

## KEEP IN MIND

Every action to protect & restore riparian areas strengthens the Guadalupe River watershed for the future. Rivers need room to ebb, flow, & grow with dense, rich vegetation. Even well-vegetated banks were damaged in this rare flood, & another major flood will come eventually.

Riverside landowners can start now to envision a healthy, resilient, & beautiful river - **by rethinking beauty & thinking like the river.** Together, we can bring back healthy banks, restore cleaner water, & build more resilient landscapes.



## FOR MORE RESOURCES, VISIT:



*The Blanco River Flood*  
**Written by Steve Nelle**



*Your Remarkable Riparian*  
**Nueces River Authority**



*Riparian Planting Guide*  
**Hill County Alliance**



*Common Invasives*  
**Texas A&M Forest Service**



No-cost treatments for the removal of *Arundo* through their *Healthy Creeks Initiative*.  
**Texas Parks & Wildlife/UGRA**

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**RIPARIAN RECOVERY:  
SLOW. SINK. FILTER. STABILIZE.**  
A GUIDE FOR RIVERSIDE LANDOWNERS

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**HERE ARE SOME SIMPLE STEPS LANDOWNERS CAN TAKE, BASED ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CONSERVATION PARTNERS THAT CAN AID IN SLOWING, SINKING, & FILTERING WATER AS IT FALLS ON THE LAND:**

Floods reshape the river & its banks, but with care the River can recover & thrive. Healthy riparian areas protect water quality, reduce erosion, & support both wildlife & aquatic life. Dense, rich vegetation **slows water, stabilizes banks, & helps recharge groundwater**. Rivers need room to ebb & flow. By embracing natural vegetative growth, we shift our sense of beauty - nature itself is beautiful. Instead of carpet grass to the water's edge, let **tall, native, diverse vegetation** line the banks, with a dedicated pathway for access, balancing natural beauty & resilience.

### 1. SUPPORT NATURAL RECOVERY

- Many areas will recover on their own if left undisturbed. **Patience is key**. Roots & seeds in the soil will sprout over time.
- Watch for invasive species like Arundo (giant reed), Chinese tallow, Ligustrum, Chinaberry, Johnson grass or Vitex & remove them early before they spread.
- **Pro tip: If removing invasives, replace with the recommendations in step 2.**

### 2. PLANT NATIVE TREES & SHRUBS - STABILIZE BANKS

- Trees stabilize banks, shade the water, & provide wildlife habitat.
- Good choices include: **Bald Cypress, Sycamore, Buttonbush, Walnut, Box Elder Maple, Black Willow, Pecan, Texas Ash, Chinquapin Oak.**
- Plant in clusters where soil is moist but stable. Water new trees deeply once a week until established.

**RECOMMENDED  
AT THE  
WATER'S EDGE:  
EMORY SEDGE,  
SPIKERUSH,  
SAWGRASS**

### 3. SEED & PLANT NATIVE SEDGES & GRASSES

- Replace exotic turf grasses such as Bermuda or St. Augustine with natives such as Buffalo Grass. Exotics can outcompete natives but don't provide the same benefits to the river & wildlife.
- Broadcast seed on bare areas in fall, winter or early spring. Lightly rake & cover with straw, mulch or small branches.

**RECOMMENDED AT THE  
WATERLINE:  
EASTERN GAMAGRASS,  
SWITCHGRASS,  
INDIANGRASS,  
MAXIMILLIAN  
SUNFLOWER, SIDEOATS  
GRAMA,**

### 4. PROTECT THE SOIL & BANK - DEAD WOOD IS GOOD

- Leave natural debris in place when possible. Logs, limbs, sticks, & leaf litter help **slow water, trap soil, & give young plants shelter**.
- Avoid heavy equipment near the riverbank. Driving or mowing too close compacts soil & inhibits regrowth.
- Use mulch, wood chips or small branches from trees to cover bare soil, reducing erosion & preserving moisture.



### 5. CONSERVE & PROTECT WATER

- Use drip irrigation or soaker hoses instead of overhead sprinklers to save water & reduce runoff.
- Avoid using chemical fertilizers & pesticides.
- Water young plants in the morning or evening to reduce evaporation.
- If using fertilizers & pesticides on upland areas, maintain a vegetative buffer (at least 25–50 feet wide) between lawns/pastures & the river to filter fertilizers, pesticides, & sediment.