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BOERNE, TX 78006

# Alamo RC&D News

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3

SPRING/SUMMER 2009

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Wilson Co.

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At-Large

**Gerard Martelly**  
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At-Large

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Atascosa Co.

**Gene Camargo**  
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**Richard Hernandez**  
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**Roger Baenziger**  
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**Rosann Zwonetschek**  
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**Robert Fitzgerald**  
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**Joe Ramos**  
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AACOG

**Beverly Keller**  
Director  
At-Large

**Robert Carrizales**  
Director  
At-Large

## Message from the Chair

Hello to all. I really cannot believe we are already almost halfway through the year 2009. Time goes by so fast. We all need to remember that time is critical to getting projects completed and ensuring we are fulfilling our mission and vision and especially our Action Plan. We have made promises to ourselves and our neighbors that we will complete specific projects. These projects are critical to the success and development of our communities. I urge all members to review our Action Plan. It is kept on file in our office in Boerne.

Speaking of that, what an incredibly busy year it has already been for Alamo RC&D. We not only have accomplished many efforts, we also have moved our office to Boerne. Kudos to Bertha for that. She withstood with great integrity being told we would move, no we won't, oh, yes we will and it will be next week. I felt sorry for her. I think she was working out of boxes for sev-

eral months. Besides a new office and a new beginning the move also offered the opportunity to look at equipment and furniture we were no longer using and donate what we did not need to at least two other non-profit organizations. Now the move is behind us and we are on our way to more success.

In 2009 and late 2008 Alamo RC&D participated in the planning and implementation of numerous workshops assisting farmer's, rancher's and rural residents. We offered knowledge in numerous areas including conservation practices and tick removal. Our annual meeting was a great success and highlighted one project that we are currently working with, the historical town of Quihi. We also are still working with the State Comptroller's Office and are available to do Energy Assessment Reports for farms in our area.

I want to take this opportunity to the Board and to all of our members who have

contributed to our projects. We cannot be successful without the support of our members. I also want to thank the various agencies who have partnered with us on projects, without their support the projects would not be accomplished. Also, without donations and support of the counties and communities we work in, it will be more and more difficult to achieve our goals. Please remember our organization when you consider making donations. Some of you know we have had to fight every year for the past few years for the funding to keep our coordinator and hire the staff we need to accomplish projects.

We look forward to working hard and utilizing all available resources to make things happen in our communities!



**Karen Opiela**  
Chairperson

## Annual Meeting held in Quihi



The Annual Meeting of the membership of the Alamo RC&D Area, Inc. was held on December 3, 2008, at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Quihi, Texas.

During the business meeting, all of the current officers were re-elected to another term. Serving as chairperson is Karen L. Opiela from Wilson County, Albert

Gamez is serving as Vice-President from Wilson County and Gerard Martelly is serving as Secretary-Treasurer from Guadalupe County. Beverly Keller, representing Medina County filled the vacant at-large position on the board.

Bertha T. Venegas, NRCS, RC&D Coordinator, recognized all the volunteers for their hard

work and dedication to the RC&D program. Scott Conrad of the Quihi New Fountain Historical Society enlightened everyone on the history of Quihi. The meeting closed with a tour of historical Quihi and the Quihi Lake. The board has adopted a project to help with improvements on Quihi Lake.

## Free Assistance to Ag. Producers

The **Texas Agricultural Technical Assistance Program** is a state-funded program offering agricultural producers in Texas the opportunity to explore energy efficiency solutions for their farms, all at no cost to them.

In this economic slump, reducing energy costs isn't just a good idea, it is a necessity. Energy efficient farms reduce energy costs, increase available capital, spur economic growth and improve the working environment. The Texas Agricultural Technical Assistance Program provides **free** services that will help Texas agricultural producers save money and energy. It provides Energy Assessment Reports (EARs), technical assistance, and help in accessing funding and incentive sources if available. If an EAR is received, a data collector will visit the

farm and collect detailed information about the farm's energy usage and equipment. A customized report will then be sent to the farmer, highlighting the areas on the farm that would benefit the most from energy efficient equipment. If technical assistance is received, information specific to the farmer's technical request and low-cost/no-cost steps to increasing energy efficiency will be sent.

EARs also include information regarding available incentives and rebates.

When appropriate, information regarding the USDA's Rural Energy for America Program (REAP), or local utility incentive programs, are included. EARs meet all REAP grant application requirements, should the producer decide to pursue that option. In each instance, electricity, diesel,

natural gas and propane consumption and costs are taken into consideration, as well as the facility's specific requirements.

Since the program began in August of 2008, it has seen the completion of over 50 EARs. Dublin dairy producer Henk Postmus received a **free** EAR from the program. He learned that he had the potential to save almost \$19,000 annually by making energy efficient equipment upgrades to his facility, with an overall estimated payback period of just 2.3 years.

"I thought EnSave did an excellent job. The EAR was really easy to read over and understand. I really liked how they helped me with the paperwork, collected all the information, and saw my EAR through from start to finish," said Mr. Postmus.



## Board of Directors



Representing the Alamo RC&D Area Board of Directors (back row from left to right)- Michael Korus with the Atascosa County Soil and Water Conservation District, Dr. Robert Fitzgerald with the Medina County Environmental Action Association, Roger Baenziger, Guadalupe County Commissioner Precinct 1, Richard Hernandez, Frio County Commissioner Precinct 1, and Gene Camargo representing Bexar County. Front row from left to right—Bertha T. Venegas, RC&D Coordinator with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Gerard Martelly representing Guadalupe County, Joe Ramos representing the Alamo Area Council of Governments, Robert Carrizales, Frio County Commissioner Precinct 2, and Rosann Zwonetschek with the Kendall County Soil and Water Conservation District. Not pictured—Karen L. Opiela representing Wilson County, Beverly Keller, Medina County Commissioner Precinct 2, and Albert Gamez, Wilson County Commissioner Precinct 1.

## Cleaning Up Your Community

Illegal dumping is a big problem in Texas, increasing with our growing population and expanding economy. Illegally dumped waste ranges from a bag of trash somebody throws to hundreds of thousands of dumped tires, and everything in between placing an economic burden on our counties to find funding to address this problem. Due to the growing need of cleaning up illegal dumpsites in the counties we serve, the Alamo RC&D Area has developed an Illegal Dumps Cleanup

Program. This program assists counties in cleaning up illegal dumpsites.



Through the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) our Council

has received funding to clean up illegal dumpsites in our counties. Financial assistance is limited based on fund availability from TCEQ. Working together with county officials we have been successful in cleaning up dumpsites in Atascosa County and we are currently working with funding to cleanup sites in Bexar County. Information about this program is available at our website at [www.alamorcd.org](http://www.alamorcd.org).

## Fever Tick Initiative



The Fever Tick eradication program has been in place since 1893 to help fight infestations and diseases like cattle fever caused by the tick. There has long been a permanent quarantine zone from Del Rio to Brownsville made up of 500,000 acres, but since July 2007, five new quarantine areas have been established in Webb, Za-

pata, Maverick, Dimmitt, Jim Hogg and Starr counties.

Recently, cases outside the quarantine zone of fever tick diseases have been detected. Texas is the No. 1 beef-producing state in the nation, and some involved with eradication efforts fear that the tick could sub-

stantially impact beef production.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has established a Fever Tick Awareness Initiative. This is a broad scale initiative geared towards disrupting the life cycle of this pest by utilizing land management practices. This

*(Continued on page 5)*

## Farm And Ranch Management

A Farm and Ranch Management Workshop was conducted on April 23, 2009 at the Pearsall Livestock Auction.

Approximately 120 participants came to listen to officials provide information on farm bill programs, Fever Tick Concerns, prescribed burning, water districts,

rangeland improvement techniques and Trichomoniasis. The participants enjoyed a lunch sponsored by Texas Capital Farm Credit. Refreshments and door prizes were also provided by numerous donors. Information was available in the form of handouts from the numerous

agencies represented at the workshop. Participants received both CEU and prescribed burn credits.

Any up and coming workshops will be posted on our website as information becomes available at [www.alamorcd.org](http://www.alamorcd.org).

## A Cleaner Place to Live In



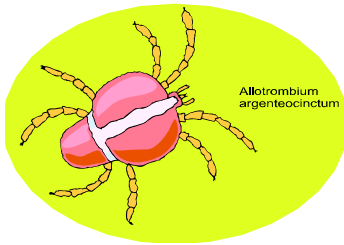
Maintaining a clean and safe environment in the Alamo RC&D Area is a top priority for our council. Trash in any form or fashion

impairs our watersheds and adds to the degradation of our natural resources affecting human lives, wildlife habitats and adding to the financial burden of our counties.

Through the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) our Council has received funding to dispose of

*(Continued on page 5)*

# Fever Tick Initiative (continued...)



*(Continued from page 4)*  
funding is specific to seven-teen counties in south Texas including **Frio County**.

Financial assistance is avail-able to livestock producers for installing conservation practices to fight the spread of fever ticks. Outreach efforts are being addressed through the local RC&D Areas by providing informational meetings for producers on the Fever Tick Awareness Initiative and in-

formation from our partners about the fever tick. Additional information can be obtained by contacting your local NRCS office, the Alamo RC&D office at (830) 249-6163 or visit our website at [www.alamorcd.org](http://www.alamorcd.org).

## New Office Location

The Alamo RC&D Office has moved. Please make note of our new contact information.

39350 IH 10 West, Suite 7  
Boerne, TX 78006

830-249-6163 telephone  
830-249-9120 fax  
[alamorcd@gmail.com](mailto:alamorcd@gmail.com)

You can still find us on the world wide web (WWW) at [www.alamorcd.org](http://www.alamorcd.org).

Please visit our website for any up to date information on programs and projects we are working on.



## A Cleaner Place to Live In (continued...)

*(Continued from page 4)*  
abandoned tires in Wil-son County.

Working together with County officials, 4,321 abandoned tires were collected and disposed of properly. This

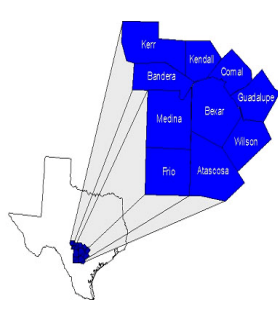


equated to roughly forty two tons of illegally dumped tires being re-moved from Wilson County. Projects like this can only be accom-plished by working to-gether with diverse groups of individuals who have

an interest in maintaining a clean and safe environment for all citizens to enjoy and have a deep respect for the environ-ment.

Information on projects like this one is available at [www.alamorcd.org](http://www.alamorcd.org).

## RC&D



Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) is a unique program that is led by local volunteer nonprofit councils that help people care for and protect their natural resources in a way that improves the local economy, environment and living standards.

The Alamo RC&D Area serves **Atascosa, Bandera, Bexar, Comal, Frio, Guadalupe, Kendall, Kerr, Medina and Wilson Counties** in Central and South

Texas.

Alamo Resource Conservation & Development Area, Inc. focuses on assisting local communities by providing tools and technical support to stabilize, mobilize and energize them while protecting and developing natural resources.

The RC&D concept is carried out by diverse groups of local volunteers who are brought together in a unique partnership to find solutions

to local problems, fulfill local needs and to empower the community to help itself. Alamo RC&D coordinates, supports and implements programs at the “grass roots” level, in your own back yard, so that you and other citizens of your community can enjoy a healthy local economy and a healthy environment.

“These Councils have been very effective in obtaining external funds, bringing in over \$333 million to implement projects in their communities.”

## Volunteers

The RC&D program helps people care for natural resources and improve the quality of life in their communities. The RC&D Council (volunteers representing public and private sector sponsors and other local organizations) undertake community driven actions that are strategically focused on regional resource conservation and economic viability. RC&D priorities are set by area residents to meet their needs.

More than 32,000 volunteers are serving on and with RC&D councils. On average, RC&D volunteers donate over 100,000 days per year. To date, 375 areas across the Nation including Guam, American Samoa, Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands have been designated by the Secretary of Agriculture as RC&D areas. They serve more than 85 percent (2,666) of U.S. counties and over 77 percent of the U.S.

population. There are 25 Councils waiting for USDA designation.

These Councils have been very effective in obtaining external funds, bringing in over \$333 million to implement projects in their communities.

If you would like to be one of these volunteers, contact us at (830) 249-6163 or visit our website at [www.alamorcd.org](http://www.alamorcd.org).

## Take Note



**Natl. RC&D Conference**  
June 14-17, 2009  
Albuquerque, NM

**2009 Alamo RC&D Board of Directors' Meetings**  
February 25  
April 22  
June 24  
August 26

**October 28**  
**December (TBA)**

**More information is available at**  
**[www.alamorcd.org](http://www.alamorcd.org)**

# Donors Support RC&D

The following businesses, groups and individuals have supported the Alamo RC&D through donations of money, goods and/or services:

Ag Workers Mutual Auto Insurance  
P. O. Box 88  
Fort Worth, TX  
www.Agworkers.com

Frio SWCD  
P. O. Box 180  
Pearsall, TX

Livengood Feeds  
P. O. Box 1080  
Lockhart, TX

Pearsall Livestock Auction  
P. O. Box 426  
Pearsall, TX  
www.pearsalllivestock.com

Rio Bravo RC&D  
123 CR 205  
Falfurrias, TX

Texas Ag Finance  
244 N. Getty St.  
Uvalde, TX

Texas Ag Finance  
605 South Main  
Pleasanton, TX

Tractor Supply Co.  
www.Tractorsupply.com

Walco International  
P. O. Box 89  
Pleasanton, TX

Z-Tag  
685 Lange Rd.  
Seguin, TX



## Members and Supporters of Alamo RC&D

USDA—Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Bandera County River Authority and Groundwater District

Guadalupe Blanco River Trust

Alamo Soil and Water Conservation District

San Antonio River Authority

Kendall Soil and Water Conservation District

City of Hondo

Upper Guadalupe River Authority

Wilson Area Housing Foundation

City of Pleasanton

Comal-Guadalupe Soil and Water Conservation District

Hill Country Mission for the Health

Daily Bread Ministries

INDIVIDUALS

Joe M. Cantu

Robert & Alyne Fitzgerald

Anton Haner

Juan Estrada



**ALAMO RESOURCE  
CONSERVATION AND  
DEVELOPMENT  
AREA, INC.**

**39350 IH 10 West, Suite 7**

Phone: 830-249-6163

Fax: 830-249-9120

E-mail: [alamorcd@gmail.com](mailto:alamorcd@gmail.com)

**“Making Things Happen in Your  
Community”**



# Help Your Community

The Alamo RC&D Area, Inc. is an IRS designated 501 ( c ) ( 3 ) nonprofit organization. Donations may be tax deductible according to applicable IRS law. Help us help your local community through a generous donation to support the work of **Alamo RC&D Area Inc.**

**Levels of giving:**

\_ Founder • \$50    \_ Naturalist • \$100    \_ Supporter• \$250    \_ Guardian • \$500    \_ Champion• \$1000    \_ Steward• >\$1000

Or become a member of **Alamo RC&D Area** and support community development, natural resource management, and other initiatives in area rural communities.

**Membership categories:**

\_ Individual/Family • \$20                      \_ Nonprofit Organization • \$40                      \_ Local/State/Government Agency • \$110

Both your donations and membership dues are tax deductible to the extent authorized by law. Complete this form and mail to Alamo RC&D Area, Inc. along with your check or money order. Amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

Organization : \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Alamo RC&D Area, Inc., 39350 IH 10 West, Suite 7, Boerne, TX 78006**

*The Alamo RC&D Area, Inc. is partially funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and adheres to the discrimination policy of the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service.*