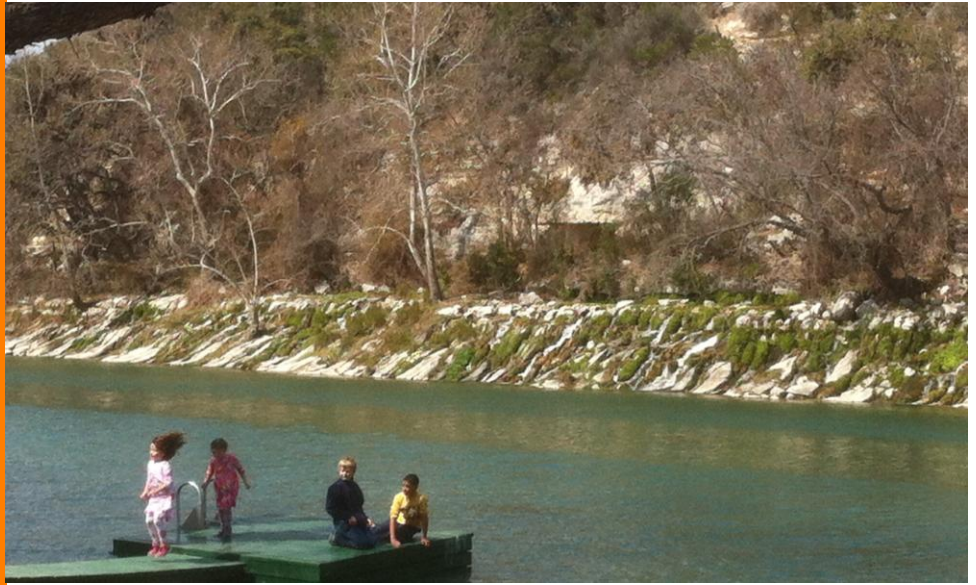




Watershed Week in Review



April 19, 2015

Tour of 700 Springs



Inside

Oasis Pipeline Wildfire Recovery Workshop

The rains held off and a good crowd gathered in Junction yesterday to learn how nature recovers.

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Flows of the Llano compare to previous dry years?

Much of the watershed is still in Severe or Extreme Drought. How bad is it?

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The [Kimble County Historical Commission](#) and [700 Springs Ranch](#) and will sponsor this year's tour of the 700 Springs this Saturday, April 25, 2015.

This will be the 21st annual event near the headwaters of the South Llano River. As in past years, participants will meet at the Courthouse in Junction. The motorcade will depart from the square at 10:00 o'clock for the 21-mile trip to the Pfluger's 700 Springs ranch on the South Llano River between Junction and Rocksprings. Participants do not need to make advance reservations but must sign the register upon arriving in Junction.

There is no charge for the event, but **goodwill donations are accepted for the Kimble County Museum Building Fund**. Bring a sack lunch and folding chair, if possible. It is always cool at the Springs so a sweater or light wrap is helpful. Cameras are ok but no fishing gear or metal detectors are permitted. Folks usually depart from the Springs area around 2:00 p.m.

Oasis Pipeline Wildfire Recovery Workshop

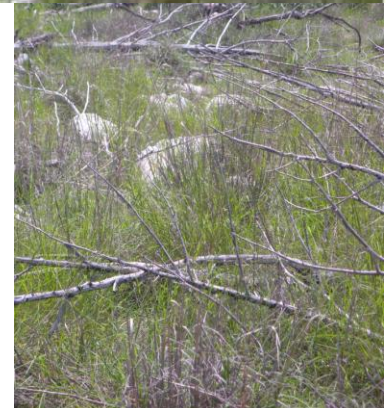
The stormy weather held off till the late afternoon, making for a beautiful day yesterday for the Oasis Pipeline Wildfire Recovery Workshop.

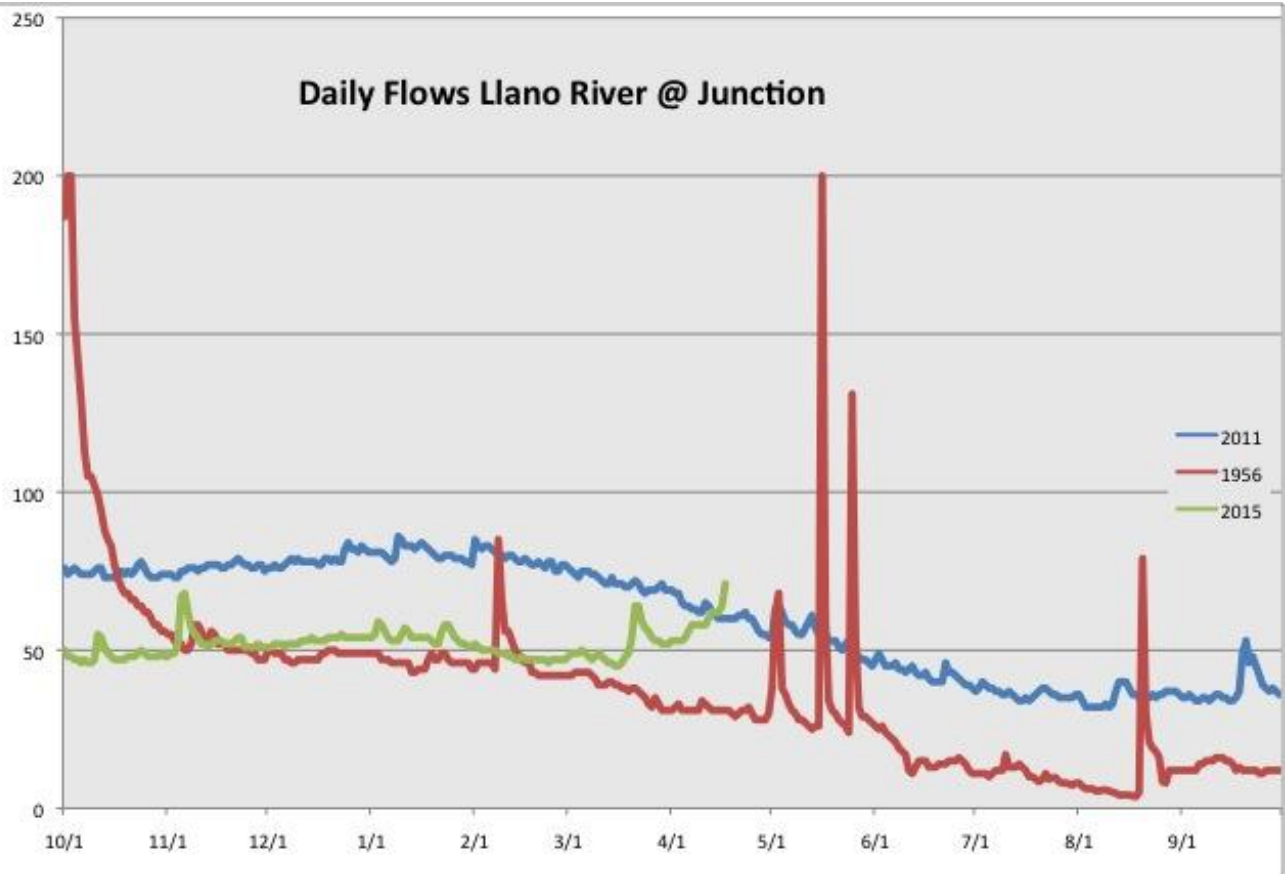
More than 60 participants saw firsthand how the uplands of the South Llano watershed have transformed from a scorched landscape (above right) into one of remarkable recovery (middle right).

The combination of drought, wildfire, and continued drought has really impacted these lands. But through some best management practices as well as nature taking her own course, these lands are beginning to heal.

Participants learned that browsing pressure from deer and axis deer has been a huge challenge to the recovery of the landscape after the fire. As such, simply spreading the burned cedar limbs across the landscape has been a successful best management practice for grasses and forbs to recover (see right), providing sufficient shade from the sun and protection from wildlife.

More details about findings from workshop will be provided in next week's newsletter. See page 4 of this issue for more pictures.





Cedar Beavers

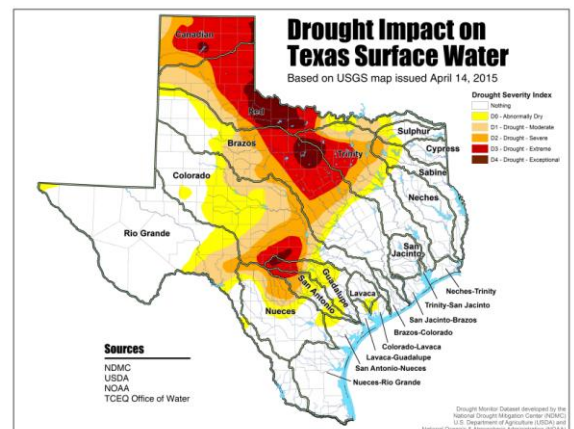


The [Llano River Field Station](#) is home to some serious beavers.

The beavers along the South Llano River at the Texas Tech Center in Junction have begun to fall *Ashe junipers*. So far, they have not moved any of these fallen timbers, so it is not clear what they plan to do with their handiwork.

Stay tuned.

Flows of the Llano and Drought



Last Tuesday's data from USGS shows the upper half of the watershed continues to be in Severe Drought, while the lower half of the watershed remains in Extreme Drought.

Indeed, until the spring rains began, the flow of the Llano River @ Junction (graph above) was below the flow of the river for the same period in 2011 and just above the flow in 1956, the worse year of the drought of record. For ease of viewing, all flows above 200 cfs are truncated. This truncation does highlight the fact that despite the decent rains this year, the Llano @ Junction has not risen above 200 cfs. In fact, the Llano has been above 200 cfs in Junction only four times since 2010. The last time was September 2013 when flows peaked at 4,400 cfs but fell below 200 cfs 4 days later, a clear indicator of drought.

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Natural Resources Conservation Service staff from the Junction office explains how this wildlife enclosure helped grasses and forbs recover.



After lunch, participants learned about riparian areas from Steve Nelle



Texas A&M Forest Service staff discusses how the fire moved across the landscape



Thankfully, the storms held off to until the evening