

Deal reached on water planning, development

By Alyson Chapman

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Water — it seems so simple.

But this wet substance is complex and vital for economic stability and growth.

Five local governmental bodies agree.

The cities of Ingram and Kerrville, Kerr County, the Upper Guadalupe River Authority and Headwaters Groundwater Conservation District have approved a memorandum of understanding that agrees to cooperate in future planning and development of water and wastewater facilities throughout the county.

"We are going to leverage our resources and work toward a common goal," said Ray Buck, general manager of UGRA. "This will ensure that we protect the environment and encourage quality growth."

With all agencies working together, Kerr County most likely will be eligible for more grants for water and wastewater projects.

"When it comes to Kerr County water issues, it makes sense for all the governmental entities to protect and conserve this valuable resource," said John Elliott, president of Headwaters GCD. "This memorandum of understanding is a positive step in that direction."

Some of the agencies already have worked together on several regional projects.

Several years ago, UGRA, Kerr County and the city of Kerrville cooperated to develop the Kerrville South wastewater system, to which 200 homes are connected and which has reduced septic system leakage into Camp Meeting Creek.

There is a plan in the works now that will develop a centralized wastewater system for Center Point and the eastern portion of the county.

The agencies also plan to cooperate on a range management plan that will preserve and enhance spring flow to the Guadalupe River.

The idea for the cooperative memorandum surfaced about three years ago.

The agencies also will work on identifying and developing additional groundwater and surface water supplies for the county; cooperate on the development of regional surface water supply, treatment, storage and transmission facilities; and identify areas with failing septic systems and work to develop regional wastewater facilities.

"All the governmental entities that deal in some form or fashion with water and wastewater need to work together in order to provide the best quality service we can for the citizenry," said A.L. "Curg" Starkey III, president of UGRA. "It's the people who get the rewards from this, and that is who counts."

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