



## Conservation Progress

First Quarter 2011

### **Alliance Honored at NWF 75th Anniversary**

Texas Conservation Alliance will be given the prestigious Affiliate of the Year Award by the National Wildlife Federation in Washington, D.C., April 16!

NWF will celebrate its 75th Anniversary at its Annual Meeting April 13-16. At a banquet the final evening, the Alliance will be recognized for its exceptional record protecting wildlife habitat, promoting conservation, educating citizens, and safeguarding natural resources for future generations.

“Being named Affiliate of the Year is an exceptional honor,” said Alliance Chairman Mack Turner. “The award is for all our members, donors, member organizations, and volunteers.” We appreciate our members’ efforts that led to the Alliance’s success.”

The Alliance invites you to Washington D.C., to share in this recognition. Joining Mack in accepting the award will be our ‘First Lady Emeritus’ Genie Fritz, Executive Director Janice Bezanson, Cat Turner, Friends of the Neches River’s Michael Banks, and our Executive Assistant Michael Revels.

Michael Revels has been singled out by NWF to participate in the inaugural event of its *Young Leaders Charter Assembly*, to recognize and cultivate young conservation leaders throughout the country.

Details for NWF’s 3-day event are available on the Alliance website at [www.TCAtexas.org/NWFAFY2011.php](http://www.TCAtexas.org/NWFAFY2011.php). Or you can visit [www.nwffaffiliates.org](http://www.nwffaffiliates.org) and click on ‘Annual Meeting’. Events include nationally-known speakers, exhibits, hands-on workshops, and the Young Leaders program.

Texas Conservation Alliance is very excited to be named Affiliate of the Year for 2011. We encourage our thousands of dedicated supporters to join us at NWF’s 75th Anniversary Celebration!

### **Smarter Water for North Texas!**

One of the biggest challenges facing Texas is how to allocate water resources over the next few decades. Water developers are promoting costly new reservoirs. *In truth, there is enough water in existing lakes to meet the region’s demands for the next fifty years.*

The Alliance offers a presentation of Smarter Water for North Texas! to civic groups in the DFW area. Bobette Brasfield and Milton Hickman provide an upbeat, informative program about sensible options for meeting the region’s growing demand for water, without the heavy economic impact of new reservoir construction.

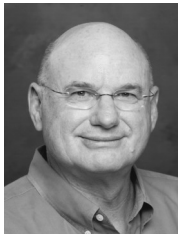
To schedule a group for a presentation, contact Bobette Brasfield, at 214-351-5202, [bobetteb@airmail.net](mailto:bobetteb@airmail.net).

### **Alliance Annual Meeting Sep 24**

Mark your calendar for September 24 for Texas Conservation Alliance’s 2011 Annual Meeting!

Join us at the Trinity River Audubon Center in Dallas for a wonderful blend of outdoor hikes and interesting programs.

We’ll send you details closer to the event. In the meantime, check out the Center’s website, [trinityriveraudubon.org](http://trinityriveraudubon.org).



## ... from the Board

by Mack Turner, Chairman

For several years the Alliance searched for an education program to motivate North Texans. Inspired by the memory of a dedicated young conservationist, Rachel Virden Hulscher, we find we have hit a home run!

Texas Conservation Alliance's exciting new outreach program - *Smarter Water for Texas* — is generating a terrific response. Our message is that there is enough water in existing lakes to meet the growing demand for the DFW region for at least 50 years.

This message is resonating with all people who see the good sense in using existing resources rather than incurring the heavy economic impacts of building new ones.

Please help us reach a broad audience in the DFW area. To schedule a presentation, contact

Bobette Brasfield, 214-351-5202  
bobetteb@airmail.net



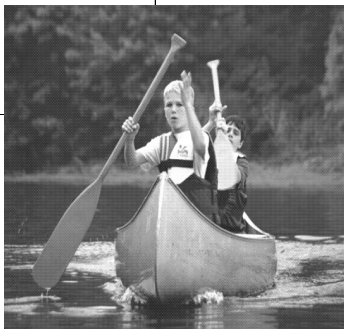
*Mack*

### **A Special Way to Contribute**

When the Alliance's Janice Bezanson picked up the phone one day, she heard the voice of Fernando Albornoz, NWF director and the Alliance's newest board member, say, "I want to make a contribution that will encourage others to give as well."

Delighted and intrigued, Janice waited for more. "I'm going to sign up for Texas Conservation Alliance's monthly giving program," continued Fernando. "And I want to challenge others to do the same!"

Automatic giving on a monthly or other periodic basis is a way to make a significant donation to the Alliance, a little at a time. Go to the Alliance website, [TCAtexas.org](http://TCAtexas.org), and click the Donate button on the home page. You'll link to a form that gives you the option of periodic giving. We appreciate you!



Canoeing the Neches!

### **Why Should I Care About Invasive Species?**

By Vivian Todd, Alliance Board Member

Invasive Species and Aquatic Invasive Species are taking over private and public waterways and lands across the U.S. This threat is very real, causing widespread economic and environmental harm.

The term Invasive Species is defined as an alien or exotic species that is non-native to a particular area or ecosystem. This term is reserved for the most aggressive plants, vines, trees, and shrubs, because of the irreparable harm they cause.

How you can help: Early detection is crucial to eradication of these invaders.

Educate yourself about Invasive Species in your own locale. Urge your local nurseryman not to sell plants/shrubs/trees that are invasive. Plant native species in your own yard.

And please, spread the word by telling your family and friends about this massive problem!

### **Some of the worst invasive plant offenders:**

Kudzu—The Vine that Ate the South! Reported to grow a foot a day and can cover anything in its path

Chinese Tallow Trees — Takes over high-quality, undisturbed forests and prairies

Giant Salvinia — Aquatic fern causing the death of native plants and food chains in Caddo Lake and other places

Hydrilla — The fastest-growing aquatic plant ever, has blanketed 100,000 acres of water

Water Hyacinth — Alarming speed of growth, spread by boaters

### **Making Waves**

Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. has established six paddling trails along the Neches River and its tributaries: one on the Upper Neches, one at Village Creek State Park, and four associated with Martin Dies, Jr. State Park.

Check the TPWD website, then go kayaking or canoeing to experience why the Neches should be designated a National Wild and Scenic River!

## ***Budget Cuts Hit TPWD - You Can Help!***

All state agencies will endure budget cuts over the next two years. Texas Parks and Wildlife can minimize impacts to state parks, wildlife, and natural resources if given flexibility to determine what to cut.

The House Appropriations Committee honored a number of TPWD's requests for flexibility but did not approve key capital needs.



Advocates for the state's wildlife and parks are urging the Senate to adopt partial reinstatement of capital budget funding and \$32 million in bond authority for capital repairs

needed to maintain usable conditions in state park facilities.

The governor is a also key player in the final outcome.

The best way to influence TPWD's future is to support flexibility and leave it to the professional managers at TPWD to decide what to cut.

To learn how you can help, see ***Call to Action, p. 4***

## ***HB 2558 Would Protect Navasota River***

Reps Fred Brown and Lois Kolkhurst have introduced HB 2558, to designate a stretch of the Navasota River as a Unique Ecological Stream Segment. This state designation would preclude construction of a reservoir proposed on that segment.

Texas Conservation Alliance worked closely with Guardians of the Navasota River last spring to get an unnecessary reservoir project pulled from the State Water Plan. Water from the proposed 71,000-acre Millican Reservoir was earmarked for the Houston area - a region that has many lower-cost, lower-impact options for supplying future demand.

More than 500 local residents banded together to form the Guardians. They would appreciate your support. To help, see ***Call to Action, page 4.***

## ***How to Find Your Elected Officials***

To find your elected officials, go to *Who Represents Me*, <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us>, and plug in your address.

Your legislator's website will give you phone, fax, address, and a link from which you can email.

## ***Water Bills in the State Legislature***

Texas Conservation Alliance will be tracking a number of pieces of water legislation through the 2011 session of the Texas Legislature, which runs until May 31.

Prominent will be a complex of bills, HJR 137, HJR 138, HB 3273, SJR 3, and SJR 25, which together give the Texas Water Development Board additional bonding authority and bonding flexibility.

While much of TWDB's funding is used for loans to communities for water and wastewater treatment, the \$6 billion in bonding authority in these bills could be used to support studies or construction of unneeded water supply reservoirs.

HB 1832 and its companion, SB 936, would expand the jurisdiction of the Lower Neches Valley Authority to include the adjoining Neches-Trinity coastal basin.

Bills which have the potential to restrict boondoggle water projects include the following:

- SB 148, which would prohibit a water district from using eminent domain outside its district boundaries
- SB 368, which would require a fresh water supply district to gain approval from the commissioners court in the county in which eminent domain authority is to be exercised if more than five miles outside the district boundaries

There are dozens of additional bills introduced in the Texas Legislature that relate to water. The Alliance will post alerts on its website as bills move and need particular attention. See below for website address.

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### ***Track the State Legislature***

Situations change fast during the last two months of the Texas Legislative Session (April and May). The Alliance will post updates at

***[www.TCAatexas.org/Legislature](http://www.TCAatexas.org/Legislature)***

To receive alerts, send your email address to us at

***[TCA@TCAatexas.org](mailto:TCA@TCAatexas.org)***

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Visit us at Texas Conservation Alliance's booth at Earth Day Dallas, April 22 and 23 from 10:00 to 5:00.

Better yet, volunteer to help!

Contact [TCA@TCAatexas.org](mailto:TCA@TCAatexas.org) to let us know which shift you can help man the booth.

*Have you asked your friends to join Texas Conservation Alliance?*

Word of mouth is a powerful publicity tool! We want the Alliance's new color brochures to reach as many people as possible.



Email us and we'll send you as many brochures as you want.

Please pass them around!



**River Bottom Refuge**

Check out our website for an exclusive story titled *River Bottom Refuge*, written by Milton Hickman. An enthusiastic outdoorsman, Milton presents *Smarter Water for North Texas* to DFW-area civic groups.

**Call to Action**



**TPWD Budget, Page 3:** Contact your state senator and urge 3 things:

- Give TPWD maximum flexibility to determine where its budget will be cut
- Support the recommendations of the House Appropriations Committee for TPWD
- Adopt partial reinstatement of capital budget funding and \$32 million in bond authority for capital repairs

**Navasota River, Page 3:** Contact your state representative and urge support for **HB 2558**. This bill would protect the Navasota River from a proposed 70,000-acre reservoir that would be devastating for the local agribusiness community.

Tell your rep that there are plenty of less costly options for water supply.

**Texas Conservation Alliance**

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Email us your signs of spring  
and photos of wildlife  
for the Alliance website !

