



Conservation Insider

May 2023

Hello, CCCA Friends, Partners, and Volunteers,

PRAY FOR RAIN. During the drought of 2011 the Upper Guadalupe River got below 8 cubic feet per second in discharge, during that time all of the campsites at Guadalupe River State Park were closed and day use was limited. At that point in my life, I was an intern who lived onsite in a double wide trailer that had been donated to the park by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and every drop of water that I consumed came directly from the river.

After the internship ended, I remember driving back to San Marcos via 281 and noticing every church with a marquee sign on my route asking for this common prayer and it struck me just how important our natural systems are. Our communities depend on a network of interweaving natural systems that provide us with the water we drink, the air we breathe, and so much more. As we enter the beginning phases of what could be a dry summer, I encourage all of you to consider our relationship with these natural systems and how we can both as individuals and as communities serve as stewards of these incredible natural resources.

Keeping with this theme our community program this month is focused squarely on the natural systems that make Comal County so unique. On May 16, 2023, Dr. Robert Mace

will present a program titled, "The Relationship Between Land and Water." As a long time, friend and personal mentor of mine I can assure you that his presentation will be illuminating and informative. As he helps us understand how conserved working lands protect our groundwater and in turn protect the base flows of our Hill Country Rivers. I hope you can join us. The presentation will start at 6:00pm and will be hosted at the McKenna Center.

Less than two months ago I started working for the Comal County Conservation Alliance. During this short period of time, I have had the opportunity to meet with hundreds of people across Comal County. A consistent theme began to emerge. Our neighbors care deeply about the unique natural resources that make our county so unique! They want to see them protected and they want to support our efforts. I also saw firsthand the enthusiasm and the energy that our staff, our board, and our volunteers take with them wherever they go. Your joy for the work is spreading. Working together we will solve some of the most complex environmental issues facing our communities. Thank you for all of your efforts to preserve land, water, and wildlife in Comal County. It is deeply appreciated.

Ryan K Spencer
Executive Director
Comal County Conservation Alliance

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## CCCA News

### Volunteers Are The Lifeblood Of CCCA

We want to welcome on board Carol Wheeler and Kelly Smith. Carol is a local business owner (NopaLeadership) and has volunteered to be the Community Programs Coordinator. Kelly's interest and work has been in landscape and regenerative design, and she has volunteered to be our Social Media Manager. A big welcome and thank you to them both!

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SAVE THE DATE

CCCA Community Program

WHAT: Presentation on "The Relationship Between Land and Water" with guest speaker Dr. Robert Mace, Executive Director and Chief Water Policy Officer of The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment. Learn how increased growth, land development,

and climate variability create challenges for our water supplies, requiring creative solutions to protect land and water for the future. This presentation will discuss what's happening, what's expected to happen, and what we can do in the future.

WHEN: Tuesday, May 16, 6:00-7:30 PM

WHERE: McKenna Events Center, [801 W. San Antonio Street, New Braunfels, TX 78130](#)

**COME ENJOY AN EVENING OF MUSIC AND FUN UNDER THE STARS -
BENEFITING CCCA AND THE COMAL COUNTY FRIENDS OF THE NIGHT SKY!**

LAND & Sky CELEBRATION



MAY 20TH @ 5080 PURGATORY RD. NEW BRAUNFELS
*Music * Camping * Stargazing*

GATES AT
5:00 PM

~
CLOSES AT
MIDNIGHT



LIVE MUSIC
7-10

~
SONG CIRCLE
STARGAZING
10-12

MUSICAL GUESTS

THE RAMBLEWOODS

& John Whipple
& Friends



DAY TRIPPERS EVENT ONLY \$15/PP
 CAMPING + EVENT \$25/PP

PRESENTED BY

Dat's Spots

FREE PARKING

FOOD TRUCK

BYOB + CAMP CHAIR

(RAIN DATE: 6/17)



Tickets



<https://tinyurl.com/LandAndSky>

21 & UP. NO FIREWORKS.

NO WEAPONS. NO PETS.

Info: landandskycelebration@gmail.com

LIMITED PRIMITIVE &
 DRY CAMPING AVAILABLE
 INFO: 512-757-4242
 PACK IN. PACK OUT.

LAND & SKY CELEBRATION

Music, Camping, & Stargazing

WHEN: Saturday May 20, 5:00 PM - Midnight

WHERE: 5080 Purgatory Rd, New Braunfels 78132

COST: Daytrippers: \$15/pp, Campers: \$25/pp

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT: [Land and Sky Celebration \(ticketspice.com\)](https://ticketspice.com)

Get your tickets now for a "stellar" event, benefiting our local, Comal County environmental organizations and to honor our Land and Sky with music, friends and fun!

All profits go to [Comal County Conservation Alliance](#) & [Comal County Friends of the Night Sky](#).

Land Stewardship Ranch Tour

WHAT: Hill Country Conservancy (HCC) and Hill Country Alliance are hosting a free ranch tour for local landowners! Join them in the field to gain first-hand knowledge on land restoration from Rachael Lindsey, HCC's Director of Science and Stewardship. You will visit different sites on a gorgeous property outside of Fredericksburg and cover the following topics:

- Restoring native Texan grasslands
- Managing Ashe juniper (or mountain cedar) for enhanced biodiversity and
- golden-cheeked warbler habitat
- Brush management in hardwood dominated communities

WHEN: May 12th, 8:30-11:30 AM

WHERE: Fredericksburg, Texas

Free Event

For questions, please email Rachel Seets at rachel@hillcountryalliance.org

Citizen Science Summer Camp

WHAT: Join Headwaters At The Comal for a brand-new summer camp for rising 6th-8th graders. During this week-long half day camp, students will become scientists helping to document and learn more about the plants and animals living in the Springs and Savannas of Headwaters and the ecosystems that support these species. During camp, students will participate in activities including BioBlitzes, water testing, soil testing, butterfly monitoring, bird watching, hikes, and nature journaling. They'll also learn more about the tools and methods scientists use to collect data through these activities. By the end of the week, students will be ready to put their new found knowledge to work and help gather data and information at home and around the community.

WHEN: June 5th - June 9th, Daily from 9 AM-12PM

WHERE: Headwaters at the Comal, Outdoor Pavilion, 333 Klingemann, New Braunfels, 78130

Scholarships are available for students and families in need of support. For more information, please contact Headwaters at the Comal.

Have questions? Need more information? Contact Lauren Strack at 830-608-8937 or lstrack@headwatersatthecomal.org.

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## IN OTHER NEWS

### MARCH - MAY: BEXAR AUDUBON SOCIETY URGES "LIGHTS OUT"

Spring Migration: March 1 - June 15

Peak Migration: April 22 - May 12

Everyone is encouraged to turn off non-essential lights at night from 11 PM – 6 AM during the full spring and fall migration periods, and where conflicts apply, prioritize lights-out during the critical peak migration periods. Visit [BirdCast](#) tools by Cornell Lab of Ornithology to learn when increased migration traffic will happen in our area. Stay informed and [subscribe to alerts today!](#)

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CCCA H-Z MAY COLUMN

"Celebrating, Recognizing, Taking Action With A Deep Dive!"

By Frank Dietz for the H-Z April 1, 2023

Our recent measurable rainfall brought us about two inches in the first round of nourishment. Two days later, our yard as well as portions of the pasture that surrounds our house looked like freshly fallen snow. Those rain lilies were like a crescendo of celebration declaring relief while seeking more. April rains have been relief rains if they will continue so that the aquifers are replenished like the stock tanks on the ranches of the region. For now, we have a splendid green growth.

Perhaps the rainfall and the celebration bloom of rain lilies are a good way to visit about the Comal County Conservation Alliance (CCCA). May 2023 marks the 5th anniversary of efforts by numerous citizens and key mentoring Texas Hill Country groups to shape a

voice for conservation in Comal County. Our County had been missing among the cluster of counties in Texas taking measures to address shrinking green space as population influx began to soar. Toward that end, a discovery process demonstrated an intergenerational concerned group of citizens were ready and willing. Thus, in short order, the wheels for connecting and organizing to shape a fresh civic voice for conservation that would put high priority on protecting open spaces, particularly where aquifer recharge and contributory areas were concerned, as well as wildlife now at risk of displacement and so much more. The impact of getting organized together is in growing evidence through varieties of participation and involvements. There are regular public gatherings around key topics of interest and numerous engagements to converse with elected officials and other leaders in and around the County. Maybe it is best to say, CCCA turns five and is just getting started! You'll find volunteers at many of the festivities throughout the year and you just might run into an energetic newcomer to Comal County in CCCA's first Executive Director, Ryan Keith Spencer. Check out the website for scheduled activities or reaching out to Ryan who is readily and eagerly available.

Read Frank's full article [HERE](#)

Stay safe, stay healthy, enjoy Nature!

Comal County Conservation Alliance

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

Info@comalconservation.org

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Comal County Conservation Alliance
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