

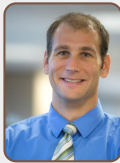
# 2023 Texas Water Leaders



**Alexis Long**

Associate General Council

Alexis S. Long is the Associate General Counsel for the Trinity River Authority of Texas. She is a member of the State Bar of Texas, Dallas Bar Association and Tarrant County Bar Association. Long received a Bachelor of Science in Bioenvironmental Sciences from Texas A&M University and a Juris Doctor from Texas A&M University School of Law.



**Brandon Hilbrich**

San Antonio Water  
Resources Section Lead

Brandon Hilbrich is a Water Resources Section Lead and Project Manager at HDR Engineering, Inc. in San Antonio, Tx and currently leads a group of 10 Water Resources Professionals. As Section Lead, Brandon is responsible for team daily operations including workplan and loan/borrow labors resources across multiple offices and business groups (regional, statewide, & nationally), as well as focusing on staff career growth, collaboration, project delivery, and identifying market growth opportunities.

He has 14 years of consulting experience supporting various local, regional, state, and federal agencies and currently leads or manages water resources, stormwater management, and transportation drainage projects throughout Texas. Brandon's expertise includes complex hydrology and hydraulic analyses for feasibility studies, Capital Improvement Projects, dam assessments and rehabilitations, and FEMA floodplain mapping and modeling efforts in both rural and urban settings.



**Brittany Lee**

Aquatic Scientist IV

Brittany Lee is a native of Mt. Holly, New Jersey. She moved to San Antonio, Texas in the middle of high school and subsequently went to Southwest Texas State University, currently named Texas State University. She graduated in 2008, with a degree in Aquatic Biology with an emphasis and minor in Chemistry. During college she completed several internships with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality in a variety of areas to include Utilities and Financial Review, Confined Animal Feeding Operations, and Water Quality Standards. She found her niche and settled in Water Quality with the Standards Implementation Team and has been working full time as an Aquatic Scientist since 2008. She is very passionate about water, be it for professional purposes or for fun. Her hobbies include scuba diving, snorkeling, and playing sports such as volleyball and basketball. Brittany also runs a music department for a church in the San Marcos community and loves traveling and spending time with her family. She is determined to succeed and lives by a quote by George Eliot, "It's never too late to be what you might've been."



**Christian Cole Ruiz**

Attorney

Cole is an Austin-based water attorney, who focuses on counseling primarily governmental and nonprofit client boards and management on natural resource-related legal and policy issues and governance, including statutory and regulatory compliance, water rights, water markets and security, water and land transactions, permitting, infrastructure finance, land use, water resource management and development, utility regulation, open government, contested cases, litigation and administrative proceedings, and governmental relations. As Chair of the University of Texas Environmental Science Institute's Advisory Council, Cole's practice emphasizes the nexus of science, law, and public policy. Prior to his career as a water attorney, Cole worked at the San Antonio River Authority where he project managed Region L's water planning activities and administered the Regional Water Alliance. While at the River Authority, Cole also helped steer the agency's legislative program, while developing strategic partnerships with local and state political subdivisions, elected officials, and staff. Cole was tapped as Program Leader, overseeing the implementation of various sustainability projects, which focused on low-impact develop and flood planning needs. During his undergrad years at UT Austin, Cole interned for then, State Representative Doug Miller, who sat on the House Natural Resources Committee; and prior to that, Cole spent summers working on his grandfather's drilling rig, providing water well services across South Texas. Cole earned has earned a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Texas, and a Master of Arts in International Relations from St. Mary's University, where he also earned his law degree.



**Cody Draper**

Geologist, Manager – Aquifer  
Characterization Group

Cody Draper is a geologist who specializes in aquifer characterization. As a scientist and manager at INTERA, he applies petroleum exploration workflows to aquifer characterization problems. For Cody, the best outcome is always finding unknown or under-known groundwater. He believes water needs to be as abundant and as cheap as possible (sustainably!) to ensure human flourishing. Cody is a licensed PG in Texas and holds a Bachelors and Masters in Geology from the University of Texas.



**Connie Curtis**

Director of Technical and  
Operational Services

Connie Curtis, P.E. is the Director of Technical and Operational Services for the San Jacinto River Authority. Connie oversees the Technical Services, SCADA, and IT departments of SJRA that provide support to SJRA's five operational divisions. Connie received a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Texas A&M University and was an owner and engineering consultant with a focus on design of water and wastewater infrastructure for 16 years prior to joining SJRA in November 2022.



**Dacy Cameron**

Assistant General Manager

Dacy Cameron is a professionally licensed Civil Engineer and UT graduate from Austin, Texas with 8 years of experience managing and consulting for Texas public water utilities. She is passionate about uplifting others to serve our communities with integrity and technical excellence. After leaving engineering consulting to assume management at Aqua Water Supply Corp., Dacy is motivated to employ best practices and make policy changes that will benefit the future of water in Texas.



**Erika Crespo**

Assistant Deputy Director  
of Water Quality Division

Erika Crespo is the Assistant Deputy Director of the Water Quality Division at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Erika participated in the TCEQ Mickey Leland Environmental Internship Program prior to joining the agency in 2014, and her work experience includes writing industrial wastewater permits and supervising the team responsible for implementing the federally-delegated national pretreatment program in Texas. Erika has a Bachelors' degree in Biology / Forensic Science and a Master's degree in Environmental and Earth Sciences, both from the University of Texas at Arlington.



**Galen Roberts**

Assistant Deputy – Water  
Resources

As the Assistant Deputy – Water Resources, Galen Roberts oversees all aspects of water resource management, watershed protection, and lake and wetland operations for the North Texas Municipal. Galen and his team are responsible for managing the District's East Fork Raw Water Supply, Bois d'Arc Lake, and more than 17,000 acres of environmental mitigation areas. He also manages the District's water rights portfolio and works closely with water treatment and conveyance staff to make efficient use of the District's water supplies. Galen holds a Bachelor of Science Degree from Texas Tech University and a Master's in Water Management from Texas A&M University.



**Jessica Taylor**

Customer Service Liaison

Jessica Taylor is a professional engineer and the Customer Service Liaison at the Texas Water Development Board. She works to improve external customer relations and develop solutions on complex financial assistance projects. Additionally, she produces and implements process improvements for multiple areas in the agency.



**Jordan Hinton**  
Supervisor WWTWP

Jordan Hinton is a professional in the field of wastewater treatment with 10+ years of experience. Jordan began his career working as a lab tech in Lake Charles, Louisiana, before moving to Dallas, Texas to work as a chemist. Currently he is an operations supervisor at the Southside Wastewater Treatment Plant in Dallas. In his career, he has excelled at complex and interdisciplinary problem solving as well as team leading, and training. Jordan holds degrees in Environmental Science and Chemistry, has a Class A Wastewater Operator License, is a state approved wastewater instructor, a Registered Environmental Manager, and a Lean Six-Sigma Black belt.



**Julia Stanford**  
Programs & Operations  
Manager

Julia Stanford has served the groundwater community as Programs & Operations Manager for the Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts since 2019. In this role, Julia connects and informs groundwater professionals by creating comprehensive member communications and innovative resources related to groundwater conservation districts, and also manages TAGD's signature educational events throughout the year. Prior to joining TAGD, Julia coordinated conservation education, grant administration, and public relations for North Plains GCD in Dumas. Her first few years after college were spent mostly outdoors, conducting a variety of environmental education programs all over Texas. She holds a B.S. degree in Geography – Resource & Environmental Studies from Texas State University and a graduate certificate in strategic public communications from Texas Christian University. Julia lives in Austin with her park ranger husband and 2-year-old son, Rio.



**Lisa Latson Benton**  
Water Quality Protection  
Supervisor

Lisa grew up on the Blackland Prairie of rural northeast Texas. She comes from a family of ranchers and small-town business owners. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from the University of Texas at Austin, and a Master of Science in Natural Resource Management (USDA Ecohydrology Fellow) from the University of Arizona. She has a wide variety of experience including environmental education and outreach, evapotranspiration modeling, plant phenology science, aquatic science, and extensive ecological restoration work including time volunteering in Ecuador. Since 2009, Lisa has been employed at the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) in Water Quality Protection. She now supervises all aquatic science programs at LCRA, which includes work on mussels, fish, aquatic vegetation, cyanotoxins, water quality modeling, permit review, volunteer water quality monitoring, and the Texas Clean Rivers Program.



**Marisa Flores Gonzalez**  
Water Resources Team  
Supervisor

Marisa Flores Gonzalez leads the Water Resources Team at Austin Water and serves as the project manager for Water Forward, Austin's 100-year Integrated Water Resource Plan. Ms. Flores Gonzalez has twelve years of experience working in local government and utilities in multiple areas including water supply, water distribution, wastewater collection, and stormwater management planning. She brings a holistic approach to water planning, with a belief in the value of community engagement and adaptive management to create a resilient and equitable water future for the Austin community. Ms. Flores Gonzalez holds a B.A. in Geography and the Environment from the University of Texas at Austin and a Master's in Public Administration from Texas State University.



**Mindy Conyers**  
Customer Service Liaison

Mindy Conyers is the manager of the River Science & Hydrosurvey program at the Texas Water Development Board, having previously served in various roles within the Office of Water Science and Conservation for over a decade. She is a physical geographer with experience in field methods, scientific communication, and legislative policy who enjoys discussing the wonders of the earth system and all things water. Mindy earned her PhD in Geography from Texas State University with research focused on fluvial geomorphic processes at the watershed scale.



**Odell Ward**

Aquifer Science Manager

Odell Ward has been with North Plains Groundwater Conservation District for 16 years. He is a lifelong resident of Dumas, Texas. Before coming to the District, Odell worked for the National Park Service in North Dakota as a seasonal employee, worked as a truck driver, and owned and operated a small trucking company. Odell holds a Geoscientist in Training certificate from the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists, a Graduate Certificate in Environmental Geology from the University of Kansas, a professional master's degree in environmental Sustainability and Natural Resource Management, and a Graduate Certificate in Business from Texas Tech University in 2018. His undergraduate degree is in Biology with a concentration in Wildlife Science from West Texas State University. Odell has three children, five grandchildren, and four dogs.



**Paul Babb**

Assistant General Manager

Paul has 24 years of experience in natural resource management and research with a primary focus on the groundwater resources of central Texas and the Texas hill country. He currently serves as Assistant General Manager for the Blanco Pedernales Groundwater Conservation District. Paul is a graduate of Texas State University with a Bachelor of Science in Resource and Environmental Studies.



**Romie Martinez**

Interim General Manager

Romie has been with the El Paso County Water Control & Improvement District #4 for almost ten years. She started working for EPCWCID#4 as an Office Clerk while performing Administrative Assistant duties for the General Manager. In 2016 she helped start the Warehouse Inventory Department and was later promoted to Warehouse/Purchasing Manager. She is currently serving as the Interim General Manager. Romie serves on the Veterans Park Committee where she helped obtain a grant from the EDA for a Veterans Memorial and outdoor museum and served as leader of her Church's Security Council. Prior to working with the water district, she worked as a lending officer for both commercial and personal loans. Romie is married to her husband Jaime, they have four children; Derek, Aaron, Jaimee, and Marco.



**Ross Brookbank**

General Manager

Ross Brookbank started his water career at the City of Bedford, Texas and was employed there in multiple roles over 7 years. Ross's passion for the utility industry continued, and he went to work for the Texas Rural Water Association where he remained for 5 years. Ross's current role is the General Manager for Copeville Special Utility District where he started in late 2021.

Ross loves the outdoors and spending time with his family in west Texas hunting and fishing. Ross is married with 2 sons. He is also a dog lover, and has a 6-year-old German Shepherd Frank. Ross currently lives north of Dallas in Murphy Texas.



**Venus Price**

Director - Drinking Water Operations

Venus Price is the Director of Drinking Water Operations in the Houston Water service line of Houston Public Works. She is a registered Professional Engineer in the State of Texas and leads a team of approximately 600 professionals to deliver the City of Houston with Superior Water.