

Landowners learn about stream health inside Plum Creek Watershed

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Contact Brian Koch

LOCKHART, TEXAS - A larger than expected crowd gathered recently in Lockhart for a riparian workshop hosted by Texas AgriLife Extension Service and the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership (PCWP).

A primary objective of the workshop was to develop a common vocabulary and understanding of riparian areas among people who live and work on the land. Riparian and wetland areas occur along water courses or waterbodies and occupy the transitional area between the upland and water ecosystems. The PCWP is actively implementing a watershed protection plan for the watershed to improve water quality.

This workshop featured presentations by Nueces River Authority, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department personnel. The presented information focused on management of riparian areas, including restoration of degraded areas, indicators for riparian health and factors that cause degradation.

“It is important to have informed landowners in the watershed to help achieve watershed planning goals,” said Nikki Dictson, Texas AgriLife Extension Service program specialist. “This workshop was a great way to provide understanding of land management techniques to protect the stream and riparian areas.”

Plum Creek is a 52-mile stream that begins in Hays County north of Kyle and flows southeast through Caldwell County, passing Lockhart and Luling and then confluences with the San Marcos River near the Caldwell-Gonzales County line. With additional flow from Clear Fork, West Fork, Bunton Branch, Town Branch, Salt Branch, and other small streams, Plum Creek and its tributaries drain an area of 397 square miles. Other municipalities with all or part of their city limits within the watershed include Buda, Niederwald, Uhland, Mustang Ridge, and Mountain City.

“Proactive, informed landowners will be more inclined to use practices that improve or maintain the integrity of the creeks, benefiting water quality and quantity, habitat, and even recreation,” said Melissa Parker, Texas Parks and Wildlife riparian ecologist.

Funding and support for the development and implementation of the Plum Creek Watershed Protection Plan is provided through a Clean Water Act §319(h) Nonpoint Source grant from the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. For more information about the Plum Creek Watershed visit

<http://plumcreek.tamu.edu/> or contact Brian Koch, TSSWCB regional watershed coordinator, at bkoch@tsswcb.state.tx.us.

The TSSWCB is the lead agency for planning, implementing, and managing programs and practices for preventing and abating agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint sources of water pollution. The TSSWCB also coordinates the programs and activities of the state's 216 soil and water conservation districts, administers a Water Supply Enhancement Program for the selective control of water depleting brush and facilitates the Texas Invasive Species Coordinating Committee.