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For Immediate Release—

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Texas Water Symposium – Economic and Conservation Perspectives on Protected Species: *If you can't cook 'em, eat 'em or shoot 'em, what the heck good are they?*

(May 4, 2016) – The second *Texas Water Symposium* of 2016 has been set for May 18th at the Llano River Field Station at Texas Tech University in Junction. The program will feature a conversation between leading biology experts about endangered species on the Hill Country's rivers.

The symposium will take place from **7 pm to 8:30 pm on Wednesday, May 18** in the **Packard Hall North building at Texas Tech Junction, Junction, TX**. The *Texas Water Symposium* is free and open to the public. Parking is available on campus.

Texas Tech University and the Hill Country Alliance have gathered a highly qualified group of endangered species policy makers and scientists to explore the various aspects of how and why we protect our endangered species.

The Symposium will be moderated by **Weir Labatt**, former Texas Water Development Board and Edwards Aquifer Authority board member.

Panelists will include:

- **Robert Gulley J.D., Ph.D.**, - Texas Comptroller's Office Director of Economic Growth and Endangered Species Management
- **Adam Zerrenner** - Field Supervisor with the US Fish and Wildlife Service
- **Tom Arsuffi Ph.D.**, - Director of the Llano River Field Station at Texas Tech University in Junction

The Hill Country's biological diversity is under tremendous pressure from increased population, development and land fragmentation. Endemic species that call Texas home are under strain from reductions in natural habitats, increased environmental pollution, and invasive species.

State and federal agencies, researchers and conservationists expend resources in an effort to protect and sustain our state's native creatures not only for *their* long term prosperity, but for *ours* as well. Biologists recognize that as biodiversity declines as a result of environmental degradation, there may be unforeseen negative implications for the human populations that call Central Texas home.

Texas is one of the nation's most biologically diverse states, and home to one of the world's largest economies. In addition to state and federally recognized endangered species, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has identified over 1,300 species of greatest conservation need—those species that, due to limited distributions and/or declining populations, face the threat of extirpation or extinction but lack legal protection. Millions of dollars of state and federal grants are available to support landowners in stewarding important habitat and permanently protecting open spaces.

Please join our panel of experts as they explore the history and practical application of endangered species protections in the Texas Hill Country and beyond, and seek to answer the question, “What are the consequences of not protecting rare or declining species?”

For nine years, the *Texas Water Symposium* series has brought together policymakers, scientists, water resource experts, landowners and regional leaders to explore the challenges and complexities of managing water in Texas. The sessions are free and open to the public, and are recorded and aired on Texas Public Radio one week later. The Symposium is a partnership project of Schreiner University, Texas Tech University, Texas Public Radio and the Hill Country Alliance.

For more information, visit the [Texas Water Symposium](#).

Listen to [past shows](#) online.

To stay informed about future programs, subscribe at www.hillcountryalliance.org.

The Hill Country Alliance is a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to raise public awareness and build community support around the need to preserve the natural resources and heritage of the Central Texas Hill Country. Visit us at www.hillcountryalliance.org.

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