

Mill Creek Steering Committee Meeting
Thursday, February 27, 2020
Austin County AgriLife Extension Office

Before opening the meeting, time was given for attendees to enjoy conversations and refreshments.

Ward Ling, Mill Creek Watershed Coordinator, opened the meeting with a Powerpoint presentation. Highlights of the presentation included a short history of the project, followed by an explanation of what is in the Mill Creek Watershed Protection Plan, related to management measures. An overview was provided about all the programs that have been brought to the watershed in the past year and a half (Texas Well Owner Network, Homeowner Septic System Maintenance Classes, Stakeholder Meetings, Lone Star Healthy Streams Workshop).

Austin and Washington Counties require homeowners with aerobic septic systems to have a maintenance provider contract on their system at all times. It was explained that AgriLife worked with both Counties Environmental Permitting Departments to allow homeowners to be certified if they attend a special training class from Extension. Both Counties agreed to this new certification program, and two classes have been conducted and the next is scheduled for Wednesday, May 27th. In addition, Extension will be scheduling a 2-hour class that covers both aerobic and conventional septic systems general operation and maintenance.

Faith Chase, the Soil and Water Conservation District Field Technician for the watershed, was introduced. She spoke briefly about her job and how she works with agricultural producers to better manage their operations through both technical and financial assistance.

Some future programs were highlighted, such as the first-ever Annual Mill Creek Clean Up Event, scheduled for April 18, 2020, and the Riparian & Stream Restoration Workshop, scheduled for April 7, 2020.

The final topic discussed was the past and future water quality monitoring in the watershed. The most recent monitoring plan included sampling at 8 locations in the watershed. Extension is beginning a new monitoring program starting this summer at 5 locations. Several locations were taken off the monitoring list due to low or no measured flow during the previous monitoring. Results will be shared with stakeholders as they become available.

Again, time was given after the meeting for conversations and refreshments.