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Lake Arlington Now Eligible for Watershed Protection Funding

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently approved the Village Creek – Lake Arlington Watershed Protection Plan. The plan was created by the Village Creek – Lake Arlington Watershed Partnership, the City of Arlington and the Trinity River Authority to restore water quality in Village Creek, and in turn protect Lake Arlington’s water quality.

Joe Gildersleeve, water resource services manager with the City of Arlington, said the plan calls on communities and private property owners throughout the watershed to help reduce potential sources of bacteria and other forms of pollution to ensure that the water quality in Lake Arlington remains safe for drinking water and recreational uses.

“These pollutants come from a wide variety of sources, including pet waste, illegal dumping, lawn residue, agricultural runoff, and waste and sanitary sewer overflows,” Gildersleeve said. He continued, “This type of pollution, known as non-point source pollution, is difficult to control, especially since the watershed includes several communities outside of Arlington. I am confident property owners in the watershed will work with us in the future to protect the water quality in Lake Arlington.”

The 143-square mile Village Creek – Lake Arlington watershed includes portions of Arlington, Fort Worth, Burleson and several communities in southeast Tarrant and northeast Johnson counties. Lake Arlington is a drinking water source for more than half a million people, including residents in Arlington, Bedford, Grapevine, Euless, Colleyville and North Richland Hills.

Aaron Hoff, watershed coordinator with TRA, said the plan wouldn’t have been a success without input from local citizens, business representatives, city/county personnel, local resource agency staff and many other stakeholders.

With the plan approved, local planning partners now have wider access to state and federal assistance programs that will encourage sustainable development as the watershed continues to urbanize.

Hoff noted that cornerstones of the effort include protection and restoration of the riparian zones around creeks to act as natural filtration systems, as well as encouraging the use of permeable materials in the construction of driveways, parking lots and sidewalks.

“Replacing asphalt and concrete with permeable construction materials reduces stormwater runoff, allowing Mother Nature to do most of the cleanup for us by filtering pollutants into the soil before they can reach our waterways.” Hoff said.

To read the full plan, visit <http://www.trinityra.org/lakearlingtonvillagecreek>.

Funding for the planning phase of this effort was provided by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality through a Clean Water Act § 319(h) grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, with matching funding from the City of Arlington and in-kind contributions from TRA.

ABOUT THE TRINITY RIVER AUTHORITY OF TEXAS:

The Trinity River Authority of Texas is a conservation and reclamation district providing water and wastewater treatment, along with recreation and reservoir facilities, for municipalities within the nearly 18,000-square-mile Trinity River basin. TRA also maintains a master plan for basin-wide development, and serves as a conduit for tax-exempt financing for municipal projects and as a local sponsor for federal water projects. Each TRA operating project is an independent financial entity, and TRA receives no tax revenues or appropriations. For more information, visit www.trinityra.org.

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