

# Nueces River Watershed Partnership

July 2013

To improve and protect the water quality of the Nueces River Watershed so that the river is restored and preserved for current and future generations

## Development of a Watershed Protection Plan for the Lower Nueces River

### A Brief History

The Lower Nueces River is the drinking water source for nearly one half million people in the Coastal Bend. Water from Lake Corpus Christi flows approximately 39 miles downstream to water treatment plant (WTP) intakes located in the City of Corpus Christi (City).

A turbidity exceedence at the O. N. Stevens WTP in 2009 prompted the City to initiate a source water protection program. The Nueces River Authority (NRA) contacted local stakeholders to solicit their input on things that could be done to protect this resource.

The Nueces River Watershed Partnership (NRWP) was formed, and a list of best management practices and studies, along with their estimated costs, was developed for the City to use as a basis for implementing projects as funding becomes available.

### Current Status

One such study was the development of watershed protection plan (WPP) which would expand on the source water protection plan to include the nine elements to meet Environmental Protection Agency requirements.

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) is now providing the funding for the WPP development via a 3-year contract with NRA. The estimated completion is date is September 2015. Some of the tasks with the contract include

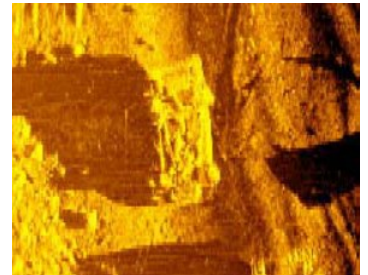
- Modeling and data analysis to estimate current loading and sources of possible contaminants
- An inventory of on-site sewage facilities (OSSF) and an OSSF management plan for voluntary inspections and financial assistance for repair or replacement for qualified participants
- A survey of water hyacinth and a management plan for removal and/or control
- An evaluation of large debris in the river and a management plan for removal



## Large Debris Evaluation

The Texas AgriLife Research & Extension Blackland Research Center (BRC) will conduct the large debris evaluation. The objective of this survey is to evaluate and map bottom features within the Lower Nueces River, determining the spatial distribution of man-made debris found within the river's navigable channel.

Later this year, BRC will utilize side scan sonar technology to create georeference imagery of items below the water surface. The reconnaissance survey results will be used to develop a Large Debris Removal Plan. This decision support tool will allow the NRWP to make informed decisions relative to foreign debris contamination risk and/or removal.



## History Lesson

Before the Spanish Explorer Alonso de León, in 1689, named the river after the pecan trees that lined the banks, (Nueces is the plural of nuez, the Spanish word for nut), the local Indians called the river Chotilapacquen.



[www.nuecesriverpartnership.org](http://www.nuecesriverpartnership.org)



Nueces River Authority

## County Road 73 and Nueces River Cleanup

The Nueces River Preservation Association, (NRPA) is a group of CR 73 residents and other individuals who are tired of seeing their community and the river trashed.



With funding from the Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program and assistance from Absolute Waste, AEP, Annville Fire Department, Buddy's Place, CC Disposal, City of Corpus Christi,

Dawson Recycling, Firestone, Nueces County, and Republic Services, NRA was able to help coordinate a roadside and on-the-river cleanup.

Approximately 40 people over each of the 5 days of the 3-phase cleanup volunteered their time to make a difference in their community.

### Phase 1 — April 6, 2013:

Volunteers filled a tractor-trailer and several flatbed trailers with about 2,000 tires from CR 73. Firestone donated their time and the large trailer and hauled off all of the tires to be recycled.



photo by Marie Garms



### Phase 2 — April 11-13, 2013

Crews and volunteers filled 21 containers with trash and debris. Large and heavy items were picked up with brush trucks, front-end loaders, and backhoes. Smaller trash was picked up by hand. In all, about 1,000 cubic yards of trash and debris, weighing over 130 tons was removed and taken to the City's landfill.



### Phase 3 — May 18, 2013.



Volunteers manned motor boats, canoes, and kayaks and removed about 30 cubic yards out of the rivers. Items included plastic bottles, styrofoam cups, lawn chairs, tires, car doors and refrigerators — every thing but the kitchen sink!



photo by Marie Garms

The NRPA is committed to restoring and preserving the natural beauty of the Lower Nueces River while promoting public education and recreation. Like them on Facebook