

THE TEXAS WATER SOURCE

UPDATING CASS AND MARION CO. FOREST LANDOWNERS ON FORESTRY AND WATER ISSUES

BMP Educational Efforts in Texas

In 1989, the Texas Forest Service established the Best Management Practices (BMP) program to focus on minimizing any threats to water quality from forestry activities. The program educates landowners, loggers and foresters about the threats to water quality and provides technical assistance on how to minimize those threats through the use of non-regulatory forestry BMPs

Project staff use a variety of methods to reach countless people, including:

- Informative seminars with county landowner associations
 - One-on-one technical assistance to the forestry community on BMPs
 - Exhibits at public events
 - Newsletters to landowners
 - Brochures and other publications
 - Highway billboards
 - Virtual BMP tours and publications on TFS website
- News releases and interviews for newspaper and radio
 - Radio public service announcements
 - BMP training workshops for loggers and foresters.

The BMP project coordinates the BMP training workshops in cooperation with the Texas Forestry Association (TFA) and Texas Logging Council (TLC). These workshops were started in 1995 and have since reached over 3,000 people through more than 140 workshops.

In January 2005, an online BMP refresher course for loggers was released on the TFA website.

In 2007, after identifying stream crossings and forest roads as areas needing improvement on some logging sites, courses on these specific topics were developed.

Continuing effective educational programs and providing technical assistance to the forestry community is the best way to mitigate any potential impacts to water quality from forestry operations.

For more information:

- <http://texasforestservicetamu.edu/BMP>

Is Your Logger a “Pro?”

Looking for a list of loggers who have been through the Best Management Practices workshop? Do you want to know if your logger has been trained in the proper use of BMPs and other related topics?

Go to the Texas Forestry Association website, <http://www.texasforestry.org/>.

At the bottom of the page, you’ll find “Logger Training Records.” Type in your county, city or a logger’s name and hit “Search Now.”

To view the list of courses an individual must attend in order to obtain the “Texas Pro Logger” classification, click on “Programs,” then “Texas Pro Logger.”

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Agency Spotlight

Overview of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

For more information:

- <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/>

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) is the environmental agency for the state. Their Mission Statement states: The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality strives to protect our state's human and natural resources consistent with sustainable economic development. Our goal is clean air, clean water, and the safe management of waste.

The Office of Compliance and Enforcement enforces compliance with the state's environmental laws, responds to emergencies and natural disasters that threaten human health and the environment, oversees dam safety and watermaster programs, and monitors air and water quality within Texas.

The Enforcement Division is responsible for investigating violations of state environmental laws and ensuring that appropriate parties take corrective action.

The Monitoring Operations Division is responsible for monitoring air and water quality within the state and for re-

porting that information to the public and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The division oversees the statewide air quality monitoring networks, and operates laboratories in Austin and mobile laboratories. Monitoring Operations staff examine and interpret the causes, nature, and behavior of air pollution in Texas and issue forecasts of possible high concentrations of ground-level ozone and particulate matter in Texas urban areas.

The Remediation Division oversees the investigation and cleanup of hazardous pollutants released into the environment. This includes activities conducted by responsible parties, state contractors and the state itself. The division also seeks restoration of damaged natural resources resulting from such releases.

The Office of Permitting and Registration is responsible for implementing the federal and state laws and regulations governing all aspects of permitting for the air, water, and waste programs.

Complaints to TCEQ

For more information:

- <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/compliance/complaints/>
- http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/compliance/complaints/type_complaint.html

In general, the TCEQ can help if you:

- see water that may be polluted
- see or smell something unpleasant in the air
- see land that may be contaminated
- have problems with your drinking water
- have information or evidence about an environmental problem
- have problems with an individual or company licensed or registered by the TCEQ
- need more information about a possible pollution source, including permitting status, compliance history, or other complaints that may have been filed against that source
- need assistance understanding environmental laws

The TCEQ is available 24 hours every day to receive complaints under their jurisdiction. Once you contact us, someone from the TCEQ regional office nearest you will talk with you about the details of your complaint.

Giant Salvinia on Caddo Lake

Caddo Lake, the only large, naturally formed lake in Texas, has been designated as a wetland of international importance. It supports an ecosystem found nowhere else in Texas.

And we may be losing it.

Not to development or global warming or neglect, but to a floating fern from South America first found in Texas little more than a decade ago: giant salvinia, or *Salvinia molesta*.

A RESISTANT INVADER

Giant salvinia first appeared on Caddo Lake in 2006, and it quickly progressed from invader to near-conqueror. In just two years, the plant expanded its coverage of the surface from two acres to more than 1,000.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), in partnership with the Cypress Valley Navigation District and the Caddo Lake Institute, launched an offensive against giant salvinia.

"We're here at Caddo Lake to spray giant salvinia with herbicide to try to knock it back to a more manageable level," said Craig Bonds, TPWD's regional director for inland fisheries. "We are at a tipping point with giant salvinia coverage. If we don't get on it heavily, we could lose this battle and experience increased levels of giant salvinia, to the point where we won't be able to control it. We will never eradicate it. This is going to be an on-going fight."

"Hairs on the leaves of giant salvinia make it very resistant to herbicide application," said Howard Elder, TPWD's aquatic vegetation biologist. "We have to use very aggressive herbicides and surfactants approved by the EPA to be able to control the plant. We have found herbicide applications to be about 90 percent effective; it takes a week to 10 days to see results."

The battle against giant salvinia is being fought mainly by the herbicide boats and a mechanical harvester that gobbles up the plant from the surface of the water and carries it to shore for disposal. Salvinia-eating weevils have also been used, but results are slow.

A FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL

While it may seem impossible for a simple plant to defeat all the efforts to get rid of it, such has already happened. "At Toledo Bend Reservoir south of here, the magnitude of the problem is so great that we are relegated to just keeping boat ramps free and clear and improving boat access and navigation where we can," said TPWD's Bonds. "Actually controlling giant salvinia is no longer an option on that lake given current resources, and we are trying to keep Caddo from reaching a similar condition."

The stakes are nothing less than survival—for the lake and for the people around it. "Caddo Lake is a national treasure because of its ecosystem and the diversity of plants and animals it supports," Bonds said. "Giant salvinia has the capability of wreaking havoc here. It can double its coverage every five to seven days under optimal growing conditions. We have nature tourism here, we have anglers, recreational boaters, waterfowlers—and every single user of this lake is impacted by this plant. If we don't ramp up our efforts to control this plant now, we may lose control of it. That's our fear, that this wonderful, wonderful place is at risk."

Bonds and Elder urge people using any lake to report any plants they suspect might be invasive species. Suspected infestations can be reported to Elder at (409) 384-9965. The TPWD web site has information to help identify this and other invasive species.

From the Cherokeean Herald, June 10, 2009, and Caddo Lake News (website)

For more information:

- <http://www.thecherokeean.com/News/2009/0610/miscellaneous/002.html>
- <http://caddolakenews.org/>
- <http://caddolakenews.org/article3.htm>
- <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/huntwild/wild/species/exotic/salvinia.phtml>

Did you know...

Removing some of the shade alongside your woods roads will allow them to dry out more quickly after a rain and help keep them in great shape.

Updating Cass and Marion Co. Forest Landowners on
Forestry and Water Issues

Distribution of *The Texas Water Source* is provided free of charge to forest landowners of Cass and Marion Counties. Funding has been provided through cooperation of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) and Texas Forest Service (TFS). PLEASE ADVISE US IF YOU WISH FOR YOUR NAME TO BE REMOVED FROM OUR MAILING LIST.

The Texas Forest Service is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer committed to Excellence Through Diversity.

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Your Local BMP Forester

Are you a -

- Landowner with questions about forestry Best Management Practices (BMPs)?
- Civic club, landowner association or other organization that would like a presentation on water quality issues?
- Logger needing assistance implementing proper forestry BMPs?
- Student needing information on water quality and what we're doing in Texas to protect it?
- Forester looking for new, innovative approaches for implementing BMPs?

Chris Duncan is your local Texas Forest Service BMP forester. His office is in Suite B102 along with other Texas Forest Service personnel in the Vantage Plaza at 1203 West Loop 281 in Longview. You can contact Chris at (903) 297-3910 or cduncan@tfs.tamu.edu.

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