

[ALL OUR STORIES](#)[TOPICS](#) ▾[FIND A SHOW](#) ▾[ABOUT US](#) ▾

arid southwest Texas

The Maverick Aquifer could supplement water supplies in a dry, rural part of the state.



Aquifer discovered in arid southwest Texas

April 15, 2022



By Michael Marks | April 15, 2022 11:01 am

[Energy & Environment](#),
[Texas Standard Original](#)



Wikimedia Commons (Public Domain)



[ALL OUR STORIES](#) [TOPICS](#) ▾ [FIND A SHOW](#) ▾ [ABOUT US](#) ▾

Texas Standard about its potential significance to the region's people and economy. Listen to the full interview in the audio player above.

This interview has been edited lightly for clarity.

Texas Standard: Tell us about this newly identified aquifer. I understand it's already been given a rather dramatic-sounding, and very Texas-sounding name.

Larry French: Yes, we've been calling it the Maverick Basin Aquifer, and it was discovered really by accident. There was an oil well that was being converted to a water well and this was being done with the Texas Railroad Commission. And as those tests were being done to make that conversion possible, lo and behold, the water that was being produced from approximately a mile deep turned out to be quite fresh, which was quite surprising.

Does this mean more water for agriculture for nearby cities? What's the potential impact here?

Well, all of that's very, very possible. We're very



[ALL OUR STORIES](#) [TOPICS](#) [FIND A SHOW](#) [ABOUT US](#)

Do you have any sense of its size? You mentioned this deep, but is there anything to compare it to? I think a lot of folks in Central Texas, for example, know about the Edwards aquifer?

Well, from what we know now, it looks like it probably extends extends over probably a couple of counties. In addition to Maverick, we also believe it would extend westward across the Rio Grande into Mexico, where we think the fresh water is really originating from. So it could be a pretty decent size, but we're still getting information on that.

If it extends into Mexico, does that complicate getting water from the aquifer or not so much?

Well, it might a little bit. We're still understanding that and there are other aquifers in Texas that we share with Mexico. But we would certainly want to understand the relationships of how the water moves across the area and so forth. So it's yet to be really determined.

So does this raise the prospect that there might



[ALL OUR STORIES](#) [TOPICS](#) [FIND A SHOW](#) [ABOUT US](#)

and additional resources.

So what happens next? Is this something now that researchers begin to explore further?

We have here at the Water Development Board, a team that specializes in looking at deeper resources, deeper aquifers – typically salty water – but they’re well equipped to look into this. And we’re also cooperating with other organizations such as the Railroad Commission, for example, the [Jackson School of Geosciences at the University of Texas at Austin’s] Bureau of Economic Geology. And we have been holding regular kind of coordination meetings, kind of understanding what each organization, each team and each scientist, can kind of bring to the table. So we’re working together with a pretty good group of people on this one.

I was trying to think of some of the other implications that people haven’t quite started to weigh. I would think that this could lead to potential new restrictions and regulations when it comes to things such as development. No?

[ALL OUR STORIES](#)[TOPICS](#) ▾[FIND A SHOW](#) ▾[ABOUT US](#) ▾

That's pretty far down the road at this point.
We're still trying to understand what the nature
of the resource is,

**At what point might it be possible for this
aquifer to be tapped and actually used as one of
the major water resources in the state?**

Well, that's a it's a good question. We're actively
working on getting information and data on it.
That'll probably take a year at least, maybe
longer. Of course, some of these wells are
already flowing with fresh water, and the owners
of those wells can be using the water, probably
for irrigation or maybe some other purposes, but
it's probably a couple of year process. I would
estimate

**How often does a discovery like this come along
to your knowledge?**

Not very often. Of course, the state has been
well-characterized with its water resource
groundwater resources. The last time we really
classified a new aquifer was back several years
ago in north central Texas – something called the

[ALL OUR STORIES](#)[TOPICS](#) ▾[FIND A SHOW](#) ▾[ABOUT US](#) ▾

This story has been updated to correct an error. The guest incorrectly stated that the Bureau of Economic Geology was part of the Texas Water Resources Institute; it is not. It's part of UT-Austin's Jackson School of Geosciences.

If you found the reporting above valuable, please consider making a donation to support it [here](#). Your gift helps pay for everything you find on [texasstandard.org](https://www.texasstandard.org) and [KUT.org](https://www.kut.org). Thanks for donating today.

More from 04/15/2022



Millions spent on
noncompetitive border security



ALL OUR STORIES

TOPICS ▾

FIND A SHOW ▾

ABOUT US ▾



Pharr-Reynosa International Bridge reopens after blockade is disbanded in Mexico



How to make cascarónes, and why the confetti-filled eggs remain a beloved Easter tradition



Home invasion: how one man experienced the 1997 Republic of Texas standoff



Typewriter Rodeo: Gas Prices



'Self-inflicted wounds' are hurting South Texas Democrats' chances in Congress



ALL OUR STORIES

TOPICS ▾

FIND A SHOW ▾

ABOUT US ▾



Texans drive up sales of recreational marijuana in New Mexico

Aquifer discovered in arid southwest Texas



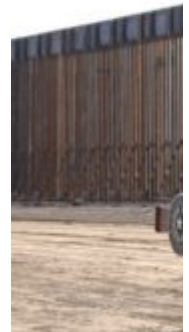
Gov. Abbott spur back to Republican



Houston's rising Democratic star defends staff indicted in Texas Rangers investigation



Arlington is considering filling in 'missing middle housing.' Experts explain what that means.



Millions square feet of border security in Texas 'scrapped' cover them



[ALL OUR STORIES](#)

[TOPICS](#) ▾

[FIND A SHOW](#) ▾

[ABOUT US](#) ▾



Texas Public Radio



©2021 Texas Standard. A service of the Moody College of Communication at the University of Texas at Austin | [Contact us](#)