



100 East Guenther
P.O. Box 839980
San Antonio, Texas 78283-9980
210-227-1373 voice
210-227-4323 fax
sara@sara-tx.org

News Release

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For more information contact: Yliana Flores
Intergovernmental Relations Coordinator
(210) 302-3228
yflores@sara-tx.org

HIGH FLYING FUNDRAISER SCHEDULED NOV 12 TO SUPPORT ESCONDIDO CREEK PARKWAY PROJECT

KENEDY, TX – The San Antonio River Foundation (SARF) is collaborating with the Kenedy Chamber of Commerce, Kenedy Airport and Riverbend Helicopters to host the first public fundraising event to support the Escondido Creek Parkway Project. On Saturday, November 12, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., residents of Karnes County and the surrounding area are being offered the opportunity to take a helicopter ride over the City of Kenedy and the Escondido Creek. The tax deductible cost is \$100 per person. The proceeds raised by the event will go to support the construction of the Escondido Creek Parkway Project.

“This is going to be a great event that will be fun for the entire family,” said Ward Thomas, who is a member of the board of directors for both the Kenedy Chamber of Commerce and SARF. “The Kenedy Chamber of Commerce, SARF and the Kenedy Airport are all pulling together to take advantage of the generous donation made by Riverbend Helicopters. Area residents can come out and enjoy a view of Escondido Creek from above knowing that the cost of the ride is going to support the construction of this wonderful creekway project.”

Riverbend Helicopters made special arrangements with SARF to offer the flights at no cost. Therefore, the \$100 cost per person will be going to support the project. Citizens who take advantage of this opportunity will not only be supporting the Escondido Creek Parkway Project, but they will be able to claim the cost as a tax deduction because the contribution to support the project is being made to the San Antonio River Foundation, which is a 501(c) non-profit organization.

One month ago, the Kenedy Chamber of Commerce and the 4B Community Development Corporation announced a \$1.2 million dollar investment to support the Escondido Creek Parkway Project. The funds will be utilized towards the design and development of the Escondido Creek Parkway Project which is being managed by the San Antonio River Authority (SARA). However, there are still additional funds to raise as the estimated project budget is currently set at \$3.4 million with \$400,000 allocated for design and permitting and \$3 million for construction costs. In addition, we will be accepting textile items, which include clothing,

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stuffed toys, towels, curtains, drapes, coats, purses, and more. All items must be cleaned before dropping off and can be new, used, tattered, and/or torn.

“SARA is extremely grateful to the Kenedy Chamber of Commerce and the 4B Community Development Corporation for their support of the Escondido Creek Parkway Project,” said Karnes County SARA Board of Directors Member Gaylon Oehlke. “The funds provided by the Kenedy Chamber of Commerce and the 4B Community Development Corporation are enough to get the project started, but equate to only about 40 percent of the total project budget. Citizen support of the project and participation through fundraisers, such as the upcoming helicopter rides, are going to be critically important if we are to raise the remaining funds to reach the project budget.”

In addition to participating in the helicopter ride fundraiser, individuals can support the project by donating to SARF by check (please note donations to the Escondido Creek Parkway Project) or online at www.sariverfoundation.org. SARF was created by SARA to serve as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization to promote educational, cultural and scientific projects and activities that enhance the conservation, stewardship, restoration, preservation and enjoyment of the land and water resources of the San Antonio River Watershed and its tributaries.

Escondido Creek runs through the City of Kenedy and is a significant tributary in the southern basin of the San Antonio River Watershed. The Escondido Creek Parkway Project, under Hwy 181, will provide safe passage and recreational enjoyment for children and adults traveling between 5th Street, near the center of Kenedy, and connecting Joe Gulley Park, on the west of Kenedy. The vision for the Escondido Creek Parkway Project is anticipated to include the following items: new concrete hike and bike trail, pavilion, native landscaping, playground, parking lot for 25 spots on east end of project near 5th Street and Hwy 181, benches installed along the trail, trail head and educational signage installed along the trail, water feature and weirs and picnic tables.

For more information about the Escondido Creek Parkway Project, please contact SARA's Watershed & Park Operations Manager Kristen Hansen at 1-866-345-7272.

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The San Antonio River Authority (SARA) was created by the 45th Texas Legislature on May 5, 1937 and reorganized in 1961 to plan, manage and implement water-related programs and projects within the San Antonio River Watershed. The State of Texas empowered SARA to preserve, protect and manage the resources and the ecology of the San Antonio River and its tributaries. To learn more about the SARA, visit our website at www.sara-tx.org.