

# Trinity River National Water Trail Task Force

December 13, 2023



North Central Texas  
Council of Governments  
Environment & Development



# Thank You for Attending!

- Please introduce yourself in the chat box
- Please mute your line
- If questions: use the “raise hand” option or enter it in the chat box
- Unmute during roundtable discussions



Materials from past meetings can be viewed at:

<https://nctcog.org/envir/committees/trinity-river-national-water-trail-task-force>

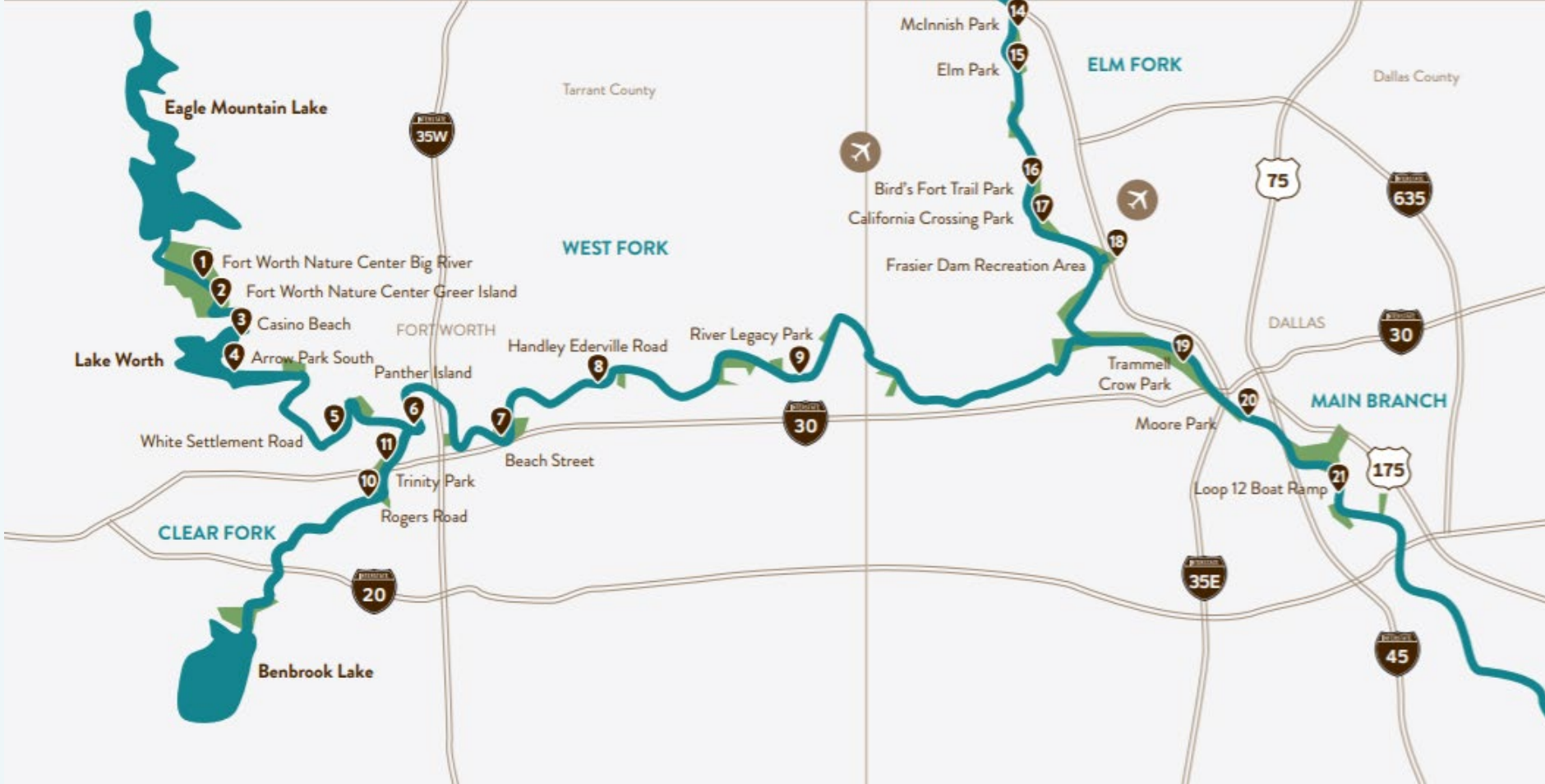
# Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome & Meeting Purpose
2. State of the Trail
3. Recreational Opportunities in Farmers Branch
4. Fort Worth's Open Space Conservation Program
5. Master Plan Update
6. Roundtable
7. Upcoming Events & Opportunities



# **Welcome & Meeting Purpose**

Steve Smith, Trinity Coalition

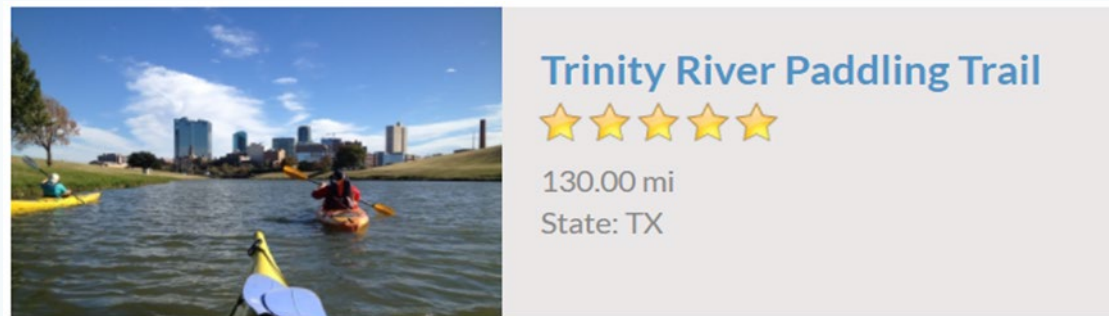


# State of the Trail

*Dale Harris, Trinity Coalition*

# Trinity River National Water Trail

- One of 35 in the nation
- [www.nps.gov/subjects/nationaltrailssystem/national-water-trails-system.htm](http://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationaltrailssystem/national-water-trails-system.htm)
- Select “Find Your National Water Trail”
- Select “Trinity River Paddling Trail”



# Trinity River National Water Trail

- 130 miles with 21 official launch sites
- Traverses 9 municipalities including Dallas and Fort Worth and as far north as Lewisville
- All but two sections are 4-6 miles in length, one section is 12 miles and one is 24 miles





# Trinity River National Water Trail

New launch sites (in various stages of planning) will shorten some of the longer distances:

- Beltline Road in Grand Prairie
- Viridian Development in Arlington
- Trinity View Park in Irving
- Riverside Park in Fort Worth
- Gateway Park (1<sup>st</sup> St)



# Trail Status

Currently 20 out of 21 launch sites are open

- Loop 12 closed - flood damage and safety concerns
- River Legacy is slowing deteriorating



*Night paddle at Panther Island, Fort Worth*

# Special Events

## National Recreation and Park Association

- “...leading not-for-profit organization dedicated to building strong, vibrant, and resilient communities through the power of parks and recreation.”
- 2023 NPRA Conference held in Dallas



NATIONAL RECREATION  
AND PARK ASSOCIATION

# Special Events

## National Recreation and Park Association Conference

- Works with local communities and non-profits to offer Off-Site Institute (OSI) or Mobile Workshops
- Lewisville Parks Department and Trinity Coalition offered a river trip
- Canoeing and kayaking, basic paddling and overview of water safety
- Paddled from LLELA downstream to Hebron Parkway launch



# Trail Usage

- This quarter the trail has been usable Sept 1 to Nov 4
- River flow >3,000 CFS twice, but only for a few days
- Section between LLELA and Hebron Parkway has a downed tree impeding the river
- Section between Hebron and McInnish Park has a downed tree



*Fort Worth Nature Center – Teresa showing a customer how to get into their kayak*

# User-Friendly Water Trail Information

- ▶ Trinity Coalition Web Site: <https://trinitycoalition.org/>
- ▶ Water Trail Information: <https://trinitycoalition.org/paddling-trail>
- ▶ Interactive Map: <https://trinitycoalition.org/launch-sites-map>
- ▶ Water Levels: <https://trinitycoalition.org/water-levels>



Trail Information



Launch Sites Map



Water Levels

# User-Friendly Water Trail Information

- Trinity Coalition Facebook Page / trail information and status
- Trinity River Paddling Trail Association FB Group Page / 1,900+
- Trinity Coalition Meetup Page / 4,000 paddlers



# Recreational Opportunities in Farmers Branch

*Robert Diaz, City of Farmers Branch*





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**FARMERS BRANCH**  
TEXAS

# Westside Art Trail and John Burke Nature Preserve

Trinity River National Water Trail Task Force | December 13, 2023





## Presentation Agenda

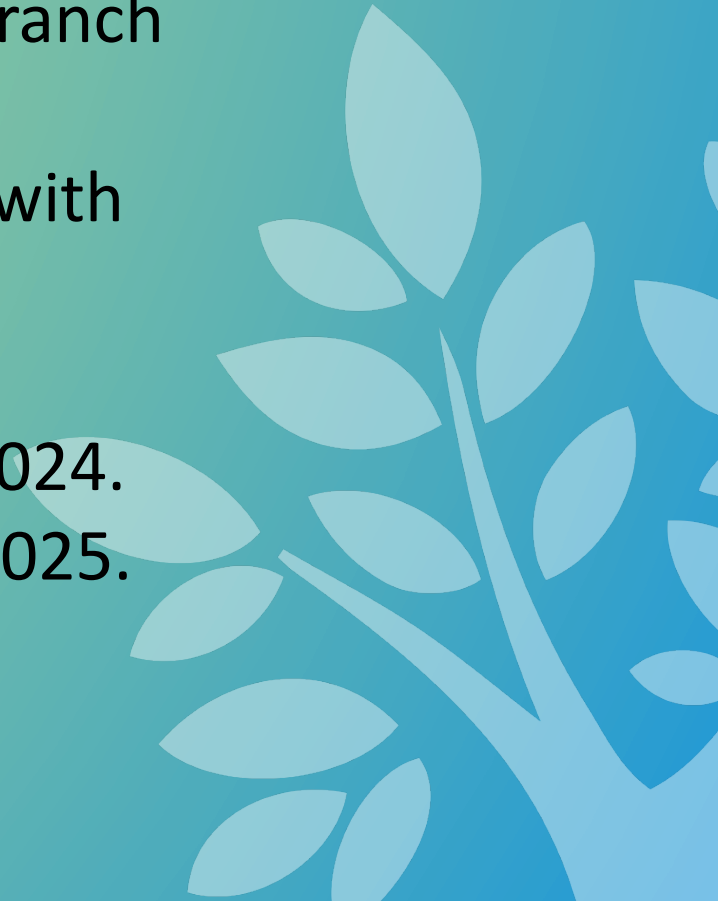
- Introductions-Robert Diaz, Deputy Director of Sustainability and Public Health.
- Discuss Westside Art Trail Project.
- Discuss completion of the John Burke Nature Preserve.
- Discuss the development of the Active Transportation Plan.
- Questions.





## Westside Art Trail Project

- Project began in 2017, identified in Farmers Branch Trails Master Plan.
- Design began in 2021 for Phase 1, disrupted with COVID 19 delays.
- Design will be completed in early 2024 and construction is set to begin in the Spring of 2024.
- Trail will be completed in late 2024 or early 2025.





# WESTSIDE ART TRAIL



**LEGEND**

- Phase 1 (Under Design)
- Phase 2 (Future)
- Denton Drive Cycle Track (Future)
- Existing Trail Segment

FEBRUARY 2023



CITY OF  
**FARMERS BRANCH**  
TEXAS

## John F. Burke Nature Preserve

The John F. Burke Nature Preserve (JFBNP), located in Farmers Branch, Texas, is a 104-acre tract of land representing a partnership between The City of Farmers Branch, the Valwood Improvement Authority, and the North Texas Tollway Authority. The preserve is a unique ecosystem comprising upland forests and wetlands along the Elm Fork of the Trinity River in the heart of the urban Metroplex.



### [View the Trail Map \(PDF\)](#)

The Nature Reserve reopened on May 19, 2023, after several months of renovation, providing new amenities to the area. Visitors now have access to a boardwalk overlook, a granite trail along the pond loop, two new river access points for fishing, wildlife viewing points, rest points, and restrooms, which are expected to open in fall 2023. Whether you are an avid hiker, a bird lover, a nature enthusiast, or simply someone seeking solace in the great outdoors, this newly renovated preserve offers something truly special for everyone.



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TEXAS





## Nature Preserve Features

### Trails

- 1 decomposed granite trail
- Pond Trail – .52 miles
- Thicket Nature Trail – .27 miles
- River Nature Trail – .57 miles

### Boardwalk overlook at the pond

### Wildlife viewing points

### Rest Points

### Restrooms (expected to open fall 2023)



## **Active Transportation Plan Project**

- Update to the Farmers Branch Trails Master Plan.
- Project began in the summer of 2023.
- Public comment and outreach in the spring of 2024.
- Review and adoption by the City Council in late 2024.







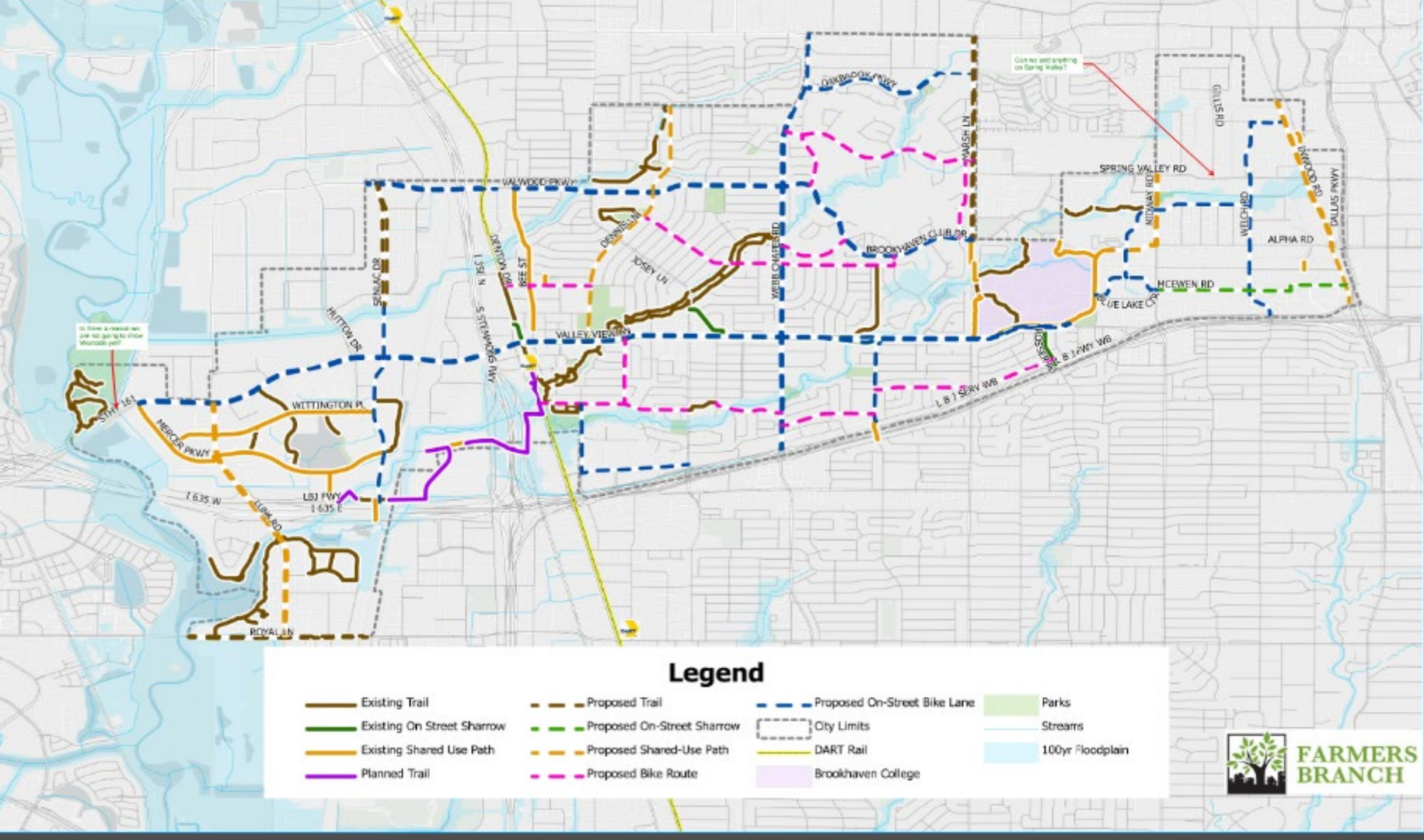
## **ATP Key development areas**

- Complete a Bicycle Plan Map.
- Complete a Pedestrian System Map.
- Analyze and recommend Low Stress Connectivity areas within the City.
- Develop an implementation and development strategy with realistic and attainable goals.
- Identify possible funding sources for project development.





**Farmers Branch Active Transportation Plan  
Proposed Bicycle Network  
Draft 10/17/2023**



### Legend

Existing Trail	Proposed Trail	Proposed On-Street Bike Lane	Parks
Existing On Street Sharrow	Proposed On-Street Sharrow	City Limits	Streams
Existing Shared Use Path	Proposed Shared-Use Path	DART Rail	100yr Floodplain
Planned Trail	Proposed Bike Route	Brookhaven College	



# Questions?

Trinity River National Water Trail Task Force  
December 13, 2023



# Fort Worth's Open Space Conservation Program

*Brandi Kelp, City of Fort Worth*



# Fort Worth Open Space Conservation Program

*Protecting Nature, Building Community*

Brandi Kelp, Senior Planner - Stormwater

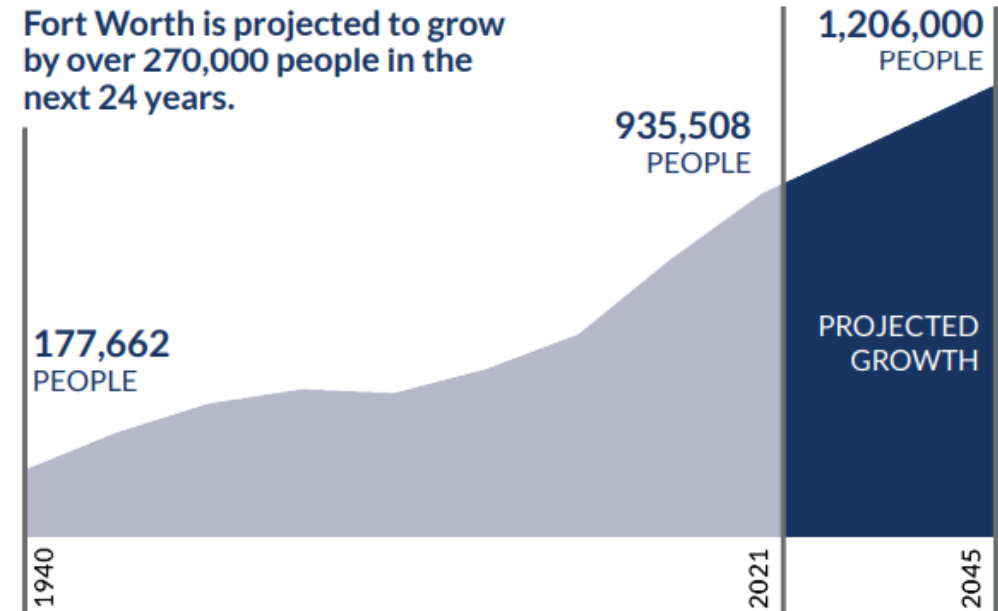
# Growth and Development

- Fort Worth is the 13<sup>th</sup> largest City in the US by population
- At the current rate of population growth, FW is projected to be home to approximately 1M people by 2027
- Fort Worth losing 50 acres/week of natural open space due to development

## FORT WORTH POPULATION, 1940 – 2045

Fort Worth has a larger population than cities including Columbus, Charlotte, Indianapolis, San Francisco, Seattle, Denver, Washington D.C., and Nashville.

Fort Worth is projected to grow by over 270,000 people in the next 24 years.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2021 Population Estimates; NCTCOG 2045 Population Projection; and City of Fort Worth, Planning & Data Analytics Department, 2022.

**359**

Land Area  
in Square Miles

**2,606**

Population Density  
per Square Mile

**194,302**

Population Change  
2010-2021

# Open Space Working Group

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## City Departments

- City Attorney's Office
- Environmental Quality
- Communications & Public Engagement
- Development Services
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Economic Development
- Fort Worth Lab
- IT Solutions
- Neighborhood Services
- Park & Recreation
- Property Management
- TPW - Stormwater Management
- Water

## Partners

- North Central Texas Council of Governments
- Streams & Valleys
- Tarrant County
- Tarrant Regional Water District
- Trust for Public Land



# Open Space vs. Park

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Experience Nature



Experience Programmed Recreation





# Open Space Conservation Program Mission

Conserve **high-quality natural areas** as the city grows to provide environmental benefits and recreational opportunities that support economic development and enhance the livability and desirability of Fort Worth.



# Priority Goal Areas

- Ecosystem Preservation
- Stream, River, and Lake Health
- Community Health
- Recreation
- Flood Control
- Equitable Access to Natural Spaces
- Economic Development



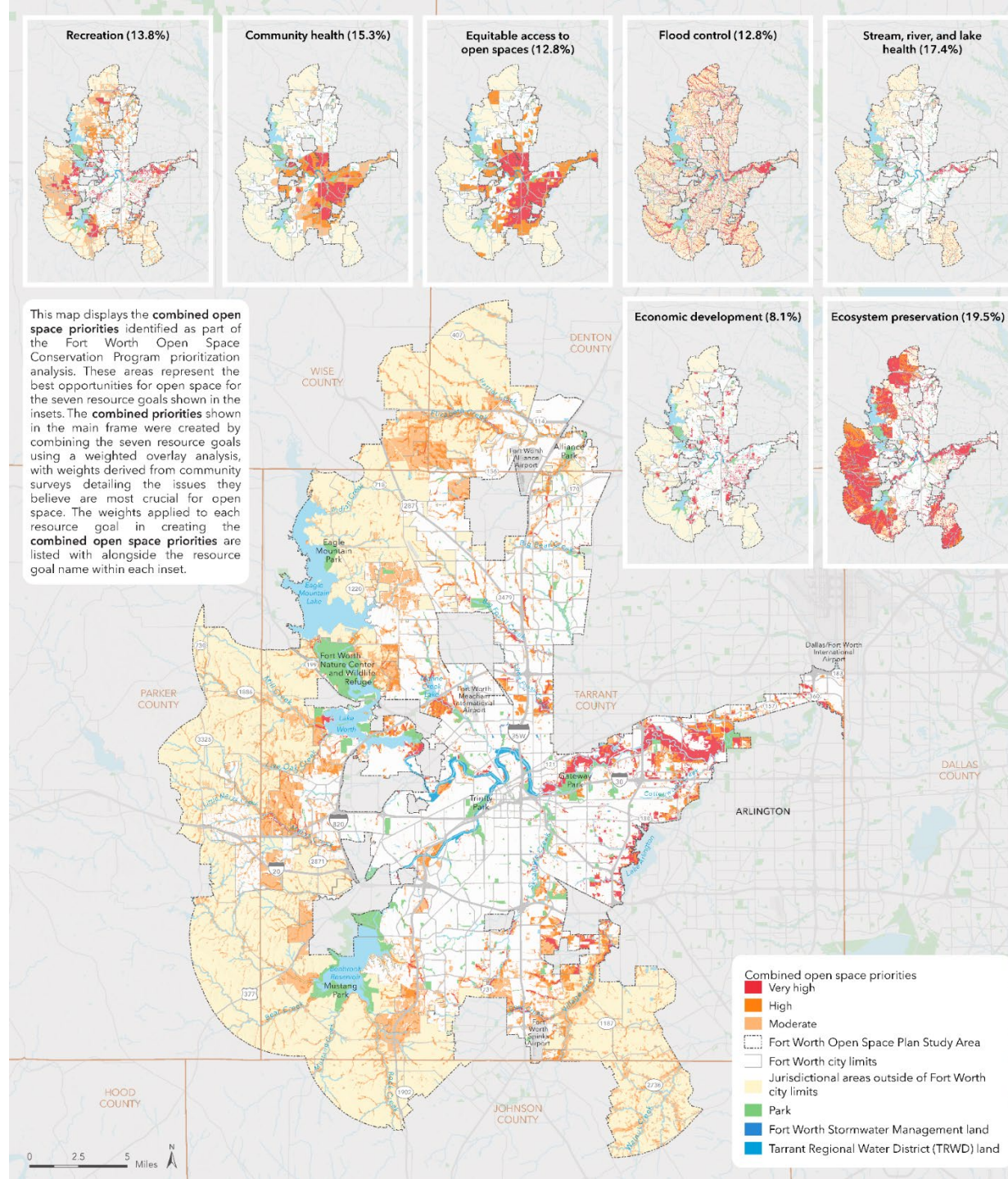
# Combined Open Space Priorities


## Prioritized based on feedback from

- Public Survey and Meetings
- Stakeholder Meetings
- Open Space Working Group

## Online Open Space Tool

- Overall Results
- Goal Area Results
- Individual Criteria





# Public Engagement Key Takeaways

- 96% define conservation of natural areas as “Very Important”
- 99% think the city should establish a permanent program to conserve natural areas
- 88% strongly support dedicating public funding for land conservation
- 37% willing to volunteer

# Public Engagement – Key Takeaways

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## Programs and Activities

- Hiking/Walking
- Bird Watching & Wildlife Viewing
- Educational Programming & Outdoor Education

## Amenities

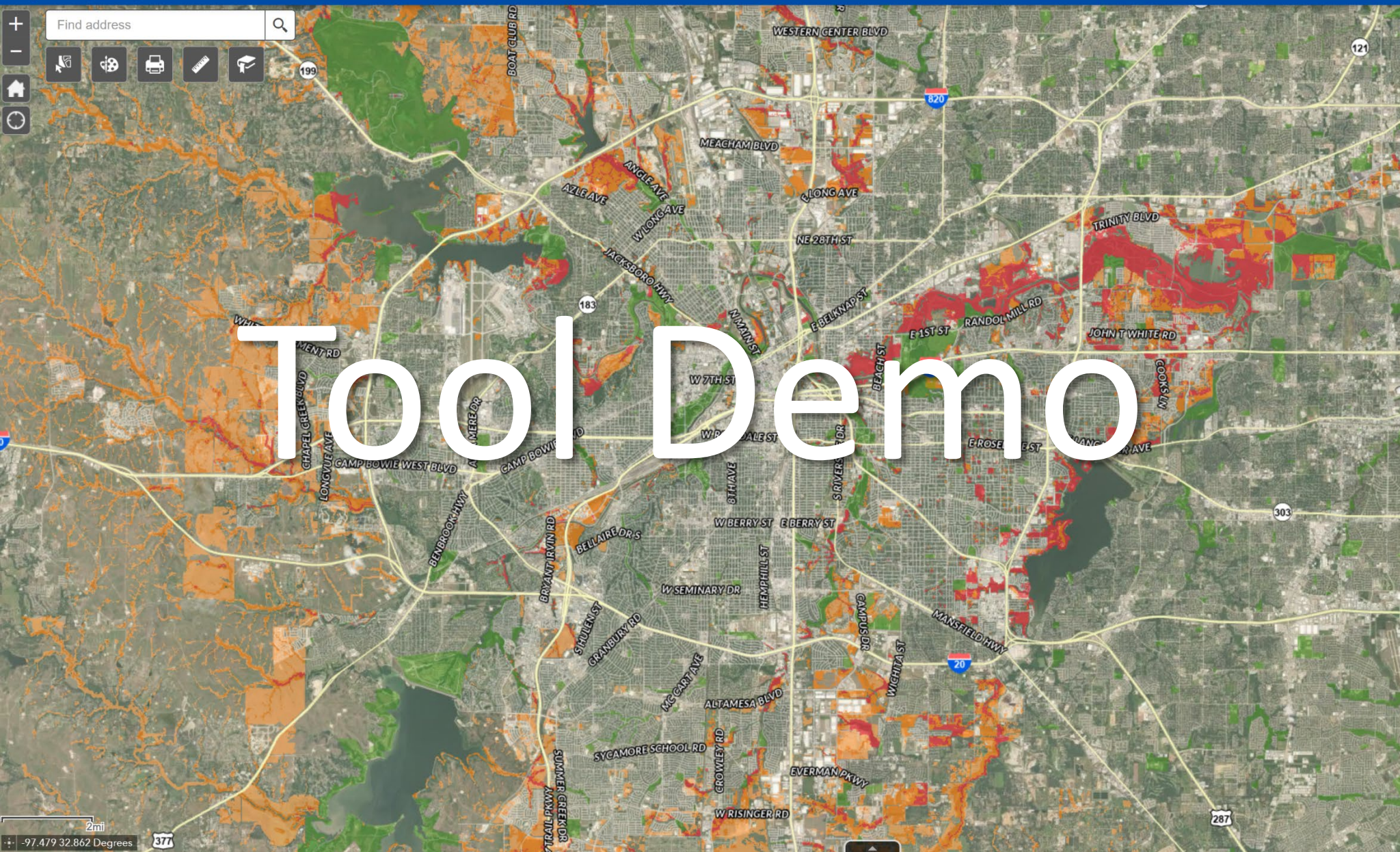
- Natural Paths & Trails
- Picnic Areas
- Educational Signage





# Open Space Acquisitions

Properties	Acres
Broadcast Hill	50
Jacksboro Hwy	29.51
Patino Rd	23.88
Rock Creek	40
Lake Arlington Bluestone Properties	14.68
Nosilla	2.8
Melcher	40
Primrose Station - in progress	35
Lake Arlington Olcott – in progress	153



Layer List

Layers

- Context Layers
- Analysis Results

2mi  
-97.479 32.862 Degrees

[mapitwest.fortworthtexas.gov/OpenSpaceTool](http://mapitwest.fortworthtexas.gov/OpenSpaceTool)

Brandi.Kelp@fortworthtexas.gov

[fortworthtexas.gov/departments/tpw/stormwater/open-space](https://fortworthtexas.gov/departments/tpw/stormwater/open-space)

(Go to [FortWorthTexas.gov](https://FortWorthTexas.gov) and search for Open Space)





# **Trinity River National Water Trail Master Plan Update**

*Jai-W Hayes-Jackson and Erin Blackman,  
NCTCOG*

# Trinity River National Water Trail

Master Plan



# Purpose

In 2018, Trinity Coalition and NCTCOG met with cities and counties with a proposal to integrate the 21 existing canoe launch sites into a single paddling trail. In October 2020, the Trinity River Paddling Trail was designated as a National Water Trail by the National Park Service.

The Trinity River National Water Trail Task Force and master plan is a coordinated effort between:

- The Trinity Coalition,
- The North Central Texas Council of Governments,
- and the communities and organizations along the Trinity River.

The Trinity River National Water Trail Master Plan seeks to identify long range actions that advance recreation, tourism, and economic development along the Water Trail. This plan will help guide communities with developing the trail and how to allocate resources.

# Trinity River Trail Map

The Trinity River Water Trail covers

- 130 river miles
- nine cities
- three counties

There are 21 launch sites along its length with access to 3 river tributaries and the main branch

- Clear Fork
- West Fork
- Elm Fork



Rivers are a natural environment and constantly changing. Please check the local river gauges for current flow conditions. If you have questions, corrections, or updates to this map, email Teresa at [teresa@trinitycoalition.org](mailto:teresa@trinitycoalition.org).



KEY	
	Launch Site
	Trinity River
	Park
	Airport

# Community Feedback

- NCTCOG has met with 7 stakeholder groups
- Sought feedback on:
  - Goals for the Trinity River Corridor
  - Points of interest to highlight
  - Challenges and opportunities (e.g., design standards, maintenance, signage, safety, etc.)
  - Etc.

# Master Plan Blueprint

- Overview of the National Water Trail
  - Purpose & Background
- Vision & Goals
  - Planning
  - Education & Safety
  - Maintenance
  - Stewardship & Conservation
  - Expansion of the Trail
  - Economic Growth
- Recommendations
  - Goal Actions

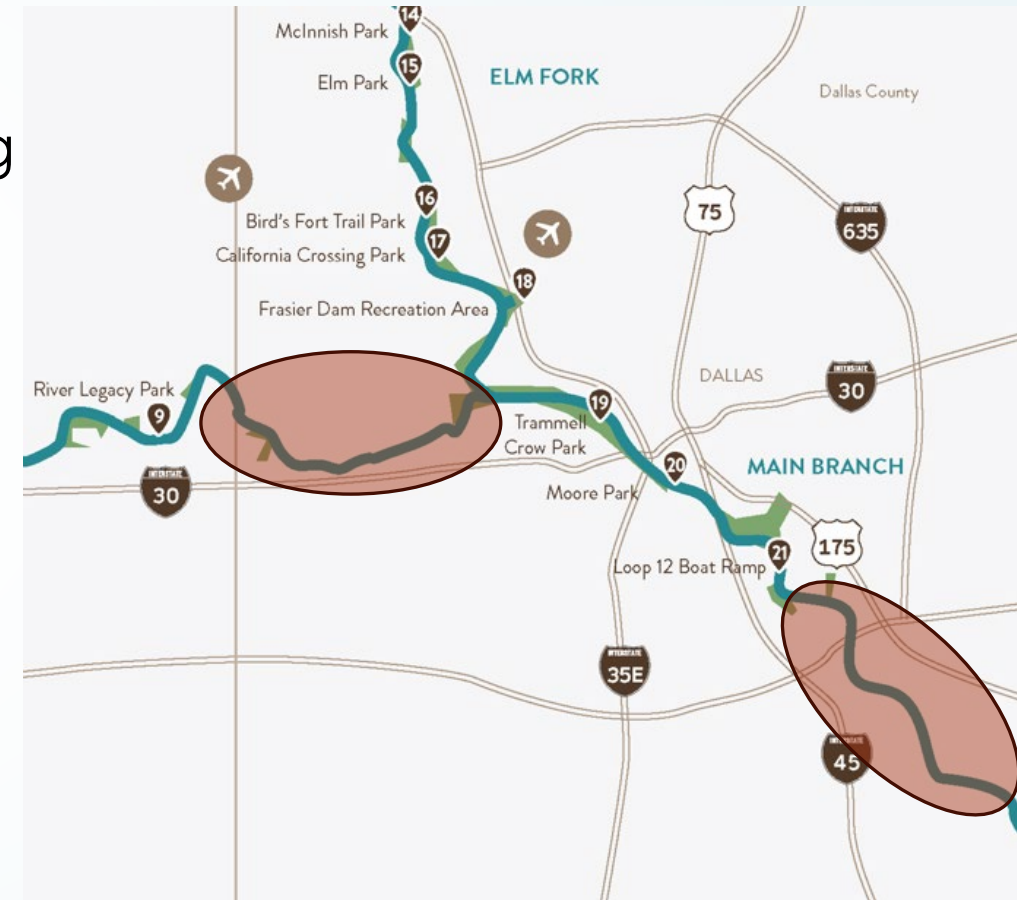
# Goals for the Trail

1. Develop new entry sites to shorten distances between sites
2. Promote the use of the trail and educate all users
3. Make the trail more accessible to all
4. Maintain condition and safety of the existing and future launch sites
5. Promote stewardship along the Trinity River
6. Connect the trail to the existing land trails
7. Extend the trail further south
8. Promote the economic benefits of the trail
9. Highlight the cultural and historical context of the trail

# Develop new entry sites to shorten distances between sites

## Actions

- Identify priority gaps in public access along the water trail.
- Complete priority gaps along the trail.
- Identify common priority projects to leverage maximum joint investments.





# Promote the use of the National Water Trail and educate all users

## Actions

- Increase sharing of information to improve communication with stakeholders (ex. newsletters, blogs, websites, etc.).
- Identify destinations along the trail in each community to highlight.
- Establish regularly scheduled trail focus meeting for additional stakeholder input (tourism and visitors' bureaus, recreation groups, health organizations, etc.).
- Emphasize the rules and regulations of non-motorized and motorized water recreation vehicles and other trail related activities.

# Make the trail more accessible to all

## Actions

- Identify ADA accessible launch sites on the trail.
- Ensure trails are designed and constructed to meet accessibility standards, including gentle slopes, firm surfaces, and minimal obstacles.
- Regularly maintain the trail to ensure it remains accessible.
- Involve individuals with disabilities or advocacy groups in the planning and design process to gather insights and feedback for improving accessibility.
- Conduct outreach and educational programs to raise awareness about trail accessibility, inclusivity, and proper etiquette when sharing the trail with diverse users.

# Maintain condition and safety of the existing and future launch sites

## Actions

- Identify and document best management practices for trail construction and maintenance.
- Identify existing condition of launch sites to prioritize needs.
- Enhance tools to electronically collect and report trail conditions on Trinity Coalition's website.
- Maintain cohesive signage throughout the trail and clearly mark hazard areas.

Trinity River Paddling Trail  
Lewisville Lake Environmental Learning Area



Current location:  
LLELA  
Lewisville Lake  
Environmental  
Learning Area  
DD: 33.067109° -  
96.964697°

Next Take-out:  
Hebron  
Parkway Rd  
~6 miles /  
~ 2.5 hrs  
DD: 33.012600° -  
96.950689°

This section has Cell coverage. In case of emergency call 911. River section LLELA to Huffines Park at Hebron Parkway, Lewisville

River conditions: this section of the river starts out with shallow fast moving current. Downstream the river widens and slows. **Hazards:** please watch for fallen trees that can go completely across the river.

<http://www.playlewisville.com/>



For more information: <https://trinitycoalition.org/>

# Promote stewardship along the Trinity River

## Actions

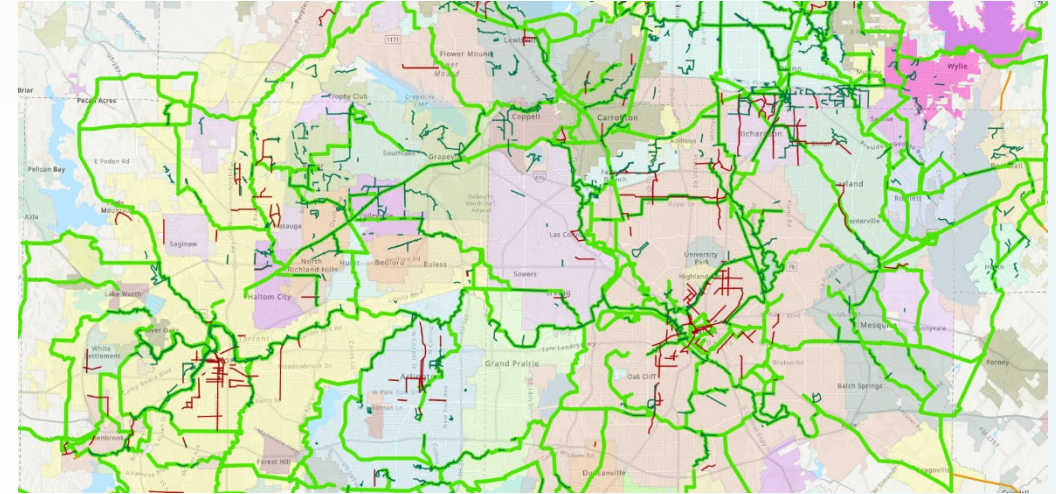
- Develop and implement volunteer programs to increase volunteer engagement in water trails.
- Work with local organizations, schools, businesses, and government bodies to collectively promote stewardship.
- Distribute information that educate visitors about the ecosystem, conservation practices, and the importance of responsible behavior including guidelines for proper trail use.



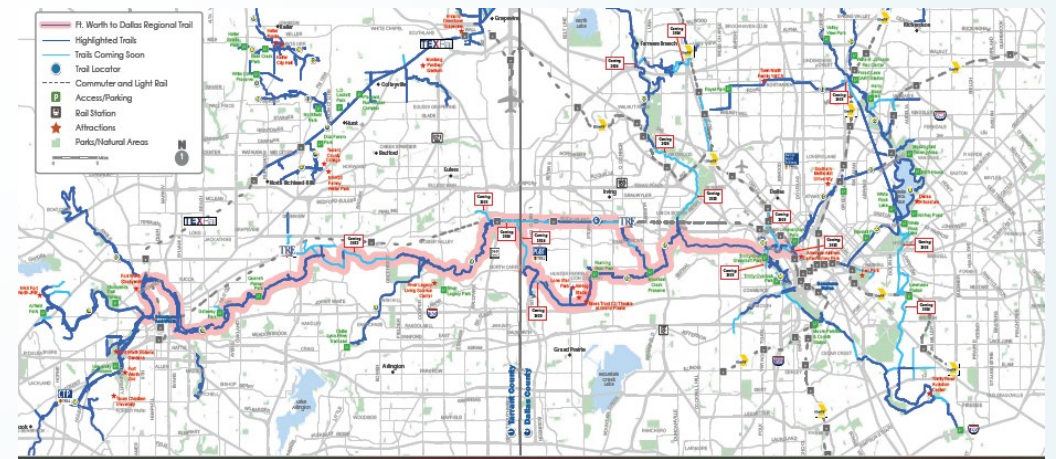
# Connect the Trinity River National Water Trail to the existing land trail

## Actions

- Create a recreational map that includes the water trail, land trails, and bike paths.
- Promote signage that shows the relation of the water trail to existing land trails.
- Highlight community points of interests.



[Veloweb](#)



[DFW Discovery Trail](#)

# Extend the National Water Trail further south

## Actions

- Collaborate with Trinity River Corridor Councils of Governments (Heart of Texas Council of Governments, Houston-Galveston Area Council, Brazos Valley Council of Governments).
- Expand The National Water Trail Task Force to additional communities.
- Work with other communities to identify entry sites for the remainder of the Trinity River.



# Promote the economic benefits of the trail

## Actions

- Complete additional studies on the economic impact / value of trails.
- Collaborate with Tourism Bureaus to promote ecotourism and recreational activities.
- Highlight local businesses and services that cater to recreational activities.



# Highlight the cultural and historical context of the trail

## Actions

- Work with indigenous populations to capture the cultural context of the trail.
- Collaborate with schools and universities to capture the historic context of the trail.





# Master Plan Timeline



# Contact

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# Connect



Facebook.com/nctcogenv



@nctcogenv



nctcogenv



youtube.com/user/nctcoged



EandD@nctcog.org

www

nctcog.org/envir

# **Task Force Roundtable**

*All Members*

*(please raise your hand and unmute yourself)*

# Upcoming Events & Opportunities

## *NCTCOG Staff*

# Upcoming Events & Opportunities

- NCTCOG Events & Opportunities: <https://www.nctcog.org/envir/Events>
- Trinity Coalition Events & Opportunities: <https://trinitycoalition.org/events>

# DALLAS-FORT WORTH AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN



The North Central Texas Council of Governments is collaborating with local stakeholders in the Dallas-Fort Worth region to develop a comprehensive Air Quality Improvement Plan (DFW AQIP). The plan will create a roadmap to improve air quality, protect public health, and reduce the impacts of extreme weather events.

Your input is requested and important! Please go to [www.publicinput.com/dfwAQIP](http://www.publicinput.com/dfwAQIP) to make recommendations, attend an open house, and more.

## FOCUS AREAS:



Transportation



Energy



Solid Waste



Water

This work is funded by the Environmental Protection Agency's Climate Pollution Reduction Grants: Planning Grants.



Park & Recreation  
Department

# PRESCRIBED FIRE WORKSHOP

Ignite Knowledge, Transform Landscapes

Join us for a two-day Prescribed Fire Workshop

**January 10-11, 2024**

ONLY  
**\$20**



# Contact

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# Connect



Facebook.com/TrinityRiverCoalition



Meetup.com/DFWPaddlesports

www

TrinityCoalition.org

www

NCTCOG.org/Envir

Materials from past meetings can be viewed at:

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