

Texas Rural Billboard Proliferation Continues Unchecked

Presently no unit of local government can do anything about it in Texas

It seems that every time you drive out of town, a new rural billboard has been built to capture your attention-and spoil the view. Since so many Texas cities (over 200) now prohibit billboard construction, industry growth has moved into the rural areas, exactly where billboards do not belong.



Under existing Texas law, there is not much that can be done about this. No local unit of government (such as counties) has the authority to prohibit the construction of a billboard. There are two statewide laws (one for federal highways and one for state rural roads), but they provide little protection; these laws allow billboard construction just about anywhere. One by one, rural roadways are beginning to look like trips through the Yellow Pages.

These new rural billboards do not seem to respect any viewshed or environment, no matter how special. For example, the beautiful Hill Country areas around Canyon Lake in Comal County continue to receive an onslaught of new billboards. Many landowners, residents and visitors are very upset about the situation, but nothing can change until the Texas Legislature takes effective action.

At the 2011 legislative session, Scenic Texas will be working hard to secure passage of legislation authorizing county governments to prohibit billboard construction in rural areas. Get involved and learn more from Scenic Texas at www.scenictexas.org