

WATERSHED WEEK IN REVIEW



700 Springs Tour

The Kimble County Historical Commission announced that Lee Pfluger has once again graciously invited the general public to his 700 Springs Ranch on Saturday, April 27, 2019.

The springs are one of the headwater springs of the South Llano River. A visit to these springs is an unforgettable experience for the entire family.

As in previous years, meet at the Kimble County Courthouse in Junction at 10am to caravan to the 21 miles to the springs. There is no charge, but donations to the Kimble Country Museum Building Fund are appreciated.

Got Guac? Unfortunately yes!

Last month, a semi-truck carrying 42,000 pounds of avocados overturned into the South Llano River at the lower crossing of US 377. No one was injured and the driver was cited for unsafe speed.

Unfortunately, the trailer came apart when rescue crews lifted it out of the river. While many boxes and plastic mesh bags of avocados were recovered, many have washed downstream.

The Alliance will likely be organizing a clean up event (watch for the Guac Grab event!), but in the meantime, please help out the river and bring along an extra garbage bag if you are planning on paddling below the crossing. Also, please be mindful of navigation hazards (see page 2).



Photo: TPWD

Please use Caution as Boating Season Begins

As the weather begins to warm, many folks are dusting off the paddling and fishing gear and thinking about some time on the Llano.

For most of us, this will be the first time back on the Llano since the floods in September and October. Some of the changes to the river will be obvious: river clarity has increased and vegetation along sand bars have decreased; riffles and rapids have been slightly reworked.

What may not be so obvious is the increase in navigation hazards, specifically downed trees known as “strainers”.

Like the spaghetti strainer in your kitchen, water passes through the fallen tree, but solid objects like a boat or padder does not. These “strainers” can be very dangerous!



“Strainer” on South Llano above Boone’s Crossing

The Llano River Watershed Alliance has published a [report on the Flooding on the Llano](#) which contains *some* information regarding the location of some of these hazards.

This information was derived through field studies and aerial surveys. However, as new trees may have fallen in the river since the survey, the reports can not (and should not) be expected to be complete.

This week, as boaters take to the Llano, two new “strainers” have been identified. In Mason County, about halfway between White’s Crossing and James River Crossing, there is a log, and now a kayak, wedged at the bottom of what is known as Turtle Head Rapid. On the South Llano, upstream of Boone’s Crossing at KC 150, there are several strainers located upstream of the long pool above the crossing. On Tuesday a ‘path’ through the South Llano strainer was opened, but caution is still advised.

More from the Flood Forecasting Workshop in Castell

Last week, the Llano River Watershed Alliance hosted a flood forecasting workshop in Castell. A near-capacity crowd of 75 people gathered at the Castell General Store to enjoy their famous hamburgers and learn how flood forecasts are generated and what they mean to personal safety and protection of property. The workshop featured speakers from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) in San Antonio and the National Weather Service (NWS) in Fort Worth.

Darwin Ockerman with USGS began the presentations by explaining how USGS measures and monitors streamflow and compared last year's floods with previous floods on the Llano. Some of his comments were highlighted in last week's newsletter.

Following Mr. Ockerman, Greg Waller with NWS detailed how his agency generates flood forecasts and the highlighted the significance of the warnings (see below). Both presentations are now available on the website.

Understanding River Forecast Categories

Low Flow	No Flooding	ACTION STAGE (AS)	MINOR (MIN)	MODERATE (MDT)	MAJOR (MAJ)	RECORD (REC)
Impacts to water supply and intake/outflow structures	River is within banks, no impacts	River is higher, possibly out of banks	Impacts to secondary roads and lowlands near floodplain	Buildings threatened, roads flooded and impassable	Significant impacts to buildings, structures and roadways	Impacts beyond anything previously experienced
Only daily operational points will have forecasts available	Only daily operational points will have forecasts available	Flood Statements, River Forecasts Begin	Flood Warnings, River Forecasts	Flood Warnings, River Forecasts	Flood Warnings, River Forecasts	Flood Warnings, River Forecasts, Flood of Record Statements
						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agriculture industry will have to prepare Reservoir levels for water storage monitored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> River can be running higher than "normal" so caution should still be used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher flows River could be out of banks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turn around don't drown! Stay away from river's edge as flow speeds could be high 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turn around don't drown! Homes and buildings could be cut off as well and should prepare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evacuations may be necessary Seek higher ground Potentially safer to shelter in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek safety or higher ground by any means Impact areas should be avoided

* NWS generally defines a river flooding as the point at which higher flows produce impacts. Common impacts are road closures, parks inundated, and water in structures. River flooding does not have to be associated with other flood threats (flash, areal, coastal).



National Weather Service

www.weather.gov/wgrfc



David Akers, longtime friend of the Llano, passes at 91.

David Akers passed away at his beloved F6 Ranch home at the headwaters of Copperas Creek on March 19, 2018. David and his wife Margaret (far right) were longtime friends of Alliance. Margaret, who passed away in 2017, was one of the original Alliance Board Members.



A memorial service for David will be held on April 13 at the Trinity Episcopal Church in Junction.

This week at South Llano River State Park

South Llano River State Park Programs for April 2019

Hike with a Ranger!

Come hike with a ranger and explore the West Canyon Loop trail! The trail is rated as moderate - it's 4 miles long. We will meet at the ~~Agarita~~ **bird blind** next to HQ. **Apr 4th - 9-11am**

Sunrise Hike - Meet at **Juniper Blind** (located by the walk-in campsite parking lot). Come enjoy the beauty that is mother nature. **April 6—at 7am**

Scat and Tracks! - Come learn about what gets left behind. Held at the **Acorn Blind**. **April 6 - 1:30pm**

Park programs are open to the public and free with park entrance fee

The Land Ethic

"The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land." - Aldo Leopold



Fostering a Land Ethic Workshop for Informal and Formal Educators

June 16-19, 2019

**Texas Tech University - Llano River Field Station
Junction, TX**

What is it? –An interdisciplinary outdoor educational experience taught by education professionals and natural resource specialists. This workshop will include the skills and teaching methods to engage students in the art and science of nature and will emphasize stewardship of Texas' natural resources and development of a personal land ethic. Participants will explore human connections to the natural world through hands-on experiences in conservation topics related to Soils, Water quality, Land Ethics and Health, Biodiversity, Plant ID, Habitat and Management. Activities will include Fishing, Tubing, Birding, Nature Crafts, Nature Journaling, Hiking, and Plant Pressing.

Who Should Attend? – Anyone who is interested in learning more about fostering a relationship between our youth and the natural world– teachers, scout leaders, parents, naturalists, park rangers, zoo educators, youth group leaders, and private citizens

Sponsored by:

-  State Soil and Water Conservation Board
-  McCulloch County SWCD
-  Upper Llanos SWCD
-  Menard County SWCD
-  Texas Tech University - Junction

For information about the workshop, contact Christine Moseley at Christine.moseley@utsa.edu

Full or Partial Scholarships available from local Soil and Water Conservation District

Cost: \$250.00

Includes:

**3 nights lodging and
9 meals**

**25 Hours of
Professional
Continuing
Education Units**

**Certification in
Leopold Education
Project curriculum**

**LEP Curriculum
Guide**

**Copy of Sand County
Almanac**

**Lessons correlated
to the TEKS.**