

DigDeep Launches The Colonias Water Project to Address the Hidden Water Crisis in Texas Towns Along the Mexico Border

DigDeep's Colonias Water Project marks the third region of focus for the nonprofit, which works to ensure safe water and sanitation services for all Americans.

EL PASO, TX, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, November 2, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today,



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George McGraw, Founder and CEO of DigDeep

human rights nonprofit [DigDeep](#) announces the launch of the Colonias Water Project, with the support of BlueTriton Brands Ozarka® Brand Spring Water, which works to bring clean running water to families living in communities along the Texas-Mexico border. This is DigDeep's third regional water project; the organization is already working on the ground in the Southwest through its acclaimed [Navajo Water Project](#) and in rural West Virginia through its [Appalachia Water Project](#).

The Texas colonias are largely unincorporated, low-income communities that fall just outside city limits and often lack basic infrastructure, including water, sanitation, trash services and street lamps. There are approximately 2,300 colonias across Texas, home to an estimated half million people. Nearly two-thirds of adults and 95% of children living in the colonias are US citizens. Many colonia residents purchased lots from developers who sold them with the promise of installing paved roads, water and electricity - but then disappeared.

DigDeep's Colonias Water Project begins in Cochran colonia, a small subdivision located just southeast of El Paso and currently home to 22 families, surrounded by an additional 50 unoccupied lots. Piped water is less than a half mile away, as Cochran exists in a 'donut hole' surrounded by retail complexes and gated communities that already have basic services. Families in Cochran are currently forced to buy bottled water, purchase non-potable water at an astronomical \$250 per month, or haul water from nearby wells, many of which are unregulated and may be contaminated. This is an expensive (and often dangerous) effort for the average household there, which makes just \$28,000 a year.

“Communities like Cochran show how Americans living without running water are often hidden

in plain sight,” says George McGraw, the founder and CEO of DigDeep. “When we talk about the US water crisis, we’re not talking about a few individuals living off the grid. We’re talking about entire communities that have been denied the basic services the rest of us take for granted.”

DigDeep has worked collaboratively with residents, local nonprofits, county and state officials to innovate a new model for public-private partnership with the potential to solve Cochran’s water problem, unlock transformative housing grants, and most importantly, build a model that can be replicated in other colonias along the border. Project work broke ground in July 2022 and household taps are expected to be turned on before the end of the year.

A large percentage of the initial funding for the Colonias Water Project is provided by Ozarka® Brand 100% Natural Spring Water. This financial donation is an investment in longer-term and more sustainable water access solutions so that Cochran residents do not need to rely on bottled water for all of their basic needs, and is in keeping with the Ozarka® Brand’s history of being a good neighbor in Texas. This upfront funding enabled DigDeep to move significantly faster in launching the project and gave the community confidence that they’d finally get the access to water they deserve, after 25+ years of broken promises.

“No American should have to rely on bottled water to meet their basic needs when water is available nearby but is not accessible due to infrastructure shortfalls. Thriving communities are built on steady and reliable access to safe drinking water, yet DigDeep’s research exposed that 2.2 million Americans are often reliant on temporary sources of drinking water,” said Edward Ferguson, Chief Sustainability Officer for BlueTriton Brands, the company which makes the Ozarka® brand. “BlueTriton has a long history of donating drinking water as a safety net for communities in their times of need, during natural disasters and other short-term water access interruptions. With the Colonias Water Project, we are proud to extend those efforts beyond emergency relief by helping DigDeep to develop longer-term solutions which provide more Americans with safe, easy access to clean, running water.”

Additional upfront funding for the Colonias Water Project was provided by Reece, a leading U.S. distributor of commercial and residential plumbing, waterworks and HVAC. Clean, running water is a human right. Learn more and stay up to date on developments of DigDeep’s Colonias Water



A resident of Cochran colonia momentarily rests his head on his arms while filling and loading jugs from a paid water kiosk on a hot Texas day.

Project at www.coloniaswaterproject.org.

ABOUT DIGDEEP: DigDeep is a human rights nonprofit working to ensure every American has access to clean running water and sanitation. Its community-led and region-specific solutions have helped install clean running water inside hundreds of homes through its award-winning Navajo Water Project (Arizona, New Mexico and Utah); Appalachia Water Project (West Virginia); and Colonias Water Project (Texas). DigDeep is leading the U.S. WaSH sector in research, workforce development and advocacy that informs public policy. It has authored two groundbreaking reports, "Closing the Water Access Gap in the United States: A National Action Plan" and "Draining: The Economic Impact of America's Hidden Water Crisis," which revealed over 2.2 million Americans live without a toilet or tap at home, costing the US economy a staggering \$8.65 billion each year. For more information, please visit www.digdeep.org and follow on Twitter (@DigDeepH2O), Facebook and Instagram (@DigDeepWater).

ABOUT BLUETRITON BRANDS: BlueTriton Brands offers an extensive portfolio of highly recognizable, responsibly sourced, and sustainably packaged spring water and other water brands including Poland Spring® Brand, Deer Park® Brand, Ozarka® Brand, Ice Mountain® Brand, Zephyrhills® Brand, Arrowhead® Brand, Origin™ Natural Spring Water, Saratoga® Spring Water, AC+ION™ Alkaline Water, Pure Life®, Splash Blast™ Flavored Water Beverage and Splash Fizz™ Fruit Flavored Sparkling Water Beverage. BlueTriton Brands also owns and operates ReadyRefresh®, a customizable water and beverage delivery service that has been certified as a CarbonNeutral® business.

Based in Stamford, Connecticut, BlueTriton Brands and its affiliates in the United States and Canada employ approximately 6,600 associates. BlueTriton Brands manages resources for long-term sustainability, and conserves more than 20,000 acres of watershed area. The Company has 28 production facilities across the United States, 16 of which are Alliance for Water Stewardship ("AWS") certified across 15 sites, with eight of the certified facilities being AWS Platinum, the highest-level certification.

Press Office

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