



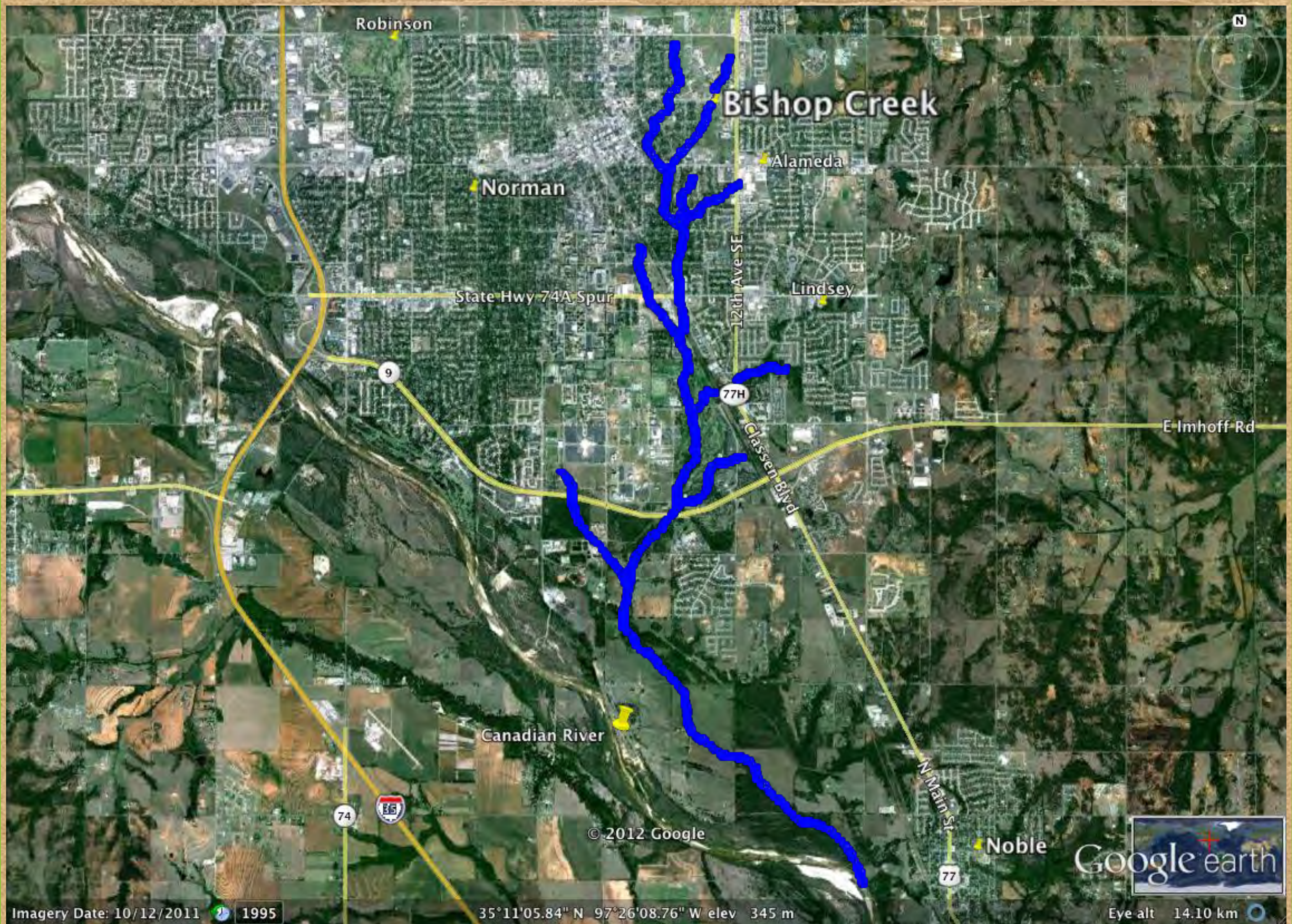
NORMAN, OKLAHOMA





Friends of Bishop Creek began in 2012 as a group of four Oklahoma Blue Thumb volunteers whose common goal was the preservation and protection of Bishop Creek.





Imagery Date: 10/12/2011 1995

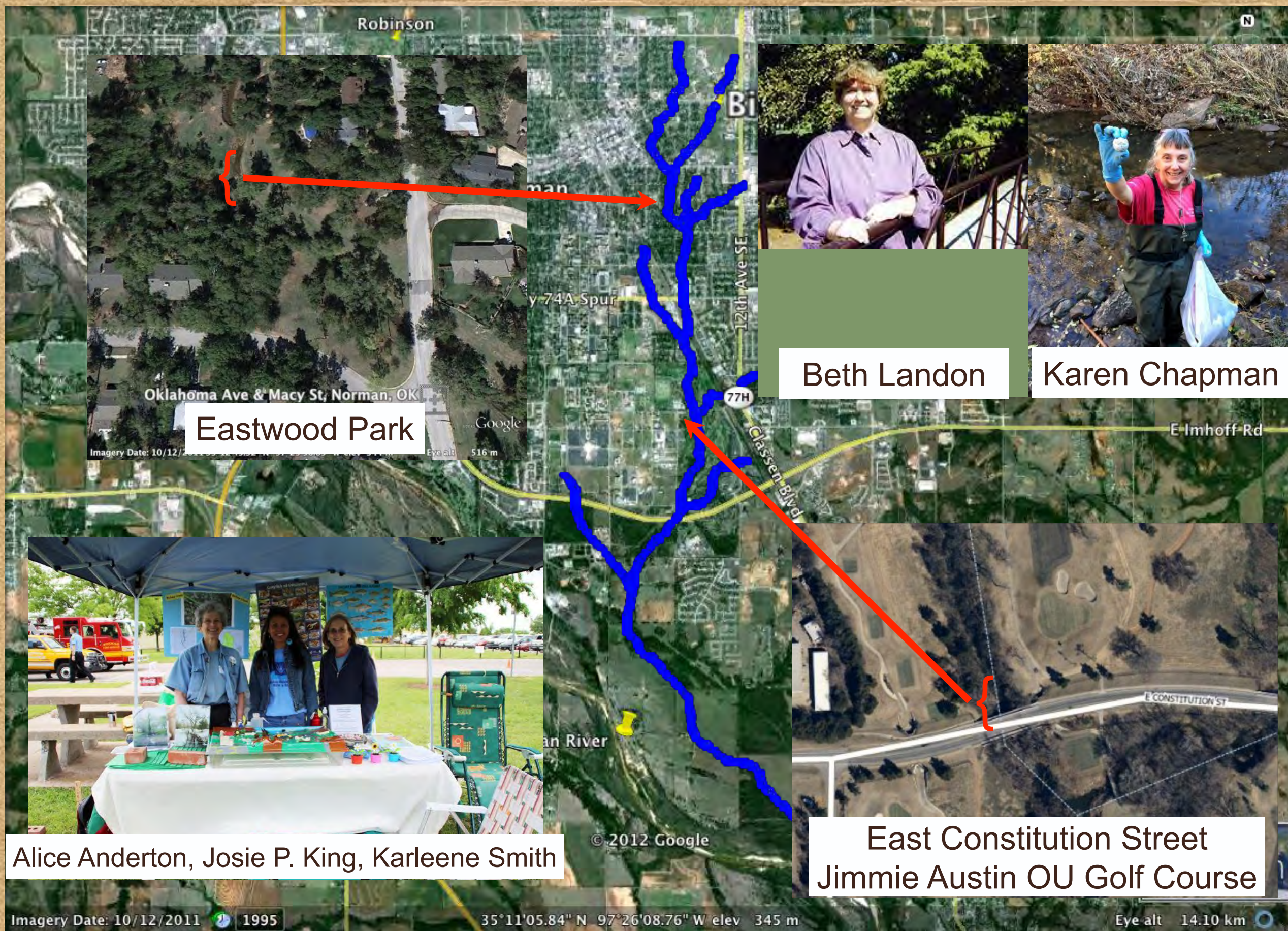
© 2012 Google 35°11'05.84" N 97°26'08.76" W elev 345 m

Eye alt 14.10 km



SECTIONS MONITORED





Eastwood Park

Beth Landon

Karen Chapman

Alice Anderton, Josie P. King, Karleene Smith

East Constitution Street  
Jimmie Austin OU Golf Course



# PROMOTING AWARENESS THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

"I would just like to say that I do not know of any other stream channel in a city that has its own dedicated Facebook page with regular updates about what is going on with it. I have used social media in a similar way for advocating City Council issues and I think it is wonderful that social media is being used to make people more aware of our local environment."

-- Stephen Tyler Holman, Norman City Council Member, Ward 7



# FACEBOOK

During this time a logo was created and a brochure was developed that outlined who we were and our objectives.



NORMAN, OKLAHOMA



## MEMBERS

Our members include:

- the mayor of Norman
- Blue Thumb staff
- Blue Thumb volunteers
- a state representative
- Norman city council members
- a Storm Water Pollution Specialist from the City of Norman Storm Water Division
- Local activists
- a reporter with the *Norman Transcript*



## TOPICS

- Concerns about other creeks in Norman.
- Creek cleanup events.
- Lake Thunderbird.
- Environmental events and publications.
- Oklahoma water issues in general.
- Public meetings that address local water problems.
- Human activities that impact our water resources.



Friends of Bishop Creek

Members

Events

Photos

Files

Search this group



Write Post

Add Photo / Video

Ask Question

Add File

Write something...

#### RECENT ACTIVITY



**Karen Chapman**

March 21 at 12:53pm

Monitored today. I was glad to see a lower chloride level. Didn't have to go to the high-range test. All other chemicals were within normal parameters. Creek level was up a little, which I expected. Turbidity was higher than usual, but the rainfall may account for that.



Like · Comment · Share



and 5 others like this.

✓ Seen by 19

#### ABOUT

58 members

##### Public Group

Friends of Bishop Creek is a group based in Norman, Oklahoma and created by four Oklahoma Blue Thumb volunteers. The goal of FOBC is the preservation and protection of Bishop Creek, which runs through east Norman. To this end, any articles or information regarding Bishop Creek will be posted and discussed. We will be promoting creek clean-up events as well as gatherings for the purpose of providing information about Bishop Creek.

Although our focus is Bishop Creek, we support efforts to preserve and protect other creeks in Norman. Please feel free to share information about clean-ups along with photos of these events.

Articles pertaining to Oklahoma's water issues in general will also be posted.

Oklahoma Blue Thumb is the educational arm of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission Water Quality Division.

For more information, visit the website:

<http://bluethumbok.com/>

or

[http://www.ok.gov/conservation/Blue\\_Thumb/index.html](http://www.ok.gov/conservation/Blue_Thumb/index.html) · [Edit](#)

58 members (1 new) · [Invite by Email](#)



March 24 at 1:18pm · Norman, OK

The orange rusty colored mass is a good indicator that this is iron fixing bacteria. Hope I don't sound like a boring biology teacher.



Like · Comment · Share



and 2 others like this.



Seen by 15



View 5 more comments





PSAs





## Creek Concerns



# WORKING WITH THE CITY OF NORMAN

"Blue Thumb is a great organization which partners with the city to reach our mutual goals of storm water management and stream preservation. Norman is lucky to have such a great group of community volunteers."

-- The Honorable Cindy Simon Rosenthal  
Mayor of Norman



To establish a partnership with the city it was necessary to develop an understanding of the various departments and their purpose.

Water quality concerns:



Retrieving items from a creek cleanup and removing large items directly from the creek:



Concerns about the area around Bishop Creek where it flows through Eastwood Park:





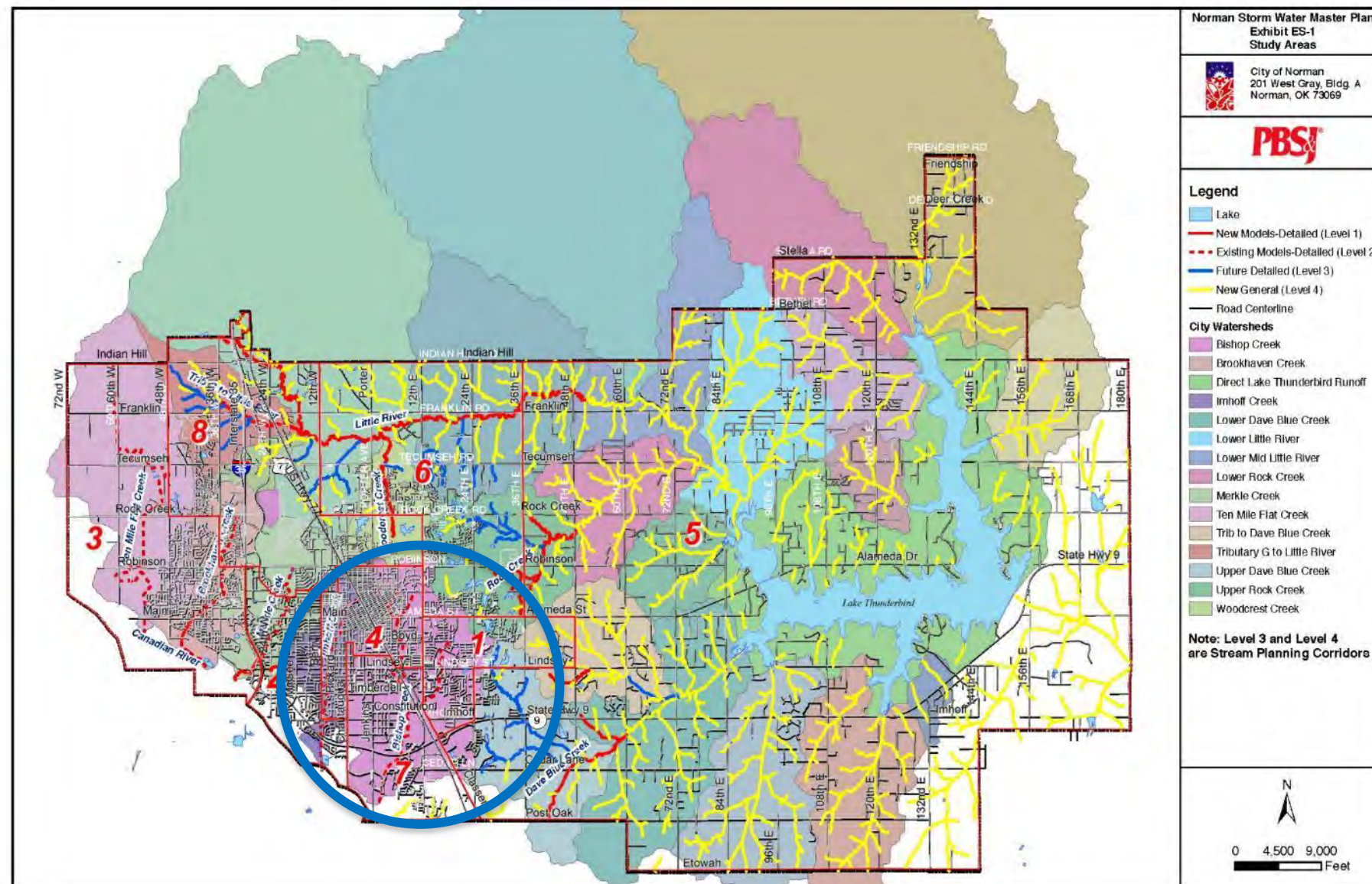
# BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH CITY STAFF

- It builds mutual trust and respect.
- Prevents an “us vs. them” attitude from occurring.
- Volunteers are invited to participate in meetings.
- Volunteers are given a “heads up” about decisions impacting the creek.
- City staff assist with Friends of Bishop Creek/Blue Thumb activities, such as cleanups and fish collections.
- City staff participate in discussions posted on the Friends of Bishop Creek Facebook group.



# CITY COUNCIL

The Bishop Creek watershed falls within Wards 1, 4, 5, 6 and 7.





## CURRENT GOAL

- A letter describing Friends of Bishop Creek, Blue Thumb, and Oklahoma Blue Thumb Association.
- A map showing the watersheds in their respective wards.
- Blue Thumb handouts.
- OBTA membership form.
- Friends of Bishop Creek brochure.
- Riparian area poster.
- An invitation to join Friends of Bishop Creek where applicable.



# SUCCESS STORIES





# Advocating for a cleaner environment

Down-home activism making a difference

**Editor's note:** This is Part I of a two-part series on grassroots activism.

**By Joy Hampton**  
Senior Staff Writer

It wasn't unusual for Oklahoma activist Carrie Barefoot Dickerson to call local newspapers about envi-

ronmental concerns from the nursing home where she lived the last years of her life.

"The health of our nation has been left in the hands of the companies whose goals are mainly to make money — not to protect the public welfare," Dickerson said in an interview with The Tulsa World.

► See **CLEAN** Page A2



Joy Hampton / The Transcript

Norman resident Karen Chapman wades through Bishop Creek after measuring its clarity Friday. Blue Thumb volunteers monitor 65 active stream sites along the street.

## Clean:

► From Page A1

weeks before her death. "It's our job to tell companies — and our government — that we want safer alternatives."

For nine years during the 1970s, Dickerson led the fight to stop Public Service Company of Oklahoma from building the proposed Black Fox nuclear power plant near the farming community of Inola. Dickerson was an ordinary person who won an extraordinary battle against big business.

She remained involved in environmental work for the remainder of her 89 years of life. Born May 24, 1917, in a log cabin 13 miles west of Okmulgee, she died in her sleep in Nov. 17, 2006.

Barefoot Dickerson is not alone. Today, people in ordinary walks of life engage at the grassroots level in various ways. In honor of Dickerson's birthday, The Transcript is focusing on ordinary women fighting for the environment.

Happy, birthday, Carrie, and thank you.

**Blue Thumb volunteer:** Norman resident Karen Chapman has been wading into creeks as a Blue Thumb volunteer for the past three years. A friend saw the notice that Blue Thumb was doing a training program and suggested that it might be fun. Both have been monitoring streams ever since.

Chapman pulled on full-body waders, slung a backpack full of testing supplies over her shoulders and grabbed her walking stick before heading down to the site she monitors on Bishop Creek.

"The walking stick is important on mossy rocks," she said.

The amateur photographer said she has always loved photographing nature, but the creek monitoring program has expanded her knowledge and



Joy Hampton / The Transcript  
**Blue Thumb volunteer Karen Chapman keeps testing gear in a backpack Friday.**

understanding of watersheds.

Her husband is supportive and often comes with her. She also has a monitoring partner who oversees the collection process and helps with the tests.

"It's not a drainage channel," Chapman said, leading the way down a steep, grassy slope and then threading through thick vegetation along the stream bank. "It's a creek. It's a valuable, living thing."

The vegetation lining rivers and streams are important filters that prevent erosion and catch pollutants before they get in the water supply. Bishop Creek leads to the South Canadian River.

"If water quality doesn't worry people this year, it will in the very near future," Chapman said.

Recent tests at the creek have indicated a high ammonia nitrogen concentration — most likely fertilizer runoff from yards.

Chapman monitors the creek monthly.

"I'm hoping we get a lot of rain today," she said. "Rain can either dilute or intensify."

She said a good rain can dilute pollutants in the water, but if the rain catch-

"The health of our nation has been left in the hands of the companies whose goals are mainly to make money."

**Carrie Barefoot Dickerson,**  
environmental activist

es more pollutant runoff, it can carry those unwanted nutrients into the stream. Decaying organic matter also can affect the health of the stream.

"People will dump organic matter into the creek," she said. "It's not a dumping ground."

Excess nutrient pollution and decaying organics can result in lower dissolved oxygen and other issues.

"Educating the public is of paramount importance," she said.

Chapman would like to

### Did you know?

The farming community of Inola was named after Chief Inola, which means "black fox."

so much as an activist as someone who loves nature and wants to preserve it. She regularly posts nature photos on her personal Facebook site and shares information about birds and other wildlife she encounters on her many nature walks.

QUEEN SET FREE SET

see the end of plastic bags and styrofoam, which often end up in the stream. She communicates with other local Blue Thumb volunteers and maintains a Facebook site, "Friends of Bishop Creek."

"That was the idea of our team to promote awareness," she said.

While the main purpose of the site is to update people on the status of Bishop Creek, she said other water issues end up posted on the site, too.

She doesn't see herself

About 60 active stream sites throughout the state are being monitored by Blue Thumb volunteers. The program increases community involvement and education on how watersheds work and problems of pollution, stream bank erosion and more.

Coming Sunday, Part II will focus on Farida Akhter, of Bangladesh, and her battle against GMOs.

**Joy Hampton**  
366-3544  
jhampton@normantranscript.com



# PROMOTING AWARENESS PARTICIPATION

“It is impossible to overstate the value of our Blue Thumb volunteers in Norman. With many creeks and streams cutting through our urban landscape, Norman needs sound advice and hard work to keep them healthy and flowing.”

-- Greg Jungman, Norman City Council Member, Ward 4



# EARTH DAY



WE'LL BE AT THE NORMAN EARTH DAY FESTIVAL  
FROM NOON TO 5:00PM. DROP BY OUR BOOTH!



## PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

Each year we bring to the event:

- Friends of Bishop Creek brochures.
- Blue Thumb and OBTA info.
- Posters showing aquatic life common to Oklahoma.
- Environmentor newsletter brochures.
- Photographs of Bishop Creek.



# ENVIROSCAPE





## OTHER EVENTS

- Red Earth Group, Sierra Club (presentation)
- OCU's Earth Day event (table)
- United Church of Norman – UCC (presentation)
- Annual Monarchs in the Park Festival (table)
- Coffee with a Cop



# FOR THE LOVE OF BISHOP CREEK



## LEAVE IT BETTER



“We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.”

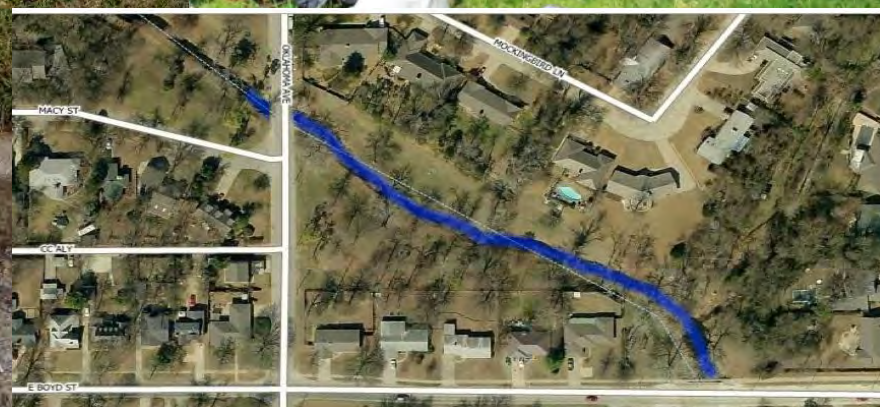
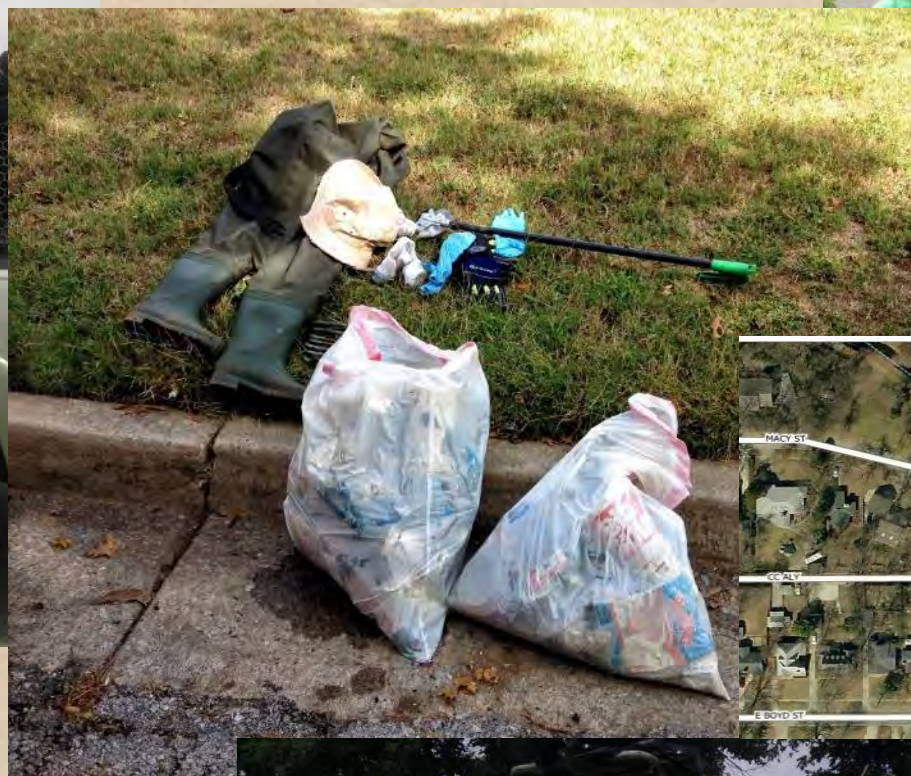
-- Aldo Leopold - Foreword to *A Sand County Almanac* (1949)

















# THE COMMUNITY SPEAKS





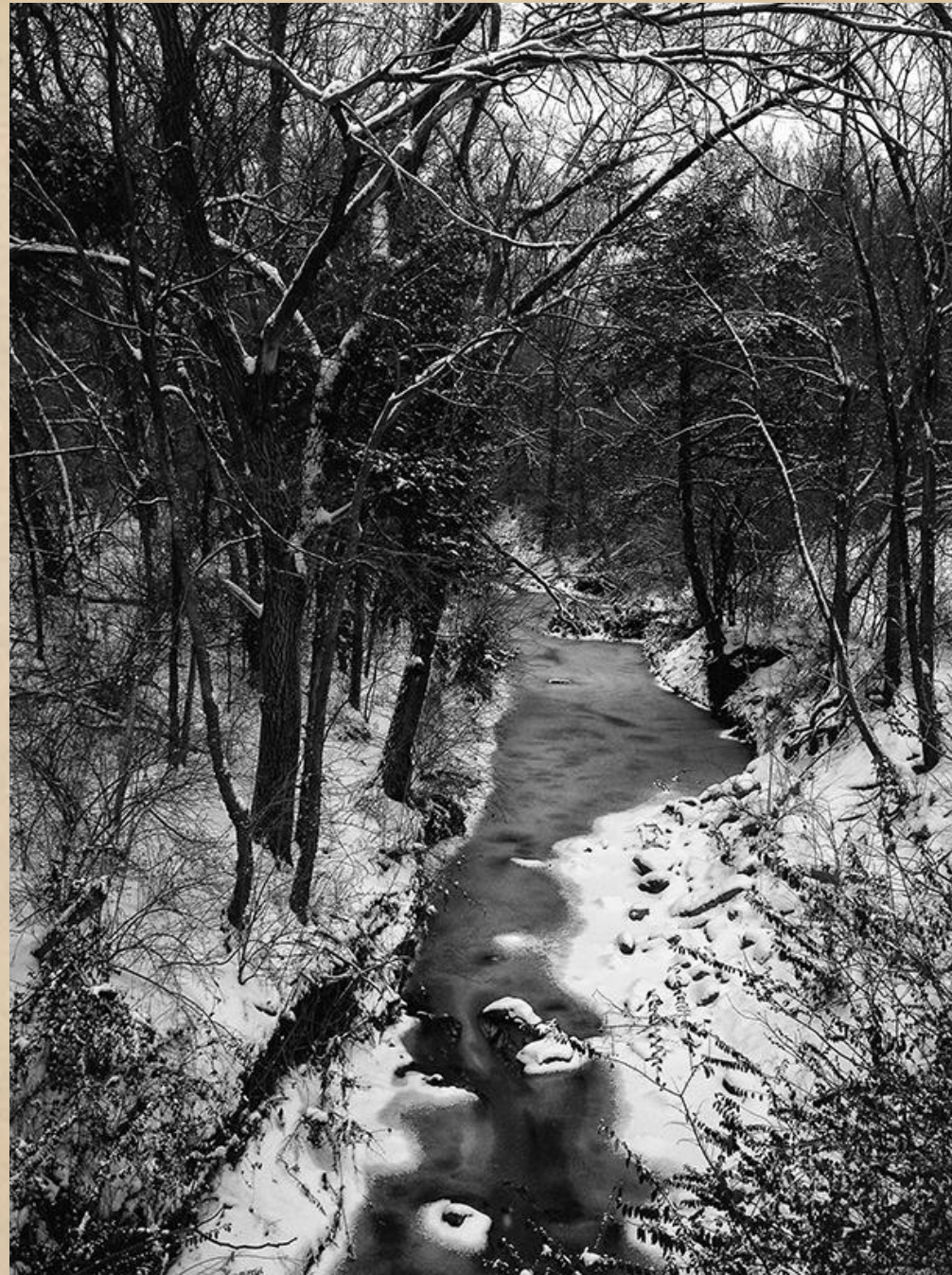
Bishop Creek in Eastwood Park.





Bishop Creek south of Constitution  
in the Jimmie Austin OU Golf Course.





Bishop Creek north of Eastwood.





Playing in the snow along Bishop  
Creek in Eastwood Park.





Male Flame Skimmer dragonfly





Roseate Skimmer dragonfly





Longear Sunfish





Green Sunfish





Mosquitofish





Mallard Drakes





Male Wood Duck





Jumping Spider  
Mature male *Phidippus mystaceus*





Wolf Spider and babies





Three-toed Box Turtle & Red-eared Slider





American Bullfrog





Blotched Water Snake





Wine Cup





Grape Hyacinth





Yellow-crowned Night Heron





Blue Heron





Red-shouldered Hawk and nestlings





Green Heron





Snowy Egret





Female Northern Cardinal





Red-bellied Woodpecker





“Some day all of this will be ours.”



Thank you very much for your  
time and attention.



NORMAN, OKLAHOMA