

TUESDAY, AUGUST 28, 2007

7:30-8:30a BREAKFAST and BUS LOADING

8:30a-4:30p

FIELD TRIPS

Uniquely Austin Urban & Suburban Monitoring Initiatives

Sponsored by the City of Austin, this tour will give you a view of the city and provide insight to unique monitoring program and projects that have shaped the decisions and policies used to protect the natural resources in the Austin area. While visiting a Water Quality Protection Land site, located in the rural outskirts of Austin, learn about the city's groundwater dye tracing studies and the challenges faced when trying to protect urban spring flows through protection of rural recharge. Enjoy lunch Central Market Park where you will see a surprising little amenity tucked in middle of the urban core: a wet pond retrofit project that exemplifies what can be done to enhance water quality with a little creative thinking and partnering. To end the day, relax on the hillside next to Barton Springs Pool, a beautiful spring fed jewel that's home to the Barton Springs Salamander, a federally listed endangered species. Here you will hear the epic tale of sampling for PAHs in the Barton Creek watershed, a journey that started with as a 319 grant project many years ago and led to state legislative hearings and a city-wide ban on coal tar sealants. Finish the day touring Barton Creek's Splash exhibit, the city's public outreach program that takes you through the history of creation of the Edwards Plateau and hydrogeologic connections of the Edwards Aquifer and Barton Springs.

Models and Management Strategies for Lake Systems

Visit the area of Austin surrounding the Highland Lake Chain and Lake Travis, a large water supply and flood control reservoir. Though rated as exceptional Aquatic Life Use and among the cleanest lakes in Texas, this lake is experiencing impacts that accompany increased urbanization. This field trip takes you through the history of the Lower Colorado River Authority's Highland Lakes Watershed Ordinance and its efforts to reduce impacts of development activities on the water quality of the Lakes. Visit the 319 grant project site at the Galloway-Hammond Recreational Center in Burnet where a successfully retrofitted impervious cover project demonstrates eight water quality treatment and erosion control BMPs, including bio-retention, extended detention, porous concrete pavement, an infiltration trench, vegetated infiltration strips and erosion control compost. Lunch will be held overlooking the beautiful Marble Falls. In the afternoon, the group will visit monitoring sites for determining the effectiveness of the project BMPs and learn of modeling effort used for lake management. The trip will finish with refreshments at the Oasis Restaurant, a most popular spot in the area for viewing sunsets on Lake Travis.

Innovative Monitoring and BMP Techniques in Karst Topographies

Sponsored by the Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer Conservation District, this trip will visit various recharge and discharge features of the Edwards and Trinity Aquifers and participants will see some projects that are designed to reduce the amount of non-point source pollutants entering the aquifer. The trip will start at Barton Springs, which is the major discharge point for the Barton Springs segment of the Edwards Aquifer. From there, a BMP that was constructed over a cave on Onion Creek will be visited. The BMP was constructed with a valve that can be closed at times of major sediment and contaminant flow in the creek and can be opened following the passage of a storm pulse. As a continuation of this project, an automated water-quality monitoring system will be installed that will automate the opening and closing of the valve. The next stop will be at San Marcos (Aquarena) Springs that is a major discharge point for groundwater from the San Antonio segment of the Edwards Aquifer. Lunch will be provided at this stop and a tour of the springs will be made on glass bottom boats. The fourth and last stop will be at Jacob's Well in Wimberley. This is a significant spring that discharges from the Trinity Aquifer. Presentations will be given on threats to the Trinity Aquifer and Jacob's Well along with descriptions of current studies of the aquifer and the cave from which this water flows.

Plum Creek Watershed Tour

The Plum Creek watershed field trip will highlight efforts regarding watershed planning at the grassroots level with local stakeholders. The Plum Creek Watershed is one of diverse issues related to rapid urbanization in the upper end of the watershed and livestock, row crop, and oil and gas production in the central and southern reaches of the watershed. On the tour, participants will have the opportunity to view potential bacterial and nutrient pollution sources and interact with individuals conducting monitoring and decision making to address these issues. Tour stops include point source and non-point source contributors, view of monitoring sites, a flowing spring, urban growth impacts, crop production fields, and livestock production areas. Participants will also hear from local stakeholders and technical advisors charged with developing a watershed protection plan for the Plum Creek watershed. Lunch of Texas barbeque and all the fixings will be provided at one of the barbecue places in the watershed.

6:00-9:30p Social Hour and Dinner at the Austin Club

8:30p

Dinner Speaker: Dr. Jean Spooner, Professor

North Carolina State University, Department of Biological And Agricultural Engineering

National Monitoring Program (NMP) Overview: Long-Term Monitoring Projects Documenting Water Quality Improvements from Best Management Practices