

Mill Creek Watershed Partnership Stakeholder Meeting
Bleiberville Fire Hall

Minutes

12 September 2017

Total attendance: 26

Introduction

- Jennifer Cary, Watershed Coordinator (WC), opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and having everyone introduce themselves by name and location/affiliation in the watershed.
- Following welcome, Ms. Cary introduced herself, Taylor Marburger (District Technician), and guest Speaker, Dr. Jim Cathey.
- Agenda topics were announced

Agenda Topics

- Announcements of programs in the Watershed
 - Riparian and Stream Ecosystem Workshop – November 8th; Flyer and registration information on website and at Extension offices
 - Lone Star Healthy Streams is being rescheduled; Information and Flyer on website
 - Texas Watershed Stewards program – January 26, 2018
- Summary of recent activities
 - After last meeting, 2 steering committee members and Texas Farm Bureau donated money for water quality testing kits – Texas Master Naturalists accepted the money on Partnership's behalf and has taken up the Mill Creek Texas Stream Team as a project (not restrictive to Master Naturalists)
 - Mill Creek Texas Stream Team is being developed; training will be scheduled soon; sites will be at locations not monitored by Houston-Area Galveston Council (H-GAC).
 - HGAC has approved test sites and approved production of QAPP (Quality Assurance Project Plan) but Hurricane Harvey and personal injury of liaison have developed finalization of QAPP. WC will send out announcement when it is approved and water quality testing will begin
- Mill Creek Watershed Partnership Log
 - WC brought up suggestion of a logo for the Partnership to easily identify itself, apart from Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board.
 - Majority of those in attendance approved use/production of a logo
 - WC provided 2 examples, but offered up possibility for new logos to be developed
 - Opinions from attendees: font size of "watershed" should be larger, preference to green bars (not maroon), possibility of including riparian imagery, simple is better, logo would help promote mission
 - WC agreed to draft 2-4 versions, send out to Partnership for voting, and the Steering Committee will vote on final acceptance of logo
- Water Quality Management Plans still available for those living in the Mill Creek Watershed; spread the word to encourage more plans; contact SWCD District Technician Taylor Marburger to set up appointment (NRCS office, Bellville and Brenham)

Special Guest Speaker – Feral Hogs

- Scheduled speaker, Josh Helcel, unable to make meeting. Dr. Jim Cathey spoke instead
- Topics included: laws and regulations, reproductive biology, status of Feral Hogs in Texas, and trapping/baiting methods

- Key Points made
 - Hogs are considered non-domestic free roaming exotic livestock (NOT wildlife)
 - No one (including the state) owns the hogs; however, if you can contain them you can possess them (and then sell or consume)
 - There is no restrictive hunting season or “bag” limit – the more the better; however, best to have a hunting permit so the intention of your actions are not questioned (can kill hogs without permit if they are actively threatening/destroying your property)
 - Most effective trapping method: corral traps (no corners) with drop down doors; entice the hogs in with bait for a while then close trap doors
 - Hogs are very intelligent and can learn methods – get creative
 - No current legal toxin for use; new technology being developed – example: sound recognition trap doors – recognize feral hog sounds but not other animals

Wrap-up Reminders

- Next meeting: Tuesday, December 12, 2017
 - Holiday party
 - Plan out 2018
 - Speaker topic open for discussion
 - Meeting will be a joint Stakeholder and Steering Committee meeting.
- Spread the word about upcoming programs
- See website, Facebook, twitter, and email for more information. Contact the watershed coordinator if you have trouble access this information so she can provide you materials via other methods

Topics on Agenda not discussed due to time:

- SLACK: online discussion forum, WC will email out more information
- Detailed damage reports from Hurricane Harvey – WC asked to share stores, reports of damage
- Ideas for increased stakeholder involvement

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