

Nueces River Watershed Partnership

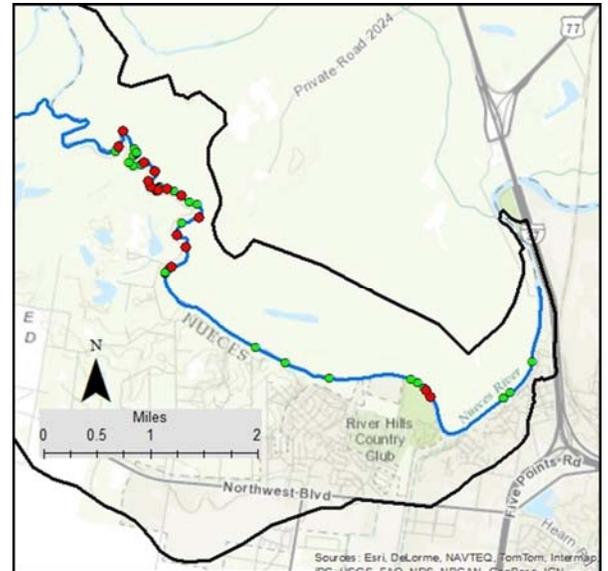
March 2015

To improve and protect the water quality of the Nueces River Watershed so that the river is restored and preserved for current and future generations

Large Debris Survey Results

The large debris survey was conducted on April 16-17, 2014 by the Blackland Research Center at Texas A&M University. The roughly 12 miles that were covered resulted in 2,942 images of the river bottom. The images are available for viewing at <https://www.nueces-ra.org/sonar/index.php>. Instructions are included on the page. Due to the size of the images, twelve sets of files, as shown on the map below, were created for viewing.

From those images, 375 objects were noted, 323 of which included woody debris, tires, and piers that are not considered harmful. 16 objects, their locations shown as the red dots on the map to the right, are considered high priority and should be removed. The remaining 36 objects, shown as green dots on the map, are medium priority objects that need to be identified and possibly removed. Nueces River Preservation Association volunteers plan to investigate these objects later this spring when the water temperature warms up. The Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program intends to provide funding to assist with the removal of items through a contract with the Nueces River Authority.



High Priority Items

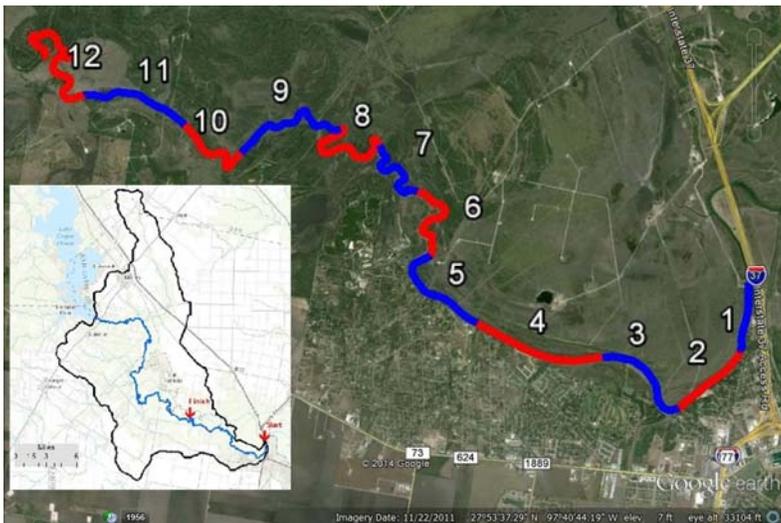
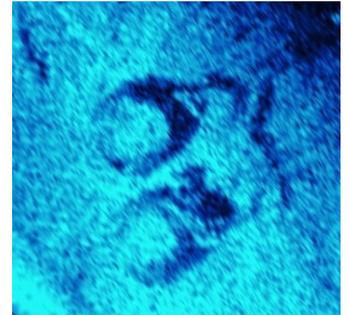
One (1) 4-wheeler or 3-wheeler (right) and one (1) boat/wreck in Section 3.

One (1) boat wreck in Section 5.

Three (3) boat or car wrecks and one (1) undetermined object in Section 6.

Seven (7) boat wrecks in Section 7.

One (1) boat wreck and one (1) undetermined object in Section 8.



History Lesson

Chipita Rodriguez Park, located on the Nueces River near San Patricio, TX, is named after Josepha "Chipita" Rodriguez, the first woman to be put to death in the state of Texas. In August 1863, John Savage, a horse trader, roomed at the Rodriguez homestead and was later found dead in the river. Chipita was accused of murdering him and stealing \$600 in gold from his saddlebags. Although the missing gold was recovered prior to the trial, she was found guilty of murder. The jury recommended leniency due to circumstantial evidence, but Judge Benjamin F. Neal sentenced her to death. She was hanged on November 13, 1863. In 1985, the Texas Legislature, noting that she did not receive a fair trial, absolved Chipita of murder in a resolution signed by Governor Mark White. The park is managed by San Patricio County and is open by appointment only.

Sources: Wikipedia, Josepha Rodriguez historical marker in San Patricio, TX, and San Patricio County Parks website



www.nuecesriverpartnership.org



Hyacinth Survey

On February 9, 2015 Flying J Services out of Jourdanton, Texas flew Rocky Freund, Sky Lewey, and Tim McWha on a hyacinth survey of the Lower Nueces River. They flew the 39 river miles from Wesley E. Seale Dam at Lake Corpus Christi to the saltwater barrier dam at La Bonte Park at an altitude of about 50' above the trees at about 20 mph. McWha held a GoPro camera that was set to take a photo every two seconds (see photo below). Lewey had a Sony Cyber-shot camera, taking georeferenced photos of any hyacinth that was spotted and any thing else of interest. The colonies were more numerous at and just below neighborhoods, mainly along the banks and at debris clogs, but there were no instances of the river being completely covered.



On March 4, 2015, Freund and Lewey conducted a ground truth survey and physically measured several hyacinth colonies. These measurements were used to approximate the size of all 125 colonies that were photographed. They averaged about 1,120 square feet / 0.026 acres. Based on this estimate and an estimate of 362 river surface acres, approximately 1% of the surface was covered by the hyacinth on the day of



the helicopter survey. A second survey will be conducted this summer to see if temperature is a major factor. A subcommittee will meet to determine what, if any, control measures should be taken. An aerial survey to try and find the upstream source, above Lake Corpus Christi, is planned for FY 2016.

