



Soil for Water

Maximizing the potential of healthy soil to catch and hold rainwater.

Both drought and intense rain storms are here to stay.

What can you do to reduce risks in the years to come?



Healthy soil acts like a sponge: holding rainwater for long periods of time and slowly releasing it to plants, springs, creeks, rivers, and aquifers.

Through proper management it is possible to increase soil organic matter and improve soil health—retaining more water on-site, improving the condition of your ranch, and reducing the effects of drought and flooding.

Grazing can be a powerful tool for improving soil health. Brad Roeder, Gillespie Ag and Natural Resources County Extension Agent, encourages landowners to participate in this program: “Learn how to graze livestock properly so we can save some grass each year to bank on the future of our groundwater, our livestock, and our wildlife.”

- Four **FREE** Soil Talks in the fall of 2015 will teach practical management techniques:
- Improve the soil on your land.
 - Increase the water-holding capacity of your soil.
 - Recognize key indicators for healthy landscapes.
 - Use livestock as a productive management tool.
 - Increase profits from your agricultural enterprises.



Soil for Water is a project of NCAT in collaboration with the Hill Country Alliance. Supported by Dixon Water Foundation.

Featured Trainers

Peggy Sechrist

Our local project coordinator, Peggy and her husband Richard live along the Pedernales River. In 1995 they were the first ranch in Texas to be certified organic and began direct marketing all of their beef as grass-fed. Peggy has been a Certified Educator in the field of Holistic Management® for over 20 years.

Steve Nelle

A Natural Resource Specialist and Wildlife Biologist, Steve worked for NRCS for 27 years out of their San Angelo office. His specialties include range plant ecology, grazing management, ranch planning, wildlife habitat and deer herd management, plant identification, riparian management, and watershed management.

Richard Teague, Ph.D.

Range Ecologist, Professor, and Associate Resident Director with Texas A&M AgriLife Research, Richard's work focuses on the effect of management actions on rangeland hydrology, soil carbon and nitrogen, plant productivity, livestock productivity, and economics. He recently completed a ten-year research project on nine ranches across three counties to study rangeland function under different management methods.

Tim Steffens, Ph.D.

An Assistant Professor and AgriLife Extension Specialist in Rangeland Resource Management, Tim has worked many years with producers on grazing management, prescribed fire, and livestock nutrition. Currently he is focusing on managing ecological succession using targeted grazing management to improve soil quality.

Walt Davis

Walt has spent fifty something years as a working rancher with interests in west Texas and southeast Oklahoma. After almost going broke following the advice of high tech agriculture experts, he spent years developing a biological approach based on planned grazing management. He is the author of numerous magazine articles and two books, including *How to Not Go Broke Ranching*.

2015 Soil Talk Series

All talks are free and open to the public, but please RSVP to soilforwater@ncat.org.

September 25: Ecosystem Function

Peggy Sechrist, Steve Nelle & Dr. Richard Teague

9 am–5 pm, Hill Country University Center
2818 E. U.S. Hwy 290, Fredericksburg, TX

Focused on the amazing world of microorganisms beneath the soil, and how that world determines the condition of our landscape.
Free lunch to first 25 RSVPs. Others encouraged to bring brown bag!

October 9: Ecosystem Monitoring

Peggy Sechrist, Steve Nelle & Dr. Richard Teague

9 am–5 pm, Lyndon B. Johnson Group Dining Hall
199 State Park Road 52 (off HWY 290 E.), Stonewall, TX

The group dining hall is across the road from the tennis courts and swimming pool area in LBJ State Park.

How do you know if your land is improving? Learn to assess land health, measure change, and use management techniques that improve the condition and function of your land.

Free lunch to first 25 RSVPs. Others encouraged to bring brown bag!

October 23: Grazing Planning

Peggy Sechrist & Dr. Tim Steffens

9 am–5 pm, Gillespie County AgriLife Extension Building
95 Frederick Road, Fredericksburg, TX

There is a way to manage grazing livestock to improve soil's water holding capacity and maintain excellent livestock performance.

This session is all about that!

Free lunch to first 25 RSVPs. Others encouraged to bring brown bag!

November 13: Financial Sustainability

Peggy Sechrist & Walt Davis

9 am–5 pm, Hill Country University Center
2818 E. U.S. Hwy 290, Fredericksburg, TX

How can agricultural enterprises manage for improved soil function and greater profit at the same time?

Expert Walt Davis shares his experience and wisdom.

Free lunch to first 25 RSVPs. Others encouraged to bring brown bag!

For more information visit soilforwater.org.

Or email us at soilforwater@ncat.org

