

...Boating Accidents (Continued from previous page)

Due to recent legislative changes, one BWI arrest classified as a state jail felony for boating while intoxicated with a child passenger.

"I am pleased to see that game wardens' efforts to keep the public safe on the water are making an impact and saving lives through a reduction in the numbers of boating accident and boating related fatalities," said Cody Jones, Texas Game Warden assistant commander for marine enforcement.

Game wardens responded to seven boating accidents, one boating fatality and seven drownings. The boating fatality occurred at Taylor Bayou and the drownings occurred at Benbrook Lake, Lake Bridgeport, Canyon Lake, Eagle Mountain Lake, Lake Lewisville, Sabine Lake and Lake Texoma.

"I am proud of the hard work and dedication Texas Game Wardens put in to ensure the safety of the people of Texas over the course of the holiday weekend," said Col. Chad Jones, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) law enforcement director.

while enforcing the laws of this state to ensure those recreating on Texas waterways return home safely at the end of the day."

On more than one occasion, game wardens were involved in search and rescue activities, responded to boating incidents and engaged numerous people on personal watercrafts, kayaks and stand-up paddleboards who were not wearing life jackets.

"A number of water safety incidents over the holiday weekend could have been avoided by people wearing life jackets and taking boater education," said Kimberly Sorensen, TPWD boating education manager.

Sorensen and her team hosted educational outreach programs at Lake Lyndon B. Johnson and Lavon Lake, reminding boaters of proper safety equipment and safe boating practices.

"Memorial Day weekend was the start of what is sure to be a hot and busy boating and water recreation season," said Cody Jones. "We have much to do to continue to keep the public informed and safe."

In addition to the many water safety inspections over the weekend, game wardens were involved with medical emergencies, boat assists, an overturned vessel, tornado response efforts, broke up multiple fights that resulted in several arrests, collaborated with partner agencies and more. Wardens also assisted the Marine Theft Investigation Unit with party boat enforcement on Lake Travis, boarding eight party boats, with seven having violations.

Even though Memorial Day Weekend is considered the unofficial start to boating season, it doesn't mean other outdoor pursuits across the state come to an end. Wardens in East Texas apprehended multiple subjects cast netting white bass behind Lake Livingston Dam, netting 137 fish illegally taken. In South Texas, wardens seized six illegal



Bronte Volleyball Camp 2024

TALT works to protect Texas' rural lands

The Texas Agricultural Land Trust (TALT) is dedicated to the conservation of working lands and preserving part of Texas' natural heritage.

Texas' privately-owned farms, ranches and forestlands account for 141.5 million acres, which is about 82% of the state, according to TALT.

However, Texas leads the nation in the loss of rural lands. "We're losing land so quickly to urban development and land fragmentation where these large ranches are being broken up and sold in smaller tracks," Russell Marshall, chairman of the board of TALT, said in an interview with the Texas Farm Bureau (TFB) Radio Network.

producer, sources of drinking water and privately-managed habitat.

TALT was created by farmers and ranchers for farmers and ranchers to bring landowners tools and resources needed to achieve their goals of productivity, sustainability and legacy preservation.

"Conservation easements, especially on Texas working lands, are extremely important in the state of Texas," Marshall said.

A conservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement allowing landowners to retain title and management of their property, while forfeiting, donating or selling certain development rights to a land trust. This protects the land from commercial or residential development, preserves habitat, limits subdivision and fragmentation of the land, and allows landowners to ensure the land they love is protected into perpetuity.

"I'm a sixth-generation Texan. My family's owned land in South Texas since 1910. I've seen agricultural lands lost to the growth our state is seeing," Marshall said. "I've never lost

sight of the fact that I grew up a ranch kid, and I want my children to be able to grow up ranch kids, and I want my grandchildren to be able to grow up ranch kids. This is one way that we can do that."

TALT is the only land trust in the state focused on conserving Texas' heritage of agricultural lands, wildlife habitats and natural resources.

"One of the things that's so important for Texas is to keep Texas agricultural working lands where they need to be in farmers' and ranchers' hands and doing what they've always done," Marshall said.

For more information, visit http://www.txaglandtrust.org

Trailblazer

By Anna Mazurek

While Dale Blasingame was waiting in the car line to enter Hamilton Pool Preserve in July 2014, a ranger walked over with bad news—the popular Hill Country swimming hole was full. Sensing his disappointment, the ranger suggested an alternative, nearby Pedernales Falls State Park.

"Would you like a day pass or an annual pass?" A simple

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