

Hi, just a reminder that you're receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in Houston-Galveston Area Council. Don't forget to add ce_communications@h-gac.com to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox! Newsletter may not display properly in some web browsers.

You may [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer wish to receive our emails.

Texas Stream Team

Working to Protect Our Waterways

Volume 2016 Issue 1



SKILLS CHECK



FIELD OBSERVATIONS

This video covers the site selection process and focuses on a wide range of field observations that monitors may potentially find at a site.

[Review the procedure on YouTube.](#)

Spotlight Photo



Fishing line collected from Oyster Creek. (Photo courtesy of Pete Romfh).

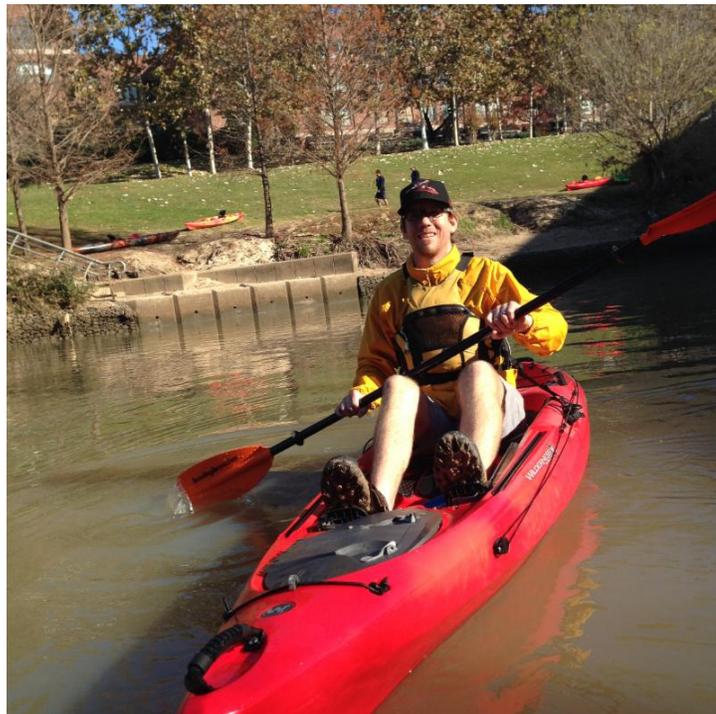
In the News



MONITOR SPOTLIGHT KELLY WHITE

Old habits die hard. That's why Kelly White searched out an opportunity to become a Texas Stream Team monitor when he moved to Houston. He was a member of the Missouri Stream Team program while living in St. Louis. Stream Team was so important to him that he focused on furthering the mission of the Missouri Stream Team program during a stint with Americorps. Since he really enjoyed those experiences, when he moved to Texas and learned that TST existed it was a no brainer to get involved.

Now he's H-GAC's newest volunteer monitor, checking on Buffalo Bayou at Waugh Drive and Allen Parkway in Houston each month.



Kelly graduated from Northland College in Ashland, Wisconsin, with a degree in Education and a minor in Environmental Education. In August 2015, he and his wife moved to Houston and he began teaching Middle School Science at St. John's School. Because he has a strong desire to help educate anyone and everyone about the value of water and our natural places, he plans to use his training to start a school Stream Team this spring.



Learn more about the EPA's Environmental Response Team Dive Team [here](#).



Calendar of Events

February 11

TST Phase 1 and 2 Training

Location: Pearland Recreation Center & Natatorium

(8:30 am-4 pm)

Contact [Will Merrell](#) to register

February 25

TST Phase 1 and 2 Training

Location: Kemah, TX (9 am-4 pm)

Contact [Sarah Gossett](#) to register

March 26

[Bayou Greenway Day](#)

T.C. Jester Park (White Oak Bayou)

April 2

[River, Lakes, Bays 'N Bayous Trash Bash](#)® (15 locations)

Deadline for inclusion in the next issue is April 15. Contact [Becki Begley](#) with information about your events.

QUICK LINKS to our partners and friends. . .



[Take Care of Texas](#)
[Keep Texas Beautiful](#)

Although he is fairly new to monitoring with the TST, from past experiences he has learned that people want to do the right thing when it comes to the environment; they just need someone to show them how. He thinks TST is a great vehicle for such conversations.

"Stream Team monitoring is a blast! It is a great way to get outside, make new friends and become very familiar with a local waterway," Kelly said. "Plus, from a teacher's point-of-view, Stream Team is real field science that allows students the chance to collect genuine science data that could potentially be used to influence water-related legislation."

TECHNICAL TERRITORY

By Paniz Bighash Meisen, H-GAC Senior Environmental Planner

Connecting the Dots to Eutrophication

As lawns, landscaping, and cultivated fields are fertilized, rain can wash excess fertilizer off the land and into nearby rivers and streams. Phytoplankton and algae use excess nutrients from fertilizer runoff as a food source, causing a rapid increase in phytoplankton and algal populations in water. The resulting green tinted water or blankets of algae block sunlight from penetrating greater depths. Without direct sunlight, aquatic plants begin to die, creating an abundant food source for various bacterial species.

As bacteria devour the decomposing plants, more nutrients are released into the water, creating a continuous cycle of algae growth, plant death, and bacterial breakdown in a waterway. As algal and bacterial populations increase, oxygen levels in water are drastically reduced to the point that aquatic organisms other than algae and bacteria cannot survive. This sequence of events and cyclical process is referred to as eutrophication.

The eutrophication process reflects the fact that all things in nature are connected and everyday activities and behaviors have the potential to directly or indirectly impact the environment. It is important to be mindful of our daily routines and how we interact with our surroundings so we can all work together to prevent problems like eutrophication. It's as easy as following the label instructions when applying fertilizers and other lawn chemicals.



[Galveston Bay Foundation](#)
[Galveston Bay Estuary Program](#)
[Bayou Preservation Association](#)
[Scenic Galveston, Inc.](#)
[Buffalo Bayou Partnership](#)

An example of eutrophication in Linville Bayou.

FEATURE PHOTO



Mouth of the Brazos River in November 2015.



It's Almost Time to "Clean It Like You Mean It!"

The 23rd River, Lakes, Bays 'N Bayous Trash Bash® is set for **Saturday, April 2, 2016.**

Please help clean up and promote a healthy Galveston Bay watershed by volunteering along with 4,500 of your closest friends, neighbors, and coworkers. Get a t-shirt and lunch, win prizes, and learn more about water after cleaning up area waterways.

Check out [our video](#) on YouTube or visit www.TrashBash.org to learn more.



Texas StreamTeam
Caring for Our Waters

2016 TST Trainings and QA Sessions

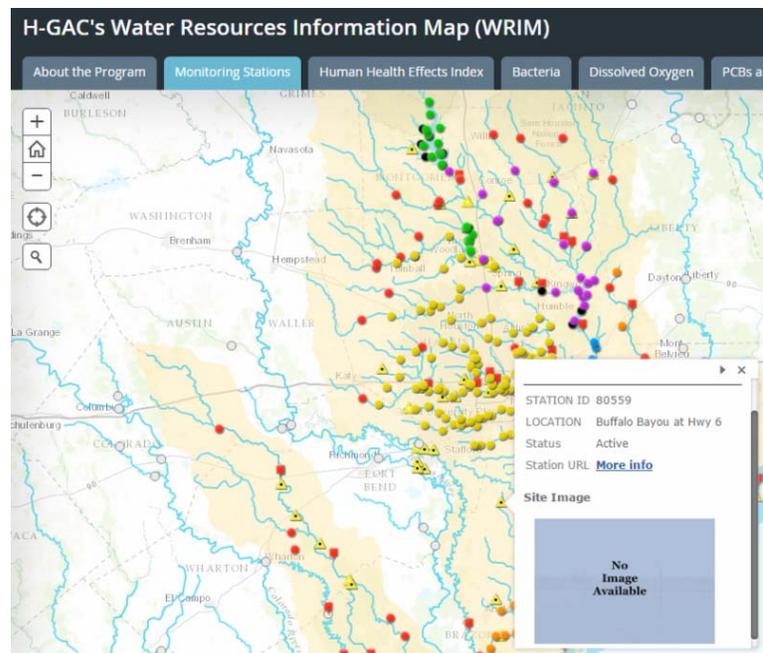
Learn more about the Texas Clean Rivers Program

Texas Clean Rivers Program works to ensure safe, clean water supplies for the future of Texas - for drinking water needs, for industry, for irrigation, for recreation, and for healthy ecosystems. Watch a [video](#) to see how the program works.

[Learn more](#) about how H-GAC works with the Clean Rivers Program.

Photos for the WRIM

The Water Resources Information Map (WRIM) is designed to display H-GAC's Clean Rivers Program water quality data. To make it more visual, we would like to add photographs from Texas Stream Team monitoring sites to the map. Please send us two photos per monitoring site - one looking downstream and one looking upstream (indicate which direction and the site number in the photo description). Photos up to 10 MB can be accepted. Please email your photos to [StreamTeam](#).



Riparian Buffer Planning Tool Debuts on H-GAC Website

The Houston-Galveston region is experiencing a wide range of water quality issues, many of which are linked to contaminants from stormwater runoff. In an effort to improve water quality, landowners have the opportunity to protect or create riparian buffers, undisturbed vegetated buffers along waterways on their property, to naturally protect a waterway from the impact of adjacent land uses. State and federal agencies have many funding and incentive programs available to assist

A Phase I and II training day will be **Thursday, February 11** from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM at the Pearland Recreation Center and Natatorium, 4141 Bailey Road, Pearland, TX 77584.

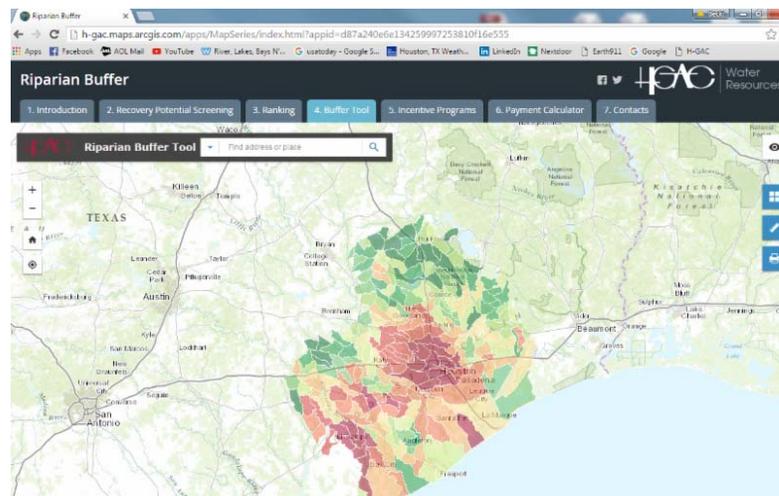
The goal this year is to have four quarterly Phase I and II training days. We will keep you updated once our dates have been scheduled.

How do you do QA reviews?

Scheduled Phase I and II training days also serve as Quality Assurance (QA) sessions for existing TST volunteers. We ask volunteers, especially those who have been certified within the past couple of years, to please attend a QA session this year. If you cannot make it to one of our training/QA sessions, please periodically review the [Meadows Center Texas Stream Team Procedure YouTube videos](#) or contact [Will Merrell](#) or [Becki Begley](#) with any monitoring related questions.

Did you know we take trainings by request? All we need are four or more interested people and a public venue with access to a water body for field activities. The area you are interested in monitoring must be located within one of four river basins (San Jacinto River Basin, San Jacinto-Brazos Coastal Basin, Trinity-San Jacinto Coastal Basin, or the Brazos-Colorado Coastal Basin) covered under H-GAC's [Clean Rivers Program](#). Please consult the [H-GAC WRIM](#) if you are unsure if your property or desired monitoring location is within H-GAC's basin assessment area.

and encourage landowners to implement riparian buffers. However, resources and information are widely dispersed and often difficult to obtain.



To reach more landowners and facilitate the planning process, H-GAC, in a collaborative effort with local agricultural agency representatives and conservation professionals, developed an online [Riparian Buffer Planning Tool](#) to house all pertinent information landowners need to implement riparian buffers.

Tabs provide a step-by-step format users can follow to learn more about riparian buffers and current water quality related issues, as well as access interactive mapping tools, information about available incentive programs, a cost share payment calculator, and contact information for agency representatives and technical professionals. Visit www.h-gac.com/go/riparian or contact [Paniz Miesen](#) at 832-681-2523 to learn more.

Email Becki.Begley@h-gac.com or call (713) 993-2410 with questions, comments, calendar items or suggestions for future newsletters.

The Houston-Galveston Area Council is the regional organization through which local governments consider issues and cooperate in solving area wide problems. We invite you to subscribe to the [Community and Environmental Update](#), a monthly e-newsletter to keep you informed about the many community planning, economic development and environmental planning programs going on at H-GAC.

[Texas Stream Team at The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment at Texas State University](#) is dedicated to understanding and protecting the 191,000 miles of Texas waterways. For more information, contact TxStreamTeam@txstate.edu.