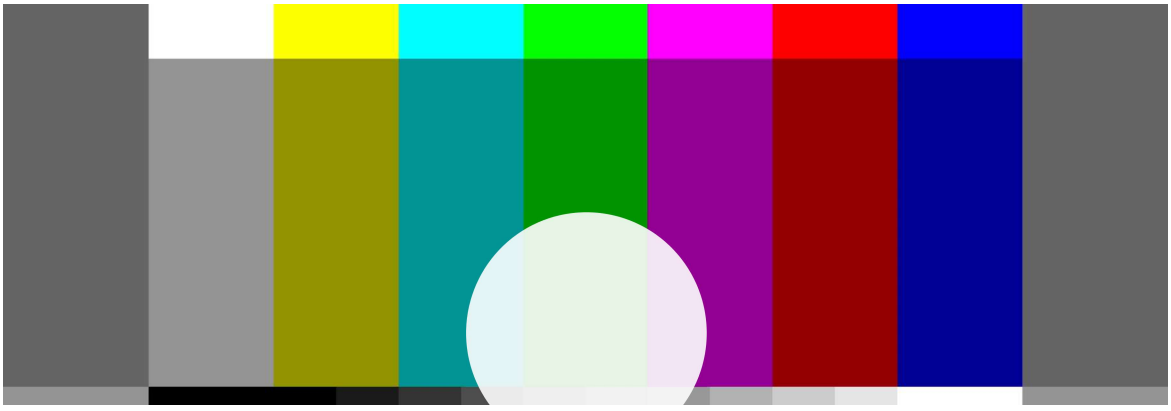
Rainmaker 2026 Celebrates Three Legends: Honoring The Past and Looking to the Future

More than 350 water professionals, policymakers, and advocates gathered at the Bullock Texas State History Museum on September 29 to honor the 2026 Rainmakers of the Year Andrew Sansom, Kinnan Golemon, and Ken Kramer. From a video commemorating their 50-year careers, to the Rainmakers' daughters presenting their awards, the evening was filled with heartfelt moments.



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That spirit of appreciation continued as last year's Rainmaker and Chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, Representative Cody Harris, toasted the three honorees.

While the evening celebrated three remarkable careers, it also highlighted a common thread running through each of their legacies: the ability to build bridges and bring people to the table — even when those people stand on different sides of an issue. During a moderated panel discussion, each Rainmaker shared what they were most proud of and what gives them hope for Texas water. In that conversation, they reflected on how their approach to collaboration helped shape their work.

To commemorate the efforts of the 2026 Rainmakers to make water awareness a statewide priority, the evening concluded with a special presentation of the first state funded water awareness campaign. The celebration continued with a surprise musical moment. Blues Hall of Fame legend Barbara Lynn made a special appearance, where she sang an a cappella verse of her hit song "You'll Lose a Good Thing," featured in the campaign's anthem video. The Texas Water Development Board closed the evening by inviting guests to raise a glass of water in celebration of the This Is Texas Water statewide campaign.

This year's Rainmakers remind us that differences of opinion are a part of the process. What distinguishes Andy, Kinnan,

move the conversations forward, they remind us that progress in Texas water has always depended on building bridges.



Representative Cody Harris, 2025 Rainmaker, honoring this year's Rainmakers.



Blues Hall of Fame legend Barbara Lynn (right) and her daughter Keisha.

View Rainmaker's Biographies

Andrew Sansom



Andrew Sansom, wife Nona Sansom, and daughter April Sansom with friends and family.

Dr. Sansom (“Andy”) graduated from Texas Tech University with a degree in parks and recreation and headed to Washington, D.C. to work for the National Recreation and Park Association. Back in Texas, he became the Director of the Texas Nature Conservancy and eventually the Director of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. In those roles, he is credited with putting more than 500,000 acres into conservation and securing stable funding for State Parks. He became a primary champion for environmental flows and was an influential voice in the passage of SB 1, SB 2, and SB 3. In 2002, Andy was the founding director of what is known today as the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment at Texas State University, where he earned a Ph.D. in Geography

Kinnan Golemon



Kinnan Goleman among friends and family, including wife Jacqueline Goleman.

Kinnan Golemon started his career in 1964 as an engineering employee for the Texas Water Pollution Control Board (now TCEQ). While attending law school at the University of Texas at Austin, he wrote the first drafts of the Solid Waste Disposal Act, which became law in 1969 and regulates how waste is stored or dumped if it may reach surface water or groundwater. After law school, Kinnan started his legal career in Corpus Christi before moving back to Austin and becoming a senior leader in the new field of environmental and natural resource law at Brown McCarroll. He helped found the

pass the Texas Environmental, Health, and Safety Audit Privilege Act, and became involved in environmental flows on his beloved San Saba River. Kinnan continues his work through his consultancy, KG Strategies, and serves as a director for Texas Water Trade.

Ken Kramer



Ken Kramer, wife Diane Kramer, and daughter Kate Kramer, with friends and family.

Dr. Kramer began volunteering on water quality issues while working on his Ph.D. in political science at Rice University. After teaching environmental policy and serving as a volunteer with the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club, he became the Chapter's lobbyist and later its first Director. He

Governor's Task Force on Hazardous Waste, the state Water Conservation Advisory Council, and many others, Ken was a respected voice for the environment. He was a founder of the Texas Living Waters Project, and his lobbying influenced Senate Bill 1, Senate Bill 2, and Senate Bill 3. In 2010, he edited a collection of essays by renowned voices on Texas water: The Living Waters of Texas. Ken continues to be an active voice on water policy.

NEXT

2026 Rainmakers: Building Bridges in Texas Water Policy Over 50 Years

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