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Water quality training Sep. 2 in Luling will focus on Plum Creek

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LULING – A Texas Watershed Steward workshop on water quality related to Plum Creek will be held from 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. on Sep. 2.

The workshop will be held at the Luling Foundation Agriculture Demonstration Farm, 523 S Mulberry Avenue in Luling. A virtual attendance option will also be available for those unable to attend in-person. The event will be presented by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board in cooperation with the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership.

“This workshop is designed to help watershed residents learn about their water resources and how they may become involved in local watershed protection and management activities,” said Michael Kuitu, AgriLife Extension program specialist and coordinator for the Texas Watershed Steward program, College Station. “The workshop is free and open to anyone interested in improving water quality in the region.”

To attend in-person or virtually, participants must preregister at the Texas Watershed Steward website at <https://tws.tamu.edu> or by calling 979-862-4457. “Once registered, additional meeting information, including our social distancing measures and sanitation practices we plan to perform will be provided,” Kuitu said.

The workshop will include a discussion on watershed systems, along with types and sources of water pollution. There also will be a group discussion on community-driven watershed protection and management.

“The workshop will provide an overview of water quality and watershed management in Texas with an emphasis on area water quality,” said Wayne Morse, Extension agent for Caldwell County. “It will address local water resources but will be applicable to all waters in the region.”

“The importance of Plum Creek is evident in regards to recreation, wildlife habitat, fresh water flows, storm water management, aesthetics and more. It truly is a vital resource,” said Stephen Risinger, Plum Creek watershed coordinator, Lockhart. “The public is invited to not only learn about water quality management, but also how they may become involved, including implementing science-based best management practices in their homes and at their jobs.”

Attendees of the workshop will receive a copy of the Texas Watershed Steward Handbook and are eligible to earn a certificate of completion. The Texas Watershed Steward program offers continuing education for multiple professional disciplines. However, the quantity of continuing

education offered does vary for select disciplines, depending on whether one attends in-person or virtually.

For those who attend in-person, four hours of continuing education is offered for the following professional disciplines: soil and water management for certified crop advisers; professional engineers; AICP certified planners (4 CM & 1.5 law); certified teachers; professional geoscientists; certified landscape architects; certified floodplain managers; and each of the following Texas Commission on Environmental Quality occupational licensees: wastewater system operators, public water system operators, on-site sewage facility installers, and landscape irrigators. In addition, three general continuing education units are offered to in-person attendees for Texas Department of Agriculture pesticide license holders, and two credits are offered for nutrient management specialists. For questions regarding professional continuing education afforded to virtual attendees, please contact Michael Kuitu.

“Participating in the Texas Watershed Steward program is a great opportunity to get involved and make a difference in your watershed,” said Morse.

Funding for this effort is provided through a federal Clean Water Act §319(h) Nonpoint Source Grant administered by the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

For more information on the Texas Watershed Steward program, and to preregister, go to the website or contact Michael Kuitu at 979-862-4457, mkuitu@tamu.edu; or Wayne Morse at 512-398-3122, wayne.morse@ag.tamu.edu.

For information on watershed protection efforts for the Plum Creek watershed, contact Stephen Risinger at 830-557-7358, srisinger@plumcreekwatershed.org.