

## **Water group identifying major springs**

Alpine Avalanche

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The Far West Texas Planning Group held its Nov. 23 meeting at Sul Ross State University. The group includes about 40 members and about half were in attendance, with other interested citizens also present. John Ashworth, engineer for LBG-Guyton Associates in Austin, presented information for the board to consider in revising the current regional water plan, including water supply source and WUG supply source availability and designation of major springs that are significant to the water supply or natural resource protection. The major springs protection is a new state requirement for regional plans. This includes water supply by major springs and natural resources, including endangered species and esthetic value.

Representatives from Big Bend Natural Park and Guadalupe National Park were present and offered to provide major springs information located within park boundaries.

Ashworth provided information on the designation of ecologically unique river and stream segments, which will be identified according to the 77th Texas Legislature to ensure that regional water planning groups assess the impact of the regional water plan on these segments to make recommendations.

Those that have been identified to date in Region E are the Rio Grande from Presidio to the Brewster/ Terrell county line, Terlingua Creek, Cienega Creek (Presidio County), the Pecos River and Independence Creek in northeast Terrell County, and Little Aguja Creek in Jeff Davis County.

Designation of unique sites for reservoir construction is another item that regional water plans should take into consideration, also clarified by the 77th Legislature.

The board adopted the state water quality standard guidelines with emphasis on nitrates, arsenic and TDS (total dissolved solids).

It was apparent, and has been discussed at more than one meeting, that water data in the tri-county area are lacking. The water supply source availability table will reflect current usage for the tri-county area, Janet Adams of Ft. Davis Water Supply Corp. told the Avalanche.

To help with this problem, Adams said they have received funding, with help from Congressman Henry Bonilla, to drill 10 observation wells in the tri-county region.

Projections presented for Brewster County for future usage assumed no population growth. However, the board did receive a proposal from the City of Alpine that will be used in future projections.

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