

Compiled and Produced by
The City of San Antonio Office of Sustainability
To submit content or suggestions, contact Robin Harvey:
Robin.Harvey@sanantonio.gov
210-667-6402



Director's Message

As you can see to the right, this month our department lost Julia Murphy, pioneer of many of our most successful sustainable transportation initiatives. Thankfully, the San Antonio sustainable community will continue to benefit from her expertise and enthusiasm; we congratulate Green Spaces Alliance as they have gained a competent, cheerful and skilled leader. We will miss you, Julia, though we look forward to continuing to work with you in your new role.

Early summer is a great time to get out and enjoy the natural recreation opportunities San Antonio has to offer, especially out at our famous San Antonio River. The recently completed Mission Reach is a great place to enjoy the outdoors; you can even kayak down the river! The San Antonio River Authority is putting on their first annual Environmental Film Festival today, featuring their own award-winning film. Read about the San Antonio River Foundation's exciting plans for Confluence Park, complete with beautiful renderings of the future park, on the last page of this month's newsletter.

Thanks for reading and for continuing to educate yourself about San Antonio's green happenings.

For a sustainable future,
Doug Melnick

OS Bids Best Wishes to Julia Murphy

On June 10th, the Office of Sustainability celebrated Mrs. Murphy's new position as Executive Director of Green Spaces Alliance as well as her contributions to the San Antonio community. Julia joined the Office of Sustainability in 2009 as the sustainable transportation expert. During her tenure she has pioneered multiple projects and programs improving the state of cycling in San Antonio. Just some of the projects she has spearheaded include:

- The 2011 Bike Master Plan, which has led to countless bicycle facility improvement projects since plan adoption and continues to guide San Antonio towards an accessible, direct and continuous bicycle transportation network
- Texas' first public bike share system, which currently includes 53 B-Cycle stations connecting San Antonio's urban core and Mission Reach trail system
- Designating San Antonio as a bronze-level bicycle friendly community with the League of American Bicyclists
- Numerous comprehensive bicycle education campaign efforts that distribute adult and youth helmets, encourage proper bike safety and etiquette, and remind all road users to "Share the Road"

The City of San Antonio will certainly miss Julia as a treasured colleague. She has been instrumental in fostering a bike friendly community in San Antonio, and her work has led to numerous awards from agencies such as the Texas Trails Network, American Planning Association, San Antonio Business

Left: Strong partnerships contributed to the success of the San Antonio Bikes program. Pictured: Julia Murphy, SAPD Officer Steve Bazany, and Allison Blazosky (former OS intern) from the Alamo Area MPO.



Journal and the Downtown Alliance. Although we at the Office of Sustainability are sad to see Julia leave, in her new leadership capacity with Green Spaces Alliance we have gained an influential advocate. Green Spaces Alliance is a non-profit organization dedicated to sustaining our natural environment and enhancing urban spaces through land conservation, community engagement, and education. The position is a good fit for Julia who is trained as an urban planner and has a long history of involvement with parks and green space, and resource conservation.

"I'm thrilled to be getting the opportunity to work on some sustainability issues about which I care very deeply," said Julia, "And, I'm looking forward to continued collaboration with the Office of Sustainability."

We wish Julia every success.



Federal Air Pollution Standards Clarified by Higher Court

The Clean Air Act requires EPA to set National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for wide-spread pollutants from numerous and diverse sources considered harmful to public health and the environment. These standards sets air pollution limits to protect public health, including the health of at-risk populations such as people with pre-existing heart or lung disease (such as asthmatics), children, and older adults. The Clean Air Act also requires periodic review of the science upon which these air pollution standards are based and the standards themselves. Since 2008, EPA's air quality rules have endured lengthy scuffles and delays due to lawsuits from various industry groups and environmental advocates. Since then, the EPA has issued draft policy assessments recommending lowering the ozone standard to between 60 and 70 parts per billion. On April 29, 2014, a federal judge's court ruling laid out a clear time frame for moving forward to produce a final standard for ground-level ozone pollution by October 2015.

Exposure to ground-level ozone

pollution can cause "chest pain, coughing, throat irritation, and congestion. It can worsen bronchitis, emphysema, and asthma," according to the EPA. It is created by chemical reactions between nitrogen oxide and volatile organic compounds, which are emitted from industrial facilities, power plants and automobiles. According to the American Lung Association, the current, weaker standards leave as many as 186 million Americans breathing in unhealthy levels of ozone pollution. In announcing its 2010 draft rules, the EPA said that setting a lower standard of 60 parts per billion would prevent 4,000 to 12,000 premature deaths a year by 2020.

In a statement EPA spokeswoman Liz Purchia said the agency "will meet the deadlines outlined by the court. However, the deadlines present a challenge for the agency because there is a significant amount of scientific analysis and review required to update air quality standards," Purchia said. "EPA has made important progress toward completing these efforts, and as required by the Clean Air Act, the agency continues to work with its

independent science advisors to ensure that the agency's proposed and final rules reflect the extensive body of research and protect public health and the environment."

Reprinted from *Huffington Post*
For the original article visit:
huffingtonpost.com/2014/04/30/epa-ozone-standards_n_5242426.html



For more information on air quality policy and how San Antonio may be affected contact

Liza Meyer
(210) 207-1449

liza.meyer@sanantonio.gov

Honda Selling Water?



By **Victoria Knowles**

The Honda FCX runs on hydrogen instead of gasoline and – thanks to combining with oxygen from the air - its only emission is water. This isn't new information, but Honda seems to be the first to exploit this benefit for commercial gain, and to promote hydrogen power, with plans to bottle and sell what comes out of its FCX model. Honda suggests service stations and the company's dealerships as future distribution methods, to "further the conversation about hydrogen fuel" with car drivers themselves.

And the good news is, unlike gasoline, we won't run out of hydrogen because "it's the most plentiful element on the planet," Honda states on its website. But exhaust-pipe water might not be hitting the shelves quite yet:

"Don't worry - if you're holding a bottle of our specially produced H₂O water in your hand right now, you've been drinking plain old spring water," the automaker continues. "If you want to taste the real thing, you'll have to travel to California, Japan or the UK where the FCX is currently available" - and where "fast-fill" hydrogen stations are also available. Furthermore, you need to do a lot of driving to fill your glass. According to 2 Degrees.com even after a full day on the road, the tailpipe will only provide you with a 1/3 of a cup of water. Nevertheless, Honda hopes to start producing vehicles like the FCX Clarity on mass by 2018, which means there'll be a lot more water on the other end. It's all part of Honda's '**Clever thinking**' campaign that aims to improve lives using technology.

Reprinted from *2degrees*
For more original article visit:
2degreesnetwork.com/groups/2degrees-community/resources/water-that-comes-out-hydrogen-powered-vehicle-so-pure-that-honda-selling-it/

Farm To Work Program

for City of San Antonio Employees

By Kasey Pape, MS, RD, LD

In the past few years, we have heard the phrase “eating local” more often. Consumers are starting to think about where their food comes from and what practices are used in the food that we eat. In just a short amount of time, we have seen the expansion of farmer’s markets throughout San Antonio because of this new demand. Not only does this help the farmers in our area, but it also increases the accessibility of fresh fruits and vegetables to people in our community. In a city that is trying to improve obesity and diabetes rates, this is a great step in the direction of promoting a healthier diet to combat these chronic diseases.

With the goal in mind to increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables, the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District has been working on implementing Farm to Work programs in San Antonio for the past few years. Recently, Metro Health and

National Center for Appropriate Technology have teamed together to offer employees the opportunity to get a basket of fresh produce delivered right to their worksite. Through the Farm to Work program, employees can simply order online and then the next week they will be able to pick up their basket at a designated location. Currently, the produce is from My Father’s Farm in Seguin, Texas who provides quality organic produce through sustainable agriculture practices. This program was implemented in several businesses in San Antonio including: City Public Service, NuStar Energy, Baptist Health System, AACOG, and the San Antonio Housing Authority. Starting in June, all City of San Antonio employees will be able to access the services as well.

In a city that is trying to improve obesity and diabetes rates, this is a great step in the direction of promoting a healthier diet to combat these chronic diseases.



For city employees interested in joining the program contact

Liza Meyer
(210) 207-1449

liza.meyer@sanantonio.gov

For more information contact

Kasey Pape
(210) 207-5261



SARA Film Fest

SARA is partnering with the South Yuba River Citizens League Annual Wild & Scenic® Film Festival to feature national and international short films about topics such as nature, adventure, wildlife, environmental justice, and conservation. The award-winning, full-length documentary produced by SARA about the San Antonio River will be the feature film of this year’s film festival. SARA intends to hold the Environmental Film Fest each June to celebrate National Rivers Month, and future festivals will showcase other local environmental films in the feature film time slot.

“National Rivers Month is a great opportunity to highlight the importance of maintaining the beauty and rich heritage of the San Antonio River while we learn about the issues facing other rivers from around the world,” said SARA’s General Manager Suzanne Scott. “We initiated this festival as a creative way to raise awareness of earth’s water resources and show how we all have a role in respecting and protecting them for the future.”

-via Hill Country Alliance

Save the Dates:

Environmental Film Fest
June 19th, 5-10pm
Santikos Bijou Cinema Bistro

6th Annual Green Building Awards
June 20th, 11:30am-1pm
Lonesome Dove Room
200 E. Martin St.

Harvesting Rain Water
June 23rd, 10-11am
2806 W. Salinas

Screening: The End of The Line: The World Without Fish
June 25th, 6:30pm
Lion’s Field

Fallowing the Garden Workshop
June 28th, 9am-12pm
East Side Neighborhood Garden
1719 Center Street

Sierra Club: Potluck-Poetry
July 15th, 6:30pm
Witte Museum

For more information on the
Environmental Film Fest
sara-tx.org/events/

Imagining Confluence Park

San Antonio River Foundation plans for an innovative outdoor educational space at the San Antonio River / San Pedro Creek Confluence

By Celeste Derozier, SARF

Imagine a place where you can experience all of the major ecosystem types of South Central Texas, all within a short walk. Imagine seeing large-scale water catchment in action, and learning about the benefits of solar energy. Imagine finding a now-inspiring space in a former industrial laydown yard. How about joining in on a community garden? Now imagine that you can even walk, bike, or kayak to a place that offers all of these features. Sound unlikely? It's not!

On the banks of the San Antonio River near its convergence with San Pedro Creek (at 310 W. Mitchell Street), the San Antonio River Foundation is working to build an exciting new park that offers all of these things and more. Confluence Park will inspire you to experience the River firsthand while also addressing issues vital to San Antonio's future: water and education. The main goal of the park is to facilitate education about sustainable living and water conservation. School children currently learning about the environment inside of a classroom will be able to visit the park and see, touch, and feel what they are learning about! Instead of looking at a model of a watershed, they will observe how Confluence Park works as a mini-watershed system. They will see the entire park act as a water collection system, with all rainwater

captured and funneled to a large underground tank which will then be used to water the plants in the park. Native vegetation will be planted that is suited to our climate, with no high-water-need plants allowed!

The park will be divided into ecosystem types: Native Grassland, Trans-Pecos/Chihuahuan Desert, Native Oak, and Live Oak Savannah. Add in community gardens and plenty of shade structures, and you have an inviting destination with a variety of landscapes to enjoy. A bicycle repair station, easy access to the river path, and nearby kayak landings provide plenty of recreational options.

While specifically designed to facilitate educational programs, the park will be open to the public and will be a wonderful point of departure for the Mission Reach section of the River Improvements Project. Anyone and everyone will be welcome to visit and learn about our wonderful water resources, grab a B-Cycle to ride the trail, or just have a picnic with family and friends.

The San Antonio River Foundation is currently raising funds to build Confluence Park, due to the strong need in our community for outdoor educational facilities. Numerous community groups, local universities, the



San Antonio River Authority, and other organizations have already expressed their strong interest in hosting programs at the park. So many, in fact, that the Foundation is moving ahead and building a temporary park to provide shade, drinking water, and other basic amenities until the funds are raised for the final project.

Confluence Park offers a place for our entire community to gather, learn and enjoy about this wonderful resource we call the San Antonio River. A landmark, the park will be a living example of the promise of our River and what the future will be if we act as stewards of our water resources.

Free tours of the River and Confluence Park site are available on the second Thursday of each month.



For more information about the River Foundation, tours, and Confluence Park please visit sariverfoundation.org

Or call
(210) 224-2694

Renderings courtesy of the San Antonio River Foundation