

SAN ANTONIO RIVER BASIN WITHIN BEXAR COUNTY

THE URBAN WATERS FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP

ABOUT THE URBAN WATERS FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP

The San Antonio River Basin within Bexar County is a selected location for the nation's Urban Waters Federal Partnership. This partnership will reconnect urban communities, particularly those that are overburdened or economically distressed, with their waterways by improving coordination among federal agencies and collaborating with community-led revitalization efforts to improve our nation's water systems and promote their economic, environmental and social benefits. Specifically, the Urban Waters Federal Partnership will:

- Break down federal program silos to promote more efficient and effective use of federal resources through better coordination and targeting of federal investments.
- Recognize and build on local efforts and leadership, by engaging and serving community partners.
- Work with local officials and effective community-based organizations to leverage area resources and stimulate local economies to create local jobs.
- Learn from early and visible victories to fuel long-term action.

Led by 14 federal agencies and coordinated by the White House Domestic Policy Council and White House Council on Environmental Quality, the Urban Waters Federal Partnership closely aligns with and advances the work of the White House's place-based efforts, including the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, to revitalize communities, create jobs and improve the quality of life in cities and towns across the nation. The Urban Waters Federal Partnership also advances the work of the America's Great Outdoors Initiative.

For more information, visit www.urbanwaters.gov

ABOUT THE SAN ANTONIO PARTNERSHIP

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development co-chair this location. A number of

federal agencies are engaged in projects with local officials and community members such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Interior Bureau of Reclamation, the Economic Development Administration, Health and Human Services, Small Business Administration, and the General Services Administration. Local stakeholders are looking forward to the partnership's assistance in providing additional nexus to other federal agencies that can support existing efforts in a more robust way and providing linkages where possible.

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY AND THE SAN ANTONIO RIVER BASIN

The San Antonio River Basin extends through 15 counties in south Texas. The San Antonio River, with its headwaters in Bexar County, is the basin's major river flowing 240 miles to San Antonio Bay and the Gulf of Mexico. San Antonio's rivers and creeks have been of great importance to those who live in the region throughout history, from pre-colonial times, to the founding of the San Antonio Missions, to the Riverwalk today. The San Antonio community has made significant investments to maintain the connection to its waterways.

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

In an effort to improve public access to waterways, improve water quality, and restore the ecosystem, the Partnership is engaged in a number of joint federal/local projects:

San Pedro Creek Restoration

Bexar County and the San Antonio River Authority, in coordination with the City of San Antonio, are in the midst of the design phase of San Pedro Creek Improvements Project, which will transform the creek to reflect its place in our cultural history, improve its function in flood control, revitalize natural habitat and water quality, and catalyze economic development. The project will start at the tunnel inlet near Fox Tech High School and wind through the western side of Downtown to the creek's confluence with the Alazan and Apache Creeks. The project includes 4 miles of trails and 11

acres of landscaped area and will remove 30 acres and 38 adjacent structures from the 100-year flood plain. The first phase of the project, from the tunnel inlet to Cesar Chavez, will be completed in time to celebrate San Antonio's Tricentennial in May of 2018.

Olmos Basin Ecosystem Restoration

This project intends to restore a three mile segment of the Olmos Creek, prevent floatable debris from entering the creek and address the continual flooding of U.S. Highway 281 over the creek, responding to the San Antonio North Central Community plan to restore natural beauty and habitat of Olmos Basin Park. The project combines water quality improvements and ecosystem restoration to create a more natural habitat. The Army Corps of Engineers agreed in 2014 to fund the restoration project.

Eastside Promise Zone and Promise/Choice Neighborhood

San Antonio's east side is a historically disadvantaged and minority community. The area has been the focus of several place-based grants and designations increasing the potential for overlapping federal and local funding to promote comprehensive community development. The Choice Neighborhood Initiative is centered around the redevelopment of a multi-family public housing into a mixed income property. This includes the revitalization of the surrounding neighborhood and the empowerment of neighborhood and public housing residents. The Promise Neighborhood Initiative is aimed at positively impacting educational outcomes for children who attend neighborhood schools. The Eastside area is also connected to the City's Salado Creek Greenway trail system through Menger Creek. In an effort to increase neighborhood connections to green spaces, the City of San Antonio and Bexar County have committed funds to a project that will improve drainage, reduce the 100-year flood zone, and provide park and trail improvements around Menger creek.

Westside Creeks Restoration

Located in west central San Antonio and in close proximity to three San Antonio Housing Authority properties, the Alazán, Apache, and Martinez creeks have been the focus of a community-based planning effort since 2008 to develop concepts for restoring the environmental condition of the creeks. In 2014, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

completed a feasibility study that recommends ecosystem restoration along approximately eleven miles of the Westside Creeks. In advance of the ecosystem restoration, hike and bike trails are being developed along Westside Creeks connecting neighborhoods and providing new recreational opportunities that will complement the Westside Creeks Restoration Project. Approximately five miles of trail will be completed in 2016 and connect San Antonio's Westside community and the creeks with the San Antonio River Mission Reach Project at the confluence of San Pedro Creek and the San Antonio River. An additional 4.5 miles of hike and bike trails will be constructed by funds approved by the voters in 2015.

Brackish Groundwater Desalination

The San Antonio Water System is developing a brackish groundwater desalination project that will diversify the region's water supplies. An additional source of water will help preserve endangered species within the Edwards Aquifer, the primary source of water for over two million people, and in its natural springs.

San Antonio Missions – World Heritage

The five 18th century Spanish colonial mission complexes along the San Antonio River were designated a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in the summer of 2015. Designation as a World Heritage site increases the areas visibility and holds the potential to create a substantial economic impact. The multi-organization group who sought the designation includes Bexar County, the National Park Service, the San Antonio Conservation Society, and the San Antonio River Authority. A feasibility study to identify opportunities for connecting sites and routes associated with El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail to the San Antonio Mission National Historical Park has been initiated to provide a living resource with enhanced historic and recreational opportunities.

For more information on the San Antonio River Basin Urban Waters Federal Partnership, please contact the lead agency representatives:

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