

EDUCATION

Water Exhibits Make a Big Splash in San Antonio

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If you find yourself in San Antonio, and are interested in how cutting-edge technology, water education, and multiple water management agencies are working together in South Texas, you may want to pay a visit to the Witte Museum. The World of Water exhibit, which debuted last May, was the first stage in the Witte Museum's new focus on water, science, and South Texas heritage. The exhibit serves as a prototype for the future Water Resource Center to be built in 2008 on the Witte campus, along the banks of the San Antonio River.

The Water Resource Center will provide a venue for discussing and learning about



Visitors investigate at River Alive!, a station at the Witte's World of Water exhibit.

regional water issues, and represents an exceptional collaboration of regional agencies and universities, working cooperatively and providing funding and expertise to tell the true story of water in South Texas. Among the many partners are the San Antonio Water System, San Antonio River Authority, Edwards Aquifer Authority, Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority, University of Texas at Austin, University of Texas at San Antonio, and University of the Incarnate Word.

The University of Texas at San Antonio built a working water tower for the exhibit that also featured water-saving household tips at the San Antonio Water Conservation House and state-of-the-art satellite imaging to help visitors learn about the watershed area near their homes. The museum's Web site contains a variety of excellent educational materials for teachers and students to complement the exhibits or to use in the classroom.

Although the main exhibit, viewed by over 150,000 visitors, closed on Jan. 1, plenty of innovative water exhibits remain at the Witte. The second phase of the Witte Museum's World of Water features a new, interactive component, World of Water: Take It to the River!, sponsored by the San Antonio River Authority. This hands-on exhibit illustrates the history of water use and life along the



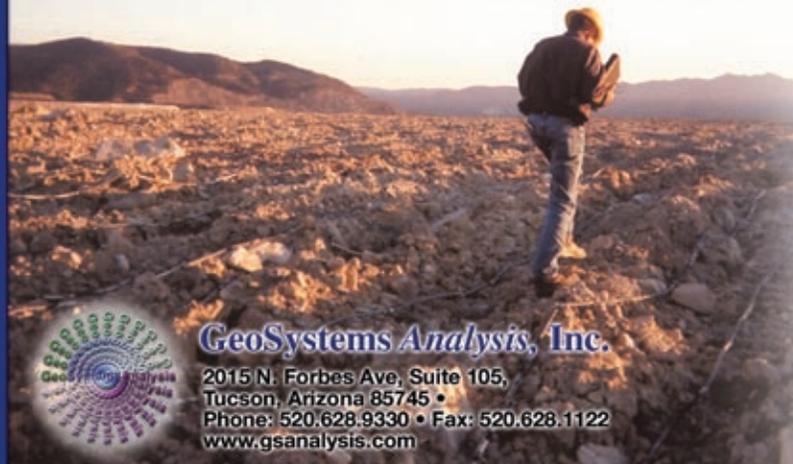
A schematic of the San Antonio River, from its source, through San Antonio, to the Gulf of Mexico.

San Antonio River including the River Alive! touch tank where the actual river and its inhabitants are cycled in and out of the tank for up-close investigations.

From inside the museum's H-E-B Science Treehouse, visitors can also view the underwater River Cam, installed near a timed feeder that attracts a wide variety of aquatic life. The Science Treehouse is also home to a huge interactive map of the San Antonio River and the watershed and houses a locally produced weather video, "Flash Flood Alley," which aims to educate visitors about avoiding this phenomenon. New permanent signs on the three levels of the Treehouse and along the river have been installed to help visitors identify the many local plants and animals of the watershed.

The Witte Museum is located at 3801 Broadway, San Antonio, Texas. For more information, visit www.wittemuseum.org or call 210-357-1900.

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