

DECEMBER 1, 2017

Watershed Week in Review

Llano River Watershed Alliance and
Llano River Field Station



COST SHARE FOR FERAL HOG TRAP

Earn \$50 just by learning more.

Learn more about Hogs and Hog Traps and get rewarded for your time.

Farmers and Ranchers in the Southeast (including Texas) have an opportunity to name their own cost-share amount (bid) on a Jager Pro M.I.N.E. trapping system through a program with USDA.

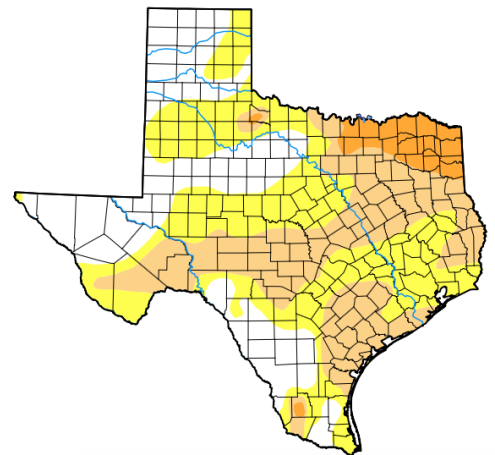
The auction runs from November 27 to December 8 and is available online to folks who don't want to drive to Amarillo.

See www.agvise.us for more details

Note: The Upper Llano River Watershed Protection Program suggests a similar trapping program to help control feral hogs in the Llano.

See more on hogs – page 2

D-word is Back



Moderate drought returned to the Llano River Watershed in November and now covers about 35% of the State.

Severe drought has begun to creep into Northeast Texas.

With a weak La Niña predicted for the winter, we shouldn't expect to see much improvement in drought severity over the next few months.

Bait v Traps



We need to control 70% of the hog population just to keep population levels even.

Which is more effective for controlling hogs? Bait or Traps?

This [AgWeb article](#) suggests we will need both.

TCEQ and the San Saba Watermaster

In the latest volley in a decade-long fight over water rights on the San Saba River in Central Texas, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) has delayed implementing a permanent solution to ensure the river flows year round.



As the *Observer* reported in October, a 40-mile stretch of the river [has repeatedly dried up](#) between Menard and Brady. Landowners who live downstream charge that their neighbors upstream are to blame for illegally pumping more water than their permits allow, and TCEQ hasn't settled the fight. As a result, downstream landowners have been calling on the agency to appoint a watermaster — a referee who can manage and enforce water rights on a local and day-to-day basis — to police the river. But at a November 15 TCEQ hearing, the agency chose to punt on resolving the issue by declining to appoint a watermaster. While the agency's three commissioners said that the discussion on the San Saba “needs to continue,” they all agreed that the issue is “better addressed through other mechanisms.” [...continue reading](#)

Bass Contest Heats up with One Month to go

Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD) released 15 retired Guadalupe Bass broodstock back into the South Llano River on October 17th, 2017. The broodstock were used to successfully restore the genetically hybridized South Llano population.

To celebrate this event, TPWD and the Alliance partnered with Bass Pro Shops on a prize giveaway to anglers who catch these tagged fish.

Recently, two great stories resulted from the contest...



Newly arrived Junction resident JD Davila caught a tagged fish November 14th, but not knowing about the contest, did not clip to tag to claim his prize. No problem...after learning about the contest, his wife Robin returned to the site 5-days later and caught the same fish (see full story next page).

This week, Nico became the first youth angler winner!

Congratulations to all. Still eleven tagged fish to be had. Contest ends December 31st...the Llano awaits!

Reprinted with permission from *Junction Eagle* – November 22, 2017

The one that didn't get away

by JD Davila, new Junction resident

On Tuesday November 14, we went fishing. A fish fry was our intent, but we got a great story instead.

The story starts with an afternoon of fishing with Robin and me. We had been casting for a couple of hours and were about to quit, when I reeled in a beautiful Guadalupe Bass. It was much larger than the fingerlings I had seen darting around the rocks next to shore. It looked to be about 14 inches, which is large for the species, and it's our state fish.

We noticed an orange tag poking out of its back. We wondered, would the game warden come after us? Was this fish important? Could we eat a fish that's tagged, and not to mention, the largest I'd seen to date? We had a lot of questions and we were okay to leave them unanswered until we got home.

Earlier in the day, I decided that I was not going to be checking my phone while we were fishing. I was resolved not to check social media or the news, or weather. I was going to live in the moment, and enjoy fishing and being with Robin. It was going to be a no stress, no media outing.

We snapped a couple of photos, and marveled at the beauty we held in our hands. We decided not to keep it. We would call it a sport fishing outing.

Excited by our one catch-and-release, we headed to the house to tell our story. I sat down to my phone to look at the pictures we took and see if there was some significance to the tagged bass. I got one return on a google image search for tagged Guadalupe Bass. The Llano

River Watershed Alliance, with Texas Parks and Wildlife, started a contest in October. Prizes are to be awarded to anyone catching a tagged fish until December of 2018. The tag is to be clipped and the winner should call the number printed on the tag.

I was beside myself. I howled from the room at Robin, "Oh no!" Naturally, she was a little alarmed when she asked me what the matter was. I was distraught. Robin had to talk me down, so to speak, and told me not to worry, that she would go back and catch it for me.

I could not believe that I didn't look on the internet for more answers while I was there with the fish in hand. I didn't take out my reading glasses to take a closer look at the tag, and didn't think to call the game warden.

The next couple of days, I went around town telling everyone who would listen the story of the fish, and the contest. It was just a fish story, so I had to show them the pictures I had taken too. I even tried going to the same spot the next day to catch it again without any luck.

On Sunday, November 19, Robin asked me if I was ready to go catch that fish. I sounded reluctant and doubtful when she stopped me and said, "Hey, you have to be all-in! You have to believe that we can catch it again!"

I thought for a moment and told myself yes. What was the harm in believing I could catch the same fish again? It was decided, we would go fishing again, same spot, similar lures she brought back from her trip to Austin that day.

We were there for about an hour when she caught another big bass.



She reeled it in and it was tagged! It looked to be tagged in the same spot, and even had a little nick in its mouth where it had been caught before. Could this be the same fish? Only a side-by-side comparison would tell us for sure. We took a couple of pictures. This time we clipped the tag. This time that fish didn't get away. And yes, it was the same fish. I have the pics, the grief, and stories on my facebook and Instagram pages, the tag, and soon, the sweet prize from Bass Pro Shop and the Llano River Watershed Alliance.

It's that time of year

Fourth Annual Christmas at the Ranch Tomorrow at South Llano River State Park

The park celebrates Christmas at the Walter Buck, Jr. Ranch. With the original ranch home acting as the backdrop, join in on holiday treats, live music, cowboy poetry and a visit from Santa himself.

Park entry fees will be waived for the event.



South Llano River State Park invites you to:
Christmas at the Ranch and North Star Party
Saturday, December 2nd, 2017

4 - 6 pm: Open House at Park Headquarters
 Warm up with cookies and hot chocolate, listen to live music and Cowboy Poetry, enjoy a children's activity, and take in the twinkling lights and decorations at the historic Ranch House that now serves as Park Headquarters. Our guest of honor will be Santa himself!

7 - 9 pm: North Star Party at the Walk-in Campground parking lot
 Join Texas Tech University, Mason Star Gazers, and Park Staff for our North Star party! We'll look at the full moon through telescopes, and check out the amazing wintertime stars and constellations!

Call (325) 446-3994 for more information.

TTU Junction Annual Trail of Lights December 14th – 6pm



Photo : Texas Tech Junction

Join us at Texas Tech Junction Llano River Field Station and Outdoor School for this year's Trail of Lights

Meet at the Pavilion where kids can create a Christmas ornament, then head off on a ½ miles walk through the luminaria-lit bottomland of the South Llano River.