



CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH



Austin Water Utility – The University of Texas – Texas A&M University
A Partnership for Urban Ecology and Sustainability – Research and Education
Hornsby Bend Biosolids Management Plant
2210 South FM 973, Austin, Texas 78725
Website: www.ci.austin.tx.us/water/cer2.htm



CER Lunchtime Lectures July – December 2007

Each talk begins **AT NOON AT Waller Center**
[625 East 10th Street – between I-35 and Red River]

Free and Open to the Public – bring a lunch and learn

On the 3rd Monday of every month use your lunchtime to learn about ongoing environmental research and education from the Center for Environmental Research. As the river flood roars past Hornsby Bend, one's mind turns to rivers. Over the next six months, Kevin Anderson, CER Coordinator, will give Lunchtime Lectures focused on rivers and waterways from riparian ecology to rivers in literature and art. Kevin will put on his river geographer's hat during the summer and talk about various perspectives on rivers and waterways from the scientific understanding of stream systems and riparian ecology to environmental history. During the fall, he will put on his cultural geographer's hat and look at the meaning of rivers and waterways in American literature. He will descend in scale from an overview of American rivers and American literature to Texas and finally to Austin. Join him for the journey, every 3rd Monday of the month.

Summer 2007 – A Wet Summer and Austin's Waterways

July 16 Monday Noon – 1pm

Texas Riparian Ecology 101: the Science, the Issues and Austin's Waterways

This talk will be an overview of riparian ecology and the ecological services provided by healthy riparian ecosystems. I will review the issues of riparian management in Texas and the relationship between riparian areas and "environmental" flows. Examples from Austin's urban creeks and the Colorado River will be the focus of the talk.

August 20 Monday Noon - 1pm

Discovering the Colorado: The Environmental History of the Texas Colorado River 1709-2007

In 1709 a Spanish expedition journeyed along the Colorado River near what would later be the settlements of Austin and Bastrop. In 2007 the Austin-Bastrop River Corridor Partnership has published a report on the current status of that same stretch of river. I will examine the environmental history of the river corridor since 1709 - the bottomland forest, the floods, European settlement, cotton and cattle – now the growth of two cities turning rural to urban.

Fall 2007 – Rivers: Myth, Meaning and Culture in America

September 17 Monday Noon-1pm

The Myth of the River: American Rivers and American Art

This month I turn my attention from what rivers are to what rivers mean. Rivers are a foundational part of American identity and American artistic expression. They figure largely in the myth [the story] of America. The Rio Grande, the Mississippi, and the Hudson each play a large role in that mythology of America, but other smaller rivers are linked to literary and artistic moments – the Hudson River Valley painters, Thoreau on the Concord, Woody Guthrie on the Columbia, and contemporary writing about Western rivers.

October 15 Monday Noon-1pm

Texas Rivers: On the Brazos with John Graves “Goodbye to a River”

Rightly considered a classic of American literature, John Graves’ Goodbye to a River is the story of a three week trip on a stretch of the Brazos River and a journey through the environmental and cultural history of that stretch of the Brazos. I will discuss the background to the book and Graves life, but I will also explore some of the questions he raises about the meaning of rivers in Texas.

November 19 Monday Noon-1pm

Texas Rivers: On the Colorado with Roy Bedichek “Karankaway Country”

The Texas Colorado River was well known to the most famous Texas Naturalist Roy Bedichek through his birding, canoeing, and wandering along the river in the Austin area. His lesser known book – Karankaway Country [1950] focuses as much on the Colorado River as on the Native Americans who made their home at its mouth on the Gulf. Like in his more famous book, Adventures with A Texas Naturalist, Bedichek turns a keen eye toward the transformation of the landscape caused by human indifference to the land [and the river] and gives careful account of the humans, animals, and plants that inhabit the Colorado River watershed.

December 17 Monday Noon-1pm

Life On Waller Creek – The Legacy of Joseph Jones

Although Waller Creek is not a river, I am finishing the fall series by focusing on a “little river” and a big book – Life on Waller Creek by Joseph Jones. Outside of academia, Joe Jones is best known for his small role in the film Slacker, but he should be better known for this wonderful book about Waller Creek. This book is rich with Austin and University of Texas history and observations about human and non-human life along an urban creek. Prof. Joseph Jones created an unique and powerful account of his own attachment to Waller Creek – a great book which should be more widely read [and certainly republished!].

CER Coordinator - Kevin M. Anderson is a geographer and philosopher who is the coordinator of the Austin Water Utility’s Center for Environmental Research. Kevin has studied at Allegheny College in Pennsylvania [BA], Durham University, England, Ohio University [MA] where he taught philosophy and symbolic logic for several years. He is now completing a dissertation at the University of Texas at Austin, Geography Department. He is a co-founder and board member of the Texas Riparian Association and is seriously preoccupied by rivers.

For more information contact Kevin Anderson – 972-1960 or Kevin.anderson@ci.austin.tx.us