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Photo: Pg 254-255

Friends for the Preservation of
Historic Landa Park by
Rosemarie L. Gregory
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Caption:A view of Landa Lake from
Gazebo Island. Courtesy of
Photographer, Gay Woodward

Whose Fault is it? Yours, Mine, Ours?

By Tim Barker, PhD

About the Author: Tim Barker, PhD is the past president of Friends for the Preservation of Historic Landa Park (Friends). Throughout the year Tim attends numerous meetings, belongs to many organizations, and is a voracious reader. Using these resources, Tim plans for the exceptional speakers to best inform us of important issues of our area. The following is his introduction to tomorrow's program.

The “fault” being addressed is the Balcones Escarpment Fault. This geological fault is important to you and me because it permits the Edwards Aquifer to bring yours, mine, and our underground water not only to Comal Springs in New Braunfels, and to the San Marcos Springs in San Marcos but also to millions of people along its 175 mile long journey from west (Bracketville in Kinney County) of San Antonio to east and northeast to Kyle in Hays County. The Comal Springs is the largest springs in the Southwest part of the North America. The Edwards Aquifer has been described as “Underground River of Texas” that hydrologically interconnects the Nueces, San Antonio, and Guadalupe River Basins.

The “drought of record in South Central Region of Texas, which occurred during the years of 1949 to 1957, graphically illustrated the interrelationship of your, mine and ours water supply. At the most critical point in this drought in the summer of 1956, the Comal Springs went dry and the San Marcus Springs dropped to a low level of 46 cfs. Consistent and sufficient flow is vital to protect endangered species which are under the auspices of the U.S.Fish and Wildlife Service(FWS). In 1993, the Texas Legislature enacted a bill that created the Edwards Aquifer Authority(EAA)and directed the EAA to implement measures that ensure “continuous minimum spring flow to protect these species” by December 31, 2012. The stakeholders' process was called Edwards Aquifer Recovery Implementation Program (EARIP) and included representatives from environmental, water authority and purveyors, industrial, municipal, public utility, state agency and agricultural interest related to the Edwards Aquifer. In 2011, the EARIP reached agreement on the Edwards Aquifer Habitat Conservation Plan (EAHCP). Implementation of the EAHCP required measures to increase viability of the species at Comal and San Marcus Springs and to take actions to ensure continuous minimum spring flow during a repeat of the “drought of record”. In 2013, FWS issued a Record of Decision stating its intent to approve the Implementing Committee in its effort to implement the EAHCP. Due to the reliance on the Edwards Aquifer of Landa Lake in New Braunfels and Spring Lake in San Marcos, one would expect a high degree of similarity of endangered species in both lakes. In reality, this is the case as has been shown by the study of researchers in both locations.

An open invitation to the community is extended by Friends for the Preservation of Historic Landa Park to attend a special presentation entitled “The Similarity of Landa Lake and Spring Lake” by Dr. Rob Dussler III: Monday January 14, 2019 in the Landa Haus, 360 Aquatic Circle in Landa Park at 3:00p.m. preceded by refreshments at 2:30p.m.

Dr. Dussler serves as a member of the senior leadership team for the Meadows Center for Water and

the environment at Texas State University and is Chief Executive Officer and Director of Spring Lake Operations.

This column is based on the book *New Braunfels' Historic Landa Park: Its Springs and Its People* by Rosemarie L. Gregory and Arlene K. Seales with special information obtained from the accompanying booklet, *The Comal Springs of Historic Landa Park*. For more information visit www.friendsforlandapark.org and Facebook.