Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Partnership Update

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Water Quality

- Geronimo Creek was listed on the 2006 303(d) list for not supporting its contact recreation use

- Geronimo Creek was first listed in 2000 for concern for nutrient enrichment
What is the Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Watershed Protection Plan?

- A community-driven management plan developed in 2012 to solve the water quality problems in the creeks.
- It was developed and is managed through partnerships among federal, state, county and local groups and citizens.
- It relies heavily on stakeholder involvement at the local level.
EPA Acceptance

- Satisfies EPA that a stakeholder group is addressing the local watershed issues, and that implementation should result in standards attainment in a reasonable length of time.
- Allows for federal funding to flow into the watershed to support management measures identified in the plan.
Where is it coming from?

- The impairment is the result of loading from nonpoint sources:
  - Urban sources such as dogs and urban runoff
  - Agricultural sources such as livestock, feral hogs, and wildlife
  - Failing Septic Systems
What does stormwater contain?

- Sediment
- Nutrients
- Toxic chemicals
- Bacteria
Human Activities Can Impair WQ
In terms of loading, urban runoff was higher than all the other sources.
What is being done about it?
To ensure that implementation of the WPP is completed and successful

Funding from TSSWCB to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
Field Technician

- Cris Perez, is an employee of the Comal-Guadalupe SWCD
- He is a field technician who works with agricultural producers to better manage runoff from their operations
Seguin High School

- Never before seen collaboration
- Impacting high school students and beyond
Purpose

- Students toured a fabrication facility
- Extension provided feral hog and water quality information
- Students combined this knowledge to construct feral hog traps
- Looking at other districts to continue this work
Homeowner Septic System Maintenance Classes

- Classes conducted in the Spring and Fall past 3 years
- Two types of classes conducted
  - 2 hr basic overview class (materials on project website)
  - 6 hr in-depth class on aerobic systems
- Comal and Guadalupe County homeowners with aerobic systems are required to have a maintenance contract for first 2 years
  - After that time, Guadalupe County homeowners can be certified or must have a maintenance contract
Decommissioning Project

- Fund decommissioning costs that the homeowners in OVN would have been responsible for
- Estimated average cost of $1,500 to decommission a septic system
  - Pump contents of septic tank
  - Remove the tank cover
  - Fill tank with sand/gravel
- Decommissioning is a state requirement
Feral Hog Control

- Josh Helcel, the Feral Hog Education Program Assistant, focuses on feral hog management in the watershed.
- The position works directly with landowners to reduce hog populations in the watershed.
- Contact info at www.geronimocreek.org/
Irma Lewis Seguin Outdoor Learning Center

- “An aggressive outreach and education program will be vital to successful engagement of watershed stakeholders”
- Collaboration between GBRA, Texas A&M AgriLife, and the Irma Lewis Seguin Outdoor Learning Center
- Combines technology with on-the-ground demonstrations and outdoor education
LID Structures

- Rainwater Harvesting System
- Rain Garden
- Vegetated Swale
- Pervious Pavement
Creek Clean Up Event

- Established the first event in 2013 on the first weekend in April
- In 4 years, over 780 volunteers have removed 12,980 pounds of trash and debris
- The 2016 event removed trash from 27 locations covering 17 miles of roadway and creek bank
Educational Opportunities

- Texas Watershed Steward Workshop
- Texas Well Owner Network Workshop
- Lone Star Healthy Streams Program
- Septic system workshops
- Master Gardener and Naturalist training
- Bacteria, nutrient, and pesticide management programs
- Soil and water testing campaigns
Thank You!
Questions and comments
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