

Dear TRPA Members and Concerned Citizens,

We all want to get 2020 behind us. It was a difficult year for many of us. We saw tremendous increases in outdoor usage by folks, and rivers were no exception. Sadly, some folks left their manners at home, and trashed areas they visited.

It is that time of year, when we raise the vast majority of our funds, by membership dues. Please visit http://www.txrivers.org/paypal/donate_on-line.html.

I am the new President of the Texas River Protection Association. For many, many, years, Tom and Paula Goynes have been the bearers of the torch, along with a great many of you folks out there. All of you have fought the good fight. We are going to continue, and broaden, those efforts. Each of you will play an important part in this process. As for my background, I am a Registered Professional Engineer, specializing in wastewater treatment system design and construction, specifically zero-discharge systems. I have been a paddler since the late 70's, and involved in a lot of related issues since that time.

As President, I want to build on our history, as well as enhance what we, as an organization, need to do for the rivers of this State, and for us, as users and residents.

A few things our Organization is going to address, and re-emphasize are:

- Strengthen River Protections, in terms of water quality;
- Introduce legislation for river quality protection, access, and control;
- Act as a resource for river users;
- Promote wise, safe, and responsible use of rivers as a resource;
- River cleanups and workshops;
- Public awareness of river quality issues, e.g. wastewater discharge permits;
- Access, review, and comment, on legislation that impacts rivers;
- Develop methods to increase membership, and raise funds for our efforts;
- Coordination with other groups on river quality issues;
- Enhance use of Hidalgo Falls, and perhaps look for similar locations.

Not all of this will be accomplished at one time, but collectively we need to set our sights on some goals and desires. We are continuing the good fight, and are going to take actions to continue to protect rivers. We will be working with some folks, in the upcoming Legislative Session, to address some of the above issues. Along with this, we are going to add in some information on our website that gets people more informed, as well as encourages them to partake of the beauty of the rivers we have in this State. As part of that, we will be offering some logistical information on trips, including access/egress, etc.

As residents of this State, we are faced with significant challenges in protecting - and enhancing - our wonderful rivers. Basically, we have water quality issues, water quantity issues, and access issues. We

are a group of volunteers, all leading busy lives. But with collective efforts, we can effect change and continue the wonderful work of this organization.

Our challenge is to educate the public on the most significant impact to the waters, which is the water quality. This issue is divided into the solid particles going into rivers (such as all sizes of sediments and suspended solids), as well as the chemical and biological agents going into rivers. This includes chemical/industrial plant wastes, as well as biological wastes seen from such things as wastewater plants.

Another issue with the use of rivers is the folks that use the river as a flowing trash can. Too often, areas of high use get the brunt of this garbage. River cleanups only help intermittently, but more needs to be done to stop the trash at the source. Public education helps to address this problem, but the ones bothering to be educated are not (from my experience) the main issue. The biggest issue (over 40 years of watching and studying this) seems to be areas of mainly commercial use. We will be addressing this with these operators.

Another major, and critical focus, of our organization is the wastewater plant issue. The State Administrative Code allows discharge of treated wastewater into creeks and rivers. The two main issues with that are the quality of the water, and the quantity. There are better ways to reuse the effluent - without discharging it - and we will continue to make efforts in encouraging developments to reuse this effluent, which can be used for landscape irrigation and grey-water systems. As the sources of potable water become increasingly more scarce, it makes no sense to use these same sources for landscape irrigation, when the effluent can be used for that. It is a win-win.

And finally, we want to encourage responsible and safe use of the rivers. This includes information on various rivers, responsible use (leave no trace, or LNT), data on put-ins and take-outs, shuttle services, etc. We also want to encourage people, while paddling, to inform us of issues they encounter, be it trash counts, potential pollution, etc.

I look forward to a brighter 2021.

David Price, President