



# LAKE CREEK PRESERVE NEWS

[lakecreektx.org](http://lakecreektx.org)

**May 22, 2017**

**PADDLETRAIL COMMITTEE COMPLETES SURVEY OF LAKE CREEK:** With an eye to developing a paddling trail along Lake Creek, the [Lake Creek Greenway Partnership](#) organized a scouting trip down the lower section of the creek on March 31. Allen Livingston, who is the Canoe and Kayak Trail Committee chair for the Partnership, had already positioned a shuttle vehicle at the take-out point (Interstate 45) before meeting up with the rest of the group at the Sendera Ranch Drive crossing at 8:00 AM. In addition to Allen, who paddled a tandem canoe together with Erik Meyer, the group included Natalie Wiest in a solo canoe, and Rea Inglis and Tom Douglas in kayaks. At 35 to 38 cfs, which is a little below the median flow for Lake Creek ([USGS Station 08067920](#)), the channel was relatively narrow, very winding, and often shallow, especially during the first quarter of the trip. All day, we paddled between banks thickly carpeted by a forest of pines, sycamores, and river birches. We saw a pileated woodpecker, belted kingfishers, egrets, and cormorants, and heard Northern Cardinals and Northern Parulas (aka: “zipper birds”) calling from the forest. With the exception of a few outcroppings of clay, the river banks and river bed were almost entirely sand. Numerous sandy shallows provided an opportunity for the canoeists to stretch their legs, or for the kayakers (Tom, at least) to work on their “knuckle walking” skills to avoid getting out of their boats. As expected, there were a number of blockages caused by downed trees. Fortunately, all of these occurred at places where there was a gently-sloping, sandy bank on at least one side of the creek, so that little bank-climbing was required. Because one of our purposes for the day was to map out features that could be of significance for a [paddling trail](#), I went back over the GPS track in some detail afterwards, finding that it was necessary to make adjustments for diversions around or through 11 different logjams. At noon, we reached a beautiful, shaded sandbar that Allen had described to us as being a great lunch spot (which it was!). After lunch, we headed on down Lake Creek, reaching the confluence with the West Fork of the San Jacinto River, at the previous location of Camp Strake, by a little after 2:00. From there on, the channel was not as winding and logjams were less frequent, although there was still one more pretty good one about a half-mile upstream from Interstate 45. I felt that I had had a good workout by the end of the 10.8-mile paddle (or 12.1 miles, if you count in the various detours). This wouldn’t be an outing suitable for a first-time paddler, but the lush scenery and the information that we were able to gather made it very worthwhile for this group of river scouts. Many thanks to Allen Livingston for organizing the trip. [Report by Tom Douglas, Bayou Preservation Society](#)



**LCGP AND WOODFOREST HOLD JOINT OPEN HOUSE AT LAKE CREEK PRESERVE:** On April 29, the Lake Creek Greenway Partnership and Woodforest joined forces to present an Arbor day event at the Lake Creek Preserve. Many residents braved the threatening weather to learn about insects, forest fire safety, the Lake Creek Watershed, water testing and the characteristics of local soils from the Texas Forest Service, The Natural Resource Conservation Service, the Houston Museum of Natural Science and the Texas Stream Team. In addition, representatives were available from the Save Jones Forest Initiative to inform residents of their work to save the forest from development. The rains held off and everyone enjoyed a day in the woods for a dose of vitamin N (Nature).





**FREE TREES**



**FOREST FIRE SAFETY**



**TRAIL HIKES**



**INSECT STUDY**





KIDS MET SMOKEY



EVEN BIG KIDS LIKE SMOKEY

## SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS TO PRESERVE COMPLETED:



AT NORTHERN TRAIL JUNCTION (1 OF 4 NEW BENCHES)

May 13 was a busy day at the Lake Creek Preserve. In addition to the normal visitors, two Eagle projects, a troop service project and neighborhood volunteers made improvements to the preserve. Troop 223 cut a new section of trail around the safe side of a large dead tree that was creating a potential hazard, removed a stump from blue trail, cleared brush for access to the point bar on the creek loop and trimmed the orange trail. Jonathan Hay led a team installing four benches along the blue and orange trails to improve visitor's enjoyment (28<sup>th</sup> Eagle Project), while David Smith led a team adding 40' of boardwalk to a low area along the blue trail (29<sup>th</sup> Eagle Project). In addition, volunteers removed deadfall from two areas along the blue trail.

**LAKE CREEK GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP STILL LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS TO SUPPORT OUR PROGRAM:** The success of our programs depends entirely on volunteers and support from the community. We have openings on the following committees: preserve trails maintenance, paddle trail development, financial including fund raising, membership, program and web site. If you are concerned about the need for access to local greenspace and recreational opportunities and looking for a way to support the community and help leave something for the future contact [glenn@lakecreektx.org](mailto:glenn@lakecreektx.org). You can also help support our programs financially by visiting our Support the Program page at [lakecreektx.org](http://lakecreektx.org).