

The Mill Creek Partnership and Steering Committee



Galen Roberts

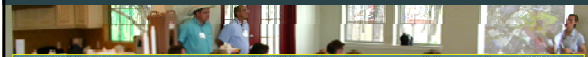
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

Mill Creek
January 26, 2015



What is a Stakeholder?

- Any individual or group of individuals that could be affected by activities/decisions to improve and protect water quality in a watershed.



- Residents, landowners and managers
- County or regional representatives
- City officials
- Business and industry representatives
- Citizen groups
- Community service organizations
- Religious organizations
- Universities, colleges and schools
- Environmental and conservation groups
- Soil and water conservation districts
- Irrigation districts

The Mill Creek Partnership

- Successful development and implementation of the watershed plan will depend primarily on the involvement of the community.
- Therefore, it is critical to build **partnerships** at the outset of the watershed planning effort.

The Mill Creek Partnership

The Mill Creek Partnership is the forum for public participation in the planning process.

The public can join and participate in the partnership in one of several ways:

- Attend and participate in meetings
- Serve as a Steering Committee member

Mill Creek Steering Committee

- The Mill Creek Steering Committee is the decision making body for the Partnership.
- The goal of the Steering Committee is to affirm the consensus of the Partnership and facilitate the development and implementation of a Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) for Mill Creek.

Steering Committee

- The Steering Committee will be composed of approximately 20 members.
- It will be representative of all types of stakeholders in the Mill Creek Watershed.



Steering Committee Selection

- Initial solicitation of individuals to represent all aspects of the watershed was conducted using three methods:
 - 1) Consultation with the County Agents, Austin & Washington County SWCDs and local and regional governments.
 - 2) Meetings with the various stakeholder interest groups and individuals.
 - 3) Self-nomination at Public Meetings.

Affiliation	Name
Austin County	Robert 'Bobby' Rinn
Austin County Env.	David Ottmer
Washington County	Luther Hueske
Washington County Env.	Mark Marzahn
City of Bellville	Still Confirming Nomination
City of Burton	Peggy Felder
City of Industry	Charlie Tallerine
Austin County SWCD	Kenneth Blezinger
Washington County SWCD	Ronnie Shulte/Ray Thaler
Mill Creek Drainage District/Realty	J. Frank Monk
Landowner/Ag Producer	Doug Albrecht
Landowner/Ag Producer	Robert Luedeker
Landowner/Ag Producer	George Dillingham
Landowner/Ag Producer	Doug Marek
Local Resident	James Elam
Local Resident	Ben Mayberry
Local Resident	Greg Plate
Business/Industry/Realty	Dixon Ashorn
Business/Industry/Realty	Ric Flores
Wildlife/Educator	Dr. Bill Eikenhorst/William Amelang

Draft Steering Committee Ground Rules



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Partnership Ground Rules

Ground Rules for the Mill Creek Watershed Partnership are intended to address:

- Role of Steering Committee
- Time frame for project
- Size and function of Steering Committee
- Replacements, additions, alternates, and proxies
- Decision making process

Steering Committee Role

- Help develop the WPP document
- Identify the desired water quality conditions and measurable goals
- Prioritize programs and practices to achieve goals
- Lead the effort to implement the WPP at the local level
- Communicate implications of the WPP to others in the watershed

Time Frame

- Development of the Mill Creek WPP will require at least a 6-month period.
- The Steering Committee will continue to function to implement the WPP.

Steering Committee

- To effectively function as a decision-making body, the membership shall achieve geographic and topical representation.
- If the Committee becomes so large that it becomes impossible or impractical to function, the Committee will institute a consensus-based system for limiting membership.
- Members will identify and present insights, suggestions, and concerns from a community, environmental, or public interest perspective.
- Members are expected to work constructively and collaboratively with other members toward reaching consensus.

Steering Committee

- The Committee will not elect a chair, but rather remain a facilitated group. Extension and/or TSSWCB will serve as the facilitators.
- The Committee has discretion to form standing and ad hoc work groups to carry out specific assignments from the Committee.
- Steering Committee members will be asked to sign the final WPP.

Role of Work Groups

- Work groups are an extension of the steering committee and partnership that discuss and work on specific topical areas.
- Composed of steering committee members, technical advisory group members and any other interested partnership members.
- Work groups make recommendations and develop components of the WPPs for their topic.
- Will meet in-between regular Partnership meetings.

Decision Making Process

- The Steering Committee will strive for consensus when making decisions and recommendations.
- Consensus is defined as everyone being able to live with the decisions made. Consensus inherently requires compromise and negotiation.
- If consensus cannot be achieved, the Steering Committee will make decisions by a simple majority vote.
- If Steering Committee members develop formal recommendations, they will do so by two-thirds majority vote.

Quorum

- In order to conduct business, the Committee will have a quorum.
- Quorum is defined as at least 51% of the Steering Committee (and/or alternates) present and a representative of either Extension or TSSWCB present.

Replacements and Additions

- The Steering Committee may add new members if:
 - 1) a member is unable to continue serving and a vacancy is created or
 - 2) important stakeholder interests are identified that are not represented by the existing membership.
- A new member must be approved by a majority of existing members. In either event, the Steering Committee will, when practical, accept additional members.

Alternates

- Members unable to attend a meeting (an absentee) may send an alternate with advance notification to the facilitator.
- **With prior notification, alternates have voting privileges. An alternate attending without advance notification cannot vote.**
- Absentees may also provide input via another Committee member or send input via the facilitator.
- Three absences in a row without advance notification or without designation of an alternate can lead to removal from the Steering Committee.

Speaking in the Name of the Committee

- Individuals do not speak for the Steering Committee as a whole unless authorized by the Committee to do so.
- Members do not speak for the Extension or TSSWCB unless authorized to do so.
- If Committee spokespersons are needed, they will be selected by the Steering Committee.

Steering Committee Membership

- Composed of stakeholders in the Mill Creek Watershed.
- Solicited individuals to represent all aspects of the watershed using three methods:
 - 1) Consultation with the County Agents, Austin & Washington County SWCDs and local and regional governments.
 - 2) Meetings with the various stakeholder interest groups and individuals.
 - 3) Self-nomination at Public Meetings.

Extension's Roles

- Provide technical assistance to the stakeholders in developing the WPP
- Draft text and prepare the WPP incorporating Committee recommendations
- Facilitate the development and implementation of the WPP through the meetings
- Assist the Steering Committee organize its work, facilitate meetings, and coordinate educational trainings
- Ensure the Mill Creek WPP satisfies U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's nine elements.

TSSWCB Role

- Provide technical assistance to the stakeholders in developing the WPP
- Provide Funding
- Review to ensure meets 9 elements

Development & Revision of Ground Rules

- These ground rules were drafted by the Extension and TSSWCB and presented to the Steering Committee for review, possible revision, and adoption.
- Once adopted, ground rules may be changed by two-thirds majority vote provided a quorum is present.

Powers

- Decision-making body for the Partnership.
- Formulates recommendations to be used in drafting the WPP
- The Steering Committee is an independent group of watershed stakeholders with an interest in restoring and protecting the designated uses of the Mill Creek Watershed.

Steps in Watershed Protection Planning



Ward Ling

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

Mill Creek
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Watershed Protection Plan (WPP)

Community-driven management plan that uses the watershed approach to address or prevent water quality problems.



- Protect healthy bodies of water and restore impaired ones
- Developed and managed through partnerships of local groups and organizations and federal/state agencies
- **Are voluntary and rely heavily on stakeholder involvement**

4 Steps of Watershed Planning

1. Establish a "Partnership"
2. Prepare a Watershed Protection Plan
 - Characterize the watershed
 - Establish goals and strategies
 - Develop an implementation strategy
3. Implement the Watershed Plan
4. Measure Progress and Make Adjustments

All of which rely heavily on local stakeholder input and participation

1. Establish a Partnership

- Form a watershed partnership and steering committee
- Identify issues of concern
- Set preliminary goals
- Encourage public participation throughout the planning process

2. Prepare a WPP

Characterize the Watershed:

- Gather existing data and create a watershed inventory
- Identify data gaps and collect additional data if needed
- Identify causes and sources of pollution
- Estimate pollution loads

2. Prepare a WPP

Finalize Goals and Identify Solutions:

- Set overall goals and management objectives
- Develop indicators/targets
- Determine load reductions needed
- Identify critical areas
- Develop management measures to achieve goals

2. Prepare a WPP

Design an Implementation Plan:

- Develop and Identify:
 - Implementation schedule
 - Milestones to track implementation and management measures
 - Criteria to measure progress
 - Monitoring component
 - Information/education component
 - Evaluation process
 - Technical & financial assistance needs

3. Implement the WPP

- Implement management strategies
- Conduct monitoring
- Conduct information/education activities

4. Measure Progress and Adjust

- Review and evaluate information
- Share results
- Prepare annual work plans
- Report back to stakeholders and others
- Make adjustments to program

Intro to Watershed Characterization

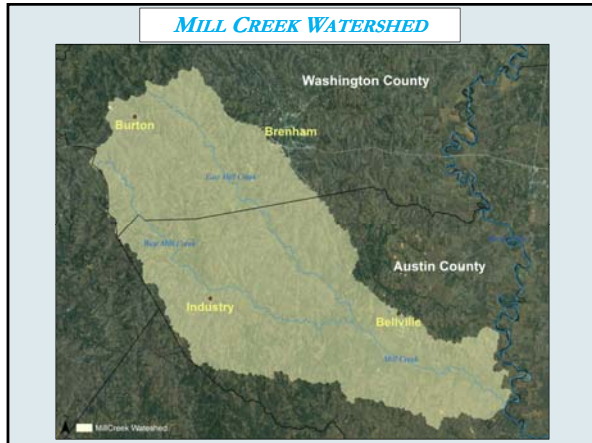


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Watershed Characteristics

- Water Resources
- Water Quality
- Geography
- Climate
- Soils
- Land use
- Ecology
- History



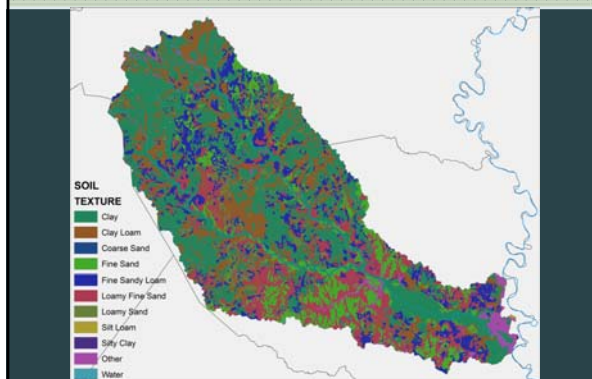
Water Resources & Water Quality

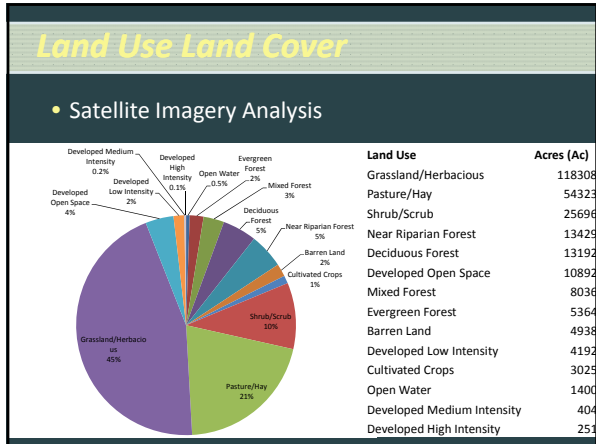
- Stream flows:
 - USGS Stream gage data
 - Local Advisory Group meeting
- Groundwater
 - TWDB Data
- Water Quality:
 - TCEQ Sampling data 1974 – Present
 - Initiated supplemental monitoring program

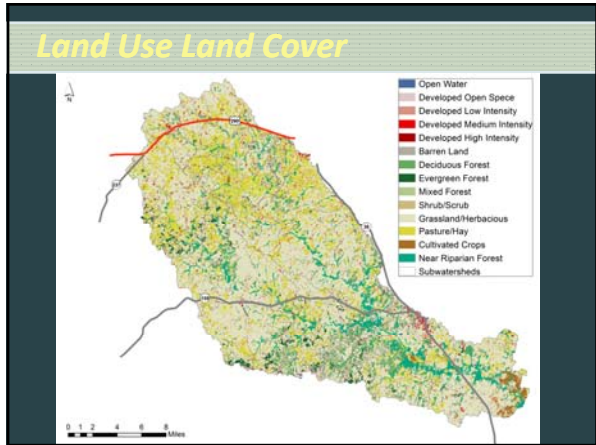
Geography & Climate

- Watershed boundary:
 - 263,450 acres (412 square miles)
 - Digital Elevation Model (DEM)
- Climate:
 - Average rainfall – 41-45 in.
 - Average temp. – January: 51°F ; July 83°F

Soils (NRCS SSURGO 2014)







- ### Ecology and History
- Ecology:
 - TPWD Data for aquatic and terrestrial biology
 - History:
 - Land use
 - Economic trends
 - Changes in habitat

Next Steps in the Planning Process



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Meeting Dates and Times

- Partnership meetings are proposed for the last Monday evening of each month.
- An additional mid-month meeting may be held during the planning process if necessary.
- 6pm start time?



Website: <http://millcreek.tamu.edu>

- Clearinghouse for all information related to the Partnership
 - Meeting info
 - Email list signup
 - Event registration
- Maps, data, publications and useful links will all be available on the website
 - <http://millcreek.tamu.edu>



Contact Info

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SAVE THE DATE

Mill Creek Partnership Meeting

February 23, 2015: 6pm

Here at the Bleiberville VFD
