



Golden Triangle

BMP Informer

Serving Hardin, Jefferson, and Orange Counties

Updating FOREST LANDOWNERS on Forestry and Water Quality Issues

TEXAS FOREST SERVICE Best Management Practices Project P.O. Box 310 Lufkin, TX 75902 sharrington@tfs.tamu.edu

FAMOUS TREES OF TEXAS

The Kissing Oak: On July 24, 1857, Senator Sam Houston made one of his more than 60 campaign speeches under this live oak. Following one such address, he gallantly kissed each of the ladies responsible for crafting and presenting him with a Texas flag.

The Hangman's Oak: The tombstone reads: "Remember, friends, as you pass by, as you are now, so once was I. As I am now, you soon will be; prepare for death and follow me." Above this inscription are the names of eight men who lie beneath it in a common grave. They were victims of a brutal and senseless murder by members of a detachment of Confederate cavalry.

See the sidebar to read more about these and other famous trees in Texas history

FORESTRY SERVICES VENDOR DATABASE

The Texas Forest Service website has a user-friendly Forestry Services Vendor Database. This is an interactive database that allows you to find information on various vendors that do forestry-related work in East Texas.

The four main databases that can be accessed:

- tree planting vendors,
- mechanical site preparation vendors,
- herbicide applicator vendors, and
- prescribed fire vendors.

The database can be queried to list only those vendors that meet specified criteria. For example, you might list only those tree planting vendors that machine plant and do work in Cass County.

The data can also be downloaded onto your computer. When this is done, data is downloaded into a comma-delimited file that can be opened by MS Excel.

For information of the preferred vendor database visit the Texas Forest Service website at <http://texasforests.tamu.edu> and click on the Forest Management tab, then click on Preferred Vendor Database. Additional information can be obtained by contacting your local Texas Forest Service Office.

INTERACTIVE WEBSITE ON FORESTS & TREES

How do you increase awareness and appreciation of paper and wood products as a natural, renewable resource to tech-savvy kids? You launch an informative, interactive and creative website called KnowYourTrees.org.

The Abundant Forests Alliance recently launched KnowYourTrees.org as a way to reach out to kids and others with important messages and facts about the health of forests and to help strengthen positive associations with paper and wood products and their many valuable uses.

The animated site allows visitors to learn about 10 tree species and contains interesting information about numerous wood and paper products. For example, did you know that there are more than 5,000 products made from trees; or that every day U.S. paper makers recycle enough paper to fill a 15-mile-long train of boxcars?

Important facts about the abundance of North America's forests are weaved throughout the site to counterbalance misinformation and erroneous perceptions about North America's forests.

For more information:

<http://www.abundantforests.org>

<http://knowyourtrees.org>

TheTreeFarmer.org

Improving My Land

Streamside Management Zones

A great way to improve and protect your forestland is by creating a Streamside Management Zone, or SMZ. An SMZ is a protective buffer of vegetation along a stream or creek. As a general rule of thumb a 50-foot buffer of trees on both sides of the stream is usually sufficient for protecting water quality.



Streamside Management Zones are easily visible in this photo.

SMZs help improve your land by:

- Reducing the amount of sediment or dirt that may get into a stream
- Providing shade to maintain a consistent water temperature for the fish and the insects that they eat
- Stabilizing stream banks and protecting them from erosion
- Providing habitat and travel corridors for wildlife.

Don't forget that you can harvest (thin) in an SMZ and still be within the voluntary guidelines. Just leave 50% of the shade for a distance of 50 feet from the bank on both sides.

Ask your logging contractor or other forestry professional about SMZs. Your land will benefit in many ways and you can show your commitment to being a good "Land Steward."

Determining Stream Types

The majority of our freshwater that is used for consumption originates on forestlands. As our population continues to increase the demand for usable water will increase as well. Forest landowners can ensure that are protecting this valuable resource by leaving streamside management zones (SMZs) along the streams that run throughout their property. Streams are divided into three groups (perennial, intermittent, or ephemeral) based on the amount of time during the year that water flows through it. The Texas Forest Service recommends that a 50-foot SMZ be left along side perennial and intermittent streams and professional judgment should be used on ephemeral streams or drains. Each stream type has identifiable characteristics that aid in its identification. Below are characteristics for each stream type that should be useful in determining the stream type on your property.

A perennial stream will flow at least 90% of the year and have a well-defined channel. This channel will be winding or sinuous and show evidence of soil and debris movement. Water pools will be present, even during dry conditions. High water marks are sometimes noticed along the stream, as well as wetland vegetation, such as mosses, ferns, and some woody species. Gray soils with red specks are associated with these types of streams. Remember that the Texas Forest Service recommends leaving a minimum width of 50 feet on either side of perennial streams.

An intermittent stream will flow at least 30% of the year and this is usually during the winter months. Intermittent streams also have a well-defined channel that is winding or sinuous. The channel will also show evidence of soil and debris movement from one part of the stream to another. Water pools are only present during wet conditions and high water marks along with wetland vegetation will occur in these areas. Intermittent streams usually have brown soils with gray soils mixed in. Again the Texas Forest Service recommends leaving a minimum width of 50 feet on either side of intermittent streams.

An ephemeral stream or drain only flows during or shortly after rain events. These streams do not always have well-defined channels because they are short lived. Ephemeral streams are generally always straight, lack water pools, and high water marks and wetland vegetation are not found. The soils in this area are usually characteristic of the surrounding lands. The Texas Forest Service recommends that professional judgment be used in determining whether or not an SMZ should be left along ephemeral streams. Some may choose to leave a small SMZ or stringer along an ephemeral stream while others may choose not to leave one.

SMZs are very important in protecting our streams from increased temperatures, excessive erosion, and provides habitat for various species of wildlife. SMZs can be thinned in order to remove some of the economic value, however it is important to leave a minimum of 50 square feet of basal area, evenly distributed. Senate Bill 977 can help reduce the financial burden of leaving an SMZ. If any debris from the thinning of an SMZ should end up in the stream, it should be removed immediately to prevent the stream flow from becoming blocked.

More information on SMZs and stream types can be found on the Texas Forest Service website at <http://texasforestservicetamu.edu> or by calling your local Texas Forest Service office.

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