

Cypress Creek and Sulphur River Basin Stakeholder Meeting

April 26, 2023

The joint Cypress Creek and Sulphur River Basin Stakeholder Meeting was held in the Community Room on the Northeast Texas Community College campus. The meeting began at 9 AM and concluded at 12:15 PM. Three virtual and five in-person presentations were given to the Stakeholders. There were 16 in-person and 24 virtual attendees.

Western Chicken Turtle (WCT) Distribution Modeling / Max Ent Model:

Danielle DeChellis University of Houston; Environmental Institute Houston

Historic Occurrences – before 2000; Current Occurrences - after 2000

Historic AUC = (0.796) Land cover, road density and elevations were the highest contributors to model. This may be due to sampling bias because these areas are easier to get to (urban areas)

Current AUC = (0.820) Distance between wetlands, elevation & land cover were highest contributors

Suitable areas for WCT found in several NETX Counties

Laura-Ashley Overdyke & Melissa Althouse wants a copy of WCT presentation.

M. Althouse: Is the study complete & the report is complete?

D.D.: The final report is on the website link at the end of slides.

M. Althouse: Plans to test the reliability of the model?

D.D.: No plans but study could be extended to other counties.

Alligator Snapping Turtle (AST) – Anthropogenic disturbances effects on AST

Kelly Garcia University of Houston; Environmental Institute Houston

Results may be applicable to designating “critical habitat” required reporting & regulations hook & trap, by catch, poaching, illegal harvest & climate change.

6 sites/ 1 occupied in Cypress & Sulphur – Overall study area positive metal detections (out of 23 individuals)

3 distinct metapopulations in East TX

Laura-Ashley Overdyke: Presentation request

L-A Overdyke: Does Cypress appear to have an abnormal amount of derelict fishing gear?

K.G.: Analysis categorized as high but there is a lot of fishing here & a lot of high flow & flooding that gets the gear tangled up in the trees.

L-A Overdyke: Is there an overlap for habitat for WCT & AST?

K.G.: Small scale – No / Large scale – unknown. Active derelict lines were merged together for analysis.

Cypress Creek and Sulphur River Basin Stakeholder Meeting

April 26, 2023

Lake Ralph Hall Update:

Jason Pierce Upper Trinity Regional Water District

UTRWD is considering developing a carbon credit bank on the western edge of the reservoir. Installing 32-mile 66" pipeline.

Constructing a raw water balancing reservoir built in conjunction with the water treatment plant.

M. Ramin: Is this a USACE lake? Will development be allowed around the reservoir?

J.P.: Generally, counties don't have zoning capabilities.

Sandy Cash, UTRWD and NTMWD requested legislative approval for zoning capabilities in Fannin County to be able to protect both water supplies. Fannin County was granted some cooperative controls to help keep the reservoir water clean, making it easier and less expensive to treat. Zoning allowance specialist between county & NTMWD & UTRWD to control shoreline development. Bois d'Arc Lake has a similar plan.

Presentation Request

Sulphur River Basin Highlights Report

Randy Rushin Water Monitoring Solutions, Inc.

Presented information about impairments throughout the basin. *E. coli* impairment in White Oak Creek – feral hogs are likely a major contributor. BST study in Cypress Creek basin showed that feral hogs were the primary contributor of bacteria.

The North Sulphur River was channelized river in the 1920's to dry out the thick woody wetlands. Flow in the N. Sulphur River has been less than 1 cfs approximately one-third of the time over the past 21 years. Fish populations were very diverse during 2022 sampling and as shown in TPWD Bio-Blitz data.

S. Cash – flushing nature of river & tributaries may be causing the diverse fish scores that we've recently seen. Flushing out upper reaches & fish stay in deeper pools when river goes down.

W. Owen - How often are annual efforts tied to triennial review & 303D List?

P. Bohannon - EPA revisions are piecemeal, 303d – every 2 years, CMM – Annual

Cypress Creek and Sulphur River Basin Stakeholder Meeting

April 26, 2023

TPWD Cypress Creek and Sulphur River Bio-Blitz Results, 2019 - 2020

Adam Whisenant Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, River Studies

Sampling was conducted within reaches of the Red River, Sulphur River, and Cypress Creek basins in 2019 and 2020. Sampling included state wildlife grants with UT-Tyler on the Kisatchie Painted Crayfish research.

TPWD State Wildlife Grant provided to SFASU for sampling for Species of Greatest Conservation Need fish species in the Cypress Creek basin.

Also working in coordination with The Nature Conservancy on sustainable rivers studies.

L-A Overdyke: Who initiated this work?

Whisenant & W. Owen: TNC, Caddo Lake Institute, & NETMWD

Invasive Aquatic Species

Tim Bister Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, Inland Fisheries - Marshall

Sulphur:

Texas Tech & Auburn research on the invasive Bighead Carp & native fish species work.

Chapman: Alligator Weed, Hydrilla – surveyed twice per year – very limited invasive vegetation.

Wright Patman: Alligator Weed, Hydrilla trace water hyacinth – not seen since 2015, 2012 - Giant Salvinia infestation eliminated.

Cypress:

Cypress Springs – trace Alligator Weed, no Hydrilla, FCWD native plant nursery.

Bob Sandlin – Hydrilla last treated in 2016, water hyacinth – small amount treated each year, Alligator Weed – Flea Beetle treatment.

Welsh: Hydrilla – the hot water suppresses growth Alligator Weed – Flea Beetle treatment.

Gilmer: Hydrilla stable, trace of Alligator Weed, Giant Salvinia repeated occurrences – very low coverage & treated.

Ellison Creek: Giant Salvinia established and treated with herbicides; Alligator Weed coverage is stable; Hydrilla has caused some issues for homeowners – they treated about 17 acres.

Pines: Hydrilla variable; Alligator Weed coverage is low, Giant Salvinia has been treated with herbicides.

Caddo: Giant Salvinia was down in 2021 probably due to the winter and back up to 3000 acres in 2022. TPWD and CBA continue releasing Giant Salvinia Weevils. Over time Giant Salvinia Weevils may build up cold tolerance & do more suppression than herbicide treatment. Crested Floating Heart expanding 655 acres in 2022. Weevils have been released for 10 years. Spring sampling will be used to determine their overwintering survival and hoping to increase their cold tolerance.

All presentations will be posted to the NETMWD website.

Cypress Creek and Sulphur River Basin Stakeholder Meeting

April 26, 2023

Total Phosphorus Load Agreement

Robert Speight Northeast Texas Municipal Water District

The TMDL in LOP determined that the low DO issues were due to excess Phosphorus. The Total Phosphorus Load Agreement includes 7 entities and 8 WWTPs – agreed to reduce Phosphorus discharge by 56%. Pilgrim’s Pride WWTP agreed to take on the reduction and spent millions upgrading their plant in 2015. All the other entities have a phosphorus limit, too. The agreement expires this year.

OSSF Program – 2020 increase in permit requests.

Adam Whisenant: Are permits replacing old systems or are they new construction?

R. Speight: mostly new construction and mostly in Upshur County.

Cypress Creek Basin Highlights Report

Randy Rushin Water Monitoring Solutions, Inc.

Presented information about impairments throughout the basin. Described the nutrient impairment study on Lake Cypress Springs and similar study on Lake O’ the Pines.

Discussed using host fish species to prioritize streams for Louisiana Pigtoe sampling, and streams currently being studied for possible future mussels work.

T. Bister: How do you identify the encysted mussel species on the fish gills?

Adam Whisenant: possibly by growing out the encysted larvae in the lab?

R. Rushin: we based our studies on information in literature including publications from UT Tyler.

Cypress Creek and Sulphur River Basin Stakeholder Meeting

April 26, 2023

IN-PERSON ATTENDEES:

Robert Speight	Northeast Texas Municipal Water District
Wayne Owen	Northeast Texas Municipal Water District
Robyn Goodson	Northeast Texas Municipal Water District
Jimmy Cox	Northeast Texas Municipal Water District
Nancy Rose	Sulphur River Basin Authority
Jenna Wadman	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
Pat Bohannon	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
Adam Whisenant	Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
Tim Bister	Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
Sandy Cash	Upper Trinity Regional Water District
Dan Keese	US Department of Agriculture, NRCS
CeJay Petersen	US Geological Survey – Fort Worth
Randy Rushin	Water Monitoring Solutions, Inc.
Wendy Rushin	Water Monitoring Solutions, Inc.
Angela Kilpatrick	Water Monitoring Solutions, Inc.
Mike Rambin	Franklin County Water District board candidate

VIRTUAL ATTENDEES:

Reeves Hayter	Sulphur River Basin Authority	rhayter@srbatx.org
Leah Taylor	Tarleton State University	ltaylor@tarleton.edu
Missy Singleton	US Fish & Wildlife	melissa_singleton@fws.gov
Luke Pearson	US Fish & Wildlife	Luke_Pearson@fws.gov
Melissa Althouse	US Fish & Wildlife	melissa_althouse@fws.gov
Scott Mills	Luminant	scott.mills@luminant.com
Saundra Wexler	Northeast Texas Municipal Water District	Slwexler74@gmail.com
Selina Tabor	City of Longview	stabor@longviewtexas.gov
Kevin Chumbley	City of Longview	kchumbley@longviewtexas.gov
Jeremiah Poling	Angelina Neches River Authority	jpoling@anra.org
Jerry Allen	North Texas Municipal Water District	jallen@ntmwd.com
Sarah Burns	North Texas Municipal Water District	sburns@ntmwd.com
Veronica Baty	North Texas Municipal Water District	vbaty@ntmwd.com
Kristen Suprobo	North Texas Municipal Water District	ksuprobo@ntmwd.com
Chris Farrell	Texas Parks & Wildlife Department	Christopher.farrell@tpwd.texas.gov
Lauren Pulliam	TCEQ	lauren.pulliam@tceq.texas.gov
Jason Pierce	Upper Trinity Regional Water District	Jpierce@utrwd.com
Danielle DeChillis	UHCL Environmental Institute Houston	Dechellis@uchl.edu
Kelly Garcia	UHCL Environmental Institute Houston	kellyleannegarcia@gmail.com
Paul Prange	Arkansas-Texas Council of Governments	pprange@atcog.org
Daren Horton		caddodaren@gmail.com
Susan Sedberry		wssedberry@sbcglobal.net
Jan Cook		jan.pappa@yahoo.com
Trish Jones		Trishjones15@gmail.com

Cypress Creek and Sulphur River Basin Stakeholder Meeting

April 26, 2023

NETMWD AND SULPHUR RIVER BASIN STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

CLEAN RIVERS PROGRAM FOR STAKEHOLDERS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 2023 @ 9:00 A.M.

NORTHEAST TEXAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

COMMUNITY ROOM

2886 FM 1735 CHAPEL HILL ROAD

MT. PLEASANT, TEXAS 75455

AGENDA

1. Call to order and Welcome
2. UHCL/EIH WCT Turtle Survey Updates Danielle DeChellis
3. UHCL/EIH AST Turtle Survey Updates Kelly Garcia
4. UTRWD Lake Ralph Hall Updates Jason Pierce
5. SRBA Basin Highlights Report Randy Rushin
6. TPWD Rivers Studies Cypress & Sulphur Bio Blitz Adam Whisenant
7. TPWD Aquatic Invasives Update Tim Bister
8. NETMWD Updates on TPLA & OSSF Robert Speight
9. NETMWD Basin Highlights Report Randy Rushin
10. Public Comments of Questions & Answers
11. Adjournment

VIRTUAL MEETING OPTION – ADVANCED REGISTRATION REQUIRED:

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlkcemhpj8uGtIXTVoCRUdQHp1OA_3YqtTj