

Bexar County Green Party

August 7, 2015

Greetings San Antonio Water System, Mayor, and City Council of San Antonio,

Bexar Greens believe that having a safe ample water supply is a basic Human Right. Water privatization has butted up against that Right where it has been tried. We oppose the Vista Ridge Pipeline Project as unnecessary to meet our water needs, because it is more expensive than better alternatives, and because San Antonio Water System (SAWS) will be buying water from a private corporation that is fencing water that it has dry-gulched from its unwilling regional owners.

Interestingly, the SAWS Board has not provided an explanation for rejecting its own staff's recommendations. SAWS staff concluded that we can get the water we need from Aquifer Storage, Desalination, Landscaping changes, and a Grey Water System for commercial use. On saws.org, SAWS tells us that an acre foot of Desalinated [brackish Bexar County] Water will cost \$1177, while an acre foot of Vista Ridge water will cost \$2300, about twice as much.

In fact, no true cost comparison study was done or publicized. And there was no study of the energy costs, including the large amounts of electricity that will be necessary to run the 142 mile pipeline and accompanying facilities. Neither is there mention of sources from which to obtain this energy.

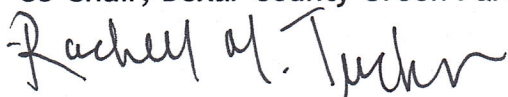
Unlike most projects around the nation which now include a Carbon Impact Assessment, no such assessment was done or publicized for the Vista Ridge Pipeline project.

The project's monetary cost will be paid for by saddling SAWS customers with at least an 18% water rate increase for the 30 year life of the \$3.4 Billion contract. This increase is in addition to any other increases in the coming years and decades, and will go largely to pay for a corporate middleman's profits. Water rate increases, estimated by SAWS to be 42.6% by 2020, hit retirees and low income families hardest.

The cheapest water of all is obtained from conservation, but the SAWS Board feels its bottom line threatened by water management practices such as conservation and re-use. Instead, it prefers to become a water trafficker, selling water wrested from Central Texas sources. At the same time, SAWS will burden San Antonians with decades of resentment and bad will from fellow Texans whose environment has been harmed, and whose basic Human Right to safe clean water has been violated.

We urge SAWS and City Council to cancel the Vista Ridge Pipeline contract. Cheaper alternatives are available to obtain the water San Antonians need, without our becoming a water bully.

Rachell M. Tucker
Co-Chair, Bexar County Green Party



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Co-Chair, Bexar County Green Party

