

# FOREST STEWARDSHIP BRIEFINGS

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

## RIPARIAN EDUCATION PROGRAM

*For more information:*

- <http://texasriparian.org>
- <http://www.remarkableriparian.org>
- <http://texasriparian.org/about-tra/what-is-a-riparian-area>
- <http://twri.tamu.edu/>

Riparian degradation is a major threat to water quality, in-stream habitat, terrestrial wildlife, aquatic species, and overall stream health. Conversely, proper management, protection, and restoration of riparian areas decrease the amount of bacteria, nutrient, and sediment getting into waterbodies; lowers water temperatures; improves dissolved oxygen levels in the water; and improves the overall aquatic habitat. In fact, many cities, such as Austin, have found that improving creek and floodplain protection is needed to prevent unsustainable public expense to maintain drainage infrastructure.

To improve the management of these sensitive and vital ecosystems, riparian education programs are needed to make citizens as well as land and water resource professionals aware of the benefits and functions of riparian areas, the degradation some of these areas are experiencing, and how to protect and restore these areas.

Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS) is partnering with Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI) and many other natural resource entities to form a Riparian Team focusing on education and training dealing with riparian areas over much of Texas.

By means of an EPA grant administered by Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB), this Riparian Team's plans are to:

- Coordinate and present riparian education programs to landowners and other citizens in targeted priority watersheds.

- Provide web-based riparian information in high quality audio-visual on-line presentations to reach even more audiences, such as students, nature groups, and others.
- Connect landowners with local technical and financial resources to improve management and promote healthy watershed and riparian areas on their land.
- Conduct training for agency personnel on riparian zone management.
- Conduct statewide riparian conferences.

The program will be modified to meet local needs. Workshops will be tailored to the watershed in which they are held, presenting information related to the local conditions, management activities, and conservation practices that can enhance riparian function.

TFS will work with the Riparian Team to adapt and deliver the program in East Texas as well as other parts of the state. In East Texas, the program will be coordinated in conjunction with the already institutionalized forestry Best Management Practices (BMPs) and forest certification programs. This will be done to meet the needs of landowners, foresters, and contractors and ensure consistency with existing logger training programs.

These education efforts will increase citizen and resource professional awareness, understanding, and knowledge about the nature and function of riparian zones; their benefits; and BMPs to protect them, resulting in improved water quality.

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## PARTNERING WITH A COMMON GOAL

by Laura Speight, Wildlife Biologist / NE TX CDN Chair, TPWD, Karnack, TX

For more information:

- [http://lmvjv.org/pages/CDNs/About\\_Consevation\\_Delivery.htm](http://lmvjv.org/pages/CDNs/About_Consevation_Delivery.htm)

We are all aware that we live in a world where the challenges to preserve and protect our natural resources seem more daunting than ever before. Wildfires, drought, budget cuts, and lack of funding are major hurdles facing agencies tasked with conservation of natural resources.

In early spring of 2012, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) personnel from the northern half of the Pineywoods met with representatives of the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture (LMVJV) to discuss ways to continue to deliver on-the-ground conservation in the face of all the current challenges. Habitat loss and degradation, urban sprawl and habitat fragmentation, altered hydrology, and lack of prescribed fire are some of the “deliverables” we must address.

So just what is the LMVJV and why did TPWD meet with them? In 1986, the North American Waterfowl Management Plan called for the establishment of Migratory Bird Joint Ventures to conserve habitat for the benefit of birds, other wildlife, and people. These Joint Ventures are a national model for partnership-driven

conservation. There are currently 22 habitat-based joint ventures in North America, with the LMVJV addressing conservation issues in the Lower Mississippi Valley and West Gulf Coastal Plain regions.

Like the LMVJV, TPWD also has a history of working with other state/federal/local governmental agencies, universities, non-governmental agencies, and private landowners. Recently, the LMVJV developed two Conservation Delivery Networks (CDN's) to help facilitate conservation partnerships in Arkansas and Louisiana/Mississippi. The concept of the CDN was exactly what TPWD wanted to pursue for this area and is in the beginning stages of forming the North East Texas Conservation Delivery Network, the first CDN to be established in Texas.

Our belief is the CDN will facilitate more effective communication, coordination, and collaboration among a full spectrum of conservation organizations. This way we should be able to increase our resources and thus more effectively achieve our common vision to deliver on-the-ground conservation.

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## TREE TIPS - ARBOR DAY AND TREE PLANTING

from Texas A&M Forest Service website

For more information:

- <http://texastreeplanting.tamu.edu/index.html>
- <http://texasforestservicetamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=1291>
- <http://www.arborday.org>

The beauty of Arbor Day is that, rather than looking backward to events of the past, this holiday looks forward with promise for a future filled with trees. Arbor Day celebrates planting and nurturing trees. It celebrates all the ways trees enrich our lives and stabilize our environment.

Thanks to the diversity of this state, Arbor Day is celebrated in Texas communities anytime from November through April. Houston and many of its neighboring communities continue to observe Arbor Day on the third Friday in January. In South Texas, many cities celebrate Arbor Day during Arbor Week, the second week in February. Dallas recently decided to

break with tradition altogether and celebrate Arbor Day in mid-November.

The tree planting season ends with a bang on the last Friday in April with the Governor's proclamation declaring the day the official state Arbor Day. The ceremony moves around from place to place to help reach audiences all over the state.

Whenever you plant trees, do a little research beforehand to make sure you choose the right tree for the right location. The Texas A&M Forest Service website can help you do just that. There, you'll find tree selector and tree planting tools. See the website address in the sidebar.

## ECONOMIC BENEFIT OF LONGLEAF PINE

With interest in longleaf at its highest point in decades, maybe ever, landowners and managers are asking what kind of investment it actually is. The answer surprises some, but there is every reason to expect very positive returns on investments and in a reasonably short time span.

For years, however, longleaf was regarded as a poor investment for a couple of reasons. First, it was considered a difficult species to plant. If it was established successfully, a lengthy period in the grass stage before it initiated height growth extended the period before income could be earned, gaining longleaf a reputation for slow growth. The tree was also often relegated to “longleaf sites,” usually deep dry sands where growth was indeed slow as it would have been for any species. Recent developments in nursery techniques, management practices, and markets have made that prognosis dated.

Better quality seedlings have taken much of the risk out of planting longleaf pine. We have learned much about handling and planting longleaf seedlings in the past several years as well. These gains, coupled

with increased knowledge about the role of competing vegetation and the development of selective herbicides to control it, have made it possible to shorten and in many cases eliminate the grass stage.

One consideration often overlooked is that the growth rate of wood volume is not the only or even the most important measure of the value of a forestry investment. The more important measure is the growth rate in value or dollars. Remember that longleaf products return a premium and value is actually growing at a faster rate than volume.

The wood from longleaf is heavier than that of other Southern pines. That means that when wood is bought on a weight basis, and it almost always is, more money is paid for longleaf than for the same volume of other pines.

Lumbermen have long realized the value of longleaf products like high-quality, straight-grained dimensional lumber and strong durable poles. The market continues to recognize this quality by paying top prices for these products.

*by Rhett Johnson, The Longleaf Alliance, Auburn, AL*

*For more information:*

- <http://americaslongleaf.org/resources/publications/>

## TEXAS FOREST ACTION PLAN

The 2008 Farm Bill required each state to analyze its forest conditions and trends and delineate priority rural and urban forest landscapes. From this [state assessment](#), a statewide [forest resource strategy](#) was developed that served as the basis for formulating competitive proposals for USDA Forest Service State & Private Forestry funds. Together, these two documents make up the [Texas Forest Action Plan](#). Development of this plan was focused on three national themes: conserve working forests, protect forests, and enhance benefits from trees and forests.

The Texas Forest Action Plan was developed around the issues facing the state's forest and tree resources. With input

from interested stakeholders from across the state representing the diverse interests of the forest resource, five primary issues were identified for the rural and urban forests of the state:

- Urban Forest Sustainability
- Central Texas Woodlands Conservation
- Sustainability of Forest Resources in East Texas
- Water Resources
- Wildfire and Public Safety

For each issue, a geospatial analysis was conducted to delineate areas across the Texas landscape where future efforts might best be focused. These areas were mapped, providing a visual indication of where these priority areas occur.

*For more information:*

- <http://tfsfrd.tamu.edu/ForestActionPlan/TexasForestActionPlan.html>
- <http://www.forestationplans.org/states/texas>

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- Joe Pase, TFS, Lufkin, Texas

## LONGLEAF FIELD DAY AND WORKSHOP

### TEXAS LONGLEAF PINE FIELD DAY AND WORKSHOP

Tuesday, May 21, 2013

8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Start/End Point: **Old TPWD Fish Hatchery**, 289 CR 098 west of Jasper, Texas. Field stops are on local U.S. Forest Service and private landowner tracts. Transportation to the field stops is provided and leaves the old Fish Hatchery at 9:00 a.m. You can bring a field chair. For a map and more information, go to <http://txlalongleaf.tamu.edu/>.

Topics include:

- Longleaf Ecosystem
- Understory Management for Longleaf Stands
- Benefits of Longleaf Habitat for Wildlife
- Prescribed Fire and the Role of Burning Longleaf
- Longleaf Regeneration Techniques
- Longleaf Management from a Landowner Perspective

This event is free; lunch and refreshments are provided. Please RSVP by May 14, giving **names of all attending and phone number** by calling (936) 639-8180 (Texas A&M Forest Service in Lufkin), or e-mail [sshockley@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:sshockley@tfs.tamu.edu).



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