The mission of the San Antonio River Authority (SARA) is to protect and enhance our creeks and rivers through service, leadership and expertise. SARA’s district spans Bexar, Wilson, Karnes and Goliad counties, yet our concern for the quality and quantity of water extends our focus beyond these boundaries, as factors outside the district contribute to the health and well-being of the watershed, the river and the communities we serve. Through the knowledge and skill of professional and technical staff, SARA continues to develop and sustain the expertise needed to fulfill our service mission.

The Fiscal Year 2016/17 Adopted Budget represents SARA’s work plan for the period July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017. It has been developed to support SARA’s strategic plan and core values of stewardship, integrity and excellence. The Adopted Budget will allow SARA to continue to advance its vision and mission by accomplishing results oriented programs and projects. 

SARA’s VISION: 
Inspiring Actions for Healthy Creeks and Rivers

SARA’s MISSION: 
Protect and enhance our creeks and rivers through service, leadership and expertise

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*as of August 29, 2016
Developing the annual budget is a multi-month process where the San Antonio River Authority (SARA) staff performs analysis of the current level of service and activities taking place, identifies strategic opportunities, and makes projections for what is expected to occur in the next fiscal year. Staff evaluates current revenues, trends from prior fiscal years and factors in changes that will impact revenues in the budget year to determine the budgeted revenue levels. SARA has three main sources of revenue – property taxes, all of which come to the General Fund; intergovernmental revenue which includes payments from other public entities for work performed by SARA, particularly on capital improvement projects; and charges for services which come mainly from utility wastewater.

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2016/17 Adopted Budget appropriations total $161.9M, including reserves of $32.9M. In addition, expenditures across all funds total $129M. This includes $30.9M in the General Fund, $13.6M for utility operations, $66.8M for capital improvement projects, $5.4M for debt service, and $12.3M for all other expenditures.

Revenues for FY 2016/17 are $119.8M when all funds are included. Of this amount, $28.1M are revenues to the General Fund with $24.2M or 86 percent from generated by property tax. Other major revenue sources include utility charges for services of $11M, grant funds of $9.8M and other intergovernmental revenue of $54.1M which incorporates funds from River Authority partners for capital improvement projects as well as for other purposes. All other revenues total to $16.9M.

SARA’s vision of “inspiring actions for healthy creeks and rivers” is advanced by efforts in four main functional areas. Through the FY 2016/17 budget process, expenditures were categorized by Water Health and Safety, Watershed Solutions, Parks and Recreation and Utilities operations (see chart to left). Functional expenditures reflect a mixture of operations and maintenance, other direct services, research and development, as well as project costs, such as management and engineering support. Expenditures from the General Fund and Utility Operating funds total just over $50M.

Six programs are assigned to Program Leaders with authority to manage and direct projects within their portfolio. The FY 2016/17 annual budget has a total of 76 projects across all programs and funds (see chart below). The $3.7 M investment by SARA is leveraging another $62.6M in funding from other governmental partners and funding sources to complete a variety of projects and technical studies.

SARA staff is accountable to the Board of Directors and reports progress regularly. Additional details regarding the functions, projects and programs are available in the full Annual Budget Detail book found on SARA’s website at www.sara-tx.org.