

The Bastrop Advertiser

TEXAS' OLDEST WEEKLY NEWSPAPER SINCE MARCH 1, 1853

SEMI-WEEKLY SINCE SEPT. 5, 1977

Page 156, Number 3

Bastrop, Texas

22 pages in two sections

Reclaiming the Colorado

By Cyndi Wright
Editor

What began as the Texas Paddling Trails project in Bastrop County has expanded to a much larger conservation and nature tourism project, involving many volunteers and community partners.

After being featured on a special Texas Parks and Wildlife program in December, the restoration efforts started by Steve Box and Denise Rodgers, with Bastrop-based nonprofit Environmental Stewardship, have initiated a much larger, community-driven effort to conserve and protect the natural spots in certain areas along the lower Colorado River in Bastrop County.

Now named the Lost Pines Nature Trails (LPNT), the growing site is located downriver and adjacent to the Colorado River Refuge owned and restored by Pines & Prairies Land Trust. Part of the ongoing project includes a half-mile handicapped-accessible trail and about 1.2 miles of natural hiking and biking trails along the river. Other improvements will soon include a few picnic sites along the river. Still a work in progress, the site already has seen many changes, from new cable and bollard fencing, to granite trails, a parking lot, kiosks, trail signs and benches.

Another phase of the project is to install a restroom and to solicit volunteers to take part in maintaining the

See RIVER, Page 12A



The Bastrop Advertiser photo/Cyndi Wright

American YouthWorks volunteers Liz Bush, Casey Abell and C.J. Davis work building a retaining wall at the new Lost Pines Nature Trails.

River Continued from Page 1A

biking trails along the river. Other improvements will soon include a few picnic sites along the river. Still a work in progress, the site already has seen many changes, from new cable and bollard fencing, to granite trails, a parking lot, kiosks, trail signs and benches.

Another phase of the project is to install a restroom and to solicit volunteers to take part in maintaining the site. The first clean-up day, held on Feb. 14, saw 65 people coming out to help. Volunteers consisted of residents and others, including the Lost Pines Master Naturalists led by Mark McClelland who collected 4,000 pounds of trash and debris from people who had dumped carpets, appliances, furniture and more. Lone Star Waste & Disposal donated services for that day.

"Between the LPNT site and the Colorado River Refuge, we have a 95-acre site with 3 miles of river frontage and close to 5 miles of trails for people to enjoy, including handicap-accessible trails. Just this past weekend, we spoke to an 86-year old man who was enjoying the trails with his son," said Rodgers.

The many community partners involved in this project include funding from TPWD, LCRA, BEDC, federal grant funding, as well as in-kind contributions from the Tahitian Village Property Owners Association, Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative, and BCWCID#2, whose employees are working weekends on the project. Many of the trails were built by American Youth Works, Talon Trails and S&S Trails, led by

Master Trail Steward Dale Morrison.

"It will take many people who love and respect nature to step up and make this park their own," Rodgers said. "We need to organize regular trail and river clean-up projects, and we invite anyone to come and help us. We encourage everyone to visit the Refuge and the LPNT to take a stroll along the river. It's a great place to walk your dog and get some exercise while enjoying the nature trails."

Rodgers added that a commemorative event is being planned for Earth Day on April 22.

Rodgers and Box encourage anyone interested in being a part of any aspect of Bastrop's recreational trails projects to call Steve at 300-6609, Denise at 303-7858 or visit www.EnvironmentalStewardship.org.