



**Barton Springs
Edwards Aquifer**
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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Aquifer District Board Approves Incidental Take Permit Application and Accompanying Draft Habitat Conservation Plan and for Submittal

At the November 20th Board Meeting, the Board of Directors approved with the Incidental Take Permit (ITP) application and Draft Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for submittal to the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The District's HCP supports the application for an ITP for a 20-year period. The permit would allow for continued managed pumping (the covered activity) of the Aquifer by District permittees, provided the proposed HCP measures minimize and mitigate the incidental take and avoids jeopardy (the inability of the salamander to survive or recover from the take) of salamanders. Ultimately, the HCP measures safeguard the continued sustainable use of the Aquifer and survival of the endangered salamanders.

The HCP was developed, refined, and reviewed through a rigorous public process over the past ten years and benefitted from input and recommendations from stakeholders, subject experts, and advisory committee members. With the proposed HCP conservation measures in place and with the proposed monitoring, adaptive management, and reporting programs described in the HCP the District reasonably expects to be able to achieve the objectives of sustainably managing use of the Aquifer as a water supply, minimizing and mitigating the incidental take of the salamanders, ensuring their survival, and the avoidance of jeopardy.

The application and supporting material will be submitted next week after minor changes identified by the Board are incorporated. The draft HCP, history of the HCP development process, and supporting materials can be found online at www.bseacd.org/projects/habitat-conservation-plan/.

BSEACD is a groundwater conservation district charged by the Texas Legislature to preserve, conserve, and protect the aquifers and groundwater resources within its jurisdiction, which includes parts of three Central Texas counties. It is governed by a Board of five elected directors and staffed with hydrogeologists, groundwater regulatory compliance specialists, environmental educators, geospatial systems specialists, and administrative support personnel.