

## **2009 TEXAS PLANT CONSERVATION CONFERENCE**

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### **Oral Presentation**

TEXAS WILD-RICE (*ZIZANIA TEXANA*): PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE?

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ABSTRACT—Texas wild-rice (*Zizania texana*) is an aquatic perennial grass found only within the upper two miles of the San Marcos River, an area almost entirely within the city limits of San Marcos. Numerous threats, in particular cessation or diminution of spring flow, led to the federal and state listing of this species in 1978. Since 1989, Texas Parks and Wildlife staff with the help of many other agencies and volunteers have monitored the entire natural population of Texas wild-rice annually. Using the detailed, location specific maps obtained from this work, I have been able to detect changes in stand location, size and number as well as fragmentation and coalescence of stands. While this species historically occupied a slightly larger area, its range has contracted through time although aerial coverage has fluctuated. Conservation of this species presents major challenges and will require cooperation amongst a wide array of government entities, schools, businesses, agriculture and industry interests, landowners, and the general public to ensure the continued presence of Texas wild-rice in the San Marcos River in the future.