

Caddo Lake regatta canceled after flooding; first time since inception



UNCERTAIN - For the first time since its inception, the annual Caddo Lake Earth Day Paddling Regatta has been canceled.











"Our team met Monday and we decided it was better to cancel it this year," Cypress Basin Texas Master Naturalists Chapter President and regatta coordinator Stella Barrow said. "The lake is not very pretty and there are a lot of safety issues as far as gasoline, oil, septic tanks and God knows what else floating in it.

"Plus, many of my master naturalist team members were affected by the flood," Barrow said of the group that hosts it. "It was hard to pull it together while they were trying to save their homes and their belongings. For those two reasons, we just decided to cancel it. It's very unfortunate. It's our fifth year and we have some good momentum going. We just felt like it was the best decision."

Barrow said she decided against postponing the regatta to later in the year for multiple reasons.

"We have decided to wait until next Earth Day in 2017," Barrow said. "We considered doing a fall regatta, but so often in September and October, the water levels are low and the vegetation clogs the paddle trails. We expect the Giant Salvinia to come back with vengeance this year. (Also) we were afraid we would dilute our potential participants in the paddler community if we threw a race at them in September or October then another one in April."

Barrow said the decision to cancel the regatta this year was not one she took lightly.

"It was a pretty heart-wrenching decision because it's something we've really gotten into," she said. "The public was expecting it; we already had paddlers sign up from last year who were just waiting for it from the word go. That's just the way it goes; Mother Nature had her say this year."

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