

<http://www.dallasnews.com/news/community-news/irving/headlines/20130728-kim-andres-valley-ranch-crews-work-to-mitigate-ledbetter-ump-erosion.ece>

July 28, 2013

Kim Andres: Valley Ranch crews work to mitigate Ledbetter Sump erosion

As you enjoy summertime and outdoor activities in Valley Ranch, you may notice maintenance crews with the Irving Flood Control District Section III making improvements in and around the Ledbetter Sump. This activity is part of IFCD 3's program of controlling erosion of the embankment area surrounding the Ledbetter Sump.

Soil erosion around IFCD's sumps, canals and waterways is a naturally occurring process that, with time, can have drastic effects on such facilities. Additionally, while soil erosion can occur naturally, the process can be accelerated when such areas are the target of heavy or repetitive activities.

Understanding the science of erosion, IFCD 3 continually reviews the status of its waterways to maximize their effectiveness. The district seeks to use taxpayer dollars efficiently by proactively improving and managing areas that are prone to erosion.

With regards to the district's sumps, which retain water before flowing to the pump house and discharging into the Elm Fork of the Trinity River, a key step in erosion control is maintaining the sump's traditional wall structures. Recently, maintenance crews have begun installing native plants in lieu of traditional structures along the edges of the sumps. By using native plants, IFCD 3 strives to help maintain functionality and make the areas aesthetically pleasing.

While active management of flood control assets is an important part of IFCD 3's mission, Valley Ranch residents play an important role in protecting these resources. As we experience the active summer months, residents and guests can assist by following a few simple rules such as not fishing. Anyone who has fished in heavily used shoreline areas of rivers, streams and lakes can attest to how the banks breakdown with continuing use.

If fishing were permitted along IFCD waterways, the same breakdown could occur, placing these facilities at risk for damage. Reducing foot traffic along IFCD 3's shoreline — except along paved walkways — will reduce maintenance costs and preserve functionality of the facilities.

Any form of wheeled vehicles repeatedly operated over grassy surfaces along or adjacent to IFCD 3 facilities can destroy grassy covering, leaving exposed dirt that can easily erode. While the greatest potential for harm comes from cars and trucks, repeated use of bicycles and strollers also can take a toll on IFCD 3 levees, canals and ponds.

Although litter doesn't directly contribute to erosion, stray paper, lawn and garden clippings and other items can be washed into district facilities, potentially reducing water-handling capabilities of the system, which can impair its operations in the event of a major storm.

Valley Ranch residents are asked to be mindful of where and how they travel along IFCD 3 waterways and should alert IFCD 3 if anything suspicious is noticed. Reports can be made by phone by calling 972-556-0625 or by emailing info@ifcd3.org.

IFCD 3 is responsible for providing flood control facilities and operations and preserving the high quality of life provided in Valley Ranch. The district safeguards people and enhances the economic value of property by constructing and maintaining canals, ponds and other natural water management facilities throughout the community.

A publicly funded organization, IFCD 3 is led by a five-member board appointed by the Irving City Council. District board members are committed to serving their fellow residents of Valley Ranch in an efficient, effective and transparent manner. For more information, visit ifcd3.org.

Kim Andres is the Irving Flood Control District III's board president.

<><><>