

Water and the Future of the Texas Hill Country

The April meeting of the Hill Country Chapter of Texas Master Naturalists will be held on Monday, April 23rd, with a program describing the ongoing struggles in Texas for the valuable resource of water. Andrew Sansom, the Executive Director of the River Systems Institute at Texas State University, will speak about the effects of population growth, drought, groundwater pumping, and other economic issues on Texas' efforts to manage this resource fairly among a number of competing interests.

A leading conservationist in Texas, Andy Sansom is the former Executive Director of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the former Executive Director of the Texas Nature Conservancy. He has assembled an unparalleled array of awards: recipient of the Chevron Conservation Award, The Chuck Yeager Award from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Pugsley Medal from the National Park Foundation, and the Lifetime Achievement from The Nature Conservancy. He is also a Distinguished Alumnus of Austin College and Texas Tech University.

Mr. Sansom spearheaded a number of significant programs while at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, including:

- Founding the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation
- Adding over 500,000 acres to the State Parks and Wildlife Management Areas
- Creating two nationally recognized aquatic facilities which include hatcheries, research laboratories, educational centers, and aquariums.
- Initiating an aggressive program to introduce urban children to nature and the outdoors

Numerous articles authored by Mr. Sansom have appeared in *Texas Monthly*, *the Texas Observer*, *Houston City Magazine*, *Texas Highways*, and *Texas Parks and Wildlife Magazine*. He is the author of four books: *Texas Lost*, *Texas Past*, *Scout the Christmas Dog* and *Water in Texas*.

Currently serving as Executive Director of the River Systems Institute, Mr. Sansom coordinates university policy and research related to freshwater resources, manages the headwaters of the San Marcos river (the second largest artesian spring in the Western United States, administers the most extensive freshwater environmental education program in Texas, and supervises the training and coordination of more than 1000 water monitors (many of whom are Texas Master Naturalists) in rivers and streams throughout the State of Texas.

The meeting is free and open to the public. Join us at 7:00 p.m., Monday, April 23rd, 2012 in the Upper Guadalupe River Authority's lecture hall. The lecture hall is located at 125 Lehmann Drive in Kerrville, Texas. For more information, please call Tom Hynes at (830) 990-5750.

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