

Lost Pines Nature Trails dedication on Earth Day

By Denise Rodgers
Special to the Advertiser

The 30 acres along the river formerly known as the Old Tahitian Quarry have received a new name and a facelift. Now known as the Lost Pines Nature Trails, the property is owned by the Bastrop County Water Control & Improvement District #2 (BCWCID#2) and has become a restoration project for Environmental Stewardship, a young Bastrop based non-profit who received their 501(c)(3) status last year.

In celebration of Earth Day, April 22, the public is invited to the trail dedication to and walk the trails from 3-7 p.m., with a chamber ribbon cutting at 5:30 p.m. The site is one mile past the golf course on Riverside Drive. Music and finger food will also be provided and several Texas Master Naturalists will be on board for walking tours.

A work in progress, for the past year and a half, Steve Box and Denise



Come check out the Lost Pines Nature Trail dedication.

Rodgers with Environmental Stewardship have been pulling together community partners to convert the previously abused site into trails for walking and biking and to improve the paddle trail access for El Camino Real Paddle Trail, a 6-mile stretch from Fisherman's Park, officially designated by Texas Parks & Wildlife (TPWD) at the 1st Annual Naturefest in 2007.

The many community partners involved in funding this project have included TPWD, LCRA, Bastrop Economic Development Corporation, federal grant funding, private donations, as well as in-kind contributions from Tahitian Village Property Owners Association, Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative, and BCWCID#2. Many of the trails were built by American Youth Works, Talon Trails, and S&S Trails led by volunteer and Master Trail Steward Dale Morrison, who brings more than 30 years of trail building expertise from New Jersey, Florida, and Nevada.

Part of this ongoing effort includes a half-mile of handicapped accessible trail connecting with the Colorado River Refuge and about 1.2 miles of natural hiking and biking trails along the river. Down from the river access site, the new trail has a lower loop trail alongside the river and curves back around so that even when the river comes up, the upper trail can still be used.

The site has already seen many exciting changes, including new cable and fencing along Riverside Drive, new crushed granite trails, a parking lot, kiosks, garbage cans, trail signs and benches along the trails. The old boat dock has also been repaired several tables will be installed at picnic sites, at least one of which will be handicapped accessible overlooking the river.

The Tahitian Village Property Owners Association recently granted money to provide a portable toilet next to the parking lot. Future plans are to have a real restroom facility, picnic pavilions, develop technical

mountain bike/BMX trails and have a bird blind.

Between the LPNT site and the adjoining Colorado River Refuge, the 95-acre park site has around three miles of river frontage and close to five miles of trails for people to enjoy, including handicap accessible trails. Joan Russell, board member of Pines & Prairies Land Trust, has already been offering educational classes at both sites.

The public is invited to take a stroll along the river, walk your dog and get some exercise. While enjoying the trails, the public is encouraged to take along a garbage bag to pick up what trash you

see and take it home with you, as there are no trash removal services as of yet.

TPWD chronicled the progress of this site in a recent PBS/KLRU special segment entitled "Reclaiming the River." The 9-minute segment can be viewed by going to the home page of www.RisingPhoenixAdventures.com and click to view.

If you are interested in being a part of any aspect of this community park project, call Steve Box at 300-6609, Dale Morrison at 629-3345, or Denise Rodgers at 303-7858. For more info about the organization, visit www.Environmental-Stewardship.org.

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