



LAKE CREEK PRESERVE NEWS

SPRING 2023



OUR MISSION: To promote an appreciation, understanding and respect for our natural world through education and stewardship of Lake Creek Watershed.

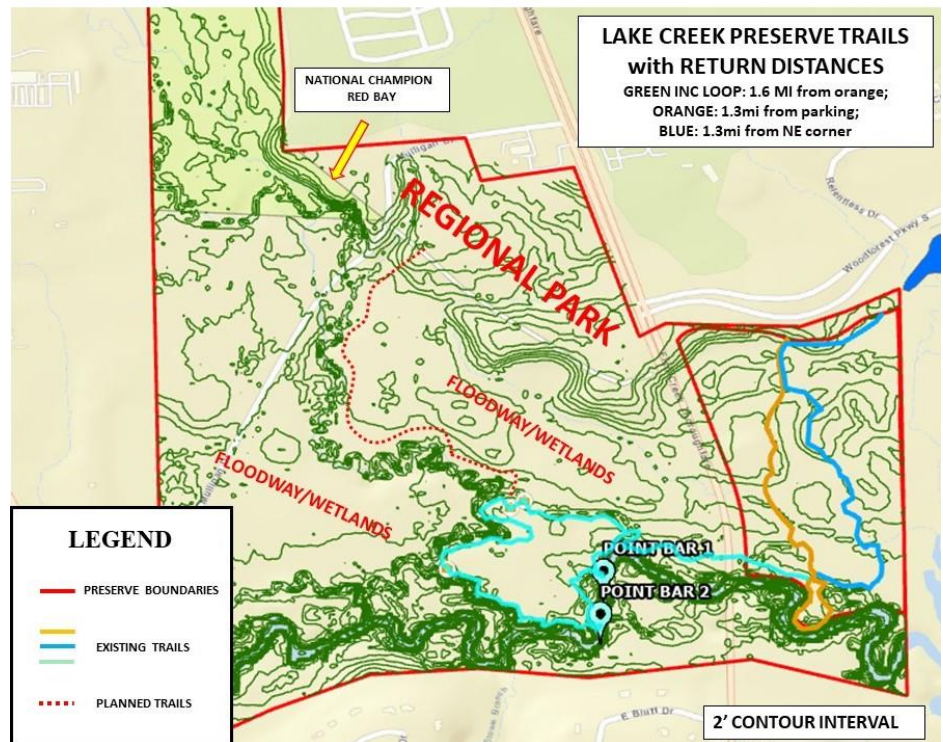
OUR VISION: To live in a community where residents understand and respect their connection to the land, water, and nature in general.

GENERAL:

Plans for Lake Creek Preserve continue to develop along with the features and usage of the developing trail system. Our trail visits are now averaging 16/day with highs of 30+ on weekends. This is an increase of 3-400% from 2020 and we expect to continue to see increased usage as residents learn about the preserve. Highlighted below are just some of the developments and activities since the newsletter last summer. We are now working with Montgomery County Pct 2, Westwood Magnolia Parkway Improvement District, Lone Star College and local residents in an attempt to integrate features that will be of the most use to the schools and community.

STATUS OF NATURE CENTER AND AREA SPORTS PARK:

Planning for the new park has progressed to the point where the county held a stakeholders' meeting which included representatives from three school districts, Lone Star College and several area developments. In addition to presenting general maps and concepts on the proposed park, the design team asked for initial feedback on attendees' ideas and concerns. More specific guidance is expected to be given by advisory committees being assembled for the nature center, community center and sports complex. We expect the planning to advance quickly once the teams are in place and some right of way issues are resolved. The adjacent map shows the completed trails and how the topography will control the location of the sports fields and structures.



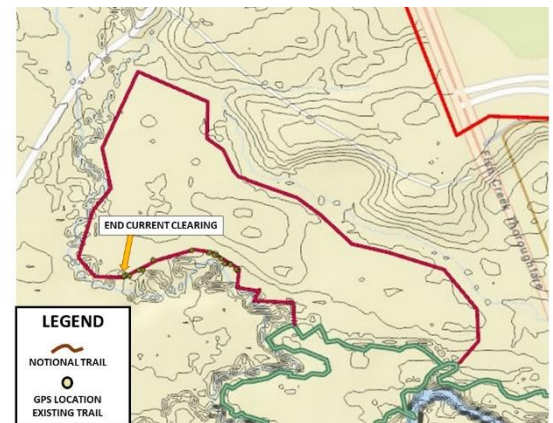
FEATURES OF THE GREEN TRAIL LOOP:

The new green loop trail is now complete and begins at the orange trail creek loop, crossing under the Fish Creek Thoroughfare bridges for safety, to enter the preserve on the west side of the thoroughfare. The trail is relatively dry even in wet weather and we plan to add geotextiles in the few muddy spots. The southern part of the loop offers excellent overviews of bottomland wetland ponds and Lake Creek as well as two access points to sandy beaches on point bars. The trail turns north at the mouth of Mound Creek passing by a small waterfall before turning east. Traveling east along a ravine you will pass one of the oldest trees in the preserve and the sweetheart arch (an ideal place for a photo). One of the Scout Eagle Projects has placed benches along the trail to rest and experience this part of the preserve.



NEW RED TRAIL DEVELOPMENT:

A recent Scout project has cleared the first ½ mile section of a new Red Trail beginning at the NW corner of the green loop and following Mound Creek north to eventually loop back to the eastern portion of the green trail. The exact location of the remaining red trail will change somewhat as it will depend on accessing the best features of the preserve as well as avoiding wetlands. This section will also allow access to the new nature center so the exact shape of the remaining trail may need to be adjusted once the location of the nature center has been set.



NEW VIEWING PLATFORM ALONG CREEK LOOP:

A raised 6'x6' platform has been installed along the Orange Creek Loop to give visitors a better view of the creek and, hopefully, the wildlife in and along the creek.

CONNECTION TO CHRISTINE-ALLEN PARK:

Since many of the visitors are now coming from Woodforest through Christine-Allen Park, we have met with the Woodforest management to see if signage can be added directing visitors in that park to the NE entrance of the preserve. This also offers an alternative access for those coming to the preserve from the north and avoids having to cross the Lake Creek bridge to access the preserve. We have provided Woodforest with signage designs for consideration and hope some will be installed soon.

COVIA CORPORATION SUPPORTS PRESERVE:

The COVIA Corporation and volunteers have joined the supporters of the county's Lake Creek Preserve and the recently acquired 391 acres on west side of Fish Creek Thoroughfare. In addition to the contribution of tools and construction material, they cut the initial section of the green trail, helped with trail maintenance and recently began work on an



informational kiosk at the entrance to the green trail on the western part of the new county preserve. Their HR department recently visited to prepare a short video that will appear in their corporate newsletter highlighting some of these activities.

COOPERATIVE PROGRAM WITH LONE STAR HONORS COLLEGE:



We recently met with faculty from the Lone Star College Montgomery to examine areas of possible synergy between our objectives and theirs. The outcome was a tour for several faculty members highlighting areas that might support their courses and programs. This resulted in a follow-up meeting with the Dean of the Honors College and several students who will be volunteering to support maintenance and management of the preserve, while learning about issues associated with area planning and development. Three students subsequently joined Glenn Buckley on site for a preserve orientation session which included monitoring the water in

Lake Creek, managing the pollinator beds and setting game cameras for wildlife surveys. A fourth student is compositing all of our creek data into one database for easier analysis. We hope to grow this relationship so that the preserve can become a field classroom for appropriate courses and to include features in the nature center to support these programs.

SCOUTS CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE PRESERVE:

There have been 92 Eagle projects (with 4 in planning) on the preserves so far that developed most of the trail and structures and that helped maintain them. Beyond the Eagle projects many Scouts contribute by satisfying service requirements for advancement. In addition, the Order of the Arrow recently held two service events on the preserve that involved adding crushed granite to the NE entrance, clearing deadfall and general trail maintenance.

TRAIL MAINTENANCE TEAM

In addition to the COVIA Corporation and Scouts we are developing a dedicated group of volunteers committed to maintaining safe, well maintained trails and features. Since the trails are developed and maintained entirely by volunteers they are a critical part of maintaining this amenity.

ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Our overhead continues to be very low due to volunteer support. This allows us to direct most of the donations to program, supporting Scout projects and other infrastructure improvements. Even when the new nature center requires permanent staff, we expect to rely heavily on volunteers for trail maintenance and program. We hope that you will consider volunteering or continuing to volunteer with the trail crew or one of the areas listed below:

Program Committee- Identify programs and presenters for the community consistent with our mission, work with related organizations such as Texas Master Naturalists and the Nature Center Director (when hired) to schedule tours and events for the community, work the logistics of events, promote the events, make presentations as your interest and skill permit.

Financials Committee – with the board, develop an annual budget, keep the financial books, track grants
IT – maintain web site and keep track of computing equipment and software licenses.

General Support: keeping records, organizing and tracking equipment, helping with demonstrations/displays; maintaining game cameras (coordinate with program and trails committees).

Anyone interested in volunteering in any capacity should contact: Glenn Buckley at glenn@lakecreektx.org or Bob Wise at trails@lakecreektx.org.

DONATIONS

Finally, if you can't volunteer, we hope that you will consider making a financial contribution either on line through our web site lakecreektx.org/membership/ or at our mailing address:

Lake Creek Greenway Partnership

6606 FM1488, Ste. 148, #356

Magnolia, TX 77354