

COMMUNITY MEETING - UNOFFICIAL NOTES

FEBRUARY 2, 2018

CADDO LAKE INSTITUTE:

Laura-Ashley Overdyke introduced herself as the new Executive Director. She stressed that the Institute is an umbrella organization that partners with government and nongovernment and the community to focus on key issues for the lake and the watershed. The main goals are improving the quantity and quality of water in the basin and addressing invasive species. The Institute steps in to fill gaps in scientific knowledge or funding.

Water Quantity through the basin – amazed by what has been done in the past 23 years. Diligent science, sticking with it, hard work with the Army Corps of Engineers.

Corps of Engineers has pumped millions in research, matched by CLI and our partners, into this basin. They are committing to continue that effort, with the goal of increasing the quantity of water into Caddo, despite many industries and other cities that would love to have our water.

CLI has kept Caddo Lake as a priority for the U.S. Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and others. We are truly a highlight in the conservation world and the gov't is even using us as a training facility and classroom this spring.

Quality of water - We work with many other partners, TPWD, FWS, LA Fish and Wildlife, and more, to improve the quality of water when it comes to pollutants. We have had some action on those, with improvements to many industrial facilities that reduced pollution by as much as 40% (phosphorus.)

And, we support, financially and scientifically, wetland and land restoration – healthy forests and well managed lands improve runoff into streams, which improves water quality.

CLI would love to hear from the community about what issues matter to them for future community meetings and updates! Feel free to contact us by Email: info@caddolake.us), online through our website @ <http://www.caddolakeinstitute.org>, or on Facebook @caddolakeinstitute . Scientific research is provided at www.caddolakedata.us. Invitations to community meetings are found by following Caddo Lake Institute on Facebook (@caddolakeinstitute).

VANESSA NEACE

TPWD, Wildlife Management Area

- There are some orphaned oil and natural gas wells on the Wildlife Management Area.
- The State of Texas has now plugged the wells on the WMA
- Last winter all 4 plugged Nelson Hill, Peggy Ashley, Cowherd 1 and Cowherd 2 ----all nine wells around Marion county - North Shore

This is a great outcome for the area to not have natural gas spewing out and to have these wells, which were abandoned by their owners, correctly plugged.

*CLI added that on the Louisiana side of the lake, officials are committed to plugging 5 wells a year.

DR. CHAD HARGRAVE

Blue Head Shiner

- The Blue Head Shiner is a very rare and beautiful fish that was being considered for listing on threatened/endangered list.
- Dr. Hargrave received a grant from the Texas Comptrollers' office to study fish distribution, status and abundance
- Fish span between Texas, Louisiana, Alabama (This study was only in Texas)
- 27,000 fish collected and 67 different types of species - of those blue head shiner found in only 3 sites
- These 3 sites have very different community structures, different habitat, and different fish
- This tells Dr. Hargrave that they are resilient, and that habitat changes would not mean the disappearance of the Blue Head Shiner.
- Found near major drainages – with the 3 sites distributed throughout the basin
- Abundant in both Iron Ore Lake, near Minden and Pruitt lake
- Spawned in artificial streams but will not spawn without vegetation

GEORGE RICE

LHAAP

- Years ago, the Army wasn't finding out the full extent of contamination and attempting to use natural attenuation (a variety of physical, chemical, or biological processes that without human intervention naturally reduce the mass, toxicity, mobility, volume, or concentration of contaminants in soil or groundwater)
- Natural attenuation isn't working at some sites
- Second contractor Army hired was much better
- It is time for a new contractor and now the contract has been broken into 2 contracts – one has been awarded to BHATE, the other will be announced by April.
- Setting up April group tours of wildlife refuge and contamination sites/clean-up – Follow the Caddo Lake Institute Facebook page for invitations to meetings and updates

UPDATE ON THE CADDO LAKE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

- Starr ranch transformed into a beautiful, day use pavilion
- Stones from the original building, the ranch, used
- Ribbon cutting in spring
- Many activities available to the public at the Refuge – hiking, birding, biking.

ROBERT SPEIGHT

VP Caddo Biocontrol Alliance - Weevil Update

- Tried barriers, flotillas, physically picking it up, setting up barges,
- Now, the coordinated approach of applying chemical treatments *and* Salvinia weevils
- Very successful in South LA and South TX but we are too far north and the cold kills off the Salvinia Weevils
- Over 400k weevils released to-date
- Pine Island Pond is a good example of an area completely covered by Salvinia that is now almost completely clear, with weevils applied, then TPWD spraying herbicide, then more weevils put in.

TIM BISTER/TPWD

- Salvinia growth at second highest level in the last 10 years
- Doubled the acres sprayed with herbicides in 2017 than 2016

- 186kg of Salvinia Weevils released between Pine Island Pond, Willowson's Woodyard, Lone Pine Stretch in 2017
- Taking weevils from Pine Island Pond and relocating them from to other affected areas
- TP&W tracks all spraying completed

Plans for 2018:

1. Sample for adults post-winter
2. Continue partnership with CBA
3. TPWD greenhouses
4. East Texas State Fish Hatchery
5. Expand weevil release areas
6. Use established locations as additional source of weevils

Paddlefish – experimental releases of Paddlefish into the system have been successful in terms of fish surviving. Science is lending itself to a full-scale restocking effort in the future.