

Date: Fri Time: 1:30-3:00pm

Session: Riparian Area Management

Moderator: Ana Gonzalez

Note-taker: Tom Ludwig

Notes From Discussion:

1. Does the City of Austin or other organizations have any mandates to replace invasive species with desirable natives? The City of Austin has strategies in place to do passive restoration of invasives by opening the canopy and allowing natives to replace the invasives. You don't want people planting where ligustrum has been growing, but rather let the seedbank there replace the ligustrum on its own.
2. You can't just fight invasives on your own, using the native plants to combat invasives on a two pronged approach will be the most effective way to replace invasives.
3. Is there an incentive for WPD to plant deep rooted plants that will help recharge groundwater resources? The WPD coordinates volunteer groups to plant a diverse range of seedlings at high volumes with the hopes that the plants best suited to that site survive and thrive. The Edwards Aquifer has a simple goal of removing all the ligustrum. They can adapt to the site conditions every single time.
4. There has been success planting native wetland plants in riparian zones and as they get established pave the way for other natives to grab hold.
5. Many of these agencies aren't regulatory, but do have an influence on development. However they are limited to within the banks of rivers and they can't influence much area outside of the right of way. The WPD can still purchase floodplain properties.
6. If a tree is collecting debris close to the bank, why not just collect the debris instead of cutting the tree down? A: How dynamic is the system? Is the debris causing a problem for the system and the tree, which will eventually drop the tree anyway? These are case by case issues that have to be answered in the field, and the long term ramifications considered.
7. Why remove trees in the channel? It's the roughness coefficient that channels can take
8. How do you balance nutrient cycling and leaving debris with the mission of conveyance? We have to be very careful with the debris that's removed, and that depends on where it is located on the bank. Stuff at the top of the bank is normally left, but the stuff in the channel has to be removed to allow for conveyance.
9. How are these trees removed? They are removed by the contractor, without taking the root system out, and contractors don't have a set strategy.
10. Private consulting and wetland delineation – does documenting and taking the data really matter if no one is looking at it? Coordination between public and private entities to share the information they collect with one another. There is no crossover for the science, but it's important for the people performing these delineations to share the information they have stored in their brains. There is always more than what exists on paper.
11. Is there training for contractors and consultants? Forestry specialists are great assets, but there have to be quality training for inspectors which is reoccurring so they can get their hands on the situations over and over again so when they see them in the field the learning curve is drastically reduced. Contractors should have a certified forestry or arborist on staff to contribute and manage the projects. Restoration should have a real craft (volunteer or hands on) component.

12. Chinese Tallow in Houston? They're everywhere. Though the migratory birds have adapted to their presence. You can pretty much delineate a wetland based on the existence of tallow. Mitigation banks have been amended so that all invasives have to be kept below 5%.