



**Barton Springs
Edwards Aquifer**
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Permittee of the Year 2017

Date: 12/6/17



Ruby Ranch Water Supply Corporation (RRWSC) is a public water supply provider that serves the Ruby Ranch neighborhood in Buda, TX. Throughout the years, the Ruby Ranch team has been a collaborative partner with District staff in working on local groundwater issues and finding solutions to technical problems.

This year has been especially notable for the RRWSC team,

as they have embarked on an innovative Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) project in an effort to learn more about the feasibility of utilizing this alternative supply strategy in their long-term water supply portfolio. Due to the unique situation of having an Edwards and Trinity well pair, RRWSC was enthusiastic about the idea of conducting ASR pilot testing at their well field. District staff was able to provide guidance on the hydrogeologic and regulatory aspects of ASR projects. After a few planning and technical discussions, RRWSC took the initiative to submit an ASR experimental test application to Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

In March 2017, the TCEQ authorized experimental testing and granted RRWSC permission to conduct an ASR pilot project to test the Middle Trinity Aquifer as a reservoir for storage and recovery of fresh Edwards Aquifer groundwater. Together with District staff, they designed a phased step test/cycle testing program with increasing volumes of injected water to evaluate the responses of the aquifers. Two phases of injection and extraction have been conducted as a partnership between RRWSC and the District. The RRWSC has both a Trinity well and multiple Edwards wells that they produce from under their Edwards and Trinity Permits. Currently they must blend the Edwards and Trinity water to satisfy quality standards and could use additional permitted

Edwards water. By injecting fresh Edwards water that can be permitted by the District when there is no District-declared drought, RRWSC can have a greater quantity of water available for summer-time usage by their customers and potentially to use during drought. The project is in Phase 3 of the testing program and a status report has been developed ([Ruby Ranch ASR Status Report](#)) that describes the results of Phases 1 and 2. More testing is to come and more will be learned.

The District encourages permittees to consider these types of projects and strategies, and has actually set aside 2cfs (472 MG/yr) of Fresh Edwards for ASR projects. The District has been working within its statutory authority and regulatory purview to find ways to reduce dependence on the Barton Springs segment of the Edwards Aquifer particularly during drought.

RRWSC is the first Permittee within the District, and the 4th entity within Texas, to move forward with conducting an ASR pilot test project. As a groundwater district, we are



proud to cooperate on new and informative projects like this. Dale Olmstead and Thomas Doebner led their leadership efforts, in consultation with Joe Vickers and technical staff. The RRWSC team has always been receptive to District staff, and their ongoing cooperation on a variety of groundwater planning issues has enabled them to have an excellent compliance record overall and has enabled them to contribute to sound policy and science within the District.



Ruby Ranch WSC continues to demonstrate their commitment to the responsible use of groundwater resources and has proven to be a model permittee in many ways. The staff of the BSEACD recognizes and commends their efforts by awarding Ruby Ranch Water Supply Corporation “Permittee of the 2017 Year” Award.