

Green Infrastructure Meeting Notes from March 5, 2008

The Green Infrastructure Team held its second forum on March 5, 2008, at Crown Colony Country Club at 8:30 a.m. with approximately 60 in attendance. Under the direction of Ellen Temple with technical assistance from The Conservation Fund, the Green Infrastructure Team will develop a plan for Angelina County. Green Infrastructure planning creates a blueprint of interconnected natural areas, parks and corridors that sustains clean air and water and provides benefits to people and wildlife.

Ole Amundsen of The Conservation Fund presented an overview of “Linking Landscapes and Communities in Angelina County”. Green Infrastructure was defined and the purpose and mission of The Conservation Fund was discussed along with the challenges Angelina County will face with the anticipated growth in the near future.

- How do we develop and protect our natural resources at the same time?
- How do we attract new business and help bolster the economy?
- How do we improve the quality of life?

Green infrastructure will benefit the county in three areas: ecologically, socially and economically.

Jazmin Varela of The Conservation Fund presented current relevant data on Angelina County, including land use and land cover, forest resources, wetland resources, aquatic resources, and cultural and historical resources. Angelina County is approximately 50% covered with various forms of forest and approximately 22% is covered by wetlands, including the Neches River and Sam Rayburn. These are huge assets to our community, but need to be kept healthy as our community grows. With Lufkin and the surrounding area being rich in history, the abandoned railroads can also provide great hiking and biking trails and possibly connect parks, green belts and waterways for more use of our resources.

The attendees divided into six groups, each with a map, to identify the location of Angelina County’s natural resources, wetlands, recreational resources, cultural and historical resources, and natural heritage resources. Next the forum divided into four groups and each group listed the top 6 outcomes they would like to achieve as a result of the Green Infrastructure plan. These were shared and then prioritized.

The Conservation Fund will take the information acquired from this meeting and put together a Green Infrastructure plan over the summer. The forum will meet again in the Fall to review the plan and make any final revisions. The goal is to have the Green Infrastructure Plan in place by the end of this year.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

