



Texas Rivers Protection Association • P.O. Box 219 •
Martindale, TX 78655

Spring 2003 www.txrivers.org

Officers:

Tom Goynes, President Martindale 512-392-6171 goynes@centurytel.net

David Reichert, Vice-president San Antonio 210-545-0548 reichert@world.std.com

Leslie Redwine, Secretary San Marcos 512-392-5182 redcanoe@axs4u.net

Duane TeGrotenhuis, Treas. Martindale 512-353-3946 t.g.canoe.livery@centurytel.net

Board of Directors:

Mark Andrus Angleton 409-849-3732 mandrus@brazoria.net

David Davenport New Braunfels 830-609-3038 crwa@crwa.com

Ann Derby Houston 281-491-3973 MADerb@aol.com

Richard Grayson Dallas 214-308-1469 webmaster@txrivers.org

Jim Hatcher Fort Stockton 915-336-6700 tallhat@ftstockton.net

Ed Lowe Dallas 214-824-9470 twl-edlowe@email.msn.com

Ann Olden Houston 713-864-0205 aolden@ix.netcom.com

Jeff Pine Austin 512-443-2870 txpine@swbell.net

Ginger Turner Austin 512-459-5742 gingerct@juno.com

Michael Van Winkle Kerrville 830-895-2359 mszvanw@kct.com

OFF ROAD VEHICLES IN TEXAS RIVERS

During the current legislative session (which began in mid January and will end in May) our lawmakers will be considering whether it should be illegal to drive vehicles within the publicly owned streambeds of Texas.

Texans place a very high value on our freedoms; and we are very protective of our rights to access our rivers. So none of us wants to keep someone from enjoying his or her favorite form of river recreation. But we (especially members of this organization) are also very concerned with protecting the natural beauty and environmental quality of our rivers; and if freedom and access must be limited to protect our rivers, then we have a duty to act.

There is no question that the streambeds of most navigable rivers in Texas belong to the people of Texas. It is much the same as the right of way along our highways, or the lands within the confines of a state park. So we will not argue that a person in an off road vehicle does not share in the ownership of most of the streambeds where he wants to drive. But just as that person may not drive off road on the right of ways along our highways, or randomly off road within a state park, he or she may not drive on streambeds that are sensitive, fragile ecosystems.

And there is no argument that driving within a streambed is harmful to the streambed. Wheels churn up the gravel, destroying vegetation and causing future erosion. Riverbanks are destabilized. Habitat is destroyed. Birds and animals sensitive to noise and heavy traffic are dislocated. Fish spawning grounds are ruined. Habitat for invertebrates that become food for fish is disrupted. Water quality is affected, both from the muddying of the water by the churning gravel and by oil spills.

On a recent trip to the Nueces River (where a disproportionate amount of off road vehicle traffic occurs) the destructive power of vehicles was easily noted. On a section of river that is commonly used by vehicles (starting at Highway 55 and proceeding downstream for approximately 3 miles) the gravel bars were very large and flat and contained almost no vegetation. Few birds were sighted, mostly because there were no trees in which they could perch. There was virtually no vegetation to control erosion, so the riverbed seemed destined to spread out wider and flatter with time. A wide, flat, shallow river will heat up more (especially in the absence of shade trees) thus changing the nature of the stream and the fish that can live there.

Then we passed an area where the channel was too deep for vehicular traffic, and fences keep the vehicles off the privately owned land above the gradient boundary. Suddenly there were trees growing along the riverbed, which was now more defined. Grasses and small trees inhabited the gravel bars, providing a home for birds and animals, which were now sighted. The river was suddenly deeper and narrower, the channel more defined. In short, we were now witnessing a healthy river, whereas a mile before we were seeing a river in bad repair.

In this issue you will find information on proposed legislation to protect our rivers from off road vehicle abuse. I hope you take the time to write your elected officials a letter supporting this legislation. The rivers of Texas will appreciate it.

Tom Goynes, president

Support Senate Bill 155

For the last two years this organization has been working with other environmental organizations, various landowner groups, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and legislators to help write a bill to prohibit off road vehicles from the rivers of Texas. The result is Senate Bill 155, filed by Senator Judith Zafarini. It is unlikely that there has ever been a bill designed to protect the environment that has enjoyed as much widespread support as this one. If you agree that off road vehicles do not belong in our rivers please let your legislator know your opinion. You can find out who your state senator and state representative are by visiting this web site: <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/> Under "Redistricting" click: "who represents me?" You can usually get such information from you telephone book under the community section or blue pages. Write your senator at: P.O. Box 12068 Austin, TX 78711. Write your state representative at: P.O. Box 2910 Austin, TX 78769.

Additional Land Purchase at Hidalgo Falls

Two years ago a group of paddlers began an effort to purchase access to the Brazos River at Hidalgo Falls. This organization, along with the Texas River Recreation Association, became involved, and now the TRPA holds the title to ten acres of land – seven upstream of the rapid and three downstream. At the time the land was purchased, we acquired a right to buy other land at Hidalgo Falls as it became available. Our hope is to someday own as much as thirty acres of property there. Recently an additional two acres of land has become available and TRPA has made an offer of \$16,000 for that property. This land has a mobile home on it, which will be sold to Southwest Paddlesports to be used as an outpost for kayak lessons. This additional property will give us excellent access to the middle portion of the rapid. At this time we have received checks and pledges for over six thousand dollars, if you believe in this amazing and precedent setting approach to preserving access for paddlers in Texas please help. You can make a non-deductible contribution (if you don't itemize your deductions it doesn't matter) directly to the TRPA – just let us know that the money is to be earmarked for Hidalgo Falls. If you would like to make a tax deductible contribution send you money to the Texas River Recreation Association c/o Tom Goynes Treasurer, P.O. Box 219, Martindale, TX 78655.

SMRF Water Right to be Considered by TCEQ

On March 19, the Texas Committee on Environmental Quality (formerly the TNRCC) will consider sending the application for water right filed by the San Marcos River Foundation to a hearing. SMRF has applied for a water right for water in the San Marcos and Guadalupe Rivers solely for the purpose of leaving that water in those rivers for instream uses and for the health of our bays and estuaries. So far TRPA has contributed \$8,000 to SMRF for this application and for other battles to protect the flow of the San Marcos River. To learn more about SMRF and/or to make a contribution, see the enclosed brochure.

Newsletters

You have no doubt noticed that you have not been receiving four newsletters per year from this organization. There are several reasons for this. First of all, your president, who also writes these newsletters, can't find the time or energy to write four per year. Secondly, as the price of postage and printing increase, it becomes prohibitive to mail out four per year. And finally, with the advent of the Internet, it has become much more efficient to get news out to the membership on a timely basis through the use of e-mail and our website. You are therefore urged to do two things: first, visit our website at www.txrivers.org and secondly, if you have not already done so, subscribe to the server list canoetx at canoetx@world.std.com with nothing on the subject line and the message: subscribe If you have problems with this, send mail to reichert@world.std.com In addition, make sure you give us your latest e-mail address when you renew your membership.

Speaking of Membership...

Just as it has been with every non-profit organization in the country, times have been lean for the TRPA ever since 9/11/01. Donations are down, but we realize that your bank accounts aren't exactly up either. That is one of the reasons that we have cut corners (like less newsletters). Nonetheless, we have been able to continue our efforts to keep our rivers free and flowing. If you'll notice, we have spent \$2,678.82 this year on the battle to stop a water rights permit for a golf course on the Guadalupe River (that case is in the appeals process). We have also been able to donate \$5000 to the SMRF toward their water rights permit and another \$3000 to fight a bed and banks water right permit that has been granted to the City of San Marcos. Since there are no paid staff for this organization, and very few office expenses, almost every cent of your dues goes directly toward protecting our rivers. We believe we are the most efficient river protection organization in the country. So please, be as generous as possible when you renew your membership. The rivers of Texas will appreciate it.

TRPA Financial Report 2002

Beginning Balance, 1/1/02 \$10,966.72

\$ Earmarked for Hidalgo Falls, 1/1 502.23

Contributions Received for Hidalgo 493.00

Expenses, Hidalgo Falls

Electricity 132.19

Property Taxes 257.55

Total expenses, Hidalgo Falls 389.74

\$ Earmarked for Hidalgo Falls, 12/31 605.49

Contributions received (general fund) 7,516.05

Interest received 25.31

Subtotal \$18,611.34

Expenses:

San Marcos River Foundation \$8,000.00

Lawyer (Guad Golf Course) 2,678.82

Newsletter 100.00

Postage 182.64

River Network (dues) 100.00

Meeting expense (facility rent) 100.00

Office 58.29

Bank Charges 5.00

Total expenses \$11,224.75

Ending Balance, 12/31/02 7,386.59

Money earmarked for Hidalgo Falls 605.49

Money Available \$6,781.10

THE 18 TH ANNUAL GREAT TEXAS RIVER CLEAN-UP

March 1, 2003

On Saturday, March 1, 2003, folks from all over Texas will be participating in the world's longest river clean-up. We will be picking up trash along the entire length of the San Marcos River (approximately 90 miles).

BANK CREWS

Everyone is urged to help. If you are unable to participate in the water, we need volunteers to work the banks of the river, especially at parks and highway crossings. Bring some trash bags (we will supply as many as possible) and perhaps a flounder gig to snag some goodies. Scuba divers and snorkelers are also urged to participate.

RECREATIONAL PADDLERS

We are asking recreational paddlers and canoe clubs to accept the challenge and volunteer for a section of river. If your group or club has not already been assigned a section, be sure to contact Tom Goynes and tell him what stretch you would like. The upper sections of the San Marcos River, particularly just downstream of the City of San Marcos, will require the most attention, and the short mileages set for these sections reflect this. Furthermore, the river becomes less accessible and more hazardous as one goes downstream. For that reason, novice boaters should volunteer for either sections 1 or 2 and more experienced boaters for the other sections.

SAFARI TEAMS AND CANOE RACING ENTHUSIASTS

The lower river, from Luling to Gonzales, has several long sections with few bridge crossings and for that reason, we are asking canoe racers and especially teams that have competed in the Texas Water Safari in the past to volunteer for sections 9 - 11.

CAMPOUT AND GET-TO-GETHER

Everyone participating in this event is invited to camp free at either Shady Grove Campground/ Spencer Canoes or at Pecan Park Retreat for the weekend. Starting at 6 p.m. on Saturday evening there will be a free barbecue provided by the San Marcos River Foundation at Shady Grove/Spencer Canoes. It should be noted that the party will terminate by midnight to allow the rest of the workers some time to sleep.

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

On Sunday morning at 8 a.m., there will be a non-denominational Christian worship service at Pecan Park. Duane TeGrotenhuis will lead the group in song and Tom Goynes will lead a short Bible study. Everyone is welcome.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

First of all, mark March 1st on your calendar. Secondly, look over the enclosed river section listing, and choose a stretch that you can help cover. Next, call me at 512-392-6171, and I will put you in contact with the group leader of the section you have chosen. Each leader will be able to help arrange shuttles and will be given logistical info regarding trash deposit locations as the clean-up nears.

MEETING TIMES AND SHUTTLES

A group meeting will be held for everyone working sections 3 through 7 at 9:00 a.m. Saturday morning at Spencer Canoes. Groups working sections 8 - 11 will arrange their shuttles as early as possible Saturday morning and try to put in the river by 9:00 a.m. Persons working sections 1 and 2 will meet at City Park in San Marcos at 10:00 a.m.

LET'S DO IT

Communities along the river are being urged to help in any way they can. If you can offer any service, such as trash hauling, shuttle driving, trash bags or food donations - anything - please give us a call.

Together we can clean up the whole river and make a strong statement to the public about our love for free flowing streams. Please help us out,

Tom Goynes (coordinator) 512-392-6171 Goynes@centurytel.net

Sponsors: Texas Rivers Protection Association; Texas River Recreation Association; Texas Canoe Racing Association

San Marcos River Foundation; Green Guys Recycling; Pecan Park Retreat; Spencer Canoes; TG Canoe Livery

RIVER SECTION LISTINGS

Section Contact:

1 San Marcos City Park to Thompson's Island (2 mi.) Tom Goynes: 512-392-6171;
Goynes@centurytel.net

2 Thompson's Island to Pecan Park Retreat (3.5 mi.) Tom Goynes: 512-392-6171;
Goynes@centurytel.net

3 Pecan Park Retreat to Spencer Canoes (6 mi.) Houston Canoe Club: Ann Derby: 713-491-3973; MADerb@aol.com

4 Spencer Canoes to Staples - Hwy 1977 (5 miles) Jeff Pines: 512-443-2870; txpine@swbell.net

5 Staples to Fentress - Hwy 20 (9 miles) Austin Paddling Club: Jeff Bauknecht: 512-303-3949; kayak999@juno.com

6 Fentress to Stairtown (7miles) Bayou City Whitewater Susan Eda: 713-465-8711 sseda@mail.esc4.com

7 Stairtown to Luling - Hwy 90 (6.5miles) Needs adoption! Tom Goynes: 512-392-6171; Goynes@centurytel.net

8 Luling 90 to Luling City Park (6 mi.) Alamo City Rivermen David Reichert: 210-545-0548; reichert@world.std.com

9 Luling City Park to Palmetto State Park (14.4 mi.) TCRA Ginger Turner: 512-459-5742; gingerct@juno.com

10 Palmetto to Gonzales Hwy 90A (14.8 miles) TCRA Ginger Turner: 512-459-5742; gingerct@juno.com

11Gonzales 90A to Gonzales 183 (10 mi.) TCRA Ginger Turner: 512-459-5742; gingerct@juno.com

TRPA Annual Meeting

On Sunday, March 2 at 10 a.m. the Texas Rivers Protection Association will hold it's annual general meeting. We will meet in Pecan Park Retreat if the weather permits; if it doesn't, we'll meet in the home of Tom and Paula Goynes (which also happens to be the campground office).

We will discuss ongoing river issues, especially the off road vehicle legislation, the upcoming SMRF water rights hearings and the new Hidalgo Falls purchase. Everyone is welcome to attend. We hope to adjourn by 1 p.m., at which time there will be a short meeting of the Texas River Recreation Association.

DRIVING DIRECTIONS:

To get to Pecan Park Retreat: coming from Interstate 35 in San Marcos, get on Highway 80 and head toward Luling for 1.8 miles. Take a right on county road 101. Immediately take a left onto county road 102. Go 1/2 mile on 102 and take a right on Pecan Park road. Our road will be asphalt for a little ways then it will turn to gravel. Keep going straight until you come to a bend in the road. Follow the arrow to the left, then go through the gate and down the hill. If the weather is bad we will meet at the Goynes home, it's the campground office. For more info call Tom Goynes at 512-392-6171 or visit the website for the campground at: <http://www.pecanparkretreat.com>

Texas Rivers Protection Association Membership Application

To join, or renew your membership, fill out the information below and include a check for your dues.

Name _____ Hm Phone _____ Wk
phone _____

Street _____ City _____ State
_____ Zip _____

E-mail _____ Fax #

Check here if e-mail version of newsletter is sufficient _____

Levels of membership:

Regular: \$10___ Protector: \$25___ Guardian: \$50___ Ranger: \$100___ Bronze: \$500___ Silver:
\$1000___ Gold: \$5000___

Is this a renewal? _____ Check if new address _____

All members receive notices and newsletters and get to vote at general meetings. Protectors also receive a cloisonné pin with our emblem. Guardians receive the pin and either a logo cap or logo t-shirt. Rangers and above receive all three. Guardians need to indicate their choice (cap or t-shirt) and Rangers and Guardians wanting t-shirts should indicate their size (M,L, XL, or XXL).

Protectors, Guardians, Rangers, Bronze, Silver and Gold members:

Please send the following: Protector ___ Cloisonné pin

Guardian ___ Pin and ___ Cap or ___ t-shirt size ___M ___L ___XL ___XXL

Ranger & above ___ Pin and ___ Cap and ___ t-shirt size ___M ___L ___XL ___XXL

Check here if you do not wish to receive any merchandise _____