

Jacob's Well Stops Flowing

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JACOB'S WELL STOPS FLOWING
Emergency 30% reduction in water use called for

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Jacob's Well, the famous natural spring known to be the longest underwater cave in Texas, stopped flowing for the second time in recorded history on the evening of October 20th. "The lack of rainfall and the continued pumping of the aquifer to serve local water supply has caused Jacob's Well to cease flowing," stated Jack Hollon of the Wimberley Valley Watershed Association (WVWA) and the Hays Trinity Groundwater Conservation District.

Jacob's Well has been hovering at between one and two cubic feet per second for the past several months. The well continued to flow through the drought of record in the 1950's and was the primary source of water flowing to the Blanco River which is also at it's lowest flow since the drought of record in 1956. Jacob's Well is the barometer for the health of the aquifer; the well ceasing to flow at this time is a major environmental event, as it stopped for the first time in recorded history in the summer of 2000.

Jacob's Well is the primary source of water flowing from the Trinity Aquifer to form Cypress Creek, the beautiful stream that rambles through the cities of Wood Creek and Wimberley. "Losing the flow to Jacob's Well is a signal that the aquifer is stressed and we all need to conserve water immediately. The WVWA is calling for a moratorium on permitting of any new wells or sub-divisions in the Trinity aquifer recharge zone that sustains Jacob's Well. We also request that all water supply companies and individual well owners move into drought contingency and cut back water use by 30% or more," stated David Baker, Executive Director of WVWA.

The Jacob's Well Natural Area was recently awarded a grant from Hays County parks and open space bond funds to purchase the 55 acres around the well and to establish a research and environmental education center. WVWA was founded in 1996 and acquired the property in 2005. The WVWA's mission advocates protecting the water quality and quantity of the area by promoting sustainable watershed management through community education, conservation and land protection.

"The economic well being of this region is directly linked to the protection of our groundwater and surface water resources. We know there is a direct correlation between the flow from Jacob's Well and the withdrawal of groundwater through pumping. This impacts not just our area but all of the people and businesses located downstream from Jacob's Well. Therefore we must all work to conserve and protect this

invaluable resource for those of us who live, work and enjoy the Wimberley Valley and this area of the Hill Country." Stated Dr. Cox, President of WVWA

The community's investment in protecting Jacob's Well, Blue Hole and Cypress Creek is threatened by unchecked development and the lack of authority to regulate pumping from the Trinity aquifer. Land in the recharge zone of Jacob's Well must be protected from any further development. As a community, we need to stop over pumping groundwater and advocate legislation to mandate rainwater harvesting for all new development in this sensitive area to preserve Jacob's Well and the environmental and economic future of this valley.

"We will know the worth of water when the well runs dry." - Ben Franklin

To keep track of the flow and water quality of Jacob's Well click on the link below.

<http://waterdata.usgs.gov/tx/nwis/uv?08170990>

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