



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 29, 2016

CONTACT: Mark Enders, Watershed Coordinator
424 S. Castell Ave.
New Braunfels, TX 78130
menders@nbtexas.org

Comal River Old Channel Bank Stabilization Project Beginning

New Braunfels, TX – It has been a few years in the making, but the Comal River Old Channel bank stabilization project, planned for downstream of Landa Lake in New Braunfels, is scheduled to begin Monday, May 2nd. The primary work area is located on the riverbank adjacent to the Landa Park Golf Course Club House and the entrance to that parking lot. The project is scheduled to be completed by the end of this summer.

The project, a partnership between the City of New Braunfels and the Edwards Aquifer Habitat Conservation Plan (EAHCP), was designed by Freese and Nichols. Austin Filter has been awarded the construction contract and Bio-West will work as a sub-contractor to Austin Filter for environmental oversight and riparian restoration work. It is 100% funded by the EAHCP for the protection of endangered species habitat. The work will help to minimize slope erosion, improve water quality within the Old Channel of the Comal River, and assist in protecting endangered species (fountain darter) habitat within the Old Channel.

“We are excited and ready to get rolling,” Mark Enders, City of New Braunfels Watershed Coordinator said. “We will be reworking about 1,000 feet of river bank between the Landa Park pool and the Landa Park Golf Course. About two years ago, we came in and removed a sediment island which had taken over the middle of a section the channel. That was caused by the sloughing off of sediment from the river bank over the years. This project will put in place well-designed and environmentally sound solutions to prevent problems in the future.”

Enders explained that the top of the bank will receive a new berm to send stormwater into the channel while preventing erosion. At the bottom of the bank, contractors will place an anchor system of “gabion baskets,” which are wire enclosures filled with rock. On top of the baskets, a stone cap will be tied into the slope for anchoring and aesthetic purposes. In the middle of the bank, “waler walls” will be added for enhanced stability. Additionally, the current vertical bank will be graded to a more angled slope.

“Another key aspect of the bank stabilization project is the removal of non-native plants and trees and replacement with native species on both sides of the channel,” Enders said. “It will be a bit of a challenge, but we are planning to work around the native oak and pecan trees in the steep embankment.”

The much anticipated project will take approximately five months to run from the engineering phase through construction and the plant restoration at the end. Once that work is completed, the riparian planting of native species will continue for the two miles below the bank stabilization project.

“The combination of the recently completed flow split project and this bank stabilization will enhance the habitat for the endangered fountain darter and help the stream quality as it flows south for about two miles. Plus, with the fact that there is no recreation along this stretch of the Old Channel of the Comal River, this project will only make life for the endangered species a whole lot easier for many years,” Enders noted.

“We ask golf course patrons to be mindful of construction activities in this area during the project duration,” said Adam Michie, City of New Braunfels Project Manager. “In an effort to improve the safety of golf

course patrons the tee boxes on hole number one will be relocated on Monday through Friday during construction activities.”

#