

Mason County News

Opportunity Knocks To Protect the South Llano River

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The South Llano River is a true gem of the Texas Hill Country. Its clear waters are legendary among outdoor enthusiasts and nature lovers alike. Its spring-fed flows provide critical water supplies to landowners and local communities. It provides most of the flow to the Llano River. With such an important resource in our own backyards, it is time to start thinking about how to best preserve and protect the river for the future.

Water conflicts arising from increased urban development are a quick-spreading trend in rural communities across the nation. Central Texas is no exception. With the growing competition for water, the South Llano River needs a united voice to relay local concerns to decision makers in order to ensure its protection.

A recently released report, "Land of the Living Waters," identified potential threats to the South Llano River, its associated springs, and the underlying aquifer that provides the water necessary to keep everything flowing. Much like other rural parts of Texas, looming concerns identified include the potential of increased groundwater pumping and the pressures that arise from increased land development in the area. Other issues identified include the lack of hydrologic data, the need for additional land stewardship, and - you guessed it - the lack of a local voice in water decisions.

The good news is that it's not too late to ensure that the flows of the South Llano River and its springs remain healthy into the future. On Saturday, November 15, a workshop will be held at Texas Tech-Llano River Field Station in Junction. This workshop will provide an ideal opportunity for interested persons and organizations to learn more about the potential issues identified in the report, as well as voice their own concerns, not only for the South Llano River, but for all parts of the Llano River. The formation of a regional organization to address these issues and concerns will also be discussed.

The workshop will run from 9 to 2:30 and lunch will be provided. The workshop is free, but participants are asked to pre-register at: www.texaswatermatters.org/southllanoriver.htm or by calling (512) 691-3435.

The workshop is sponsored by Environmental Defense Fund, and co-sponsored by Kimble County Groundwater Conservation District, Western Edwards Plateau Texas Master Naturalist, Texas Wildlife Association, and Texas AgriLife Extension Service.

It's never too early to begin protecting such a precious resource. Come lend your voice to this important effort.

Tyson Broad authored the report "Land of Living Waters," is a Llano resident, and works on the South Llano River Project. This effort is sponsored by Environmental Defense Fund, a non-profit advocacy organization working to ensure natural water resources remain viable into the future.

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