

After we finished up with our "lessons" we ended the day with a BBQ dinner and sat around an open fire discussing everything we had seen.

On Sunday, we wrapped up with an overview of Texas water issues by Mike Mecke and a conversation about "What Next?" The answer is a plan to hold our Second Annual Riparian Workshop in May 2005. This workshop will provide an excellent opportunity for those who missed the first workshop or those who want to extend the discussion started in Junction. A few participants of the Junction workshop have already signed up for the 2005 workshop and we have already begun planning it. Kevin Anderson (Hornsby Bend) and Jacquelyn Duke (Baylor University) will be leading the planning committee for the 2005 Workshop and need more volunteers to help, so please contact Kevin if you're interested. In the next few months, we'll be sending out notices about the workshop to members and past workshop participants, as well as posting notices on the riparian listserv. Keep your eyes peeled. We look forward to another great group of people and another wonderful set of presenters at the 2005 Riparian Workshop. We'll see you there!



Participants contemplate a river on the Native American Seed property, whose incised banks the company has re-vegetated.

Photo credit: Kevin Anderson

"The outreach of this kind of workshop is what TRA is all about and I would love to see this workshop presented repeatedly throughout the state. In the workshop we have an essential piece of learning about healthy riparian areas." ~Sari Moyer, Chair of the 2004 Workshop Committee



A variety of sites were visited to view watershed principals in action during the day of field trips.

Photo credit: Kevin Anderson

This summary of TRA's first annual workshop was provided by Sari Moyer and Kevin Anderson. As Workshop Chair, Sari would like to thank everyone who volunteered and participated in this wonderful program, including Amanda Camp, Assistant Director of the Texas Tech Field Research Station, who was invaluable in coordinating between the University and the Workshop Team both before and during the event.

Calendar of Riparian Events

February 24-26. "Ecology and Management of the Southern Great Plains," the 40th Annual Meeting of the Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society. Amarillo, TX.

February 25. "Working Towards Sustainability," workshop hosted in conjunction with the HRM of Texas' annual meeting (see below). Hornsby Bend, Austin, TX. Contact Peggy Jones at 512-858-2671 or harmofox@earthlink.net.

February 26. "Discussing a Watershed Choice for the Future of Texas," the annual meeting of Holistic Resource Management of Texas. Austin, TX. Contact Peggy Jones at harmofox@earthlink.net or 512-858-2671.

March 30. Field Day for Land Managers, covering HRM, risk management, decision-making, and impact of tools/technology on upland and riparian rangeland systems, taught from economic and ecologic perspective. Carrizo Springs, TX. Sponsored by HRM of Texas and Texas A&M University.

April 5-8. Texas Water 2005. The Texas Section of the American Water Works Assoc. and the Water Environment Assoc. of Texas host. Galveston, TX. www.tawwa.org

◆ **May.** TRA's 2nd Annual Riparian Workshop. Date and location TBA. Watch the listserv for details.

◆ = Events sponsored by TRA.

A Listserv Primer

The Riparian Listserv is a service of the University of Texas, created to encourage the exchange of information on riparian issues among the citizens of Texas. You do not need to be a member of TRA to subscribe. Notices about recent riparian research, conferences, training, and activities are posted daily. The listserv also provides a forum for finding, sharing, and discussing riparian-related information and issues. TRA member business is generally conducted through a membership email list and snail mail.

To subscribe to the Riparian Listserv, send an email to: listproc@lists.cc.utexas.edu. Leave the subject line blank. In the body of the email, type: SUBSCRIBE RIPARIAN your first name your last name (for example: SUBSCRIBE RIPARIAN JOHN DOE). Soon afterwards, you should receive an email response confirming your request and providing general listserv info.

To receive listserv postings in a daily digest instead of receiving individual emails for each posting, send an email to the address above, leaving the subject line blank. In the body of the email, type: set RIPARIAN mail digest.

To remove yourself from the Riparian listserv, follow the instructions for subscribing, except in the body of the email, type: UNSUBSCRIBE RIPARIAN. Again, a confirmation email will be sent when your request has been processed.

To post messages to the listserv, direct your email to riparian@lists.cc.utexas.edu.

Please remember: When using the listserv, please be courteous to other users by not pushing the "Reply" button after viewing a message unless you want your reply sent to everyone that subscribes to the service.

That's about it! We suggest saving this primer for future reference. If you have questions, or encounter problems using the Riparian listserv, email Kevin at Kevin.anderson@ci.austin.tx.us.

Newsletter Basics

It's difficult to believe, but we're already into our third year of producing *TRA Stream Lines*. It is our hope that this newsletter will serve as a means of orienting new members and updating existing members to the developments and activities within our organization. I am sure that *Stream Lines* will evolve with the TRA, and I welcome your comments and suggestions for improvement, topics, and features (as long as you're nice). I also hope that you will contribute ideas, articles, and calendar entries for future issues.

We plan to publish this newsletter biannually, in the winter and the summer; the deadlines for submittals will be November 1st and May 1st, respectively. I encourage you to submit articles on topics you find interesting, but please be sure to make your submittals ahead of the deadline so that the newsletter can be printed on schedule. I will always edit articles for clarity and space constraints. Please send submittals (text as .doc files and images as .jpg files) and comments to Emily Schieffer at 512-451-5240 or eschieffer@lggroupinc.com. Thanks!

2005 TRA Board Members

At our Annual Meeting this fall (held in conjunction with our Riparian Workshop in Junction), two new board members were elected. In this issue of *TRA Stream Lines* we introduce you to the newest members and list the continuing board members. Please feel free to contact any of us with questions, comments, or suggestions.

Amanda Camp – Member-at-Large

A graduate from Texas Tech University (Bachelor of General Studies), Amanda Camp's emphasis is on agricultural and wildlife sciences, zoological sciences, and technical writing. Her main interest focuses on private land consulting for switching over land tax exemption from agricultural to wildlife management. Amanda is currently enrolled in graduate school at Tech and works as the Assistant Director of the University's Field Research Station in Junction. In that capacity, she maintains and schedules use of the facilities, website, and research projects. In addition to this work, Amanda develops educational programs for The Outdoor School.

Emily Schieffer – Communications Coordinator

Interested in a variety of pursuits, from writing, hiking, and ecology, to social justice, cross-cultural issues, and philosophy, Emily Schieffer prefers the description of Renaissance Woman, rather than a "Jack of all trades; master of none." After receiving a B.S. in Ecology, Evolution and Conservation Biology from the University of Texas at Austin, Emily spent some time in Bolivia, working with the Peace Corps. She is now employed as an environmental consultant with an engineering firm in Austin. She is also a member of the Austin to Bastrop River Corridor Partnership and the Young Adult Advisory Council for the National Women's Museum.



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For more information, contact Kevin Anderson at 512-972-1960 or kevin.anderson@ci.austin.tx.us
 Or check us out on the web at www.texasriparian.org

Membership Update. The Texas Riparian Association is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization dedicated to encouraging healthy riparian systems in Texas. The TRA's efforts in education, research and healthy watershed management are possible largely through the funds provided by members like you. Please consider joining us or renewing your membership today. Thank you for your support!

Yes, I want to become a member of the Texas Riparian Association and help to encourage healthy riparian systems within Texas!

Name _____ Affiliation (if any) _____

Address _____

Phone (work/home) _____ Phone (cell/pager) _____

Email _____

Please check one of the following annual membership categories:

<input type="checkbox"/> Member	\$20	<input type="checkbox"/> Business Member	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/> Student Member	\$10	<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsoring Member	\$150
<input type="checkbox"/> Government or Non-profit Member	\$35	<input type="checkbox"/> Life Member	\$300
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining Member	\$20

(add to cost of any other membership category)

- I would like to serve on a committee! My first choice is:
- Administration (finances, incorporation, by-laws, membership)
 - Program (agendas and logistics for conferences, workshops, seminars, meeting planning)
 - Outreach (educational materials- except programs- including newsletter, website, brochures)
 - Research & Demonstration (library, database, demonstration projects)

Please make checks payable to the Texas Riparian Association and mail with this form to:
 TRA c/o Center for Environmental Research
 2210 S. FM 973
 Austin, Texas 78725-7103

For more information on membership, contact Kevin at kevin.anderson@ci.austin.tx.us

TRA's First Annual Workshop a Rousing Success

On October 1-3, 2004, twenty-seven people from around the state participated in TRA's first annual workshop, "Building Healthy Watersheds." The workshop was well-received; all agreed that it was both a great learning experience and a fun social weekend of getting to know a diverse group of people working on Texas riparian systems (for marketing purposes, we call it "networking"). Representatives of the following organizations attended: TCEQ, Texas Tech, University of Texas, Sul Ross State University, Texas A&M University, Baylor University, San Antonio River Authority, Texas National Guard, NRCS, Texas Cooperative Extension, Nature Conservancy of Texas, Austin Water Utility, Plateau Land and Wildlife Management, as well as private landowners. Texas Tech's Junction campus in the Texas Hill Country provided a natural backdrop for the three days of activities.

On Friday, the first afternoon of the workshop, our presenters laid the groundwork for the weekend's discussion by giving us a crash course in watershed, riparian, and stream ecology. Sue Watts (TRA President) began by reviewing the basics of watershed function; Larry White and Steve Nelle (TRA board members) followed with a description of basic management requirements and indicators of healthy upland watersheds and riparian zones. Michael Gonzales (TRA Treasurer) continued the theme, describing how a stream's fish community composition relates to ecosystem health. Kenneth Mayben (TRA Vice-President) concluded the evening's sessions with information on environmentally sensitive designs for stream bank rehabilitation and reclamation. We followed the classroom sessions with an evening by the river sipping refreshments and getting to know each other.



Bill Nieman talks to workshop participants about promulgating native seed.

Photo credit: Ken Mayben

The second day was devoted to a full day of field trips. We started on the South Llano River, visiting numerous sites and discussing how the on-the-ground realities of the sites connected to the topics covered in the sessions the previous night. We were then treated to an extensive viewing of Native American Seed operations with Bill Nieman. NAS has done a great job of re-vegetating the steep banks of the river on their site and- even more exciting- must have the highest concentrations of harvester ants and horned lizards in Texas! (Check out their website to learn more about native seed for riparian projects: www.seedsource.com.) We finished the field day with a visit to a restoration project on the Llano implemented by the Texas Tech Campus. The field trips were a great opportunity to see upland watershed management, riparian health, stream bank stability, stream dynamics and management activities first-hand.

Austin – Bastrop River Corridor Partnership Flows Forward in 2004

The Colorado River runs for over 60 river miles between Austin and Bastrop. This stretch of river played an important role in the history of human settlement in Texas both for Native Americans and during early Anglo settlement in the 1820's and 1830's. It is consistently rated excellent for water quality, and it is a significant natural and recreational resource for the Austin area. However, urbanization is rapidly changing the river corridor between Austin and Bastrop with housing developments, new highways, gravel extraction, and more. This transformation is inevitable, given population growth in Central Texas, but it is not too late to shape the kind of land-use change affecting the river corridor.

The Austin-Bastrop River Corridor Partnership is an effort to gather stakeholders together for a sustained conversation about the future of this river corridor. It is not a non-profit organization, but rather a partnership of agencies, organizations, and individuals committed to advancing this conversation and to articulating a shared vision for the river corridor. The Partnership has grown out of a common commitment to seeking positive, cooperative opportunities to promote a healthy river corridor ecosystem and to enhance public awareness of the Colorado River as a unique natural, recreational, and economic resource for the Austin-Bastrop area.

Beginning in February 2003, the Austin Water Utility's Center for Environmental Research has hosted a monthly meeting of the Partnership. Through those meetings, participants agreed that the mission of the Partnership is to support sustainable development and a healthy riparian ecosystem along the Austin to Bastrop river corridor. The following goals were also adopted:

TRA Workshop continued on page 2.

ABRCP continued on page 4.

Riparian Ribbons of Gold

For many centuries, gold has been an enduring symbol of value and worth. Dad retired a few years ago after serving 48 years with the same company. Prior to his retirement, his boss held a fancy dinner to honor Dad's service, and gave him a rare Double Eagle, gold coin in mint condition dated the year of his birth. Although the one-ounce coin had a face value of only \$20, it has an actual value many, many times greater. It was a way to tell everyone that Dad's service had been valuable, reliable and much appreciated. It is the sort of thing that is cherished and kept and protected indefinitely. In all likelihood, it will be passed along to a child or grandchild some day and its value will continue to increase.

In a similar way, the narrow bands of land that lay alongside of creeks and rivers also have a value much greater than their face value. Although these riparian areas make up only one or two percent of the total land area, the contributions and values they provide are far in excess of their rather small acreage. No right-minded person in possession of a gold coin would dream of spending it at its face value. That would be an absurd and foolish waste. Likewise, the loss or degradation of riparian areas is also an unfortunate waste of a precious and valuable natural resource.

We could list a number of important values that creeks and riparian areas provide. Natural beauty, extraordinary fish and wildlife habitat, recreational value, livestock forage, real estate value just to name a few. But possibly the value that exceeds all of these is the very real value of the water itself and the way that riparian areas function to process that water. Restoring creeks and riparian areas to their functional potential cannot increase the total supply of water, but it can increase the availability of that water across the landscape and over time. In fact, many would agree that the total supply of water that we get from rainfall each year is sufficient to meet the demands, but the timing of the water supply and the location of that water is often the problem. Sometimes we see a years worth of water flushing down the creek all in one day only to find a dry creekbed, small trickles, or scattered puddles a short time later.

A properly functioning creek, along with its riparian floodplain area can help ameliorate and buffer those wild pulses of water over space and time and can help keep water more evenly distributed on the land longer. In fact, the essence of riparian function is to efficiently catch, store and release floodwaters. At the same time, a healthy riparian area captures sediment and stabilizes that sediment to improve water quality while continually building a bigger riparian sponge. The sustained release of that stored water from the banks and floodplains and from shallow water tables after rainfall events, is the way that riparian areas process water. Good, dense riparian vegetation across the entire floodplain is the key to the proper function of riparian areas. Proper riparian vegetation dissipates the destructive energy of floodwater, slows water velocity, allows sediment to drop, protects banks, and helps build floodplains.

Like gold coins that we treasure and protect, let us do everything in our power to encourage and promote the proper husbandry and stewardship of these valuable ribbons of riparian gold. The dividends are enormous.

Steve Nelle wrote this essay as part of his "Riparian Notes" series.

ABRCP Update, continued from page 1...

- **Public Awareness Goal:** To raise community awareness about issues affecting the future of the Colorado River corridor over the next twenty years of rapid development.
- **Sustainability Goal:** To promote economic and recreational use of the river corridor that supports long-term ecological health and social equity.
- **Riparian Management Goal:** To promote actions that conserve and maintain a healthy riparian system along the river Corridor.
- **Restoration Goal:** To assist with restoration of riparian habitats along the corridor.

As reported previously in the TRA newsletter, a riparian restoration workshop was held in November 2003 in conjunction with the Society for Ecological Restoration International Conference in Austin. With the help of the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program, two more public workshops were held to solicit more input from stakeholders during 2004. In May 2004, 60 people participated in an all-day workshop to discuss the many important values of the river and to raise issues and concerns currently facing this stretch river corridor. The LCRA donated the use of the McKinney Roughs Nature Park and catered this day-long workshop. The Partnership built on the ideas gathered through that session during a second community workshop in November 2004 at the LCRA's Bastrop Riverside Conference Center. Again 60 people spent the day identifying opportunities for cooperative efforts between landowners, business leaders, developers, industry representatives, agencies, non-profit groups, and the community at large to support sustainable development and riparian ecosystem health along the river corridor.



Break-out groups at the workshops discuss their visions for the future state of the Colorado River. *Photo by: Kevin Anderson*

A key focus of the Partnership's work for 2005 will be the publication of a "River Corridor Study" that will articulate the broad consensus vision reached through the May and November workshops and Partnership meetings, and describe recommendations and strategies for implementing that vision. Additionally, the Partnership has identified a range of projects to support, including assisting with active riparian restoration, hosting regular river paddling trips, and holding public outreach presentations to educate the community about the river corridor. If you are interested in this effort, please contact Kevin Anderson (kevin.anderson@ci.austin.tx.us or 512-972-1960) or attend our meetings, the third Wednesday of the month at Hornsby Bend.

This article submitted to TRA's Stream Lines by Kevin Anderson.

Water: Our Most Precious Resource

Our Earth is known as the "Blue Planet" because of the blue color we see from space, caused by the large amounts of water present on its surface. Most of the earth's water, however, is undrinkable, salty ocean water. Making this water drinkable requires facing the often high costs for treatment, disposal of the toxic salty waste products and the cost of transporting.

A website known as the Water Page states it this way. "If a **large bucket of water** were to represent the sea water on the planet, an **egg cup** full would represent the amount of water locked in ice caps and glaciers and a **teaspoonful** would be all that was available as drinking water." I am going to pose some questions about *your* water for your thought and actions.

Our use of freshwater resources such as rivers and lakes has steadily increased over the centuries. Human population has exploded worldwide and we have advanced our civilizations to the point where we use many times the amount of water actually needed for life. Quite often, we have too many people living and working in dry areas that cannot support them in a sustainable manner. In Texas, we are very familiar with the ranching term "*carrying capacity*". This refers to keeping your forage and water supplies on a ranch in balance with the livestock herd, including the wildlife populations present. Well, I believe that our world has "*human carrying capacities*" also. Are we always in balance with our carrying capacity in the arid and semi-arid areas of the American Southwest and West? Are we leaving enough water in our creeks, rivers, aquifers, wetlands and bays to keep them healthy and functional? Do we treat ALL lands as a water catchment (watershed)? All lands are water catchments. I don't believe in many cases we are - we get by "taking from Peter to pay Paul" which can have serious consequences.

With population growth and the increasing use of water for agriculture, industry, and recreation, water is becoming an incredibly valuable resource. Many water experts feel that our "extra water needs" will come from irrigated agriculture in the future. Does this mean that we find ways to irrigate more efficiently than we do now, which can certainly be done in many cases? Does this mean that we will return these profitable, valuable irrigated fields to native grasslands or to desert and then buy the food and fiber our state and nation need from other countries? What happens to the families, communities and regions depending upon irrigated agriculture's income and jobs? These are questions we are going to have to ask- and answer.

Rapid population growth and increased human water use has also caused an explosion of water marketing - water selling, trading and leasing. Sound familiar fellow Texans? Right! We are in one of the target areas - both for selling and buying.

It is not only the scarcity of water that is becoming an issue, but also the quality of water. Auto/jet fuels, mineral fertilizers, home/agricultural pesticides, pathogens and industrial by-products have seeped into surface and aquifer waters contaminating them beyond human consumption and disrupting delicate ecosystems. Our indiscriminate dumping of sewage, industrial wastes, and toxins pollutes rivers and lakes and threaten the world's most important resource - fresh water.



Riparian corridors protect and feed the water bodies they surround. *Photo by: Kevin Anderson*

Many U.S. rivers and bays have become unfit for swimming or fishing, let alone for drinking. Unfortunately, Texas is in that group of states with many water quality concerns. Out here, we need look no further than our historic Rio Grande/Rio Bravo or Pecos River for an example of poor water quality and quantity.

Will there be enough drinkable water to accommodate the needs of future generations of Texans, Americans and others worldwide? Will it be affordable to all? There will be, if we properly manage all of our water supplies and plan our growth with this irreplaceable resource at the top of our lists. Conservation must always be #1 on our water resources planning list, as the water we save is always our cheapest water!

Water availability - this is the question that many of us working in the water arena wrestle with and try to address daily. It is also the issue that our children and grandchildren will face due to an exploding human population utilizing a finite amount of water. So, do your share NOW to conserve water and to keep our water supplies pure! Keep on being great stewards of your land. Manage and protect those riparian areas along your creeks and rivers - restore the ones that need serious help. Whether you control one city lot or one hundred sections, manage it for the rainfall catchment that it is! Become involved in your regional water planning group - check the Texas Water Development Board's web site for details. It is too important to neglect, our future depends upon it. Remember, water is not a commodity like oil..... ***Agua es Vida!***

This article contributed to [TRA Stream Lines](#) by Mike Mecke.