



— • **WHAT IS THE EDWARDS AQUIFER HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN?**

The Edwards Aquifer Habitat Conservation Plan (EAHCP) defines how we protect federally listed species that live in the Edwards Aquifer and the Comal and San Marcos springs. Our program's Incidental Take Permit was granted to the Edwards Aquifer Authority, City of San Marcos, City of New Braunfels, Texas State University, and the City of San Antonio acting by and through the San Antonio Water System (collectively known as the EAHCP Permittees) to protect federally listed species from specific activities, Covered Activities, like groundwater pumping.

— • **WHAT IS AN INCIDENTAL TAKE PERMIT [ITP]?**

An Incidental Take Permit is a permit issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). To protect the species identified by the ESA, the ITP requires a habitat conservation plan.

— • **HOW DOES THE EAHCP PROTECT THE COVERED SPECIES?**

The Edwards Aquifer Habitat Conservation Plan protects Covered Species through:

- Habitat Protection
- Flow Protection
- Supporting Measures (i.e. biological monitoring, water quality monitoring, applied research, and refugia).

— • **WHAT IS EAHCP DOING FOR HABITAT PROTECTION?**

The Permittees of the EAHCP work with contractors in the Comal and San Marcos systems to protect habitat for the Covered Species. For example, BIO-WEST, Inc. plants and removes submerged aquatic vegetation in Landa Lake to create shelter for fountain darters and Atlas Environmental works in both the Comal and San Marcos systems to remove non-native fish, like tilapia. The EAHCP is also supported by many dedicated volunteer organizations in both spring communities. These organizations, such as the New Braunfels Headwaters and San Marcos River Foundation, work to keep the rivers and springs clean from litter and debris.

— • **WHAT IS THE REFUGIA PROGRAM?**

Refugia is a population of species, housed in a series of facilities, for reintroduction into their native habitat in the event of hazardous environmental conditions that cause the population of the Covered Species to decline. The EAHCP Refugia Program, housed at USFWS facilities, also provides the opportunity to research and observe the Covered Species.

— • **HOW DOES A FARMER IN UVALDE OR MEDINA COUNTY SUPPORT CONSERVATION OF THE COMAL & SAN MARCOS SPRINGS?**

The Edwards Aquifer Authority has Critical Period triggers that protect flow at Comal and San Marcos springs. When a Critical Period trigger occurs, all Edwards Aquifer users reduce their use and withdrawal of groundwater to ensure water for springflow and to protect the federally listed species. Specific EAHCP springflow protection measures include Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) and Voluntary Irrigation Suspension Program Option (VISPO).

● WHAT ARE THE FEDERALLY LISTED SPECIES THE EAHCP PROTECTS?

The Covered Species are listed in this table.

Common Name	Federal Status	Geographic Distribution
fountain darter	Endangered	Comal Springs San Marcos Springs
San Marcos gambusia*	Endangered	San Marcos Springs
Comal Springs dryopid beetle	Endangered	Comal Springs Hueco Springs
Comal Springs riffle beetle	Endangered	Comal Springs San Marcos Springs
Peck's Cave amphipod	Endangered	Comal Springs Hueco Springs
Texas wild-rice	Endangered	San Marcos Springs
Texas blind salamander	Endangered	San Marcos Springs
San Marcos salamander	Threatened	San Marcos Springs
Texas cave diving beetle	Petitioned	Comal Springs San Marcos Springs
Comal Springs salamander	Petitioned	Comal Springs
Texas troglobitic water slater	Petitioned	San Marcos Springs

A federally listed species is classified as **endangered** if it is considered to be at immediate risk of extinction and **threatened** if it is considered to be at risk of extinction in the foreseeable future. A species classified as **petitioned** has been brought to the attention of the USFWS for consideration for listing as a federally protected species.

* Not observed since 1983

