

Geronimo and Alligator Creeks WPP: Implementation and Updates



Evgenia Spears, Ph.D.

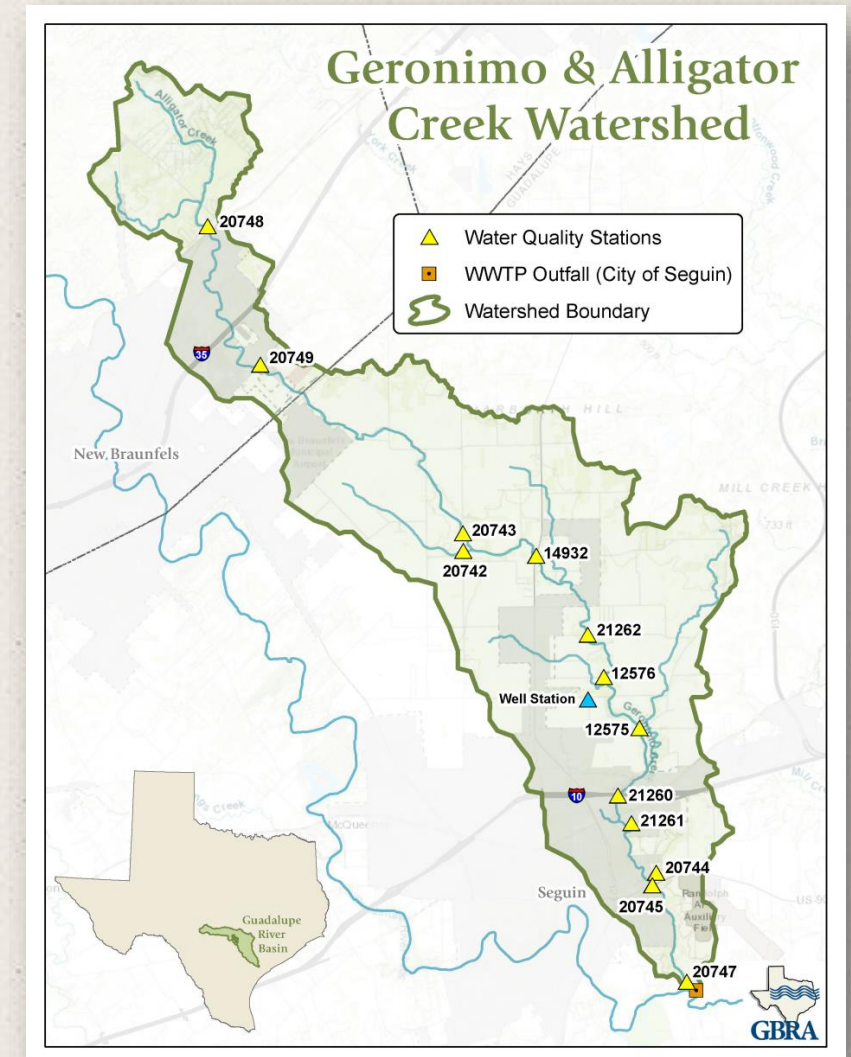
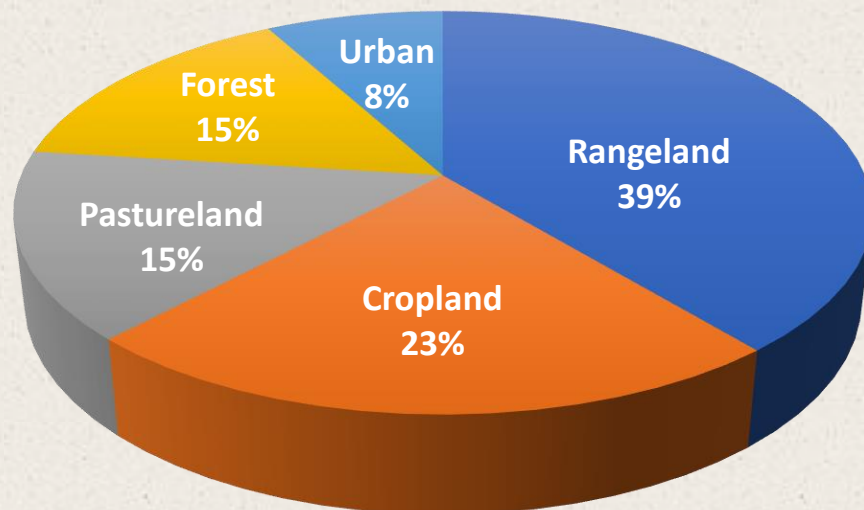
Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Watershed Coordinator
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service



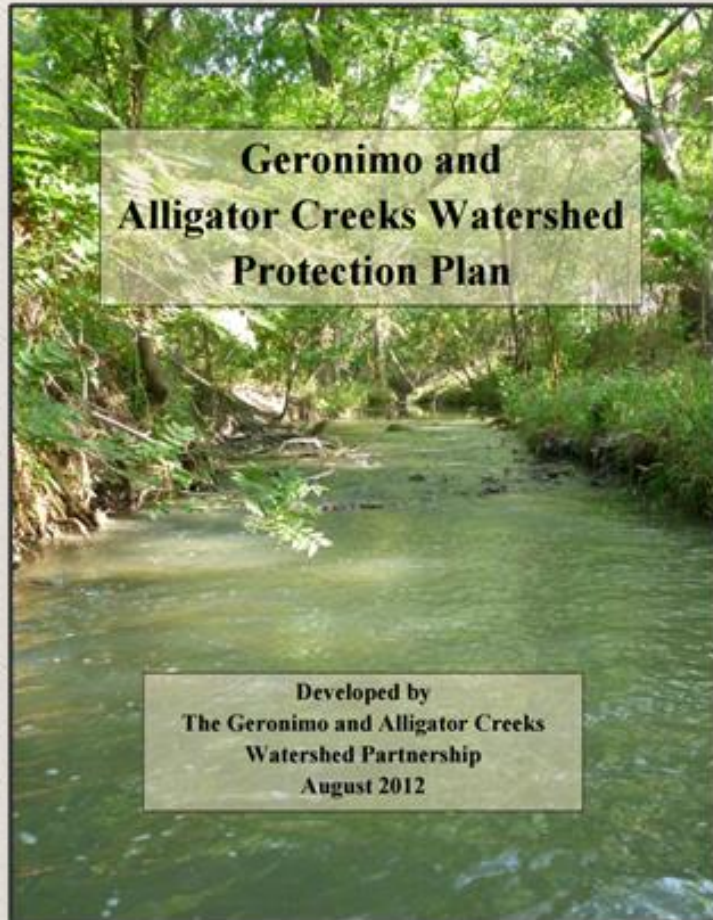
July 29, 2021

Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Watershed

- Population growth
- Rapidly urbanizing area
- Proximity to San Antonio, San Marcos, and Austin
- Widespread conversion of agricultural land to urban uses



Geronimo and Alligator Creeks WPP



- WPP in place since 2012
- Impairments in Geronimo Creek:
 - Elevated levels of *E. coli*
 - Nitrate-nitrogen concentrations
- Major sources of pollution identified in WPP:
 - Agriculture
 - Pet waste
 - Urban runoff
 - Failing septic systems

Outreach and Education

- Programs include:
 - Homeowner Maintenance of Septic Systems
 - Healthy Lawns Healthy Waters
 - Riparian & Stream Restoration Training
 - Texas Well Owner Network
 - Low Impact Development workshop
 - Feral Hog Management
 - Annual Cleanup Event
 - ...and many more!



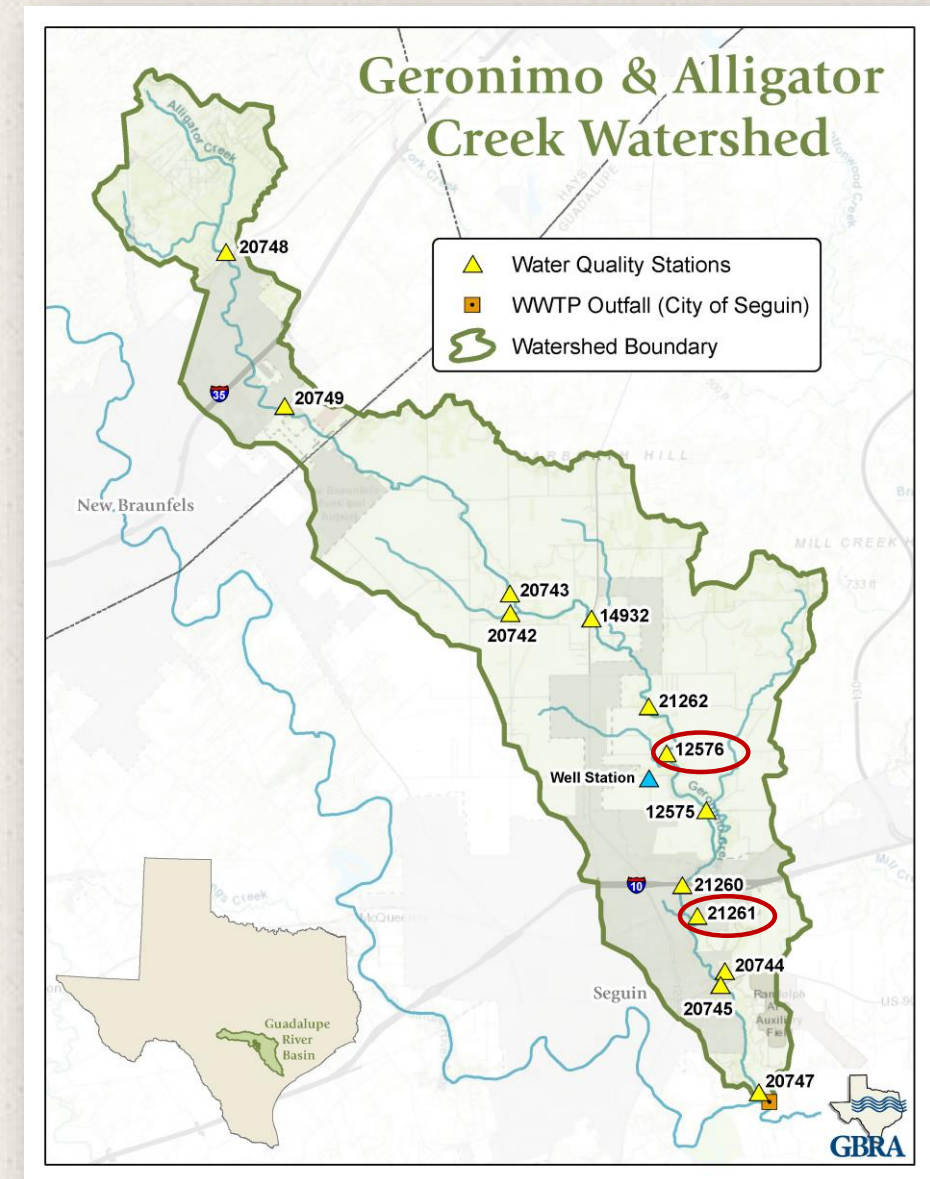
Geronimo and Alligator Creeks WPP: Implementation Efforts

- Multiple events had to be canceled/postponed
- New Watershed Coordinator
- Bacteria source tracking analysis
- Decommissioning of septic systems
- Homeowner Maintenance of Septic Systems virtual course
- 8th Annual Geronimo and Alligator Cleanup Event
- Water Quality Management Plans
- Face-to-face programs are back!



Bacteria Source Tracking

- Bacteria source tracking analysis (April 2019 – March 2020)
- Summary for both sites:
 - Wildlife = 61%
 - Livestock/domesticated = 17%
 - Human = 2%
 - Unidentified = 20%



Decommissioning of Septic Systems

- TCEQ NPS grant awarded to the City of Seguin in 2020 to address failing septic systems
- Targeted 52 households in Seguin
 - Decommissioning of septic systems
 - Connection to the sewer line
- Public meetings and education
- 16 signed up (as of June 2021)
- Decommissioning will begin early September



Homeowner Maintenance of Septic Systems Online

- Available via AgriLife Learn
- 7-hour course with quizzes
- 30 days to complete
- Course fee: \$150
- Eligible for certification in Guadalupe County



COURSE INFORMATION

An aerobic septic system, or aerobic treatment unit (ATU), uses oxygen to breakdown both dissolved and solid constituents into gases, cell mass, and non-degradable material contained in wastewater. This online course will teach you how to properly maintain and operate your ATU.

Topics

- Understand the basic operation and maintenance activities for an ATU
- Be a better consumer in the onsite wastewater treatment industry
- Have the knowledge needed to understand and communicate with maintenance providers

Course Details

Cost: \$150

Duration: 30 days from sign-up date

To register, go to tx.ag/EnrollAerobicTreatment and click 'Enroll Now'.

Available to Texans in approved counties starting **April 1**.

Visit tx.ag/HomeAerobicTreatmentSystems for more information.



Contact

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8th Annual Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Cleanup Event

- 2013 – first Cleanup Event
- Over 1,200 volunteers removed nearly 20,000 pounds of trash

2021

- April 17 and April 24
- Details and registration online
- In-advance pick up of supplies
- Staggered pattern



Water Quality Management Plans

Comal-Guadalupe Soil and Water Conservation District

- Completed WQMPs on four farms and received five new applications
- Terraces, waterways, brush management, revegetation, etc.



Photo credit: Cris Perez, Comal-Guadalupe SWCD Field Technician

Upcoming Programs

- Homeowner Maintenance of Septic Systems, in person (August 18)
- Healthy Lawns Healthy Waters (September 23)
- Fall Sweep (October, TBD)
- Texas Well Owner Network (November 4)
- Low Impact Development workshop (December 1)





THANK YOU!

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