

**ARLINGTON
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL**

POST OAK

VOLUME 22, NUMBER 2

MARCH 2021



April Zoom Meeting
Texas Blackland Prairie: Past, Present, Future
Brandon Belcher,
North Texas Preserves Manager, The Nature Conservancy
Wednesday, April 7, 6:30 p.m.
Watch your email for details

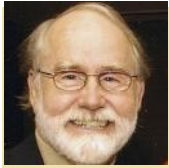
Brandon Belcher manages five North Texas preserves and more than a dozen conservation easements for The Nature Conservancy. His focus is protecting and maintaining grasslands, including remnant prairielands. Conservation of these rare and fragile ecosystems is accomplished through partnerships with private landowners, other nongovernmental organizations, and local cities and counties, as well as state and federal agencies. Brandon received a BS in wildlife and conservation science and an MS in biology - plant ecology from Texas A&M University-Commerce, where he teaches as an adjunct instructor.



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From the President

Dick Schoech

Back to Normal, Maybe Soon?

Things are going fast. We are slightly more than half through President Biden's first 100 days and the date for everyone in the US to be vaccinated keeps moving forward. Lots of ACC folks have had both shots and can now socialize unmasked with others who are vaccinated. This is a major relief, although we still need to practice safe behavior as COVID-19 variants pop up all over. We have the end in sight even if we don't know what it will look like.

We also are seeing major reversal of many environmentally destructive policies promulgated under the Trump administration. The biggest change is an all-out war on climate change. This war pervades all of President Biden's other actions, including international policies with our allies and adversaries. Things we can do to address climate change that we thought impossible a few years ago are now center stage. What a delightful change this is!

Hopefully, the adage that a tragedy exposes opportunities applies to the mid-February week of record-breaking freezing temperatures that almost destroyed the Texas energy grid. President Trump's COVID-19 hands-off approach and Texas' unregulated energy market suggest that a decentralized approach without central oversight, coordination and management may make sense in the short term but makes us vulnerable to unforeseen disasters. Opinion polls are discovering that Texans would rather pay for serious solutions to their problems than trust a market-based approach. This short-term vs. long-term lesson applies to local environmental issues as well, for example flooding from unregulated development in Arlington.

What is exciting to see is how local people have responded to the recent tragedies. We have applied our energy and resources to help others who often are strangers. Our eagerness is coupled with a new willingness to design solutions using science and compromise. Many politicians don't get this yet, but a few more election cycles may correct this misalignment. Those running for office are more diverse in gender and ethnicity, resulting in new ideas and actually getting things done. Environmentalists know the power and benefits of biodiversity in

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ACC POST OAK

Our mission: ACC works to protect Arlington's natural environment through education, community service and advocacy for a sustainable future

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Please send them to
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Bits & Pieces

The terse treehugger

Defunct live oak, pre-deep freeze.
How? Could it be the 24 holes drilled for
the up-lights?
So all at once we can kill the tree, pollute
the night sky and squander electricity.
Efficient.



visit us on the web
www.acctexas.org

March Mothness

For two nights only, American lappet
moths came to our moth lights in
Central Arlington. First reaction:
What's wrong with this thing? Some-
how the creature knows to imitate a
dead leaf by holding its hindwings
horizontally while tenting the fore-
wings over the abdomen.

Adults don't feed, and males can
detect as little as one molecule of
female pheromone in a cubic meter
of air.



Coffee Grounds: Bad for Plants?

We once thought nothing but
good about coffee grounds in
compost and even around acid-
loving plants. But nothing's
ever that simple. We easily find
heaps of conflicting internet
views about acidity, caffeine
and even nitrogen content. But
[here's an article](#) from Tree-
hugger that looks like calm,
solid information.



Asian lady beetle on golden groundsel

**Join us and act locally.
Use the application form
on the back page.**



Question Corner John Darling

Q: I have a job that involves fooling around with a very large number of dead leaves. Every few months I come across an artificial leaf mixed in with real ones. It's usually plastic, looks tropical and always jumps out from the real ones. What's going on?

A: This is your lucky day. It just happens that my day job involves interactions with many dead leaves, and I have had exactly the same experience. Amazing, right? Okay, first, nobody knows. Second, I wonder if it's part of **nature-deficit disorder**. You're staring at a screen all day (like me, now); your phony plant loses a leaf; maybe you flick it out the window; your impoverished immigrant gardener (formerly the leading neurosurgeon in Tegucigalpa) bags it up with the real leaves from your perfect yard; and there you have it. Perfectly obvious. Next!



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Wild Birds Unlimited
1660 W. Randol Mill Rd.
Arlington, TX 76012
(817) 275-1000
www.wbu.com/arlingtontx
Hours 10 - 6 Mon - Fri,
9 - 6 Sat, 12 - 5 Sun

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Mexican plum



From the President continued from page 3

nature, and it's nice to see that diversity has similar effects in political life. Keep these lessons in mind when you vote in the local May elections.

I feel good about my newfound optimism and hope it will last. There are signs that it will. Approximately 40 people attended the March ACC Zoom presentation. The Randol Mill Park cleanup last Saturday attracted 30+ eager people, one so determined he fell in the pond twice collecting trash. A group of youth joined in. Find them on page 7 and on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram under Arlington Park Clean Up. Their mission is impressive:

Arlington Park Clean Up is dedicated to addressing the prevalent global issue of pollution on a local scale through hands-on community involvement. We strive to directly reduce the impact of littering in local parks, natural areas, and waterways through organized volunteer clean up events. Our goal is to promote community engagement and education in preserving the integrity of our local ecosystems.

With COVID in retreat, our new administration moving boldly on its environmental agenda, and Texans demanding we rethink some major issues like energy, we now can concentrate on May elections, helping our parks suffering from

budget cuts, and addressing the priorities ACC attendees voted on at the January annual meeting. The higher the score each priority received below indicates the higher the priority.

1. Work to connect, enhance and advocate for "friends of the parks" and similar groups (FAUNA) (65)
2. Work to address climate change (54)
3. Work to address monarch butterfly extinction (48)
4. Watchdog activities where fast action is needed (45)
5. Work to reduce plastic pollution in our environment (41)
6. Take kids on nature adventures to discover the wild (41)

It's Time to Pay Your Dues

Please make us bigger so we can be better.

ACC's size is important when voicing members' environmental interests and concerns to municipal policymakers on issues such as new gas wells.

Plus, it will just make you feel better to increase ACC's environmental voice in Arlington.

See the last page of this newsletter for information on submitting your 2021 dues.

Through with writing checks? You can now pay your dues via PayPal.

www.acctexas.org/pay

Randol Mill Park: Arlington Park Cleanup **Ivory Lowe**

On March 6, Dick Schoech was working at a trash cleanup event in the park when he met Ivory Lowe and other students in a group who were gathering litter. Sensing a common thread, he told Ivory about ACC, and she explained her group's interests. Dick invited Ivory to send information to the Post Oak, and here it is:

Arlington Park Cleanup is a group dedicated to keeping Arlington parks, natural areas and waterways free of litter and pollution. We are an activist group founded by two young women who are passionate about climate justice and improving the pollution crisis. We organize weekly cleanup events with the goal of promoting hands-on community involvement to preserve our natural areas and parks. Through social media engagement and educational activities, we were able to grow our group to a few dozen active members after just a few cleanup events.

As an up-and-coming group fueled by young activists, we are excited to collaborate with other like-minded groups and community members in the area. We welcome you to follow us on Instagram and Facebook for updates and educational content – we hope to see you at our parks!

Instagram: @arlingtonparkcleanup
Facebook: Arlington Park Cleanup
Email: arlingtoncleanup@gmail.com

*Frequent question at ACC meetings:
Where are all the young people?*

One good answer: Out in the parks, picking up trash!



Top Tips for Creating an Eco-friendly Business Carrie Spencer

If you care about the environment and you want to do something about climate change, deforestation, air pollution or the depletion of natural resources, launching an eco-friendly business is a great way to make a positive impact. But where do you start? Getting a business up and running is no easy feat!

Here are some tips to help you navigate the process, from brainstorming ideas to marketing your finished product.

Come Up with a Green Business Idea

There are countless ways to earn money while supporting the environment, whether it means creating products with sustainable materials or offering services with a low carbon footprint.

- Running an environmental website, [blog](#), or newsletter could be a great way to break into the niche.
- If you want to sell products, find out how you can source [sustainable materials](#) and packaging.
- Your business could even target a specific [environmental issue](#), such as ocean pollution.
- For example, you could produce reusable bags and containers to [reduce litter](#).

Take Care of the Legalities

The last thing you want is to deal with legal headaches while juggling the demands of your growing business.

- Research your business name thoroughly before registering it so you can avoid infringing on an existing [trademark](#).
- Check the [zoning laws](#) in your area to make sure the property you're considering is zoned for your type of business.
- Consider forming an LLC to [protect yourself](#) from lawsuits against your business.
- It's also a good idea to protect your business with liability and property [insurance](#).

Learn How to Market Your Business

Show consumers that your business cares about the environment with a good marketing strategy.

- Come up with an [eco-friendly selling point](#), like promoting healthier living with fewer chemicals or low-energy solutions to everyday problems.
- Brand your business with [green](#)



photo via Pexels

[insignias](#) like the Energy Star rating logo.

- Stick to [online marketing](#) to avoid wasteful marketing strategies like direct mail or print advertising.
- Support local vendors and let your customers know that you are working towards a [greener supply chain](#).

Do you want to make the world a better place? Launching a green business is a wonderful way to turn your passion for nature into a profitable business. Follow your dreams and do your part for the environment.

We all need to do our part to make the world a better place. Ready to get involved? Check out the Arlington Conservative Council [blog](#) for more great tips on living green and supporting sustainability in your local community.

Refuse to Use Marylee Thomason

A beginner's guide to single-use plastics

A long time back, Isaac Newton recognized inertia as one of nature's ruling laws — an object at rest will remain at rest unless acted upon by an unbalanced force.

Although well aware of the damage plastics do to our environment, we continue to buy, use and dispose of plastic containers every day. That's inertia. We need an unbalanced force, a kick in the pants, to motivate us to find alternatives.

This column intends to offer verified information and report shared suggestions, tips and tricks for kicking the plastics habit.

Four years ago a leading scholar of reproductive health, Shanna H.

Swan, calculated that in 1973-2011 the sperm count of average men in Western countries had fallen by 59% and that more girls are experiencing early puberty. Now an epidemiologist at Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York, Swan has written a book, *Count Down*, subtitled *How our modern world is threatening sperm counts, altering male and female reproductive development, and imperiling the future of the human race*.

"The problem is a class of chemicals called endocrine disrupters, which mimic the body's hormones" and "can wreak reproductive havoc." They are found in such diverse items as canned food, shampoo and cosmetics, cushions, pesticides and ATM receipts. She goes on to warn against storing and heating food in plastic containers. [Nicholas

Kristof, "What Are Sperm Telling Us?," The New York Times, Feb. 23, 2021]

So what can we do about our plastic consumption and waste?

Take laundry detergent. It traditionally comes in large plastic jugs, but

now we have effective, environmentally safe and reasonably priced options.

Droppps (dropps.com) sells pods of concentrated soap for cold-water wash packaged in cardboard boxes the size of an order of bank checks. No additional packaging surrounds the containers.

One pod = one wash, 28 pods per box. The pod packaging dissolves in the wash, leaving clean, fresh-smelling clothes. The empty box can be recycled or composted. Plus with Dropps you get a goofy CEO in a bathtub [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n5kNBGHoaKI>].

More choices: detergent sheets from tru.earth, wellearthgoods.com and kindlaundry.com, and soap balls from econutssoap.com. If you have used any of these, please send a review.

Next up, toothpaste. What's your eco-friendly preference? Send a review. If you have a question or a suggested subject/product, please write.

Let's kick inertia down the street and get going on ridding our lives of plastics.

contact: maryleest@gmail.com



cartoon by Katharine Thomason

In Case You Missed It Grace Darling



Last month, Colorado regulators unanimously adopted nation-leading **rules to cut methane pollution** from pneumatic devices, an often overlooked but significant source of emissions from oil and gas production. Although small, pneumatic controllers — devices that open and close valves to regulate temperature and pressure at production facilities and well sites — have a serious impact on our climate and air quality. They are the second largest source of methane emissions from oil and gas operations in Colorado, releasing an estimated 132,000+ metric tons of methane — a greenhouse gas over 80X more potent than carbon dioxide — with the same climate impact as 1.9M passenger cars. Nationally, requiring zero-bleed pneumatic controllers for new sources starting in 2022 could reduce 3M metric tons of methane over the

next five years, a near-term climate impact equal to taking about 16.2M cars off the road by 2027. (<https://coloradosun.com/2021/02/19/oil-gas-controllers-colorado-rule-methane-emissions/>)

About **a third of all food produced globally is wasted**, according to the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Almost 1.4B hectares of land — close to 30% of the world's agricultural land — is dedicated to producing food that is never eaten, a huge carbon footprint

from food waste alone. In the UK, about a third of all food is thrown away — half of it in people's homes — making the UK the third largest emitter of CO₂ after the US and China, according to the FAO, and everyone agrees that reducing food waste is one of the most effective ways of tackling the global climate crisis. Enter IT innovation with anti-food-waste apps where eco-conscious consumers can share their unused produce. Some 3.5M people around the world have signed up

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In Case You Missed It continued from page 10

to Olio, Karma or Hubhub, apps designed to encourage people to give away rather than throw away surplus food by linking supermarkets, cafes, restaurants and individual households to local communities. Too Good To Go uses a different model, offering consumers heavily discounted prepared meals that would otherwise be discarded. (<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/mar/21/millions-sign-up-to-anti-food-waste-apps-to-share-their-unused-produce>)

A number of bills being considered by the Texas Legislature deserve our attention. First, the good: House Natural Resources Chairman Tracy King (D-Laredo) has filed two water-related bills set to be heard in committee on Tuesday, March 23. **HB 2225** would empower Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to encourage and facilitate dedication of water rights to preserve instream flows, water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and flows to the bays and estuaries. **HB 2716** would empower TPWD to contest water and wastewater permits that would impact the properties they manage (see [https://sanantonioreport.org/god-is-not-making-more-honey-creeks-](https://sanantonioreport.org/god-is-not-making-more-honey-creeks-longtime-neighbors-clash-over-planned-hill-country-development/)

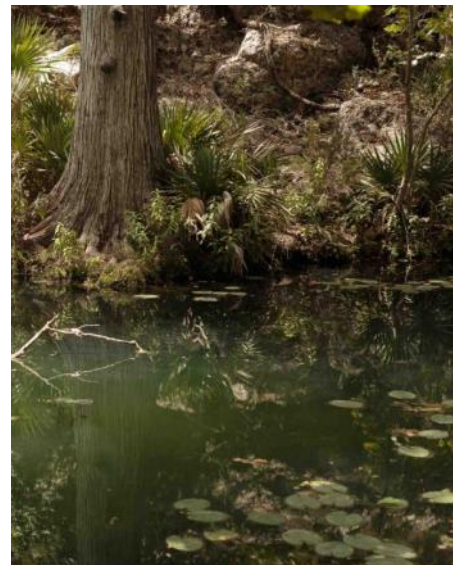
[longtime-neighbors-clash-over-planned-hill-country-development/](https://sanantonioreport.org/god-is-not-making-more-honey-creeks-longtime-neighbors-clash-over-planned-hill-country-development/)). Although **HB 2716** will not allow TPWD to contest Honey Creek Ranch's permit, it would prevent any similar situation where the agency is prohibited from taking meaningful action to protect its charges. (Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance, <https://aquiferalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/GEAA-Comments-HNR-HB2225.pdf>) **HB 416** is also up in the House Environmental Regulations Committee and could use our support. The bill requires permit applications for concrete batch plants to include more detail in their plot plans, such as the location of the baghouse and the property line, which would help to determine whether setback requirements are being met.

The bad, really bad, and awful: **HB 1683** could force Austin to close Barton Springs Pool! The bill would prohibit political subdivisions and state agencies from participating in actions that would affect oil and gas operations or risk losing all state grant funding.

On a different tack, **HB 2962** not only fails to accomplish the supposed goal of halting high-

level waste coming to Texas, but proposes surcharge changes that will cost Texas hundreds of millions of dollars. **HB 2962** is a giveaway to special interest Waste Control Specialists.

Topping the list of awfuls is **HB 17**, a bill endorsed by the oil and gas industry, which is terrified because a growing number of people are becoming aware that natural gas is neither clean nor good for the environment — and not the most affordable option, either. **HB 17** is a broad bill that is very restrictive and could prevent local governments or regulators from offering incentives for energy-efficient electric appliances or updating building codes to encourage electrification. (<https://actionnetwork.org/groups/alliance-for-a-clean-texas/>)



Very Miscellaneous



It's All About the Lights

Turn off your lights at 8:30 Saturday as the beginning of your participation in the first virtual **Earth Hour**. Why? In 2007 the first event was aimed at calling attention to climate change. "Today, Earth Hour aims to increase awareness and spark global conversations on protecting nature not only to combat the climate crisis, but to ensure our own health, happiness, prosperity and even survival." You will find much more information on the website, and opportunities to become involved through social media.

The Lights Out program emphasizes the crucial role of big city buildings going dark during spring and fall bird migration. Learn about Fort Worth's role in the March 19 *Star-Telegram* or [here](#). You can also read about the important activities of Texas cities at [this website](#).



Blackland Prairie Site Guy Random



*Two words for the March prairie:
green and small. Everything's dirty
yellow and brown until you stop and
stoop. Then you see that February's
terrible cold could not deter spring
on our prairie.*



Molly Hollar Wildscape Update Marylee Thomason

Life is never dull at the wildscape. Unexpected adventure always awaits.

On Jan. 27 it was 38 degrees at 9 am, and Ann Knudsen declined to cancel the workday. We were “invited” to come, but not “expected.” There was nothing exciting going on, but Ann knew her volunteers. At 8:45 Josephine Keeney and Joe Martinez were already there. Half an hour later cold-averse Jane Oosterhuis arrived, followed by Carol Marcotte. Marylee Thomason had showed up with the early birds to tag along on a meeting with park manager Donna Holmes. No one dodged work for a little piddling cold.

Donna resolved the mystery of the disappearing Eagle Scout bridge. It had been lying damaged for over a year but suddenly vanished. Wild rumors flew. An angry mob might have stormed the grounds, if wildscapers were of that bent. The answer was simple. The park assets manager had carried it away for another Eagle Scout to repair, improve and reinstall. Sigh of relief. The buzz faded.

Real genius lurks under those garden hats. Josephine Keeney proved it. There was an element of desperation since the skunks and raccoons regularly raid the

greenhouse plants kept outside. But from challenges spring solutions. In this case, milk cartons. Turns out you can pack six gallon-sized pots in a milk carton. That makes a package too heavy for even the mightiest raccoon to tip over to explore the soil for worms. Cheap, effective, readily available. Genius.

Earlier in the month, workers gathered to transfer sedges from the northeast end of the sidewalk to the bioswale. Are we close enough for a little friendly rivalry? Oh, yeah! Bev Crawford and Marylee Thomason were working away digging and putting clumps into a wheelbarrow for delivery to Ann Knudsen and Robin Agee. Bev came back reporting that we were ahead of them and might need to slow down. About that time, Eric Strickland arrived, so the pace did anything but slow down. When he returned after delivering the next wheelbarrow load, he explained that Ann and Robin were now overwhelmed. “Let’s bury ’em,” Bev said, and we set to work with a vengeance.

The Molly Hollar Privet Pull this year attracted the usual suspects and afforded a chance to razz a fellow volunteer. Carol Marcotte told on Joe Martinez so we ganged up and sang “Happy Birthday” to him. It’s hard to



From left, Bev Crawford, Ann Knudsen, Robin Agee. “Let’s bury ’em!”

embarrass Joe, though. He joined in leading the chorus.

The loppers, clippers and shovels all came out of the shed and were deployed in the battle against privet. Given a chance, the invasive bush would take over the world, but the wildscape freedom fighters beat it back another year.

Jim Domke teamed with Josephine Keeney to ferret out the last of the winter honeysuckle. Ann Knudsen prowled the riverbank. Jane Oosterhuis and Carol Marcotte caught anything that dared show its black berries along the woodland trails. Robin Agee and Marylee Thomason waded through the leaves and ducked

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Wildscape Update continued from page 14

under the briar to pull, dig, cut and paint in the wake of Joe Martinez, who tackled the big stands all by himself.

One solitary hero showed her stuff. If there ever was a question about a woman's lack of strength or ability, Kay Sekio dismantled it. Working alone, she wrangled the monster privet puller with finesse and yanked out piles of the offending alien.

It was impossible to miss the straight stones that line the trails. In the past they have looked like neglected teeth badly in need of a dentist. But now they're secure and properly placed. None are down the hill or snagged to one side. In fact, they look so right, we hardly notice them. Thank you, Rich Wright. We know you did this on your own time and without asking for or expecting any ballyhoo.

continued on page 16



Screech owl at the pavilion.



Josephine Keeney and Jim Domke ferret out the last of the invasive winter honeysuckle.



Privet trembles at the sight of Kay Sekio. She single-handedly yanks it out by the roots.



Jane Oosterhuis, left, promoter of the cut-and-paint method, and Carol Marcotte, who can always be counted on to help, went scouting for privet beside the trails.



Joe Martinez, left, and Eric Strickland made a dynamic duo. Sadly, Eric is moving, and we miss him already.

Wildscape Update continued from page 15

Wildscape Extra: *left*, perfectly arranged stones now line the wildscape trails, thanks to the hard work of Rich Wright. *right*, The annual prime time for coralberry was a week or so ago, just before new leaves emerged and obscured that remarkable mass of color.



The Watchdog Needs You

watchdog@acctexas.org

We try hard, but we can't keep up with every environmental thing.
So if you see something we should know about,
email a message to the watchdog.



Here's to Hope, Maybe Grace Darling

Earth: We could have saved it,
but we were too damned cheap.

Kurt Vonnegut

The Economist [Feb 20, 2021] puts it this way: “Texas winter storm typifies the [enormous] problems facing energy in America. Although nobody can be sure if this particular freeze was a sign of climate change, the growing frequency of extreme weather across the country is. Texas infracture has buckled. Gas-fired plants and a nuclear reactor were hit as well as wind turbines. Worse, Texas has too little capacity and its poorly connected grid was unable to import power from elsewhere. Texas shows that America needs both a cleaner grid and a more reliable one.

Plans to overhaul American energy will come before Congress in the next few months. President Joe Biden has said that he wants fossil-fuel emissions from power generation to end by 2035 and the economy to be



carbon neutral by 2050. America is not just the world's second-largest emitter, but also a source of climate-related policy, technology and potentially leadership. What is about to unfold in Washington will set the course in America for the next decade — and quite possibly beyond.

Unfortunately, America brings little credibility to action on climate. Congress has not considered serious climate legislation since 2009. Today must be different. There will never be a better chance for Pres. Biden to show real ambition. If the blackouts in Texas are any guide, it would not just be the world that would thank him, but Americans, too.”

And with thanks to Don Young for making us aware of it, this excerpted piece by Margaret Renkl from *The New York Times* [March 15, 2021]: “In honor of the spring equinox, I offer some news that might bring a glimmer of light in all the darkness of rolling pandemics, the near annihilation of birds and insects, and even the end of sharks. I share these stories with the usual caveat attached to any kind of climate optimism: Hope is not a license to relax. Hope is only a reminder not to give up.



New Zealand's takahe was once considered extinct.

- Creatures we thought we'd lost forever still have a chance. These so-called Lazarus species suggest that recovery can sometimes be possible even when all seems lost.
- Creatures we've never seen before keep turning up. Newly identified species remind us again of how urgent it is to save as much as we can save as quickly as we can save it, while species diversity remains rich.
- Renewable energy is edging out fossil fuels. Solar power is the cheapest electricity we have, which means that capitalism is now on its side, and even Big Oil is beginning to pivot from extracting carbon to storing it. We are heading in the right direction, we just need to pick up speed.

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Here's to Hope continued from page 17

- We have finally started to plan for what we can't stop. Addressing climate change, [habitat] loss, and diminishing diversity requires more than simply finding ways to halt the worst damage before it arrives. We also need to mitigate the damage from what cannot be undone. [Think] wildlife bridges and tunnels that address ecosystem fragmentation. Bacteria that eat plastic. Drones that plant trees. Lab-grown meat.
- Conservation nonprofits are winning in court. Thanks to their efforts, courts recently stopped a Trump-approved oil-drilling project in the Arctic, ordered reinstatement of a red-wolf restoration project in North Carolina, halted plans to allow trophy hunting of grizzly bears in Yellowstone, and forced a reconsideration of oil drilling on federal land in five Western states. These and dozens of other examples reinforce the importance of supporting conservation nonprofits with every penny we can spare.
- People are waking up. Oil companies successfully turned climate change into a politically divisive issue, but that's changing. More than half of all Americans now characterize themselves as either 'alarmed' or 'concerned' about climate change, and those numbers are growing.



Nobody wants to breathe polluted air or drink polluted water. Nobody wants to lose the insects that pollinate their crops or the birds that sing in their trees. Nobody wants to watch their forests go up in flames or their beaches wash away. We are a big-brained, big-hearted species, and we are finally waking up. And that's what gives me the most hope of all."

Pay your ACC dues today.

(Application form on the last page.)

Why?

We're all counting on YOU.

And lots of us are cute.



Southwest Nature Preserve

Friends of SWNP Events & Programs

Friends of SWNP events and programs are free and open to the public.

For more information about Southwest Nature Preserve and to sign up for email updates, see www.swnp.org or email info@swnp.org.

Friends meetings, programs and activities continue to be on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic. You will enjoy much more about the preserve when you take a look at the [December newsletter](#).

Kennedale plans could benefit SWNP Annabelle Corboy

Since 2018, the city of Kennedale has been working on a plan to highlight and enhance the creek systems that run through the city. The plan is of interest to the Friends of Southwest Nature Preserve. Especially interesting is a proposed wildlife crossing to connect SWNP with Village Creek and Winding Creek wildlife travel corridors. The Friends of SWNP have been represented in the stakeholder meetings by Lynn Healy and Jan Miller.

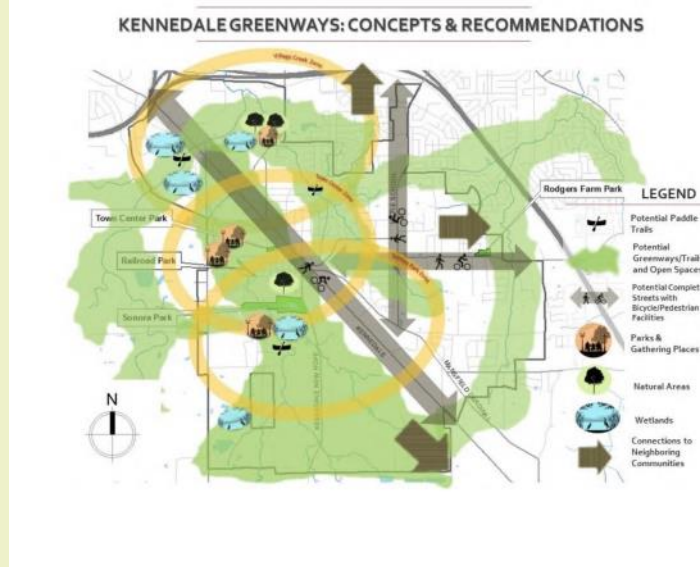
Melissa Dailey, Director of Planning and Economic Development for the city of Kennedale, described the plans and answered questions about how they impact the Southwest Nature Preserve.

The Greenways creek system in Kennedale consists of Village, Kennedale, and Winding Creeks and the surrounding areas. The project has identified opportunities to create gathering places alongside nature and a citywide network of pathways which could connect Kennedale neighborhoods, parks, schools, churches, and local businesses. The project plan was developed through surveys, public meetings, and conversations with community members and experts.

This program was the Friends' first ZOOM program. Anyone looking for more information about the Greenways Project should check out their website and presentation:

<https://www.cityofkennedale.com/780/Greenways-Project>

AT-A-GLANCE: Concept Plan



Southwest Nature Preserve continued from page 19

Coming Attractions

In 2020 the Friends of SWNP cancelled all programs after February and held an October Anniversary commemoration via Facebook Live. During 2021 we look forward to hosting some socially-distanced programs at SWNP and other programs via ZOOM. Coming up are:

April 10, Bird Song Walk, at SWNP

April 20, Reptiles and Amphibians of SWNP and Beyond, via ZOOM

May 18, Bats of the Area, at SWNP

April 30 – May 3, Yucca Moth Evening Walk at SWNP as part of the City Nature Challenge

Check the website, www.swnp.org, for details.

The Great Backyard Bird Count of 2021 Jim Frisinger

It would prove to be an omen for the Great Deep Freeze of 2021. Sleet made Arlington streets hazardous an hour before the annual Great Backyard Bird Count was to begin Saturday morning, Feb. 13, at the Southwest Nature Preserve. Temperatures were well below freezing — a record since the count began in 2007. Minutes before start time, the count was canceled. But wait.

By 3:15 Saturday afternoon, the sun having come out, the temperature had risen to 34 degrees and the roads were now dry. Jim Frisinger, birding coordinator for the Friends of Southwest Nature Preserve, headed out to the preserve to record whatever he could. The 14th Great Backyard Bird Count would still contribute to the worldwide effort by hundreds of thousands of citizen scientists to generate useful data to monitor the health of bird populations.

Twenty-two species and 79 birds were counted in two hours. It proved that increased participation (14 birders a year ago) make a big difference, when 40 species and 274 were counted. On the other hand, chilly temperatures always depress the count, as the birds hunker down. Wait 'til next year!



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Southwest Nature Preserve continued from page 20

2021 GBBC list for SWNP

3 cormorants
 13 mallards
 2 buffleheads
 11 gadwalls
 10 ring-necked ducks
 2 pied-billed grebes
 14 northern shovelers
 1 great blue heron
 1 green-winged teal
 1 lesser scaup
 1 American coot
 1 Eastern phoebe
 1 tufted titmouse
 1 house finch
 3 red-winged blackbirds
 3 American robins
 3 yellow-rumped warblers
 1 white-crowned sparrow
 1 Carolina chickadee
 3 dark-eyed juncos
 1 crow
 2 vultures (not clear which)

Clockwise from top,

Great blue heron

Green-winged teal

White-crowned sparrow

Yellow-rumped warbler

Red-winged blackbird



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April Zoom Meeting**Texas Blackland Prairie: Past, Present, Future****Brandon Belcher,****North Texas Preserves Manager, The Nature Conservancy****Wednesday, April 7, 6:30 pm****Watch your email for details**