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## U.S. Army Corps of Engineers updates Dallas Audubon on Trinity River wetlands project

*FORT WORTH, Texas* – Wetlands built by the Fort Worth District since 2004 are now a successful working ecosystem that can withstand major flood events, research ecologist Gary O. Dick told a gathering at the Trinity River Audubon Center in Dallas Thursday.

The Dallas Floodway Extension wetlands project, built for the city of Dallas, have the dual goals of reducing flood risk while creating a quality wildlife habitat just four miles from downtown. Excavation of the Lower Chain of Wetlands along the Trinity River in Dallas began in 2004 and was completed in 2008. The wetlands efficiently convey flood waters away from the center of Dallas downstream into the Great Trinity Forest lowering flood elevation upstream by one foot.

The Lower Chain is comprised of seven wetland cells, which are diverse topography of deepwater ponds, shallow water and surrounding grasslands. They are supplied year-round by effluent from the Central Waste Water Treatment Plant.

The wetlands have become host to increasingly diverse populations of macro-invertebrates, fish, birds, mammals and other wildlife that are able to withstand the dramatic impacts of the periodic flood events that the wetlands are designed to convey, Dick said. The backbone of this ecosystem restoration was the planting of some 30 aquatic species in three forms, emergent, submersed and floating-leaved. These plants in turn provide food directly to water fowl – or indirectly through the creation of two kinds of fisheries (deepwater shad and shallow water bass-blue gill). These provide additional fuel for both resident and migratory birds.

Corps researchers and Dallas Audubon's quarterly Trinity Bird Count have identified well over 100 bird species in the wetlands, he said.

On Sept. 30 the Fort Worth District awarded a contract to begin building a separate Upper Chain of Wetlands adjacent to the Martin Luther King Jr. Bridge in Dallas. This multi-year project will create three interconnected cells that will also provide new habitat and reduce flood risk.

Once the plant communities are fully established and the ecosystem complete, the Corps of Engineers will turn the wetlands over to the city of Dallas for ongoing maintenance and operations.

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**About the Fort Worth District:** The Fort Worth District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was established in 1950. The District is responsible for water resources development in two-thirds of Texas, and design and construction at military installations in Texas and parts of Louisiana and New Mexico. Visit the Fort Worth District Web site at: [www.swf.usace.army.mil](http://www.swf.usace.army.mil) and Facebook at: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Fort-Worth-District-US-Army-Corps-of-Engineers/188083711219308>

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