DRAFT v4\_2025\_0801

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 1st, 2025

KERR COUNTY WATER ALLIANCE UNITES WITH LOCAL, REGIONAL GROUPS TO RELEASE GUIDANCE FOR POST-FLOOD WOODY DEBRIS MANAGEMENT, WORKSHOPS

KERRVILLE, Texas – In response to the July 4, 2025 flood event in Kerr County, a collaborative effort involving the Kerr County Water Alliance (KCWA), Upper Guadalupe River Authority, Bandera County River Authority and Groundwater District, Hill Country Alliance (HCA), Hunt Preservation Society, and other local groups has developed educational tools and guidance for landowners on managing woody debris.

This initiative aims to foster a balanced and ecologically sound approach to river recovery following significant flood events.

Informational workshops are planned for August 5th, 6th, and 7th in Center Point, Hunt, and Kerrville. The KCWA and HCA are helping organize the workshops.

Center Point

Tuesday August 5th, 4-6pm
Central Provisions
223 Ranch to Market Rd 480
Center Point TX 78010

Wednesday August 6th, 4-6pm
Ingram Tom Moore High School Cafeteria
510 TX Hwy 39, Ingram TX 78025

Thursday August 7th, 4-6pm
Trailhead Beer Garden
2100 Memorial Blvd #11
Kerrville TX 78028

“While we as a community focus on immediate needs of those directly impacted by this disaster, we are also hearing from many individuals throughout the County who feel the River and the Land are critically valuable to our day-to-day lives, our physical and mental health, and even our spiritual well-being,” says a representative of the KCWA.

KCWA recognizes a need for “direct connection between people and meaningful contributions to the recovery, cleanup, rebuilding, and restoration efforts”, and wants to provide science-based tools for landowners and volunteers who are already working on land impacted by flooding.

The guidance emphasizes that "Dead Wood is Good" and plays a crucial role in river health. Sources highlight that dead wood is "just as important to river function as living trees", acting as "critical structural reinforcement of the channel, bank and floodplain". It can also "form new banks and assimilates as sediment is trapped behind the logs" and "provides many protected niches for the subsequent establishment of new cypress, sycamore, walnut, buttonbush, sedges and grasses".

Natural Resource Specialist Steve Nelle, a contributor to the discussion on woody material management, asserts that it is "not merely desirable to leave much wood, but necessary for proper river/riparian function". He stresses that "dead wood is perhaps equally important to river function as living trees". He added that "The river will heal better and faster if much wood is left".

The educational tools advocate for a "Balanced and Selective Approach" to woody debris management, guiding landowners to "Take it Slow, Be Selective". Key principles include:

* "Leave What Lives": This refers to trees/logs that still have living tissue or are sprouting leaves, as "living material stabilizes soil and promotes regrowth".
* "Keep What Covers": This encourages leaving debris that is naturally anchored, forming natural piles, or is large/long with a rootwad, as this "helps stabilize banks and improves habitat". Large, slow-decaying wood provides "long-term benefits". It is recommended to "Leave most (50% or more) of the longer, larger downed trees/logs with rootwad and at least some side branches attached". After cleanup, "woody debris should end up occupying at least 1/3 of the banks and adjacent floodplain".
* "Remove What Harms": This pertains to debris that is blocking infrastructure or access, mixed with trash or invasive plants, or is unanchored and could easily wash downstream. Such debris "may pose safety or drainage issues" or "prevent downstream hazards or blockages". It is advised to "Remove most (but not all) of the small and mid-size logs, limbs and woody debris".

Clint Carter of the Bandera County River Authority and Groundwater District, who contributed to developing a simple field-based guidance tool, noted, "This guidance tool is grounded in field assessments, public safety, and floodplain dynamics with the aim of supporting ecological function and real-world conditions".

This collaborative effort aims to provide practical, field-based suggestions that align with both ecological function and real-world conditions, ultimately supporting the long-term health and stability of the region’s waterways.

Kerr County Water Alliance was formed in 2023 to address concerns of the impacts of drought, extreme weather conditions, and population growth on Kerr County surface and ground water resources.

For more information on riparian management, visit the Hill Country Alliance website - <https://hillcountryalliance.org/our-work/water-resources/riparian-management/>

For more information on Kerr County Water Alliance, visit their website at:

https://www.kerrcountywateralliance.org