

FOREST STEWARDSHIP BRIEFINGS

Timber ◇ Wildlife ◇ Water ◇ Soil ◇ Best Management Practices ◇ Forest Health ◇ Recreation ◇ Aesthetics

LLANO RIVER FIELD STATION

from Junction Eagle newspaper article by James Murr, dated Oct. 11, 2017

For more information:

- <https://goo.gl/Bgkon9>
- <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/junction/lrfs>
- <https://www.llanoriver.org>

At a recent awards ceremony at Auburn University in Birmingham, Alabama, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation recognized Texas Tech University's Llano River Field Station and its activities as an "Exemplary Project" for outstanding accomplishments.

The mission of the Station, located at the Texas Tech Center in Junction, is focused on increasingly important basic and applied research projects involving water, watersheds, invasive species, range management, ecological restoration, and environmental education. The Station provides a unique laboratory and classroom environment for undergraduate and graduate students from universities, institutes, and public schools.

The "Exemplary Project" recognition is extended to colleges and universities that have redesigned their learning, discovery, and engagement missions to become even more involved with their communities. The Station was competing with entrants from several other states, as well as American Samoa, Guam, Mexico, Micronesia, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

The award was based on many factors, including the Station's "research and engagement in a spectrum of partnerships focused on recognizing, understanding, and finding solutions to regional problems related to watershed and range science, freshwater systems, and the environment, with national and international implications."

Among other activities, the Station is focusing on the connection between groundwater and surface water – i.e., springs – that is a vital natural resource of

the Edwards Plateau where the headwaters of seven major Texas river systems are formed. The Station's research activities, which are a model collaborative community effort, concentrate on the Upper Llano River watershed and threats to this healthy watershed.

These threats include aquifer mining, population growth, invasive water-sucking plants, land fragmentation, climate change, pollution, and harmful land management practices. The Upper Llano River Protection Plan and related materials can be found on the last website in the sidebar.

The "Exemplary Project" award recognized that engagement between Station researchers, students, staff, and community partners has resulted in enhanced natural resource science and conservation and best practices in watershed protection. Also flowing from this engagement is an exemplary Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) curriculum and nationally recognized education programs.

In commenting on the award, Dr. Tom Arsuffi, Director of the Station, said he is very pleased to see community stakeholders, Texas Tech, and the Field Station being recognized for truly collaborative efforts to protect the precious natural resources of the Texas Hill Country and, in particular, the Upper Llano River Watershed. He emphasized this effort can do much to maintain a healthy watershed so critical to the community's economy, environment, and heritage. Arsuffi and staff are also rightfully proud of the Station's exemplary educational programs being made available to the youth of Texas.

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URBAN FOREST STRIKE TEAMS

from Texas A&M Forest Service website

For more information:

- <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/content/article.aspx?id=27485>
- <http://www.southernforests.org/urban/ufst>

After Hurricane Harvey, Texas A&M Forest Service mobilized Urban Forest Strike Teams to the coastal Texas towns of Rockport, Fulton, Refugio, and Victoria to assess damage to the trees on public property.

Impacted communities deal with many post-storm issues, one of which includes destruction to public trees. To assess their storm-damaged trees, the communities called upon the expertise of Texas A&M Forest Service and the Urban Forest Strike Team.

A 10-member strike team spent a few days at each location sizing up the damage to the community trees, documenting types of damage, location and whether the tree posed a risk to the community. The trees were geospatially mapped and information was provided to the communities for use in applying for FEMA public assistance and debris removal funding.

“Initial findings in these areas show that Live oaks were particularly hard hit with damage most commonly occurring in the crowns of the trees and being fully or partially blown over,” said Paul Johnson, Texas A&M Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program Coordinator. “This type of damage was caused by high winds and small tornadoes associated with the storm.”

In addition to winds, flooding may also cause damage to urban forests. Later in October, the Urban Forest Strike Team will survey Houston’s public trees and

assess any damage that may have occurred there due to the inundation of water.

According to Johnson, flood damage may not be as apparent as a broken limb or blown-over tree. Flood damage could include tree roots being underwater and suffocated by both salt and fresh water for extended periods of time. Survivability may not be known for several years.

“Once we assess the Houston trees, we may need to monitor mortality for the next three to five years,” said Johnson. “That’s typical with trees when the roots have been saturated with salt water.”

Texas A&M Forest Service works with communities year-round to care for their urban forests – but especially in times of natural disaster. That’s how the Urban Forest Strike Team came to be.

The Urban Forest Strike Team program has been active for 10 years. It is a nationwide collaborative effort among state forestry agencies funded and trained through the U.S. Forest Service’s Urban and Community Forestry Program.

Since 2007, the Southern Urban Forest Strike Teams have been activated 10 times and have mobilized hundreds of team members across the South in response to disasters such as Hurricanes Gustav, Ike, Irene, and Matthew; tornadoes in Georgia and Missouri; and ice storms in Oklahoma, Arkansas and Kentucky. Strike teams also responded to the Florida coast where Hurricane Irma hit September 10 of this year.

THERE’S AN APP FOR THAT - DUCKS UNLIMITED

from Ducks Unlimited website

For more information:

- <http://www.ducks.org/Hunting/Mobile-Apps>

Experience the official Ducks Unlimited App. Popular features include:

- Waterfowl Migration Map
- Waterfowl ID
- Waterfowler’s Journal
- Sunrise / Sunset Data
- DU Multimedia

- and more - all in one app.

The DU App update for the 2017-2018 season includes a wide range of content and features that are important to DU supporters, waterfowl hunters, and conservationists throughout North America. Free for download on your iOS or Android device.

DUCKS UNLIMITED MILESTONE

Ducks Unlimited (DU) has achieved a conservation milestone with more than 14 million acres of habitat conserved in North America. The groundbreaking number is a cumulative accomplishment of the millions of DU volunteers and partners who have been a part of the organization over the past 80 years.

“As we celebrate our 80th anniversary, this milestone is a fitting tribute to the hard work of each and every volunteer, partner, and staff member who has contributed to our mission over the past 80 years,” said DU CEO Dale Hall. “If not for their dedication and commitment to conservation, this accomplishment would not have been possible.”

Such conservation gains did not come easily in the face of ongoing threats to waterfowl and their habitats. Loss of wetlands across North America is a challenge DU volunteers take seriously, and their efforts will continue into the future. Although DU has successfully conserved more than 14 million acres of critical wetlands and associated habitat since DU’s founding in 1937, wetland losses continue.

In the last 50 years alone, the United States has lost more than 17 million acres of wetlands. As human populations grow, demands for clean and plentiful water for

use at home and in many agricultural and industrial processes also increase.

Ducks Unlimited – working with partners – provides valuable, on-the-ground solutions that benefit waterfowl populations and maximize water resources through the dynamic natural functions of wetlands. In addition to providing habitat for waterfowl, wetlands naturally slow and store water to help recharge watersheds and aquifers, improve water quality through biological and physical processes, and provide important wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities.

The groundbreaking number is a perfect example of how hunters and others with a passion for waterfowl and wetlands conservation can come together for a common goal. DU’s mission has always been to conserve, restore, and manage wetlands and associated habitat for North America’s waterfowl.

Ducks Unlimited Inc. is the world’s largest nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving North America’s continually disappearing waterfowl habitats. Established in 1937, and guided by science and dedication to program efficiency, DU works toward the vision of wetlands sufficient to fill the skies with waterfowl today, tomorrow, and forever.

from Ducks Unlimited news release dated Aug. 1, 2017

For more information:

- <https://goo.gl/qbWpUa>
- <http://www.ducks.org>

DON’T MOVE FIREWOOD

If you’re a camper or hunter heading out for a trip, or just getting firewood for your wood stove or fireplace, remember: don’t move firewood long distances. It can potentially transport invasive species. Instead, buy it where you’ll burn it, buy certified heat-treated firewood, or gather on site where permitted.

Why is moving firewood such a bad idea? Tree-killing insects and diseases can lurk in or on firewood. Even wood that looks clean and healthy can still have tiny insect eggs or microscopic fungi spores that can start a new infestation. Infestations destroy forests, reduce property val-

ues, and are expensive to control. Much of Texas is under quarantine for imported fire ant, and it is illegal to move any regulated item (such as firewood stored outdoors on the ground, nursery stock, hay, soil-moving equipment) out of this region.

Parts of Texas have infestations of Mexican soapberry borer, an invasive species that kills native Western soapberry trees. Many Southern states have additional areas under quarantine for pests such as emerald ash borer, and it is illegal to move any regulated items such as firewood from quarantined zones out of those states and into Texas.

from Texas A&M Forest Service website

For more information:

- <https://www.dontmovefirewood.org>
- <https://goo.gl/D2MxHn>
- <https://goo.gl/ypzbYY>
- <https://goo.gl/cjXgBS>

Distribution of this newsletter is provided free of charge to professional foresters, state and federal agency professionals, county judges and commissioners, state senators and representatives, various forestry-related associations, and others.

PLEASE ADVISE US IF YOU WISH YOUR NAME REMOVED FROM OUR MAILING LIST.

This newsletter is also available on the web at tfsweb.tamu.edu/StewardshipPublications. If you would rather receive this newsletter electronically (by e-mail), contact us at the address, phone number, or e-mail address above.

The Texas A&M Forest Service is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer committed to Excellence through Diversity.

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GEAR UP FOR GAME WARDENS

Every year Texas Game Wardens patrol over 10 million miles by vehicle and 130,000 hours by boat, facing challenges as unique as the 254 counties they serve. During Hurricane Harvey, Texas Game Wardens rescued more than 10,000 people. In natural disasters like these, the equipment a warden has can mean life or death.

Months before Harvey roared ashore, plans were in the works to provide a helping hand to Texas Game Wardens. A group of dedicated citizens is partnering with Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation to launch "Gear Up for Game Wardens." The program will raise private funds to ensure that Texas' 550 game wardens have access to specialized equipment beyond their standard issue gear. While the state provides the basic necessities for wardens to do their jobs, there is still a critical need for additional equipment across the state.

Through private donations, "Gear Up for Game Wardens" will provide specialty equipment Texas Game Wardens need to maintain safety and ensure the highest level of service for the people of Texas. You can even donate for specific items in specific regions. Go to www.gearupforgamewardens.org for more information and to donate.



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