

DRAFT Davidson Creek Stakeholder Meeting Notes

10/21/2025

Welcome and Overview

- Introductions
- Davidson Creek impaired for bacteria and low DO
- New WQ monitoring project in upper watershed. No data yet since it hasn't rained lately.

Summary of September Meeting

- Load Duration Curves -
 - site near Tractor Supply - reductions needed between 78% and 95%
 - Downstream site - reductions needed between 35% and 95%
 - Lowest station - reductions needed between 35% and 93%

Hot spots for Potential Bacteria Loading

- SELECT analysis
 - Watershed is divided into 6 subwatersheds
 - Assuming worst-case scenario of 100% of potential sources reaching the stream
 - Cattle - populations estimated from input at previous meetings
 - Highest loading rate in lower watershed
 - Other livestock - highest in top and subwatershed and lower portion of watershed
 - Feral Hogs - highest in upper-most and lower-most subwatersheds
 - Deer - Highest in upper-most and lower-most subwatersheds
 - OSSF - highest in middle of watershed, near more populated areas.
 - WWTF - only 1 in watershed, in the middle watershed where Caldwell WWTF discharges
 - Dogs - highest in mid-watershed where most population resides, and lower watershed.
 - Combined - highest priority subwatersheds are in middle and lower watershed
- Relative loadings - Cattle, other livestock, OSSFs and dogs are highest potential sources

Potential Best Management Practices

- Voluntary practices that reduce loads in the watershed
- Livestock practices have different effectiveness, including fencing filter strips, prescribed grazing, stream crossings, and watering facilities. Rotational grazing is also a low-tech and effective practice.
- Feral Hog bounty programs, voluntary removal, educational workshops
- OSSF - O&M workshops, installer training, and online trainings
- Dogs - pet waste stations, educational materials, continuation of spay & neuter programs, and city ordinances

Next steps

One additional meeting, then TWRI will finish compiling the draft WPP for stakeholder review over the holidays. Submit to TSSWCB and EPA for review. Goal is to print and distribute the WPP by May 2026

Audience questions

- Why are Livestock loads higher than feral hogs that are a more visible source nearer to the creek?
 - Density of fecal matter is lower

- Populations are applied regardless of where they live in the watershed.
- Because of the voluntary nature of the WPP, stakeholders can put emphasis on whatever BMPs they feel are most needed.
- OSSF enforcement has been a priority for the county. Education and awareness has been effective in addressing failing systems.

Panel Discussion

1) Overview of programs

- Leanne Wiley - described how to get to NRCS Local Service Center for Burleson County
- Arlene, TPWD Wildlife Division - 2 conservation programs for landowners, Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) and Pastures for Upland Birds (PUB). Have worked with a few landowners in the Davidson Creek watershed. She would like to bring more landowners to the table. Programs offer guidance by biologists. Inland fisheries group can assist with areas along the creeks
- Paul Crump, TPWD Non-game and Rare species. Spent the last 6 years working in the Burleson and Milam County areas on Houston Toad recovery programs.
- Brian Koch, Regional Watershed Coordinator with TSSWCB - the lead agency dealing with NPS pollution from agricultural and silvicultural areas. Provides funding for various programs, such as the WPP, implementation projects, and educational programs. Goal of conservation practices is to slow runoff and help infiltration of rainfall. Local SWCDs were established as a liaison with the USDA-NRCS to provide local input to programs.
- Jaclyn Wise, POSGCD. Charged with prevention of pollution entering surface and groundwater resources, including education
- Leanne Wiley, AgriLife Extension Program Specialist. Supports the Lonestar Healthy Streams to raise awareness of cattle, livestock, and feral hogs as sources of bacteria across the state. Provides the educational programming that supports and guides landowners and producers to NRCS, TSSWCB technical and financial assistance.
 - NRCS programs that are popular and effective include EQIP, CSP, and easements. Technicians at the local NRCS office can help.

2) How does land stewardship affect the resources your program supports?

- Arlene - everything done on the landscape affects wildlife and the natural resources TPWD supports. Programs primarily support wildlife, but naturally support habitats and watershed functions.
- Paul - land stewardship is everything. Land and habitat condition is entirely dependent on land management. On average, this region receives too much rainfall for optimal habitat without the natural disturbances such as fire. So specialized stewardship such as prescribed fire are necessary to maintain.
- Brian - good stewardship directly supports healthy landscapes and water. Responsible agricultural system management can also support healthy watersheds and habitat for wildlife resources.
- Jaclyn - wells, septic systems, and stormwater runoff are direct contamination sources. Stewardship such as rainwater harvesting can help mitigate runoff.
- Leanne - Vegetation and upland management are essential

3) What trends have you seen in the last 10 years? Any unique to Burleson County? How have these impacted the resources you support?

- Arlene - Increased population, land fragmentation, habitat fragmentation in rural areas. Have noticed new interest in land management, especially from smaller-acreage or newer landowners - for various goals.
- Paul - More smaller-acreage landowners, and more landowners interested. Less dependency on the land for income may mean less restrictions on land management options landowners will consider.
- Brian – Landowners in rural areas, especially just outside of large metro areas, are limited in management of small acreages by County Appraisal District requirements for Ag Valuation benefits. The number of landowners in these situations seems to be increasing. Bare ground caused by confined animal situation, even on small acreages, is not always enforced.
- Jaclyn - Increased population. New interest from new and existing landowners on land stewardship, water quality, and awareness.
- Leeanne - Same observations. Additionally increasing instability in funding.

4) Are you working on any projects in the Davidson Creek region?

- Arlene - Yes, Pastures and Upland Birds Program ~200 acres, 5 Landowners in Burleson & 7 in Milam Counties.
- Paul - Landowner Incentive Program. Pushing Post Oak Savannah Restoration Program. Most money comes from Houston Toad Recovery Program. Focus area is generally north of Hwy 21.
- Brian – TSSWCN funds the Davidson Creek WPP and monitoring. The Water Quality Management Program is a statewide program that protects landowners from complaints. Priority is to use voluntary programs such as watershed protection plans and adoption of programs are effective in meeting agency goals to improve soil and water quality.
- Jaclyn - Has 23 programs and 70% of budget supports community programs that protect groundwater quality and support land stewardship. Programs include on-site E.coli testing.
- Leanne - Lone Star Healthy Streams are not active in Davidson watershed yet, but will be after the WPP is developed. Impact is generally at the county level.

5) Obstacles or challenges for landowners in implementing good land management practices? How can your program help?

- Arlene - Navigating the alphabet soup of agencies and programs to figure out which programs are appropriate and most beneficial. TPWD can help through their knowledge and expertise of the programs and understanding the landowner goals and landscape they're trying to manage. Drought makes vegetation establishment & management difficult. Funding. PUB program provides funds up front and is **not** a reimbursement program.
- Paul - Reimbursement-based programs where landowners must front the funds and wait for reimbursement. Landowners can be afraid of government intervention or regulatory issues when programs focused on endangered species are discussed.
- Brian - NPS program prioritizes areas on the 303(d) list and other geographically specific conditions, so other areas may not score as high on applications for cost share programs. Overcoming challenges caused by CADs, discussed previously. TSSWCB partners on programs and initiatives outside of priority geographic areas.
- Jaclyn - Finding out what programs are available. Hesitancy in working with the government.
- Leeanne - Navigating programs. Talking to neighbors to find out what they've used can be helpful. Timelines and deadlines of programs. Reimbursement programs can be a challenge for some landowners.

6) What can decision-makers do at the local, county, or state level to promote sustainable land management in the Davidson Creek watershed

- Brian - invite TSSWCB in and make connections to learn about programs and benefits, as well as plan & conduct educational events & workshops.

8) How can landowners engage with your program?

- Arlene - Contact local biologist, Brittany Perry
- Paul - Contact local biologist, Brittany Perry
- Brian - Contact local SWCD
- Jaclyn - Through website, contact directly, stop by the office.
- Leanne - Contact the county agent (John Grange) and/or local SWCD.

Audience Questions:

What acreages do these programs relate to

- Paul - minimum 5 acres
- Arlene - if a landowner doesn't meet a minimum acreage, the minimum can be adjusted if neighbor or contiguous landowner is enrolled or interested.
- Leanne - doesn't think NRCS has a minimum acreage for most programs
- John Grange - CAD requires minimum 10 acres for ag valuation in Burleson County.

Who to contact about erosion on Rough Bayou?

- Brian - Contact TSSWCB Wharton office, or NRCS local office.

Next Meeting November 17, 2025