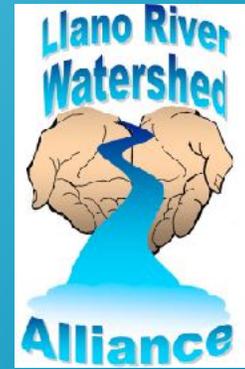


WATERSHED WEEK IN REVIEW



A Week Off

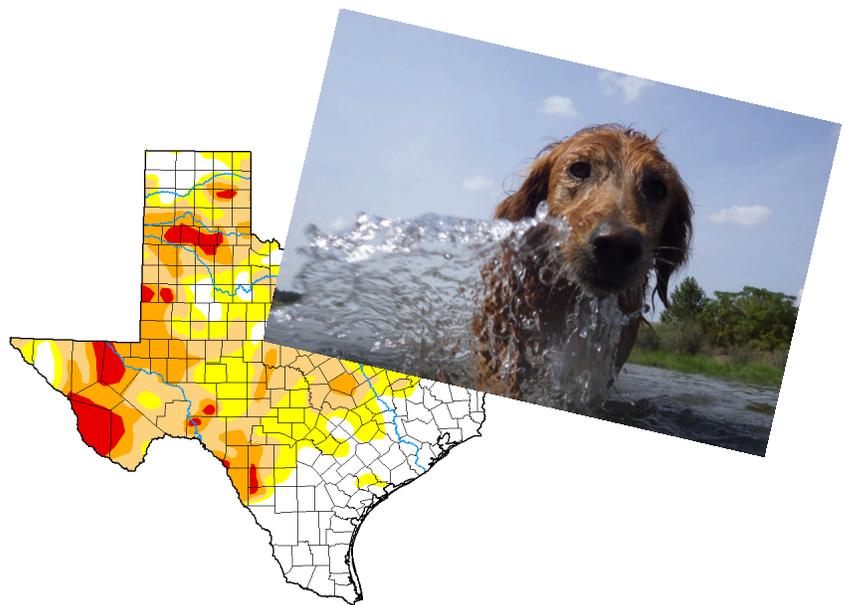
The 'Staff' at Watershed Week in Review noted that this week's edition of the newsletter is number 260, since we began in 2015.

Since that nearly matches the Heat Index, why not take a break.

See ya Aug 28.

Dog

Days



The dog days of summer are definitely here. According to the latest Drought Monitor, the majority of the watershed is now in Moderate Drought.

Flows of the Llano are at 37 cfs, about 1/2 of normal for this time of year. Other Highland Lake tributaries are even lower : Colorado (24 cfs); Pedernales (0.4 cfs); and Sandy (0 cfs).

Where did the term 'Dog Days' originate?

Restoring the Natural Beauty and Biodiversity of the Hill Country

By David Hillis

Reprinted with permission of *Mason County News* - “*Mason County Science Corner*”

In recent decades, many Texas landowners have become interested in restoring the natural beauty and biodiversity of their land. They may do this for their own enjoyment and gratification, or because income from land is now often greater from recreational use than from agricultural use. Even if they use their land for agriculture, many ranchers realize that a diverse landscape of native species is often far more cost-effective and easier to maintain (e.g., no need for expensive fertilizers or herbicides) than is a field of planted, non-native grasses. Landowners may also be aware that a biodiverse landscape takes care of itself and replenishes itself in perpetuity, while maintaining the natural beauty for which Mason County is famous.

Hunting leases, in particular, are an important source of income for many Mason County residents. But with our abundant deer and other game in Mason County, hunting no longer presents as much of a challenge as it once did. Many hunters are now looking for a broader and deeper experience with nature while they hunt. They often wish to see a natural landscape as it might have existed before the county was settled, and to see a wide diversity of plants and animals that they are unlikely to see again once they return home.



continue reading

Protecting the Llano : Increased Use Can Actually Help

Written by Tyson Broad for Mason County News - "Transformations"

Many of us grew up as kids spending time with cousins along the Llano River, usually without adult supervision. Parents and grandparents just hoped that one of us youngsters had a 'lick of sense' and a neighbor kept a watchful eye.

Sadly, those days have likely passed. More folks are discovering the Llano and sharing the river with just eagles and beaver is a rare occurrence anymore.

Where is everyone coming from? Locals?

About 250 more folks called Mason County home during the last ten years, a population increase of 7% since the previous census. Llano County increased 13%, but most of that increase occurs around the Highland Lakes. Populations in Kimble and Edwards County decreased. While Covid-19 is keeping us all closer to home, there just aren't 'enough of us' to account for all the increased river use.

Rather, the increased pressure on the river is likely coming from our neighboring urban centers. The Austin metro area grew nearly 30% from 1.2 to 1.7 million over the last decade. Metro San Antonio grew nearly 20% from 1.7 million in 2010 to 2.6 million today. That is 1.4 million new urban neighbors over the last decade.

And where are can all these folks recreate?

[continue...](#)



Wildfire Map

The screenshot shows a map of San Saba County, Texas, with a wildfire location marked by a red dot. A pop-up window provides the following details:

Mays	
Stage of Control: Contained	
Last updated: 08/11/20 15:55	
COUNTY	DISPATCH ZONE
San Saba	North
FIRE SIZE:	CONTAINMENT:
9813 ac	100%
COORDINATES	
31° 7' 33.05" N , 99° 2' 55.01" W	

Hopefully, this is an on-line tool you won't have to use...

Texas A&M Forest Service has updated their Wildfire Incident Response System. This webpage shows the location, size, and containment data for active and recently active wildfires.

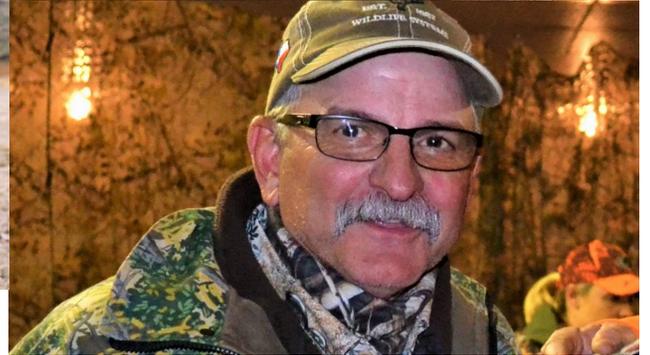
Prescribed burns can be very beneficial to watershed health. Wildfires, while providing some benefit, often burn too hot, impacting soil health and resulting in increased erosion and sedimentation and decreased water quality.



We encourage members to nominate another person or business to become a member. Twelve of these nominations will be selected for a one-year **free membership**. Deadline for nominations is *August 31, 2020*. [Nominate here](#).

Nominate a Member

Tragic Loss at TPWD



The Alliance was deeply saddened to learn of the helicopter crash last weekend that took the lives of three Texas Parks and Wildlife employees.

Brandon White (top right), from Spur, was a Fish and Wildlife Technician based at Elephant Mountain Wildlife Management Area. Dewey Stockbridge (above left) from Mason, was the Lead Biologist at Elephant Mountain. Dr. Robert Dittmar, originally from Harper and a long-time Kerrville vet, was the TPWD Wildlife Veterinarian. Dr. Dittmar often spoke to groups in the watershed regarding chronic wasting disease.

The Alliance sends heartfelt condolences to all the families affected by this tragedy. It also sends heartfelt thanks to all TPWD employees who often risk their lives to protect the places and species that make Texas special.