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Senator Campbell Files Third Bill to Restrict Hill Country Quarries
SB 1696 Adds Strict New Permit Requirements to Protect Guadalupe River Basin

AUSTIN – On Wednesday, State Senator Donna Campbell filed her third bill to increase oversight of the aggregate industry and protect quality of life in the Hill Country. The Guadalupe Valley Hill Country Corridor Protection Act, or SB 1696, would add new restrictions for quarries that seek a permit to operate in the Guadalupe River watershed west of Canyon Lake Dam.

"The Texas Hill Country has a cultural, ecological, and economic value that benefits our state and deserves to be protected. SB 1696 adds strict new requirements for aggregate production operations in the Hill Country that are unlike anywhere else in Texas," said Senator Campbell. "Because this area of our state is so special, we should demand a special commitment and land restoration efforts by operators to preserve our rivers, streams, lakes, and aquifers."

SB 1696 prohibits any quarry or aggregate mining facility from operating within 1500 feet of a navigable waterway. In addition, it establishes new criteria as part of the permitting process through the TCEQ that includes consideration of potential effects on erosion, renewable land use, flooding, endangerment of life or property, and water quality.

The Guadalupe Valley Hill Country Corridor Protection Act also requires quarry operators to include a plan for the control of water drainage and accumulation, reclamation and revegetation of quarried land, and evidence of sufficient financial bonding to cover the remediation of potential negative effects to the Guadalupe River watershed and surrounding Hill Country.

Senator Campbell previously filed SB 208 and SB 694 to increase oversight of the aggregate industry. SB 208 extends the distance from neighbors in which concrete plants may operate and SB 694 increases inspections, fees, and fines for quarries cited for non-compliance.

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