

Riparian, stream ecosystem workshop set for Oct. 3 near Robstown

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ROBSTOWN—The Texas Water Resources Institute's [Texas Riparian and Stream Ecosystem Education Program](#) will host a free workshop from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m Oct. 3 in the Robstown area for local residents interested in land and water stewardship in the Lower Nueces River watershed.

The morning session will be at the Nueces County emergency Services District #4, 5781 Farm-to-Market Road 666 (Just north of the FM 666 and FM 624 intersection at Bluntzer). The afternoon session will include a walk and presentations along the river in San Patricio de Hibernia Park.

The workshop is co-hosted by the Nueces River Authority, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service office in Nueces County and the Texas Water Resources Institute.

The program will include a lunchtime presentation. A catered lunch is available for \$10 or participants may bring their own lunch.

Register for lunch online at <https://goo.gl/RKphVk> or pay cash at the door.

Attendees must RSVP by Sept. 27 to Clare Entwistle at Clare.Entwistle@ag.tamu.edu or 210-277-0292 x 110 or online at <http://nrt.tamu.edu/schedule/>.

The Lower Nueces River includes 39 river miles from Lake Corpus Christi to the saltwater barrier dam in Corpus Christi.

Rocky Freund, the Nueces River Authority's deputy executive director, said water quality testing conducted on the Lower Nueces River showed high levels of total dissolved solids and the nutrient chlorophyll-a.

“Not only is the Lower Nueces River our main water source, it is a beautiful river with many miles of natural areas and abundant wildlife,” Freund said. “The watershed protection plan is intended to improve and protect water quality, habitat, and promote awareness and stewardship. The riparian and stream workshop is an educational event supporting this effort.”

Clare Entwistle, research associate for the water institute, said the workshop will focus on the nature and function of stream and riparian zones as well as the benefits and economic impacts from proper functioning riparian systems.

“Riparian areas – the green vegetated land area adjacent to the bank of a stream, creek, bayou, river or lake – are unique and important ecosystems that provide many benefits including habitat and forage,” she said. “The goal of the workshop is for participants to better understand riparian and watershed processes, the benefits of healthy riparian areas and what resources are available to prevent degradation while improving water quality.”

Jason Ott, AgriLife Extension agent for Nueces County, said workshop presentations will be given by representatives of the Texas Water Resources Institute, U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service, AgriLife Extension, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and Nueces River Authority.

Participants will receive a certificate of completion and appropriate continuing education unit certificates at the conclusion of the training.

The workshop is being offered free thanks to program funding provided through a Clean Water Act nonpoint source grant from the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The workshop offers many types of continuing education units, including three units — two general and one integrated pest management — for Texas Department of Agriculture pesticide license holders. It offers one unit from the Texas Water Resources Institute, seven credits from Texas Floodplain Management Association, seven hours for Certified Crop Advisors, seven hours from the Texas Board of Professional Land Surveying and six hours for Texas Nutrient Management Planning specialists. The program may also be used for continuing education units for professional engineers, master naturalists, and Texas Water Specialist Certification.

Other upcoming riparian workshops include one in Brenham on Nov. 8. More information can be found at <http://naturalresourcestraining.tamu.edu/schedule/>.

For more information, contact Entwistle or visit <http://texasriparian.org> or go to Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/TexasRiparianAssociation>.