



## A Note from the Watershed Coordinator

I hope everyone is enjoying the very much needed rain we are having lately! If you are interested how the recent rainfall has been affecting the drought situation in Texas, I encourage you to check the [Texas Drought Monitor](#) – the drought map is updated every week allowing you to easily compare the data overtime.

On a completely different note, this month I am transitioning to a new role at Texas A&M University. While I am excited about the prospect, I also feel sad to be saying goodbye to the amazing people I have worked with over the past two years. I truly believe that the Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Partnership has a great potential, and I am sure that the new watershed coordinator will continue to successfully move the watershed protection plan forward. It has been a pleasure working with you all! If you would like to keep in touch, feel free to connect with me on [LinkedIn](#).



*Evgenia*

## Upcoming Events

- 💧 October 22, 9:30 a.m.–12 p.m. Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Fall Cleanup Event
- 💧 November 2, 8 a.m.–12 p.m. Low Impact Development workshop

*Funding for this effort is provided through a Clean Water Act §319(h) Nonpoint Source Grant administered by the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.*



## Want to Be a Solution to Nonpoint Pollution? Here's What You Need to Know

It is not an overstatement to say that water is key to human survival. Aside from our health and well-being, clean water is critical to agriculture, recreation, and biodiversity. Unfortunately, our water resources are increasingly threatened by nonpoint source (NPS) pollution. The good news is that there is a solution to NPS pollution, and it starts with you! If everyone of us practices responsible water stewardship, collectively we can improve water quality and reduce NPS pollution. Before we discuss how we can make a difference, let us take a look at what NPS pollution is and where it originates from.

### What Is NPS Pollution?

NPS pollution occurs when runoff water moves through the ground gathering pollutants and carrying them to waterbodies. Unlike point source pollution, when pollutants enter a waterbody from a defined source such as a plant discharge pipe, NPS pollution does not have a specific point of origin. For example, a downpour can generate runoff as soil becomes saturated and can no longer absorb water. A heavy rain in urbanized areas can also produce runoff when water falls on impervious surfaces such as roads, sidewalks, and rooftops, unable to be absorbed. As runoff water flows across the land, it picks up and transports pollutants to streams, lakes, and rivers. On its way, it gathers a variety of pollutants, including nitrogen and phosphorus typically found in manufactured fertilizers. Bacteria, pesticides, oils, and sediment are among other pollutants carried by runoff. As they make their way to waterbodies, the combined effects of these pollutants put water quality at risk.

### What Can You Do to Help?

Water quality reflects everything we do on the land. Whether we realize it or not, such activities as walking dogs, fertilizing and irrigating the lawn, car washing, and many other things we do every day affect water quality. We all share the responsibility for NPS pollution, and every individual can make a

difference and reduce NPS pollution by practicing these easy conservation behaviors:

- When using fertilizers and pesticides, be sure to follow application recommendations on the package.
- Check the weather forecast before applying fertilizers to your lawn; do not use fertilizers if it is going to rain.
- Do not overwater your lawn; irrigate between 6 and 10 o'clock in the morning.
- Maintain your septic system properly; it should be inspected every year and pumped out every 3-5 years.
- Pick up after your pet; pet waste is not a fertilizer and poses a hazard to water quality.
- Dispose of household chemicals properly; do not dump them in the toilet or drain.
- Use a commercial car wash to clean your vehicle.
- Maintain your vehicle properly to prevent leaking of oils.
- To prevent erosion, plant trees, shrubs and grasses around your home.
- If your property faces a waterbody, avoid mowing all the way to the water. Keep the banks vegetated to filter pollutants from incoming runoff.
- Participate in community cleanup days.
- Do not litter.
- Recycle.
- Report illegal dumping activities to the appropriate regulatory authority.

By incorporating these activities in everyday life, everyone can protect water quality in our lakes, rivers, streams, and oceans.

**Be the solution to NPS pollution!**

## 2022 Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Fall Cleanup Event

Volunteers are needed for the 2022 Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Fall Cleanup Event.

**Saturday, October 22 | 9:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

Volunteers will gather at Irma Lewis Seguin Outdoor Learning Center located at 1865 US 90, Seguin. The orientation meeting will start at 9 a.m. – join us for free coffee and breakfast as we discuss the Cleanup Event rules and personal safety. All volunteers will receive a special event t-shirt.

Pre-registration is required at [www.geronimocreek.org](http://www.geronimocreek.org). Service hour certificates will be available.

Everyone will need to fill out the [Liability and Photo Release form](#) prior to participating. If you are bringing a group, you may download this form for everyone to sign in advance and return to the watershed coordinator the day of the event.

For the event updates, please follow us on [Facebook](#) or visit [www.geronimocreek.org](http://www.geronimocreek.org)

Questions? Feel free to reach out at [Geronimo.Alligator@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:Geronimo.Alligator@ag.tamu.edu)

**We look forward to seeing you on October 22!**



## Low Impact Development

Join us as we discuss the design and function of various low impact development (LID) systems and practices: rain gardens, rainwater harvesting, pervious pavement, green roof, and others! The program will include classroom presentations and outdoor walking tours; dress for the weather.

**Wednesday, November 2**

**8 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

Seguin Outdoor Learning Center  
(1865 US 90, Seguin, TX 78155)

Pre-registration is required by October 31:

[www.geronimocreek.org](http://www.geronimocreek.org)



## Fall Beef & Pasture Management Workshop



The Guadalupe County AgriLife Extension invites everyone to attend the Fall Beef & Pasture Management workshop on **September 28, from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** Two TDA CEUs for commercial, non-commercial, and private applicators will be available!

For more information about this program, please click [here](#) or contact the Extension Office at (830) 303-3889.

## Homeowner Maintenance of Septic Systems

Need to become certified to maintain your septic system? Great news! The *Homeowner Maintenance of Septic Systems* course is available [online](#)!

Once registered, you will have 30 days to complete this class. Upon completion, contact your TCEQ authorized agent to finalize the certification process.

The Guadalupe County Environmental Health Office accepts this course for certification. If you reside in a county other than Guadalupe, please contact your TCEQ authorized agent to verify if the online program is sufficient to grant you certification.



### SIGNS OF FAILING SEPTIC SYSTEMS

- Standing water around your septic tank
- Unpleasant smell
- Bright green lush grass around your septic tank
- Sewage backup
- Slowly draining bathtubs, showers, and sinks
- Noises in your plumbing system
- Excessive growth of algae in nearby ponds

## Water Quality Management Plans

A *Water Quality Management Plan* (WQMP) is voluntary site-specific plan focusing on agricultural land improvement measures to minimize water pollution from nonpoint sources. The practices include but are not limited to brush management, conservation crop rotation, prescribed grazing, nutrient management, contour farming, and forage and biomass planting.

For more information, contact Cris Perez at (830) 379-0930, ext. 3 or [Cresencio.Perez@tx.nacdn.net](mailto:Cresencio.Perez@tx.nacdn.net)



Photo credit: Cris Perez



## Bacterial Source Tracking Analysis in Geronimo Creek

Understanding what types of sources contribute fecal bacteria to Geronimo Creek is critical for effective implementation of the in the Geronimo and Alligator Creeks WPP. Our partners from Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority conducted the Bacterial Source Tracking (BST) analysis to identify origins of fecal bacteria found in Geronimo Creek.

From April 2019 through March 2020, water samples were collected every month at two locations – Haberle Road and the Seguin Outdoor Learning Center. The results indicated that the majority of fecal bacteria detected in the creek originated from non-avian wildlife, including feral hogs, deer, raccoons, foxes, coyotes, and other species. Other sources included avian wildlife (ducks, turkeys, geese, etc.), cattle, avian and non-avian livestock (Guinea fowl, donkeys, etc.), humans (failing septic systems), and even pets (dogs, cats). More information can be found [here](#).

The Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Partnership is actively integrating these newly acquired data into the public outreach and education strategies to further promote public awareness about water quality issues in Geronimo and Alligator Creeks.

## Alligator Creek Trail Project



The Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Watershed Partnership is working with the City of New Braunfels on the design of a new linear trail park around Alligator Creek. Multi-use paths, natural features, educational signage, connections to neighborhoods, and other park design elements will be incorporated to provide local residents with an improved quality outdoor recreation experience.

Everyone is welcome to participate in public meetings conducted by the City of New Braunfels as this project is being developed. To learn more and find out the date of the next public meeting, please visit the [Alligator Creek Trail Project website](#).

Interested in attending our events? Reach out to us at [Geronimo.Alligator@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:Geronimo.Alligator@ag.tamu.edu).

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