



# HELM



Habitat Enhancing Land Management



# HELM Project Planning

- **Meetings/Workshops**
  - 1st Zoom 9/30/2020
  - Sought Expert Advice
  - Reading Land Workshop
- **Discussion Topics**
  - Pertinent Resources
  - Site Mapping
  - Talking to Landowners
  - Electronic Tools
    - Trello
    - BeautifulHaysCounty



# HELM Project Kickoff

- Spring 2021
  - First Spring Site Visit 3/12/2021
  - 13 Landowners Visited
  - Total of 377 Acres
  - Average 29 Acres
- Fall 2021 - 9/10/2021
  - First Fall Site Visit
  - 12 Landowners Visited
  - Total of 319 Acres
  - Average 27 Acres
- Spring 2022
  - Mid-March Kick-off Planned
  - 15 Visits In Process
  - Tend to Be Smaller Properties

## General Description

5.4 acres in Wimberley. Landowner is in the process of building a small house for his 87 year old father and has plans to build a new house for his family. Both houses will have rainwater collection systems. The family currently lives in another existing house on the property. There is also a cleared/mulched area where owner plans to hold music events.

Land is mostly Ashe Juniper and Oak except for areas recently cleared to make way for planned development. The property has two distinct forested areas that the landowner plans to "keep in their natural state." The property is sloped with two ravines (see contour map). A seasonal creek runs through the property and includes a small spring (pictured). Erosion is a major concern.

The landowner wants to make the property a "haven for wildlife, native trees, grasses, and wildflowers." He is also planning to raise honeybees.



## Trees/Shrubs

### Observed

Live Oak, Red Oak (pictured), Ashe Juniper, Sugar Hackberry, Persimmon, Agarita, Lantana (non-native), Vitex (non-native), Prickly Ash, Cedar Elm, Possumhaw



# HELM Team Training

- All Certified Hays Master Naturalists
- HELM Workshops
  - Plant ID - Bill Carr
  - Riparian - Ryan McGillicuddy
  - Wildlife - Blake Hendon
  - Cedar - Elizabeth McGreevey
- Encouragement Other Training
  - BCP Forest Restoration ZOOMs
  - Hill Country Alliance Workshops



# HELM & Water Education

- Land/Water Relationship
  - Historic Abuse
    - Cedar Clearing
    - Overgrazing
  - Current Issues
    - Cedar Myths
    - Erosion
    - Excessive Mowing
    - Invasive Species
- Land Stewardship Helps Recharge
  - Native Vegetation
    - Grasses
    - Shrubs/Trees
  - Berms and Swales
  - Riparian Buffer
  - Added Benefit - Wildlife Habitat



<https://beautifulhayscounty.org/helm>

## HABITAT-ENHANCING LAND MANAGEMENT

### HELM

*"When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect." – Aldo Leopold*

*Want to know more about managing your Hays County acreage?*

We can help. As part of our Habitat-Enhancing Land Management (HELM) program, the Hays County Master Naturalists have assembled a specially trained team. Our volunteers will walk your property with you to identify plants and trees. We will make recommendations on improving soil and controlling erosion. We can provide helpful advice on attracting birds and other wildlife, preventing oak wilt, and much more. Through our visit and follow-up, we will provide friendly, customized guidance to help you meet your goals for managing your special property.

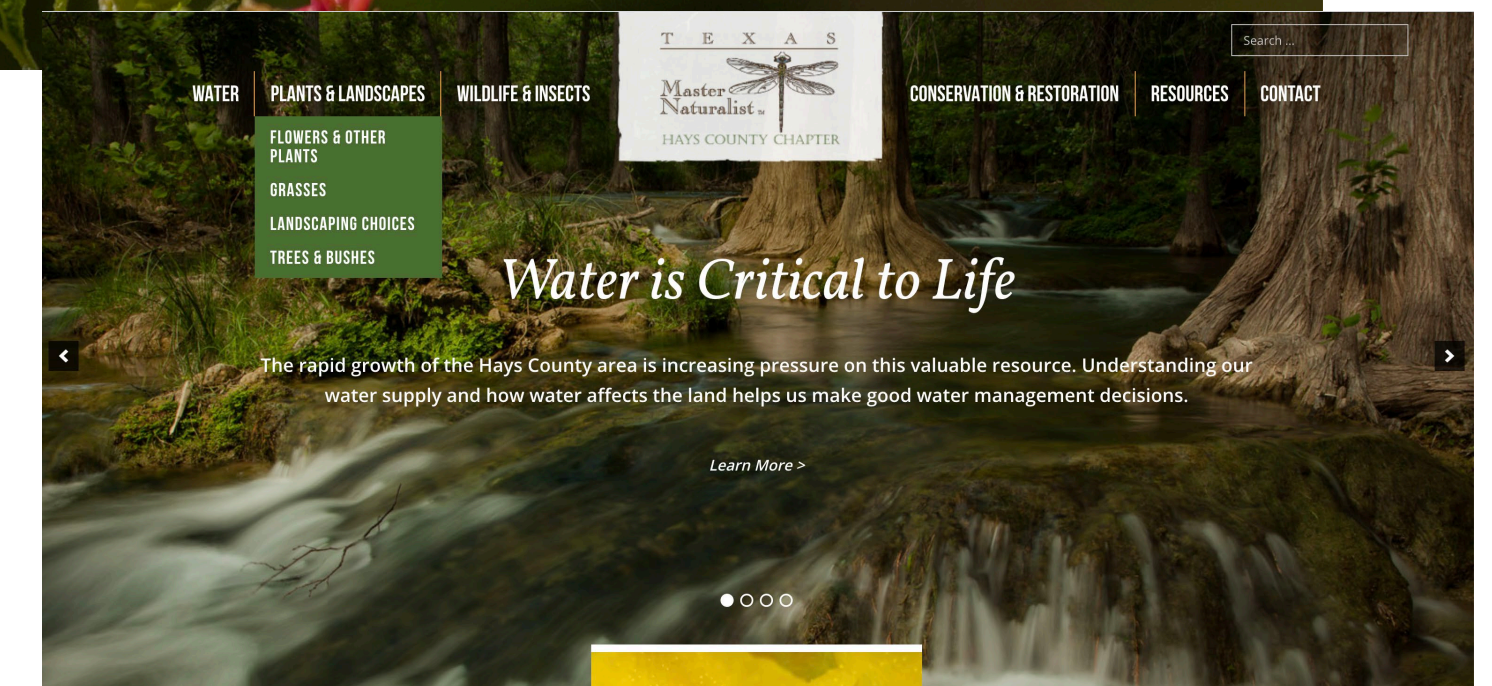
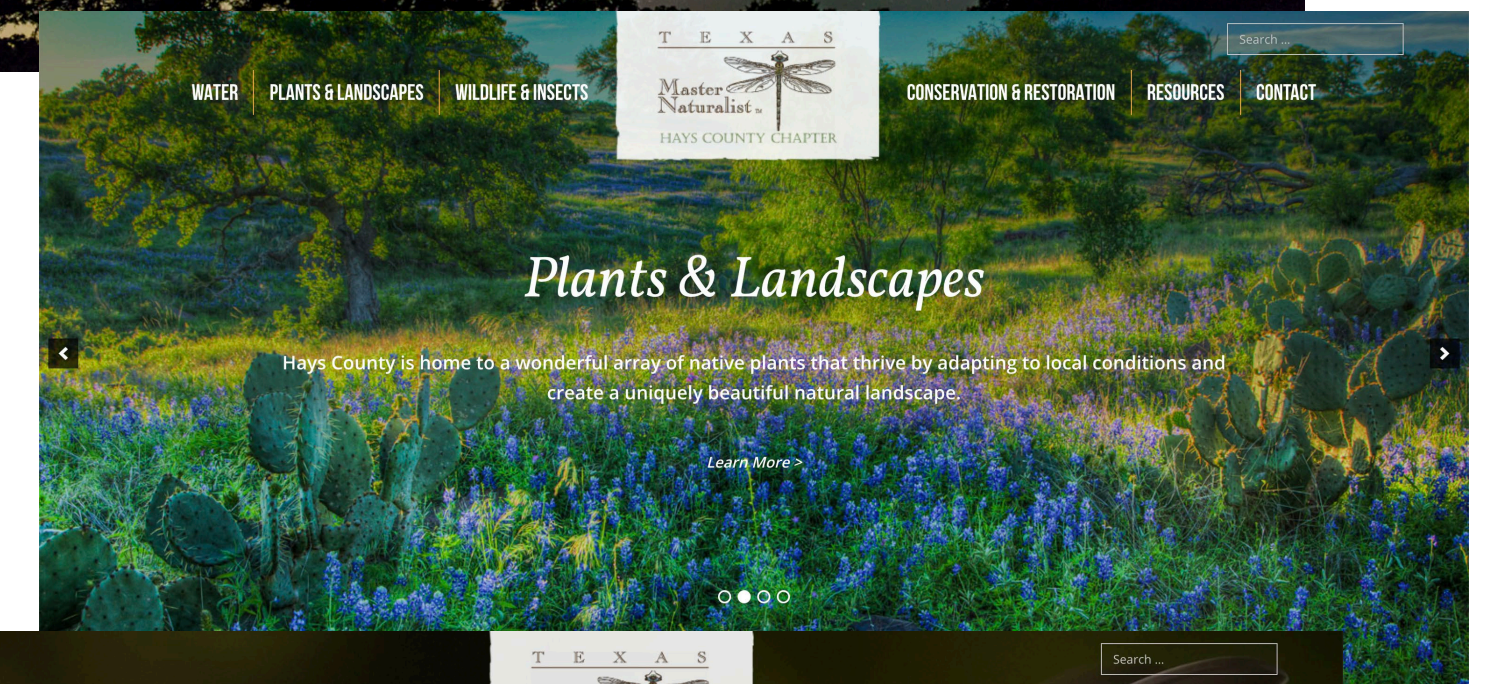
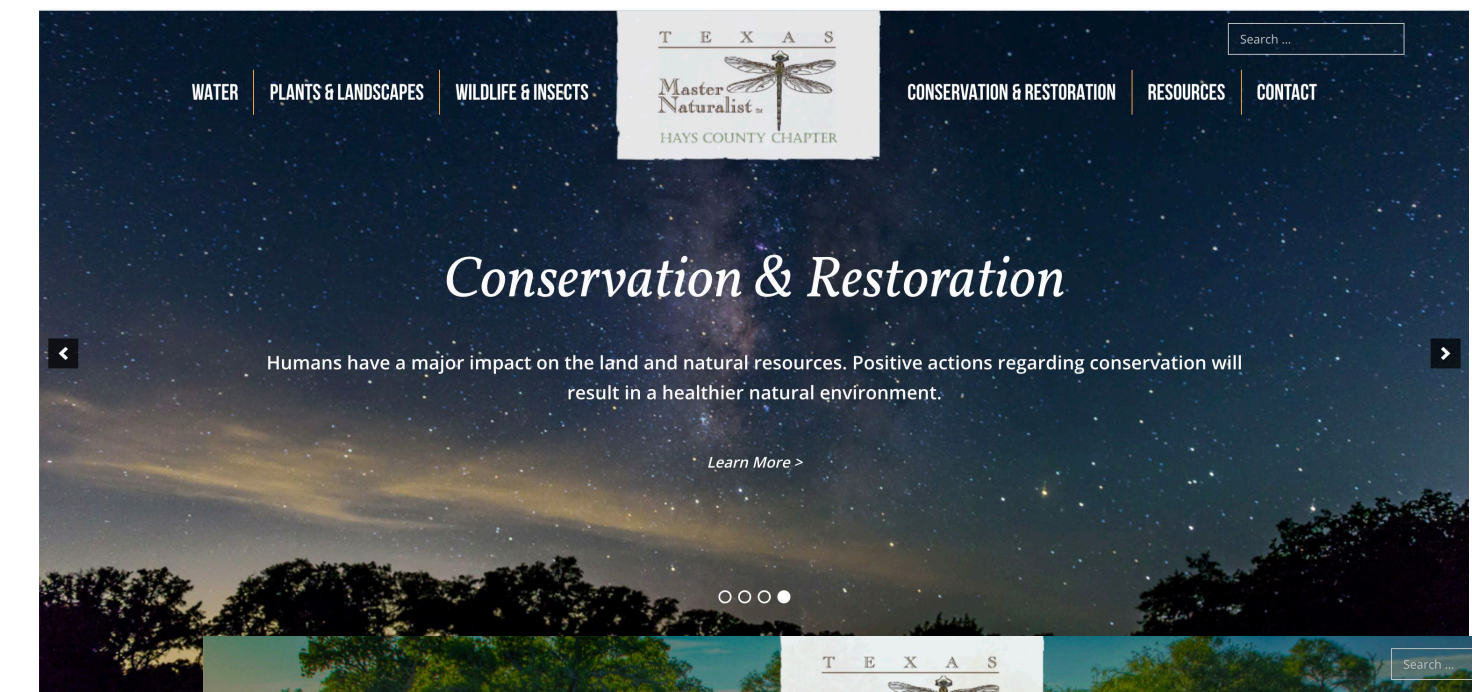
To request a visit complete and submit the form below. A Hays County Master Naturalist will promptly contact you to schedule a convenient time for your visit.

Landowner Name(s) \*

Landowner Mailing Address (including City and Zip Code) \*

Physical Location of Property (if different from above)

Contact Phone # \*





# Community Education

- HELM Network News
  - Every 4-6 Weeks
  - 1st Issue Mid-January
  - 2nd Issue - Cedar
  - [helm@haysmn.org](mailto:helm@haysmn.org)
- Wild About Nature
  - Family-Oriented Pop-Ups
  - Formal Kid Education Programs
  - E-Nature Facebook Page
- Speaker's Bureau

## HELM Network News Habitat Enhancing Land Management



*"The land steward has a keen and sensitive conscience towards the land, and he thinks as much about his responsibility towards the land as he does his rights as a landowner."*

*-Steve Nelle*

This newsletter is designed to complement the new Hays County Master Naturalist program, Habitat Enhancing Land Management Program (HELM). What is Habitat Enhancing Land Management? It means managing your property in ways that create and sustain a healthy, functioning ecosystem by:

- controlling erosion, invasive species, and other impediments to land health,
- increasing the diversity of native wildflowers, grasses, shrubs, and trees,
- restoring habitat for birds, butterflies, amphibians, or whatever wildlife you love,
- and lots more!

Retired wildlife biologist, Steve Nelle eloquently defines land stewardship as "... a deeply held inner conviction that motivates landowners to care for and sustain the land entrusted to them." That's an interesting way to think about your property - rather than owning it, the land has been "entrusted" to you to look after. And your commitment is not only to yourself, but to the generations that come after you!