



## CURRICULUM

### **Welcome to Earth Camp's classroom curriculum.**

Earth Camp is the City of Austin Watershed Protection Department's four-day, outdoor, environmental education program for fifth-grade elementary school students. This curriculum was developed to aid the classroom teacher in preparing students for Earth Camp. The theme of this curriculum is watersheds, aquifers, and water quality. The content was chosen to correlate to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills and to integrate into Austin Independent School District fifth-grade science curriculum, while keeping the focus on water quality.

for more info, go to  
[www.austintexas.gov/earthcamp](http://www.austintexas.gov/earthcamp)

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## **What Is a Watershed?**

A watershed is the area of land that rain washes over on its downhill flow towards a specific creek, river, or lake. Each body of water has a watershed, defined by rises in elevation that separate it from a neighboring creek or river. A watershed gets its name from the local creek, river, or lake. In Austin, we have small creek watersheds which are all part of the larger Colorado River Watershed.

## **What Is the Difference Between a Watershed and a Recharge Zone?**

A watershed drains to surface water (creeks, rivers, lakes), and a recharge zone drains into groundwater (aquifers).

## **Why Should Elementary Students Learn About Watersheds?**

As the saying goes, children are our most precious resource. Since clean water is a resource we cannot live without, teaching children the science of clean water will help them to make decisions and develop habits that will preserve both these precious resources. Approximately seventy-five percent of the pollution in America's rivers and lakes occurs from the actions of people living in the watershed, not from factory discharge. Watersheds are the key to understanding how each of us individually affects water quality. Understanding watersheds means understanding choices for a cleaner and healthier environment.

## **Does the Curriculum Include Information About the Aquifer?**

Yes, there is a lesson on aquifers. The better choices for a cleaner watershed also apply to an aquifer recharge zone.

## **How Do I Use the Curriculum?**

The classroom curriculum consists of three hands-on, activity-oriented lessons, which encourage students with any learning style to become involved with learning. All lessons meet the requirements of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Science, but can be integrated into social studies as well.

## **Can I Be Flexible In Using the Lessons?**

Yes. Lessons can be reduced, adapted, skipped, or even expanded according to your planning needs. However, since lesson one is a concrete model of a watershed students easily understand, it is suggested this lesson not be skipped, but taught first. The other lessons are in an order that encourages students to build upon previous knowledge, but lessons can stand alone, integrate into other subjects, or be taught throughout the school year in conjunction with other subject matter (e.g. maps, scientific method). Please cover as much as possible before attending Earth Camp.



## CURRICULUM INTRODUCTION CONTINUED

### What Materials Do I Need?

This curriculum requires some special materials that are in an Earth Camp Curriculum Kit. The kits are delivered to schools participating in the City of Austin Watershed Protection's Earth Camp program. All other materials needed are normal school supplies.

### How Will I Get Materials to Continue Teaching this Curriculum in Years to Come?

Teachers continuing to participate in Earth Camp through the Teacher-Led Earth Camp program will be scheduled to receive an Earth Camp Curriculum Kit. If your school would like to put together your own kit, a list of suppliers is located at the back of the Curriculum Guide under "Resources."

### What About the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), and STAAR?

The lessons in this curriculum and at Earth Camp are correlated to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for fifth-grade science, social studies, language arts, math, and health. The TEKS are located in the next tabbed section. The knowledge and skills in these lessons will aid student success on the STAAR test.



## Earth Camp Curriculum TEKS

<b>SCIENCE TEKS</b>	<b>Water Watersheds</b>	<b>Puzzling Watersheds</b>	<b>Austin Water Down Under</b>
<b>(1) Scientific investigation and reasoning. The student conducts classroom and outdoor investigations following home and school safety procedures and environmentally appropriate and ethical practices. The student is expected to:</b>			
(A) demonstrate safe practices and the use of safety equipment as described in the Texas Safety Standards during classroom and outdoor investigations; and	x		x
(B) make informed choices in the conservation, disposal, and recycling of materials.	x		x
<b>(2) Scientific investigation and reasoning. The student uses scientific methods during laboratory and outdoor investigations. The student is expected to:</b>			
(A) describe, plan, and implement simple experimental investigations testing one variable;	x		x
(B) ask well-defined questions, formulate testable hypotheses, and select and use appropriate equipment and technology;	x		x
(C) collect information by detailed observations and accurate measuring;	x		x
(D) analyze and interpret information to construct reasonable explanations from direct (observable) and indirect (inferred) evidence;	x		x
(E) demonstrate that repeated investigations may increase the reliability of results;			x
(F) communicate valid conclusions in both written and verbal forms; and	x		x
<b>(3) Scientific investigation and reasoning. The student uses critical thinking and scientific problem solving to make informed decisions. The student is expected to:</b>			
(A) in all fields of science, analyze, evaluate, and critique scientific explanations by using empirical evidence, logical reasoning, and experimental and observational testing, including examining all sides of scientific evidence of those scientific explanations, so as to encourage critical thinking by the student;	x		x
<b>(4) Scientific investigation and reasoning. The student knows how to use a variety of tools and methods to conduct science inquiry. The student is expected to:</b>			
(A) collect, record, and analyze information using tools, including calculators, microscopes, cameras, computers, hand lenses, metric rulers, Celsius thermometers, prisms, mirrors, pan balances, triple beam balances, spring scales, graduated cylinders, beakers, hot plates, meter sticks, magnets, collecting nets, and notebooks; timing devices, including clocks and stopwatches; and materials to support observations of habitats or organisms such as terrariums and aquariums; and	x		x
(B) use safety equipment, including safety goggles and gloves.	x		x
<b>(7) Earth and space. The student knows Earth's surface is constantly changing and consists of useful resources. The student is expected to:</b>			
(B) recognize how landforms such as deltas, canyons, and sand dunes are the result of changes to Earth's surface by wind, water, and ice.(watershed and aquifer)	x		x
<b>(8) Earth and space. The student knows that there are recognizable patterns in the natural world and among the Sun, Earth, and Moon system. The student is expected to:</b>			
(D) identify and compare the physical characteristics of the Sun, Earth, and Moon. (watershed and aquifer)	x	x	x

<b>SOCIAL STUDIES</b>	<b>Water Watersheds</b>	<b>Puzzling Watersheds</b>	<b>Austin Water Down Under</b>
<b>(5) History. The student understands important issues, events, and individuals in the United States during the 20th and 21st centuries. The student is expected to:</b>			
(A) analyze various issues and events of the 20th century such as industrialization, urbanization, increased use of oil and gas, the Great Depression, the world wars, the civil rights movement, and military actions;	x	x	x
<b>(6) Geography. The student uses geographic tools to collect, analyze, and interpret data. The student is expected to:</b>			
(A) apply geographic tools, including grid systems, legends, symbols, scales, and compass roses, to construct and interpret maps.	x	x	
<b>(7) Geography. The student understands the concept of regions in the United States. The student is expected to:</b>			
(A) describe a variety of regions in the United States such as political, population, and economic regions that result from patterns of human activity;		x	
(B) describe a variety of regions in the United States such as landform, climate, and vegetation regions that result from physical characteristics such as the Great Plains, Rocky Mountains, and Coastal Plains;	x	x	x
(D) locate on a map important physical features such as the Rocky Mountains, Mississippi River, and Great Plains. (Edwards Aquifer)		x	
<b>(8) Geography. The student understands the location and patterns of settlement and the geographic factors that influence where people live. The student is expected to:</b>			
(A) identify and describe the types of settlement and patterns of land use in the United States;		x	
(B) explain the geographic factors that influence patterns of settlement and the distribution of population in the United States, past and present; and		x	
<b>(9) Geography. The student understands how people adapt to and modify their environment. The student is expected to:</b>			
(A) describe how and why people have adapted to and modified their environment in the United States, past and present, such as the use of human resources to meet basic needs; and		x	
(B) analyze the positive and negative consequences of human modification of the environment in the United States, past and present.	x		x
<b>ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND READING</b>	<b>Water Watersheds</b>	<b>Puzzling Watersheds</b>	<b>Austin Water Down Under</b>
<b>(13) Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Procedural Texts. Students understand how to glean and use information in procedural texts and documents. Students are expected to:</b>			
(A) interpret details from procedural text to complete a task, solve a problem, or perform procedures; and			x
(B) interpret factual or quantitative information presented in maps, charts, illustrations, graphs, timelines, tables, and diagrams.	x	x	
<b>(29) Listening and Speaking/Teamwork.</b>			
Students work productively with others in teams. Students continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to participate in student-led discussions by eliciting and considering suggestions from other group members and by identifying points of agreement and disagreement.	x	x	x

<b>HEALTH</b>	<b>Water Watersheds</b>	<b>Puzzling Watersheds</b>	<b>Austin Water Down Under</b>
<b>(9) Personal/interpersonal skills. The student demonstrates critical-thinking, decision-making, goal-setting and problem-solving skills for making healthy decisions. The student is expected to:</b>			
(C) utilize critical thinking in decision making and problem solving;	x		x
<b>MATH</b>	<b>Water Watersheds</b>	<b>Puzzling Watersheds</b>	<b>Austin Water Down Under</b>
<b>(4) Algebraic reasoning. The student applies mathematical process standards to develop concepts of expressions and equations. The student is expected to:</b>			
(H) represent and solve problems related to perimeter and/or area and related to volume.	x		x



## LESSON 1

### BACKGROUND

Everyone lives in a watershed, an area of land that drains water into a particular creek, river, or lake. Creeks, rivers and lakes interconnect to form a large watershed basin that drains to the ocean. The entire watershed basin of the Colorado River begins above Colorado City, and includes all the land that drains water into the Colorado River as it travels down to Matagorda Bay and the Gulf of Mexico. The Austin segment of the Colorado River Watershed Basin is composed of many smaller watersheds that drain to the Colorado River. Urban and natural areas within Austin city limits drain water to: (1) creeks, (2) the Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer, and (3) Lake Travis, Lake Austin, and Lady Bird Lake. Rainwater travels over all the surfaces in a watershed, so water quality is greatly affected by the condition of the land, streets, buildings, etc. within the boundary of a watershed.

Gravity forces water downhill, so a watershed's boundary is defined by high points, such as peaks and ridges, that divide two water systems. One of the largest and most famous watershed boundary line is the North American Continental Divide, which defines the boundary between all the water systems flowing to the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. Topographic maps are used to define a watershed boundary, along with a walk of the area to observe flow.

A watershed map prepared by the City of Austin can be used to locate your school's watershed. It is useful for elementary students to define the boundary of the smaller watershed where they live and go to school. The condition of the body of water in their watershed will be an indicator of the environmental problems facing their neighborhood. Students can relate to the effect of their own behavior and choices, and focus efforts on cleaning up pollution sources close to home.

## LESSON 1

**Description of the class:** 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Science

**Length of lesson:** One 45 minute class period

### I. Overview

A. Students will learn how water on the land runs off into a particular creek, river or lake. This is important for students to understand because it helps students realize how pollution on the land can get into the water.

#### B. Vocabulary

**watershed** – an area of land that drains water into a particular creek, river or lake. Water flows downhill, so hills ridges and other high points define the boundary of a watershed.

**runoff** – water that washes over the land (rather than soaking in) into a creek, river or lake.

**surface water** – water that is on the earth's surface, such as in creeks, rivers and lakes.

**groundwater** – water found underground that flows through soil or fractured rock supplying water to springs and water wells.

**infiltration** – when water slowly enters the ground

**topography** – the shape of the land

### LESSON 1

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- ▶ WORKSHEETS



**II. Objectives (performance or learner outcomes)**

A. Students will be able to:

- (1) define a watershed
- (2) predict the flow of water in a watershed, and
- (3) define groundwater and surface water

**III. Resources, materials and supplies needed**

A. [Watershed Riddle](#)

B. Copies of Wandering Water lab sheet for each student

C. Additional resources/materials/supplies included in kit:

- (1) 1 L bottle with rain cloud top
- (2) Two watershed models (one with green hills and red houses and one that the students build with puzzle pieces, a tray and surface cover)
- (3) 3000 ml pitcher (to catch runoff)
- (4) Food coloring

D. Pieces of yarn or string

**IV. Teacher Preparation**

A. Prepare a table with a flat surface for the watershed rainstorm demonstration. If doing this demonstration inside, use an area that can get wet. This demonstration can also be done outside.

B. Fill the 1 L bottle with water and attach rain cloud.

C. Copy Wandering Water lab sheet for each student.

**LESSON 1 - Part 1****ENGAGE**

Teacher will capture student interest using a [Watershed Riddle](#).

Project the Watershed Riddle. Present the students with the riddle. Discuss the Watershed Riddle as a class. Encourage students to explain their answers. Tell the students they will do an activity that will help them answer the Watershed Riddle.

**Critical questions that will establish prior knowledge and create a need to know:**

- How would the fertilizer get from the yard to the creek?
- Why is fertilizer bad for the creek?
- Which house do you think used the lawn fertilizer that polluted Blunn Creek? Why?

**EXPLORE****Description of hands-on / minds-on activity:**

Students will look at a physical watershed model with houses on hills and discuss how they think the water will flow from the yards to a creek; write a hypothesis about which house used the lawn fertilizer that polluted Blunn Creek and where they think the water will flow on the model during their rainstorm experiment (on the Wandering Water lab sheet).

Students will conduct experiments with the watershed model to observe how topography

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(the shape of the land) affects where water will flow during a rainstorm and how pollution on the land can affect the water quality of creeks and rivers. First, students will place a drop of food coloring to represent pollution near the house that they think used the lawn fertilizer that washed into Blunn Creek causing the algae to overgrow. Next, students test their hypothesis by using the 1 L bottle with rain cloud top to rain over the polluted yard to see if the food coloring pollutes Blunn Creek. Then, they can 'rain' over the entire model to observe and discuss how the water flows from the land surface to the creeks.

**Questions the teacher will use to encourage and/or focus students' exploration:**

- What do the red squares on the model represent? (houses)
- What does the food coloring represent? (fertilizer or any chemical pollution)
- What does the low area in the middle of the hills represent? (a creek, stream, or river)
- Can you locate which creek receives runoff from each house?

**EXPLAIN**

Explain to students that a watershed is an area of land that drains to a creek, river, or lake. Ask students what they think forms the boundary of a watershed. Ask the students to point to the high points, or hilltops. Lay one piece of colored yarn from hilltop to hilltop. These high points of land form watershed boundaries.

**Questions and techniques teacher will use to help students connect their exploration to the concept under investigation:**

- What do we call the area of land that drains to a creek, river, or lake? (a watershed)
- What are the boundaries of a watershed? (the highpoints)
- Can you point to the highpoints, or hilltops on the model?
- Can you use the yarn to outline Blunn Creek Watershed (the area of land that drains to Blunn Creek)?

## LESSON 1 - Part 2

**List of higher order thinking questions which teachers will use to solicit student explanations and help them to justify their explanations:**

- In what ways does this model represent the real world?
- What does the surface water in this model represent? (three Austin creeks that drain into the Colorado River)
- What are some limitations of this model?
- In the real world, does water soak into the land? (yes)
- Does this model represent water that soaks into the land? (no)
- Where does the water that does not soak into the land flow? (over the land into a creek, river, or lake)
- What does the pitcher that caught the water represent? (runoff from the rainstorm that drains into a bigger creek, stream, river, lake or the ocean)

**ELABORATE**

**Descriptions of how students will develop a more sophisticated understanding of the concept:**

Organize students into five groups. Give each group matching watershed puzzle pieces to build one hill in the model (i.e. group A, B, C, D, and E). When the hills are finished, allow groups to piece the hills together inside the tray making sure the mouth of the creek is located a the cut in the frame.

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Refill the 1 L bottle. Ask students to hypothesize how much of the 1 Liter 'rainstorm' they think will run off the watershed. Have a student hold the graduated pitcher under the mouth of the creek to catch the runoff. Allow other students to pass the watering bottle and 'rain' on the watershed. Students observe and discuss how the water flows from the land surface to the creek. When the 'rainstorm' is over, measure the amount of water in the pitcher.

#### Questions to ask the students:

- Why isn't the pitcher filled to 1000 ml (1L), since this was the amount in the 'rainstorm'? (some water stayed underground and some pooled in the creek)
- After it stops raining, is water still flowing? Where? (yes, the groundwater continuously flows)

#### How this knowledge is applied in our daily lives:

Some water soaked into the ground, becoming part of the groundwater. During the 'rainstorm', water soaked into the hill, then stopped when it came to a part of the hill that would not soak up water and flowed out and over this layer. When groundwater reaches a layer it cannot pass through, it comes out at the surface again. Groundwater provides continuous flow to the creek during the time when it is not raining.

#### Optional extension activity:

Students can 'rain' on the model a second time to compare the amount of runoff to the first demonstration. Ask students: What causes flooding? (When the ground is saturated, most of the water from a large rainstorm will run off, causing flooding.)

## LESSON 1 - Part 3

### EVALUATE

**ANSWER RIDDLE** – Show the [Watershed Riddle](#) on the overhead. Discuss with the students what the lines and enclosed circular shapes represent (the lines represent elevation and enclosed circular shapes represent hilltops). Ask if anyone can use the lines to identify the yard that polluted Blunn Creek.

**List of higher order thinking questions which teachers will use to solicit student explanations and help them to justify their explanations** (Project Riddle on the screen):

- What are these wavy lines on the map?
- What do hilltops look like on the map?
- Can you use the lines on the map to identify the yard that used the fertilizer that polluted Blunn Creek? (answer B)
- How can you tell which of these houses may have polluted Blunn Creek by putting fertilizer on their lawn?
- What are other chemicals people put on their lawns and gardens that can pollute the creek? (Pesticides and Herbicides)

On the Wandering Water lab sheet students will:

- (1) write their hypothesis for how they think the water will flow,
- (2) describe the results from their experiments
- (3) write what formed the boundaries of the watersheds
- (4) define the differences between groundwater and surface water

**EXTENSION;** Technology Activity- Copy "Find Your Watershed" for each student. Students use the interactive map found on the website included on the worksheet to identify and answer questions about their watershed.

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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

A **watershed** is an area of **land** that drains water into a particular creek, river, or lake. Watersheds have high points where one watershed ends and another watershed begins. You can look at the shape of the land to predict the flow of water to the creek.

**Hypothesis:**

Which house do you think used a lot of fertilizer that polluted Blunn Creek?

A, B, C, D E

Predict where the water will flow during a rainstorm on the watershed model?

I think \_\_\_\_\_

**Materials:**

Watershed pieces, tray,

1 liter bottle filled with water and rain cloud attached.

**Procedure:**

1. Build a hill using the matching watershed pieces.
2. Put your hill inside the tray, fitting it together like a puzzle with the other hills.
3. Use the rain cloud to pour rain on the watershed.  
Look for patterns in the flow of the water as it rains.

**Results:**

1. Where did the water flow? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Did all the water flow into one creek? \_\_\_\_\_

Explain your answer. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Where did the creek flow? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What formed the boundary of the creek's watershed? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is the difference between groundwater and surface water? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Conclusion:**

Where does water flow in a watershed? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_

Una **cuenca hidrográfica** es una área de tierra que envía el agua que recibe a un arroyo, río o lago en particular. Las cuencas tienen puntos altos donde termina una cuenca y empieza otra. Puedes ver la forma del terreno para predecir el flujo de agua hacia el arroyo.

**Hipótesis:**

¿Cuál casa crees que uso mucho fertilizante que contamina al Blunn Creek (Arroyo Blunn)? A, B, C, D, E

Predice hacia donde fluirá el agua durante una tormenta en el modelo de la cuenca.

Yo creo \_\_\_\_\_

**Materiales:**

Piezas de la cuenca, bandeja, vaso de laboratorio de 3000 ml lleno de agua, regadera de plantas

**Procedimiento:**

1. Forma una colina usando las piezas del juego de la cuenca.
2. Coloca la colina dentro de la bandeja, acomodándola como un rompecabezas con las otras colinas.
3. Mide 3,000 ml de agua de agua en la regadera. Deja caer la lluvia sobre la cuenca.  
Busca patrones en la corriente de agua al llover.

**Resultados:**

1. ¿Hacia dónde fluyó (corrió) el agua? \_\_\_\_\_

2. ¿Corrió toda el agua hacia un arroyo? \_\_\_\_\_

Explica tu respuesta. \_\_\_\_\_

3. ¿Hacia dónde corrió el agua del arroyo? \_\_\_\_\_

4. ¿Qué formó el límite de la cuenca del arroyo? \_\_\_\_\_

5. ¿Cuál es la diferencia entre agua subterránea y agua superficial? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Conclusión:**

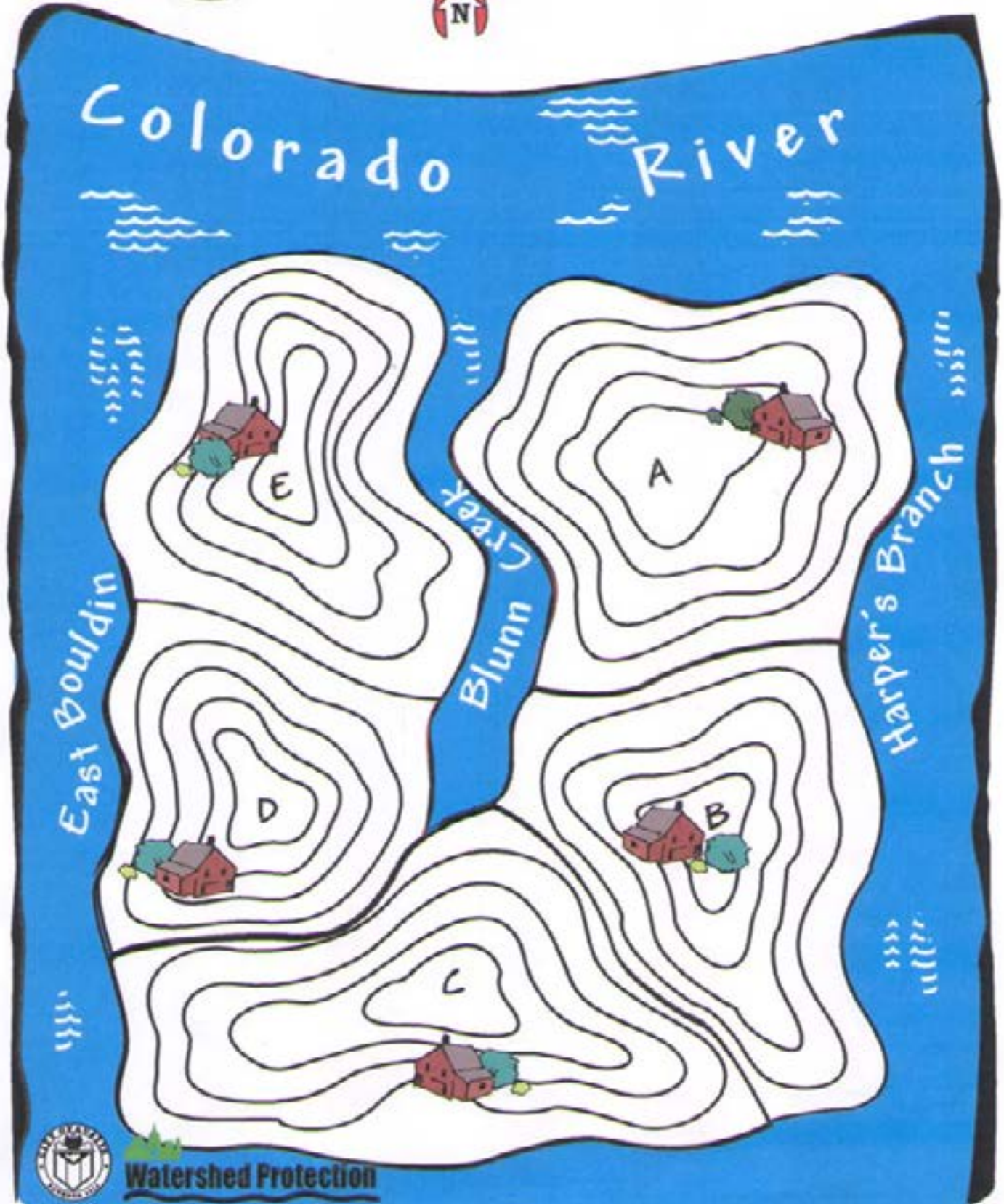
¿Hacia dónde corre el agua de una cuenca? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# WATERSHED RIDDLE

Lawn fertilizer washes into Blunn Creek causing the algae to overgrow and the creek to become thick and green. Which yard do you think the fertilizer is probably coming from?



Watershed Protection

# Find Your Watershed

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

DIRECTIONS: Requires a computer with internet access.

Check the boxes as you complete each step. Answer questions 1-4.

Open the internet. Go to [atxwatersheds.com](http://atxwatersheds.com)

Use the hand icon to move the map to the area where you live.

Use the plus sign to zoom in to your street. Click the mouse. The name of your watershed will be in a box in the middle of the screen.

1. Write the name of your watershed. \_\_\_\_\_

2. The name of your neighborhood creek is the same as your watershed.  
What is the name of your creek? \_\_\_\_\_

3. The water from your yard, driveway, and street drains  
into \_\_\_\_\_ creek.

Use the hand icon to find the location of the street where your school is located. Click the mouse.

4. Is your school in the same watershed as your home? \_\_\_\_\_  
If not, what is the name of your school's watershed? \_\_\_\_\_





## Encuentra tu cuenca

**Nombre:** \_\_\_\_\_

**INSTRUCCIONES:** Se requiere una computadora con acceso a Internet.

Marca el cuadró al completar cada paso. Contesta las preguntas 1-3.

Abre el Internet. Ve a la página [atxwatersheds.com](http://atxwatersheds.com).

Utiliza el ícono de la mano para mover el mapa hacia el área en donde vives.

Utiliza el signo de más para agrandar el mapa en tu calle. Haz clic con el ratón de la computadora (mouse). El nombre de cuenca aparecerá en una casilla en el medio de la pantalla.

1. Escribe el nombre de tu Cuenca \_\_\_\_\_.

2. El nombre del arroyo de tu vecindario es el mismo que el de tu cuenca. ¿Cómo se llama tu arroyo? \_\_\_\_\_.

3. El agua de tu patio, entrada al garaje y calle se drenan hacia el arroyo

Utiliza el ícono de la mano para encontrar la ubicación de la calle en donde está tu escuela. Haz clic con el ratón de la computadora.

4. ¿Está tu escuela en la misma cuenca que tu casa? \_\_\_\_\_

Si no es así, ¿cuál es el nombre de la cuenca de tu escuela? \_\_\_\_\_



## BACKGROUND

Austin is comprised of many different watershed areas surrounding creeks, as well as watersheds that drain directly into Lake Austin and Lady Bird Lake. Not every creek's watershed is completely within the city limits. Most of the watersheds located on the boundaries of Austin begin in one city or county, then flow through Austin to the Colorado River. The creeks in Austin are part of the Colorado River watershed basin. A basin is the entire land area from which a river and its tributaries receive water. The entire Colorado River basin is shown on the Major Basins of Texas map. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Two Austin creeks, Lake Creek and Rattan Creek, do not flow to the Colorado River, but are part of the Brazos River Watershed. They flow through the City of Round Rock to the San Gabriel River, which then flows to the Brazos watershed basin.

Since high points and ridges define the boundary of a watershed, the boundary of the Colorado River watershed is a good place to view the basin of the Colorado River in Austin. The watershed map shows major streets, and gives a good idea of places to view the entire Austin/Colorado River watershed basin. On IH 35 just south of Onion Creek (#20 on the map) is the southern boundary, or high point, of the watershed, while the northern boundary is located on Burnet Road north of Wells Branch Parkway. The largest water tower in the world marks this high point, and was placed there because the rest of northern Austin is located downhill, allowing water flow to rely on gravity.

In this lesson, students will use map skills to locate watersheds and interpret information, identify the watershed where they live and go to school, and understand all land is in a watershed. The "Extension," and activities during Earth Camp will teach students that when it rains, rainwater washes trash, excess fertilizer, pesticides, oil, and other pollutants on the land into the local creek or river. What students and others do in their neighborhood affects their local creek and the Colorado River, which is our drinking water source.

### LESSON 2

- ▶ BACKGROUND
- ▶ LESSON PLANS
- ▶ WORKSHEETS



**CONCEPT**

Watershed

**OBJECTIVE**

Students will use watershed maps to explain:

1. how all land is a watershed;
2. how all bodies of water have a watershed;
3. why all but two creeks in Austin flow to the Colorado River/Lady Bird Lake, and;
4. the location of their school's watershed.

**TIME**

One 45 minute time period.

**VOCABULARY**

**Watershed** - an area of land that drains water into a particular creek, river, or lake. The boundaries of a watershed are the highest elevation points. The creek flows through the lowest area of the watershed basin.

**Tributary** - a creek, stream, or river that flows into a larger creek, stream, or river.

**Basin** - the entire land area from which a river and its tributaries receive water.

**TEACHER MATERIALS**

[Major Basins of Texas \(map\)](#)

Do You Know Your Watershed (poster)

[AISD Watersheds \(map\)](#)

**STUDENT MATERIALS**

“AISD Watersheds” map for each pair of students (in notebook)

**Copy:** Puzzling Watersheds worksheet for each group

**TEACHER PREPERATION**

1. Project the Major Basins of Texas map where all students can see it.
2. Print color copies of “AISD Watersheds” for each pair of students.
3. Write vocabulary on the board.
4. Organize students into five groups.

**LESSON 2**

- ▶ BACKGROUND
- ▶ LESSON PLANS
- ▶ WORKSHEETS



## INTRODUCTION

**REVIEW LESSON 1 CONCEPT** - Ask students what they know about watersheds? (Answer: Watershed means land. High points of the land are the boundaries of a watershed, middle or low area is the creek. Water flows over the land to a creek, and the creek drains in a river.)

### Procedure

1. **LOCATE THE COLORADO RIVER WATERSHED ON THE MAJOR BASINS OF TEXAS MAP** - Use the map to explain to students how all land is a watershed, and all bodies of water are surrounded by a land area that drains to it. The major rivers of Texas have large watershed basins. Austin is in the Colorado River watershed basin. Within the river basin, we have many smaller watersheds surrounding tributaries to the major river.
2. **PROJECT THE AISD WATERSHEDS MAP** - Give each pair of students a copy of the map.
3. **LOCATE YOUR LOCAL WATERSHED –**
  - Colored areas represent an area of land that drains to a creek (watershed). The creek is the blue line flowing through the middle of the watershed.
  - Identify your neighborhood creek. Use the key at the bottom to locate the watershed for your local creek. Ask students to put a symbol where the school is located and add it to the key at the bottom.
4. **DEFINE TRIBUTARY AND BASIN** - Explain to students every Austin creek has a watershed (or land area that drains to a particular creek), and the creeks are part of the larger Colorado River watershed. The creeks in Austin are tributaries to the Colorado River, which together form the Colorado River Basin.
5. **INTRODUCE THE WATERSHED PUZZLE** - Discuss how watersheds fit together like a puzzle. Every piece of land is part of a watershed, and every body of water has a watershed. Creeks, rivers, lakes and oceans are connected, so any water in one part of a creek or river, will eventually flow into connecting rivers, lakes, and the ocean downstream. It is important to keep the creek in your neighborhood clean, because it flows to the Colorado River, where Austin gets its drinking water, and because Bastrop, Smithville, and other cities are downstream. Tell the class they will learn about the Austin Watershed Puzzle so they can identify the locations of the different watersheds as they travel around Austin.
6. **RECHARGE ZONE** - The white crosshatch on the map represents the Edwards Aquifer recharge zone. The water in this part of the watershed goes underground into the aquifer.

**LESSON 2**  
 ▶ BACKGROUND  
 ▶ LESSON PLANS  
 ▶ WORKSHEETS



7. **MODEL ANSWERS FOR ONE WATERSHED PIECE** - Demonstrate how to use a watershed, the “AISD Watersheds” map, and “Puzzling Watersheds” worksheet to answer questions about a watershed.
8. **DO THE ACTIVITY** - Organize students into groups of 4 students. Give each group a “Puzzling Watersheds” worksheet and a watershed color to complete: blue, green, purple/red, or yellow watersheds. Allow students time to work together with their group to answer questions.

**EXTENSION:** Instruct students to use the “AISD Watersheds” map to answer the following:

1. Which watersheds would you travel through to get to Barton Creek from your school?
2. At a point before Barton Creek watershed, tell the students someone in the car threw trash out the window. Ask students which watershed was polluted?
3. Ask students if the trash could also pollute the Colorado River/Ladybird Lake? Explain.

**LESSON 2**

- ▶ BACKGROUND
- ▶ LESSON PLANS
- ▶ WORKSHEETS



## Lesson 2 - Puzzling Watersheds

# Earth Camp



### WORKSHEET

**DIRECTIONS:** Use the chart on the back to write your answers.

1. Watershed Number & Watershed Name: Use the “AISD Watersheds” map to locate each watershed of the color you have been assigned. Write the number and name for each watershed.
2. N or S: Locate the Colorado River. Write N if the watershed is located north (above) the Colorado River. Write S if the watershed is located south (below) the Colorado River.
3. Tributary: Most of the creeks in Austin flow to the Colorado River. Sometimes one creek will flow into another creek, but eventually Drain into the Colorado River. Use the “AISD Watersheds” map to look at each watershed. If the watershed connects to Lady Bird Lake (which is the Colorado River), write Co. R. If the watershed connects to a creek, write the name of that watershed. If you have #33 or #34, they are tributaries of the Brazos River.
4. Recharge: The white crosshatch represents the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone. If the watershed has recharge zone, write yes. If not, write no.

# Lesson 2 - Puzzling Watersheds

## Earth Camp



### WORKSHEET

Group Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Number	Watershed Name	N or S	Tributary	Recharge

# LECCIÓN 2 - Cuencas enigmáticas

## Earth Camp



### HOJA DE TRABAJO

**INSTRUCCIONES:** Usa la tabla al dorso para escribir tus respuestas.

1. Número de la cuenca y nombre de la cuenca: Usa el mapa “Cuencas de AISD” para ubicar cada cuenca del color que te asignaron. Escribe el número y el nombre de cada cuenca.
2. N o S: Ubica el río Colorado. Escribe N si la cuenca está ubicada al norte (arriba) del río Colorado. Escribe S si la cuenca está ubicada al sur (abajo) del río Colorado.
3. Afluente: La mayoría de los riachuelos de Austin fluyen al río Colorado. A veces un riachuelo fluye a otro riachuelo, pero finalmente drena en el río Colorado. Usa el mapa “Cuencas de AISD” para ver cada una de las cuencas. Si la cuenca se conecta con el lago Lady Bird (que es el río Colorado), escribe R. Co. Si la cuenca se conecta a un riachuelo, escribe el nombre de esa cuenca. Si tienes el número 33 o 34, esos son afluentes del río Brazos.
4. Recarga: El cuadrículado blanco representa la Zona de Recarga del Acuífero Edwards. Si la cuenca tiene una zona de recarga, escribe sí. Si no la tiene, escribe no.



# LECCIÓN 2 - Rompecabezas de cuencas

## Earth Camp

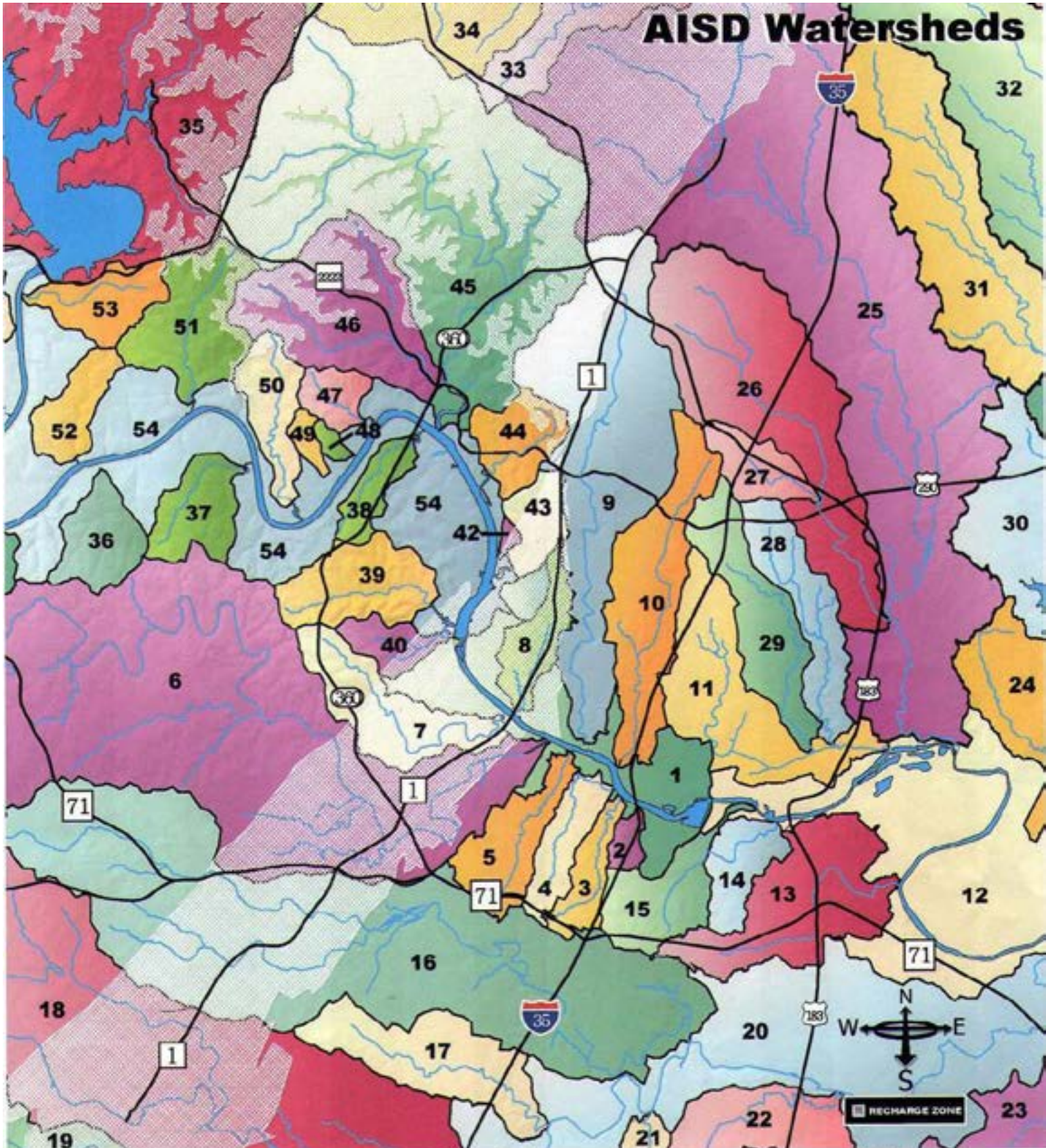


### HOJA DE PRACTICA

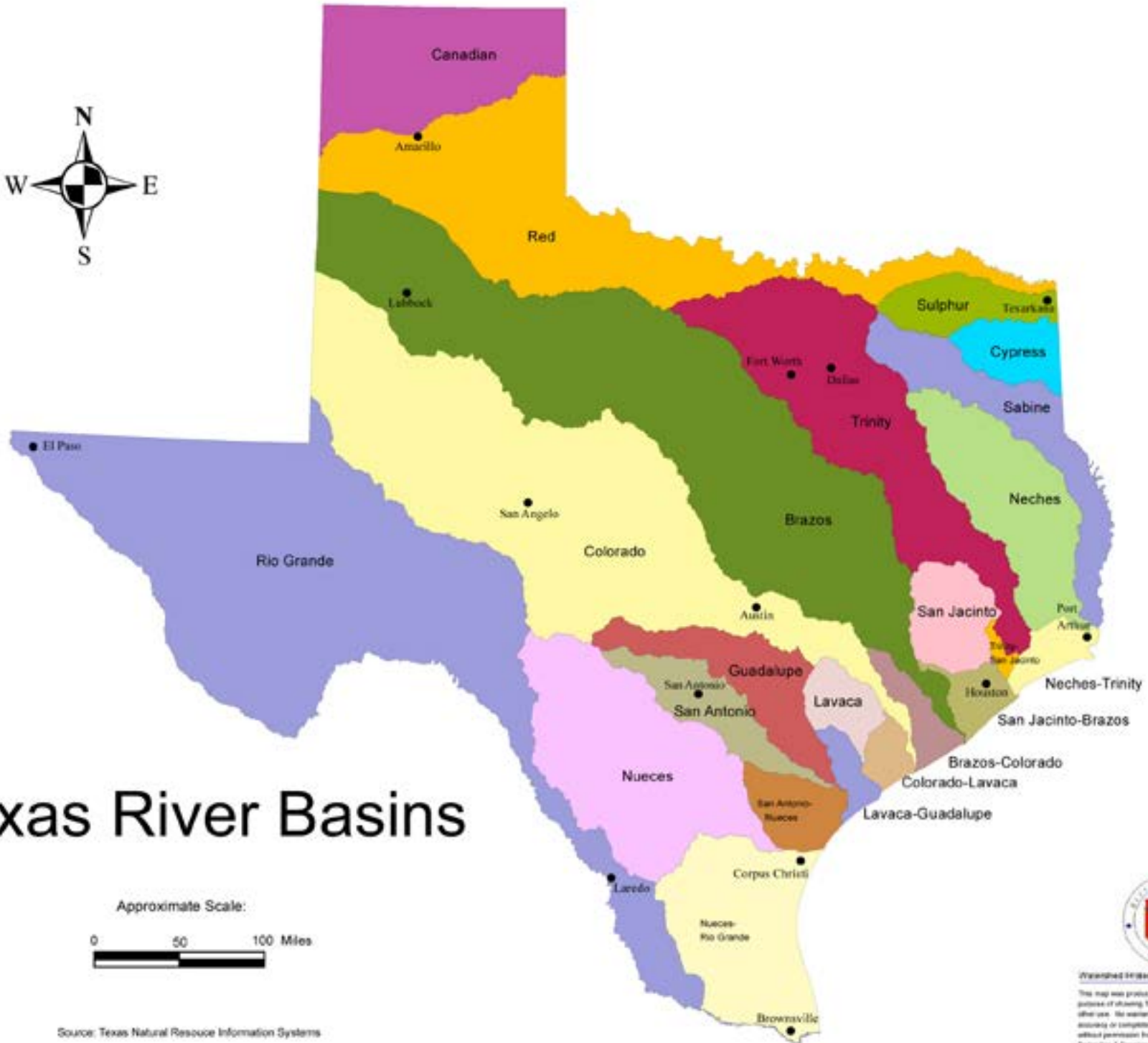
Nombres: \_\_\_\_\_

Número	Nombre de la cuenca	N o S	¿Río Tributario?	¿Zona de Recargo?

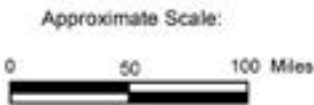
# AISD Watersheds



- |                   |                       |                   |                         |                    |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Town Lake      | 12. Colorado River    | 23. Dry East      | 34. Lake                | 45. Bull           |
| 2. Harpers Branch | 13. Carson            | 24. Elm           | 35. Lake Travis         | 46. West Bull      |
| 3. Blunn          | 14. East Country Club | 25. Walnut        | 36. Commons Ford        | 47. Coldwater      |
| 4. East Bouldin   | 15. West Country Club | 26. Little Walnut | 37. Cuernavaca          | 48. Hog Pen        |
| 5. West Bouldin   | 16. Williamson        | 27. Buttermilk    | 38. St. Stephens        | 49. Connors        |
| 6. Barton         | 17. South Boggy       | 28. Fort          | 39. Bee                 | 50. Turkey         |
| 7. Eanes          | 18. Slaughter         | 29. Tannehill     | 40. Little Bee          | 51. Panther Hollow |
| 8. Johnson        | 19. Bear              | 30. Decker        | 41. Taylor Slough South | 52. Steiner        |
| 9. Shoal          | 20. Onion             | 31. Harris Branch | 42. Hucks Slough        | 53. Bear West      |
| 10. Waller        | 21. Marble            | 32. Gilleland     | 43. Taylor Slough North | 54. Lake Austin    |
| 11. Boggy         | 22. Cottonmouth       | 33. Rattan        | 44. Dry North           |                    |



# Texas River Basins



Source: Texas Natural Resource Information Systems



Watershed Protection & Development Review  
This map was produced by the City of Austin for the sole purpose of showing Texas river basins and is not for any other use. No warranty is made by the City regarding its accuracy or completeness. Reproduction is not permitted without permission from City of Austin - Watershed Protection & Development Review.

## BACKGROUND

Aquifers are underground rock layers that store ground-water. The most common aquifers are made up of sand, gravel, or limestone. The Edwards Aquifer in Austin is formed from layers of limestone. Some layers of the limestone are easily dissolved by water, creating holes, channels and caves. This can create a type of land surface called karst. A karst area has many sinkholes, caves and underground channels that can store a lot of water. The limestone that forms a karst area is very porous and appears 'honeycombed'. Karst aquifers are especially susceptible to pollution because the openings on the surface (sinkholes, cave openings, cracks, and fractures) can be direct conduits to the aquifer, allowing water to flow into the aquifer without any filtration through the soil.

**There are three major zones in the aquifer:**

**The contributing zone:** watersheds upstream of a recharge zone whose creeks and rivers flow downstream to the recharge zone

**The recharge zone:** land with caves, sinkholes, cracks and fractures that rainwater and streamflow drain through to an aquifer

**The confined zone:** area of land where the aquifer is capped by clay or shale so the groundwater is under pressure

Water from the Edwards Aquifer is usually crystal clear and cold. However, because water moves quickly through the limestone cavities, there is little filtering to remove pollutants. Water must enter the aquifer clean to come out clean at the springs.

### LESSON 3

- ▶ BACKGROUND
- ▶ LESSON PLANS
- ▶ WORKSHEET



**CONCEPT**

Comparing the Edwards Aquifer to other aquifer formations.

**OBJECTIVE**

The students will:

1. build three models of three types of aquifers (sand, soil, and karstic limestone);
2. measure the rate that water flows through the three types of aquifers; and
3. measure the rate that pollution flows through the three types of aquifers .

**TIME**

One hour. The extension will require another class period.

**VOCABULARY**

**Aquifer** – an underground layer of earth, gravel or rock that holds water. The Edwards Aquifer is underground rock that holds water.

**Karst** – an area of land that has caves, sinkholes, and underground drainage. The Edwards Aquifer is a karst aquifer.

**TEACHER MATERIALS**

**In Kit:** karstic limestone

[Edwards Aquifer Regional \(map\)](#)

[Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer Hydrologic Zones \(map\)](#)

**STUDENT MATERIALS - for each group of 6 students**

Aquifer Research (student worksheet)

**In Kit:**

- 3 clear cups (marked #1, #2, #3)
- 3 funnels
- 3 paper coffee filters
- 1 bottle of “pollution” (food coloring)
- 1 quart bag each of rocks, soil, and sand
- 100 ml beaker for measuring water

**TEACHER PREPARATION**

1. Become familiar with the materials that each group will need.
2. Make copies of the “Aquifer Research” worksheet for each group.

**LESSON 3**

- ▶ BACKGROUND
- ▶ LESSON PLANS
- ▶ WORKSHEET



## INTRODUCTION

Explain to students that they will be conducting research on what earth materials best filter pollution underground. Show students a sample of karstic limestone. Define karst. Explain that the aquifer in Austin is made of karstic limestone.

### Procedure

1. **WORK IN COOPERATIVE GROUPS** - Divide students into groups of six. Give each group a copy of the “Aquifer Research” worksheet. Help students assign each person in the group a job: Pollution Manager, Water Manager, Time Keeper, Recorder (reader), Materials Manager, Presenter. Explain that the recorder will read the instructions that will tell them what to do at a given time.
2. **DISTRIBUTE MATERIALS** - Pass out lab materials to each group.
3. **FORM A HYPOTHESIS** - The Recorder will read the instructions and write the hypothesis agreed upon by the group on the “Aquifer Research” worksheet. Students should not start the experiment until the hypothesis is finished.
4. **DO THE EXPERIMENT** - Students proceed with the instructions and conduct the experiment.
5. **RECORD THE RESULTS** - The Recorder will write the results and conclusions agreed upon by the group on the “Aquifer Research” worksheet.
6. **CLEAN UP** - When students have completed the experiment and recorded their results, the materials manager cleans up by washing out the plastic bottles and returning all materials except the used sand and soil to the kit.

### EVALUATION

Completed “Aquifer Research” worksheet .

#### LESSON 3

- ▶ BACKGROUND
- ▶ LESSON PLANS
- ▶ WORKSHEET



**WORKSHEET**

Directions: Write your name by your job description.  
Follow the directions to complete the lab.

**RECORDER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MATERIALS MANAGER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TIMEKEEPER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**WATER MANAGER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**POLLUTION MANAGER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PRESENTER:** \_\_\_\_\_

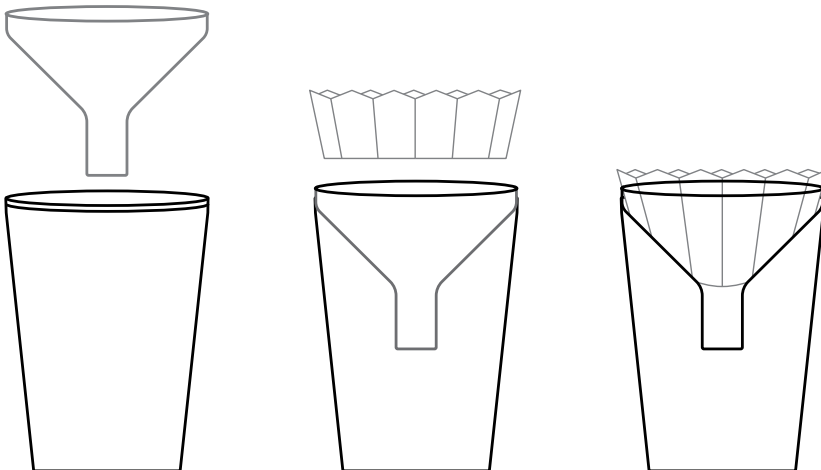
**RECORDER:** Read out loud to the group the question: What natural materials such as sand, rocks and soil are best for keeping underground water clean by keeping pollution out of the aquifer?

Talk over with the group answer to the question and fill in your hypothesis:

We think that (circle one)      sand      soil      rock      will be the most effective filter of pollution in an aquifer.

Read out loud to the group the following: We are now going to conduct an experiment to test our hypothesis. We will compare Austin's Edwards Aquifer (#1) the Miami Sand Aquifer (#2) and the Oklahoma Soil Aquifer (#3) to see which materials are the best pollution filter.

**MATERIALS MANAGER:** Put the funnels into the cups labeled #1, #2, and #3. Place a paper filter in each one.



In #1 place rocks into the filter. This represents the karstic limestone of the Edwards Aquifer in Austin.

In #2 place sand into the filter. This represents the Miami Sand Aquifer.

In #3 place dirt into the filter. This represents the Oklahoma Aquifer.

**TIMEKEEPER AND WATER MANAGER:** Work together. The WATER MANAGER uses the beaker to add 100 ml of water to the first container #1 (all at once), while the TIMEKEEPER counts until all the water has come through the container. TIMEKEEPER should use this system to count: Mississippi One, Mississippi Two, Mississippi Three, etc. Do exactly the same experiment on #2 and #3.

**RECORDER:** Write down the number of seconds for each container as reported by the TIMEKEEPER.

#1 \_\_\_\_\_ sec.      #2 \_\_\_\_\_ sec.      #3 \_\_\_\_\_ sec.

**POLLUTION MANAGER:** Take the bottle of pollution (food coloring). Add three full droppers to each aquifer.

**ALL SCIENTISTS:** Work together to describe how much pollution entered the aquifer in each container. What does this mean about pollution in our aquifer?

**WATER MANAGER:** Add 100 ml of water to each container.

**ALL SCIENTISTS:** Work together to describe the differences in color? What do you think that difference means about pollution in our aquifer?

**RECORDER:** writes the answers:

#1 Edwards Aquifer (rock) \_\_\_\_\_

#2 Miami Aquifer (sand) \_\_\_\_\_

#3 Oklahoma Aquifer (soil) \_\_\_\_\_





**CONCLUSIONS:** We studied three aquifers to see which earth material is the best filter for pollution. Based on our research, we found the following:

#1 Edwards Aquifer (rock)

---

#2 Miami Aquifer (sand)

---

#3 Oklahoma Aquifer (soil)

---

Our original HYPOTHESIS was that \_\_\_\_\_ was the best filter of pollution.

In our experiment we found that \_\_\_\_\_ is the best filter of pollution in an aquifer. We believe that the people who live in the \_\_\_\_\_ Aquifer have to be the most careful with their pollution because \_\_\_\_\_

---



# HOJA DE PRÁCTICA

Instrucciones: Escribe tu nombre junto al título de tu trabajo.  
Sigue las instrucciones de la investigación.

**Anotador:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Encargado de los materiales:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Encargado del tiempo:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Encargado del agua:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Encargado del contaminante:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Presentador(a):** \_\_\_\_\_

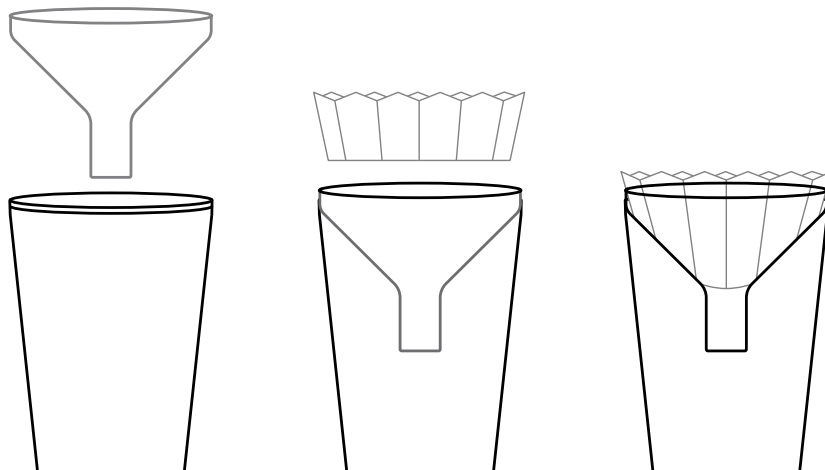
**Anotador:** Lee la pregunta en voz alta al grupo: De los materiales naturales tales como arena, piedras y tierra, ¿cuál sirve mejor para impedir la contaminación del acuífero y mantener pura el agua subterránea?

Comenta la respuesta con el grupo y escribe la hipótesis:

Pensamos que la (marca una) \_\_\_\_arena \_\_\_\_tierra \_\_\_\_piedra  
es el mejor filtro contra la contaminación de un acuífero.

Lee en voz alta lo siguiente al grupo: Ahora vamos a hacer un experimento para comprobar nuestra hipótesis. Compararemos el Acuífero Edwards de Austin (#1) con el Acuífero Miami (#2) y el Acuífero Oklahoma (#3) para determinar cuál de los materiales es el mejor filtro contra la contaminación.

**Encargado de los materiales:** Pon los embudos en los vasos #1, #2 y #3.  
Pon un filtro de papel en cada uno. Pon un filtro de papel en cada una.



Pon las piedras en el filtro #1. Esto representa la caliza cársica del Acuífero Edwards de Austin.

Pon la arena en el filtro #2. Esto representa al Acuífero Miami.

Pon la tierra en el filtro #3. Esto representa al Acuífero Oklahoma.

**Encargados del tiempo y del agua:** Trabajen juntos. El estudiante encargado del agua vacía 100 ml de agua al recipiente #1 (toda el agua a la vez), mientras que el encargado del tiempo cuenta hasta que toda el agua pasa por el filtro. El encargado del tiempo debe usar el siguiente sistema para contar: Mississippi uno, Mississippi dos, Mississippi tres, etc.

Repite el mismo proceso con los recipientes #2 y #3.

**Anotador:** Anota el número de segundos para cada recipiente según contó el encargado del tiempo.

#1 = \_\_\_\_\_ segundos    #2 = \_\_\_\_\_ segundos    #3 = \_\_\_\_\_ segundos

**Encargado del contaminante:** Agrega 3 goteros llenos de contaminante (colorante de alimentos en la botella pequeña) a cada acuífero.

**Todos los científicos:** Trabajen juntos para describir la cantidad de contaminante que entró en cada acuífero. ¿Qué nos dice esto sobre la contaminación en nuestro acuífero?

**Encargado del agua:** Agrega 100 ml de agua a cada recipiente.

**Todos los científicos:** Trabajen juntos para describir la diferencia en el color. ¿Qué nos dice esta diferencia sobre la contaminación en nuestro acuífero?

**Anotador(a):** escribe las respuestas:

#1 Acuífero Edwards (piedras) \_\_\_\_\_

#2 Acuífero Miami (arena) \_\_\_\_\_

#3 Acuífero Oklahoma (tierra) \_\_\_\_\_



**Conclusiones:** Estudiamos tres acuíferos para saber cuál material terrestre es el mejor filtro para la contaminación. Basándonos en nuestra investigación, descubrimos lo siguiente:

#1 Acuífero Edwards (piedras)

---

#2 Acuífero Miami (arena)

---

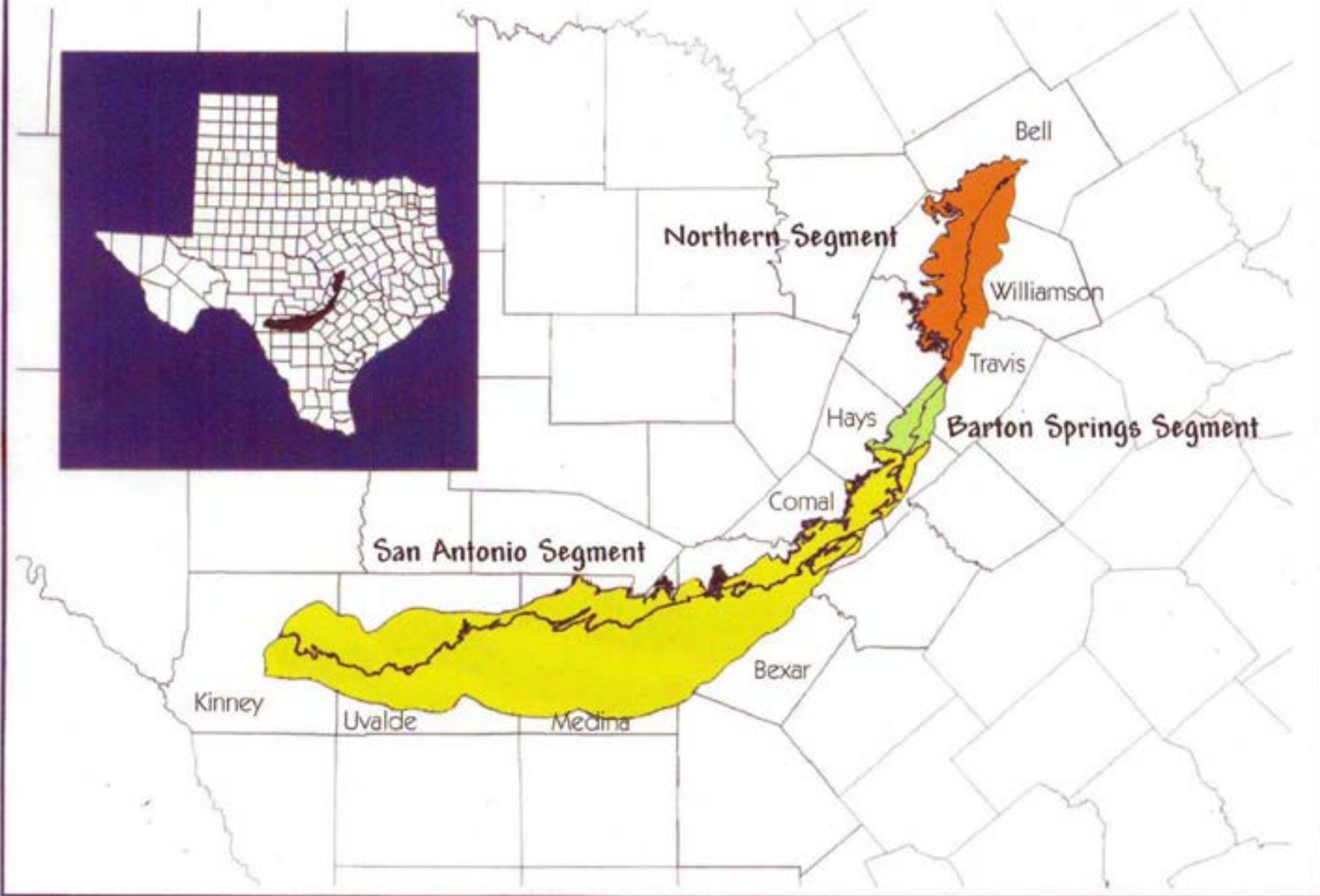
#3 Acuífero Oklahoma (tierra)

---

Nuestra hipótesis original decía que la \_\_\_\_\_ era el mejor filtro contra la contaminación. En nuestro experimento descubrimos que la \_\_\_\_\_ es el mejor filtro contra la contaminación del acuífero. Creemos que las personas que viven en el Acuífero \_\_\_\_\_ tienen que tener más cuidado con la contaminación porque \_\_\_\_\_

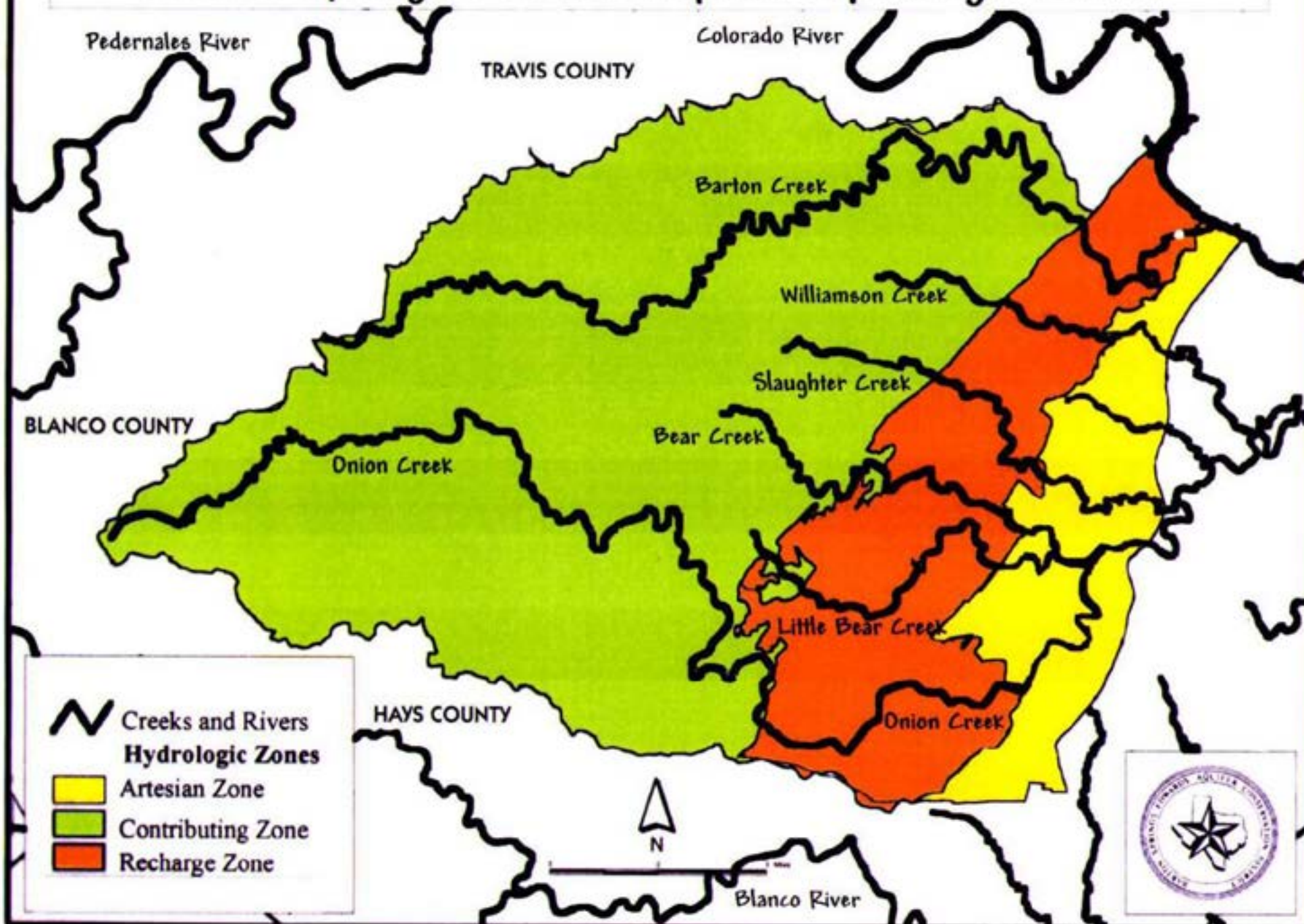


# EDWARDS AQUIFER REGIONAL MAP



Used with permission and adapted from BSEACD

# Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer Hydrologic Zones



Used with permission and adapted from BSEACD

**Acorn Naturalists**

Web: [www.acornnaturalists.com](http://www.acornnaturalists.com)

**BioQuip Products, Inc.**

Web: [www.bioquip.com](http://www.bioquip.com)

**forceps (blunt featherweight)**

**Nasco**

Web: [www.enasco.com/science](http://www.enasco.com/science)

**handheld magnifiers,  
compass, beakers**

**Wards Geology**

Web: [www.wardsci.com](http://www.wardsci.com)

**watershed and groundwater models**

**Carolina Biological Supply Co.**

Web: [www.carolina.com](http://www.carolina.com)

**gloves, nets, compass, beakers, thermometers**

**LaMotte Company**

Web: [www.lamotte.com](http://www.lamotte.com)

**elementary chemical water tests**

**RESOURCES**

- ▶ CATALOGS
- ▶ CURRICULUM & PROGRAMS



**ENDANGERED SPECIES:****Project WILD**

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department  
 4200 Smith School Road  
 Austin, Texas 78744  
 Contact: Project WILD Coordinator  
 Phone: (512) 328-6035  
 TPWD Website: [www.tpwd.state.tx.us](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us)

**Wild Basin Preserve**

805 North Capital of Texas Highway  
 Austin, Texas 78746  
 Phone: (512) 327-7622  
 Website: [www.wildbasin.org](http://www.wildbasin.org)

**National Wildlife Foundation**

Website: [www.nwf.org](http://www.nwf.org)

**HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE EDUCATION:****Beat the Baron Waste**

Lower Colorado River Authority  
 Phone: (512) 473-3200  
 McKinney Roughs Workshops  
 LCRA Website: [www.LCRA.org](http://www.LCRA.org)

**PLANT EDUCATION:****National Wildflower Research Center**

4801 La Crosse Avenue  
 Austin, Texas 78739  
 Phone: (512) 292-4200  
 Website: [www.wildflower.org](http://www.wildflower.org)

**Project Learning Tree**

Texas Forestry Assn.  
 PO Box 1488  
 Lufkin, TX 75901  
 Phone: 936-632-8733  
 Fax: 936-632-9461

**RESOURCES**

- ▶ CATALOGS
- ▶ CURRICULUM & PROGRAMS





**REDUCING, REUSING, AND RECYCLING EDUCATION:**

Keep Austin Beautiful (KAB)  
[www.KeepAustinBeautiful.org/educate](http://www.KeepAustinBeautiful.org/educate)  
 Phone: (512) 391-0617

**WATER EDUCATION:****Aquatic WILD**

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department  
 4200 Smith School Road  
 Austin, Texas 78744  
 Contact: Project WILD Coordinator  
 Phone: (512) 328-6035

**City of Austin – Watershed Protection Department**

Website: [www.austintexas.gov/watershed/youthed](http://www.austintexas.gov/watershed/youthed)

**The Pondwater Tour**

LaMotte Company  
 Website: [www.lamotte.com](http://www.lamotte.com)

**Project WET Texas****PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS****Science Teachers Association of Texas (STAT)**

(Coordinates CAST, Conference for the Advancement of Science Teaching)

STAT

P.O. Box 4828,  
 Austin, TX 78765  
 (512) 451-STAT [7828]  
 Website: [www.statweb.org](http://www.statweb.org)

**Texas Association for Environmental Education (TAE)**

Website: [www.statweb.org/TAE/](http://www.statweb.org/TAE/)

**RESOURCES**

- ▶ CATALOGS
- ▶ CURRICULUM & PROGRAMS

