

The Bandera PROPHEET

April 6, 2021

The Bandera County River Authority and Groundwater District (BCRAGD) Board of Directors will reconsider the Young Life Water Well Permit Application at their meeting on Thursday, April 8, at 9 a.m. The item was tabled at the BCRAGD January meeting citing the need to get more information and clarity from Young Life officials on what they are planning for this Public Water Supply well.

Here's how to join the meeting:

[Click here for the Zoom link](#)

Meeting ID: 846 0924 2465

Passcode: BCRAGD

Or

+1 346 248 7799 US

Meeting ID: 846 0924 2465

Passcode: 470167

Uvalde County commissioners unanimously approve resolution opposing Young Life Wastewater Discharge permit

The Uvalde County Commissioners Court voted unanimously to support a resolution opposing the release of wastewater into the Sabinal River by the Colorado-based Young Life organization. The vote was conducted at their regular meeting on Monday, March 22.

The Young Life Organization purchased the Lone Hollow Ranch property between Utopia and Vanderpool and is seeking a Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit that would allow them to build a wastewater treatment plant and legally release up to 60,000 gallons of treated sewage each day into creeks that lead to the Sabinal River at a point just north of the northern Uvalde County line. The

permit application is still pending before the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

After learning about the issue and the potential impact on small businesses that depend on recreational tourists, Uvalde County Pct. 3 Commissioner Jerry W. Bates introduced the resolution.

“I do not want any outside water coming into the Sabinal River, or any of our rivers in Uvalde County. I don’t think we need it and it’s going to create a lot of problems...I am totally against it,” Bates said.

The Upper Sabinal River is one of the last remaining pure and pristine rivers in Texas with no existing wastewater discharge permits. If approved, the Young Life permit would set a dangerous precedent as the first of its kind that would allow wastewater to be discharged into the waters of the Upper Nueces River Basin. Wastewater released into the river would cloud the clear water and cause algae blooms that could become toxic to fish and wildlife. Nutrients in wastewater have been shown to make other rivers un-swimmable and unsightly.

“The best way to keep our rivers clean, keep our rivers flowing and to continue the great economic benefits that we get from these waters is to require a no discharge permit,” Nueces River Authority Executive Director John Byrum said.

The Uvalde County Commissioners Court joins Texas Parks & Wildlife, Friends of Lost Maples, Keep Utopia Beautiful, the Nueces River Authority and the Bandera Canyonlands Alliance in either opposing or raising serious questions about the Young Life Wastewater Discharge Permit.

“The opposition is growing as more people learn about what’s being proposed and the economic and environmental damage that could result. We appreciate the Uvalde County Commissioners Court for taking a stand against the current Young Life plans. We are asking Young Life to adopt an iron-clad Zero Discharge method for disposing of the wastewater by using it for irrigation or other approved beneficial reuses,” Bandera Canyonlands Alliance President Merry Langlinois said.

Almost 500 landowners have filed official written comments with the TCEQ opposing the permit and asking that a public meeting be held to address citizen concerns and questions. Also, more than 21,000 people have signed a Change.org petition asking Young Life to change from a discharge permit to a Zero Discharge plan to prevent any wastewater from reaching the creeks and river.

A video outlining the issue is available for viewing at: <https://vimeo.com/526591042> The petition can be signed at <http://chng.it/d4YPgc8rdS>

Additional information is also available at www.banderacanyonlandsalliance.org