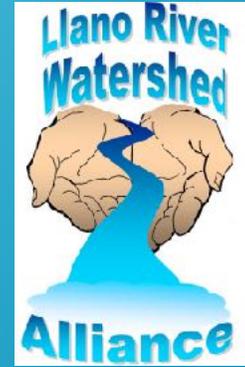


WATERSHED WEEK IN REVIEW



Special Thanks to our New and Returning Sponsors

Fred and Cynthia
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Thank you for the
support!

A Reminder



Photo by Llano River Landowner

Readers of this newsletter likely are already aware of this law, but here it is again: The operation of a wheeled or tracked motor vehicle in the “protected freshwater area” (the bed, bottom, and banks up to the gradient boundary) of a navigable stream **is prohibited.**

What readers of the newsletter may not know is that all peace officers of the state may enforce this provision. It does not just have to be the game wardens.

The Pros and Cons of Brush Control

By David Hillis

Reprinted with permission of *Mason County News* - "Mason County Science Corner"

I met recently with a new Mason County ranch owner to discuss his management efforts and his interest in increasing wildlife populations and biodiversity on his property. As we rode around his ranch, he showed me various plants that he had been working to control, and asked me what I thought about them. Before answering this question, I always start by asking the landowner what goals they hope to achieve. Are you interested only in raising livestock? Are you interested in wildlife populations, such as deer and quail? Do you have an interest in restoring the land and increasing overall biodiversity of plants and animals?

Many new landowners, in particular, seem to have an idealized view of grasslands as pure stands of grass, much like a lawn of a suburban home. However, healthy, native grasslands do not resemble this view at all. A healthy, productive, diverse grassland includes a wide variety of broad-leafed plants called forbs, as well as clumps of woody, and often thorny, vegetation. The forbs are especially important food for most species of wildlife, as well as for livestock. Whitetail Deer, for example, eat very little grass. They only eat the tender green shoots of newly sprouted grasses, and cannot digest mature grass efficiently. Whitetail Deer would starve if confined to a field of nothing but mature grass.



Deer change their diet throughout the year. In the spring, they mostly eat a diet of tender green forbs. By late summer, most of these forbs are dried up, and they switch to eating a lot of mast—the fruits of plants like Prickly Pear Cactus and Texas Persimmon.

continue reading

New Conservation Easement Protects Lands along the Llano



From Texas Agricultural Land Trust

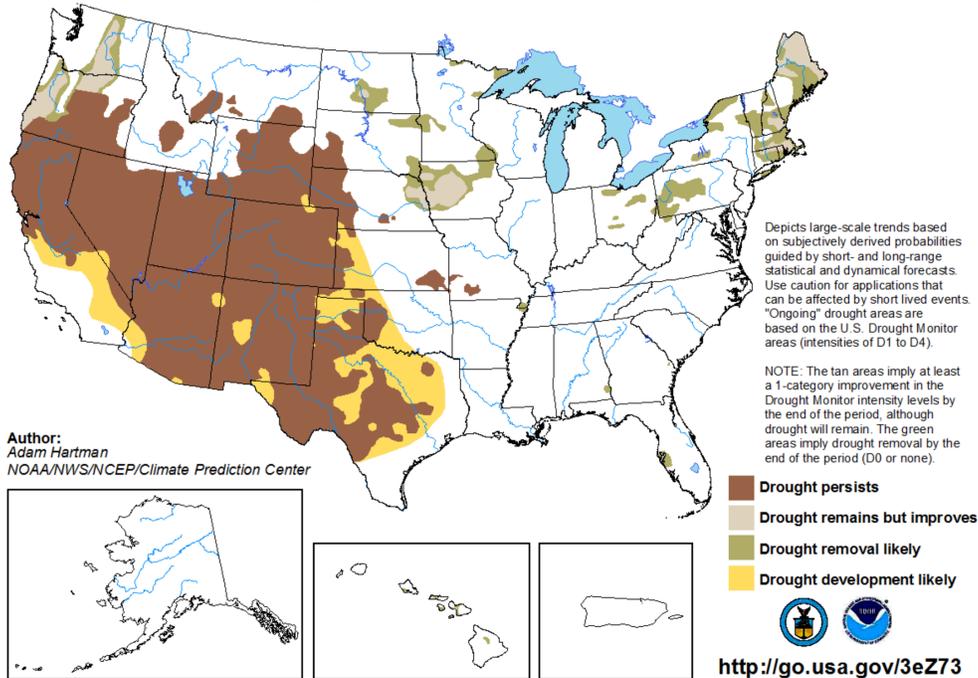
Perry Donop Jr. knows the details of his family history in Texas going back to the 1800s, from the time his forebears made the journey from Germany to Texas in 1845. It was a journey fraught with peril, with several family members dying of cholera on the trip, and the ship foundering in a horrific storm off the Texas coast. But Donop's ancestor Heinrich Conrad Pluenneke made it to shore, and eventually ended up in Fredericksburg where he married, and then purchased land in 1859 that would be handed down for generations.

The family land in present-day Mason County has been a working ranch ever since, but over the years, other surrounding ranches have been cut up into pieces and sold, a familiar story across Texas and beyond. While the land may be a precious legacy, the practical matter is that it can be expensive to maintain. [...go to full story](#)

Drought Likely to Worsen

U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook
Drought Tendency During the Valid Period

Valid for August 20 - November 30, 2020
Released August 20



The U.S. Seasonal Drought outlook through the fall predicts continued and developing drought across the western US with warmer temperatures and drier-than-normal conditions. Much of this prediction is predicated on the potential for a slight La Niña developing this fall.

El Ninos traditionally bring more precipitation to our area, while La Niñas traditionally bring 'Less Agua'.



We encourage members to nominate another person or business to become a member. These nominations will be selected for a one-year **free membership**. Deadline for nominations is *August 31, 2020*.

[Nominate here.](#)

Last Chance!