



Tres Palacios Watershed Protection Plan

Winter 2021 Newsletter

A RECENT SUCCESS

Working with the City of El Campo, TWRI successfully installed a large stormwater education sign and 5 pet waste stations in Legacy Park to increase water quality education in the watershed!

Read more about this success story under the “Project Spotlight” section

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TRES PALACIOS CREEK

Thank you for your interest in the Tres Palacios Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) annual newsletter! The team at Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI) hopes everyone and their families are staying healthy and wish you a very Happy Holiday season.

This newsletter serves as an avenue to keep Tres Palacios residents informed of water quality updates and activities that happen in the area.

Project Background

In 2006, The tidal portion of Tres Palacios Creek was first identified as impaired in the *2014 Texas Integrated Report 303(d)* list for elevated levels of *E. coli* and depressed dissolved oxygen. The Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) development process began in fall 2016 and the final WPP was published and ready for WPP implementation in May 2018. Since 2018, implementation efforts have commenced to implement an array for best management practices to restore water quality in the tidal portion of Tres Palacios Creek through long-term conservation and stewardship of the watershed’s resources.

HERE’S THE SCOOP: PICK UP AFTER YOUR PET

What does pet waste have to do with the water in the creeks? Pet waste is a source of water pollution, and something that most of us can easily do something about as we go through our daily routine. When left on the ground, animal waste can flow directly into our waterways. Animal waste can contribute harmful bacteria to your local waters. These bacteria can pose serious health risks to humans and other animals!

How Can You Help? Proper Disposal is Key!

What To Do With Pet Waste

1. Bag it – pick up pet waste using a plastic bag and deposit in a trash can.
2. Flush it – pick up pet waste and flush it down the toilet. Do not flush the pet waste bag or cat litter!
3. Bury it – pick up pet waste and bury it in a hole about 6 inches deep. Be sure to cover the hole and do this well away from gardens growing edible plants.

What NOT To Do With Pet Waste:

1. Do NOT place bagged or un-bagged pet waste in the storm drain. These structures connect directly to a creek or stream.
2. Do NOT add pet waste to a compost pile. The temperature in the pile will not be high enough to kill harmful bacteria and other organisms

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT: STORMWATER EDUCATION AND OUTREACH IN EL CAMPO, TX

In this project, TWRI collaborated with the City of El Campo, the largest municipality in the the Tres Palacios Watershed area to incorporate stormwater and pet waste management strategies at Legacy Park . Legacy Park is a city owned park within the Tres Palacios watershed and El Campo city limits that provides recreation opportunities for residents. The park includes public baseball fields, a small fishing pond, and future plans to include walking trails. As one of the few public spaces in the entire watershed, Legacy Park is a high priority location to reach the public through informational signage.

With this project, TWRI and El Campo coordinated to (1) develop and install stormwater and water quality education signage at Legacy Park and (2) install and maintain five pet waste stations at Legacy Park. These two items were successfully installed at Legacy Park during 2021, and helped fulfill management measure 7 (pet waste management) and education and outreach measures identified in the Tres Palacios Creek Watershed Protection Plan (WPP). Moving forward, TWRI is continuing conversations with El Campo to further develop stormwater strategies to further address pollution sources and improve water quality across the watershed.

This program is managed by the Texas Water Resources Institute, part of Texas A&M AgriLife Research, AgriLifeExtension and the College at Texas A&M University. It is funded through a Clean Water Act grant provided by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.



Stormwater Education Sign established at Legacy Park

Photo Credit: City of El Campo Public Works

MOVING FORWARD!

TWRI continues to work locally to implement the WPP and improve water quality in the Tres Palacios Creek. The constant support from local stakeholders and organizations is the foundation for improved water quality. Thank you to everyone who has taken time to participate in our project efforts. We hope you continue to tell your neighbors how important the Tres Palacios is to you and how we can all contribute to improving water quality.

To read more about the Tres Palacios WPP and other project efforts, visit <http://matagordabasin.tamu.edu/tres-palacios/>.

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Use your phone camera to scan the QR code to sign-up for more Tres Palacios news.

Or you may type this link into your internet browser:

<https://bit.ly/2zfzcaI>

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