**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**UPPER LLANO RIVER WATERSHED PROTECTION PLAN**

**STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS**

**Questions from 8/14/2012**

1. ***What is a BMP?***

**Best Management Practice (BMP)** are [methods](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/method.html) or [techniques](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/technique.html) found to be the most [effective](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/effective.html) and [practical](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/practical.html) [means](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/mean.html) in achieving an [objective](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/objective.html) (such as preventing or minimizing [pollution](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/pollution.html), controlling erosion, improving range) while [making](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/maker.html) the [optimum](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/optimum.html) use of the [resources](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/resource.html).Examples of best management practices will be showcased at the TTU Llano River Field Station, and include brush management, erosion control, invasive species, and riparian restoration.

1. ***What are the current issues in the Upper Llano River Watershed?***

Erosion (especially streambank), the spread of invasive species, brush infestations and control, land fragmentation, and urbanization e.g. water transfers.

# *What is being done to understand crop field irrigation with river water?*

# Education and outreach associated with improved irrigation techniques, retro fitting programs and cost and efficiency benefits as components of the WPP will be provided on conservation of water resources.

***4. What’s being done to study the effects of the flame retardant used during the Oasis Pipeline wildfire?***

At this time little is known about the ecological effects of using flame retardant to fight the Oasis Pipeline wildfire. The main constituent used for fighting the fire was water, not flame retardant. Texas Forest Service records indicate only one, 2000 gallon application of a 1:1 retardant/water mixture was used. The retardant used was Phos-Check P-100F. The retardant appears to have fairly inert ingredients, although over 16% of the components are not provided and listed as ‘trade secret.’ These ingredients may or may not have impacts. Given the small quantity used in relation to the area covered in application, the potential for impact is likely low.

***5. How do landowners eradicate elephant ear (Colocasia esculenta)?***

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department with support from the Llano River Field Station is aggressively managing the elephant ear populations along the Upper Llano River. The best removal practice seems to be ‘wicking’. This process involves brushing the leaves with a systemic herbicide, such as Clearcast. In this way, only the targeted plant is affected. The herbicide is eventually incorporated into the plant root, which kills the plant. Although this method seems to be successful, landowner access for herbicide application is essential.

***6. What happens if an endangered species is found while sampling?***

There are no known endangered aquatic species found in the North and South Llano Rivers. There are only two known terrestrial endangered species; the Golden-cheecked Warbler and the Black-capped Vireo. The Upper Llano WPP is not designed to discover, evaluate, and/or assess endangered species.

**Questions from 10/9/2012**

1. **How often will water quality be sampled for the development of the Upper Llano Watershed Protection Plan?**

Sampling will be conducted at 14 main stem and 6 spring sites along the North and South Llano. Sampling includes water quality, flow, habitat assessment, fish, and macroinvertebrates. Water quality and flow will be sampled four times a year at all 20 sites. Biological sampling, which includes habitat assessment, fish, and macroinvertebrates will be conducted twice a year, and only at the main stem sites.

1. **Is there a regulatory component of the Upper Llano Watershed Protection Plan?**

Most WPPs are initiated in watersheds that are polluted and listed, in part or as a whole, as an impaired waterway. Generally, any water body that does not meet its water quality standards is considered an impaired water body. As an example, water bodies with low dissolved oxygen levels associated with organic matter pollution would be considered for listing as an impaired waterbody. For each impaired waterbody, the state must develop an accounting of pollution loads that would result in the waterbody’s meeting water quality standards. Since diffuse, non-point pollution sources are difficult to measure, permitted point discharge sources (such as wastewater treatment plants) are targeted for strict pollution reduction. If loads are not reduced within the specified timeline, regulation might be targeted at specific point source discharges (e.g. regulation is levied only on the wastewater plant).

The Upper Llano WPP is unique from other WPPs because it is being developed in a healthy watershed. The goal of the WPP is to protect the high-quality waters that are threatened by changing land uses, and to protect unique and valuable aquatic resources from serious risk of irreparable harm. The WPP is completely voluntary and local stakeholder driven. Bottom line, this is your plan.

1. **How is information about the plan being disseminated to the public?**

Information about the Upper Llano Watershed Protection Plan can be found on the South Llano Watershed Alliance: <http://southllano.org/projects/upper-llano-watershed-protection-plan/>. In addition, press releases are sent to local papers in Edwards, Kimble, Menard, Real, and Sutton counties prior to all stakeholder meetings.