

# WATERSHED WEEK IN REVIEW



## 3rd Annual Birding Festival Registration Open

Registration space is filling quickly for the 3rd Annual South Llano River Birding Festival.

**April 24-26, 2020**

Saturday will be filled with a variety of birding actives and then a banquet. Sunday is the Big Sit!

[Information & Registration](#)

*Due to travel commitments, there will be no Newsletter next week.*

## River Access of Concern for New White's Crossing Bridge



A local Llano River outfitter expressed his frustration in this week's *Mason County News* regarding TxDOT's lack of response to inquiries regarding the new bridge to be built at White's Crossing of the Llano in Mason County. The state agency has ignored repeated request by Tony Plutino at Llano River Region Adventures and the Llano River Watershed Alliance to gain an understanding the actual plans for the new bridge. Representative Murr's office is now assisting these efforts.

*Read Article...*

## LRWA Comments to TCEQ re City of Mason Wastewater Permit Renewal

The City of Mason is asking TCEQ to renew their permit to discharge wastewater into Comanche Creek. As part of the new permit, the City is taking positive steps to begin using some of the wastewater to irrigate the nearby golf course. The LRWA is supportive of these efforts.

At the same time, the Alliance has noted an increase in algal growth in the Creek downstream of the wastewater facility. Several folks who recently participated in the riparian restoration workshop at Fort Mason Park last month also commented on the condition of the Creek (photo right). Algal growth, or eutrophication, results from an excess of nutrients in water causing dense growth of aquatic plant life and resulting decreases of oxygen in the water. Often these excess nutrients come from wastewater treatment facilities. While the City's wastewater treatment facility generally meets nutrient discharge restrictions, they did report exceedances of the standards in early 2019.



Following the riparian workshop, the Alliance took Dissolved Oxygen (DO) readings of Comanche Creek downstream of the City's discharge pipe. How much oxygen is dissolved in water is a key factor for aquatic health. Aquatic species become stressed when DO levels drop below 5 mg/l; the lower the DO, the greater the stress. While DO readings near the wastewater treatment plant outfall were around 8 mg/l, they quickly dropped to around 3 mg/l and remained at these low levels for several hundred yards downstream. No aquatic species were observed in the Creek.

The Alliance has begun productive discussions with the City on ways to improve the water quality of Comanche Creek and the City is exploring some of these options. Meanwhile, the Alliance will continue to monitor the creek.

*[Read Alliance comments to TCEQ.](#)*

# TCEQ Adopts New Rules for Wastewater

*Editor's Note: These new rules make it easier for cities to reuse wastewater for other purposes, such as irrigation. The rules will hopefully decrease the amount of effluent discharged to Hill Country rivers, like the Llano, that are very susceptible to algal blooms resulting from excess nutrients.*

From Corridor News:

In December, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) adopted new rules for the disposal of treated wastewater effluent by land application.



In 2016, Austin petitioned the TCEQ to consider rule changes that would encourage beneficial use of treated wastewater effluent for non-potable purposes, such as irrigation of parks and medians or for toilet flushing within buildings. Beneficial reuse of wastewater effluent, which is often referred to as “reclaimed water,” helps protect water quality while achieving water conservation. It is also more cost-effective for public and private entities that employ land application for wastewater management.

More from Corridor News...

## Great Opportunity for Llano Landowners

Hill Country Conservancy is now accepting pre-applications for funding of conservation easements through the Hill Country Headwaters Conservation Initiative.



The Hill Country Headwaters Conservation Initiative (HCHCI), a program of Hill Country Conservancy, the Texas Hill Country Conservation Network and 18 partner organizations, is now accepting Pre-applications from landowners located within specified critical river basins, including the Llano. The HCHCI has a \$2.1 million pledge, awarded by the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, for the purchase of conservation easements from willing landowners. *...Learn more*

## Our Relationship with Soil

Kara Kroeger is a Sustainable Agriculture Specialist with the National Center for Appropriate Technology in San Antonio. She will be discussing “Our Relationship with Soil” at this month’s Texas Master Naturalist - Hill Country Chapter meeting in Kerrville on Monday, January 27.

The presentation begins at 7pm at the Upper Guadalupe River Authority Lecture Hall at 125 North Lehmann Drive.

[More details...](#)



## South Llano River State Park Activities

### Let's Get Fishy!

📅 1:30p to 2:30p  
Sat, January 18, 2020

Try your hand at the ancient art of Gyotaku.

Meet at the large Main Day use parking lot . Ranger will be set up at a picnic table close to the stairs down to the river. Explore the ancient art of Gyotaku, a method used by Japanese fishermen to record their catch.

All materials provided.

### Fishing Tournament

📅 10:30a to 12:30p  
Sat, January 18, 2020

📍 [South Llano River State Park](#)  
[Map & Directions](#)

👤 [Lorissa Digiacomo](#)  
(325) 446-3994  
[lorissa.digiacomo@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:lorissa.digiacomo@tpwd.texas.gov)

📅 [Download to Your Calendar](#)

You think you got the skills to get your fish on?! Well, prove it by signing up!

This tournament is for both kids and adults. The kids are required to have parental supervision. The river and Buck Lake (catch and release only) are open for use.

\* **Register by email** before January 10, 2020. Include number of adults and kids (ages needed). Let us know if you need loaner tackle (limited supplies) and if you are fly fishing or not.

Meet at the Main Day use parking lot (big one).

Fly fishing is allowed but in a different category

Artificial lures only.

\* Registration required but the event is FREE. Only park fees apply (park entrance fee \$5 per adult; children 12 and under are free). Fishing license required if going in the water for ages 17 and up.