



Conservation Insider

November 2020

Hello CCCA friends and volunteers! Here's a wonderful fall quote to begin this issue.

“Is not this a true autumn day? Just the still melancholy that I love - that makes life and nature harmonise. The birds are consulting about their migrations, the trees are putting on the hectic or the pallid hues of decay, and begin to strew the ground, that one's very footsteps may not disturb the repose of earth and air, while they give us a scent that is a perfect anodyne to the restless spirit. Delicious autumn! My very soul is wedded to it, and if I were a bird I would fly about the earth seeking the successive autumns.”

[Letter to Miss Lewis, Oct. 1, 1841]” — George Eliot, *George Eliot's Life, as Related in Her Letters and Journals - Volume 1*

NEWS AROUND THE HILL COUNTRY

HAYS COUNTY PLANS FOR PRESERVING LAND

Hays County Voters overwhelmingly voted YES for the new \$75 million Parks Bond.

Congratulations to the people of Hays County for having the foresight and commitment to support land preservation when they went to the polls on November 3rd. Passage of the Parks Bond shows how important access to nature is to the voters.

The vote tally is currently hovering at the 70% approval mark. This new bond will enable Hays County to preserve 500 acres of the former Boy Scout Camp, El Rancho Cima, as well as additional parcels of land identified by the residents.

What is the Hays County 2020 Parks Bond? Hays County Commissioners Court, following a 4-1 decision, allowed voters to determine whether the County will fund \$75 million for new parks, trails and open spaces over the next several years. That bond will help provide funding for projects submitted by groups, organizations and municipalities earlier this year. Hays County submitted two proposals to be included in the bond; Sentinel Peak and Cape's Pond.

The Parks and Open Spaces Commission (POSAC), with appointees by each member of Commissioners Court, reviewed 19 submitted projects and recommended funding of 16 over several budget cycles. One project has since been removed from consideration. Hays County Commissioners Court will allow new projects to be submitted and vetted in a similar fashion to those recommended by POSAC.

Hays County General Counsel Mark Kennedy said, “Each project on the story map indicates the types of features that would result, including public access, camping opportunities, ADA accessibility, and trails and river recreation,” Kennedy said. “Additionally, the story map indicates broader benefits of water quality protection, protection of sensitive, threatened or endangered species habitat, and flood mitigation.”

Commissioner Walt Smith said he understands why some voters might wonder at the logic of putting a \$75 million bond on this year's election ballot during the coronavirus pandemic. “The pandemic has caused financial uncertainty in many ways,” he said, “but I believe the projects in this bond will allow our county to continue protecting and conserving land while offering benefits to the general public.” He added that this ballot measure allows the county flexibility with the timing of bond issuance, meaning the county is not obligated to spend money right away. “If voters approve the bond,” Smith said, “Commissioners Court will proceed with caution and on a timeline that allows us to assess our financial situation.”

POSAC goals and priorities were found in the 2012 Hays County Parks, Open Space and Natural Areas MASTER PLAN.

<https://hayscountytexas.com/2020/10/07/learn-about-the-hays-parks-bond-before-heading-to-polls/>

MONTHLY SPOTLIGHT ON HUNTING AND FISHING

Our **CCCA SPOTLIGHT** celebrates the hunter as conservationist this month! You'll want to check it out and learn more about the who, what and where's of hunting and fishing in our part of Texas. We've also designed a short questionnaire we hope you will answer, sharing your opinion about the importance of game management and open spaces preservation in Comal County. Please find a minute or two to fill out our survey.

Go to: <https://www.comalconservation.org/hunting--fishing.html>

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

FISHING, HUNTING, PROTECTING, PRESERVING

by Frank Dietz

Friday, November 6, 2020

With the advent of November, sounds and activities around our rural home take a shift. Deer season arrives with a burst of rifle shot. Suddenly our calm deer show a frantic frenzy and dash about sensing something is happening in the open spaces they frequent on remaining ranches and open areas.

It leads me to ponder the considerable and impressive conversations I've had through the years with avid fishing and hunting friends, colleagues and relatives. It led me to reach out to a select few for their reflections on what nourishes their interests and enthusiasms for fishing and hunting... .

continue reading at <https://www.comalconservation.org/hunting-fishing.html#Dietz>

Hunters are among the most ardent conservationists around

Written 2018

Theodore Roosevelt, the founder of the National Wildlife Refuge System and a hunter himself, knew it. "In a civilized and cultivated country, wild animals only continue to exist at all when preserved by sportsmen," the 26th president of the United States said years ago. "The excellent people who protest against all hunting, and consider sportsmen as enemies of wildlife, are ignorant of the fact that in reality the genuine sportsman is by all odds the most important factor in keeping the larger and more valuable wild creatures from total extermination."

Department of the Interior officials know it today. "Hunters are a driving force behind funding many of our nation's conservation efforts," a 2017 Interior Department blog said. "After the extinction of the passenger pigeon and the near elimination of the bison and many migratory bird species in the early 1900s, Americans realized the impacts humans could have on wildlife. To ensure that there would be animals to hunt in the future, hunters began to support programs that helped maintain species populations and protected habitat for wildlife."

Read more at <https://www.comalconservation.org/hunting--fishing.html#H&C>

7 Amazing Fishing Spots in the Beauty of the Hill Country

By Texas Hill Country

From state parks to river crossings, the Hill Country offers some of the best fishing with breathtaking views. This area of Texas rises at the Balcones Escarpment and spreads west across the Edwards Plateau. It has an abundance of rivers, streams and creeks, as well as natural and man-made lakes. Fishing conditions are close to perfect all year, so anglers have plenty of opportunities to catch the limit from these beautiful lakes and waterways. Here are just a few of our favorite fishing spots and don't forget some tips for catching bullhead catfish.

Read the entire article at <https://www.comalconservation.org/hunting--fishing.html#7>

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

Comal County Conservation Alliance

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