

CRAIG SMITH

Attorney

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Maintaining the quality of Austin's environment will require engaging a new generation of citizens to value and defend it.”

I am an attorney, who moved to Austin from Nacogdoches in 1973 to go to law school. My first involvement with environmental politics was with the Sierra Club in about 1990. I had a desire to be involved in the global environmental movement, to be a part of something bigger than myself. I met Tim Jones of Earth First and was really impressed by him. He was a True Believer, motivated by a deep belief in environmental values.

Through my activity with the Sierra Club Conservation Committee, I got involved in the effort to try to reach a settlement regarding the Barton Creek Planned Unit Development. I was part of Mayor Bruce Todd's Task Force to try to work out an agreement about the development. When that effort failed, I enlisted in the Save Our Springs movement and met some really good people. That is how I got involved in the Save Barton Creek Association. It was Elliot Naishtat, later my State Representative, who suggested that I start going to Save Barton Creek Association meetings in 1991 or 1992. I was the Austin Sierra Club president in 1991 and 1992, the year of the victorious SOS election. I have been on the board of Save Barton Creek Association since 1991, and I was the president in 1997 and 1998.

The success of the citizen-driven Save Our Springs ordinance was a victory and turning point for Austin environmentalists and for Austin itself. Before the SOS movement, the city was run and driven by business interests. With the Save Our Springs initiative, the environmentalists had a contest with the establishment powers and won. The movement was an ad hoc, grassroots campaign. You can do that once in a generation. It is not sustainable, but a lot of things that we fought for have come to be. Politically, the environmental perspective is institutionalized in Austin, and these values are a key element of Austin's identity. We now have a stellar Watershed Protection Department full of people devoted to protecting Austin's water. Austin Energy and Austin's Water Utility are all devoted to supporting environmental values.

I think that Barton Springs is a window into nature in the heart of the city. My motivation for my long involvement has been my love of Barton Springs and Austin's landscape.

**Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer
Conservation District 1998-Present**

**Save Barton Creek Association
President, 1997-1998**

**Save Barton Creek Association
Board 1991-1998**

Sierra Club, President 1991-1992

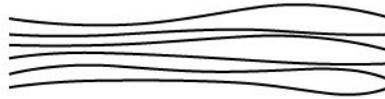
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In 1998, I was elected to the Board of the Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer Conservation District. Thanks to the help of my wife, Mary Ann Neely, a great political organizer, I won by 34 votes after a recount. I am still serving as a District board member until 2022.

The District's authority is to regulate wells and the withdrawal of water from the aquifer that recharges the springs. It is our commitment to make sure that the Springs always have water, even in a drought, to sustain the endangered salamanders and the humans that depend on them. In 2005 we created a Barton Springs Zone Regional Water Quality Protection Plan, acknowledging that a regional approach is needed to really protect the aquifer and the springs. I am glad to chair a Working Group that is trying to implement the Regional Plan.

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BARTON CREEK



TIME STREAM