

# THE TEXAS WATER SOURCE

UPDATING ANDERSON, FREESTONE, HENDERSON, HOUSTON, & LEON COUNTY FOREST LANDOWNERS ON FORESTRY AND WATER ISSUES

## The “How-to’s” of Protecting Soil and Water

Forestry Best Management Practices (BMPs) are guidelines that involve the application of practices that effectively prevent or minimize soil erosion and protect water quality. Water that flows through our forests eventually makes it to the water supply we use every day.

BMPs can include such measures as leaving a buffer zone of trees next to a stream, installing a culvert to cross a stream, or planting grass on forest roads to prevent erosion.


In Texas, these practices are voluntary, except for some forest road BMPs that must be implemented in federally regulated wetlands. Voluntary implementation of these practices not only protects water and soil, but also helps to keep these practices from becoming mandatory in our state.

A guidebook is available to aid landowners, loggers, and other forestry professionals in effectively protecting water and soil before, during, and after forestry operations. *Texas Forestry Best Management Practices* covers all types of forestry practices, giving detailed specifications for the methods de-

scribed. It also contains guidelines for working in forest wetlands and includes a glossary of forestry terms and sources of more information and assistance.

Also, there is now a pictorial directory of BMPs, developed by the Texas A&M Forest Service’s Water Resources Program. This directory defines common BMP-related terms, displays a picture to illustrate the practice, lists its functions, and provides a link to the BMP guidebook section that gives even more details on the practice.

**Culverts – Stream Crossing**



A conduit or pipe through which surface water can flow under roads that cross streams

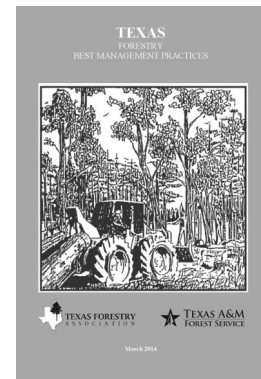
- Ideal for permanent crossings on streams with high banks
- Must be sized properly to minimize blowouts
- Allows water flow and fish passage

[Click to learn more about "Culverts as Stream Crossings"](#)

Go to the website listed in the sidebar and click on “Publications.” There you’ll find a copy of the Texas Forestry BMP Guidelines and a the BMP Pictorial Directory.

For more information:

- <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/water>



## Local Forest Landowner Associations

Forest landowner associations help private forest landowners keep in touch with what is going on in the forest industry and what help is available to them. For information on how to join and upcoming meetings, contact your TFS Forester (see back page of this newsletter).

Those with property in **Houston County** have the *Houston County Forest Landowners Association*.

**Anderson, Freestone, Henderson, and Leon County** landowners can join the *Trinity/Neches Forest Landowners Association* and meet with Cherokee County landowners.

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*Organization Spotlight***Trinity Waters****For more information:**

- <http://trinitywaters.org>
- <http://trinitybasin.tamu.edu>

Trinity Waters is a landowner conservation organization promoting land stewardship and water conservation in rural and urban areas of the Trinity River Basin.

In 2000, a 150,000 acre wildlife cooperative of about 35 landowners was formed in Anderson and Freestone Counties - the **Mid Trinity Basin Conservation Cooperative**. These landowners were interested in improving their properties for wildlife by working with local TPWD biologists for technical assistance through written wildlife management plans. Plans specified habitat management tasks, primarily for white-tailed deer and waterfowl.

By 2005, several landowners decided to form a non-profit organization known as the **Trinity Basin Conservation Foundation (TBCF)**. The purpose of the foundation was to improve the quality of life, economic sustainability, and ecological integrity of areas associated with the Trinity River Basin through a broad-based coalition of local communities and municipalities, non-governmental organizations, and stewards of private and public lands, particularly local wildlife management cooperatives/associations. This coalition expanded the stakeholder base to include several natural resource organizations and agencies.

Even though local representatives of the Texas Wildlife Association (TWA) were involved from the inception of the Trinity initiative, the executive board of TWA voted formally in 2007 to join as a full partner with the TBCF, thus integrating the missions, activities, and operations of the two organizations.

In September 2006, Governor Rick Perry announced the **Trinity River Basin Environmental Restoration Initiative** to help clean up the Trinity River. Governor Perry asked Texas A&M University to lead the effort through the Institute for Renewable Natural Resources (IRNR) and the Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI). The TBCF helped with the project, along with private landowner volunteers. Funds raised from grants and other contributions provided for hydrology studies, wetland restoration, reforestation, and wildlife habitat conservation efforts, along with a comprehensive water flow model with the Army Corps of Engineers.

In 2011, the Trinity Basin Conservation Foundation was renamed **Trinity Waters**, and educational programming began, as well as the launch of their website. This website has a wealth of information. For example, the "Landowner Library" provides links to information on water, land management, economics, and education.

**Trinity River Basin Mapping System****For more information:**

- <http://trims.tamu.edu>

TRIMS, or Trinity River Information Management System, is an online mapping tool for supporting land conservation and habitat restoration decisions in the Trinity River Basin.

TRIMS provides access to data addressing water quality, hydrology, floodplain management, wetland restoration, bottomland hardwood establishment, and wildlife habitat management in the Trinity River watershed.

Mapping tools are available for drawing property boundaries or points of interest; measuring distances and acreages; and saving and printing maps. Users can see different views of their property - roads, topography, and aerial views.

This is a user-friendly aid for property management planning and becoming more familiar with your property and the landscape around it.

## Trinity River Land and Water Summit

Land stewardship has a tremendous impact on the quality and quantity of water that reaches the urban areas as rural lands cover 75% of the Trinity River basin. Land stewardship practices have greater benefits for landowners directly as they result in improved agricultural productivity and wildlife habitat.

On October 2, 2013, Trinity Waters co-hosted the Trinity River Land and Water Summit with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Athens, TX. The importance of the Trinity River was discussed as it supplies water to 45% of Texans, particularly in the Dallas/Fort Worth and Houston metro areas.

One of the topics discussed was where to prioritize future watershed planning in the middle Trinity River basin. The focus was on five sub-watersheds in the middle Trinity River basin, two of which are listed as impaired by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

Catfish Creek in Henderson and Anderson Counties has been on the 303

(d) list (considered impaired) since 2006 for low levels of dissolved oxygen and 2010 for high bacteria levels.

Upper Keechi Creek in Freestone and Leon counties has been on the 303(d) list since 2010 for low levels of dissolved oxygen.

One way to address these waterbodies is to use Recreational Use Attainability Analysis (RUAA) and Use Attainability Analysis (UAA), which are scientific assessments of the creeks that can determine the appropriate water quality standards for each creek and perhaps take these creeks off the 303(d) list. Meetings are being scheduled to further discuss these opportunities.

Attendees at this summit agreed it is important to continue educating and partnering with other groups that are dedicated to maintaining the lands and water supplies in the Trinity River basin for years to come.

You can download a pdf of some of the PowerPoint presentations from this conference by going to the first website page listed in the sidebar.

For more information:

- <http://trinitywaters.org/about-us/trinity-river-land-and-water-summit>
- <http://water.epa.gov/lawsregs/lawguidance/cwa/tmdl/overview.cfm>

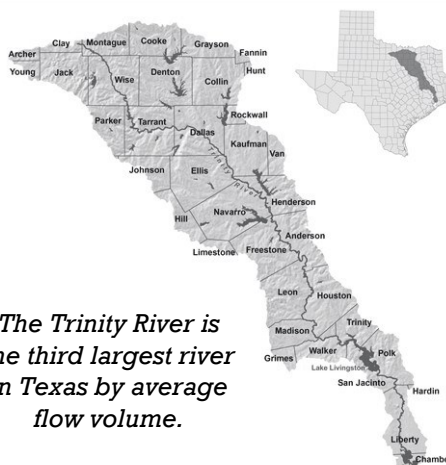
*Did you know...*

The Trinity River Basin is the most populated river basin in Texas with nearly 8 million people.

## The Trinity River Basin

The Trinity Basin is the largest river basin whose water-shed area is entirely within the State of Texas. The basin's namesake river was named La Santísima Trinidad, "the Most Holy Trinity," by early Spanish explorers.

From the confluence of its Elm and West Forks near Dallas, the Trinity River flows to Trinity Bay, which drains to the Gulf of Mexico. Some of the smaller streams within the basin include Cedar, Chambers, and Richland creeks. Houston County Lake, Fairfield Lake, Richland-Chambers Dam and Reservoir, and Cedar Creek Reservoir are within this basin.



*The Trinity River is the third largest river in Texas by average flow volume.*

For more information:

- [http://www.twdb.state.tx.us/surfacewater/rivers/river\\_basins/trinity/index.asp](http://www.twdb.state.tx.us/surfacewater/rivers/river_basins/trinity/index.asp)

Updating Anderson, Freestone, Henderson, Houston, & Leon  
County Forest Landowners on Forestry and Water Issues

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## Welcome Landowners!

Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS) is the state forestry agency and works closely with private landowners and others in a wide variety of disciplines associated with forests and related natural resources. The Water Resources Program deals with water issues as they relate to forests and forestry practices.

Forestry Best Management Practices (BMPs) are common-sense practices that help reduce soil erosion and protect water quality. BMPs can include measures such as leaving a buffer zone of trees next to a stream, installing a culvert to cross a stream, or establishing grass on forest roads to prevent erosion.

This newsletter is the first in a series of four to be published over the next few months for landowners owning forested property in the Middle Trinity watershed.

You can access past editions of *The Texas Water Source* on the TFS website. Go to <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/water>, click on Publications, and look under Newsletters. There you'll find articles on water-related issues, agencies, organizations, and programs, as well as information that can help you in the management of your forestland. Check out the TFS Water Resources Blog as well - <http://tfswater.blogspot.com>.

