

WATERSHED WEEK IN REVIEW



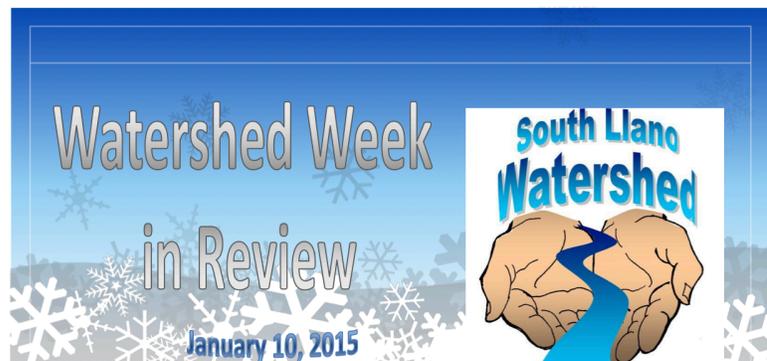
New Look for the Newsletter

After nearly 300 newsletters, the Alliance is going to change 'Watershed Week in Review' a bit.

A new member of the Alliance has volunteered to assist with the layout and other members have volunteered to assist with content. The newsletter will now become a monthly publication.

Please look for the next newsletter on June 24.

The First Edition



Time to Renew

Happy 2015 from the South Llano Watershed Alliance

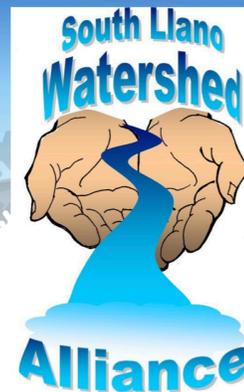
The beginning of each year is the time for membership renewal with the SLWA.

Individual Membership is \$20

Business Sponsorship is \$100

[Click here for more info](#)

Memberships are the primary revenue source for the South Llano Watershed Alliance



New Newsletter

Over the past few years, information of interest to SLWA members has been shared via the [Alliance Website](#), the [Alliance Facebook page](#) and the Alliance email list serve. Information will continue to be shared in this manner, but emails will now be consolidated via this newsletter. We hope you like the newsletter and also hope you will consider joining or renewing your membership.

Save the Date!

Planning Meeting

Jan 17, 2015

SLWA Board invites members to participate in program planning meeting at 10am at the Hacienda Maria at Native American Seed (page 3)

Stakeholder Meeting

Feb 5, 2015

Upper Llano River Watershed Protection Plan Stakeholder Meeting at Texas Tech-Junction-details soon

This was first weekly newsletter from January of 2015. An [archive of all newsletters](#) can be found on the Alliance website.

What Happened to All our Frogs?

By David Hillis
Mason County News
Reprinted with Permission

One of my ranch neighbors grew up in Mason and spent most of his summers working and playing on his family's ranch. He left Mason County for his career, but returned in recent years and now manages that ranch. He recently asked me, "What happened to all our frogs?" When I probed him for the basis of his question, he explained.



"When I was a teenager, there were frogs and toads everywhere. If we went fishing, we could pick up a bucket of frogs any time with little effort. There were always frogs and toads hopping around everywhere after a rain storm. I would love to listen to the frogs calling in choruses in the spring. Now, I rarely see or hear any frogs at all. What happened to them?"

Sadly, the decline in frogs and toads is not just a local problem. Amphibian populations have declined or completely disappeared across many areas of the world. In Mason County, some species appear to have disappeared completely, whereas others are hanging on, but in lower numbers than occurred historically. [continue reading...](#)



The Alliance is once again participating in Texas Parks and Wildlife's Heathy Creeks Initiative to combat invasive *Arundo Donax* or Giant Cane. This program provides treatment of this invasive **at no cost to the landowner**. The Alliance began participation in the program last year and several patches were able to be mapped and treated, despite the pandemic.

This year we hope to have more patches treated.

If you are interested in having your *Arundo* treated, contact the Alliance at southllanoriver@gmail.com

Invasives Refresher

As the countryside continues to green-up, there are two fairly new invasive species in the watershed to be looking for. Mexican Needlegrass or Mexican Ricegrass (*Achatherum lobatum*) was first observed in Kimble County in the early 1950s but has spread through much of the area, specifically those with deeper soils along riparian areas. It can be readily, **if not slightly painfully**, identified by pressing on the ends of the leaves with an open hand.

Texas A&M Agrilife Extension provides more details on the history, characteristics and treatment of this invasive.



Photo : Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Figure 1. Mexican needlegrass is a prolific seed producer which rapidly colonizes on deep soils throughout West Central Texas.



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Photographer: Joseph M. DiTomaso, University of California - Davis
Source: Bugwood.org

Malta Star-thistle (*Centaurea Melintensis*) is another recent invasive on the landscape. The plant competes with native vegetation, often forming dense stands. The Texas Invasives Database provides more information on this prickly pest.

Alliance Begins Riparian Site Visits



Does your riparian area look like this?

The Llano River Watershed Alliance has begun offering on-site technical consultation to assist landowners whose riparian areas need some assistance returning to their properly functioning condition.

During these visits, we will help landowners identify areas where Best Management Practices could be employed to increase vegetative growth and reduce erosion, allowing the riparian area to trap sediment, store more water, and provide shade to improve habitat for aquatic species.

There is no charge for this consultation or for the plantings, which will be delivered in the fall.

If you are interested in this opportunity, please contact southllanoriver@gmail.com.