

WONDERFUL NEWS!

Dear Members and Supporters:

I am writing today to make you aware of some wonderful news for our community.

BCA is happy to be able to report that in recent discussions with Young Life they have shared with us that they are going to move to a Zero Discharge plan for managing treated wastewater at their camp at LoneHollow Ranch between Utopia and Vanderpool.

This plan has our support and will prevent discharge to the Sabinal River and will use the treated wastewater for irrigation on the Young Life property.

This is a great outcome for everyone involved. Young Life's change to a Zero Discharge approach allows the Upper Nueces River Basin to remain free of any permits that would allow wastewater discharge into our waterways.

I am sharing a copy of the Young Life press release below that is being distributed today formally announcing this new plan to the public.

We encourage you to share this good news with everyone you know who has been concerned about this issue.

We sincerely appreciate the efforts of our members and supporters. We are also greatly appreciative of the efforts of Young Life, The Cibolo Conservancy and the TCEQ in making this plan possible.

Sincerely,

Merry Langlinais
President
Bandera Canyonlands Alliance

LoneHollow Ranch, Cibolo Conservancy, and Bandera Canyonlands Alliance Announce Plan for an Environmentally Responsible Water Conservation Plan

Revised approach includes a zero-discharge permit that accomplishes camp's and community's shared water conservation goals with "new standard for water management"

August 7, 2021 (Vanderpool, Texas) – LoneHollow Ranch, a Young Life camp in the Texas Hill Country, today announced it will be filing for a Texas Land Application Permit (TLAP) as part of a Zero-Discharge water conservation plan. This plan was developed in coordination with the Cibolo Conservancy and also based on discussions with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). It will allow Young Life to withdraw their request for a TCEQ discharge permit.

"Young Life cares deeply about the environment, and our intent at LoneHollow Ranch and our camps across the country is to be good stewards of the environment, especially when it comes to water conservation and wastewater management," said Stacey Noll, camp manager of LoneHollow Ranch. "This new permit will allow us to achieve two goals for water management we have had from the very beginning of this process: to treat water to the highest standards for use in areas where there might be human contact, such as soccer fields; and reuse most of the water the camp generates for irrigation. This plan accomplishes both of these goals in a way that wasn't possible under previously available procedures, and we're grateful to our partners at the Cibolo Conservancy for working with us to develop a custom approach that meets those goals."

While Young Life always planned to use as much of the treated water as possible for irrigation, the issue was how would LoneHollow Ranch manage the water that could not be used for irrigation -- such as during heavy rain events. The best option Young Life identified under the original permit parameters was a TCEQ discharge permit that would have allowed for up to 60,000 gallons of treated water to be released per day, far more than LoneHollow would ever need or want to release. Previously available Zero-Discharge options would not have permitted LoneHollow Ranch to use treated water for irrigation in all areas of the camp, creating a need to use more groundwater for irrigation. However, this new plan will allow LoneHollow Ranch to adopt a Zero-Discharge approach without compromising on Type-1 treatment or limiting the areas of the camp where treated water could be used for irrigation.

"Since the Cibolo Conservancy first started advising LoneHollow Ranch, it was clear they wanted to do what was best for the environment but felt limited by the permit options available to them," said Brent Evans, Executive Director of the Cibolo Conservancy Land Trust that holds a conservation easement on the property. "We are grateful for the opportunity we had to search for creative solutions for LoneHollow Ranch. This process can now set a new standard for sensitive water management in the Texas Hill Country."

The plan also garnered support from a local conservation group, Bandera Canyonlands Alliance. "This news is exciting. Achieving Zero Discharge is a great result and it's encouraging that Young Life is dedicated to achieve this goal at LoneHollow Ranch," said Merry Langlinais, President of Bandera Canyonlands Alliance. "Their new approach aligns perfectly with our specific goals of environmental stewardship."

The plan unveiled today utilizes two complementary permits governing water usage on the property. The first is a TLAP permit written to allow for Type 1-level treatment, the highest treatment standard for water. The second is a chapter 210 reuse permit that will allow for treated water to be used for surface irrigation throughout the camp, including areas of human contact.

LoneHollow Ranch will no longer pursue a TCEQ discharge permit and will instead manage any excess water with a zero-discharge subsurface irrigation system.