

From: Comal County Conservation Alliance <info@comalconservation.org>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 4:23 PM
To: Roxanna Deane
Subject: CCCA January 2024 Conservation Insider



Conservation Insider

January 2024

Hello, CCCA Friends, Partners, and Volunteers,

What an incredible start to the New Year! Although temperatures across Comal County are currently freezing, we're heating up here at Comal County Conservation Alliance. Our new board convened for the first time just last week and I want to thank our new board members: Kaitie, Carol, Matthew, and Marisa, for answering the call to support our efforts.

As we look toward the future, framed by a new year, our group sees big changes on the horizon for the scope, scale, and style of our work. Make no mistake, we will continue to host compelling community programs, cultivate an authentic and collaborative relationship with local policymakers, and develop regional partnerships that will bolster conservation efforts. However, we are entering a period of transition and growth. New ideas will be tested. Some will work without a hitch, and some will need to be tweaked.

During this period of growth, I want to encourage you to remain steadfast in your efforts to support conservation here at home. **Volunteer** your time too, **Donate** in support of, **Speak Up** on behalf of, and **Explore** the incredible natural systems that define our communities. The Hill Country needs your protection. Our work is aimed at bringing everyone together to safeguard our land, water, and wildlife, so our home can remain beautiful and healthy for generations to come. Thank you for standing with us.

Ryan K Spencer

Executive Director
Comal County Conservation Alliance



CCCA NEWS

Message from Roxanna Deane, President

Hello CCCA Friends,

I would like to introduce myself. I am Roxanna Deane, newly elected President of the Comal County Conservation Alliance. I lived in the Washington D. C. Metropolitan Area and worked at the main D. C. Public Library for 36 years. During that time, I confess that I never really thought about where my water was coming from or where my trash was going. I retired in 2004 and moved to Canyon Lake. Retirement didn't last long as I began working part-time at the Tye Preston Memorial Library to help with the capital campaign to build a new library. I became the director in 2008 and retired for good in 2020. One of the first things I did when I moved to Texas was to join the League of Women Voters Comal Area. I wanted to learn how the Texas government worked and how unincorporated areas of counties were managed. I discovered that the League is not just about voting but takes positions on issues. I met people who cared about Comal County and the environment. LWVCA members wrote and adopted a Facts and Issues statement and a position on "Land Use Planning in Comal County". In 2017 the League, Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance, and the Hill County Alliance organized the "Planning for Growth in Comal County" conference. Ultimately this led to the formation of CCCA in 2018. I joined the Board of CCCA in 2022 as Co-chair for Government Affairs.



CCCA Board and Staff, January 2024

2024 marks an important milestone for CCCA. All the original Board members have now rotated off the Board, having served the maximum of 6 continuous years allowed by the bylaws. It is not possible to overestimate the contribution these and all former Board members made to setting deep roots in Comal County for CCCA. We are forever in their debt. In 2024 there is the first new president in six years; the Executive Director will start his first full year; and five new people are joining the Board. The mission to preserve land, water, and wildlife in Comal County won't change. You can still expect to see a monthly newsletter, bi-monthly public programs, and visits with volunteers at outreach tables at events across the County. At the same time, we will be branching out, giving new ideas a try. We remain committed to working respectfully with governmental bodies, other non-profits, landowners, and concerned citizens to find common ground and solutions for the environmental challenges facing Comal County.



CCCA Welcomes New Board Members



Comal Conservation New Board Members January 2024

Introducing the newest board members of Comal County Conservation Alliance – Carol Wheeler (Nopa Leadership), Kaitie Moore Underwood (Blue Collar Commercial Group), Marisa Bruno (Hill Country Alliance) & Matthew Hoyt (Edwards Aquifer Authority & Corner Tubes) – a passionate group of individuals dedicated to preserving and conserving the natural beauty of Comal County. Bursting with enthusiasm, these 4 new members bring fresh perspectives and innovative ideas to the board table. Join us in welcoming these committed individuals as they work to help ensure that the beauty and richness of our environment are protected for generations to come.

Stay tuned for a special spotlight on each of our 14 Board Members in upcoming newsletters!



Looking for a way to help protect Comal's rivers and springs?

Preserving Comal County's natural beauty and rural character is a job for the whole community. Won't you join the effort? CCCA is looking for volunteers to help advance the conservation work in Comal County by helping CCCA in one of the following areas:

-
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- Graphic Designer
- Facebook Manager
- Website Assistant

Interested candidates should submit their contact information and interests here:
[Become a Volunteer](#)

OR

Support CCCA's effort to the effort to preserve land, water, and wildlife in Comal County by making donation today!

Give Now



SAVE THE DATE

January Community Program

WHAT: Robin Gary, **NBU One Water Coordinator** will join CCCA to talk about "One Water in Comal County"

One Water principles consider all water valuable - stormwater, commercial, industrial, wastewater, and drinking water; finding new uses for existing water, including water reuse, all designed to maximize water resources.

WHEN: Tuesday, March 12, 6:00 - 7:30 PM

WHERE: McKenna Events Center, 801 W. San Antonio Street, New Braunfels, TX 78130.



CCCA H-Z JANUARY COLUMN

"SCREECHING: CLEARCUTTING OFFENDS!"

by Frank Dietz, for the H-Z January 6, 2024

In the weeks surrounding Thanksgiving 2023, along River Road you could hear folks moaning and groaning as they observed the scraping of the surface down into limestone bedrock. Defensively someone said, "they're developing the future!" Just down from Loop 337 and before the bend to the river by River Road Ice House, the "earth mischief" was underway. A handful of trees were left.

Are we in New Braunfels and Comal County so desperate for dense population influx that no care or oversight is provided when scouring of the countryside is intended?

For the radically and freshly exposed rock of the Guadalupe watershed with this devastating approach one could best shed tears of regret and indignation.

Just imagine all the exposed acres of limestone with small mounds of the modest topsoil of former days. Will the housing placement be landscaped with astroturf or its product cousin to feign outdoor grasses?

If not, the attempts at landscaping, even xeriscaping will require water in considerable measure to nudge any live blades or plantings to attempt establishing. That's to say nothing of the kind of runoff from impervious cover, rooftops and irrigation "systems" which the efforts will require. Alas, where are the planning overseers, policy providers, permitters and state legislative boundary builders with reasonable protections? The earth wounds and defacing shriek and shout that something is wrong and terribly incongruous with beloved River Road. Will there be a way to make amends? Might those engaged in the project sit down for pursuit of best practices ongoing with some of our informed local naturalists? Imagine what the deer that once grazed or the birds that built nests must sense about utter abandonment? Yikes!

In my earliest years as a youngster our family spent a day or two after Thanksgiving on the Mississippi coast where our grandparents had a small farmstead and some wooded acres alongside. We located a small Christmas tree to take with us. Along with the tree, we watched our parents carefully prune some wild yaupon and small branches of holly offered by a grand tree at property edge. We even put some extra pine sprigs that needed clearing for sharing with friends and neighbors before tying down the trailer. It was Easter break when we went back and found what little was left of our grand holly after some greedy vendors took the branches and left a very bare trunk. Taking to the extreme from that first sight on has remained a deep wound. I could feel that offense (the local sheriff's comment when taking a photo of the savaged holly tree) once again as I beheld the "taking" and scraping on beloved River Road! In such circumstances, there's no turning back once the deed is done. Perhaps some course corrections might ensue. I found that summer in Mississippi some little sprouting holly growths. I captured one carefully and that one grows in the safer section of the property to this day but, alas, never so grand. I potted two others that I gave to playmates and hopefully they grow to this day decades later as well.

Locally there are folks concerned about how much green is vanishing in our pristine jewel of Comal County. The whole of the beloved Texas Hill Country grieves when grievous disregard for our land, water and wildlife ensues. Check out the endeavors at comalconservation.org or better yet, join us in person 12 March at the McKenna Center for our next community program.



IN OTHER NEWS

Make a difference with "regard to stormwater, water, and watershed issues"

City of New Braunfels has two open positions on the Watershed Advisory Committee. The window for applications for this committee and many others is from February 1st to March 31st. You can find the application and the open appointments at the link below.

Openings: [NB Boards and Commissions](#)

Participate in the survey for the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) Statewide Active Transportation Plan.

Your involvement is crucial in shaping the future of active transportation in Texas until 2050. This plan aims to identify and implement strategic priorities and policies for human-powered, non-motorized transportation, including bicycling, walking, rolling, and electric-powered micro-mobility options. Collaborating with TxDOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, metropolitan planning organizations, stakeholders, and the public, this plan seeks your input to create a vision for increased and safer active transportation activities. By clicking the link, you can learn more about the plan, discover how to get involved and sign up for updates on the engagement platform. Your participation matters in planning a sustainable and accessible active transportation future for Texas.

TxDOT Survey: [Statewide Active Transportation Plan](#)

"Building for Tomorrow: The Imperative of Rainwater Harvesting and Water Reuse in Businesses."

By: Kaitie Moore Underwood | REALTOR®, Blue Collar Commercial Group

Water, the elixir of life, has long been a precious resource. As businesses navigate an era where sustainability is no longer a choice but a responsibility, integrating rainwater harvesting and water reuse systems emerges as a crucial step towards a more resilient and environmentally conscious future.

The Water Challenge: A Global Perspective

Water scarcity is not a distant woe confined to arid regions; it's a global concern. The World Wildlife Fund estimates that by 2025, two-thirds of the world's population could be living under "water-stressed" conditions. Businesses, being significant consumers of water, play a pivotal role in addressing this challenge. Adopting sustainable water practices isn't just a moral imperative; it's a strategic necessity.

The Power of Rainwater Harvesting

Rainwater harvesting is a centuries-old practice that is experiencing a renaissance in modern sustainable building strategies. Instead of letting rainwater run off surfaces and become stormwater, businesses can capture and store it for future use.

[Read more](#)

Visit our website for more news you can use!


Working to preserve land, water, and wildlife in Comal County!

Comal County Conservation Alliance

<https://www.comalconservation.org/>

info@comalconservation.org

Thank you for being a FRIEND OF CCCA!

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