



The Nueces and other rivers in the Hill Country and other parts of Texas have had chronic problems with four-wheel drive trucks and other off-road vehicles in the river, destroying the fisheries, tearing up streamside vegetation, trespassing on private land, damaging private property, polluting the water, and ending the enjoyment of people who want quiet recreation along the state's streams.

The situation in Zavala County came to a head recently when the commissioners' court submitted an application to Texas Parks and

Wildlife Department (TPWD) for approval of a river access plan that would not have protected the river or streamside landowners. Texas Conservation Alliance joined with local landowners to oppose the access plan. We generated front-page coverage in the San Antonio Express-News and articles in other area papers, alerted statewide conservation groups of the situation, made comments and encouraged our members to comment to TPWD, and helped riverside landowners get the word out in the local area.

Landowners and conservationists breathed a sigh of relief when TPWD denied approval, citing state law that forbids vehicular traffic in a river bed or on private property along a river and requires an river access plan to protect the river.

Now Zavala County landowners are organizing to work with the commissioners and other area leaders to improve recreational opportunities that also safeguard the river environment. To learn more about their activities, contact Texas Conservation Alliance by going to www.TCAtexas.org/contact.php.

The Nueces River

