



Conservation Insider

July 2020

Hello CCCA friends and volunteers! We have missed you during this time of COVID19 and hope you are doing well. As it is for you, this is a new experience for our organization, and we have no idea if this situation will be over in months or much longer.

We have been working to find a way to stay connected and keep you informed. With many hours donated by a great team of volunteers we are happy to be back in touch with a new monthly email as one small part of the plan. Our new **CONSERVATION INSIDER** email will be a continuing work in progress, and our hope is you will find it interesting and informative. At times we will refer you to new information on the CCCA website, which has grown substantially. If you haven't visited it recently, please do, and browse the sections and drop-down tabs. You will see a new website section titled **MONTHLY SPOTLIGHT**. There we will post a new topic each month to bring awareness to a subject we feel is important and which will include a way for you to join in the conversation and participate virtually. Think of it as our virtual monthly meeting! **We hope you will enjoy it.**

NEWS AROUND THE COUNTY

The CCCA Board has been having monthly Zoom meetings to continue the work of conservation in our county during Covid19. Here's what's going on:

CCCA recently created the **COMAL LAND CONSERVATION FUND** to provide funds to support projects designed to preserve open space in Comal County. Among the projects eligible for CLCF funding are establishing conservation easements on private or public land and providing matching funds for conservation grants or loans designed to protect water resources or habitat or to improve a property's conservation value. Read more on the CCCA website and please consider contributing to this very worthwhile fund.
<https://www.comalconservation.org>

Three new **PARTNERS** joined CCCA this month. Representing the important cultural heritage of Comal County, the historical source waters of the Comal River, and the fun, inviting network of hiking and biking trails in our county, our three new Partners are:

- **The Museum of Texas Handmade Furniture and the Heritage Society of New Braunfels**
- **The Headwaters at the Comal**
- **The Comal Trails Alliance**

We invite you to get to know them. Learn about the good work they are doing and how their efforts help contribute to the quality of life and protection of natural resources in our county. Read more about them on our website. <https://www.comalconservation.org/partners.html>

CCCA has joined the **NEW BRAUNFELS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**, and our two representatives are now part of the Chamber's Natural Resources Committee and Government Affairs Committee. The Natural Resources Committee provides information and resources to Chamber members in the areas of water resources, air quality, land conservation, natural resource protection and other environmental topics. Hopefully, our CCCA representatives can help focus the committee's attention on specific resource protection needs during this time of rapid growth and make them aware of opportunities for preservation.

MONTHLY SPOTLIGHT ON TRAILS

Our **CCCA SPOTLIGHT** is on trails this month! You'll want to check it out and learn about all the trails in Comal County, the economic benefits trails bring to a community, Apps you can download to located trails, and a place for you to share your favorite trail story. We've also designed a short questionnaire you can answer, sharing your opinion about trails in our county.

Go to: <https://www.comalconservation.org/monthly-spotlight.html>

If you haven't had a chance to read **Frank Dietz's delightful columns** that appear monthly in the *Herald Zeitung* here is his latest article, which just happens to be about trails:

TRY A TRAIL, OR TWO OR THREE.....!

By Frank Dietz July 2020

Some friends and colleagues have mentioned their frustration in seeking away from home options while remaining distanced and quarantined in this "selah season." They've mentioned their appreciation for my/our circumstances living as we do with wild and pasture life as our primary neighbors. My suggestions have included, "why not try a trail suited for your interest, ability and purposes!"

We in New Braunfels and Comal County are blessed with local trail options as well as a broader Hill Country context which multiplies the options exponentially both for hiking and biking. There are some excellent resources to pursue. Most local would be the Comal Trails Alliance (comaltrails.org). They identify some nearby options and invite participation in trail development and maintenance as well. Find your comfort zone and head on out!

When I inquired of a small select group of family, friends and colleagues about favorites all of the listings with Comal Trails were on the list. In addition, I was pointed to the rich offerings identified on the All Trails apps for sophisticated phones. Note the options carry with them "degrees of challenge."

Nothing is better food for the soul and one's mental health than a stroll under the canopy of a wooded area or alongside a fascinating creek bed. With "our Canyon Lake" so much more begins to open wide. Be sure to prepare for any stroll with a good walking stick and sufficient hydration, especially in our summer months. Use hardy shoes and take your best sunscreen and repellents as well.

Read the whole column on the CCCA website: <https://www.comalconservation.org/hiking-trails.html>

AND you may read Frank's previous columns as well as those written by Ernie Wittwer on our website: <https://www.comalconservation.org/hz-monthly-columns.html>

NEWS COMING SOON TO YOUR INBOX

-- We have invited some highly qualified professionals to join our new **CCCA Advisory Board**. Details to come soon.

-- A new group, **Comal County Friends of the Night Sky**, has been created to inform residents about the importance of keeping Comal County's night sky dark. Helping this new group is CCCA board member and Hill Country Alliance staff member Cliff Kaplan, who specializes in the Night Sky Program.

-- A new, exciting project has been initiated in Bexar and Comal Counties through the **Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG.) The Sentinel Landscape Initiative for Camp Bullis** is in the very early stages.

Stay safe, stay healthy, enjoy nature! See you next month.

Elizabeth Bowerman

President

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