



EDWARDS AQUIFER
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Hydrologic Data Report 2016 Discharge

2016 GROUNDWATER DISCHARGE AND USAGE

Groundwater discharges from the Edwards Aquifer either as springflow or as pumping from wells. Comal and San Marcos springs, the largest and second-largest springs in Texas, respectively, are fed by the Edwards Aquifer. This springflow greatly benefits the recreational economies in New Braunfels and San Marcos, and both springs provide habitat for threatened and endangered species. Figure 1 shows locations of the major springs in the Edwards Aquifer region. Wells drilled into the Edwards Aquifer throughout the region provide water for many diverse uses, including irrigation, municipal water supplies, industrial applications, and domestic/livestock consumption.

Estimates of total annual groundwater discharge from combined springflow and pumping for the Edwards Aquifer are provided in Table 1 for the period of record (1934–2016). Annual total groundwater discharge estimates range from a low of 388,800 acre-feet in 1955 to a high of 1,130,000 acre-feet in 1992. In 2016, the total groundwater discharged from the Edwards Aquifer from wells and springs is estimated at 870,290 acre-feet: 554,990 acre-feet as springflow and 325,300 acre-feet as pumping from wells.

The portion of discharge as springflow is estimated by measuring streamflow downstream of the springs and converting the streamflow measurements to spring discharge by subtracting any estimated contributions from surface runoff. Total annual spring discharge has varied from a low of 69,800 acre-feet in 1956 to a high of 802,800 acre-feet in 1992. Monthly springflow estimates for 2016 at each of the six major Edwards Aquifer springs are provided in Table 2.

In Figures 2 and 3, flows at Comal and San Marcos springs are shown as mean annual flows compared with the long-term historical mean flow for the available period of record. The 2016 mean annual flow was greater than the historical mean discharge at both San Marcos Springs and Comal Springs.

Discharge as well pumping can be classified as either reported or unreported discharge. Reported discharge refers to water pumped from the aquifer by a person or entity holding a groundwater withdrawal permit. These users, who are typically larger quantity users,

meter their withdrawals and report the totals to the EAA. Unreported discharge refers to use that does not require a groundwater withdrawal permit from the EAA, such as domestic, livestock, or federal facility use. Unreported discharge is estimated based on numbers of wells and statistical estimates of per-well usage. In 2016, unreported discharge for domestic and livestock wells was estimated at 13,981 acre-feet, and non-reporting federal facility discharge was estimated at 5,325 acre-feet, for a total of 19,306 acre-feet of unreported discharge. Reported discharge totaled 305,994 acre-feet. The total of all reported and unreported pumping discharge is 325,300 acre-feet.

Table 3 provides a summary of well and spring discharge for 2016 based on type of use and county. The distribution of discharge from springflows and the different types of pumping for 2016 is shown graphically in Figure 4. Total annual discharge from pumping and springflow are compared in Figure 5 for the period of record from 1934–2016. The years when springflow exceeds pumping tend to be wet years when pumping demand is lowered by more frequent rainfall and higher aquifer levels produce increased springflows. Conversely, during dry years pumping tends to exceed springflow due to increased municipal and agricultural demand and lower aquifer levels. Since 1997, however, the increase in pumping demand during dry years has been limited by the withdrawal permit system and critical period pumping reductions implemented under the Edwards Aquifer Authority Act. Table 4 provides a historical list of total annual discharge by type of use for the period 1955–2016.

Figure 1. Major Springs in the Southern Segment of the Balcones Fault Zone Edwards Aquifer

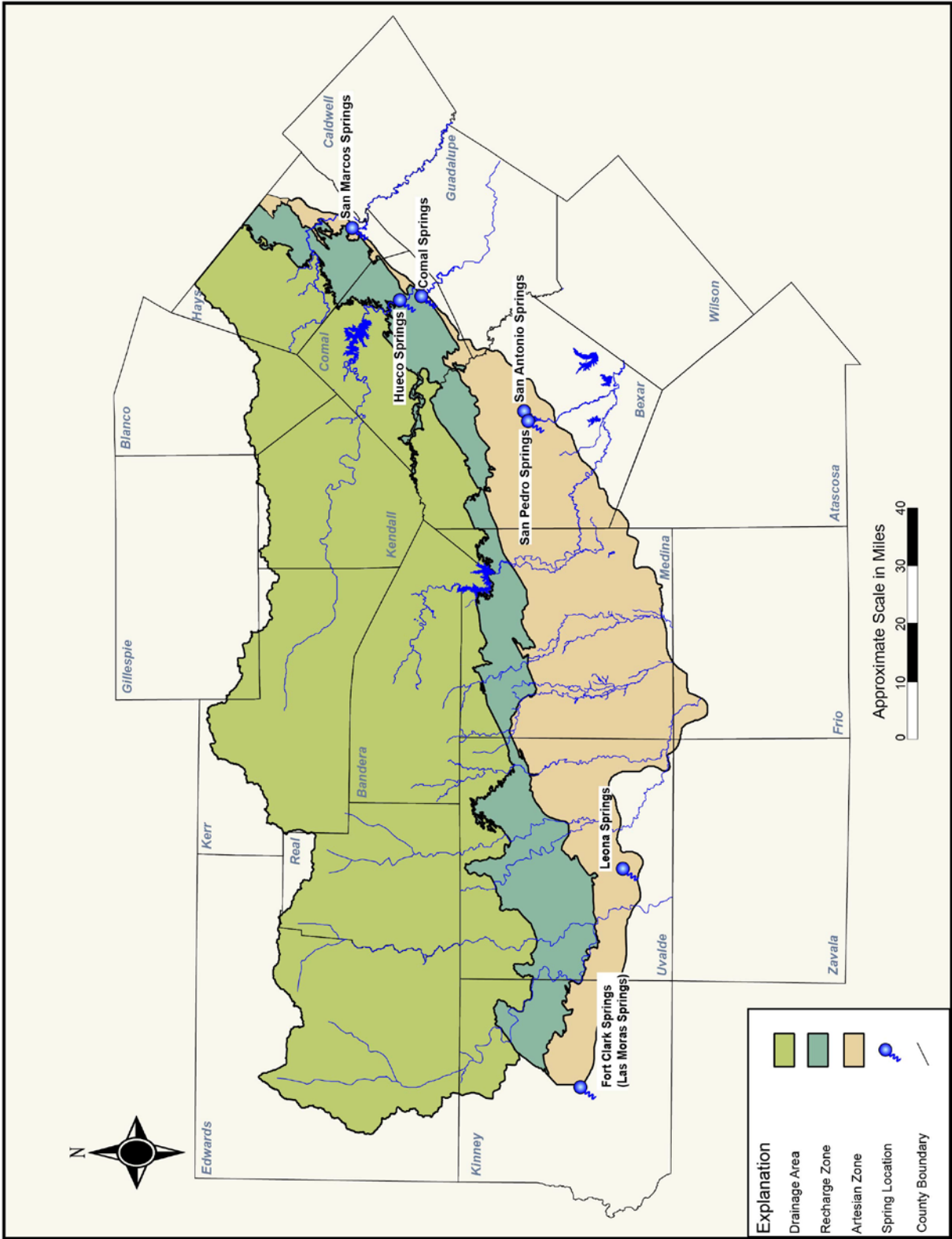


Table 1. Annual Estimated Groundwater Discharge Data by County for the Edwards Aquifer, 1934–2016 (measured in thousands of acre-feet).

Year	Uvalde ^a	Medina	Bexar ^b	Comal ^c	Hays	Total	Total Wells	Total Springs
1934	12.6	1.3	109.3	229.1	85.6	437.9	101.9	336.0
1935	12.2	1.5	171.8	237.2	96.9	519.6	103.7	415.9
1936	26.6	1.5	215.2	261.7	93.2	598.2	112.7	485.5
1937	28.3	1.5	201.8	252.5	87.1	571.2	120.2	451.0
1938	25.2	1.6	187.6	250.0	93.4	557.8	120.1	437.7
1939	18.2	1.6	122.5	219.4	71.1	432.8	118.9	313.9
1940	16.1	1.6	116.7	203.8	78.4	416.6	120.1	296.5
1941	17.9	1.6	197.4	250.0	134.3	601.2	136.8	464.4
1942	22.5	1.7	203.2	255.1	112.2	594.7	144.6	450.1
1943	19.2	1.7	172.0	249.2	97.2	539.3	149.1	390.2
1944	11.6	1.7	166.3	252.5	135.3	567.4	147.3	420.1
1945	12.4	1.7	199.8	263.1	137.8	614.8	153.3	461.5
1946	6.2	1.7	180.1	261.9	134.0	583.9	155.0	428.9
1947	13.8	2.0	193.3	256.8	127.6	593.5	167.0	426.5
1948	9.2	1.9	159.2	203.0	77.3	450.6	168.7	281.9
1949	13.2	2.0	165.3	209.5	89.8	479.8	179.4	300.4
1950	17.8	2.2	177.3	191.1	78.3	466.7	193.8	272.9
1951	16.9	2.2	186.9	150.5	69.1	425.6	209.7	215.9
1952	22.7	3.1	187.1	133.2	78.8	424.9	215.4	209.5
1953	27.5	4.0	193.7	141.7	101.4	468.3	229.8	238.5
1954	26.6	6.3	208.9	101.0	81.5	424.3	246.2	178.1
1955	28.3	11.1	215.2	70.1	64.1	388.8	261.0	127.8
1956	59.6	17.7	229.6	33.6	50.4	390.9	321.1	69.8
1957	29.0	11.9	189.4	113.2	113.0	456.5	237.3	219.2
1958	23.7	6.6	199.5	231.8	155.9	617.5	219.3	398.2
1959	43.0	8.3	217.5	231.7	118.5	619.0	234.5	384.5
1960	53.7	7.6	215.4	235.2	143.5	655.4	227.1	428.3
1961	56.5	6.4	230.3	249.5	140.8	683.5	228.2	455.3
1962	64.6	8.1	220.0	197.5	98.8	589.0	267.9	321.1
1963	51.4	9.7	217.3	155.7	81.9	516.0	276.4	239.6
1964	49.3	8.6	201.0	141.8	73.3	474.0	260.2	213.8
1965	46.8	10.0	201.1	194.7	126.3	578.9	256.1	322.8
1966	48.5	10.4	198.0	198.9	115.4	571.2	255.9	315.3
1967	81.1	15.2	239.7	139.1	82.3	557.4	341.3	216.1
1968	58.0	9.9	207.1	238.2	146.8	660.0	251.7	408.3
1969	88.5	13.6	216.3	218.2	122.1	658.7	307.5	351.2
1970	100.9	16.5	230.6	229.2	149.9	727.1	329.4	397.7
1971	117.0	32.4	262.8	168.2	99.1	679.5	406.8	272.7
1972	112.6	28.8	247.7	234.3	123.7	747.1	371.3	375.8
1973	96.5	14.9	273.0	289.3	164.3	838.0	310.4	527.6
1974	133.3	28.6	272.1	286.1	141.1	861.2	377.4	483.8
1975	112.0	22.6	259.0	296.0	178.6	868.2	327.8	540.4
1976	136.4	19.4	253.2	279.7	164.7	853.4	349.5	503.9
1977	156.5	19.9	317.5	295.0	172.0	960.9	380.6	580.3
1978	154.3	38.7	269.5	245.7	99.1	807.3	431.8	375.5
1979	130.1	32.9	294.5	300.0	157.0	914.5	391.5	523.0
1980	151.0	39.9	300.3	220.3	107.9	819.4	491.1	328.3
1981	104.2	26.1	280.7	241.8	141.6	794.4	387.1	407.3
1982	129.2	33.4	305.1	213.2	105.5	786.4	453.1	333.3
1983	107.7	29.7	277.6	186.6	118.5	720.1	418.5	301.6
1984	156.9	46.9	309.7	108.9	85.7	708.1	529.8	178.3
1985	156.9	59.2	295.5	200.0	144.9	856.5	522.5	334.0
1986	91.7	41.9	294.0	229.3	160.4	817.3	429.3	388.0
1987	94.9	15.9	326.6	286.2	198.4	922.0	364.1	557.9
1988	156.7	82.2	317.4	236.5	116.9	909.7	540.0	369.7

(Table 1. continued)

Year	Uvalde ^a	Medina	Bexar ^b	Comal ^c	Hays	Total	Total Wells	Total Springs
1989	156.9	70.5	305.6	147.9	85.6	766.5	542.4	224.1
1990	118.1	69.7	276.8	171.3	94.1	730.0	489.4	240.6
1991	76.6	25.6	315.5	221.9	151.0	790.6	436.0	354.6
1992	76.5	9.3	370.5	412.4	261.3	1130.0	327.2	802.8
1993	107.5	17.8	371.0	349.5	151.0	996.7	407.3	589.4
1994	95.5	41.1	297.7	269.8	110.6	814.8	424.6	390.2
1995	90.8	35.2	272.1	235.0	127.8	761.0	399.6	361.3
1996	117.6	66.3	286.8	150.2	84.7	705.6	493.6	212.0
1997	77.0	31.4	260.2	243.3	149.2	761.1	377.1	383.9
1998	113.1	51.3	312.4	271.8	168.8	917.6	453.5	464.1
1999	104.0	49.2	307.1	295.5	143.0	898.8	442.7	456.1
2000	89.1	45.1	283.6	226.1	108.4	752.3	414.8	337.5
2001	68.6	33.9	291.6	327.7	175.4	890.0	367.7	529.6
2002	76.2	40.6	311.9	350.4	202.1	981.2	371.3	609.9
2003	89.4	34.8	331.7	344.7	176.3	976.9	362.1	621.5
2004	91.3	22.5	331.9	341.4	153.1	940.3	317.4	622.9
2005	107.4	37.3	366.1	349.3	175.6	1035.7	388.5	647.1
2006	107.5	64.9	289.5	216.7	87.9	766.5	454.5	312.0
2007	64.6	18.4	330.2	331.7	196.0	940.9	319.9	621.0
2008	102.0	48.8	320.4	266.6	108.0	845.7	428.6	417.1
2009	76.9	47.3	265.2	206.6	87.8	683.7	395.7	287.9
2010	53.1	36.4	298.5	312.1	162.5	862.6	372.6	490.0
2011	79.6	57.4	277.2	187.7	91.0	692.9	427.7	265.2
2012	57.6	44.3	267.5	193.4	124.2	687.0	384.7	302.3
2013	43.6	42.8	251.0	154.9	96.0	588.6	355.8	232.8
2014	41.5	43.1	230.5	114.5	97.9	527.5	332.2	195.4
2015	27.1	27.6	256.3	239.8	178.8	729.7	325.2	404.5
2016	46.9	31.9	262.6	320.7	208.3	870.3	325.3	545.0
For period of record 1934–2016:								
Median	68.6	18.4	256.3	234.3	118.5	692.9	327.8	383.9
Mean	71.2	23.8	248.7	227.5	122.7	696.6	315.5	381.3
For last 10 years, 2007–2016:								
Median	55.4	43.0	266.4	223.2	116.1	711.3	264.2	353.4
Mean	59.3	39.8	275.9	218.7	125.9	742.9	366.8	376.1

Data source: Unpublished USGS and Edwards Aquifer Authority files (2016).

a = As of 2008, no longer includes Kinney County discharge; prior years include 1,900 acre-feet of discharge for Kinney County.

b = Includes reports of Edwards Aquifer irrigators in Atascosa County.

c = Includes reports of Edwards Aquifer industrial and municipal users in Guadalupe County.

Differences in totals may occur as a result of rounding.

Table 2. Estimated Spring Discharge from the Edwards Aquifer, 2016 (measured in acre-feet).

Month	Leona Springs and Leona River Underflow	San Pedro Springs	San Antonio Springs	Comal Springs	Hueco Springs	San Marcos Springs	Total Monthly Discharge from Springs
January	523	238	0.02	19,810	4,740	17,880	43,190
February	514	165	0	16,810	3,840	14,550	35,880
March	503	202	0	18,250	4,100	14,790	37,840
April	494	203	33	18,040	5,030	15,320	39,120
May	509	442	1,220	20,550	6,520	19,170	48,410
June	509	708	3,880	22,790	6,350	20,380	54,710
July	545	260	226	21,110	4,320	19,390	45,850
August	747	297	440	21,890	4,720	17,520	45,700
September	1,340	483	1,400	22,330	3,410	15,650	46,610
October	1,860	495	1,810	22,670	4,970	16,580	48,380
November	2,210	620	2,740	22,100	4,750	14,660	47,080
December	2,450	843	5,590	24,230	6,270	14,820	54,200
Total	12,300	4,960	17,360	250,700	59,020	200,700	544,990

Data source: USGS unpublished report (2016).

Totals might not equal sum of discharge values as a result of rounding.

Table 3. Comprehensive Discharge Summary for Calendar Year 2016 (in acre-feet).

County	Reported Use (permitted wells)			Unreported Use		Total Well Discharge	Spring Discharge	Total Wells and Springs
	Irrigation	Municipal	Industrial	Domestic or Livestock*	Non- Reporting Facilities*			
Atascosa	999	0	0	0	0	999	0	999
Bexar	3,134	207,532	14,596	8,915	5,089	239,266	22,320	261,586
Comal	46	6,305	4,025	406	0	10,782	309,720	320,502
Guadalupe	0	4	184	0	0	188	0	188
Hays	69	4,703	1,718	879	236	7,605	200,700	208,305
Medina	21,609	5,692	3,450	1,146	0	31,897	0	31,897
Uvalde	28,812	3,013	103	2,637	0	34,565	12,300	46,865
Totals	54,669	227,249	24,076	13,981	5,325	325,300	544,990	870,290

* Federal facilities and domestic and livestock wells do not report annual use (non-reporting); quantities estimated.

Differences in totals may occur because of rounding.

Figure 2. Mean Annual Discharge at Comal Springs

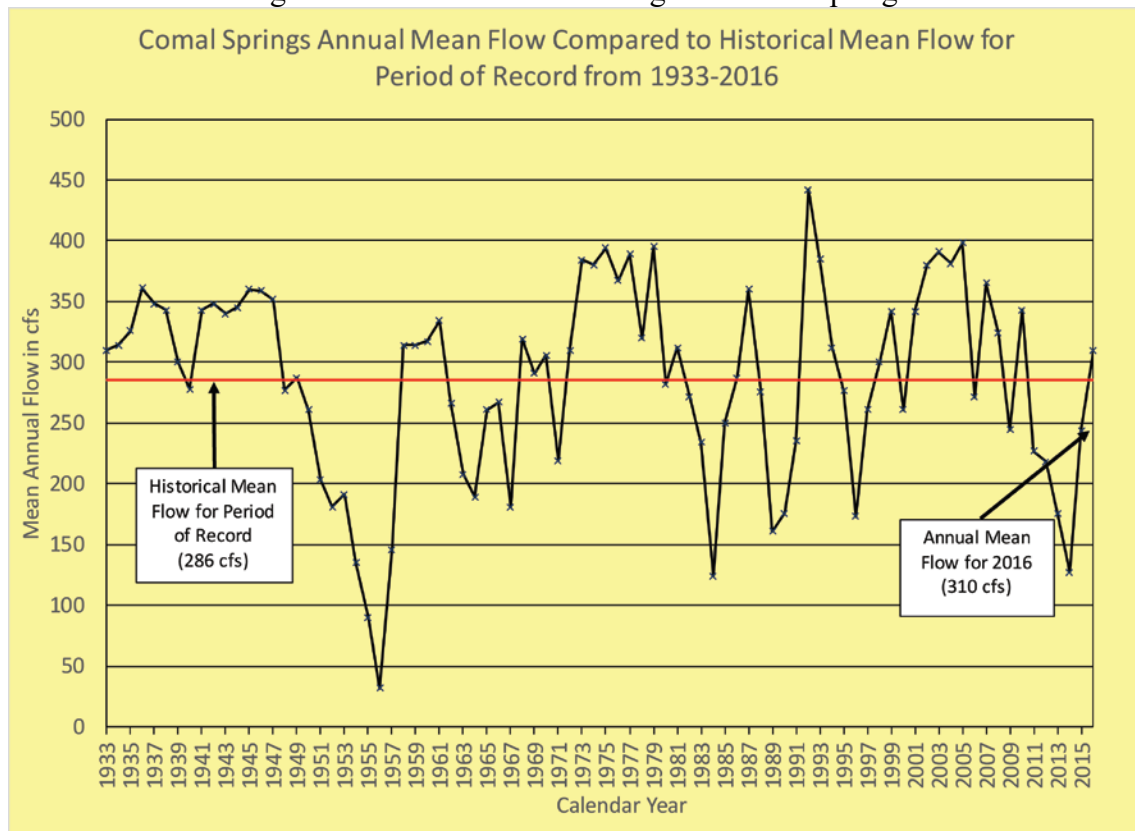


Figure 3. Mean Annual Discharge at San Marcos Springs

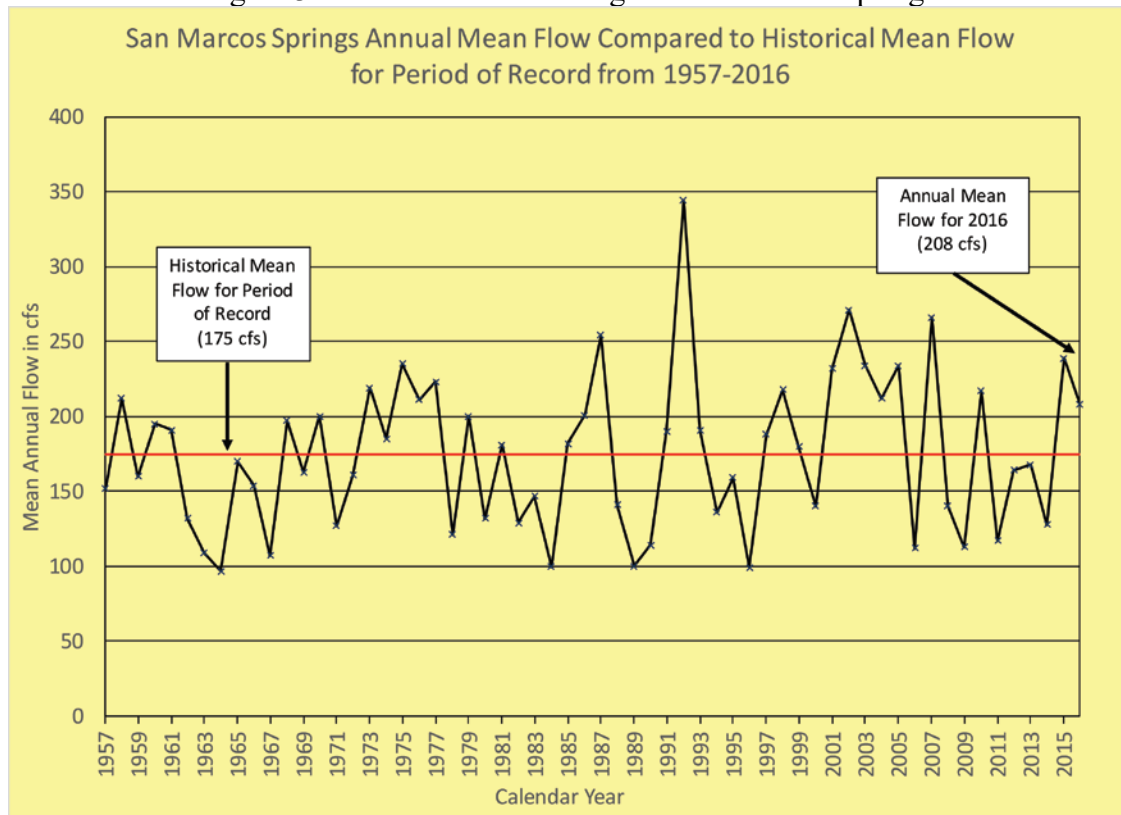


Figure 4. 2016 Discharge by Type of Use

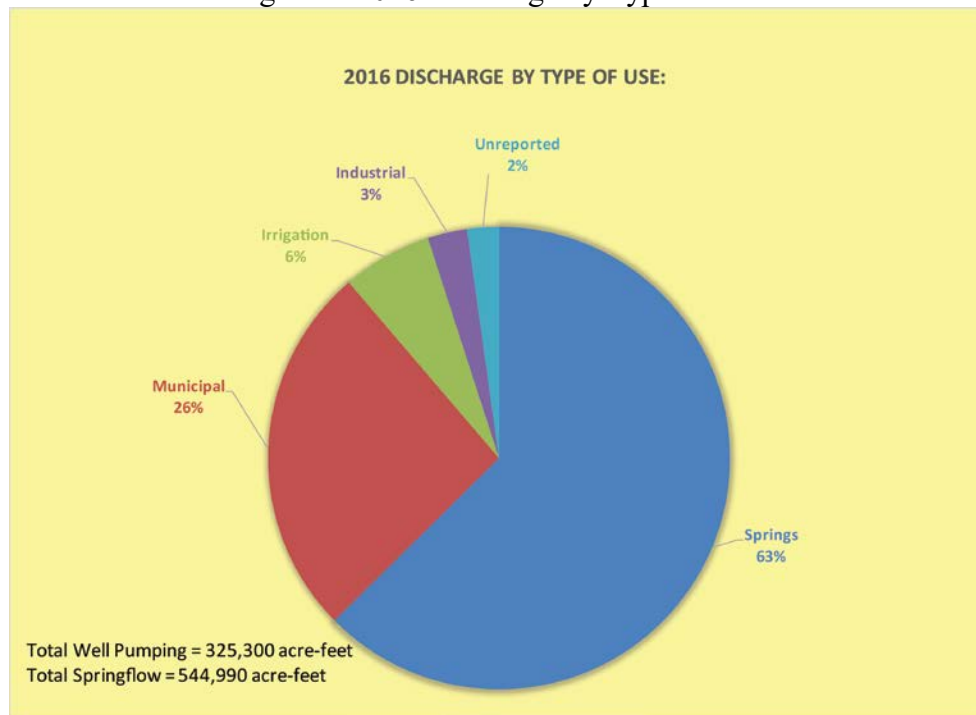


Figure 5. Groundwater Pumping Compared with Springflow

Groundwater Pumping Compared with Total Spring Flow from the Edwards Aquifer, 1934-2016

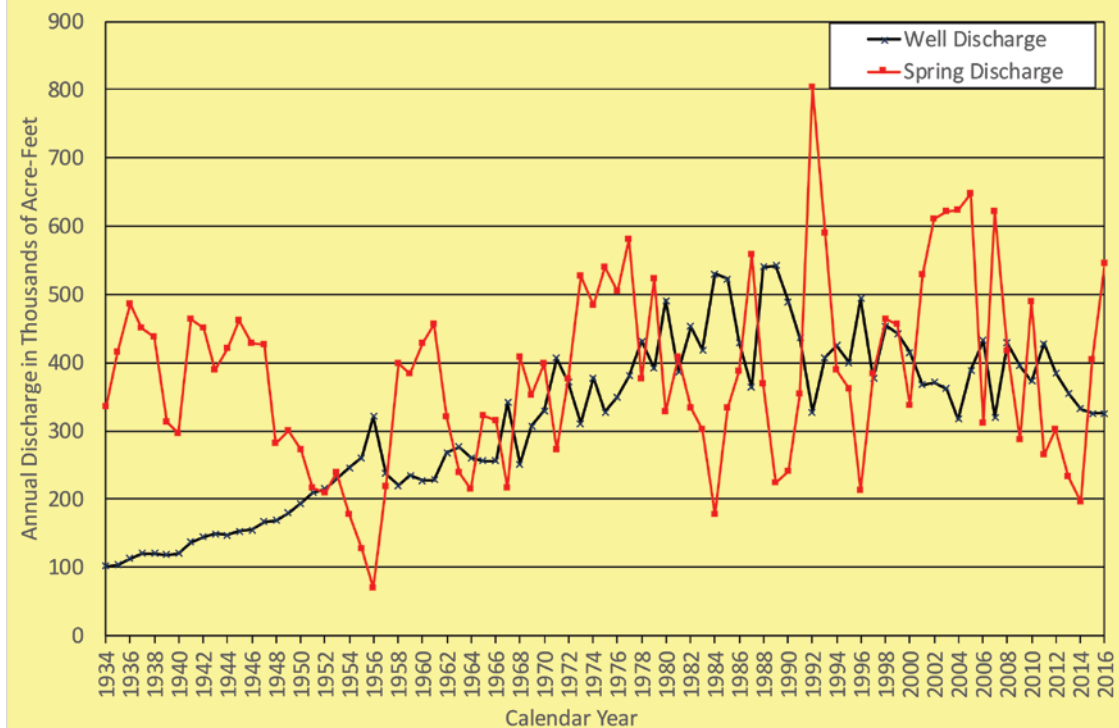


Table 4. Annual Estimated Edwards Aquifer Groundwater Discharge by Use, 1955–2016
(measured in thousands of acre-feet).

Year	Irrigation	Municipal	Domestic/ Stock	Industrial/ Commercial	Springs
1955	85.2	120.5	30.1	25.1	127.8
1956	127.2	138.3	28.9	22.4	69.8
1957	68.8	116.1	29.8	22.6	219.2
1958	47.2	113.7	33.4	25.1	398.2
1959	60.0	118.9	31.5	24.2	384.5
1960	54.9	121.1	29.1	23.3	428.3
1961	52.1	124.5	29.6	22.2	455.3
1962	72.7	143.7	28.8	22.8	321.1
1963	75.4	151.8	27.8	21.8	239.6
1964	72.6	140.2	26.3	21.7	213.8
1965	68.0	138.8	27.0	22.3	322.8
1966	68.2	141.8	23.3	22.6	315.3
1967	119.4	171.0	25.1	25.8	216.1
1968	59.3	146.9	25.5	20.0	408.3
1969	95.2	162.0	29.2	21.1	351.2
1970	110.1	167.5	29.3	22.5	397.7
1971	159.4	196.2	28.6	22.6	272.7
1972	128.8	190.5	30.8	21.1	375.8
1973	82.2	177.1	32.3	18.8	527.6
1974	140.4	174.6	33.5	15.1	483.3
1975	96.4	182.5	33.6	15.3	540.4
1976	118.2	182.1	34.6	14.7	503.9
1977	124.2	205.3	38.1	13.0	580.3
1978	165.8	214.2	40.3	11.5	375.5
1979	126.8	208.9	40.7	15.2	523.0
1980	177.9	256.2	43.3	13.7	328.3
1981	101.8	231.8	40.9	12.6	407.3
1982	130.0	268.6	39.5	15.0	333.3
1983	115.9	249.2	38.8	14.7	301.5
1984	191.2	287.2	36.2	15.2	178.3
1985	203.1	263.7	39.2	16.5	334.0
1986	104.2	266.3	42.0	16.8	388.0
1987	40.9	260.9	43.5	18.7	557.9
1988	193.1	286.2	41.9	18.8	369.7
1989	196.2	285.2	38.2	22.9	224.1
1990	172.9	254.9	37.9	23.7	240.6
1991	88.5	240.5	39.5	67.5	354.6
1992	27.1	236.5	34.8	29.0	802.8
1993	69.3	252.0	49.9	36.1	589.4
1994	104.5	247.0	33.9	39.3	390.2
1995	95.6	255.0	11.6*	37.3	361.3
1996	181.3	261.3	12.3*	38.8	212.0

(Table 4. continued)

Year	Irrigation	Municipal	Domestic/ Stock	Industrial/ Commercial	Springs
1997	77.4 ^{a/b}	253.0	12.3	34.4	383.9
1998	131.9 ^a	266.5	13.4	41.7 ^b	464.1
1999	113.6	273.3	13.4	42.4	456.1
2000	106.3	261.3	13.4	33.8	337.5
2001	79.0	245.9	13.4	29.4	529.4
2002	97.1	228.4	13.6	32.3	609.9
2003	79.6	237.2	13.7	31.7	621.5
2004	55.4	220.3	13.8	28.1	622.9
2005	85.3	255.1	13.8	34.3	647.1
2006	149.1	259.1	13.8	34.5	312.0
2007	42.5	236.0	13.8	27.6	620.6
2008	112.7	273.6	13.5**	28.8	417.1
2009	108.9	247.5	13.6**	25.7	288.0
2010	72.7	259.9	13.6**	26.4	490.0
2011	124.9	265.5	13.6**	23.6	265.2
2012	90.6	257.9	13.7**	22.6	302.3
2013	76.3	239.5	13.7**	26.3	232.8
2014	75.3	220.1	13.9**	22.8	195.4
2015	42.2	247.2	13.9**	21.9	404.5
2016	54.7	232.6	14.0**	24.0	545.0
For period of record 1955–2016:					
Median	96.0	236.3	13.6** ¹	22.8	379.9
Mean	102.4	215.0	13.4**	24.9	389.8
For period of record 2007–2016 (last ten years):					
Median	75.8	247.4	13.7	24.9	353.4
Mean	80.1	248.0	13.7	25.0	376.1

Data source: USGS unpublished report and Edwards Aquifer Authority files (2016).

a = Includes estimates from Atascosa County discharge by Edwards Aquifer users.

b = Includes estimates from Guadalupe County discharge by Edwards Aquifer users.

* = In 1995 USGS revised the method of calculating domestic/livestock pumpage, which significantly decreased the estimates for 1995 and 1996.

** = Revision based on number of new wells permitted annually and discontinuation of Kinney County estimates in total. Differences in totals may occur as a result of rounding.



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