

SHC Preface – Draft 2B -- Feb 16, 2005

The Stakeholder Committee gratefully acknowledges the leadership of the Executive and Core Committees in initiating this pioneering regional water quality planning process. The long-standing public interest in preserving water quality in this area of Texas, coupled with unprecedented population growth, will require continued leadership as we move toward meaningful regional water quality protections.

The Executive and Core Committees challenged those most interested in the process and outcome of any such plan--ordinary citizens with a broad spectrum of interests and backgrounds--to form a stakeholder committee and take a leadership role in the plan's development. By guiding a professional consulting firm and acting on advice from nationally recognized experts, the stakeholders negotiated the key provisions of the plan. The Stakeholder Committee submits this Final Report in fulfillment of its charge.

The stated goal of the plan is to maintain or enhance the existing water quality of the groundwater and surface water within the study area. This goal is premised on the belief that water quality is vital to every person, and that protection of water quality is an individual as well as governmental responsibility. The Stakeholder Committee sought to balance responsible water quality regulation with economic interests.

Based on the best available science and engineering data specific to this area, this report is the culmination of months of education, analysis, collaboration, compromise and ultimately consensus on fundamental issues. Perhaps most fundamental is the decision to allow no increase in pollution under the plan. We believe that the protections offered by the plan will withstand exhaustive scrutiny. Indeed, we encourage all interested persons and organizations to review the entire report.

We believe that this Final Report, when implemented on a regional basis, will achieve the critical goal of preserving the most valuable assets of this region--the pristine waters and the natural physical features from which they flow. Preservation of these unique resources will enhance the future economic interests of the region. We believe that implementation of this plan will be met with broad public support.

The Stakeholders urge you to adopt the protections outlined in the plan. Failure to act is the greatest threat to both water quality and the economic viability of the region.