**Comal County needs to borrow tools from Hays**

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I want to thank Craig Massouh for the article published on Aug. 21 about the work being done to protect our environmental resources in Comal County. Cliff Kaplan, the operations manager for the Hill Country Alliance pointed out that "Hays County just agreed to put on the Nov. 3 election a $75-$80 million item to address the need for 16 parks throughout its county, including six in San Marcos and one in Kyle."

The article concluded by explaining what the CCCA is doing to raise public awareness of environmental issues in Comal County. The plan relies heavily on voluntary conservation easements that I strongly support. But in my past five years living here, I have come to realize that no significant improvements will be made without some changes in the local political leadership.

So, what real changes are currently being made in New Braunfels and Comal County? After all, Comal shares a border with Hays, is experiencing similar levels of population growth, is also heavily dependent on the Edwards Aquifer, and also has a major spring that serves as an important tourist attraction.

Unfortunately, most of what I read in the paper about New Braunfels has to do with the new $64- million jail that is late and over budget. Other than from citizen groups like the CCCA, HCA and Preserve our Hill County Environment (PHCE), I have seen nothing about creating new parks and protecting our air and water in Comal County.

Many residents like me are very tired of hearing politicians tell us that they have "no tools in their toolbox." I am sure they could have borrowed some tools from Hays County if they had wanted to. My hope is that a majority of Comal County voters will decide that now is the time to elect leaders who will listen to us, and will work to find new and better tools. I would much prefer to see more discussion of work being done locally to improve and add to our park system, including more hike and bike trails.

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