

The Conservation Security Program (CSP) in the *Hondo Watershed Texas*

September 2004



“As a land owner, I feel a social responsibility to implement good management practices on our ranch. It is to our advantage to manage the land according to CSP incentives. It doesn’t just create more grass and water for our wildlife and cattle; it leaves the land better for the next generation.”

Debbie Davis, CSP Partner

For more information:
www.nrcs.usda.gov

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WATERSHED STATISTICS

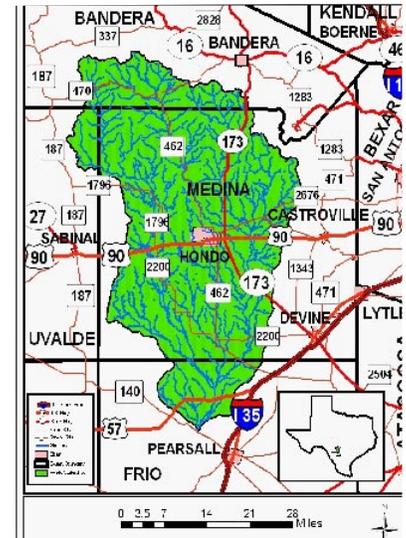
Watershed Surface Area: 751,000 acres

Crops and Land Use: The watershed area is a combination of the Edwards Plateau and Rio Grande Plains resource areas consisting of rangeland, dry cropland, irrigated cropland, and pastureland as its major land uses.

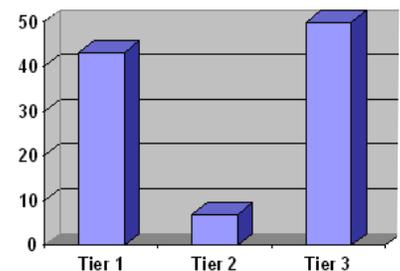
Farms: Approximately 62,900 acres are in cropland. Primary crops include corn, wheat, cotton and grain sorghum. Other crops include vegetables and forage sorghum.

Ranches: About 615,000 acres are in rangeland and 46,900 acres are in improved pastureland. Ranches are mostly cow/calf and wildlife production operations.

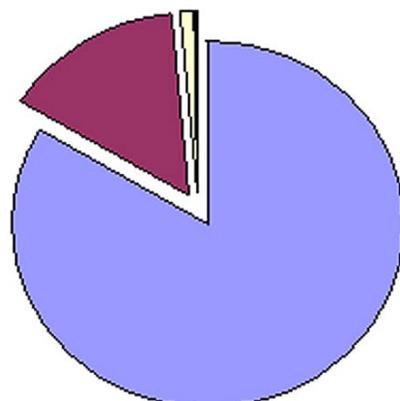
Watershed Description: The topography ranges from steep limestone ash juniper covered hills in the north, to mixed brush and mesquite covered plains to the south. The soils range from very shallow cobbly clay soils in the northern part of the watershed to deep, gently sloping loamy soils in the south.



Located in southwest Texas, the Hondo Watershed lies within portions of Bandera, Uvalde, Frio and Medina counties.



43% of the applicants are Tier 1, 7% are Tier 2, and 50% are Tier 3.



- All Farmers & Ranchers in the Hondo Watershed (1,211)
- Farmers & Ranchers who sought out CSP information (220)
- Farmers & Ranchers who applied and were accepted for CSP (16)
- Applied, but not eligible (3)

The face of the *Hondo Watershed*

Enhancements common in the Hondo Watershed:

Brush Management-Wildlife Corridors

Water facilities (pipelines and troughs)

Wildlife Enhancement

Pest management (weeds)

Buffers (riparian plantings)

Soil Management Enhancement

Crop Rotation



The Davis' (from left to right: Debbie and Don), shown here with NRCS State Conservationist Larry Butler, at their Seco Valley Ranch near Hondo, were recognized by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service as Texas's first Conservation Security Program (CSP) participants at a signing ceremony in Medina County, August 31th.

CSP is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to promote the conservation and improvement of soil, water, air, energy, plant and animal life, and other conservation purposes on Tribal and private working lands.

Owning and managing the Seco Valley Ranch for the last five years, the Davis' qualified for Tier III - - the highest tier of the program -- through their use of conservation practices including, prescribed grazing, brush management, reduced pesticide application, integrated pest management and wildlife upland habitat management.



It just makes sense...

The Davis' utilize their registered Longhorn herd for prescribed grazing as part of their common sense conservation approach to ranch management. As a result, the Davis' have discovered their soil is healthier, yielding more plentiful and nutritious forage for their livestock and wildlife, season after season.



This is one example of a watering facility the Davis' installed on their ranch.