Trinity River Basin Environmental Restoration Urban Water Education Initiative

Water Body: Trinity River Basin (Segment 0805)
Location: Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex to Houston
River Basin: Trinity (8)
Contractor: Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Urban Solutions Center
Project Period: May 2, 2008 to August 30, 2010

Project Summary

The Trinity River Basin Environmental Restoration Initiative, fostered by Governor Rick Perry and the Texas A&M AgriLife, will fund the development of water quality and conservation educational program in the Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston areas. Educational materials available will be assessed and needed materials will be created specifically for the regional portion of the Trinity Basin. Additionally, the Initiative will establish a mini-grant program for further development of educational programs by other entities and develop a geo-database for use in identifying priority areas for habitat restoration projects. Surveys will be conducted to determine the effectiveness of public education activities.

Project Description

The Trinity River, the 512-mile river stretching from north of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex to Galveston Bay, and its natural resources are important assets to Texas. With more than 8.9 million residents, the river and its 1,983 miles of major tributaries drain an area of more than 11.5 million acres and supports water needs for 40 percent of the state’s population.

Increased development and changes in land use, however, threaten its water quality, reservoirs’ capabilities, groundwater availability, recreational opportunities and flood control of the basin. The Basin is a host to numerous water quality concerns ranging from bacterial contamination, high pH, total dissolved solids and elevated nutrient levels (Phosphorus and Nitrogen).

Project leaders will partner State, Federal and local agencies and stakeholder groups to educate the public to conserve water supplies in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex and Houston area. The focus of the program is to educate a broad section of youth and adults in the DFW Metroplex and Houston about the importance of urban landscape management to increase conservation, improve water quality and improve the quality of life.

Objectives

- Conduct workshops to public on urban land stewardship, emphasizing water-efficient landscape techniques, water-conserving plants and landscapes that help prevent nonpoint source pollution.
- Conduct workshops for landscapers, engineers, grounds managers, nursery owners, developers, builders and others on the need and how to design and install landscapes that not only conserve water but prevent nonpoint source pollution.
- Provide mini-grants for cities, counties and agencies to conduct water education programs in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex and Houston area.
Develop a comprehensive urban water conservation education program in the Dallas–Fort Worth Metroplex and Houston area.

Goals

- Develop partnerships, relationships, and other instruments to facilitate collective, cooperative approaches to manage NPS pollution.
- Increase the water literacy of residents in the Trinity River Basin and educate citizens about water quality and their potential role in causing NPS pollution as well as ways in which to conserve water.
- Reduce the amount of non-point sources of pollution entering the Trinity River Basin.
- Enhance public participation and outreach by providing forums for citizen and industry to contribute their ideas and concerns about the water quality management process.

Project Partners & Funding

The program will work with cooperating groups who will work together to educate a broad cross section of the general public in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex and Houston area about the importance of urban landscape management and environmental infrastructure for water conservation.

- North Central Texas Council of Governments
- Tarrant Regional Water District
- Texas A&M AgriLife Water Resources Institute
- Texas AgriLife Extension Service
- Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Urban Solutions Center – Dallas
- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
- Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board
- Texas Water Development Board
- Trinity River Authority

Since 2008 $333,334 in EPA section 319 and nonfederal matching funds have helped to support this collaborative project.

Last Updated: August 25, 2008
Related website(s): http://dallas.tamu.edu

For More Information Contact:

Clint Wolfe
Urban Water Program Coordinator
TX AgriLife Urban Solutions Center
972.952.9635
c-wolfe@tamu.edu