

Linda Curtis Public Comments to Post Oak Savannah Groundwater Conservation District
League of Independent Voters • LIVTexas.org • 512.213.4511
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This is Linda Curtis speaking to you from Bastrop for the non-partisan, non-profit League of Independent Voters. We represent people throughout the “source” communities, as well as the “receiving” communities for Vista Ridge.

First, thank you all again for continuing to pursue getting to the bottom of San Antonio Water System’s discharge of Vista Ridge water, most of which we believe was not used for any beneficial purpose.

At this point, we believe SAWS has a serious credibility problem. We believe very little of anything they tell the public --- or *you*.

This last month SAWS has derailed --- by just one vote -- the appointment of the highly qualified and respected former General Manager of the Edwards Aquifer Authority, Robert Potts, as the replacement for an outgoing Trustee.

I believe this indicates SAWS is desperate to continue the fantasy of Vista Ridge as a “game changer”.

Instead, they are playing the game of hide and seek when the economic downturn due to COVID is causing terrible pain in San Antonio, the poorest urban area in the United States.

Fairness to SAWS ratepayers is the focus of a municipal petition drive for the SAWS Accountability Act, to be voted on in May 2021. If passed, an independent performance audit of Vista Ridge will happen. There has never been one – not before or during the development of the Vista Ridge “game changer.”

We believe it will become more apparent that SAWS made a bad bargain when they negotiated a “take and pay” contract to buy water, decades before they actually need it -- if they ever do need it. Their ratepayers are now saddled with buying 30% more water than SAWS admits it will ever need but can’t sell elsewhere.

In 2019, the City Council waived \$87 million in developer water supply impact fees. SAWS has also been discounting commercial water users’ rates, while increasing residential rates 58% in four years. The COVID debacle now prevents those commercial users from paying their fair share, while thousands (120,000 in May) of poor ratepayers turn to food lines for their next meal.

There is simply no excuse for SAWS’ moral bankruptcy in luring businesses that use water to San Antonio because the city is “waterful,” a word SAWS had the audacity to make up out of thin air.

We urge that our two districts (Post Oak and Lost Pines) hold feet to the fire when those who export our water act without accountability.

We are counting on you to protect all affected landowners and ratepayers. We hope you and the Lost Pines District can come together for this purpose because, as you all know, we share the same resources and we really ARE ALL in this together.

Though we have had and will continue to have our differences, we do not believe anyone wants to do harm here. That said, we all know that the profit motive can get the best of well intentions...pun intended. Thanks again for your time.