

THE TEXAS WATER SOURCE

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

Who is Using Best Management Practices?

Forestry Best Management Practices (BMPs) are common-sense practices that help reduce soil erosion and protect water quality. Since 1991, Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS) has completed nine rounds of BMP implementation monitoring. This monitoring is done to see how well BMPs are being used.

Each round, TFS randomly selects a minimum of 150 tracts of forestland that have recently had some form of “normal forestry” operation – harvesting, thinning, site preparation and reforestation, etc. These forestry operations are evaluated, with the landowner’s consent, for the presence and functionality of BMPs.

The latest round of monitoring was recently completed. Overall BMP

implementation on the monitored sites was 94.0%. In general, implementation was highest on sites under public ownership. These National Forest sites had an overall implementation rate of 100%. Corporate lands (commercial landowners that do not have wood processing facilities) scored 94.5% overall. Family forest owners like yourself scored 93.0% - a substantial increase from 88.0% in the previous round in 2011.

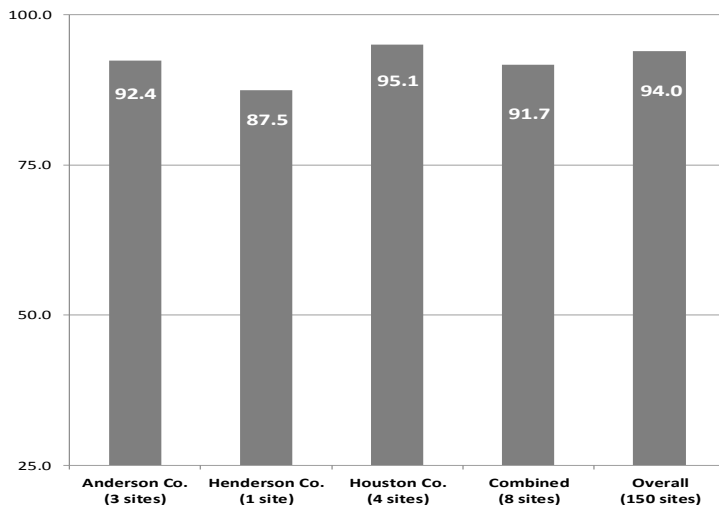
The Texas Forestry BMP program is non-regulatory; relying heavily upon voluntary cooperation from all individuals involved in forestry operations, including you as landowners. If everyone involved in forest management properly implements these practices, we can continue to show that water quality can be protected without strict government regulation.

For more information:

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

Local Implementation Scores by County

Here is a breakdown of implementation rates by county for your area. No sites were monitored this round in Freestone and Leon Co.



Keep in mind that these numbers are from small sample sizes. The number of sites monitored per county is based on the amount of the previous year’s harvest activities in that county.

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*Organization Spotlight***Trinity River Authority****For more information:**

- www.trinityra.org
- **Newsletter:**
www.trinityra.org/default.asp?contentID=76#tpia
- **Board of Directors:**
www.trinityra.org/about-us-boardofdirectors
- **Master Plan:**
www.trinityra.org/downloads/Master_Plan_2012.pdf

The Trinity River Authority (TRA) was created by an Act of the 54th Texas Legislature in 1955. It is a conservation and reclamation district providing water and wastewater treatment, along with recreation and reservoir facilities, for municipalities within the nearly 18,000-square mile Trinity River basin.

The Trinity River Authority's mission is to promote conservation, reclamation, protection, and development of the natural resources of the river basin for the benefit of the public.

TRA has a general office in Arlington and a southern region office in Huntsville. TRA owns and operates five water treatment and supply facilities, five wastewater treatment facilities, one reservoir (Lake Livingston), and one recreation project (Wolf Creek Park on Lake Livingston), plus serves as local sponsor for three multiple-purpose

lakes operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Bardwell Lake, Joe Pool Lake, Navarro Mills Lake). The services each facility provides are contracted for by cities, municipalities, or districts. TRA also serves as a conduit for tax-exempt financing for municipal water and wastewater facilities and for industrial air- and water-pollution control facilities.

One of TRA's statutory mandates is to prepare and maintain a master plan for responsible water use and reclamation. TRA completed its first master plan in 1958 and revises it as needed.

TRA has also been active in the preparation and maintenance of the Texas Water Plan since the 1960s, and, since 1997, TRA has been instrumental in regional water planning required by Senate Bill 1.

Clean Rivers Program**For more information:**

- <http://www.trinityra.org/clean-rivers-program.htm>

The Clean Rivers Program (CRP) operates under the Clean Rivers Act, which was passed by the Texas Legislature in 1991 with the goal of assessing and improving the state's water resources.

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) contracts with river authorities or regional entities to perform specific tasks within each river basin involving water quality. The CRP Steering Committee serves as its guiding body, and suggestions from its members serve as the genesis for many of the special studies conducted within the Trinity River basin.

The CRP creates and maintains a comprehensive statewide water quality monitoring program. Each CRP Planning Agency is responsible for implementing such a monitoring program within its respective basin. In the Trinity River basin, many local entities

have conducted fixed monitoring programs for years. These entities monitor water quality for water supply protection and conduct municipal storm water monitoring.

Ultimately, the overall health of the Trinity River basin depends on public investment and involvement. The Trinity River basin's CRP pursues public participation through support of local and regional organizations and events. These include stream clean-ups, Texas Stream Team volunteer monitoring, the Waterborne Education Center (WEC), and the River Legacy Foundation.

For information on opportunities or to become involved in the Trinity Basin CRP, including joining the Steering Committee, please contact TRA's Clean Rivers Program at (817) 467-4343.

Riparian Buffer Initiative

Restoring the quality of forests and wetlands in the primary stream corridor and tributaries is critical to the health and sustainability of the Trinity River. Riparian buffers are "linear patches of vegetation adjacent to streams, lakes, reservoirs, or wetlands," and serve to improve and protect habitat, water quality, and soil retention along the stream corridor and adjacent flood plains.

Effective buffers address wildlife and aquatic habitat and one or more non-point source pollutants such as sediments, nutrients, chemicals, and animal waste. Trinity Waters is committed to assuring, to the extent possible, that all stream banks and adjacent wetlands in the Trinity River Basin are protected by a forested or other appropriate riparian buffer.

Trinity Waters is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization, originally established in 2000 as a landowner cooperative focused on land stewardship wildlife and habitat protection in the rural areas of the middle Trinity River basin. Today,

the organization is expanding its reach and services where needed, throughout the entire Trinity River Basin - from the headwaters in North Texas to its terminus south of Lake Livingston at Trinity Bay.

Rural Landowner Assistance - Trinity Waters provides planning, planting, and long term maintenance specifications for riparian buffers through a cost share contribution generated through fundraising and corporate sponsorship. Contact them for more information (see sidebar).

Urban Lands Assistance - Trinity Waters works with developers, stream mitigation banks, and other organizations to promote, implement, and maintain urban and suburban riparian buffer restoration projects along the river and its tributaries. Follow their EVENTS calendar for upcoming planting activities or contact them to schedule an event for your organization (see sidebar).

For more information:

- <http://trinitywaters.org/our-work/riparian-ecosystems-recovery>
- Contact phone: (214) 542-5806
- Contact by email: <http://trinitywaters.org/contact-us>

Did you know...

There are 22 reservoirs on the Trinity River that provide drinking water and flood control.

Time to Harvest?

Forest landowners, primarily those who have never harvested timber before, are often unaware of the outcomes associated with a timber harvesting operation, and the need for Best Management Practices (BMPs) to protect their water resources. Knowing what to expect or stipulate in a timber sale contract can help prevent misunderstandings and hard feelings, as well as protect the health and productivity of your forestland for future rotations. Here are some reasonable BMP expectations that landowners should have regarding forestry operations.

- Roads should be left in good condition: reshaped if necessary; stabilized; have proper water control structures.

- Buffers, or streamside management zones (SMZs), should be left along streams and other sensitive areas.
- Streams should be crossed appropriately and only when crossings cannot be avoided.
- Operations should be halted when the tract is too wet; excessive rutting can be an indicator.
- Trash generated from the operation should be disposed of properly.
- Operations should be conducted on the contour to reduce erosion.
- Chemicals, herbicides, and fertilizers should be kept out of waterways, and equipment should be serviced away from streams.

For more information:

- <http://www.tfsweb.tamu.edu/LandownerAssistance/ForestManagementInformationSheets>
- <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/water>

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

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Through Diversity.*

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BMP Demos and Other Info

You hear of Forestry Best Management Practices (BMPs), but what do they actually look like “on the ground?” Follow this link to a virtual tour of BMPs that have been implemented at one of our State Forests, demonstrating practices that can help prevent erosion and protect water quality.

http://www.tfsweb.tamu.edu/Water_Publications

Simply look under the heading “Training” and click on “Tour the W.G. Jones State Forest BMP Demonstrations.”

While you are on that Publications page, check out the other topics that can help landowners as well as contractors:

- BMP guidelines
- Newsletters - former editions geared towards forest landowners
- Fact Sheets on different practices
- Training for loggers and contractors
- BMP Reports from previous years and landowner aids
- BMP Technical Assistance – Wildfire Recovery - focusing on what to do to protect the soil and water if your property is damaged by a devastating wildfire.



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FOREST SERVICE