

Lake Creek Preserve News

Summer 2024

LAKE CREEK GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP

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

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

GENERAL: The past year had seen trail usage continue to increase until the winter/spring high water events limited access and flooded our storage container. The flooding will have minimal impact on long term trail use, but did indicate the need for some improvements in muddy areas to allow usage during extended wet periods. Our continuing relationships with Lone Star College, Scouting organizations (including 93 Eagle projects to date) and a dedicated group of volunteers have kept our improvement and maintenance costs low while exposing youth to local resource management issues. Finally, be sure to reserve Saturday November 9 to join us at the Celebration of Nature and the Outdoors discussed briefly below.

FLOODING HISTORY

IMPLICATIONS: Both the increasing upstream development and climate outlook suggest that we can anticipate an increasing number and intensity of flooding events. Figure 1 shows the preserve flooding history for the past 10 years (since USGS monitoring began on Lake Creek) indicating that we should plan and design for continued frequent flooding. It also demonstrates why you shouldn't build in these areas. What isn't as clear is how important these bottomland forests and wetlands are to limiting the severity of local and downstream flooding as they slow the water down and limit peak flow.

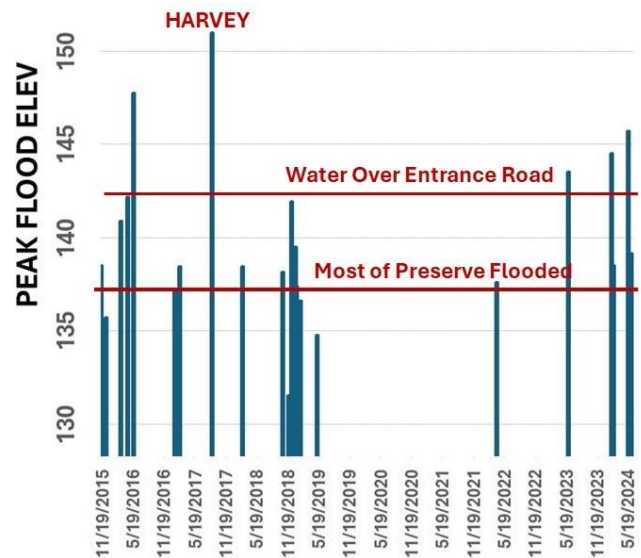


Figure 1: Peak flood levels at Fish Creek Thoroughfare bridge. Normal creek elevation about 121.5'

TRAIL RESTORATION: Flooding continues to require remedial work clearing debris from the trails or rerouting to avoid new hazards. We are fortunate to have an experienced sawyer and a small dedicated group of volunteers on our trail crew, but we can always use more help so that we don't burn folks out. Pictures below (figure 2)

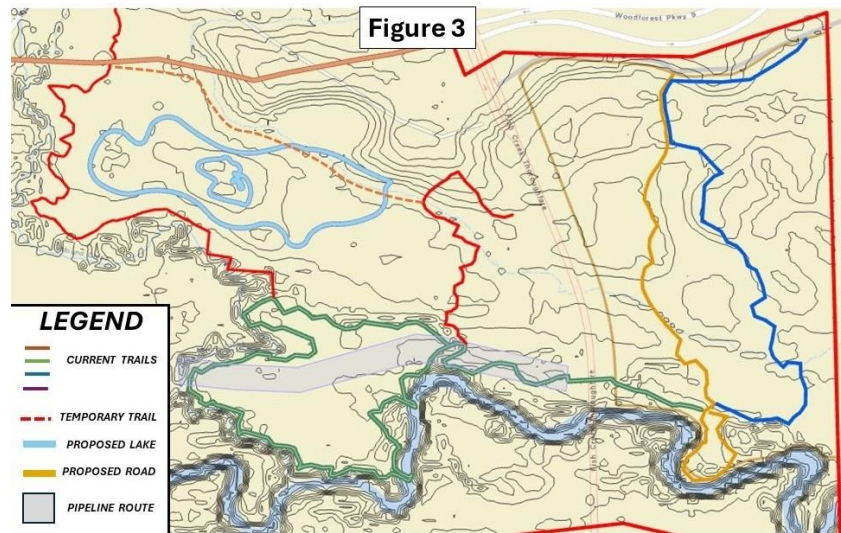
are from some of the work since our last newsletter. Anyone wanting to volunteer should email trails@lakecreektx.org.



NEW FEATURES/IMPROVEMENTS

We had made significant progress toward completion of a new loop on the red trail prior to the recent flooding. The western segment was completed over the past two seasons and a Scout has taken on the development of the eastern segment as his Eagle project. We are now in the process of connecting the two segments with a temporary

segment, much of which will be replaced by a permanent trail around the planned lake. The map (figure 3) shows the planned location for the lake along with other existing or planned trails. Scouts from Troop 1080 have also developed a trail to allow access to the west side of Fish Creek Thoroughfare from the NE where the ground is higher. This will allow access to much of the trail when the bottom is partially flooded. Access was further improved by a new bridge by Eagle candidate Zane Maples (figure 4)



CONTRIBUTIONS BY LSC HONORS COLLEGE

We have been working with Lone Star College Honors students to teach about watershed issues and related recreational and service opportunities. In turn the students have made significant contributions to flood restoration and new trail development.



Figure 5

Removing Tripping Hazards

Removing Stumps

The Team

SITE VISIT BY 35 6TH GRADERS

In March we partnered with the Rotary Club of Magnolia to bring 35 Bear Branch 6th graders out to the preserve to teach about wildlife, watersheds and soils related to the state TEKS requirements. This followed an earlier program in Unity Park in Magnolia for Magnolia Intermediate students. Lunches were donated by Pappa John’s Pizza and Chick-Fil-A.

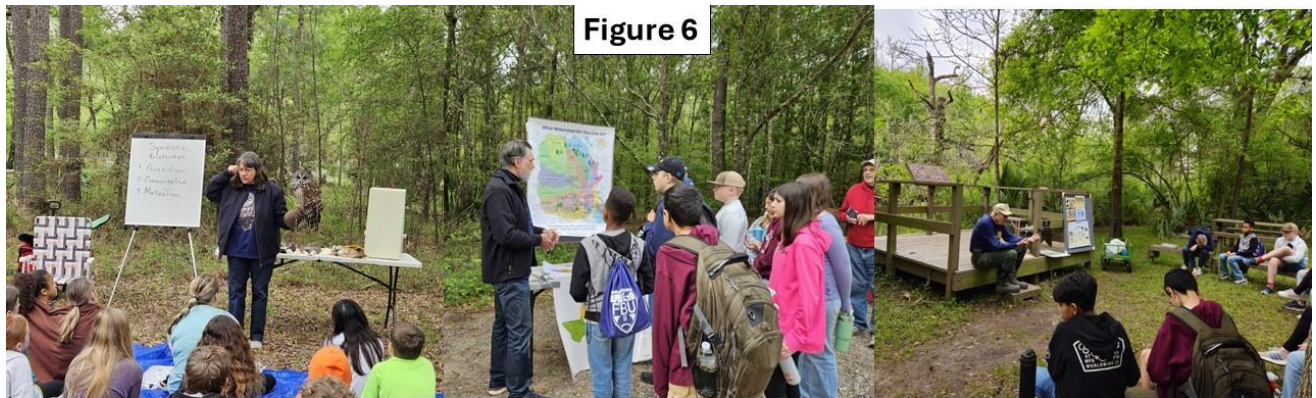


Figure 6

Wildlife Ecology

Watersheds

Soil Ecology

PIPELINE NEWS

Unfortunately, the Blackfin natural gas pipeline appears to be moving forward and an easement through the park west of Fish Creek Thoroughfare and the Lake Creek Preserve was approved by Commissioner’s Court in June. As noted before, we understand that Blackfin agreed to drill under Lake Creek Preserve on the east side of Fish Creek Thoroughfare. Siting of the drill pads is still uncertain. We hope to obtain a copy of the easement document soon.

AWARDED SCHOLARSHIP

For the past several years we have worked with the Montgomery County Soil & Water Conservation District to cosponsor a \$1500 scholarship for an outstanding high school senior or college student planning studies in agriculture and/or natural resource conservation. This year’s recipient will be studying sustainable agriculture and plant

science at Texas A&M. We thank the generous donor/s who have made these awards possible.

DEVELOPING TRASH DUMPING PROBLEM

We recently noticed that someone has started dumping landscaping waste in the pollinator beds again. If you see someone dumping please get the license and report to trails@lakecreektx.org. We will also be installing additional security cameras.

PLANNING UNDERWAY FOR FALL NATURE/OUTDOOR FESTIVAL

Lake Creek Greenway Partnership and the Rotary Club of Magnolia are partnering to host a fall festival dedicated to Nature and the Outdoors. It will be held at the Magnolia ISD Event Center at 11659 Fm1488 from 11-3 on November 9. This year we will have exclusive use of the facility with booths and activities both inside and outside. In addition, there will be related programs and activities for youth and special presentations on foraging, snakes of Texas and boater safety. We are hoping to have 50-70 informational exhibits as well as additional booths representing related businesses. Finally, the event is free. The attached informational flyer summarizes the event as well as listing organizations that have committed so far.



Join us for a
CELEBRATION OF
NATURE & THE
OUTDOORS

SATURDAY - NOVEMBER 9
11am to 3pm

MAGNOLIA EVENT CENTER
11659 FM 1488
MAGNOLIA, TEXAS

ACTIVITIES INCLUDE

- Live animals
- Games & hands-on activities
- Info on area recreational opportunities
- How to create a pollinator garden
- Best practices for property management
- Free seedling tree giveaways

Chat with area organizations & learn what they're doing to protect our earth.

FAMILY FRIENDLY
FREE EVENT!

Event Hosts
Rotary
Club of Magnolia

Lake Creek Greenway
Partnership

To reserve your booth, call Cheryl at 281.723.9696

EXHIBITORS AND ACTIVITIES

Air Alliance Houston
Bayou City Gator Savors
Boater Education USCG Aux
Brazos Bend St Park
Citizens Climate Education
Crystal Soul Rock & Gem
Foraging: Plants and Fungii
Future Farmers of America
Guardian Grounds Ranch
Gulf Coast Bird Observatory
Habitat for Humanity MC
Houston-Galveston Area Council
Huntsville State Park
Lake Creek Greenway Partnership
Lake Livingston St Park
Living Wild + Presentation on Tx snakes
Lone Star Groundwater Conservation District
Magnolia Fire Department
Magnolia Rotary Club
MC Pct 2 Recycling Center
MC Pct 2 Regional Park
N. Houston Astronomy Club
Natural Resource Conservation Service
Releve brands
Sam Houston National Forest
Sam Houston Trail Coalition
Sierra Club
SPLASH
St Francis Wolf Sanctuary
Texas Forest Service w/Smokey Bear
Texas Hawking Association
Texas Native Plant Society
Texas Wolfdog Project
Texas Wildlife Association
Trees For Houston
Wildlife Habitat Federation