

# The Leader



Newsletter of the Dallas Flyfishers ♦ May 2026  
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FLY FISHERS  
INTERNATIONAL

## On The Water

by Dave Smith

The spring fishing season is on with many fly fishers reporting good days on the water and a high catch rate. I have fished a number of ponds in my area and was surprised that it was the bass that I caught mostly. We had the warm weather early in the year and that got things rolling. The weed growth started and now most ponds are closed in along the bank with weeds.

I decided to go river fishing and headed to the Elm Fork of the Trinity River. The water flow was very high with the river far out of its banks. The current river conditions made for a difficult time with limited access to the river. Moving downstream, the water was farther out of the river banks over 100 feet or more in some areas and into the adjacent fields. The fish could be seen

farther out in the normal river channel as they rose to feed from the surface. The time spent walking along the river was quiet with only the sound of the heavy water flow. I had time to look around and check out nature along the way. Still a good day on the river.

The busy time for the club is here, so be sure to check the calendar in The Leader to find outings and events. The Fly Tying Class held at Cabela's in Allen is the 3rd Tuesday of the month, so contact Dan Montayne to add your name to the class list. Need help with your casting? Arrive early to the monthly meeting at 6pm in the gym for practice and tips to help you.

Till next time, hope to see you on the water or at the tying bench.

*Dave Smith*  
President, Dallas FlyFishers



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# DFF Program Schedule

## DFF Board 2026

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dshatz86@gmail.com

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montayne@verizon.net

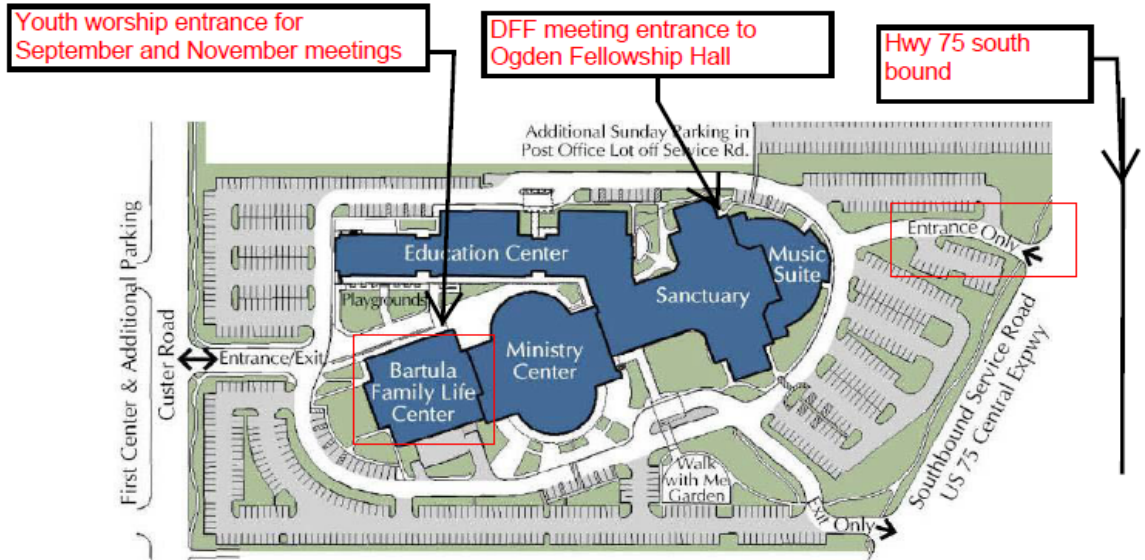
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**Outings Chair**  
Joel Williams  
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joel.williams53@gmail.com

**Programs**  
Danny Soltau  
406-600-6732  
dan@dirtywaterflyco.com



located between Arapaho (to the north) and Beltline (to the south) Rds  
address: 503 N Central Expy, Richardson, TX 75080

Next month's meeting will be **May 4th**, at our regular meeting location at First United Methodist Church (FUMC), 503 N. Central Expressway, Richardson, TX 75080.

**Location:** Youth Room • **Time:** 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

**Casting Practice:** Gym, 6:00 PM – 6:45 PM (unless noted)

May 4th—DFF Monthly Meeting, Youth Room, **Zack Bruce** - fishing local waters

June 1st—DFF Monthly Meeting, Youth Room, **Josh Nugent**

July 6th—DFF Monthly Meeting, Ogden Room, **Kristian Cole** - Dallas Tyers Club, Fly Tying Meeting

August 3rd—DFF Monthly Meeting, Youth Room

September 14th—DFF Monthly Meeting, Youth Room

October 5th—DFF Monthly Meeting, Youth Room

November 2nd—DFF Monthly Meeting, Youth Room

December 6th—DFF Holiday Party

## July Meeting Sign-Up

The July meeting is our in-person tying meeting. Bill Sargeant is going to be out-of-town, so we have Kristian Cole of the Dallas Tyers Club coming to present some exciting patterns. This meeting targets the Intermediate Level and above tyer, but anyone is welcome to attend, socialize, watch, ask questions. If you are planning to attend and tie, please email Julia Bell at [flyfshrgl@gmail.com](mailto:flyfshrgl@gmail.com) NO LATER THAN JUNE 4TH 2026.

## Happy May Fly Anglers!

If you have any content that you would like featured in the newsletter, please reach out to Julia Bell, [flyfshrgl@gmail.com](mailto:flyfshrgl@gmail.com)

Sincerely, The Dallas Fly Fishers

Reach us: <https://dot.cards/dallasflyfishers>

or use your mobile to scan the QR code here:



# 2026 Calendar

**May 1st - 2nd:** FFI 4th Annual Gulf Coast Classic Fly Fishing Festival, Learning Campus, Gulf State Park, 20249A State Park RD, Gulf Shores, AL 36542

**May 2nd:** Alamo Fly Fishers' Bud Priddy Any Fly Event, Nueces River from Camp Wood to Uvalde, TX, Nueces River RV, 32598 Texas 55, Uvalde, TX 78801

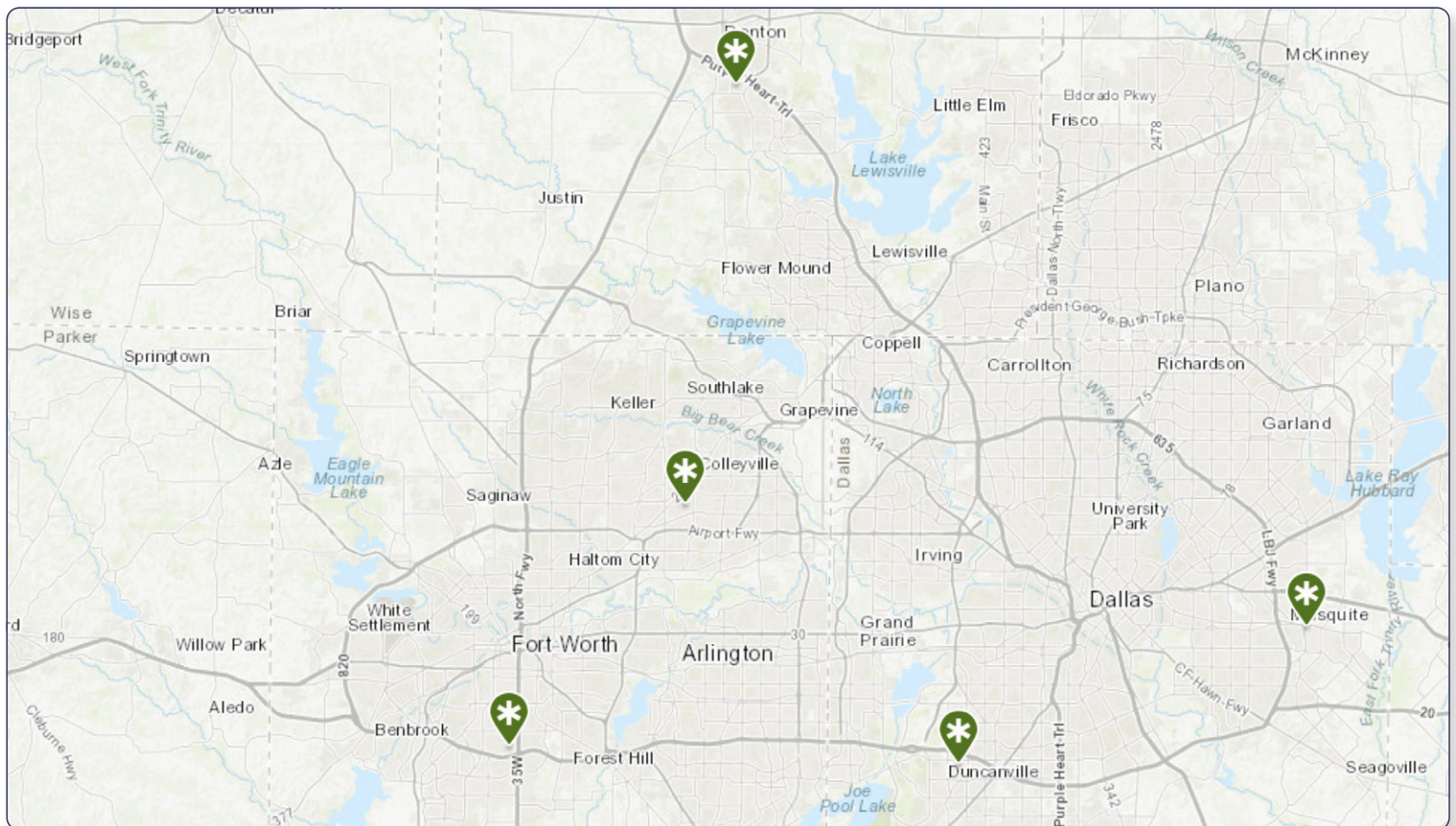
**May 16th:** Stoney Hollow Park Pond Outing, 7:30 am, 4100 Coldwater Creek Ln, Plano, TX 75074

**September 24th – 26th:** FFI Fly Fest, Redding Civic Auditorium, 700 Auditorium DR, Redding, CA 96001  
**November 6th – 8th:** Toledo Bend Rendezvous, North Toledo Bend SP, Zwolle, LA 71486

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## TPWD Neighborhood Fish Stocking Program

If you're looking to chase Catfish on a fly rod, TPWD has begun its Catfish stocking program and there are several Metroplex places to go Catfishing. For more information, visit [TPWD's Neighborhood Fish Stocking Program](#). TPWD also has a Facebook Page with notifications about their stocking program named Inland Fisheries – [Dallas – Fort Worth District – Texas Parks and Wildlife](#).



# Latham Springs Outing Recap

by Jeff Ziehm

Our Latham Springs outing had another strong showing, with 19 members in attendance. Joining us were Chris Atkins, Cody Bell, Julia Bell, Shel Dail, Vaughn DuBose, Ron Eberhardt, Brad Edwards, Doug Forney, Daniel Inns, Pat Kennedy, Grant Murphy, Bob Nachtrieb, Matt Nachtrieb, Al Palmer, Mariya Palmer, Dave Shatzer, Mark Wegmann, and Jeff Ziehm. My apologies if I omitted anyone.

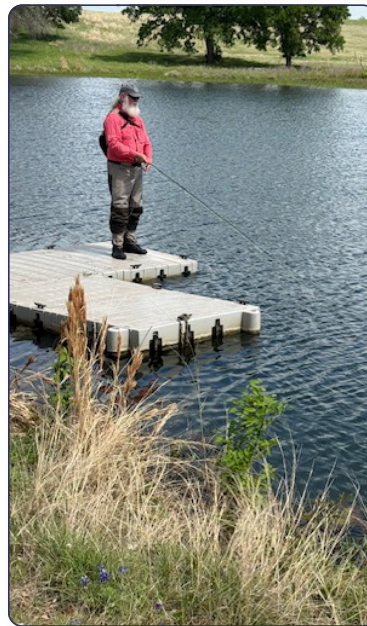
We were blessed with beautiful weather. The fishing success varied wildly. Two members reported catching more than 30 fish, while others had anything from slow days to steady action.

Lots of Largemouth bass, lots of sunfish, at least one crappie in the lake, and at least one hybrid in the river. Shel Dail threw at a carp, but it got spooked.

Pat Kennedy's friend, Doug Forney caught the mystery species. One unidentified species—with a mouthful of big teeth—made an appearance. See the accompanying photo if you think you can help id.

After about an hour on the lake, where a Miss Prissy popper produced well, Julia and I headed down to the river. The water was low, about 15cfs, but holes could still be found.

I caught a good sized Hybrid White Bass on a white WB like fly. Hybrids really fight. Funny story, I hooked a 6" bass. I was reeling him in when a 2 lb bass crashed him trying to eat him, but he missed. He tried again but missed. I kept pulling the bait bass way from the larger bass. On the 5th attempt, the large bass was successful in engulfing the 6" bass. I played the two



bass tandem for about two minutes, before the big bass spit out the 6” bass. The little guy was a little punch drunk, but he swam away to fight another day.

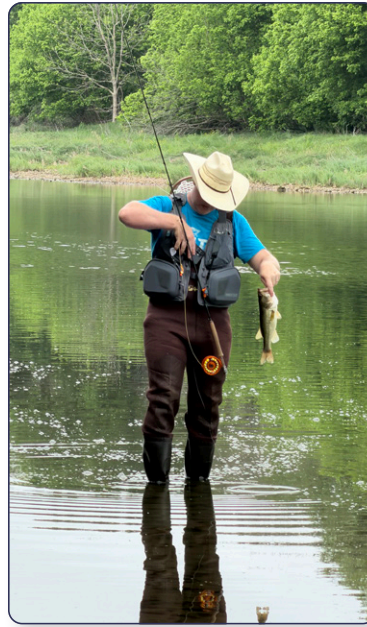
Grant Murphy, who calls himself “the rokiest of rokiest” when it comes to fly fishing without a guide, made these firsts.

- First 2 fish caught without a guide. One in the Brazos, one in the pond. I went 0 for 500 at the last outing.
- First fly pattern change while standing in the water.
- First successful tying of a surgeons knot not conducted in my easy chair.
- First use of my 8-4 rod from Dirty Waters.
- First outing without losing a fly due to a crappy knot.

Grant, thank you for sharing. We were all once “the rokiest of rokiest!”

After fishing everyone enjoyed lunch under the shade of their large live oak trees. Mariya Palmer made sure everyone had enough fudge. Thank you Mariya.

We’ll be back at Latham Springs again this fall—I hope to see you there.



# Upcoming DFF Outings

## Stoney Hollow Park Pond Outing

Join us for the DFF April Outing on the morning of April 18th! We'll be fishing at Stoney Hollow Park Pond, just southwest of Hickey Elementary School, located at:

### Hickey Elementary School

4100 Coldwater Creek Ln, Plano, TX 75074

This is a City of Plano Public Park

We'll meet in the parking lot at the far southwest corner of the school parking lot. (See Map Below). Meet at the red dot below

### Schedule & Location

- Meet @ 7:30 AM
- Fish for several hours
- Head to either Ye'Old Butcher Shop or Lockhart's for some lunch

### Fishing Details

Target species include:

- Panfish
- Largemouth Bass
- Carp

We recommend bringing a 4- to 6-weight rod.

Recommended flies:

- Poppers
- Small to mid-sized streamers

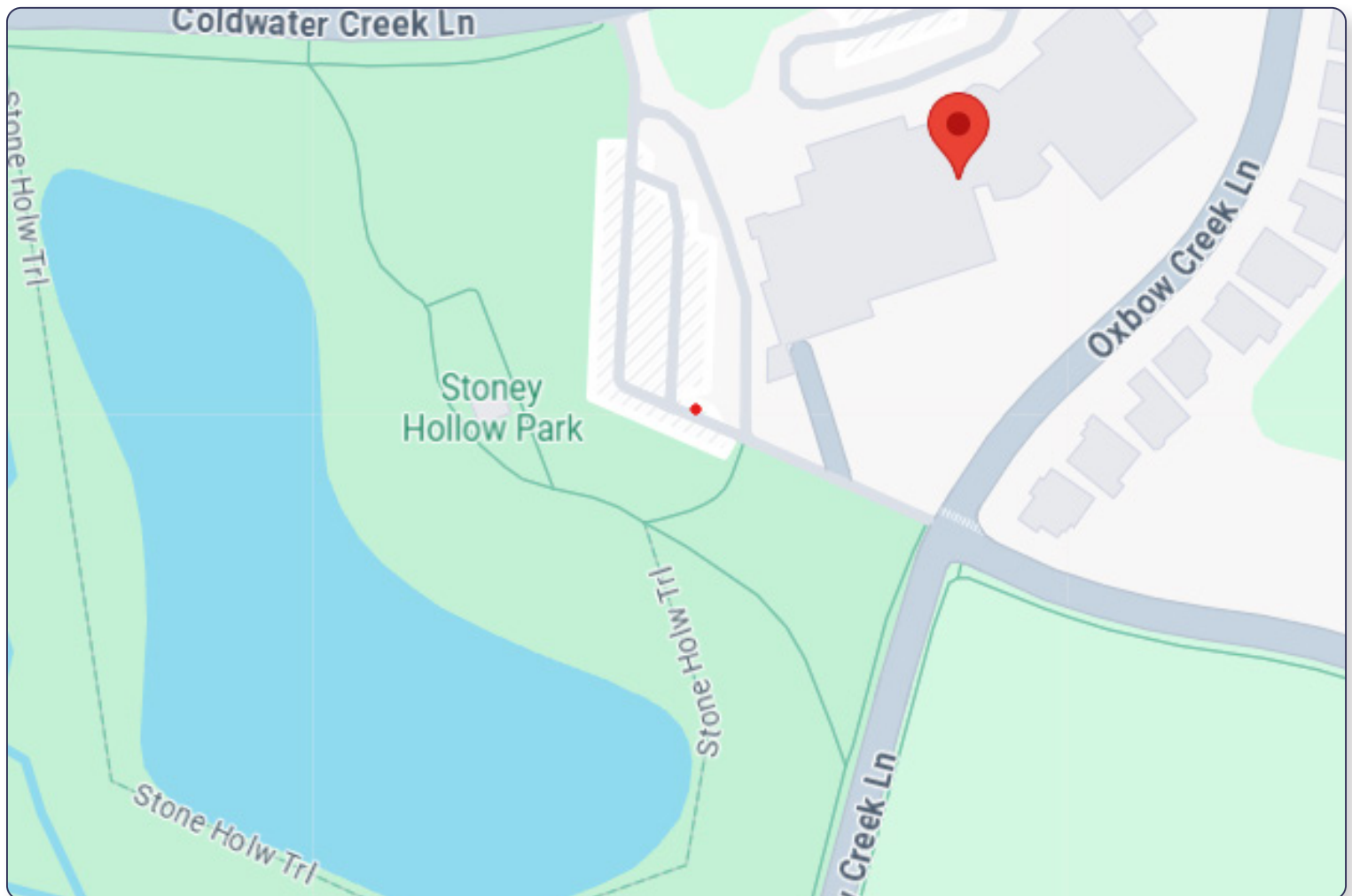
### RSVP

Please RSVP with Joel Williams so we can plan appropriately for camping arrangements:

(972) 880-1788

[joel.williams53@gmail.com](mailto:joel.williams53@gmail.com)

We look forward to seeing you!



# Upcoming DFF Outings

## South Fork, Colorado Outing

The Dallas Fly Fishers (DFF) and Fort Worth Fly Fishers (FWFF) will again be holding a joint outing to South Fork, Colorado this July. Dates for 2026 are July 11-18.

It is the responsibility of the attendees to make their own travel and hotel plans, and bring their own gear. There is fishing available that will satisfy most anglers; small creeks, large rivers, and high mountain lakes.

Our home base will be the The LOGE - Wolfcreek.

<https://logecamps.com/property/wolfcreek>

You can make your reservations using the link below. This link provides a 12% discount over the standard internet rate.

[LOGE Reservations](#)

We meet informally every morning to discuss the day, and spread out nicely. Every evening there is an informal “where did you go today and how did you do?” gathering. The Lodge has a great community room that can be used for our gatherings if weather conditions are inclement. Remember to bring a camping chair, as we gather outside if the weather is nice.

Most will leave on Saturday mid-morning and drive most of the way there, stopping somewhere between Amarillo, Tx and



Walsenburg, Colorado. Spend the night and head on into South Fork Sunday morning. Fish Sunday afternoon, and next 5 days, and return home the following weekend.

You can also fly to Denver, Colorado Springs, Albuquerque, or Durango and rent a car.

Please let me know if you are thinking of attending. If you have any questions, contact Jeff Ziehm, 214-202-2826, [jziehm55@gmail.com](mailto:jziehm55@gmail.com).



# Go Fish!

## Brazos River Fish Camp

by Jeff Ziehm

Brazos Outing - Long Time in the Making. I won the Brazos River Fish Camp outing at the 2024 Holiday Party. The raffle donation was generously donated by Will Herring and Jordan Marsh, owners of Brazos River Fish Camp. Cody Bell and I planned on going in April of 2025, but back surgery got in the way.

Will was kind enough to let us reschedule to April of 2026. This was supposed to be a two day outing, half day evening plus half day morning the next day. This first half days was going fine (7or 8 small bass) until a stomach bug kicked in. This was as sick as I have felt in quite a while. I will skip the details, but it was not pretty. Some how I made it home the next morning.

While I was struggling to get home the next morning, Cody was killing it. Large bass, sunfish, carp, and smallmouth buffalo. Huge fish. Oh well, next time.



## Go Fish!

Our members are taking the card game to a whole new level. Their literal interpretation serves as an inspiration to us all, and what an active bunch we have who love to cast a fly and Go Fish! This new column lets us share in everyone's fishing passion and adventures each month. Feel free to post your photos, story, blurb on our Facebook page or email Julia Bell, interim newsletter editor, [flyfshrgri@gmail.com](mailto:flyfshrgri@gmail.com). Short or long, we want your adventures!



**Jeff Ziehm** - Some of the older club members may remember Hector Macedo. Hector and I had lunch today. Hector was the club president in 1992. Hector is 93 years old, walks 2 miles every day, and bowls twice a week. Just amazing.

**Al Palmer** - Showed up to Stony Hollow despite the weather. Decided if the fish don't mind getting a little wet, I don't mind catching them. Was able to land 2 of the 5 bites over the hour I was there. Fished my way around the pond to the other fly fisher crazy enough to come out this morning and found our Jeff Ziehm. Wet, chilly, and fun till lightening chased us away.

**Jeff Gannon** - 1st bass and bluegill on a fly rod by member Parrish Present after "beginner fly fishing class" auction bid he won at the DFF Auction! He continued to fish and caught about 20 fish yesterday on 3/31. We both had an enjoyable day at my Sunset Ridge Ranch yesterday for about 6 hours!



*Jeff Ziehm with Hector Macedo*



*Al Palmer*



*Jeff Gannon*



*Al Palmer*



*Jeff Gannon*

# May Conservation Corner

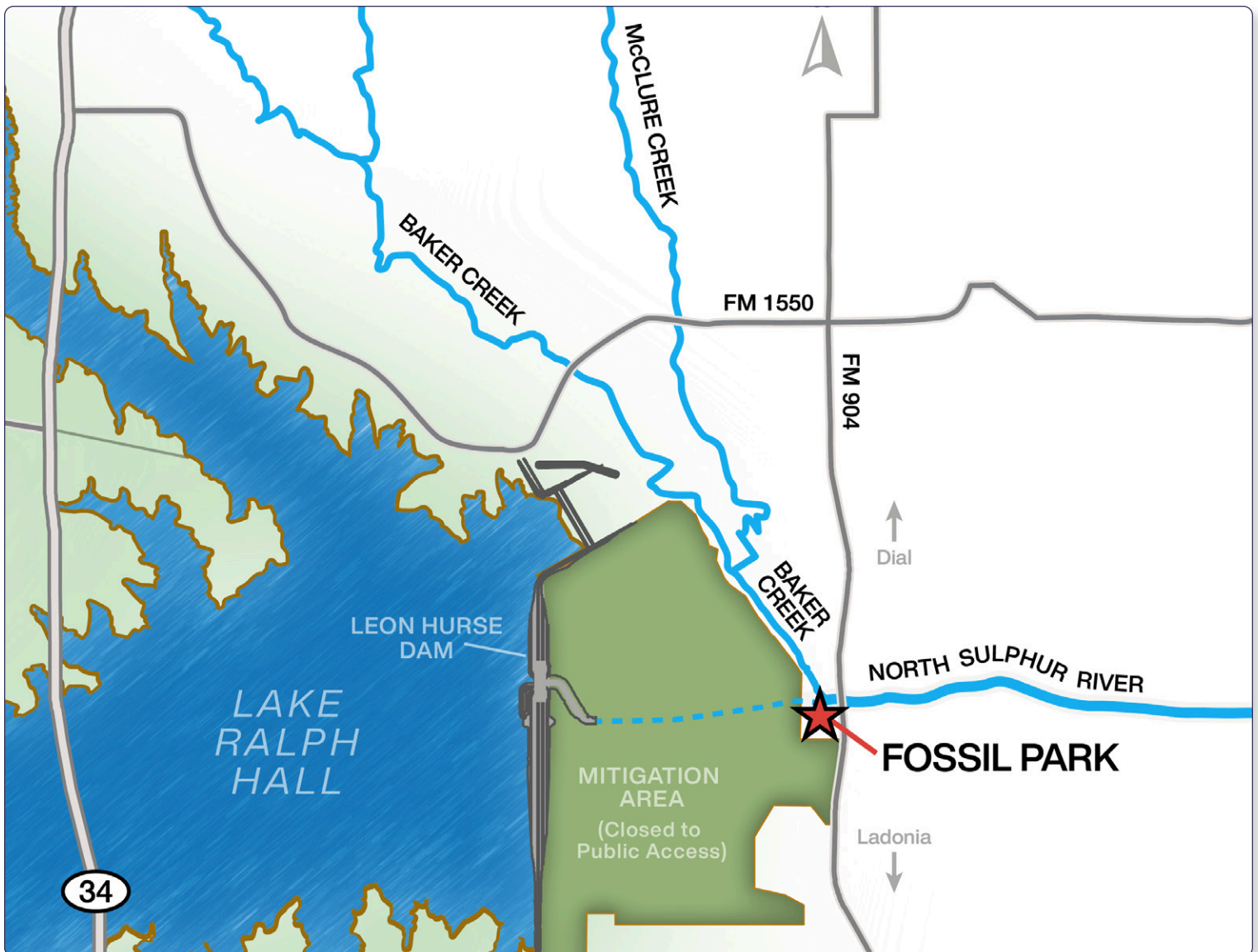
## Lake Ralph Hall

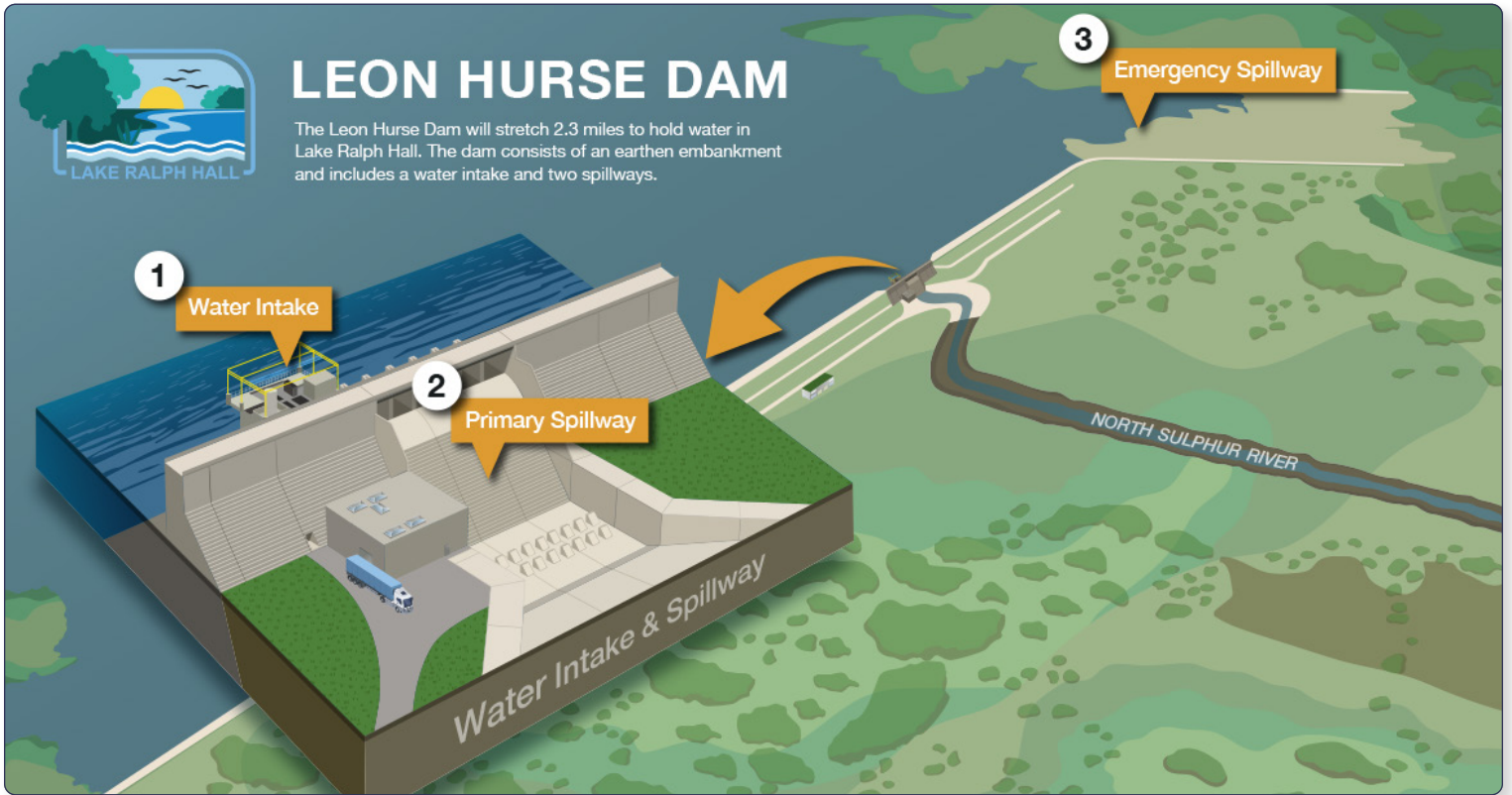
by Julia Bell

With the rapacious growth Collin and Denton Counties have seen in the last five years, Lake Ralph Hall's impoundment cannot happen quickly enough. Located in southeast Fannin County north of Ladonia, Lake Ralph Hall is about 1½ hours northeast of Dallas off of SH 34. Lake Ralph Hall comes under the auspices of the Upper Trinity Regional Water District and serves all of Denton County and portions of Collin and Dallas Counties.<sup>1</sup> Created in 1989 as a non-profit government agency and conservation and reclamation district, the Upper Trinity Regional Water District works to provide water, wastewater, solid waste,

and watershed protection. Lake Ralph Hall will be the only lake to-date under its advocacy.

Lake Ralph Hall's construction began in June 2021, just as the North Texas Municipal Water District was nearing their completion of Bois d'Arc Lake in northeast Fannin County. These two lakes are the first and second major reservoirs Texas has seen since Lake Naconiche was built in 2009.<sup>2</sup> The lake's main water supply is the headwater of the North Sulphur River. Part of the lake's impoundment purpose was to control the extensive erosion created by the North Sulphur River. Originally, the North Sulphur River





was approximately 10 feet wide and 16 – 20 feet deep—more creek-like than river, but in the 1920s, farmers channelized the river’s course, which then resulted in extreme erosion and poor flood control as the river channel expanded to 350 feet wide and a depth of 60 feet in places. “In order to build the lake, the district had to get a permit from the [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers](#), and the restoration project was a necessary condition for the permit, explained Ed Motley, UTRWD project manager for Lake Ralph Hall.”<sup>3</sup> The UTRWD contracted with Texas Mitigation Solutions to build five new streams, which had been connected to the North Sulphur River prior to the channelization. Seeking to stop massive erosion, habitat destruction, and costly bridge repairs, the project restored six miles/32,000 linear feet of streams which follow 80% of their original channels, that will be monitored for functionality and stability, supporting the local ecosystem, proper stream geomorphology, vegetation growth, wildlife habitats, and water quality. “According to TMS Construction Manager Dustin Fitzgerald, banks were stabilized with native vegetation, biodegradable matting, and willow stakes. Approximately 40,000 native trees were planted as part of this project to stabilize stream banks and improve soil health. Logs and gravel were also added to create riffles that support local wildlife by forming pools for frogs and

bugs.”<sup>4</sup> These streams lie just below Hall’s 2.3 mile long Leon Hurse Dam and once again meander through the Blackland Prairie.

In addition to ACOE permits, the UTRWD operates under Texas Historical Commission permits which requires the conservation of archeological artifacts. UTRWD partnered with the Perot Museum to study, extract, and identify noteworthy fossil discoveries like the 2022 *Tylosaurus* discovery.<sup>5</sup> As the area is an archeologically rich one due to the dinosaurs, mammoths, and Caddo Indians who once roamed the area,<sup>6</sup> concern for artifacts and the NSR Ladonia Fossil Park merits attention. The UTRWD contracted with AR Consultants to manage, study, handle, and record the discovered artifacts and fossils. The Center for Archaeological Studies at Texas State University in San Marcos will serve as the repository for all curated reports and physical finds.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, UTRWD responded by building a new fossil park downstream of Hurse Dam on Baker Creek implementing improvements from the original Ladonia Fossil Park.

While water benefits and improvements are readily measurable, heated opposition to Lake Ralph Hall existed, especially from the 2005 Flower Mound city leaders and affected farmers and landowners. Some of the biggest



concerns were: Why flood 11,200 acres to prevent annual loss of around 100 acres to erosion? Would the loss of tax revenue caused by turning farmland into a reservoir be a financial burden on the local school districts? How much money is being set aside to compensate families for land that has been their livelihood for generations? Are we displacing people in Fannin County because land is cheaper here? Would Upper Trinity drain the lake during drought conditions? And how does Upper Trinity feel about a utility district around Lake Ralph Hall? <sup>8</sup>

If I were a landowner in the impoundment zone, it would have angered me to lose my land, especially multigenerational land. I have always felt if an area needed a water source, build the water source in the area—Lake Arlington, Grapevine Lake, Lake Granbury, Lake Lewisville, Lake Pat Cleburne, Lake Worth, and White Rock Lake—are just some examples. Yes, it limits land that can be developed, but isn't overdeveloping the reason why many lakes are constructed? The land loss to all the pipe construction to carry water from Fannin County to Dallas, Denton, and Collin Counties would have made me livid, as I never want to be caught in the middle of someone else's fight or problems, and the recourse to address any grievances is basically nonexistent. Flower Mound's then-mayor, Jody Smith, and then city manager, Van Smith, felt Lake Ralph Hall was the most expensive solution to needed water resources, and that the water costs for the customers relying on Lake Ralph Hall would see water bill prices that would be beyond their residents' budget. It, and many of the other opposition questions are in a wait-and-see situation. As to compensation, the Texas Water Board originally approved \$44.7 million in

2015 to UTMWD for their land acquisition needs, and a second approval in July 2019 of \$45.5 to complete land acquisitions. ("Funding comes from a \$2 billion fund established by a 2013 Texas constitutional amendment to carry out the state's long-range water plan." <sup>9</sup>) Will Lake Ralph Hall be beneficial to the immediate, Fannin County area? In economic terms, yes, but their infrastructure beyond the new lake bridge will need serious attention. Are they ready to have a population growth? How long will Ladonia receive water "at no expense?" How will they expand their school system? Regardless, when Ladonia Mayor Leon Hurse and Ladonia Chamber of Commerce began planning to develop a lake in Fannin County in the late 20th century to serve their needs, and then encouraged by U.S. Congressman Ralph Hall in 2004 to seek a larger partner, their dreams are finally coming to fruition.

#### **Quick Facts:**

Cost: \$490 million dollars

Lake water capacity: 58.7 billion gallons

Lake water supply: 35 million gallons daily average

Lake surface area: 7,600 acres or just under 12 square miles

Planned construction: 2020 – 2025 vs. Actual Construction: 2021 – 2026

Pipeline delivery: 32 miles of 54" – 60" diameter

Total land area: 16,000 acres

Dam:

- Leon Hurse Dam, approximately 2.3 miles long
- Spillways (to release excess water back into the North Sulphur River)
- Intake structure and pump station (to move water to the balancing reservoir, where it can be pumped through pipelines to treatment). The station will initially be able to pump up to 45 million gallons per day (MGD) and eventually up to 80 MGD.

Recreation:

- Three public boat ramps,
- A fishing jetty (for lake access without a boat),
- A new a Ladonia Fossil Park (which is open to the public),
- A walking path over the lake's new bridge that connects to existing trail networks,
- A Visitor Center, and
- Trails near the Visitor Center (the trail head parking area is complete and open for access to the SH 34 bridge.



Future trails are under design on the Visitor Center and Lake Office site, which is adjacent to the south end of the SH 34 bridge).

- Upper Trinity has partnered with Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD) as part of the Toyota ShareLunker Program to stock the lake with genetically enhanced Florida bass that grow to a larger size. In addition, TPWD plans to

stock the lake with black and white crappie, channel and blue catfish, sunfish, bluegill, threadfin and gizzard shad.

- Upper Trinity provides public hunting access to over 1,150 acres of land adjacent to Lake Ralph Hall through a cooperative agreement with TPWD's public hunting program.

1. Kendall Davis, [“Two Brand New Lakes in Texas.”](#) Lake Hub LLC, accessed 23 April 2026.
2. [“Lakes and Reservoirs.”](#) Texas Almanac, accessed 23 April 2026.
3. Poormina Apte, [“Flowing again: Texas Restoration Project Returns Streams to Natural State.”](#) American Society of Civil Engineers, accessed 23 April 2026.
4. Samantha Baxter, [“Restoring North Texas Streams to Historical Flows.”](#) Environmental Monitor, last modified 9 June 2025, accessed 23 April 2026.
5. [“Archeologic and Palaeontologic Protocols During Construction of Lake Ralph Hall.”](#) Upper Trinity Regional Water District, last modified

13 October 2024, accessed 23 April 2026.

6. Zachary Adams, [“Ladonia Fossil Park to Lie Underneath Lake Ralph Hall.”](#) KETR, last modified 11 November 2020, accessed 23 April 2026.
7. [“Ladonia Fossil Park.”](#) Upper Trinity River Water District, accessed 23 April 2026.
8. Allen Rich, [“Opposing Arguments Presented Concerning lake Ralph Hall.”](#) NTXE News, last modified 9 March 2005.
9. Mary Madewell, [“Lake Ralph Hall Land Buys Go on in Fannin County.”](#) The Paris News, last modified 29 July 2019, accessed 23 April 2025.

<p>To Join DFF, complete the form below and mail along with your check to:</p> <p>Dallas Fly Fishers 8349 Club Meadows Dr. Dallas, Tx 75243</p> <p>You can also join or renew online at <a href="http://www.dallasflyfishers.org/membership.html">http://www.dallasflyfishers.org/membership.html</a></p>	<h2 style="margin: 0;">MEMBERSHIP / RENEWAL</h2>	
	<p>New Member <input type="checkbox"/> or Renewing My Membership <input type="checkbox"/> (Check one)      Date _____</p> <p>Name: _____ Spouse's name: _____</p> <p>E-mail address: _____</p> <p>Home phone: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____</p> <p>Address: _____</p> <p>City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____</p> <p>Are you a current member of the Federation of Fly Fishers? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> (check one)</p>	
	<p><b>New Members:</b> Annual membership dues: \$36 per year After July 1st, pay \$18 for half year After Oct 1st, just pay for the following year</p>	<p><b>Renewing Members:</b> Annual membership dues: \$36 per year</p>