the proposed riparian restoration activity. First, the restoration will compliment an open space initiative currently underway by the City of San Antonio that has received overwhelming community support. Second, the improved natural habitat on the south side of the downtown area will be the building block of economic development activities that will reinvigorate investments in a financially disadvantaged area of San Antonio.

Finally, the proposed restoration by SARA will be a parallel support mechanism to those conducted by the Authority. The Authority has long been an advocate of conscientious development on the recharge zone of the Edwards Aquifer (the Aquifer) as a means to protect the quality of the water in the Aquifer. Discharge from the Aquifer creates the



Colonel John R. Minahan

March 16, 2004

Page No. 2

San Antonio River; therefore, the restoration activity proposed by SARA will serve as a continuum of that effort. Secondly, the proposed restoration activity is quite similar to the development of a Habitat Conservation Plan that is currently underway in the Comal and San Marcos ecosystems north of San Antonio.

Again, I strongly support and encourage approval of the SARA San Antonio River restoration initiative.

Sincerely,



Gregory M. Ellis
General Manager

GME:VRD/ssh

cc: Mr. Greg Rothe, San Antonio River Authority



BEXAR AUDUBON SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 6084 • SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78209

March 12, 2004

Colonel John R. Minahan, District Engineer
Fort Worth District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 17300
Forth Worth, TX 76102-0300

Dear Colonel Minahan:

On behalf of the Bexar Audubon Society and its 1450 members in the San Antonio region, I am writing to commend the Corps on its plans for environmental restoration of the San Antonio River, specifically the "Eagleland" project, and to encourage its timely implementation.

An historical look at the San Antonio River, such a central element of the ecological integrity of central Texas, discloses by contrast the enormous loss of biological diversity and natural beauty that resulted from earlier flood control work. With full recognition of the responsibility to protect the populace from the devastation of flooding, we now know that we needn't forsake ecological health for the cause of moving water downstream and that, in fact, the two objectives are eminently compatible and interdependent.

Despite the often inhospitable environs of the San Antonio River in its current condition, there remains a significant variety of avian wildlife along this corridor. The planned channel changes will provide additional habitat for a wider variety of waterfowl and other birds and will surely diversify the number of species of wildlife that can and will inhabit this area. The benefits to microfauna, insects, and small invertebrates will have impacts far up the food chain. The River will truly get a new lease on life.

One of the greatest challenges and most important components of the plan will be the diversification of the botanical species. Today, despite the unceasing efforts of a few riparian plant species to recover, the domination of Johnson grass, nightshade, and bloodweed results in very poor to non-existent wildlife habitat. Plans for reintroduction of native trees and shrubs and a mix of wildflowers and Central Texas grasses bode very well for both small vertebrates and the invertebrate fauna that are reliable barometers of biological health from the soil up.

Changes to the patterns of water flow to restore banks and shoals, eddies and pools, will improve water quality that will benefit the entire watershed.

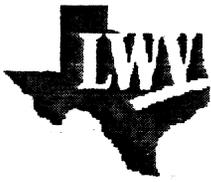
An enormous amount of local interest and effort has gone into the development of the plans for this project and many hopes for a future of improved ecosystem health and aesthetics are pinned upon its completion and long-term maintenance and establishment.

We heartily support this effort.

Sincerely,

Susan K. Hughes, President

✓ cc: Eli A. Kangas, Chief, Plan Formation



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS of the San Antonio Area

2515 Austin Highway

San Antonio, Texas 78218

Telephone: 210-657-2206

Web Site: www.lwvsa.org

March 2, 2004

Colonel John R. Minahan
District Engineer
Fort Worth District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, TX 76102-0300

Dear Colonel Minahan:

The League of Women Voters has long supported projects that will reintroduce natural habitat along rivers. The San Antonio River Project will do this. Among other things, this project will add native trees and grasses to help support a sustainable ecosystem. The river system has been in need of these improvements for a long time.

Lineal park areas are very necessary to enhance the migration of birds. Placing environmental features and plantings in these parks will also enhance water quality and aquatic habitat.

When this project is finished, the whole area will benefit.

The League of Women Voters organization strongly supports this project!

Sincerely,

Deanna M. Frisk, President

cc: Eli A. Kangas, Chief
Plan Formation

East Pyron/ Symphony Lane Neighborhood Association
" Las Islas en la Sombra de San Jose "

February 20, 2004

Eli A. Kangas
Chief, Plan Formation
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Dear Sir:

Our neighborhood has become aware of the Corps of Engineers comprehensive environmental restoration study along the San Antonio River. We welcome the Corps of Engineers as they explore options to reintroduce a natural habitat along the San Antonio River.

The East Pyron / Symphony Lane Neighborhood Association represents over 30 homesteads all within 1000 feet of the San Antonio River including a rare relatively well preserved segment of original historic river channel near San Jose Mission. One of the primary goals of our organization is to promote and encourage beatification and preservation of the San Antonio River.

Sincerely yours,



Gerrit Dinkla,
Vice President
East Pyron / Symphony Lane Neighborhood Association

cc: Suzanne Scott, Director
Community and Intergovernmental Relations
San Antonio River Authority
P.O. Box 839980
San Antonio, Texas 78283-9980



LOS COMPADRES
de San Antonio Missions
National Historical Park

February 18, 2004

Colonel John R. Minahan
District Engineer
Fort Worth District
P.O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-0300

Dear Colonel Minahan:

San Antonio contains the largest concentration of Spanish colonial structures in the United States – five missions, a governor's palace and two 1730s acequias (irrigation systems) and an aqueduct. We would not have these historic touchstones or a city, for that matter, without the San Antonio River. In 1716, Captain Domingo Ramon noted in his diary that fish were caught in abundance and nets were used with great facility. Other accounts talk of eel, catfish, numerous varieties of fish in the river along with alligators, rabbits, squirrels, wildcats and javelinas enjoying its cooling waters. And, the banks were teeming with wild garlic and onions!

Los Compadres is the official Friends' group to the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park. We have supported the San Antonio River Improvements Project since its inception and we strongly support the restoration of the river to add vegetation and aquatic features to support a safe habitat for fish and wildlife. We would like to see it returned as much as possible to a more natural state as it was so eloquently described in the 18th century.

Los Compadres and the National Park Service have worked diligently over the past five years to remove exotic species from the Park and re-vegetate with native species, such as oak and bald cypress. This has been accomplished along the historic river channel behind Mission San Juan and is currently an ongoing project. River restoration will greatly expand the amount of wild habitat as it connects the river to adjacent Park land which includes about 600 acres.

Fish, wildlife and vegetation along the river were the reason the city was established. We wholeheartedly support the environmental restoration of the San Antonio River and encourage you strongly to qualify the significance of the river for this very critical project.

Sincerely,

Ethel T. Runion
Chairman of the Board

cc Elia A. Kangas, Chief, Plan Formation

6701 San José Drive
San Antonio, Texas 78214

Office (210) 922-3218
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loscompadres@sbcglobal.net

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February 16, 2004

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Colonel John R. Minahan, District Engineer
Fort Worth District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P. O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-0300

Dear Colonel Minahan:

We understand the Corps of Engineers will be conducting a comprehensive environmental restoration study along two segments of the San Antonio River in San Antonio, Texas.

The Bexar Land Trust is a local land trust that works with both the public and private sectors to protect the natural values of the land in Bexar and contiguous counties. We are supportive of your efforts to restore the San Antonio River by adding vegetation and aquatic features that will be a better habitat for fish and wildlife including:

- Wading birds, such as great blue heron and egrets
- Water fowl, such as red necked ducks and teals
- Smaller raptors, such as red tailed hawks and sparrow hawks
- Songbirds, such as painted buntings, the common bluebirds, and red-winged blackbirds
- Reptiles, such as the diamond back water snakes

Water quality could be improved if the plans call for spreading out the river channel, so that there would be greater aeration and more time for microbes to break down the pollutants in the water. Finally, just having the river appear more natural will encourage local residents and visitors to take better care of this precious resource.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment and would like to be informed if there are other opportunities to do so.

Sincerely,

Bill Barker, Board President

CC: Eli A. Kangas, Chief, Plan Formation

THE KING WILLIAM ASSOCIATION

THE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION FOR THE KING WILLIAM HISTORIC DISTRICT

February 13, 2004

Colonel John R. Minahan
District Engineer
Fort Worth District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, TX 76102-0300

RE: Environmental Restoration of the San Antonio River

Dear Colonel Minahan:

The King William Association has always been supportive of the environmental restoration of the San Antonio River. KWA has had a representative participating in all river related committees since 1990. Several residents in the area have been active participants on river projects including the cleanup, habitat protection, and other issues. As a result, we are deeply encouraged by the Eagleland project and look forward to working with the Corps of Engineers to make this project the prototype for future restoration of the San Antonio River Channel.

We encourage the Corps of Engineers to evaluate the SWA Concept Plan as modified by Carter-Burgess preliminary design work with input from the Mission Reach Subcommittee as the best plan for the restoration of the channel. A tremendous amount of analysis and community support has been invested into the local plan. Environmental restoration in an urban area is a complex issue involving not only the flora but also the fauna including the human species. There has to be a comprehensive approach so that the restoration work is in balance with all of the pressures placed upon that environment. Long term results that are sustainable must be the objective. The King William Association, its representatives, and the residents look forward to working with the Corps of Engineers, the San Antonio River Authority, Bexar County Commissioners Court, and the City of San Antonio to achieve a sustainable environmentally balanced river system.

Yours truly,



Stephen Yndo
President

Cc:
Eli A. Kangas
Chief, Plan Formation
Fort Worth District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, TX 76102-0300



SUSAN COMBS, COMMISSIONER

TEXAS DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

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www.agr.state.tx.us

February 13, 2004

Colonel John R. Minahan
District Engineer
United States Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-0300

Dear Col. Minahan:

I am excited about the joint effort between the San Antonio River Authority, the City of San Antonio, Bexar County and other stakeholders to improve and restore sections of the San Antonio River. The San Antonio River Improvement Project is an excellent example of the type of local, state and federal cooperation that is needed to protect our natural resources. As a member of the Texas Water Advisory Council, created by the Texas Legislature to provide recommendations on Texas water policy, I have a vested interest in the protection and improvement of one of our most precious natural resources, our rivers.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend the Corps' San Antonio River environmental restoration efforts. A healthy San Antonio River means a healthy environment for all of us. By providing additional open spaces for recreation, the River Improvement Project will return a natural asset to the San Antonio community that has been missing for far too long. I also commend the Project because it will improve conservation and habitat restoration in this region of the state.

Keep up the good work!

Sincerely,



Susan Combs
Commissioner

SC/tgp

*Making Texas the nation's
leader in agriculture while
providing efficient and
extraordinary service.*

PM
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MITCHELL LAKE WETLANDS SOCIETY, INC.

434 West Hermine Blvd. San Antonio, Texas 78212

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February 12, 2004

Colonel John R. Minahan
District Engineer, Fort Worth District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P O Box 17300
Forth Worth, TX 76102-0300

Dear Colonel Minahan:

The Mitchell Lake Wetlands Society supports the San Antonio River Improvement Plan as developed by our local participants. The San Antonio environmental community has worked hard to develop the proposed plans for the San Antonio River which will restore the habitat to provide a sustainable environment for the area while offering greater control of flood waters.

Restoring a meandering stream with more sloping sides, native vegetation and rippling features and the removal of large chunks of old concrete which obstruct water flow will reduce erosion of the banks and contribute to cleaner water downstream as well. Species which have departed due to the hot and barren nature of the area can be expected to return when there is a more diverse habitat along the River.

Over 160 species of birds have been recorded in the upper portion of the project along the River in the Brackenridge Park where the riparian habitat is to be preserved. We can expect these feathered friends to visit the lower restored river. This plan will offer cooler temperature, cleaner air, cleaner water, and a better habitat for plants, animals as well as people along the restored portion of the San Antonio River.

The Mitchell Lake Wetlands Society is involved in the restoration of an old sewage treatment site as a wildlife refuge nearby. We understand the importance of caring for habitat to protect the wildlife that shares this earth with us. We are just beginning to understand that our health in many ways is tied to theirs.

San Antonio has made great strides in recent years in setting aside more green spaces, renovating and improving what we have, and involving the citizens in this effort. This San Antonio River Improvement Project would help tie much of these efforts together in a way that improves the environment for all.

We urge you to adopt this plan. It will help make our city more livable for everyone and everything.

Sincerely,

Anne Parrish, President



SAN ANTONIO CONSERVATION SOCIETY

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February 11, 2004

Colonel John R. Minahan
District Engineer
Fort Worth District
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
P. O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-0300

Dear Colonel Minahan:

The San Antonio Conservation Society, currently celebrating its 80th year, appreciates the opportunity to comment on a proposed plan to restore natural habitat along a portion of the San Antonio River. The society has remained true to its earliest mission to encourage the preservation and enhancement of natural areas in Texas.

The San Antonio River has been the lifeblood of the San Antonio River Valley for hundreds of years and remains so today, even though surrounded by more than a million people. Its vital importance to the site selections and development of the earliest settlements—the Spanish Colonial missions of San Antonio—is well documented. The river provided the incentive for early settlers to build over 50 miles of irrigation ditches along the river's course to carry water to mission farmlands.

And yet, even though development has continued unabated up to the present time, this river has sustained an environmental oasis for plants and wildlife as it meanders through the valley. From the site from which it first appears, the San Antonio River winds through a large park and into the heart of our city, passing through neighborhoods and near 18th century missions on its way to the Texas coast. All along its course, it provides important ecological habitat for a large number of birds, animals and fish, as well as trees and plants.

The significance of riparian restoration, stabilization and enhancement for the present and future protection of the San Antonio River is indisputable. Such work benefits the citizens in the San Antonio area, as well as the urban wildlife inhabiting or visiting this important river corridor.

Sincerely,


Loretta Huddleston
President

c: Eli A. Kangas, Chief, Plan Formation. U. S. Army Corps of Engineers

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107 KING WILLIAM STREET + SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78204-1399 + 210/224-6163 + FAX: 210/224-6168

The Purpose of this Society is to preserve and to encourage the preservation of historic buildings, objects, places and customs, relating to the history of Texas, its natural beauty, and all that is admirably distinctive to our State; and by such physical and cultural preservation to keep the history of Texas legible and intact to educate the public, especially the youth of today and tomorrow, with knowledge of our inherited regional values.



Audubon TEXAS

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901 S. Mopac, Bldg 2, Suite 410
Austin, TX 78746
Tel: 512-306-0225
Fax: 512-306-0235
www.tx.audubon.org

February 10, 2004

Colonel John R. Minahan
District Engineer, Fort Worth District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, TX 76102-0300

PER-E
PER-P
- FYI

Dear Colonel Minahan:

I am writing to endorse and offer my strongest support for the proposal to restore important portions of the San Antonio River. This long overdue project would produce very positive results along this critical and historic urban ecosystem.

As you know, riparian areas along river corridors are among the most productive and important environments in the world. The combination of adding natural meanders to the river while enhancing the riparian areas along the river will significantly benefit this ecosystem by:

- Improving overall water quality as sediments and other contaminants are removed and filtered;
- Reducing stream bank and stream channel erosion while reducing the risk of flooding;
- Enhancing and sustaining the biodiversity of the more extensive, adjoining uplands;
- Increasing water quantity and stream flow duration by retaining water; and
- Improving and enhancing habitat for a broad range of plant and wildlife species.

A healthy riparian zone is vital to the health and diversity of a wide variety of fish, birds, and wildlife. Riparian areas are often the sole available habitat for amphibians and invertebrates that need the moist conditions found along river corridors.

Eliminating exotic plant species and reintroducing native vegetation along the San Antonio River will help prevent down-cutting or channelizing, thus promoting the meandering nature of the river, increasing groundwater recharge, maintaining an elevated water table, and preserving and promoting overall ecosystem biodiversity.

Again, I strongly support and encourage approval of the San Antonio River restoration initiative.

Sincerely,

Terry W. Austin
Executive Director, Audubon Texas
Vice President, National Audubon Society



SAN ANTONIO CONSERVATION SOCIETY

February 11, 2004

Colonel John R. Minahan
District Engineer
Fort Worth District
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
P. O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-0300

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Sincerely,


Loretta Huddleston
President

✓ c: Eli A. Kangas, Chief, Plan Formation, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers

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