



**Kerr County Soil & Water
Conservation District**



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KERR CO. SWCD NEWS

Kerr County Soil & Water Conservation District July 2015 Volume 6, Issue 3

Youth Range Workshop & George Holekamp Award Recap

Once again, the Kerr SWCD participated in the Youth Range Workshop's field day at the Kerr Wildlife Management Area. The SWCD served a hamburger lunch to the students and faculty of the camp. During the day, the campers participated in field experiments including hydrology and soils lessons, and the local NRCS office demonstrated a rainfall simulation.



The 61st Youth Range Workshop is a volunteer-led camp sponsored by the Texas Section Society of Range Management. Youth, age 14 -18, are eligible to participate in this week-long, hands-on workshop. Participants are exposed to actual land management practices and decisions through field trips to ranches and a wildlife management area. These field trips bring out facts on goals of land ownership and the responses of vegetation to practices conducted for livestock, wildlife, recreation, and rangeland restoration. The camp is headquartered on the Texas Tech University in Junction. For more information on this camp, please visit: <http://rangelands.org/texas/youtheducation.shtml>.



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2015 George Holekamp Award Winner

**Lane Pressler
Comfort, TX**

Sponsored by Kendall County SWCD

After lunch, the Kerr County SWCD again awarded the George Holekamp Award to the camper who demonstrated outstanding public speaking skills and their knowledge on their chosen ecological topic. The Youth Range Workshop incorporates this contest and award into their program each year. We're proud to present **Lane Pressler**, a camper from Comfort, Texas, as the 2015 George Holekamp Award Winner. He is pictured to the left with members of the Holekamp family. Lane was sponsored by the Kendall County SWCD and he and his family live in the eastern part of Kerr County. He was presented with a certificate and belt buckle from the Kerr County SWCD.

Dates of Interest:

- Aug. 5 : Grazing Management Clinic
- Aug. 7 : Kerr WMA 1st Friday Tour
- Sept. 4 : Kerr WMA 1st Friday Tour
- Sept. 19-20 : Texas Pollinator Powwow
- Oct. 2 : Kerr WMA 1st Friday Tour
- Oct. 23-25 : Kerr County Fair

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Watch for more information on our upcoming Native Tree Sale this Fall! Fall/Winter is the BEST time to replant woody species and we'll have a great selection of native, locally grown trees to choose from!

**KERR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA
Wildlife Management and Research Seminar**

Join us at the Lee and Ramona Bass Conference Facility for discussions on wildlife management and research in the Texas Hill Country.

TOPICS COVERED:

- Improving Land for Wildlife Diversity
Axe, Fire, Plow, Cow and Gun
- Food, Water and Cover Needs
- Threatened and Endangered Species
- Function of Genetics and Nutrition in White-tailed Deer Management

Donnie E. Harmel White-tailed Deer Research Pens

- New Research on Feral Swine Control
Kerr WMA Feral Swine Research Facility

Aug. 7th, Sept 4th & Oct. 2nd
@1pm-5pm

Presented at the Kerr WMA
Free

WMA/Facility Tour to Follow
Register at (830) 238-4483
Or lisa.wolle@tpwd.texas.gov








CONSERVATION TIP: WHAT'S GOING ON WITH THIS THISTLE By Burt Barnes

Musk thistle came into the states in the Early 1900's from Europe & Asia and was first sighted in Ft. Worth, Texas at the Stockyards. The rosettes emerge in fall and early spring, and sprout to a flower in spring-early summer. Reproduction is achieved through seedlings and there is no known value to wildlife or livestock.

The Good

- Beneficial for pollinator species (bees, butterflies)
- First successional forb to appear in a disturbed area (helpful if you have bare soil- holds the soil in place if lack of coverage)

The Bad

- Typically in distressed soils or overgrazed rangeland
- Not palatable for livestock (occasional use by goats)
- Prevents livestock from grazing areas
- Plants can produce up to 100,000 seeds
- Has no Agriculture benefits for the land

Ways to control Musk Thistle:

- Mow before they flower (biennial plant – 2 year life cycle)
- Herbicide (Organic or Conventional)
- Monitor Grazing
- Manually cut off and dispose of flower heads to prevent seeding (seeds can survive up to 10yrs)



Rosette Stage - 1st Year



Flower Stage - 2nd Year



Headed Out (Seeds spread by wind or animal)

Benefits of Prescribed Grazing:

If prescribed grazing is implemented, you will promote a healthier soil that will support new plant communities that are more desirable. Soil coverage is crucial to maintain the moisture in the ground that supports plant growth. Having adequate ground cover helps with moisture retention and in turn, the soil contains needed microbes to help beneficial plants dominate the area and compete/control with the Musk Thistle.

Ask yourself: What are you trying to achieve on your property and what are your goals? Whether you own or lease property, being good stewards of the land will help encourage our future generations to appreciate what is available and continue good conservation practices. If you would like further information please contact your local NRCS or SWCD office.



Burt Barnes is an NRCS intern at the Kerrville Field Office. He is currently enrolled at Texas State University in San Marcos and is working towards obtaining a degree in Agriculture w/ minor in Plant & soil science. Burt believes conservation is vital for our children's future and ours.

USDA-NRCS & TSSWCB Programs Available

Several programs are available for Kerr County residents to apply for and receive assistance in implementing management practices for agricultural land.

The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) is designed to assist agricultural producers in enhancing their land with certain management practices. Practices that address and improve water quantity and domestic animals are given high priority in Kerr County and include such practices as brush management, livestock water systems, fencing, and seeding.

The NRCS office accepts applications for this program year round and more information can be gained by contacting the Kerrville office at 830-896-4911 x 3 or visit the NRCS Texas homepage at: www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov.

The Water Quality Management Program (WQMP) is a stated-funded program made available through Senate Bill 503. It is a site-specific plan developed through and approved by the local soil and water conservation district for agricultural or silvicultural lands. The main goal of these plans is to abate agricultural and/or silvicultural nonpoint pollutant contributions to impaired or threatened waters as prioritized. A WQMP covers the entire operating unit and includes required practices applicable to the planned land use. The first step in obtaining a WQMP is to contact the Kerr County SWCD. There is no charge for the development of a WQMP, but there may be costs for implementing required practices outlined in the WQMP.

Financial assistance is available at this time in the form of a cost-share program for WQMPs in Kerr County. You may read more on this program at TSSWCB's website at: www.tsswcb.texas.gov (click on Programs, then select WQMP). You may also contact the Kerr County Soil and Water Conservation District's office at 830-896-4911x3 and ask for Deanna (SWCD) or Laura (NRCS) for assistance or to start the application process.

NRCS is an equal opportunity provider & employer.

UGRA's River Clean Up

The Upper Guadalupe River Authority is hosting the 12th Annual River Clean Up at Flat Rock Park on Saturday, July 25th from 8 AM – 12 PM. Volunteers can pre register now or just show up at 8 AM on Saturday July 25th. The first 200 volunteers will receive a free River Clean Up t-shirt. Refreshments will also be provided and prizes will be raffled off. For more information please contact UGRA at 896-5445 or visit www.ugra.org.

NOW AVAILABLE!!

From The
Kerr County Soil & Water Conservation District

With a Minimum \$20 Donation



Please visit our office to get your copy today!
2104 Memorial Boulevard #103, Kerrville
(In the USDA Service Center, NRCS office)
830-896-4911 x 3 or 830-459-1701 (Deanna Pfeffer)

Area Grazing Management Clinic in Sonora

The Texas Grazing Lands Coalition will be hosting a Grazing Management Clinic on August 5, 2015, at the Sutton County Civic Center in Sonora, Texas. The featured speaker is Jim Gerrish, a grazing specialist with over 20 years of experience in beef-forage systems with the University of Missouri and the Forage Systems Research Center along with more than 20 years of experience in the commercial cattle and sheep industry on his family farm in northern Missouri. Topics will include: efficiently capturing solar energy, creating a more efficient water cycle, building a dynamic mineral cycle, enhancing biodiversity in pastureland and rangeland, and grazing system design.

After lunch, there will be a ranch tour to see local rancher, Joe David Ross's high intensity-low frequency grazing operation. Gerrish and Ross will discuss grazing systems, water distribution and fencing options with an open group discussion to talk about your successes. "This workshop will discuss successes with intensive grazing management systems and feature a ranch tour where this style of system has been in place for 30 plus years," said Scott Petty, Edwards Region Chairman. "This event allows conservation minded producers to come together and see what they can take home and implement in their operation."

Cost for the workshop is \$25 a person or \$30 at the door, which includes a catered lunch. For more information please contact Kason Haby at 830-426-2521 ext. 116. Three CEU credits will be provided towards your pesticide applicator's license. Please **RSVP by July 29, 2015** to the Edwards Region GLCI, 257 HWY 173 N., Hondo, Texas 78861 or call 830-741-0717. Thank you to event sponsors Concho Valley, Edwards, and Trans-Pecos Grazing Land Conservation Initiative Regions in partnership with Texas Grazing Lands Coalition, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Edwards Plateau Soil & Water Conservation District and Eldorado-Divide Soil & Water Conservation District. All partners are equal opportunity employers and providers.

Texas Pollinator Powwow

BIRDS, BATS, BEES, BUTTERFLIES and more! Come learn about Texas plants and their pollinators, the conservation challenges they are facing, and how YOU can help! The **TEXAS POLLINATOR POWWOW** brings you topics ranging from native plants and bees, to hummingbirds and butterflies, to urban and rural land management best practices by experts from around the state and beyond. We are pleased to present to you some of the best and brightest of minds and committed professionals in pollination conservation today.

It is our desire that the general public be educated, edified and entertained, and that conservation staff and volunteers be enabled to network with others outside their own narrow focus while being provided with a popular venue to share their missions with the community at large.

We will have a fantastic group of **EXHIBITORS** on hand both days to answer questions, provide resources, and showcase their organizations. There will be **LIVE EXHIBITS** featuring bees, butterflies, caterpillars and the precious bat 'ambassadors' from Bat Conservation International.

Who: THE TEXAS POLLINATOR POWWOW

What: A pollinator conservation conference for Texas and beyond

Why: To provide education, resources and networking opportunities to natural resource management professionals and volunteers— and the community at large— and to empower them all in conserving our pollinators and their habitats across the landscape.

When: September 19-20, 2015

Where: Schreiner University, Cailloux Ballroom

RSVP: <http://www.texaspollinatorpowwow.org/registration.html>

Online or By Mail, By September 1