

Highlands Soil and Water Conservation District celebrates a “working” Earth Day

It was a time when the environment was in trouble. Cities were covered in smog and rivers were catching fire because of the amount of pollution they contained. It seemed as though not much was being done about it until some concerned folks decided to take action. Through cooperative efforts of the United States government, grassroots environmental organizations and citizens of the country, Earth Day was born. On April 22, 1970, about 20 million Americans celebrated the first Earth Day. What started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

One of the main players in getting Earth Day started was Senator Gaylord Nelson. He came up with the idea and took steps to move forward and put his idea into action. He stated, “For several years, it had been troubling me that the state of our environment was simply a non-issue in the politics of the country. Finally, in November 1962, an idea occurred to me that was, I thought, a virtual cinch to put the environment into the political “limelight” once and for all. Earth Day worked because of the spontaneous response at the grassroots level. We had neither the time nor resources to organize 20 million demonstrators and the thousands of schools and local communities that participated. That was the remarkable thing about Earth Day. It organized itself.” Since that infamous day, Earth Day is celebrated annually on April 22nd. More than 500 million people in 164 countries participate in earth Day festivities.

This year the Highlands Soil and Water Conservation District (HSWCD) will be celebrating Earth Day at the Lake Jackson Restoration Project site. On April 22nd, the agencies and organizations that financed the project will get together and finish it up as a team. Approximately 1,000 stems of cord grass have been purchased and they need to be planted in the Lake Jackson Shoreline Restoration area.

Here’s where you come in! This year Earth Day falls in the same week as National Volunteer Week. So in an effort to help mother earth, finalize the Lake Jackson project, and celebrate our volunteers, it is our vision that staff, governmental agencies and volunteers such as yourself will all come together and get the plants in the ground. With your help we can all join together and install all the cord grass in the ground and work toward a common goal while celebrating our beautiful planet. Can you think of a better way to celebrate the earth than to plant vegetation which will provide shelter and habitat for wildlife? You can be a part of restoring the shoreline of Lake Jackson!!!

It won’t be your typical Earth Day celebration with balloons, food and activities. But you can truly do something real to help our planet. If you want to help out and be part of making Highlands County beautiful and healthy, then show up at the project site around 8:30 or 9:00 a.m. on April 22nd. Bring post hole diggers, garden shovels or any other digging tool you have around the house. We have some work gloves, so don’t worry about that. Sonny’s management has graciously allowed us the use of their parking lot until 11:30 a.m. If you decide to come and be a part of this worthy project, you can park at Sonny’s and walk across the street to the presentation area. Please use caution crossing US 27!

There will be a brief ceremony and opportunity to listen to some of the people that have been involved in the project and then we will start the planting. Please come and join us, get to know some of the folks that share the same vision as you do and get your hands dirty this Earth Day!

If you want more information please call our office at (863) 402-6545.