

Forum to Address State Water Issues

SEGUIN – The League of Women Voters (LWV) and the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) are co-sponsoring a regional public forum, "State Water: What You Should Know." The forum will be held 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 6, at the GBRA River Annex, 905 Nolan, in Seguin, TX.

The purpose of the forum is to address issues regarding the allocation of water in Texas. Experts will describe the state water plan, the Region L water plan, information from the Headwaters region in Kerr County, current state regulations that govern the sale and transfer of water rights by river authorities, and the permitting of water transfers by groundwater districts. Participants will also hear about upcoming legislation relating to water allocation.

Individuals from across the Guadalupe-Blanco watershed, from Kerrville to Victoria, are invited. Participants will have the opportunity to talk to each other in small groups about how regional water practices impact the communities throughout the watershed.

"Elections are not just about candidates, they are about issues. One of the most important issues of which every citizen in the state should be aware is water," explained Bill West, GBRA general manager, adding, "The League of Women Voters are to be commended for making a conscious effort to educate constituents on the challenges we face in trying to manage one of the state's most precious resources."

"As last summer's drought made clear, Texas has limited water resources. We who live in Central Texas are all too familiar with the competing interests of agriculture, industry, population growth and endangered species for that limited water supply," said Jensie Madden, from LWV-Comal Area. "Members of LWV want to know who makes the decisions about where the water goes, and how much can be pumped? Who is planning for future needs? Is water in Texas a resource or a commodity?"

These questions are part of a study by LWV of Texas, "State Water: What You Should Know." Representatives of local Leagues in Wimberley Valley, Victoria, San Marcos, San Antonio, Kerrville, and Comal areas have planned this day-long event as part of the LWV mission to encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government.

To participate in "State Water: What You Should Know," please contact Kathy Hunt at (361) 573-1317 or kathyhunt@suddenlink.net. The cost will be \$10, which includes a box lunch, refreshments, and handouts. An agenda and directions to the forum will be posted on www.LWVTexas.org, on the local leagues' pages for Comal, San Antonio, San Marcos, Kerrville, Wimberley and Victoria.

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The GBRA was established by the Texas Legislature in 1933 as a water conservation and reclamation district. GBRA provides stewardship for the water resources in its 10-county statutory district, which begins near the headwaters of the Guadalupe and Blanco rivers, ends at San Antonio Bay, and includes Kendall, Comal, Hays, Caldwell, Guadalupe, Gonzales, DeWitt, Victoria, Calhoun and Refugio counties. The Mission of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority is to protect, conserve, reclaim and steward the resources of the 10-county district in order to ensure and promote quality of life for those served.

AGENDA

Texas Water: What You Should Know, Part 1
Sat, Nov 6, 9:00 am – 3:30 pm

Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority River Annex, 905 Nolan, Seguin

- 9:00 Registration
- 9:30 Welcome
Grace Kunde, Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority Vice-Chair
- Introductions & Brief Overview
LWV Planning Committee
- 9:40 State Water Plan
9:50 Region L Water Plan
Con Mims, Chair of Region L Planning Group
- Questions from audience
- 10:30 Kerr County: Impact of the headwaters
Feather Wilson, Region J Planning Group
- Questions from audience
- 11:10 Surface water laws and regulations
Panel of speakers: Todd Votteler, GBRA; Suzanne Scott, San Antonio River Authority; and Con Mims, Nueces River Authority
- Questions from audience
- 12:30 Lunch/ Table discussions in mixed geographic groups
- 1:15 Groundwater laws and regulations/Groundwater Management Areas
Greg Ellis, Texas Groundwater Association and Feather Wilson, Upper Guadalupe River Authority
- Questions from audience
- 2:30 Upcoming legislation relating to water allocation
Speaker to be announced later
- Questions from audience
- 3:15 "Next Steps"
LWV Planning Committee
- Evaluations by participants
- 3:30 Adjourn