

Lende Lecture Series Memorializes Avid Conservationist Bill Lende

“Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better.” –Albert Einstein

If there is an individual who embodies this quote, it would be the late Bill Lende. An avid conservationist committed to environmental research, Lende established the Cibolo Preserve in 2008. Adjacent to the Cibolo Nature Center & Farm, this 645-acre Texas Hill Country property has as its mission to own, maintain, and preserve its natural habitat as part of the Cibolo Creek watershed for educational, scientific, and charitable purposes. Today the Cibolo Preserve is a model for how private land can be protected and preserved.

To continue his legacy after his death in 2016, the board of trustees of the Cibolo Preserve established the Lende Lecture Series. Sponsored by the Cibolo Preserve, the CNC&F is presenting the series because of Lende’s generosity and long-time partnership with the organization. This year’s Lende Lecture will be held April 13 at the Ye Kendall Inn in Boerne at 2pm and will feature Dr. Andrew Sansom, Executive Director of the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment.

In keeping with Lende’s commitment to environmental stewardship, the lecture series touches upon regionally relevant topics in the areas of natural resource conservation, wildlife research and protection, children in nature, preservation of rural heritage, and farm and ranchland issues. The thought is to attract those who are interested in conservation in Texas at all levels by offering engaging and thought-provoking presentations that convey knowledge and inspire action.

On land protected from the human footprint, Cibolo Preserve activities are limited to research projects conducted by research partners UTSA, Cibolo Nature Center, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, San Antonio River Authority, and Texas Parks and Wildlife. The Preserve includes a mile and a half of Cibolo Creek flowing downstream from the Cibolo Nature Center. This stretch of creek supports a unique plant and animal environment and supplies groundwater recharge to the Trinity Aquifer.

Long-term projects with the Cibolo Nature Center have included Great Blue Heron Rookery Monitoring, now in its 16th year, with reports shared annually with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Other CNC volunteer-led projects at the Preserve include waterfowl and winter prairie bird surveys.

Lende established a long-standing relationship with UTSA dating back to 2008. At that time, he began working with the Office of the Vice President for Research, offering to accept research proposals on nature that could take place on the Cibolo Preserve. Today faculty and students have conducted more than 50 graduate projects, including topics in archeology, geology, flora, fauna, and water.

Sansom, the speaker for this year's Lende Lecture, is one of Texas' leading conservationists. He is a former Executive Director of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and Executive Director of the Texas Nature Conservancy. He is a Distinguished Alumnus of Austin College and Texas Tech University. He now serves as Research Professor of Geography and Executive Director of The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment at Texas State University where he coordinates university policy and research related to freshwater resources, manages the headwaters of the San Marcos River; administers the most extensive freshwater environmental education program in Texas; and supervises the training and coordination of more than 1000 volunteer water monitors in rivers and streams throughout the State.

For more information and to reserve a seat for the event, visit www.cibolo.org.