

2018



# Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan



Recreation Grants Branch  
State Parks Division



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GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

December 27, 2017

Mr. Cameron Sholly  
Regional Director, Midwest Region  
National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Drive  
Omaha, Nebraska 68102

Dear Mr. Sholly:

I am pleased to present the 2018 Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan. This letter certifies that ample opportunity for public participation has occurred in the development of the plan.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) contracted a research firm to conduct a survey to determine Texas residents' participation in outdoor recreation, as well as their attitudes toward a variety of issues related to outdoor recreation in the state. Responsive Management is an internationally recognized public opinion and attitude survey research firm specializing in natural resource and outdoor recreation issues. The study entailed a scientific multi-modal survey of Texas residents with a total of 2,726 completed surveys.

In addition, TPWD conducted a parks and recreation survey of federal, state and local agencies in Texas to assess the evaluation criteria for awarding Local Park Grants. Feedback regarding the application and grant management processes was also included. A total of 338 responses were received from parks and recreation professionals around the state.

This plan creates awareness of current outdoor recreation and conservation needs, issues and areas of concern through input from citizens and outdoor recreation professionals. It is aligned with TPWD's Land and Water Resources Conservation and Recreation Plan and guides us on how to best administer Texas' apportionment of the Land and Water Conservation Fund by merging national, state and local goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Abbott".

Greg Abbott  
Governor

GA:ssk

cc: Mr. Carter Smith, Executive Director, TPWD

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# Executive Summary

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The LWCF Act of 1965 authorized the distribution of matching grants to states and local governments for statewide outdoor recreation planning, and to leverage public and private investment in public outdoor recreation through the acquisition and development of outdoor recreation areas and facilities. The 2018 Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan (TORP) fulfills an eligibility requirement allowing Texas to continue receiving its allotted appropriation through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program. Each state is required to produce a statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan (SCORP) at least once every five years. The Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (TPWD) is the state agency that holds the authority to represent and act for the state of Texas regarding the LWCF stateside assistance program.

The minimum obligations specified in the SCORP guidelines include requirements to:

1. Identify outdoor recreation issues of statewide importance
2. Evaluate demand for public outdoor recreation preferences
3. Evaluate the supply of outdoor recreation resources and facilities
4. Provide an implementation program that identifies the state's strategies, priorities, and actions for the LWCF apportionment
5. Include a wetlands priority component consistent with Section 303 of the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986
6. Include Governor approval

The TORP goals are to:

1. Assess current statewide outdoor recreation and conservation needs and areas of concern
2. Act as a guide on how to best administer Texas' apportionment of the LWCF
3. Align with the TPWD Land and Water Resources Conservation and Recreation Plan

To ensure that ample opportunity for public input occurred in the development of the TORP, a third party research firm was hired to complete a general population survey. *Responsive Management* is an internationally recognized public opinion and attitude survey research firm specializing in natural resource and outdoor recreation issues. This study was conducted for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to determine Texas residents' participation in outdoor recreation, as well as their attitudes toward a variety of issues related to outdoor recreation in the state. The study entailed a scientific multi-modal survey of Texas residents with a total of 2,726 completed surveys.

In addition, TPWD conducted a parks and recreation provider survey of federal, state, and local agencies in Texas to assess the evaluation criteria for awarding Local Park Grants. The survey effort included feedback regarding application and grant management processes. A total of 338 responses were received from park and recreation professionals around the state.

In 2011, the State Park Planning and Geospatial Resources area was tasked with updating the land and water inventory mandated in Chapter 11 of the Parks and Wildlife Code and as required in the SCORP guidelines. The process involved an intensive data collection period followed by analysis of current conservation and recreation lands available to Texas communities. The Inventory of Outdoor Recreation Lands in Texas Chapter has been updated to include newly funded parks.

Each year the LWCF apportionment is split between the State Park and the Local Park programs. As needs differ slightly for each program, the Executive Office Land Conservation Program and the Recreation Grants Branch developed separate project selection criteria. Scoring criteria were analyzed to insure that they support the priorities identified in the 2018 TORP. The Open Project Selection Process Chapter provides an overview of the different scoring systems.

Using sustainable techniques in the design and construction of public parks and other outdoor recreation supports the broader TPWD mission of managing and conserving the natural and cultural resources of Texas for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Sustainable Park Design Chapter, authored by the Infrastructure Division, provides a starting point for recreation providers to help identify specific solutions for implementing sustainable design elements into the creation, construction, and maintenance of outdoor recreation lands across the state.

In order to meet the requirements of the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act (Public Law 99-645, S. 303, 1986) and to maintain eligibility of the State to participate in the LWCF Program, TPWD and partners assembled the Texas Wetlands Conservation Plan. The Plan identifies non-regulatory, voluntary approaches to wetlands conservation supported through stakeholder-driven planning and partnership-based conservation actions at regional and local scales. More detailed information can be found in the Texas Wetlands Chapter.

# Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan Overview

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## The Land and Water Conservation Fund

The LWCF Act of 1965 authorized the distribution of matching grants to states and local governments for statewide outdoor recreation planning, and to leverage public and private investment in public outdoor recreation through the acquisition and development of outdoor recreation areas and facilities. The program is intended to create and maintain a nationwide legacy of high quality recreation areas and facilities, and to stimulate non-federal investments in the protection and maintenance of recreation resources across the U. S.

The LWCF State and Local Assistance Program is the only federal source of funds partnering with states and local governments that is solely dedicated to protecting conservation and recreation lands for future generations. Program funding is appropriated annually by Congress. Federal oil and gas leases on the Outer Continental Shelf are the primary source of funding for this program.

The Mission of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is to manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas and to provide hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

In order to remain eligible to receive assistance from the LWCF program, each state is required to produce a statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan (SCORP) at least once every five years (*Appendix A*). The Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (TPWD) is the state agency that holds the authority to represent and act for the state of Texas regarding the LWCF stateside assistance program (*Appendix B*).

## Planning Process

The development of the 2018 TORP started with a review of the SCORP guidelines, and previous TORP documents. An implementation plan was developed by the TPWD Recreation Grants Branch, Local Park Grants Program for internal review encompassing the following areas:

## Outdoor Recreation Supply

In 2011, the State Park Planning and Geospatial Resources Progam was tasked with updating the land and water inventory mandated in Chapter 11 of the Parks and Wildlife Code and as required in the SCORP guidelines. The process involved an intensive data collection period followed by analysis of current conservation and recreation lands available to Texas communities. The Inventory of Outdoor Recreation Lands in Texas Chapter has been updated to include newly funded parks.

## **Outdoor Recreation Demand**

To ensure that ample opportunity for public input occurred in the development of the TORP, a third party research firm was hired to complete a general population survey. Responsive Management is an internationally recognized public opinion and attitude survey research firm specializing in natural resource and outdoor recreation issues. This study was conducted on behalf of TPWD to determine Texas residents' participation in outdoor recreation, as well as their attitudes toward a variety of issues related to outdoor recreation in the state. The study entailed a scientific multi-modal survey of Texas residents with a total of 2,726 completed surveys.

In addition, TPWD conducted a parks and recreation provider survey of federal, state, and local agencies in Texas to assess the evaluation criteria for awarding Local Park Grants. This effort included feedback regarding application and grant management processes. A total of 338 responses were received from park and recreation professionals around the state.

The 2018 TORP is available to the public on our agency website. More detailed information regarding this section is included in the Outdoor Recreation Trends and Demand Chapter.

## **Wetlands**

In order to meet the requirements of the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act (Public Law 99-645, S. 303, 1986) and to maintain eligibility of the State to participate in the LWCF Program, the TORP is required to either: (a) include a Wetlands Component that identifies wetland conservation goals, strategies and priorities, or (b) develop a State Wetlands Priority Plan that is consistent with the National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan. In fulfillment of these requirements, TPWD and partners assembled the Texas Wetlands Conservation Plan. The Plan identifies non-regulatory, voluntary approaches to wetlands conservation supported through stakeholder-driven planning and partnership-based conservation actions at regional and local scales. More detailed information can be found in the Texas Wetlands Chapter.

## **Sustainable Park Development**

Using sustainable techniques in the design and construction of public parks and other outdoor recreation supports the broader TPWD mission of managing and conserving the natural and cultural resources of Texas for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Sustainable Park Design Chapter, authored by the Infrastructure Division, provides a starting point for recreation providers to help identify specific solutions for implementing sustainable design elements into the creation, construction, and maintenance of outdoor recreation lands across the state.

## **Open Project Selection Process (OPSP)**

Each year the LWCF apportionment is split between the State Park and the Local Park programs. As needs differ slightly for each program, separate project selection criteria have been developed respectively by the Executive Office Land Conservation Program and the Recreation Grants Branch. Scoring criteria were analyzed to insure that they support the priorities identified in the *2018 TORP*. The Open Project Selection Process Chapter provides an overview of the different scoring systems.

# A Sense of Place: The Lone Star State

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## Introduction

Texas holds a special place in the hearts and minds of its citizens. The sheer size of the state and its richly varied landscape and history are among the reasons that Texans feel an incredibly strong sense of place and connection to its land, water, and wildlife. It is because of this special connection to nature that outdoor recreation and conservation efforts among Texans are a high priority.

Table 2.1 Ten States in the United States with the Largest Numeric Population Increase: 2000-2010				
	2000 Population	2010 Population	Change 2000-2010	
			Numeric	Percent
United States	281,421,906	308,745,538	27,323,632	9.7
Texas	20,851,820	25,145,561	4,293,741	20.6
California	33,871,648	37,253,956	3,382,308	10.0
Florida	15,982,378	18,801,310	2,818,932	17.6
Georgia	8,186,453	9,687,653	1,501,200	18.3
North Carolina	8,049,313	9,535,483	1,486,170	18.5
Arizona	5,130,632	6,392,017	1,261,385	24.6
Virginia	7,078,515	8,001,024	922,509	13.0
Washington	5,894,121	6,724,540	830,419	14.1
Colorado	4,301,261	5,029,196	727,935	16.9
Nevada	1,998,257	2,700,551	702,294	35.1

Source: U.S. Census 2000 & 2010

Prepared by the Hobby Center for the Study of Texas at Rice University <http://HobbyCenter.Rice.edu>

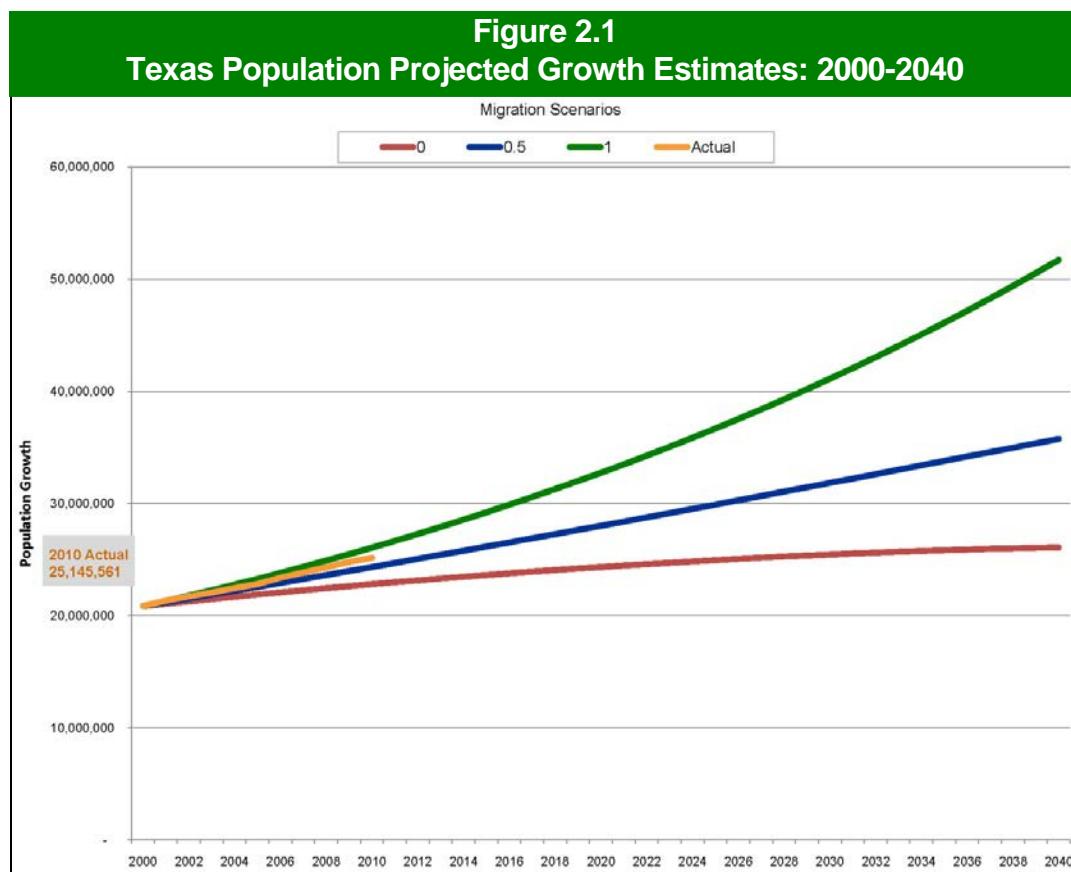
As population dynamics shift, leaders must plan for the future, taking into consideration the evolving needs from continuing rural to urban migration, changing demographics, and intensified pressure on our land, water, and wildlife resources.

Given the fact that Texas lands are 94% privately owned, involving landowners and educating urban dwellers about conservation efforts will be vital to preserving the wild Texas beauty that is so dear to the heart of our Texas family (Dunlap, 2006).

Moving forward, land preservation and water conservation are listed among the top state priorities. Adventure is a part of the Texas tradition and we must preserve our natural heritage so that our children and grandchildren may have the joy of exploring and learning first-hand about the wilder side of life in the Lone Star State.

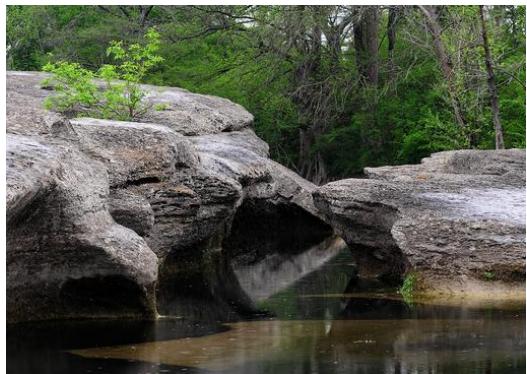
## People of Texas: Changing Demographics

According to the 2010 Census, the great state of Texas is home to a fortunate 25,145,561 individuals. According to 2005 population projection scenarios from the Texas State Data Center, actual 2010 population numbers fall between the medium (0.5) to high (1.0) net migration projection scenarios, leading experts to anticipate a continued above average growth trend.



Source: Texas State Data Center, 2008

Given the dramatic increase in population since 2000, community demands for outdoor experiences are on the rise all across the state.



© TPWD, 2008

Not only is Texas increasing in sheer population, but there is also significant growth in diversity of people and cultures. With a total population of over 25 million, Texas has three cities with over 1 million people, more than any other state in the nation. These cities are increasingly diverse, and the face of Texas continues to change. Of significance is the growth of the Hispanic population in Texas in the last ten years. In 2000, 37% of Texans were Hispanic compared to 45% in 2010.

**Table 2.2  
Population, Population Change, and Proportion of the Total Population by Race/Ethnicity for Metropolitan Central City Counties in Texas: 2000-2010**

Race/Ethnicity *	2000		2010		Change 2000-2010		
	Population	%	Population	%	Numeric	% Race	% Total
NH White	6,280,433	44.9	6,126,120	37.0	-154,313	-2.5	-6.1
Hispanic (All Races)	5,233,081	37.4	7,310,033	44.2	2,076,952	39.7	81.5
NH Black	1,825,667	13.0	2,184,001	13.2	358,334	19.6	14.1
NH Asian	427,495	3.1	636,526	3.8	209,031	0.9	8.2
NH Other	227,029	1.6	286,543	1.7	59,514	26.2	2.3
Total	13,993,705	100.0	16,543,223	100.0	2,549,518	18.2	100.0

\* Hispanic includes persons of all races. All other race/ethnicity categories shown here are Non-Hispanic. Non-Hispanic Other includes personal identifying themselves a Non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native, Non-Hispanic Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Non-Hispanic Some Other Race, or Non-Hispanic and combination of two or more races.

Source: U.S. Census 2000 & 2010, P.L. 94-171

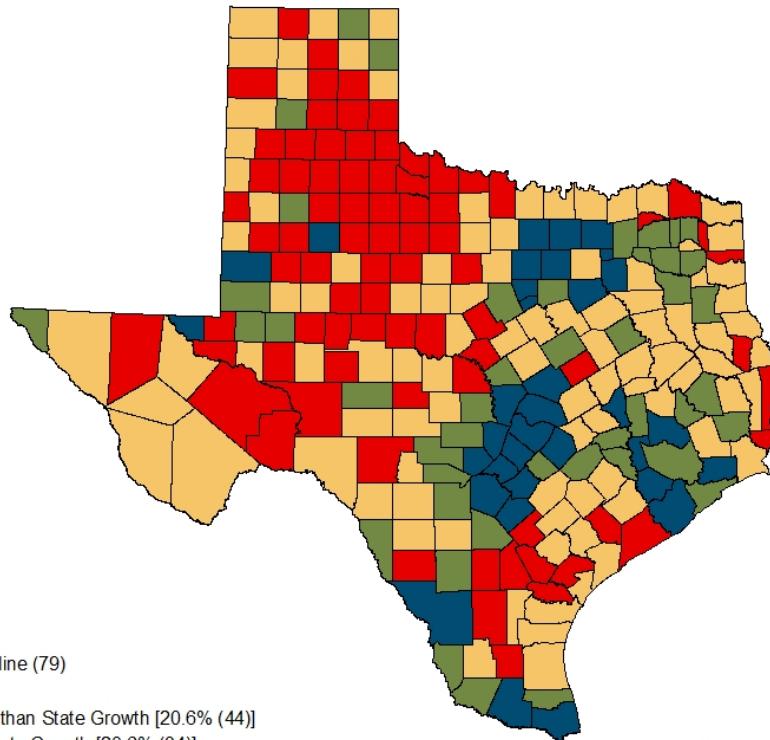
Prepared by the Hobby Center for the Study of Texas at Rice University <http://HobbyCenter.Rice.edu>

A century ago, most Texans lived in rural areas and were closer to nature. Today, the vast majority of the population lives in large cities.

As the urban population increases, so does the demand for improved access to outdoor recreational opportunities. Texans need preserved land where they can hike, bike, or just be. Direct experience with nature is vital to physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being and leads to a healthy understanding of our place in the world.

**Figure 2.2**  
**Population Change in Texas Counties, 2000-2010**

**Population Change in Texas Counties, 2000-2010**



Prepared by the Hobby Center for the Study of Texas at Rice University.

<http://hobbycenter.rice.edu>

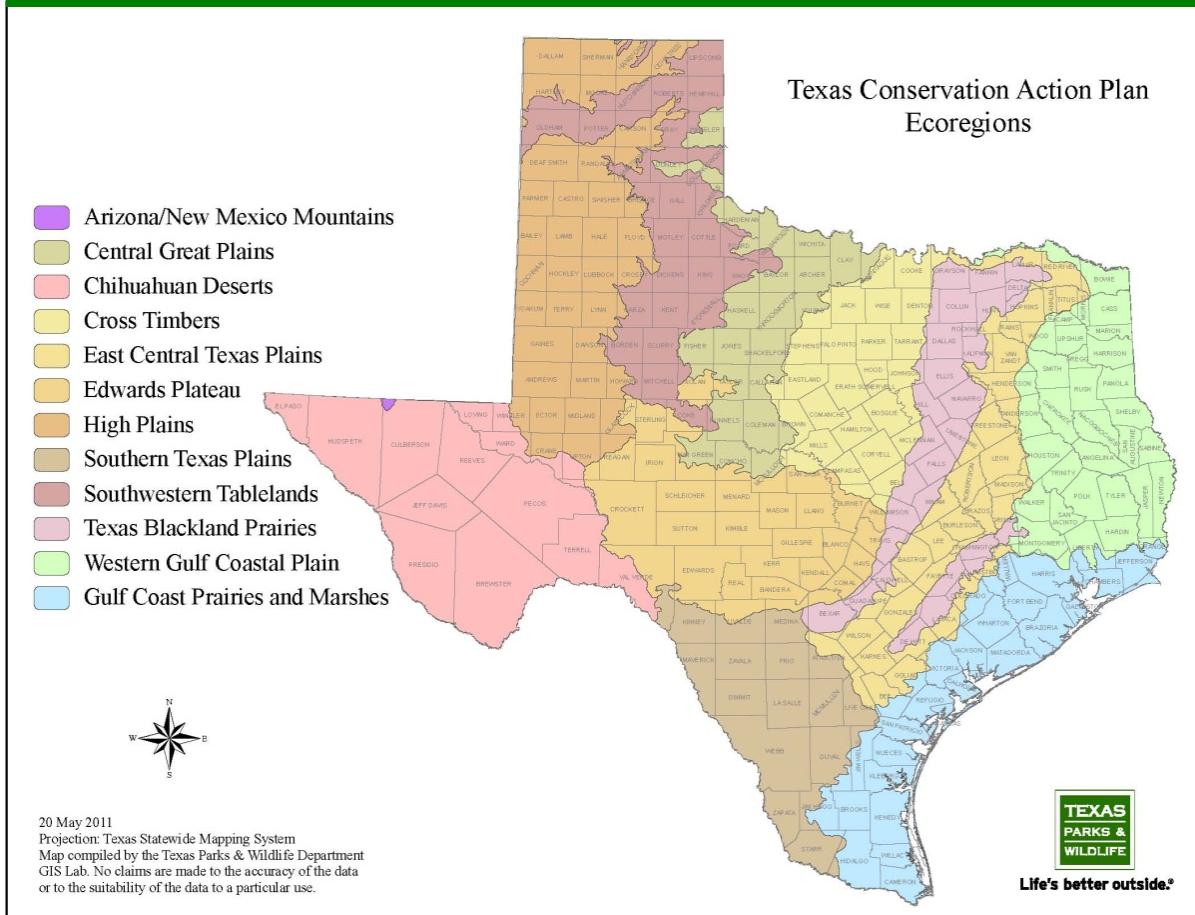
Source: U.S. Census 2000 & 2010, P.L. 94-171

Prepared by the Hobby Center for the Study of Texas at Rice University <http://HobbyCenter.Rice.edu>

## Rich Resources of Texas

Texas is blessed with amazing biodiversity. The state is home to nearly 800 species of fish, 425 species of butterflies, 634 species of birds, and over 4,600 species of native plants. With 12 distinct ecoregions covering approximately 268,500 square miles, Texas has an astounding array of climates, soils and habitats (Texas Parks and Wildlife, 2015). High plains, wetlands, mountains, deserts, forests, and coastal marshes provide habitat for the fish and wildlife resources that help define the landscape.

**Figure 2.3**  
**Texas Conservation Action Plan Ecoregions**



From spring-fed rivers flowing past towering cypress trees to coastal bays and wetlands teaming with plants, fish and wildlife, Texas waters are a source of beauty and wonder, and an essential life-supporting resource for animals, plants, and humans alike.

With over 191,000 miles of rivers and streams, seven major estuaries and approximately 200 major springs, Texas is blessed with a bounty of aquatic resources (Texas Parks and Wildlife, 2015).

Healthy ecosystems depend on careful and effective water management. The population of Texas is expanding rapidly, bringing incredible pressure to bear on all of the state's natural resources, especially water.

## Conservation

Today, Texas is facing unprecedented conservation challenges. Several species of birds and mammals have already vanished from Texas, and many more are in danger. Fortunately, Texans have long recognized the need for stewardship of the state's land, water, fish, and wildlife and took action generations ago to protect the state's natural heritage.

The first game and fish laws in Texas were passed in the late 19th century, and the first game warden began protecting the state's resources in 1895.

TPWD was formed in 1963 when the Texas Game and Fish Commission and the Texas State Parks Board were united into a single agency. For over a hundred years, Texas has worked to ensure that present and future generations continue to enjoy the state's great natural and cultural heritage.

Involving Texans in outdoor recreation is a critical component of conservation. Numerous studies have confirmed that outdoor recreation leads to caring for natural resources. An informed and involved citizenry is vital to the conservation of healthy terrestrial and aquatic habitats.

TPWD currently operates 95 state parks and natural areas, 47 wildlife management areas, and eight fish hatcheries—comprising 1.4 million acres that are managed in the public trust for recreation and conservation (Texas Parks and Wildlife, 2015). State parks and wildlife management areas offer a remarkable variety of opportunities to experience the outdoors. From the desert mountain sky islands of Davis Mountains State Park to the cypress swamps of Caddo Lake Wildlife Management Area, TPWD maintains and provides outdoor experiences ranging from peaceful to exhilarating, and from suburban oases to backcountry wilderness.



© TPWD, 2004

# Texas Wetlands

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## Introduction

In order to meet the requirements of the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act (Public Law 99-645, S. 303, 1986) and to maintain eligibility of the State to participate in the LWCF Program, the TORP is required to either (a.) include a Wetlands Component that identifies wetland conservation goals, strategies and priorities, or (b.) develop a State Wetlands Priority Plan that is consistent with the National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan. In fulfillment of these requirements, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and partners assembled the Texas Wetlands Conservation Plan. The plan identifies non-regulatory, voluntary approaches to wetlands conservation supported through stakeholder-driven planning and partnership-based conservation actions at regional and local scales.

Consistent with the intent of the Texas Wetlands Conservation Plan, a number of self-directed, regional conservation partnerships (e.g., Bird Joint Ventures, Fish Habitat Partnerships, and Estuary Programs) have assembled strategic conservation plans that identify regional and local wetlands conservation strategies and actions. This chapter has been added to the TORP to facilitate implementation of the Texas Wetlands Conservation Plan and relevant regional and local strategic conservation plans by aligning wetlands restoration, enhancement, and preservation priorities in Texas with resources available through the LWCF Program.

Applications submitted to the TPWD Recreation Grants Program, which disperses LWCF grants in Texas, are awarded additional points within the application review and scoring process if the project provides for the acquisition and preservation of important wetlands. Wetlands recognized as conservation priorities in state, regional, and local wetlands conservation plans, such as those referenced in this chapter, may qualify for additional points within the application review and scoring process.

## Texas Wetlands: Regional Descriptions

Although wetlands comprise less than five percent of the total land area of Texas, the state has the fourth largest acreage of wetlands in the conterminous US. Texas contains a diversity of wetland types, including swamps, bottomland hardwood forests, marshes, bogs, springs, resacas, ciénegas, forested riparian bottomlands, playa lakes, and saline lakes. The diversity of Texas wetlands are described below within the regions of the state where they generally occur.

## Wetlands of East Texas



Photo 1. Bottomland hardwood forest in east Texas, © TPWD.

and vines that grow together in different vegetation assemblages depending on soil type, water depth, velocity, and flood duration.

Bottomland hardwood communities in Texas contain over 180 species of woody plants, including bald cypress (Photo 2), water oak, willow oak, overcup oak, water hickory, green ash, pecan, possumhaw, buttonbush, planertree, and swamp privet.

Characteristic herbaceous species include smartweeds, arrowhead, sedges, cutgrass, arrow arum, lizard's-tail, spiderlilies, and bladderworts. Animals found in forested wetlands include wood ducks, mallards, eastern wild turkeys, swamp rabbits, gray and fox squirrels, raccoons, river otters, beavers, red-eyed vireos, alligator snapping turtles, and cottonmouth water moccasons.

East Texas contains a mosaic of wetland types including forested wetlands, shrub swamps, marshes, oxbow lakes and bogs. Forested wetlands (Photo 1), the most common wetland type in east Texas, are dominated by bottomland hardwood trees that grow in creek and river floodplains. In floodplains, the ebb and flow of floodwater shapes the forest floor into ridges, swales, or flats. These elevational differences influence the duration of flooding or soil saturation, which, in turn, affect the type and abundance of plants that can grow. As a result, bottomland hardwood forests contain a diversity of trees, shrubs, herbaceous species,



Photo 2. Bald cypress trees in a forested wetland in east Texas, © TPWD.

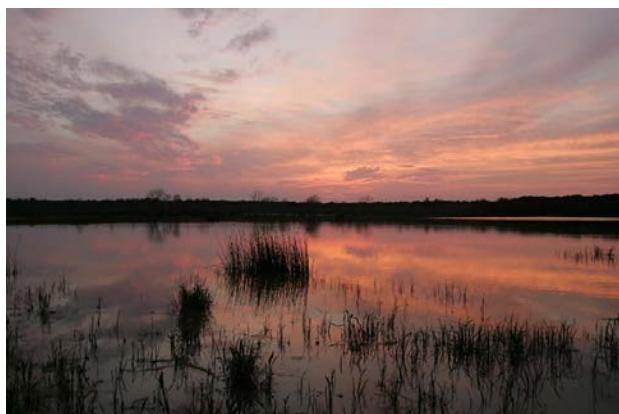


Photo 3. Freshwater emergent marsh in east Texas, © TPWD

Freshwater marshes (Photo 3) contain extensive stands of cutgrass in deeper portions of the marsh. Other perennial plants occupying the adjacent shallower areas include several smartweed species, arrow arum, soft rush, spikerushes, arrowhead, maidencane, and plumegrass. Numerous submergent plant species are found in deeper open water pools. Cutgrass marshes are seldom dry. Historically, during extreme, infrequent droughts, prolonged fires burned the organic, peat soils of cutgrass marshes.

These fires reduced or eliminated the dense herbaceous cover, which temporarily favored the growth of many annual plant species.

East Texas bogs, found in association with bottomland hardwood forests, occur when bowl-shaped terrain features restrict water drainage. These systems are usually wet year round because of continuous groundwater seepage. Acidic conditions and poor soil aeration support plant communities containing a variety of specialized species, including carnivorous plants such as sundews and pitcher plants (Photo 4). Other plants include red maple, wax myrtle, alder, bladderworts, orchids, ferns, and irises. Species composition is best maintained by periodic prescribed burns to control woody plants.



Photo 4. Sundew is a carnivorous plant found in east Texas bogs, © TPWD.

## Wetlands of the Texas Gulf Coast

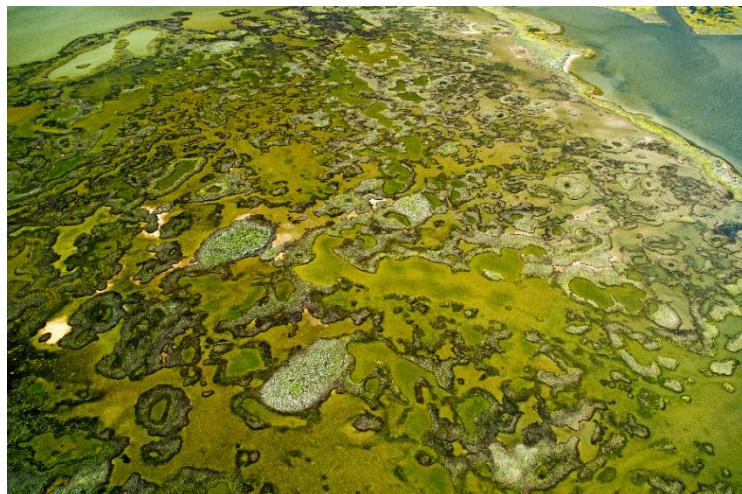


Photo 5. Saline marsh on the Texas coast, © TPWD.

The Texas Gulf Coast contains a diversity of wetland types, including wet prairies, forested wetlands, barrier islands, tidal flats, estuaries, bayous, and rivers. Saline and brackish marshes (Photo 5) are most widely distributed south of Galveston Bay, while intermediate marshes are the most extensive marsh type east of Galveston Bay. The lower coast has only a narrow band of emergent marshes, but has a system of extensive bays, lagoons, and small near-shore ponds, which are critical freshwater sources to diving ducks that feed in saline and hypersaline lagoons. Annual rainfall along the coast varies from 25

inches on the lower coast to 55 inches on the upper coast. The occurrence and extent of specific plant species within these different wetland types depends on their tolerances to fluctuating salt concentrations and variability in water depth. Some overlap of species can be found within the different wetland types on the Gulf coast.

Submerged aquatic vegetation (primarily seagrasses, Photo 6) grows in permanently inundated areas ranging from highly saline to brackish waters, but thrives in shallow subtidal areas of less than six feet. Most submerged aquatic vegetation, including shoalgrass, widgeongrass, manatee grass,

clover grass, and turtle grass, is found in the Lower Laguna Madre. Because submerged aquatic vegetation is found below the mean high-tide line, most areas are state-owned.

Tidal flats are located in the intertidal zone and are consistently exposed and flooded by tides. Tidal flats, characterized by sand, silt, and clay, have minimal vegetation but are important feeding grounds for coastal shorebirds, fish, and many invertebrates including crabs, oysters, clams, shrimp, and mussels. Texas contains more tidal flats than any other state.



Photo 6. Submerged aquatic vegetation in the Lower Laguna Madre, © TPWD.

Salt marshes have the greatest tidal fluctuation of all marsh types. Soils have a lower organic content than fresher types located further inland. Salt marshes contain relatively few plant species and are characterized by smooth cordgrass, a species that depends on regular water fluctuations. Behind this zone may be saltgrass, needle rush, blackrush, saline marsh aster, saltwort, glasswort, and sea lavender.

Brackish marsh communities are transitional between saline and intermediate marshes. They are still subject to daily tidal influence. Marsh soils have a higher organic content than salt marshes, and water levels are also higher. Brackish marshes contain numerous small bayous and lakes. Dominant species include marshhay cordgrass, saltgrass, saltmarsh bulrush, Olney bulrush, and widgeon grass.

Intermediate marshes, somewhat tidally influenced, have greater plant diversity than saline or brackish marshes. Species found here include seashore paspalum, marshhay cordgrass, Olney bulrush, arrowheads, common reedgrass, coastal water-hyssop, bearded sprangletop, pondweeds, and naiad.

Fresh marshes support the greatest diversity in plant species of all marsh types. They are normally free from tidal influence, exhibit slow drainage, and have the highest soil organic content of coastal wetlands. Dominant vegetation includes maiden cane, giant cutgrass, American lotus, white water-lily, smartweed, marsh millet, arrowhead, seedbox, coontail, alligator weed, and many others.

Texas coastal wetlands are an important wintering and migration area for North American waterfowl. Other birds of special concern, such as the bald eagle, peregrine falcon, brown pelican, and whooping crane, all depend on Texas marshes and estuaries, as do otter, alligator, swamp rabbit, furbearers, and amphibians. Texas coastal marshes and estuaries provide productive nurseries/spawning areas and habitat for seafood species and other marine organisms.

## **Wetlands of South Texas**

South Texas freshwater or brackish wetlands include small, isolated depressions, or potholes, and resacas, which are relic meanderings of the Rio Grande. Coastal potholes, formed when clay soils exposed by wind action trap and hold water, often supply the only fresh water for resident wildlife in an area generally devoid of creeks and rivers. Potholes depend on rainfall or underground water sources. High evaporation rates and temperatures may cause potholes to retain water only temporarily or seasonally.

The vegetation composition of potholes depends upon the amount of water available. Non-permanent wetlands contain both wetland and upland species. Common wetland vegetation includes duckweed, saltmarsh spikerush, common cattail, and smartweed. Upland vegetation associated with coastal potholes includes live oak, wax myrtle, plantain, silverleaf sunflower, and panic grass. Many animal species depend on wetland vegetation for cover, and for nesting and resting. Coastal potholes are wintering grounds for waterfowl, shorebirds, songbirds, waders, and several species of mammals, fish, and invertebrates. Coastal brushland potholes may also be prime habitat for threatened and endangered species such as the ocelot and jaguarundi.

In the lower Rio Grande Valley, oxbows or resacas are common. Resacas are former streambeds that are subject to repeated drying and flooding, thus forming long quiet ponds. Vegetation associated with resacas includes retama and huisache. Resacas thrive on periodic inundation from river flooding. However, levees, floodways, and reservoirs, along with irrigation diversion, have virtually eliminated flood flows to resacas, which are no longer scoured and flushed. Siltation has become a major problem within the resacas due to the absence of scouring and the increase in urban runoff, shoreline erosion, and general degradation of water quality.

## **Wetlands of the Texas Panhandle**

The High Plains and Rolling Plains of the Texas Panhandle support wetlands predominantly in playa lakes and saline lakes (High Plains), and in water-table influenced basins and riparian habitats (Rolling Plains). Playas (Photo 7) are ephemeral wetlands characterized by Randall or Ness clays, and are very similar to coastal potholes, but have a different geologic origin. Saline lakes are generally larger than playas, are very saline, and are influenced by groundwater. A few playas and playa-like basins with connections to groundwater occur in the Rolling Plains.



*Photo 7. Waterfowl at the Playa Lakes Wildlife Management Area,  
© TPWD.*

Riparian wetlands include vegetation along main channels of creeks and rivers and associated wet meadow, perched water table lakes and beaver pond habitats. Riparian wetlands in the Panhandle are characterized by Plains cottonwood, netleaf hackberry, buttonbush, native plum, western dogwood, and persimmon.

Playas, surrounded by vast acreages of winter wheat, corn and other grain crops, are the migrating, wintering and breeding area for several million ducks, geese, and other migratory birds. Hundreds of thousands of mallards, pintails and other ducks terminate their southward migration in this checkerboard of water havens and grainfields.

Because playa lakes are fed by rainwater, many may be dry for extended periods of time. The unpredictable and dynamic nature of playas is natural and necessary to maintain primary productivity and biodiversity. The 86 plant species living in playas have adapted to this rapidly changing environment. The most common plants found in the playa lakes include spikerush, curly dock, bulrush, cattail, pink and willow smartweed, pondweed, wollyleaf bursage, and barnyard grass. Woody species in riparian habitats include Plains cottonwood, buttonbush, netleaf hackberry, native plum, western dogwood, and persimmon.

## Wetlands of Central Texas

Central Texas wetlands, including seeps, springs, and freshwater streams and their associated riparian systems, are found throughout the limestone formations of the Edwards Plateau. Riparian systems and associated woodland areas are the most widespread wetland type found in Texas (Photo 8), as they are found in the Rolling Plains of the Panhandle to the South Texas brushlands to the forests of East Texas.



*Photo 8. Riparian zone of a stream in the Edwards Plateau Ecoregion of central Texas, © TPWD.*

The riparian zone of a river, stream or other water body is the land adjacent to that water that is, at least periodically, influenced by flooding. Aridity, topographic relief, and presence of depositional soils most strongly influence the extent of high water tables and associated riparian ecosystems. Riparian areas provide protective pathways of migration for birds, deer and small mammals, as well as habitat for many animal species. Vegetation found along central Texas streams includes bald cypress, pecan, possumhaw, smartweed, sugarberry, boxelder, buttonbush, and black willow.

Central Texas contains numerous springs, which typically flow into freshwater streams. Springs are fed by groundwater that travels through a natural opening in the rock or soil. In comparison to streams fed by surface water, spring-fed streams have a more constant supply of water, which supports vegetation such as marsh purslane, water pennywort, and cattail.

## Wetlands of the Trans-Pecos

The Trans-Pecos Region, located in far western Texas within the Rio Grande and Pecos River basins, is dominated by Chihuahuan Desert salt basins and flats, desert scrub, desert and semi-desert grasslands, and very locally by evergreen woodlands and montane forests. Wetlands occur within each of these ecosystems.

Although Trans-Pecos wetlands account for less than two percent of the total regional land surface, they are highly significant to the region's wildlife diversity. Desert wetlands shelter endemic desert fishes, reptiles, and invertebrates and are especially important to the region's diverse bird life.



*Photo 9. Desert cienega at Balmorhea State Park, © TPWD.*

Desert basin salt flats, which are remnants of ancient lakes, contain water seasonally or permanently, depending on annual rainfall. Vegetation may include algal mats or plants (mostly grasses) adapted to saline conditions.

Perennial riparian corridors have narrow bands of woodland vegetation, many of which have been invaded by salt cedar, an exotic shrub. The region still shelters many headspring areas varying from fresh to slightly saline. At one time, headsprings were associated with desert marshes, referred to as cienegas (Photo 9), which are dominated by grasses, sedges, and rushes.

Cienegas still occur throughout the Trans-Pecos in areas with abundant soil moisture, such as in mid-elevation and montane areas in the Davis Mountains. Cienegas that occur where soil is lacking or very shallow are called seeps or hanging gardens, which are dominated by columbine, poison ivy, ferns, and orchids.

## **Status and Trends of Texas Wetlands**

To support statewide evaluation of wetlands and other vegetation communities in Texas, TPWD recently cooperated with a variety of state, federal, and private partners to produce a new 398-class, 10-meter spatial resolution land classification map of the entire state of Texas. More than 14,000 ground data samples were collected in support of the mapping effort, the largest effort of its kind ever in Texas.

Significant overall improvements over existing maps included better spatial and thematic resolution of wetland habitats. These improved data for Texas wetlands and other vegetation communities are currently being used to conduct the Texas Ecological Indices Project, which will identify priority areas for conservation investments and serve as a tool for landscape-scale conservation planning.

Ecologically significant wetlands and other vegetation communities are being identified based on the habitat preferences of fish and wildlife identified by TPWD as Species of Greatest Conservation Need. The Texas Ecological Indices Project is expected to be completed in 2017. Additional information on this wetlands conservation planning resource is available at: <http://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/land/programs/landscape-ecology/>.

Under the provisions of the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is required to assess and report on the status and trends of the nation's wetland resources at 10-year intervals, with the most recent report published in 2011: *Status and*

*Trends of Wetlands in the Conterminous United States 2004 to 2009.* This series of reports is intended to help guide decisions by providing resource professionals and policy-makers information on wetlands-related issues, such as, the need for potential changes to incentive and disincentive policies, measures to conserve wetlands, funding priorities for wetlands protection, restoration and enhancement, and landscape-scale planning to address emerging issues that have the potential to negatively affect wetlands.

The 2011 report measured trends by the examination of remotely sensed imagery for 5,042 randomly selected sample plots located throughout the conterminous US. This imagery, in combination with field verification provided a scientific basis for analysis of the extent of wetlands and changes that had occurred over the four and half year time span of the study. The most recent report, published in 2011, and other historic reports on the status and trends of wetlands in the US are accessible at: <https://www.fws.gov/Wetlands/status-and-trends/index.html>.

## **Texas Wetlands: Conservation Strategies and Priorities**

### **Texas Land and Water Resources Conservation and Recreation Plan**

The Texas Land and Water Resources Conservation and Recreation Plan serves as the strategic visionary document that guides TPWD in achieving its mission to conserve land and water resources and to provide outdoor recreation opportunities for all Texans.

The Plan was developed with extensive input from our constituents and partners, state leaders and agency staff. As such, it encompasses the collective vision of conservation and outdoor recreation in Texas.

More Information:

- [http://tpwd.texas.gov/publications/pwdpubs/media/pwd\\_pl\\_e0100\\_0687\\_2015.pdf](http://tpwd.texas.gov/publications/pwdpubs/media/pwd_pl_e0100_0687_2015.pdf)

### **Texas Conservation Action Plan**

The Texas Conservation Action Plan, also referred to as the Texas Wildlife Action Plan or Texas Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, identifies fish and wildlife species and their habitats (including wetland habitats) of greatest conservation need, describes major stressors affecting these species and habitats, and recommends specific conservation actions. Recommended actions identified in the Texas Conservation Action Plan were developed with stakeholder input obtained through ecoregional planning workshops.

More Information:

- <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/land/tcap/>

### **Texas Wetlands Conservation Plan**

The Texas Wetlands Conservation Plan focuses on non-regulatory, voluntary approaches to wetlands conservation that enhance the ability of landowners to use existing incentive programs and other land use options through outreach and technical assistance; develop and encourage land management options that provide an economic incentive for conserving existing wetlands or restoring

former ones; and ensure coordination of regional wetlands conservation efforts. Chapters 5-10 of the Texas Wetlands Conservation Plan identify specific regional and statewide issues of concern and recommended conservation actions to address those issues.

### **North American Waterfowl Management Plan**

In 1985, waterfowl populations had plummeted to record lows. Historical data indicated that since the first settlers arrived, 53 % of the original 221 million wetland acres found in the contiguous United States had been destroyed. The picture was the same across Canada, where a large percentage of the United States' wintering waterfowl nest.

Waterfowl were then and are now the most prominent and economically important group of migratory birds of the North American continent. By 1985, approximately 3.2 million people were spending nearly \$1 billion annually to hunt waterfowl. By 1985, interest in waterfowl and other migratory birds had grown in other arenas as well. About 18.6 million people observed, photographed, and otherwise appreciated waterfowl and spent \$2 billion for the pleasure of doing it.

Recognizing the importance of waterfowl and wetlands to North Americans and the need for international cooperation to help in the recovery of a shared resource, the U.S. and Canadian governments developed a strategy to restore waterfowl populations through habitat protection, restoration, and enhancement. The strategy was documented in the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (Plan) signed in 1986 by the Canadian Minister of the Environment and the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, the foundation partnership upon which hundreds of others would be built. The most recent update of the Plan occurred in 2012 (link provided above).

The Plan is innovative because its perspective is international in scope, but its implementation functions are based at the regional level. Its success is dependent upon the strength of partnerships, called "joint ventures," involving federal, state, provincial, tribal, and local governments, businesses, conservation organizations, and individual citizens. Joint ventures develop implementation plans focusing on areas of concern identified in the Plan.

Partners' conservation projects not only advance waterfowl conservation, but make substantial contributions toward the conservation of all wetland-associated species. There are 21 joint ventures actively working to implement the Plan. The five listed below have a geographic scope and mission focused on conservation of wetlands and associated species in Texas. All have assembled a variety of strategic conservation plans, many of which identify priorities for wetlands conservation.

More Information:

- <https://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/pdf/management/NAWMP/2012NAWMP.pdf>

### **Gulf Coast Joint Venture**

The Gulf Coast Joint Venture (GCJV) is a partnership among Federal and State Agencies, non-profit organizations, and private landowners dedicated to the conservation of priority bird habitats along the U.S. Gulf of Mexico coast. The GCJV is divided geographically into five Initiative Areas, three of which are geographically focused within Texas (Laguna Madre Initiative Area, Texas Mid-Coast Initiative Area, and Chenier Plain Initiative Area).

More Information:

- <http://www.gcjv.org/>

### **Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture**

The Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture (LMJV) is a self-directed, non-regulatory private, state, federal conservation partnership that exists for the purpose of implementing the goals and objectives of national and international bird conservation plans within the Lower Mississippi Valley region. The LMJV is focused on the protection, restoration, and management of those species of North American avifauna and their habitats encompassed by the North American Bird Conservation Initiative. The geographic scope of the LMJV consists of the Mississippi Alluvial Valley and the West Gulf Coastal Plain, an area that includes eastern Texas.

More Information:

- <http://www.lmvjv.org/>

### **Oaks and Prairies Joint Venture**

The Oaks and Prairies Joint Venture (OPJV) is a regional, self-directed partnership of government and non-governmental organizations, corporations and individuals that works across administrative boundaries to deliver science-based avian conservation within the Edwards Plateau ecoregion and Oaks and Prairies ecoregion.

More Information:

- <http://www.opjv.org/>

### **Playa Lakes Joint Venture**

The Playa Lakes Joint Venture (PLJV) is a non-profit partnership of federal and state wildlife agencies, conservation groups, private industry, and landowners dedicated to conserving bird habitats in the Southern Great Plains, including rivers and streams, playas, saline lakes, and other wetlands.

More Information:

- <http://www.pljv.org/>

### **Rio Grande Joint Venture**

The Rio Grande Joint Venture (RGJV) is a regional, self-directed partnership that delivers science-based bird and habitat conservation in the Chihuahuan Desert (located in the Trans-Pecos region of Texas and north-central Mexico) and the Tamaulipan Brushlands (located in south Texas and northeastern Mexico).

### **National Fish Habitat Partnership**

Determined to reverse the declines of America's fish habitats, a diverse group of partners known as the National Fish Habitat Partnership joined together to develop and implement a nationwide strategy to protect, restore, and enhance aquatic habitats. This nationwide plan, the National Fish Habitat Action Plan, is being implemented through voluntary, locally-driven partnerships known as Fish

Habitat Partnerships, two of which have a geographic scope and mission that encompasses wetland habitats in Texas.

More Information:

- <http://www.fishhabitat.org/>

### **Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership**

The Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership (SARP) is a regional collaboration of natural resource and science agencies, conservation organizations and private interests developed to strengthen the management and conservation of aquatic resources in the southeastern United States (from Texas to Virginia). The SARP supports and facilitates on-the-ground and in-the-water science-based action to improve and protect aquatic habitats and resources. The SARP has developed a strategic plan known as the Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan that identifies priority conservation strategies and actions in the region. The SARP also promotes a set of regional conservation focus areas that include several Texas rivers as priority areas.

More Information:

- <http://southeastaquatics.net/>

### **Desert Fish Habitat Partnership**

The Desert Fish Habitat Partnership (DFHP) conserves native desert fish by protecting, restoring, and enhancing their habitats in cooperation with state and tribal fish and wildlife agencies, federal resource agencies, research and private organizations, and engaged individuals. The DFHP Strategic Plan identifies priority conservation strategies and actions to preserve aquatic habitats within the desert ecosystems of the western US, including the Trans-Pecos region of Texas.

More Information:

- [http://www.nature.nps.gov/water/DFH\\_partnership.cfm](http://www.nature.nps.gov/water/DFH_partnership.cfm)

### **National Estuary Program**

The National Estuary Program (NEP) is a place-based program to protect and restore the water quality and ecological integrity of estuaries of national significance. Currently, 28 estuaries located along the Atlantic, Gulf, and Pacific coasts and in Puerto Rico are designated as estuaries of national significance, including two in Texas. Local estuary programs have been established to plan and coordinate restoration efforts. The two Estuary Programs contained in Texas are described below.

### **Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program**

The Coastal Bend Bays Plan (Plan) developed by the Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program provides a regional framework for conservation action in a 12-county area of Texas known as the Coastal Bend. The Coastal Bend includes three of the seven Texas estuaries – Aransas, Corpus Christi, and upper Laguna Madre. The Plan focuses on conservation of open water, submerged habitat, emergent wetland and upland environments critical to the preservation of natural resources in the region.

The Plan identifies regional conservation goals and calls for efforts to identify habitat types that are most at risk and to work with landowners and local and state governments on ways to preserve sufficient, functional acreage of those habitats. The Plan identifies specific conservation tools

necessary to attain this goal, including the use of conservation easements, tax abatements, or land acquisition.

More Information:

- <http://www.cbbep.org/>

### **Galveston Bay Estuary Program**

The Galveston Bay Plan developed by the Galveston Bay Estuary Program includes a Habitat Protection Action Plan (Plan). The Plan advocates an ecosystem approach to conservation that supports the maintenance of natural physical processes (e.g., sediment flows) and that ensures the existence of an optimal variety and distribution of habitats. Specific goals of the Plan include protection of existing wetlands through acquisition.

More Information:

- <http://www.gbep.state.tx.us/>

### **Mission-Aransas National Estuarine Research Reserve**

The Mission-Aransas National Estuarine Research Reserve (Reserve) is a 185,708-acre contiguous complex of private, federal, and state-owned lands and waters that includes high-quality freshwater wetlands, riparian habitats, salt marshes, and seagrass meadows. Located along the Texas Coastal Bend, these unique and diverse estuarine habitats support a host of endangered and threatened species including the endangered whooping crane.

The Reserve Management Plan identifies priority acquisition and boundary expansion opportunities, including acquisition of additional high-quality wetlands that will protect the integrity of the Reserve and be used to further promote conservation of Texas coastal resources.

More Information:

- <https://sites.cns.utexas.edu/manerr>
- <http://missionaransas.org/about/management-plan>

### **National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is responsible for preparing the National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan (NWPCP), authorized by the 1986 Emergency Wetlands Resources Act (EWRA). The NWPCP's ongoing program provides decision-making guidance on acquiring important, scarce, and vulnerable wetlands and establishing other non-acquisition protection measure priorities.

Section 301 of the EWRA requires the Secretary of the Interior to establish, periodically review, and revise a National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan that identifies federal and state acquisition priorities for various types of wetlands and wetland interests. The NWPCP is an ongoing program and continues to provide guidance for making decisions regarding wetland acquisition. The NWPCP applies only to wetlands that would be acquired by federal agencies and states using LWCF appropriations.

More Information:

- <http://www.fws.gov/policy/660fw4.html>

# Inventory of Outdoor Recreation Lands in Texas

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## Introduction

Texas houses an amazing diversity in unique ecological settings. In addition to the various wetlands, there are a host of beautiful and ecologically valuable places throughout the state. The state is divided into 12 distinct level III ecoregions and 56 level IV ecoregions, as defined by the U.S. EPA ecoregion framework. TPWD uses the level III ecoregions as a planning tool when planning for natural resource management. By creating, maintaining, and promoting parkland, recreation providers can help conserve the rich and varied natural resources of Texas. This chapter summarizes results of the 2011 inventory of all municipal, county, state, federal, and non-profit, or otherwise publicly-owned conservation and recreation lands in Texas. The inventory fulfills a requirement by Chapter 11 of the Parks and Wildlife Code as well as a requirement by the LWCF SCORP guidelines. The following sections will outline the methodology utilized to obtain the best available data, explain the detailed data structure and storage methods employed, and will offer the analytical results from the geospatial analysis.

## Methodology

### Data Compilation and Creation

Prior to undertaking this massive endeavor there was not a single existing data source that contained all of the required information or that met the quality and coverage of the inventory requirement. In order to gain the best level of detail for conservation and recreation lands across the states, a number of approaches were employed.

The first attempt for geospatial data collection was made by contacting the largest regional planning entities, including Council of Governments (COGs), and referencing the previous statewide inventory. While most regional planning entities did not have the requested data, existing regional and statewide data sets were used to the extent possible. These sources included:

- StratMap (<https://www.tnris.org/StratMap>)
- North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG, <http://gis.nctcog.org/>)
- Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC, <http://www.h-gac.com/rds/>)
- Ark-Tex Council of Governments (ATCOG, <http://www.atcog.org/>)
- Central Texas Council of Governments (CTCOG, <http://www.ctcog.org/>)
- Coastal Bend Council of Governments (CBCOG, <http://cbcog98.org/>)
- TPWD Land and Water Resources Conservation and Recreation Plan, Statewide Inventory, 2002.

As the majority of COGs did not have the appropriate level of geospatial data, it was necessary to make direct contact on other levels of governance. TPWD initiated direct contact with the following entities:

- Texas Cities over 10,000 in population (243 contacts)
- Texas Counties over 15,000 in population (142 contacts)
- Texas River Authorities (12 contacts)

- Texas Council of Governments (23 contacts)
- Non-Governmental Entities (conservation organizations, 37 contacts)



© TPWD

Federal agency web resources were utilized to download boundary data for their respective properties with the exception of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers who were contacted directly. A combination of sources were used to perform data compilation for city, county, and utility districts. These included city websites, city park master plan documents, utility district websites, the TPWD website, chambers of commerce websites, county appraisal district data, fishing guide sites, etc. Many indirect sources contained only suggestive or partially correct information depicting the location, configuration, or size of a property. In these instances, multiple references were combined to create a best fit for the boundary definition of the property. GIS analysts placed heavy reliance on multiple sources and dates of aerial imagery available to remedy unsupplied, erroneous, or incomplete boundaries, thus creating the most complete statewide inventory of publically accessible recreation and conservation lands ever compiled in Texas.

## Data Structure

The inventory data is a polygon data set maintained in the Texas State Mapping System (TSMS) projection. This is an official state projection using a Lambert Conic Conformal projection in meters based on the North American Datum 1983 (NAD83). Attributes for each feature are described in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1**  
**Data Structure Attributes**

Attribute	Description
<b>Owner</b>	Name of the Governmental or Non-Governmental entity that owns the property
<b>Owner Type</b>	Type of entity, limited to Federal, State, County, City/municipal, River Authority, Utility District, Private, Other, and Unknown
<b>Owner Classification</b>	Designation assigned by owner, i.e. Neighborhood Park, Community Park, etc.
<b>Owner Property Name</b>	Property name assigned by owner
<b>Manager</b>	Name of entity that manages the property
<b>Manager Type</b>	Type of entity, limited to Federal, State, County, City/municipal, River Authority, Utility District, Private, Other, Unknown
<b>Manager Property Name</b>	Property name assigned by manager
<b>Manager Property Name Alternate</b>	Secondary name for property
<b>Acres Calculated</b>	Area, in acres, calculated by GIS software
<b>Data Source Name</b>	Name or listing of sources supplying or contributing to the data
<b>Data Source ID</b>	Number assigned by XXXX (PGR) to each data source
<b>Data Editor</b>	Name of the data editor and date of data entry into the database

## Data Storage

The inventory is a geographic data set. The data consists of an ArcGIS 10 Polygon Feature Class in an enterprise geodatabase mounted on a Microsoft SQL Server relational database management system.

To obtain a digital copy of this extensive data set please contact the following TPWD branch:

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department  
 State Parks Division  
 Planning and Geospatial Resources  
 4200 Smith School Road  
 Austin TX 78744  
 (512) 389-4661

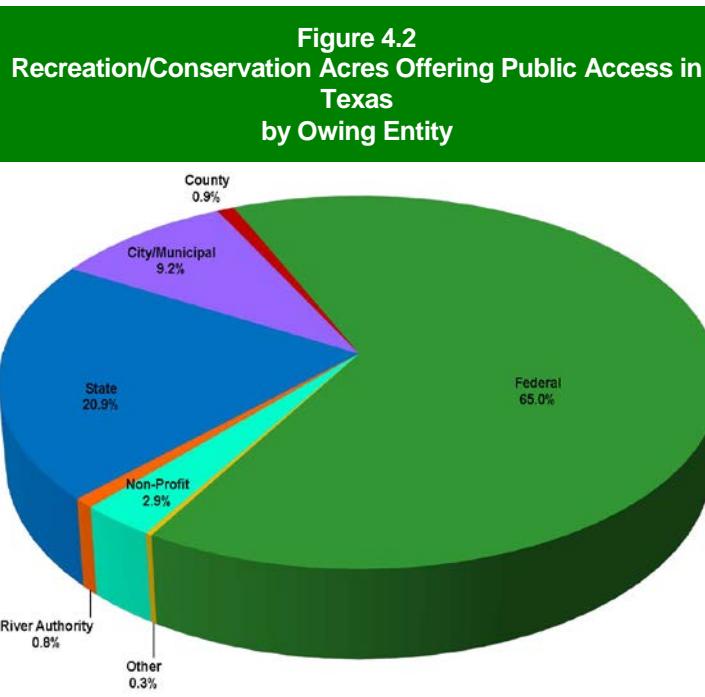
## Inventory of Recreation and Conservation Lands in Texas

Given the sheer physical diversity of the state, each of the 12 ecoregions has a little something different to offer the public in terms of recreation and conservation opportunities. In an attempt to quantify these opportunities, TPWD performed an extensive inventory of the recreation and conservation lands that have public access. By contacting recreation providers ranging from the federal government to small municipalities to non-profits, TPWD was able to establish a solid baseline analysis of the geographic properties of publicly-accessible recreation and conservation lands across Texas. Moving forward, the data will be made available by request, thus improving future planning efforts across the state. There are several spatial analysis tools available to quantify the acreage and location of parklands and recreation facilities. Owing to the current level of detail within the collected data, the inventory was analyzed in the context of spatial location and ownership. Ownership was classified by the categories established during data collection while location was related to political subdivision, primarily state, county, and level III ecoregions. This section will attempt to provide an overview of the available recreation and conservation lands in Texas and will start with an examination of Texas as a whole and will then move into an analysis of ecoregions, followed by county-level results.

### Statewide Inventory

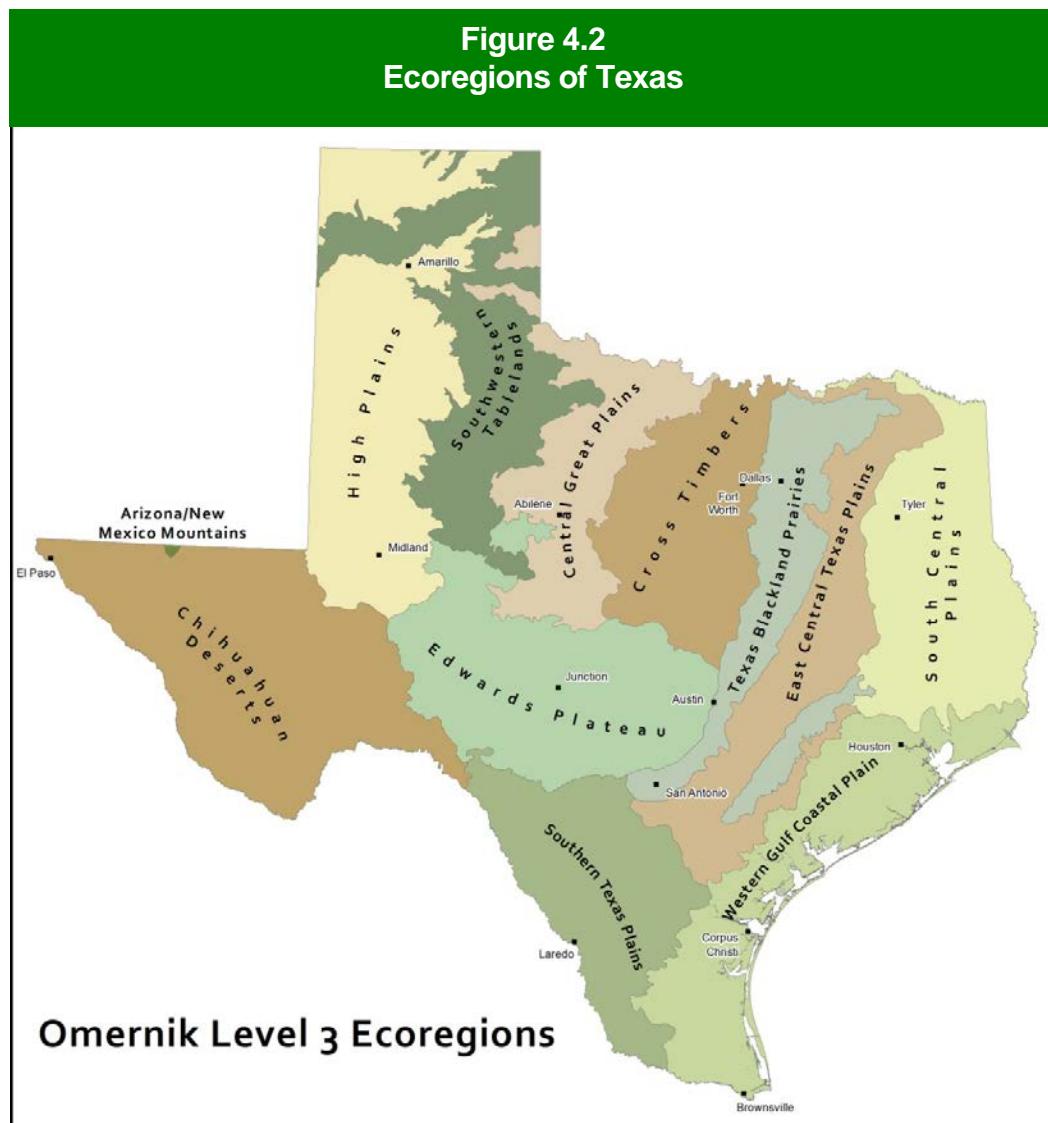
This inventory reveals that 2.5% of all Texas lands are open to the public for recreation and conservation purposes.

The 2011 Statewide Inventory offers a detailed perspective into the extensive recreation and conservation network. Out of the entire state, this updated inventory reveals that recreation and conservation lands that are open to the public make up 2.5% of Texas lands. Examination on a statewide basis reveals that the majority of land owned under the purpose of recreation and conservation management is held by the U.S. federal government, an overwhelming 68.4% of recreation and conservation land in Texas. Second to this is state ownership at 21.7%. While, beyond the state level all other ownership types fall into the single digits. Figure 4.1 offers a summary of recreation and conservation acreage by ownership type.



## Ecoregions

Twelve unique ecoregions cover the state and are depicted below in Figure 4.2. In order to gather an appropriate picture for the amount of recreation and conservation land in each ecoregion, values were calculated for the acreage and percent and this analysis can be seen below in Table 4.2. However, no distinction has been made regarding the actual status or condition of any recreation-conservation parcel as it relates to native or natural conditions. Many parcels are urban in nature and/or heavily developed for active recreation facilities. Thus, these figures, while based upon existing properties and mapped ecoregions, may not depict a true sense of conserved lands in each ecoregion. That being said, barring standardization in future data collecting endeavors, these results represent the best available data in the state. The following adaptation presents a brief description of each ecoregion, along with information on acreage of recreation and conservation lands.



**Table 4.2**  
**Ecoregions and Recreation/Conservation Acres**

Level III Ecoregion	Ecoregion Acres *	Recreation/Conservation acres **	% in Recreation/Conservation
Arizona/New Mexico Mountains	51,960	50,571	97.33%
Chihuahuan Deserts	22,537,951	1,456,806	6.46%
South Central Plains	15,671,654	924,593	5.90%
Western Gulf Coast Plain	14,991,385	798,268	5.32%
Texas Blackland Prairies	10,681,313	168,699	1.58%
Cross Timbers	12,781,734	190,938	1.49%
Edwards Plateau	18,449,346	201,594	1.09%
East Central Texas Plains	13,487,753	129,295	0.96%
Southwestern Tablelands	14,890,927	129,585	0.87%
High Plains	20,934,612	119,661	0.57%
Southern Texas Plains	13,179,176	59,836	0.45%
Central Great Plains	11,533,378	32,068	0.28%

\* Acres contained in this table depict surface acres in Texas, not the entire ecoregion within North America.

\*\* Represents only land acres. Surface water acres are not included.

Source: Griffith, Bryce, Omernik, & Rogers, 2007. Ecoregions of Texas. Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Austin. 134 pp

### Arizona/New Mexico Mountains (Ecoregion 23)

The Arizona/New Mexico Mountains are distinguished from neighboring mountainous ecoregions by lower elevations and an associated vegetation indicative of drier, warmer environments, given the region's more southerly location. Chaparral is common at lower elevations, pinyon-juniper, and oak woodlands are found at lower and middle elevations, and dense ponderosa pine forests cover the higher elevations. Forests of spruce, fir, and Douglas-fir are common in the Southern Rockies and the Wasatch and Uinta Mountains, but they are found only in limited areas at the highest elevations in this region. Only a small portion of this ecoregion occurs in Texas.

The Guadalupe Mountains on the Texas-New Mexico border comprise the southernmost peaks of the Arizona/New Mexico Mountains ecoregion. The portion of this ecoregion that occurs in Texas may be small, but 97.33% of the entire region is comprised of recreation or conservation land, amounting to 50,571 acres.

## **Chihuahuan Deserts (Ecoregion 24)**

This desert ecoregion extends from the Madrean Archipelago in southeastern Arizona to the Edwards Plateau in south-central Texas. It is the northern portion of the southernmost desert in North America that extends more than 500 miles south into Mexico. In much of the U.S. portion, the physiography of the region is a continuation of basin and range terrain (excluding the Stockton Plateau) that is typical of the Mojave Basin and Range, and the Central Basin and Range ecoregions to the west and north. However, the pattern of alternating mountains and valleys is not as pronounced as it is in the neighboring ecoregions. The mountain ranges are a geologic mix of faulted limestone reefs, volcanoes and associated basalt and tuff extrusive rocks, and rhyolitic intrusions.

Outside the major river drainages, such as the Rio Grande and Pecos River, the landscape is largely internally drained. Vegetative cover is predominantly semi-desert grassland and arid shrubland, except for high elevation islands of oak, juniper, and pinyon pine woodland. The extent of desert shrubland is increasing across lowlands and mountain foothills due to gradual desertification caused in part by historical grazing pressure. The recreation-conservation properties in the Chihuahuan Desert ecoregion amount to 6.46% of the entire region. This region contains the largest amount of recreation-conservation land in Texas at 1,456,806 acres. This region houses both Big Bend National Park and Big Bend State Park, which account for a large portion of the conserved land.

## **High Plains (Ecoregion 25)**

The High Plains ecoregion is higher and drier than the Central Great Plains to the east. Much of the High Plains is expressed as smooth to slightly irregular plains with a high percentage of cropland. The potential natural vegetation in this region is grama-buffalo grass. The northern boundary of this ecological region is also the approximate northern limit of winter wheat and sorghum, and the southern limit of spring wheat. The ecoregion includes the plains area of the Llano Estacado.

Thousands of playa lakes (seasonal depressional wetlands) occur in this area, many serving as recharge areas for the important Ogallala Aquifer. These playa lakes are also essential for waterfowl during their yearly migration along the Central Flyway of North America. Oil and gas production occurs in many parts of the region. Only 0.57% of this region is classified as recreation or conservation lands, amounting to 119,661 acres in total.

## **Southwestern Tablelands (Ecoregion 26)**

The Southwestern Tablelands flank the High Plains with red hued canyons, mesas, badlands, and dissected river breaks. Unlike most adjacent Great Plains ecological regions, little of the Southwestern Tablelands are in cropland. Much of this region is in sub-humid grassland and semiarid rangeland. The potential natural vegetation in this region is grama-buffalo grass with some mesquite-buffalo grass in the southeast, juniper-scrub oak-midgrass savanna on escarpment bluffs, and shinnery (midgrass prairie with low oak brush) along parts of the Canadian River.

Soils in this region include Alfisols, Inceptisols, Entisols, and Mollisols. This ecoregion houses slightly more than its High Plains neighbor, with 129,585 recreation-conservation acres, accounting for only 0.87% of the total area.

## **Central Great Plains (Ecoregion 27)**

The Central Great Plains are slightly lower, receive more precipitation, and are more irregular than the High Plains to the west. The ecological region was once grassland, a mixed prairie, or a transitional prairie from the tallgrass in the east to shortgrass farther west. Scattered low trees and shrubs occur in the south. Most of the ecoregion is now cropland. The eastern boundary of the region marks the eastern limits of the major winter wheat growing area of the United States. Soils in this region are generally deep with shallow soils on ridges and breaks. Not surprisingly, as most of this ecoregion is covered by cropland, the Central Great Plains holds the smallest ratio of recreation-conservation lands, with only 0.28% or 32,068 out of 11,533,378 total acres.

## **Cross Timbers (Ecoregion 29)**

The Cross Timbers ecoregion is a transitional area between the former prairie (now winter wheat growing regions to the west) and the forested low mountains or hills of eastern Oklahoma and Texas. The region stretches from southern Kansas into central Texas, and contains irregular plains with some low hills and tablelands. It is a mosaic of forest, woodland, savanna, and prairie. The Cross Timbers ecoregion is not as arable or as suitable for growing corn and soybeans as the Central Irregular Plains to the northeast. The transitional natural vegetation of little bluestem grassland with scattered blackjack oak and post oak trees is used mostly for rangeland and pastureland, with some areas of woody plant invasion and closed forest. Oil production has been a major activity in this region for over eighty years. The Cross Timbers ecoregion houses 190,938 recreation-conservation acres out of 12,781,734, which is a ratio of 1.49%.



© TPWD

## **Edwards Plateau (Ecoregion 30)**

This ecoregion is largely a dissected limestone plateau that is hillier to the south and east where it is easily distinguished from bordering ecological regions by a sharp fault line. The region contains a sparse network of perennial streams. Due to karst topography (related to dissolution of limestone substrate) and resulting underground drainage, streams are relatively clear and cool in temperature compared to those of surrounding areas. Soils in this region are mostly Mollisols with shallow and moderately deep soils on plateaus and hills, and deeper soils on plains and valley floors.

Covered by juniper-oak savanna and mesquite-oak savanna, most of the region is used for grazing beef cattle, sheep, goats, exotic game mammals, and wildlife. Hunting leases are a major source of income. Combined with topographic gradients, fire was once an important factor controlling vegetation patterns on the Edwards Plateau. It is a region of many endemic vascular plants. With its rapid seed dispersal, low palatability to browsers, and in the absence of fire, Ashe juniper has increased in some areas, reducing the extent of grassy savannas. Following the Cross Timbers in terms of percentage, 1.09% of the Edwards Plateau region is classified as recreation-conservation land. While the ratio may be smaller than the Cross Timbers region, the actual acreage is larger, with 201,594 acres out of 18,449,346 being put aside for recreation or conservation purposes.

## **Southern Texas Plains (Ecoregion 31)**

These rolling to moderately dissected plains were once covered in many areas with grassland and savanna vegetation that varied during wet and dry cycles. Long continued grazing and fire suppression created the conditions for thorny brush, such as mesquite, to be the predominant vegetation type. Ceniza and blackbrush occur on caliche soils. Also known as the Tamualipan Thornscrub, or the “brush country” as it is called locally, the region has its greatest extent in Mexico. The subhumid to dry region contains a diverse mosaic of soils, mostly clay, clay loam, and sandy clay loam surface textures, and ranging from alkaline to slightly acid.

The ecoregion also contains a high and distinct diversity of plant and animal life. It is generally lower in elevation with warmer winters than the Chihuahuan Deserts to the northwest. Oil and natural gas production activities are widespread. The Southern Texas Plains hold the second smallest percentage of recreation-conservation land, with only 0.45% being classified as such. This percentage amounts to 59,836 acres out of 13,179,176.

## **Texas Blackland Prairies (Ecoregion 32)**

The Texas Blackland Prairies form a disjunct ecological region, distinguished from surrounding regions by fine-textured, clayey soils and predominantly prairie potential natural vegetation. The predominance of Vertisols in this area is related to soil formation in Cretaceous shale, chalk, and marl parent materials. Unlike tallgrass prairie soils that are mostly Mollisols in states to the north, this region contains Vertisols, Alfisols, and Mollisols. Dominant grasses included little bluestem, big bluestem, yellow Indiangrass, and switchgrass. This region now contains a higher percentage of cropland than adjacent regions; pasture and forage production for livestock is common. Large areas of the region are being converted to urban and industrial uses. The Texas Blackland Prairies hold 168,699 acres of recreation-conservation lands, which amounts to 1.58% of the whole region.

## **East Central Texas Plains (Ecoregion 33)**

Also called the Post Oak Savanna or the Claypan Area, this region of irregular plains was originally covered by post oak savanna vegetation, in contrast to the more open prairie-type regions to the north, south, and west, and the pine forests to the east. Soils are variable among the parallel ridges and valleys, but tend to be acidic, with sands and sandy loams on the uplands and clay to clay loams in low-lying areas. Many areas have a dense, underlying clay pan affecting water movement and available moisture for plant growth. The bulk of this region is now used for pasture and range.

However, the region houses 129,295 acres or 0.96% of recreation-conservation lands.



©TPWD

## **Western Gulf Coastal Plain (Ecoregion 34)**

The Western Gulf Coastal Plain is a relatively flat strip of land, generally 50 to 90 miles wide, adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico. The principal distinguishing characteristics of this ecoregion are its relatively flat topography and mainly grassland potential natural vegetation. Inland from this region the plains are older, more irregular, and have mostly forest or savanna-type vegetation potentials. Largely because of these

characteristics, a higher percentage of the land is in cropland than in bordering ecological regions. Rice, grain sorghum, cotton, and soybeans are the principal crops. Urban and industrial land uses have expanded greatly in recent decades, and oil and gas production is common. However, there are still a large proportion of lands set aside for recreation-conservation purposes, currently 798,268 acres or 5.32% of the total region.

### South Central Plains (Ecoregion 35)



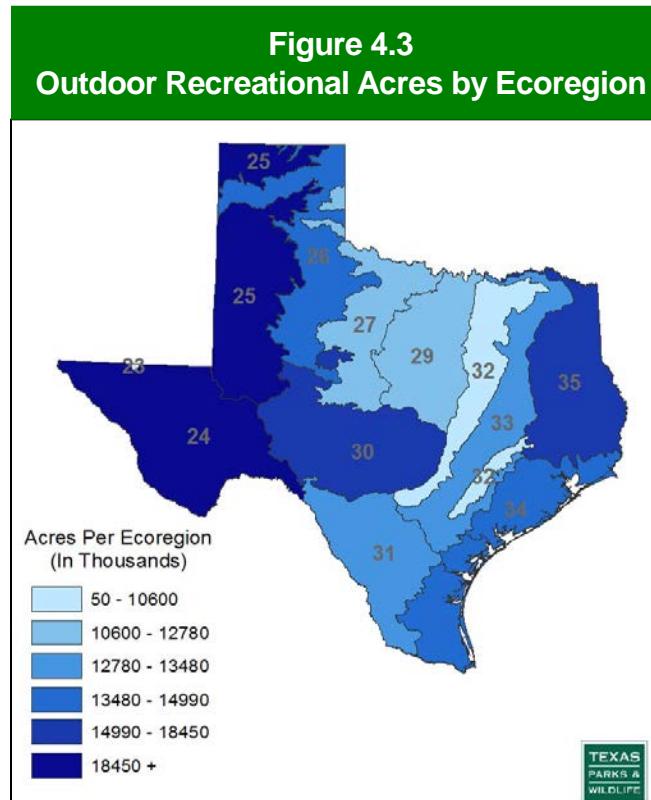
© TPWD

Locally termed the “piney woods”, this region of mostly irregular plains represents the western edge of the southern coniferous forest belt. Once blanketed by a mix of pine and hardwood forests, much of the region is now in loblolly and shortleaf pine plantations. Soils are mostly acidic sands and sandy loams.

Covering parts of Louisiana, Arkansas, east Texas, and Oklahoma, only about one sixth of the region is in cropland, primarily within the Red River floodplain, while about two thirds of the region is in forests and woodland. Lumber, pulpwood, oil, and

gas production are major economic activities. The South Central Plains ecoregion houses the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest recreation-conservation acreage at 924,593, which represents 5.9% of the whole region.

Figure 4.3 represents the number of acres per ecoregion.



## County-Level Analysis

To assist local governments in meaningful community planning, county data was examined through multiple approaches, including representative acreage and service to populations (per capita). Figure 4.4 characterizes the distribution of acres per capita by county.

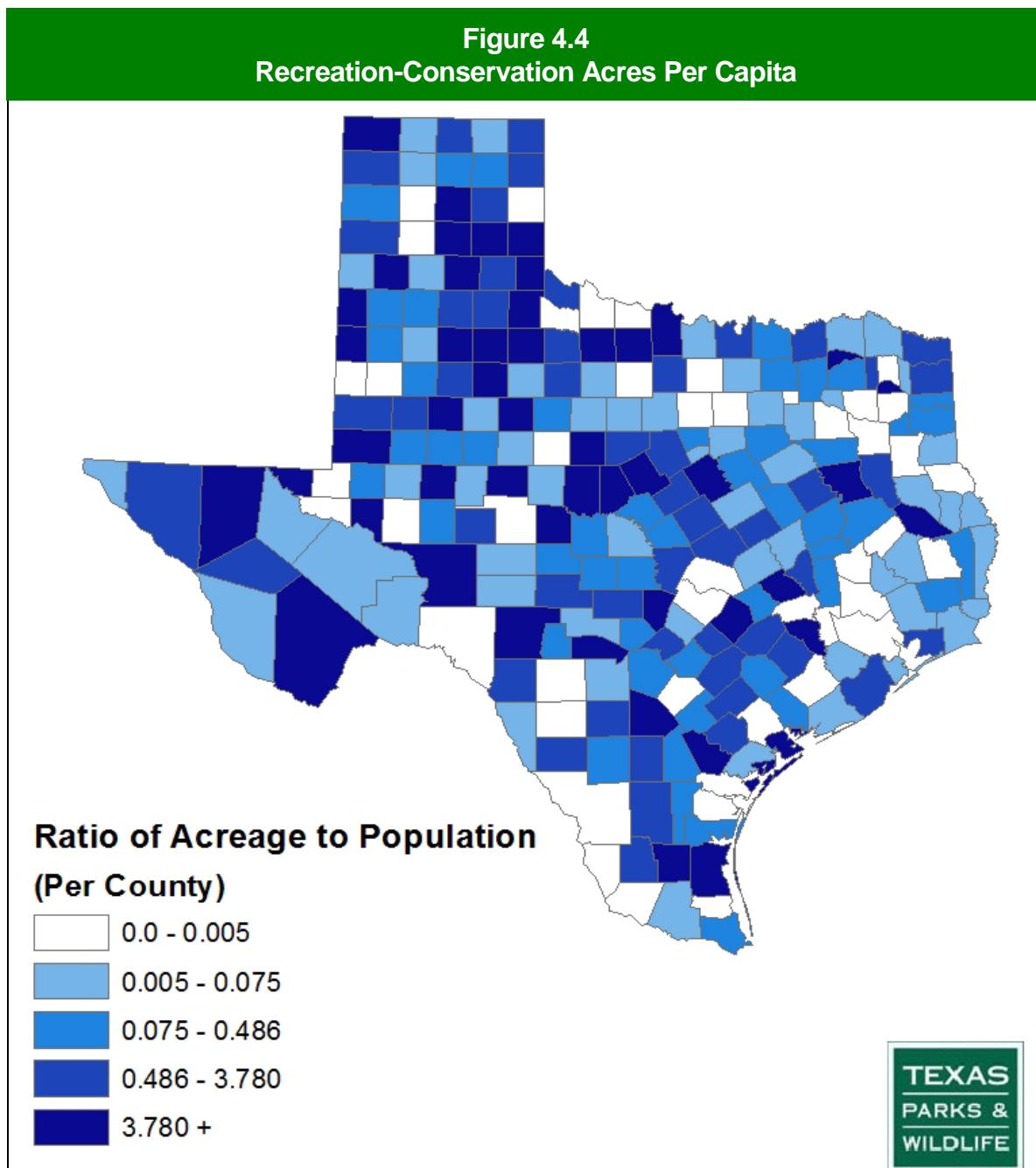


Figure 4.5 represents recreation-conservation land by county, which does not take into consideration population. As can be seen in the map below, 20 out of 254 counties reported zero recreation-conservation. This can be attributed to several different causes; either there are not enough people to require outdoor space, or the recreation providers did not report any owned lands in their respective counties.

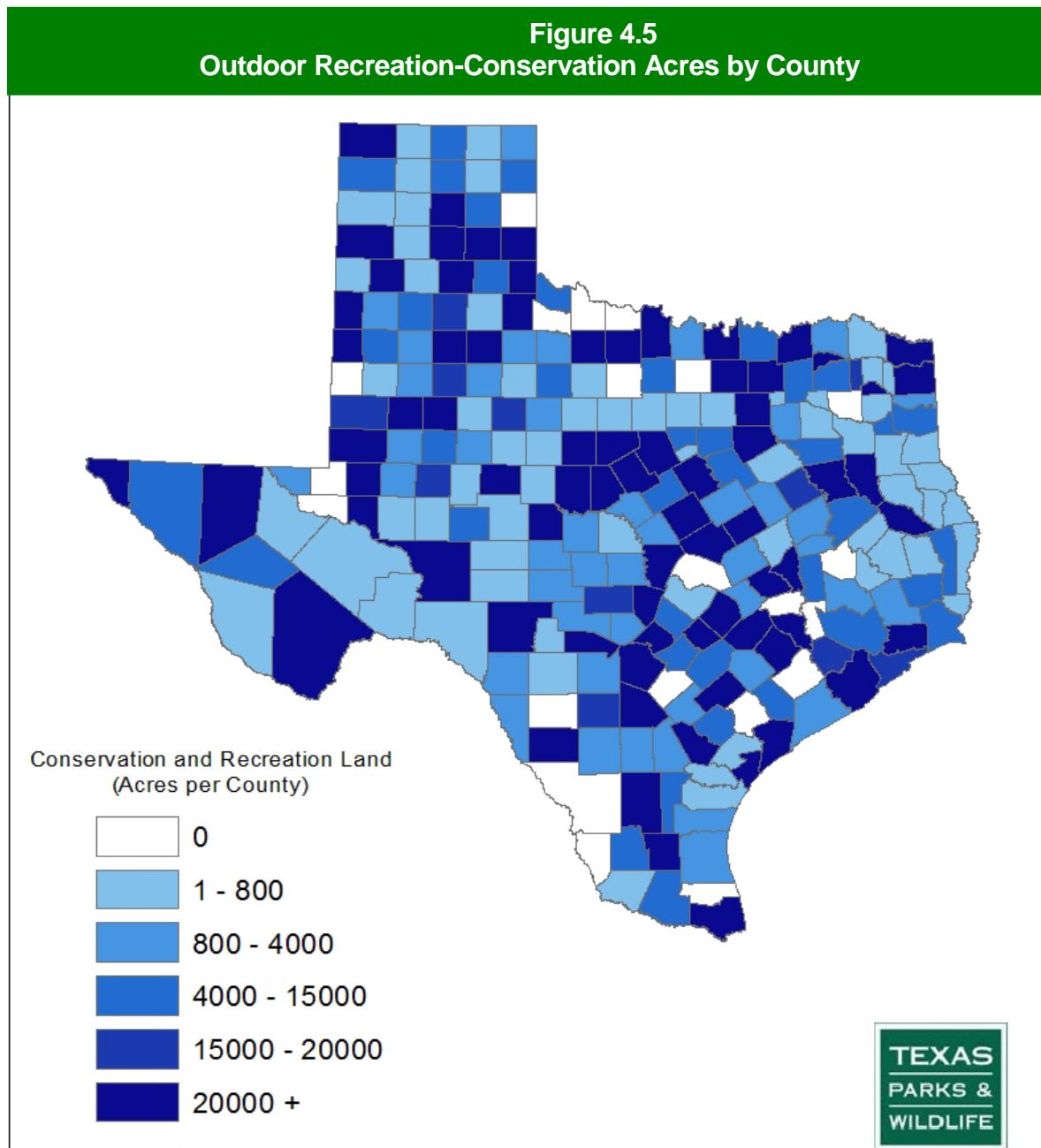


Table 4.3 represents the top ten counties for recreation-conservation lands in terms of actual acreage. As can be seen by the table below, the counties with the largest amounts of acreage are oftentimes those with lower population levels.

**Table 4.3  
Top Ten Counties by Recreation-Conservation Acres**

County Name	County Acres	County Population	Recreation-Conservation Acres	2010 Population Rank
Brewster	3,949,581	9,232	939,349	172
Presidio	2,458,488	7,818	321,067	183
Cameron	790,520	406,220	123,163	13
Brazoria	1,062,963	313,166	104,319	15
Val Verde	2,061,067	48,879	101,363	65
Jefferson	786,701	252,273	97,408	19
Sabine	367,356	10,834	93,441	160
Houston	788,530	23,732	92,831	105
Kenedy	1,290,300	416	90,180	252
Dallam	966,944	6,703	78,375	191

As can be seen in Table 4.4, the per capita rate of recreation-conservation lands is significantly lower owing to fiscal, spatial, political, and other constraints.

**Table 4.4  
Ten Most Populace Counties by Recreation-Conservation Acres  
Per Capita**

County Name	County Acres	County Population	Recreation-Conservation Acres	2010 Population Rank
Harris	1,133,239	4,092,459	66,646	1
Dallas	578,268	2,368,139	33,420	2
Tarrant	573,242	1,809,034	28,008	3
Bexar	801,952	1,714,773	27,960	4
Travis	653,260	1,024,266	66,083	5
EI Paso	646,607	800,647	30,585	6
Collin	565,441	782,341	27,309	7
Hidalgo	1,015,707	774,769	32,136	8
Denton	611,467	662,614	39,156	9
Fort Bend	564,888	585,375	14,102	10

In contrast to the previous table, Table 4.5 shows the top ten counties with the highest per capita ratio of recreation-conservation lands, where the majority of counties have extremely low population rates.

**Table 4.5**  
**Top Ten Counties by Recreation-Conservation Acres Per Capita**

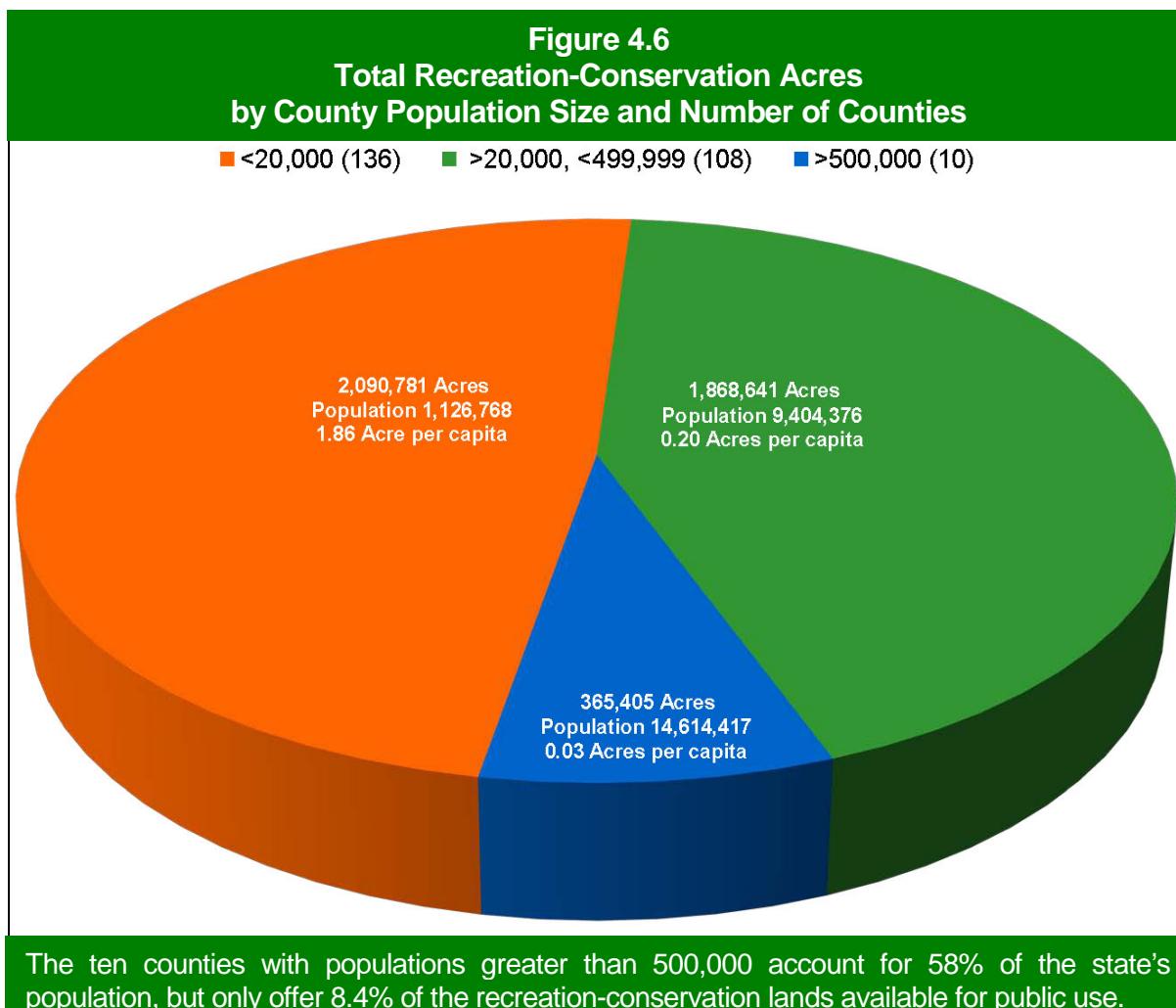
County Name	County Acres	County Population	Recreation-Conservation Acres	2010 Population Rank
Kenedy	1,290,300	416	90,180	252
Brewster	3,949,581	9,232	939,349	172
Presidio	2,458,488	7,818	321,067	183
Culberson	2,430,579	2,398	72,179	232
Terrell	1,503,614	984	19,943	247
Cottle	575,865	1,505	28,247	241
Jeff Davis	1,442,454	2,342	36,115	233
McMullen	743,918	707	10,489	250
Dallam	966,944	6,703	78,375	191
Briscoe	576,985	1,637	14,169	239

In summary, the Texas population has grown at a tremendous rate. The urban metropolises have a much lower per capita allocation of recreation and conservation acreage than counties with smaller populations. This trend is not surprising, given land costs and development pressures. Moving forward, state and local officials will need to plan ahead to provide equitable access to conservation and recreation lands, particularly in urban areas.

The urban counties, with populations greater than 500,000, include:

- Bexar County
- Collin County
- Dallas County
- Denton County
- El Paso County
- Fort Bend County
- Harris County
- Hidalgo County
- Tarrant County
- Travis County

These counties account for 58% of the state's population, but only offer 8.4% of the recreation-conservation lands available for public use. Furthermore, the opportunities to acquire additional lands are hampered by the lack of available quantity and quality of land, and the cost for acquisition and development in the urban setting. Figure 4.6 illustrates the per capita distribution of recreation-conservation lands in Texas.



While this statewide inventory is the most complete data set to date, improvements in data standardization, as it relates to park classification (community, neighborhood, regional, etc.), would be useful in increasing the value of this inventory for future planning and analysis purposes. Furthermore, there are limitations to this data set.

While the majority of owning entities responded with some type of property information, there were a small percentage of non-responders that were not included in this compilation. Also, particularly as it relates to smaller municipalities, many did not have the data in a digital geospatial format. ArcGIS and its corresponding capability to produce accurate geospatial data still have a cost prohibitive element for many recreation providers. Moving forward, TPWD plans to give the data freely to any recreation providers that request it, in order to increase planning efforts across the state.

## Inventory Update

The following cities, counties and special districts; along with state parks, have been added to the state's inventory with funding from the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund; and/or state Texas Recreation and Parks Account and Large County and Municipality Recreation and Parks Account since December 2012.

**Table 4.6**  
**Inventory Additions - January 2013**

Sponsor Authority	Project Name
Bedford	Boys Ranch Park II
Belton	Nolan Creek Recreational Project
Brownwood	Camp Bowie Soccer Complex
Cameron County	El Ranchito Community Park
Center	Park Expansion
Granite Shoals	Quarry Park
Hays County	Jacob's Well Natural Area
La Feria	Unger Park
Nueces County	Lyondell Baseball Park
Sonterra Municipal Utility District	North Park & Southwest Park

**Table 4.7**  
**Inventory Additions - March 2015**

Sponsor Authority	Project Name
Alamo	Nature Park
Allen	Watters Branch Community Park
Atlanta	McNoble Harper Park
Austin	Colony District Park
Bishop	City Park
Deer Park	Wetlands Park
Enchanted Oaks	Community Park
Fort Worth	Northwest Community Park II
Houston	Busby Park
Italy	Upchurch Ballfields
Jacksonville	Nichols Green IV
Leander	Lakewood Community Park
Levelland	4th Street & Double U Street Parks
McAllen	Youth Baseball Complex
Primera	Community Park
Rio Grande City	Skate Park
Rockwall	Stone Creek Park
San Antonio	Botanical Adventure Garden
South Houston	City Hall Park
South Padre Island	City Park
Sullivan City	Memorial Park
Timber Lane Utility District	Timber Lane Recreation Area
Troy	Trojan Park
Uvalde	Municipal Pool
Vernon	Orbison Park

**Table 4.8**  
**Inventory Additions, March 2016**

Sponsor Authority	Project Name
Argyle	Community Park
Baytown	Jenkins/Holloway Parks III
Bevil Oaks	Bevil Oaks Recreational Area
Breckenridge	City Park II
Brenham	Fireman's Park II
Bridgeport	Harwood Park II
Chandler	Winchester Park II
Commerce	Centennial Park
Encinal	Rosalie Welhausen Encinal City Park
Fort Worth	Alliance Park
Gruver	Community Park
Harris Co. Fresh Water Supply #52 (MUD)	HCFWSD#52 Park
Hays	Community Gardens
Hidalgo	Villa Garza Flores/Valle Alto Parks
Holliday	City Park
Hollywood Park	Voigt Park II
Houston	Brock Park
La Feria	Veterans Memorial Park
La Vernia	City Park III
Little Elm	McCord Park II
Los Fresnos	Ninth Street Park
McAllen	Veterans War Memorial of Texas
Mount Pleasant	Harts Bluff Park
Nolanville	City Park
Pantego	Bicentennial Park
Pharr	Nature Park
Plainview	Travis Trussell Pond Park
Prosper	Frontier Park North
Refugio	Heritage Park
Rosebud	American Legion Park
San Elizario	Tedd F. Richardson Memorial Park
San Juan	Sorensen Park
Taylor	Fannie Robinson Park
Tres Lagos Public Improvement District	City Park
Venus	Fielder Park III
Weimar	City Park II
Whitehouse	Sports Complex
Wichita Falls	Lake Wichita Park
Williamson County	Expo Center

**Table 4.9**  
**Inventory Additions, March 2017**

Sponsor Authority	Project Name
Athens	Baggett Park
Austin	Emma Long Metropolitan Park
Bexar County	Hot Wells Spring
Bovina	Arnold Park
Combes	Community Park
De Kalb	City Park II
Del Rio	Community Sports Park
Denton County FWSD #10	Arrow Brooke Park
Edcouch	City School Community Park
El Paso	Northeast Regional Park
Florence	City Pool Renovation
Floresville	City River Park II
Floydada	Annie Taylor Park
Granite Shoals	Multipurpose Sports Facility
Harris County	Alabonson Sports & Nature Complex
Hico	City Park
Houston	Avondale Promenade Park
Hutto	Creekside & Fritz Parks
Lago Vista	Park & Open Space Project
Levelland	Park Playgrounds
Los Indios	Community Park
Mercedes	Sports Complex Community Park
North Richland Hills	Northfield Park II
Port Isabel	Arturo Galvan Park
Port Isabel	Washington Park
Rice	Mike Dickens Memorial Park
Rockdale	Sumuel Park II
Rotan	Ed Patton Memorial Park
Slaton	Compress Lake Park
Taylor	Heritage Square Park
West	City Park

**Table 4.10**  
**Inventory Additions, 2013**

Sponsor Authority	Project Name
TPWD	Government Canyon State Natural Area III
TPWD	Palo Pinto Mountains State Park III
TPWD	Palo Pinto Mountains State Park IV

**Table 4.11**  
**TPWD Inventory Additions, 2014**

Sponsor Authority	Project Name
TPWD	Powderhorn Ranch Wildlife Management Area/State Park

**Table 4.12**  
**TPWD Inventory Additions, 2015**

Sponsor Authority	Project Name
TPWD	Bastrop State Park VII

**Table 4.13**  
**TPWD Inventory Additions, 2017**

Sponsor Authority	Project Name
TPWD	Franklin Mountains State Park Visitor Center

Additional details about these projects are available through the Recreation Grants Branch, Local Park Grant Programs.

# Outdoor Recreation Trends and Demand

To ensure that ample opportunity for public input occurred in the development of the Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan, a third-party research firm was hired to complete a general population survey of Texas residents. *Responsive Management* is an internationally recognized public opinion and attitude survey research firm specializing in natural resource and outdoor recreation issues.

## Introduction and Methodology

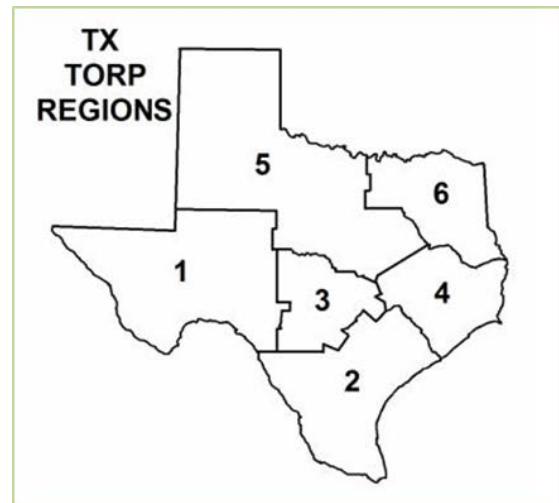
This study was conducted for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to determine Texas residents' participation in outdoor recreation, as well as their attitudes toward a variety of issues related to outdoor recreation in the state. The study entailed a scientific multi-modal survey of Texas residents with a total of 2,726 completed surveys.

For this survey of Texas residents, a multi-modal approach was chosen to ensure that the maximum number of residents might be surveyed. This multi-modal approach used telephone and online survey formats and reached participants via telephone and email contact. The email portion of the survey was not an open internet survey; rather, the survey was of a closed sample of residents selected ahead of time and then contacted by email. In other words, it was not possible for a person to simply find the survey while surfing the web and take it.

The general population survey was stratified to obtain at least 200 interviews in each region, thereby ensuring that each region's sample size would be statistically valid (see map at right). A supplemental online survey of minorities was conducted to ensure that there would be sufficient minority representation for statistically valid results when cross-tabulations were run by ethnicity.

In the analysis, data from both modes of survey were put into a single dataset, with proper weighting applied, so that the final dataset was representative of Texas residents as a whole.

## Participation in Outdoor Recreation

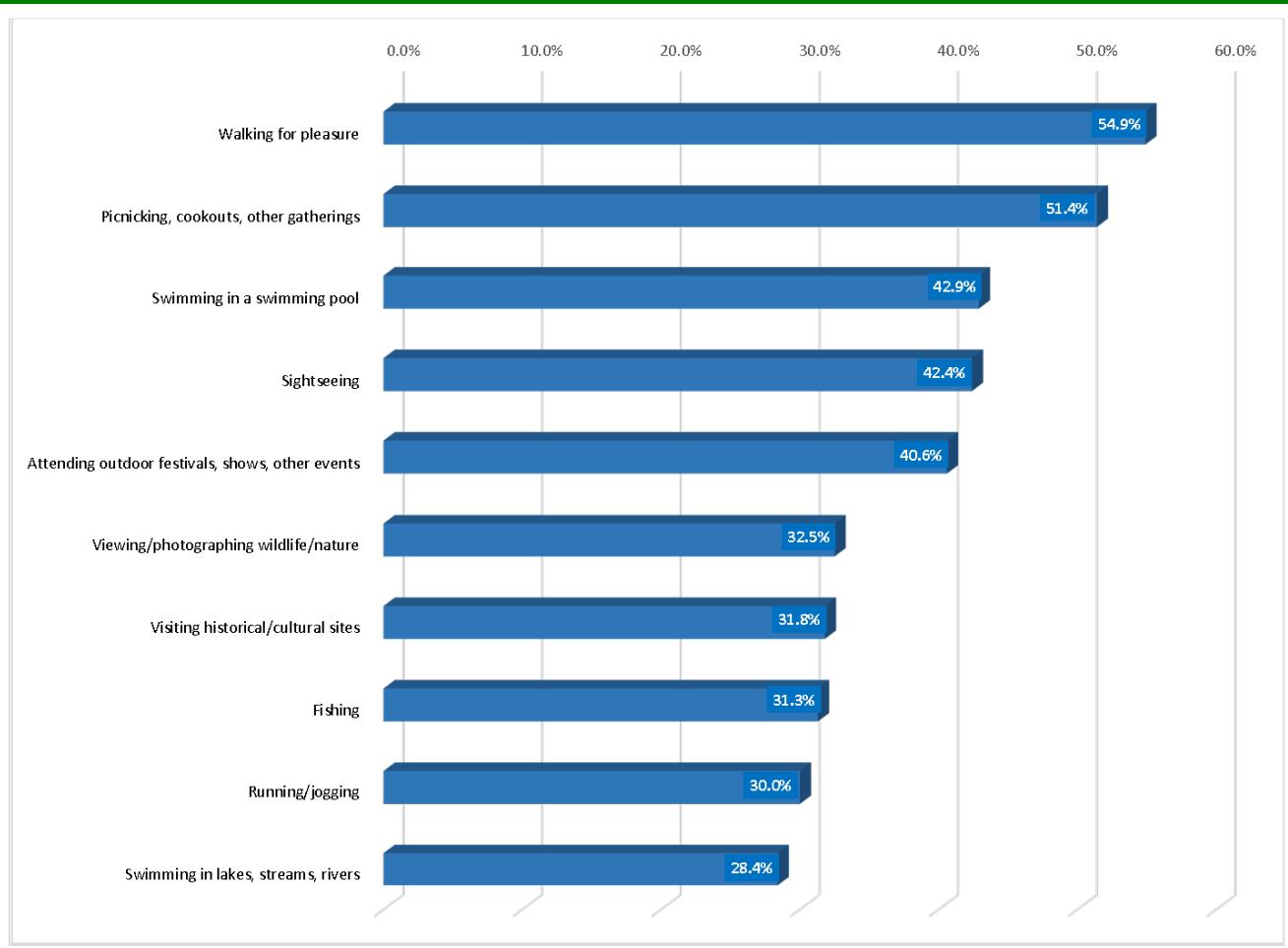


Survey results indicating rates of participation in outdoor recreation activities are depicted in Chart 5.1. Survey responses show that Texans' top reported activities include *walking for pleasure* and *picnicking/cooking out*. The next most common responses, with more than 40% of Texans participating, are *picnicking/cookouts/other gatherings*, *swimming in a pool*, *sightseeing*, and *attending festivals/shows/other events*. Multiple responses were allowed.

*Walking for pleasure* was the most common activity for all four ethnicity groups surveyed; White, Latino, African American, and Asian. When looking at the top five activities by ethnicity, *running/jogging* replaces *sightseeing* for both African Americans and Latinos with *sightseeing* coming in at number six.

## Chart 5.1

### Texans' Top 10 Areas of Participation for Outdoor Recreation Activities



## Gateway Outdoor Recreation Activity

Respondents identified the most important outdoor recreational activities that they participated in during childhood that made them enjoy spending time outdoors as an adult. The most common activities mentioned were fishing (27%), swimming (21%), camping (17%), bicycling (15%), hunting (13%), and hiking (12%), as well as simple children's games played outdoors (11%)—all with more than 10% having participated in the activity during childhood.

When broken down by ethnicity, you can see some differences in the top activities. For example the top activity mentioned for Latino/Hispanics and White/Caucasian was fishing, while biking was number one for Black/African Americans, and hiking/backpacking rose to the top for Asians. Refer to Table 5.1 to see the list of the top ten activities, presented by ethnicity.



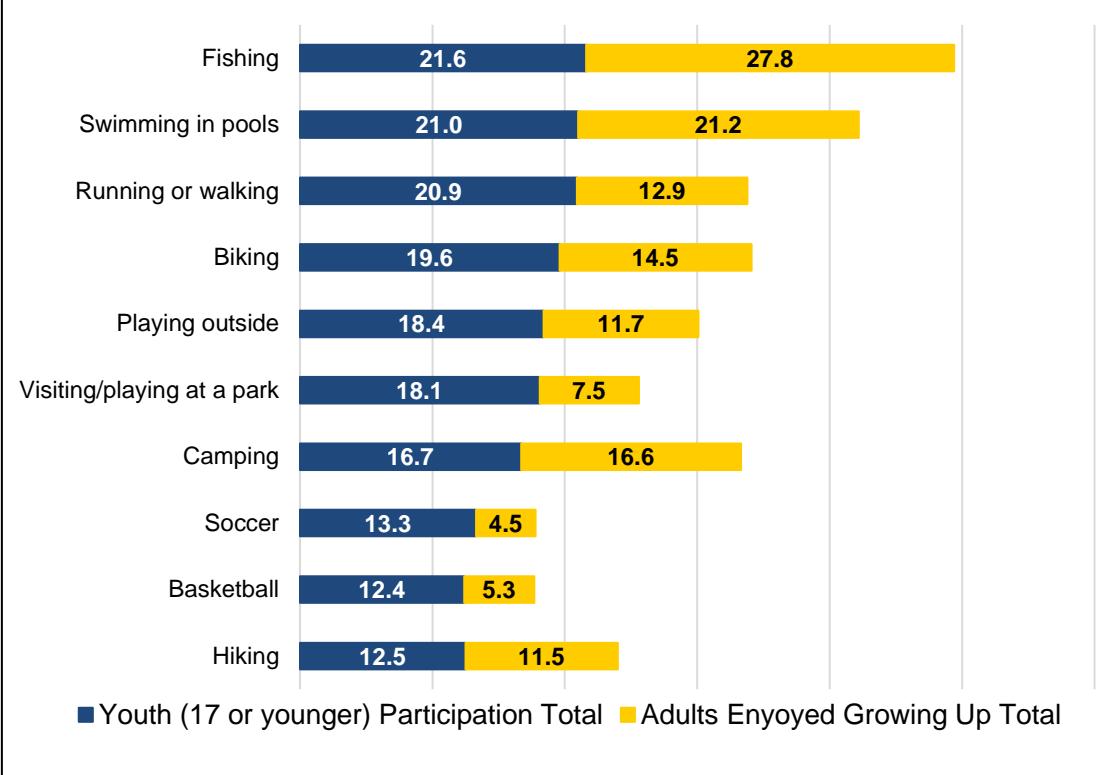
**Table 5.1**  
**Outdoor Recreation Activities Enjoyed During Childhood**

Activities	Black/African American	Hispanics/ Latino	Asian	White/ Caucasian
Fishing	12.4%	24.0%	17.0%	37.0%
Swimming	13.8%	23.1%	18.9%	21.9%
Camping/campfires	7.3%	19.5%	16.1%	16.6%
Bicycling	20.3%	15.5%	17.0%	11.7%
Hunting	5.1%	9.3%	2.2%	22.0%
Children's games/play	15.6%	13.1%	7.8%	9.6%
Hiking (includes backpacking)	5.5%	14.1%	20.0%	10.1%
Park visit/playground	9.8%	13.3%	7.6%	4.2%
Jogging/running	8.3%	11.0%	14.0%	1.4%
Walking	5.6%	10.0%	8.0%	3.0%

Respondents were also asked if youth under the age of 18 lived in their household. If they responded yes, they were asked "What are the most important outdoor recreation activities for those youth in the past 12 months?" Chart 5.2 compares youth activities with the adult responses to "Growing up, what were the most important outdoor recreational activities that made you enjoy spending time outdoors?" Activities where the participation is the most alike are fishing, camping and hiking. The activities with the most difference in participation include soccer, basketball and visiting/playing at a park.



**Chart 5.2**  
**Comparison of Outdoor Recreation Activities**  
**Current Youth Activities vs. Activities Adults Enjoyed During Childhood**



## Constraints to Participation: Local Parks and State Parks

Survey respondents who did not visit a local park in Texas in the previous 12 months were asked why they had not visited. The survey indicated three prominent reasons for lack of visitation: lack of time, age/health issues, and a lack of interest. Less frequent responses included: no parks close to home, weather, and residents not knowing where to go.

A similar question asked non-visitors about the main reasons for not visiting a state park in Texas in the past 12 months. Similar responses came up: lack of time, age/health, and lack of interest. A substantial percentage of survey respondents also mentioned that they had no parks close to home.

## Encouraging Park Visitation: Local Parks and State Parks

About a quarter of Texas residents who do not currently visit local parks show some interest in doing so; 28% of those not visiting local parks say that they could be encouraged to do so. The most common responses in follow-up questions indicated that having more free time, having people to go with or who ask to be taken, and having more information about activities would encourage park use.

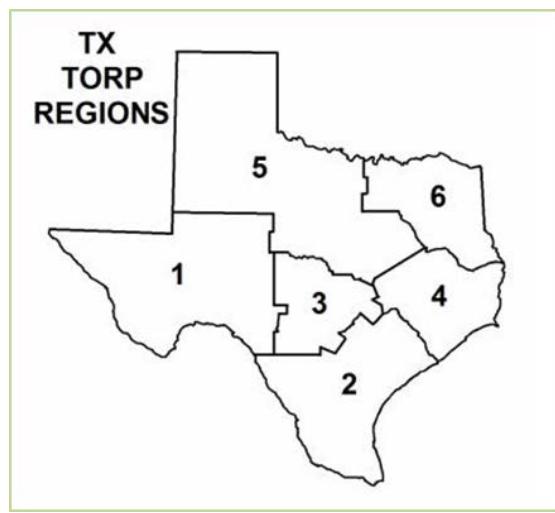
About a third of Texas residents who do not currently visit state parks show interest; 33% say that they could be encouraged to do so. Most commonly, those encouragements included: more free time, activities/events/amusements at the park, having a park closer to home, having someone to go with or who asks to be taken, and discounts to get in.

## Recreational Facilities

Over a quarter of residents (28%) indicate that their community lacks various outdoor recreation opportunities. Table 5.2 shows the most commonly identified missing opportunities by region. In follow-up questions, the most common response regarding the opportunities that are lacking for Regions 2 through 6 are trails. More parks and park capacity was the number one response for Region 1, and the number two response for Regions 3 and 4. A lack of children's activities was the second most common response for Region 1, while campgrounds (including cabins) came in second for Region 2, access to fishing for Region 5, and swimming pools for Region 6.

**Table 5.2**  
**Most Common Responses to Lacking**  
**Outdoor Activities by Region**

Region	Most Common Response	Second Most Common Response
Region 1	Parks/Park Capacity	Children's Activities
Region 2	Trails	Campgrounds
Region 3	Trails	Parks/Park Capacity
Region 4	Trails	Parks/Park Capacity
Region 5	Trails	Fishing
Region 6	Trails	Swimming Pools



Park visitors were asked follow-up questions about whether parks lacked features or amenities (one question asked the 58% who had visited local parks about local parks; the second asked the 34% who had visited state parks about those parks). About a third of local park visitors (36%) indicate that local parks lack desired features or facilities. The most common features/facilities named as lacking in the open-ended follow-up question are restrooms, shade, trails, and play equipment.

Just under a third of state park visitors (30%) indicate that state parks lack desired features or facilities. By far, the most commonly named missing amenity is restrooms. This is distantly followed by campgrounds, drinking water, fishing access, cabins, and picnic facilities.

The survey asked about visitation to local and state parks separately.

Just over half of Texas residents (58%) have visited a *local* park in Texas in the past 12 months (local being a county, town, or city park). The median number of visits is 5 times (among those who visited a local park). About a third of Texas residents (34%) have visited a *state* park in Texas in the past 12 months. The median number of times visited for state parks is 3 times in the past 12 months. The survey also asked about typical travel times to visit state parks: 42% of state park visitors typically travel no more than an hour to visit a state park.

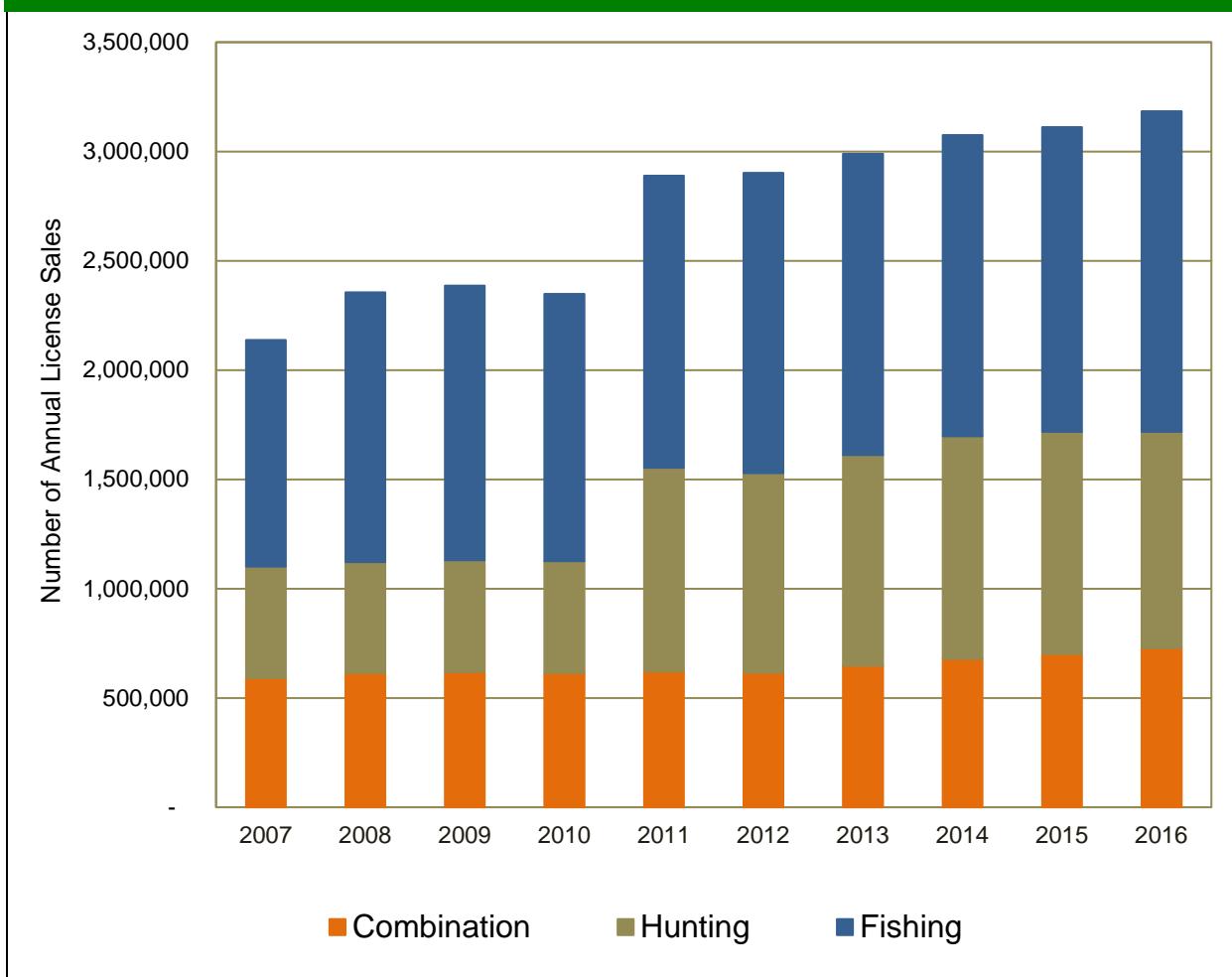
The complete report includes analysis by male, female, age groups, education level, and percent of participation for all six of the TORP regions. The full report is available by request from Recreation Grants at [rec.grants@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:rec.grants@tpwd.texas.gov).

## Hunting, Fishing and Boating

State-wide data highlighting license holders and revenue are presented for fishing, hunting, and boating. In Texas, the numbers of hunters and anglers stayed about the same between 2007 and 2010. However, since 2011, there was a moderate increase in the number of licenses sold, that has remained constant through 2016.



**Chart 5.3**  
**Total Texas Hunting, Fishing and Combination License Sales, 2007-2016**



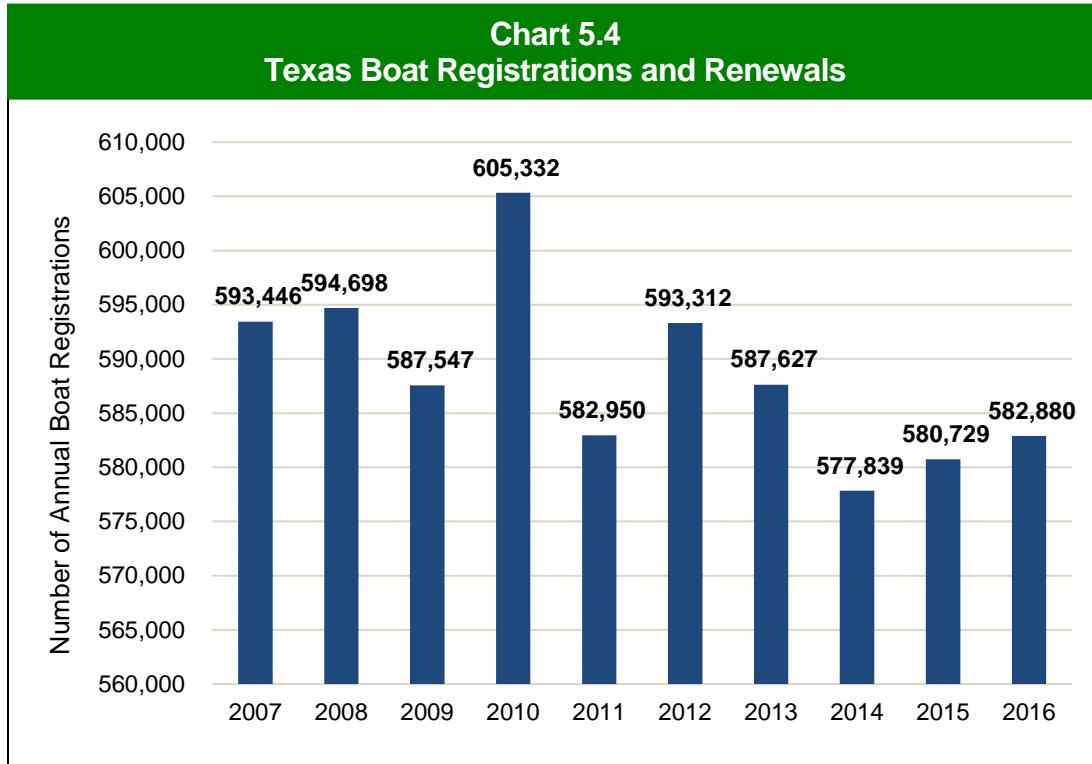
Source: TPWD, License Sales Reports 2007 - 2016, Neal R. Chambliss, Accountant-License Division

Because more than 90% of land in Texas is held by private owners, it is sometimes challenging to find hunting locations for non-landowners. To address this, TPWD has several hunting programs offered on more than one million acres located throughout the State. The TPWD website [HuntPublic](#) provides information on available hunting opportunities on property owned by TPWD as well as acres leased by the department from other state and federal agencies, forest products industries, and other cooperating private landowners. Big Time Texas Hunts provided hunting opportunities on wildlife management areas and private ranches.

Both freshwater and saltwater fishing opportunities abound around the state with access to major lakes, rivers, artificial reefs, and free fishing in State Parks (at more than 70 locations and a fishing license is not required). Additional online information is available at: <https://tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/fish/recreational/wheretofish/>.

Enjoy improved and maintained fishing and paddling access to rivers, creeks, lakes, ponds, bayous, and bays on any of the 73 official Texas Paddling Trails available throughout the state!!

Boating in Texas remains a leading outdoor recreation activity. With more than half a million registered motorized boats, over 300 public boat ramps, and improved access for non-motorized opportunities, boating is available close to home for many Texans.



Source: Julie Gilmore, Manager-Boat Titling, Registration and Marine Licensing.

It should be noted that the FY10 registration renewals are slightly inflated due to a program coding error which caused 44,000 renewal notices to be omitted from the regular mailing schedule. This resulted in a large, additional mail out of registration notices occurring at the end of FY09 and being renewed in the following fiscal year of FY10.

Variations in boating registrations and titling are susceptible to years of drought conditions, as in 2011 and 2014; or from high water or flood damage conditions in 2016. Information on opportunities to fish in bays and estuaries, lakes, and rivers; along with paddling trails, is available at TPWD online: <https://tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/boat/where/>.

Increased Boating Access: (Fisheries) Staff worked to identify boat access needs and recommended funding priorities for seven proposed freshwater boat ramp projects. The division worked with an agency team that ultimately approved three projects for funding through a \$1.4 million Federal Boating Access Grant.



Of major concern on Texas waterways is the invasion of zebra mussels. Invasive zebra mussels have devastating economic, recreational, and environmental impacts. The first Texas infestation was found in Lake Texoma in 2009. TPWD and partners closely monitor "positive" and "suspect" lakes, as well as other lakes we consider high risk for zebra mussel introductions. A native of Eurasia, the zebra mussel had arrived in North America by the late 1980s, invading the Great Lakes Region. Since then the zebra mussel and its close relative the quagga mussel have spread to numerous states through the Mississippi waterway and have traveled overland on boats as far west as California.



## RV's Travel Trailers, and Camping



While the number of motor home and travel trailer registrations is not likely to correlate directly with participation in camping, it can be a useful indicator of outdoor recreation. According to the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), the number of motor home and travel trailer registrations has increased. Take note, that in the first quarter of 2015, Texas implemented a "Two Step" Registration process whereby a verifiable current inspection was required in order to renew a registration. With the new process, registration could be delayed, thereby, resetting the annual cycle.

Since motor homes and travel trailers are often used seasonally, many owners delayed registering vehicles until the vehicle would be used.

**Table 5.3  
Total Number of Motor Home and Travel Trailer Registrations in Texas**

Year	Motor homes	Travel Trailers	Total Registrations
2016	62,280	351,919	414,199
2015	61,547	361,456	423,003
2014	61,905	379,358	441,263
2013	57,916	184,748	242,664
2012	56,868	189,388	246,256

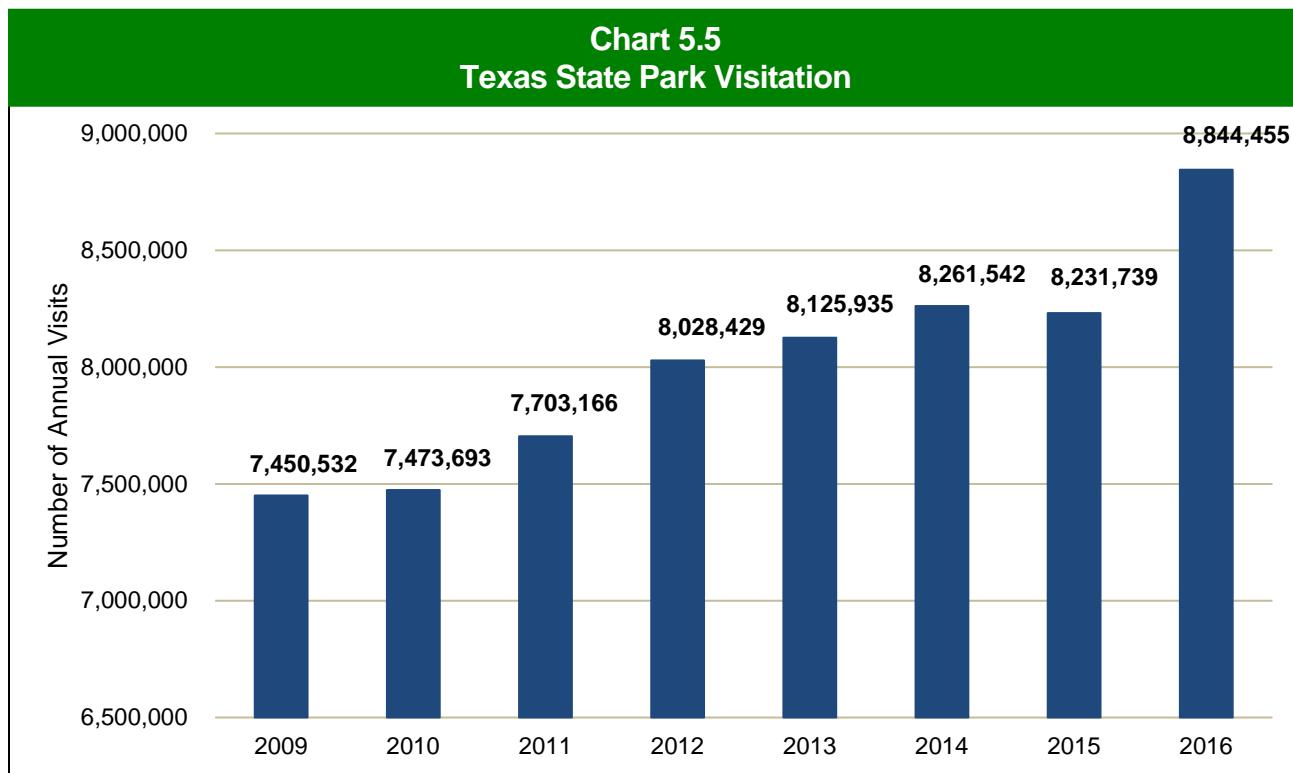
Source: Lori Paul, Program Specialist-Budget & Research Services, Texas DMV.

## Texas State Parks

From the report *Sustaining a Viable State Parks System – Recommendations of the Texas State Park Advisory Committee*, Texas State Parks provide significant value to the quality of life of its residents and the legacy of our traditions.

The following highlights capture only a portion of the value the state park system provides:

- The largest and most accessible undeveloped public lands in close proximity to all of our major urban areas are state parks.
- Texas State Parks contain some of our state's most treasured natural wonders including Palo Duro Canyon, Enchanted Rock, Longhorn Caverns, and Mustang Island.
- Texas State Parks are the most extensive network of high quality, family-oriented camping and outdoor recreation sites in the state.
- Texas State Parks contain some of our state's most treasured historic and cultural resources including Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site, hundreds of Civilian Conservation Corps structures, San Jacinto Battleground & Monument State Historic Site, Hueco Tanks State Park and Historic Site, Monument Hill/Kreische Brewery State Historic Site, and Seminole Canyon State Park and Historic Site.
- Texas State Parks is one of the only state agencies with facilities that provide significant economic impact throughout the state, directly impacting over 100 local towns and communities.



Visitation at Texas State Parks rose slightly in 2016 to an estimated 8.8 million visitors. Historic trend data for state park visitation is not available as the department updated the methodology of counting park visitors in 2008. Therefore, estimates preceding FY 2009 are not directly comparable. Between 2009 and 2016 there was over a 1.4 million increase in visitation.

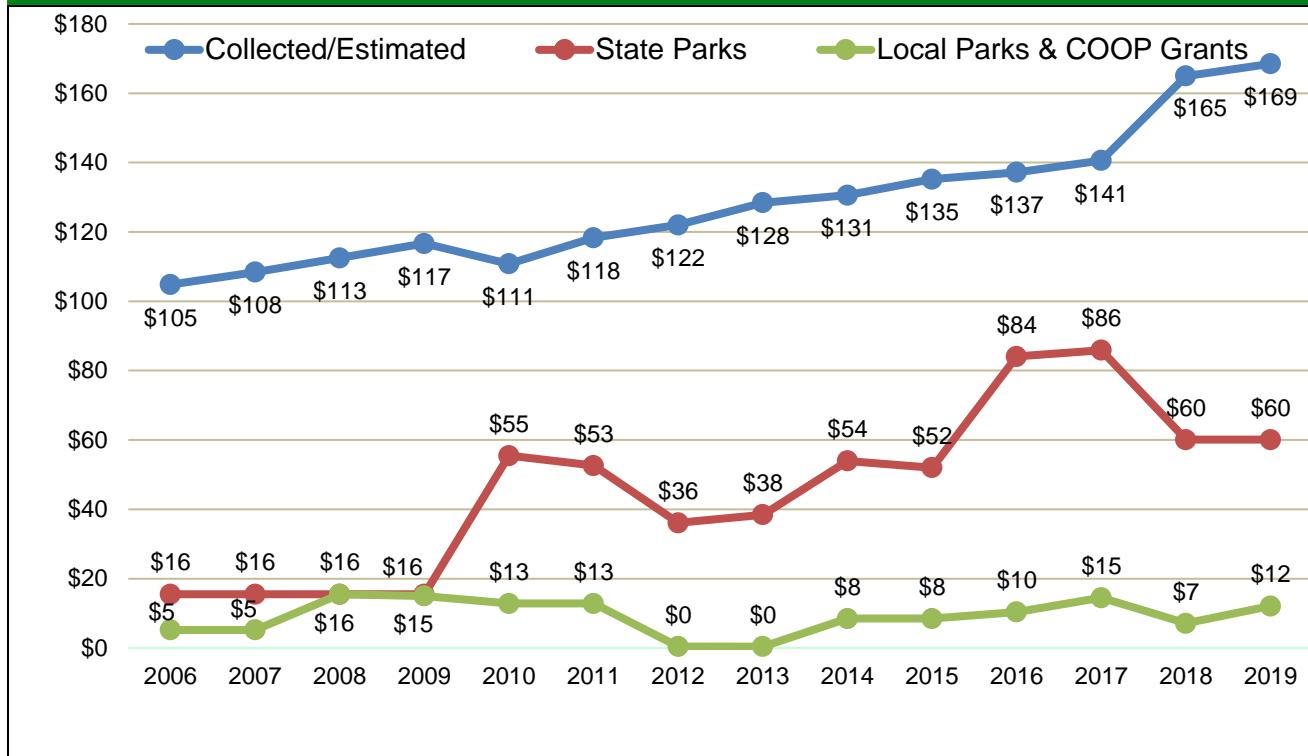
## Outdoor Recreation Demand

TPWD acts as a silent partner in hundreds of communities across the state through its grant, assistance, education, and outreach programs. From the largest metropolis to the smallest rural community, these programs help to build new parks, conserve natural resources, provide access to water bodies, develop educational programs for youth, and much more. Providing grants to communities across Texas helps build access to outdoor experiences and encourages a connection with nature that is vital for promoting conservation and good environmental stewardship amongst Texans young and old. Funds for the Texas State Park System, the Local Park Grants Program, and the Community Outdoor Outreach Program (CO-OP) are distributed biennially through Legislative appropriation. The source of state funding is from a portion of the Sporting Goods Sales Tax (SGST).



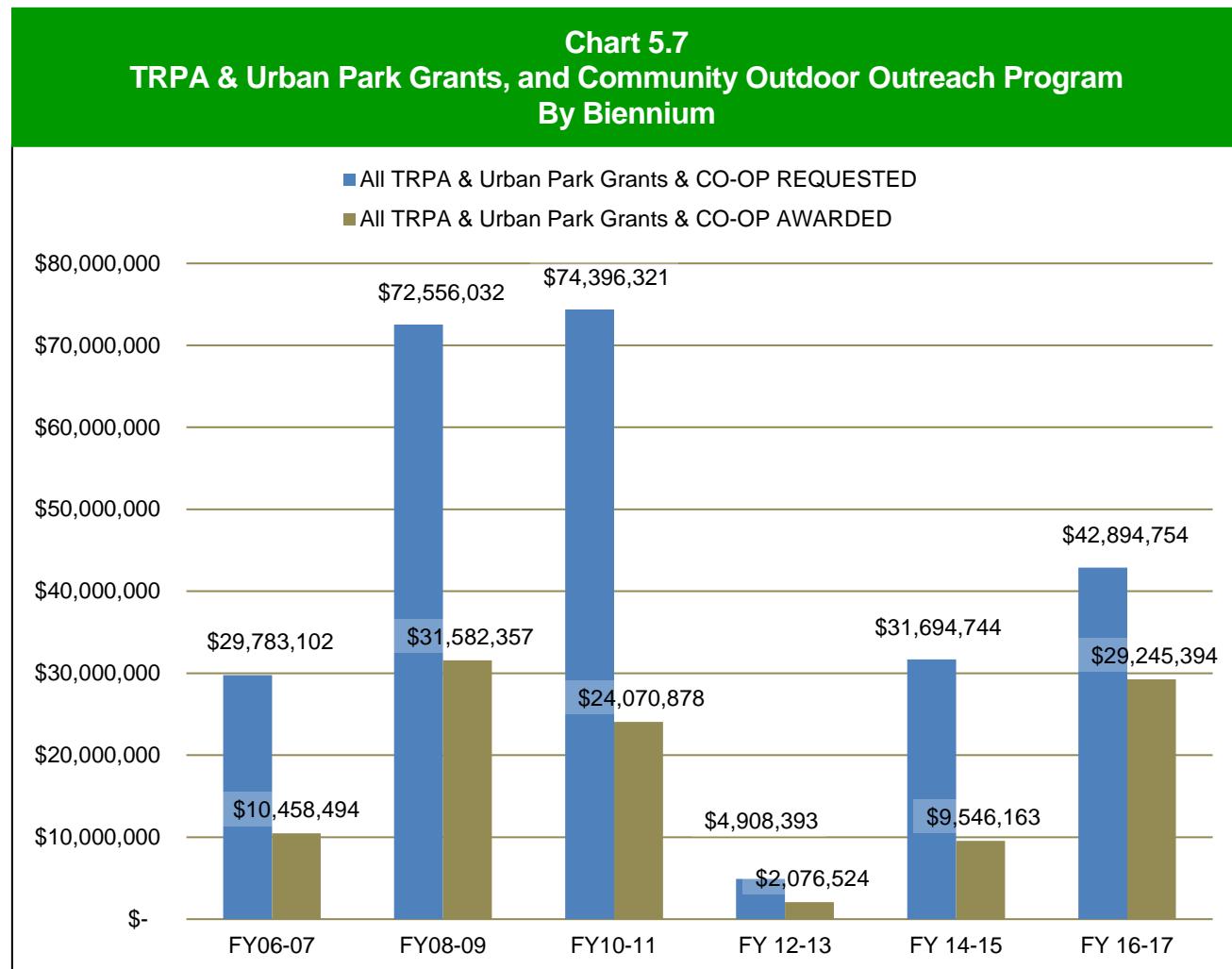
See Chart 5.6 for the estimated SGST collected and amounts appropriated to the State Parks System and to the Local Park / CO-OP competitive grant programs.

**Chart 5.6**  
**Estimated Sporting Goods Sales Tax Collected,  
Appropriations to State Parks and Local Park/CO-OP Grants  
(in millions)**



Local Park Grants provide 50% matching grant funds to local units of government. Those communities are eligible for assistance to acquire and develop parkland or to renovate existing public outdoor recreation areas and indoor recreation facilities. Local governments must permanently dedicate project areas for public recreational use, and assume responsibility for operation and maintenance. The CO-OP grant helps to introduce under-served populations to the services, programs, and sites of TPWD and is awarded statewide to tax-exempt organizations.

Chart 5.7 compares the number of grant funds requested funds awarded by biennium.



TPWD administers the National Recreational Trails Fund in Texas under the approval of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). This federally funded program receives its funding from a portion of federal gas taxes paid on fuel used in non-highway recreational vehicles. The grants can be up to 80% of project cost with a maximum of \$200,000 for non-motorized trail grants. Presently there is not a maximum amount for motorized trail grants. Funds can be spent on both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail projects such as the construction of new recreational trails, to improve existing trails, to develop trailheads or trailside facilities, and to acquire trail corridors.



**Table 5.3  
Recreational Trails Applications and Awards**

Fiscal Year	# Applied	# Awarded	Funds Approved
2014	82	38	\$5,253,655.00
2015	78	17	\$2,376,733.00
2016	73	22	\$3,538,141.00
2017	75	22	\$4,386,236.00

The Boating Access grant program provides 75% matching grant funds for the construction of public boat ramp facilities throughout Texas. Local government sponsors must make an application, provide the land, provide access to the proposed boat ramp, supply 25% of the development costs, and accept operation and maintenance responsibilities for a minimum 25-year period. These funds are allocated annually through the federal Sport Fish Restoration Act. This program is administered through the Recreation Grants Branch.

The Boating Access grant program, funded from the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act, provides 75% matching funds for construction and repairs to boat ramps, access roads and related improvements; and capital improvements to existing state boat ramp sites. Since 2014, there have been 26 grant applications, with 17 projects funded (including state park ramps) for \$6,778,851.00 in federal funds for freshwater and saltwater facilities.



# Sustainable Park Design

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## Introduction

Using sustainable techniques in the design and construction of public parks and other outdoor recreation supports the broader mission of TPWD: “to manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.” Parks provide important community space, valuable open space, and areas for maintaining biological diversity. There is immense added value to outdoor recreation areas across the state when sustainable measures are incorporated into the construction and maintenance of these public spaces.

Specifically, sustainable parks can be less expensive to operate, repair, and maintain. They can also have a variety of environmental benefits including reduced stormwater pollution, support for native species, and improved ecosystem services. Additionally, by utilizing sustainability as a key design element, recreation providers can provide an example of environmental stewardship to Texas citizens. Incorporating sustainable design elements helps to accommodate current demands for outdoor opportunities while also ensuring that the needs of future generations can be met.

This chapter provides several strategies for identifying a wide range of ways in which recreation providers can deal with financial obstacles and create sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities to meet public demand now and in the coming years. Numerous studies and reports have demonstrated that though sustainable, ‘green’ buildings may incur initial expenses beyond conventional construction costs, this premium reduces lifetime building costs through proven financial returns such as savings in utility bills, increased property values, and user productivity gains.

A move from solely recreation-based parks to sustainable parks not only improves the quality of the natural environment, but also adds to the visitor experience in the park and the community in general. Many of the initiatives defined within this chapter are outlined in the Sustainable Sites Initiative™ (SSI), which was developed by a partnership between the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center at the University of Texas in Austin, and the U.S. Botanical Garden.

The SSI offers a set of “voluntary national guidelines and performance benchmarks for sustainable land design, construction, and maintenance practices.” (American Society of Landscape Architects, Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center, U.S. Botanical Garden, 2009). The SSI is modeled after the

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) Green Building Rating System™ and is a 250 point rating system based on 15 prerequisites and 51 credits. The U.S. Green Building Council anticipates incorporating the SSI rating system into future versions of the LEED Green Building Design Rating System™. In an attempt to increase the validity of TPWD’s Sustainable Park Design initiative, many of the key elements outlined are further supported by the prerequisites and credits listed under the SSI SITES rating system.

Land practices are defined as sustainable if they enable natural and built systems to work together to “meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” (American Society of Landscape Architects, Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center, U.S. Botanical Garden, 2009). It should be the goal of all public outdoor recreation projects, buildings, and



sites to strive to follow as many of the LEED and SSI™ concepts as possible, even if the projects are not participating in full and formal certification.

This chapter seeks to explore and analyze the outdoor recreation issues that will be of concern to public agencies in the coming years. Rising costs of utilities are impacting operation budgets. Looking to sustainable methods is an effective way to mitigate these effects, in addition to ensuring the future of ecosystem services. Maintaining and promoting natural ecosystem services is very important for the environment and the economy because ecosystem services provide a large and often overlooked economic benefit. Additionally, as new generations of Texans become park users, their education and life experiences influence their expectation of parks. Young people today recycle at school, study natural resource conservation, and take environmental issues seriously. These lessons can be further ingrained by seeing sustainable practices in place at their parks.

The primary objective of this chapter is to assist recreation providers in developing a comprehensive strategy to incorporate sustainable park design for their unique park systems. There are many diverse regions within the state of Texas. A sustainable solution that works well in Central Texas may not be as effective in far west Texas. This chapter provides a starting point for recreation providers to help identify specific solutions for implementing sustainable design elements into the creation, construction, and maintenance of outdoor recreation lands across the state.

## **Techniques for Sustainable Park Design**

This chapter will outline techniques for addressing sustainability for the following elements of park design and environmental stewardship:

- Planning, Evaluation, and Monitoring
- Land Conservation
- Building Materials
- Energy Conservation
- Water Conservation
- Stormwater Management
- Wetlands, Streams, and Shorelines
- Landscaping
- Waste and Recycling
- Social Impacts
- Operation and Maintenance

## Planning, Evaluation of Resources, and Monitoring

In order to begin implementing sustainable park design into a local park system, recreation providers must first identify the natural resources offered by their regional environment. An ideal way to accomplish this is to create a Natural Resource Inventory Management Plan, which highlights objectives and strategies for meeting the objectives. It is also important for recreation providers to develop a baseline understanding of each impacted site so that they may create a monitoring system to track the positive benefits for their efforts. The following sections provide further detail about the Natural Resource Inventory, the Natural Resource Management Plan, in addition to Monitoring and Evaluation techniques.

### Natural Resource Inventory

A Natural Resource Inventory is a list and description of all the characteristics of the land, including soils, bedrock, ground and surface water, vegetation, and wildlife, in addition to the built landscape (roads, trails, utility rights-of-way, buildings). It can be a valuable resource for assessing which sustainable techniques will apply best to each individual site.

More Information:

- TX Natural Resources Information System - [www.tnris.org/](http://www.tnris.org/)
- National Park Service NRI Guide - [science.nature.nps.gov/im/index.cfm](http://science.nature.nps.gov/im/index.cfm)

### Natural Resource Management Plan

A Natural Resource Management Plan is a document that outlines the objectives for park management and provides a list of actions for meeting the objectives. The level of detail may vary depending on the area being evaluated. There are a wide variety of ways to develop a resource management plan depending on respective needs and use.

More Information:

- University of Florida NRMP - [edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fr126](http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fr126)

### Evaluation and Monitoring

As recreation providers continue with sustainable site management, they can look to their Natural Resource Inventory to help in documenting and evaluating the effect of their efforts. Monitoring the performance of sustainable design practices is useful when determining how an area has been affected. Keeping up to date with the impact that efforts have made will help in the continuation to plan for the future.

### Planning, Evaluation of Resources, and Monitoring

SSI Areas Addressed: P2.1, P2.2, P8.1, C2.3, C9.1

- Conduct a pre-design site assessment and explore opportunities for site sustainability
- Use an integrated site development process
- Plan for sustainable site maintenance
- Engage users and other stakeholders in site design
- Monitor performance of sustainable design practices

## Land Conservation

Whether developing a new park system or maintaining a current one, recreation providers must consider each individual site, in addition to potential impacts from site development and construction. The following sections outline some important sustainable design components to keep in mind.

### Greenfields, Greyfields, and Brownfields

Greenfield land is a term used to describe undeveloped land in a city or rural area. Rather than build upon a greenfield space, developers may choose to re-develop a brownfield or greyfield area. Those are areas that have previously been developed but have been left abandoned or underutilized. The term greyfield has historically been applied to formerly viable retail and commercial shopping sites (such as regional malls and strip centers) that suffer from lack of reinvestment and have been "outclassed" by larger, better designed, better anchored malls or shopping sites. Unlike brownfields (which feature actual or perceived levels of environmental contamination) a hidden value of greyfields, in many cases, is the presence of underlying infrastructure (such as plumbing and sewer, electrical systems, foundations, etc.) that allow a developer to more efficiently improve the site through major or minor capital expenditures.

### Land Conservation

SSI Areas Addressed: P1.1, P1.4, P7.1, P7.2, C1.5, C1.6, C7.3, C7.6

- Limit development of soils designated as prime farmland, unique farmland, and farmland of statewide importance
- Preserve threatened or endangered species and their habitat
- Control and retain construction pollutants
- Restore soils disturbed during construction
- Select brownfields or greyfields for redevelopment
- Select sites within existing communities
- Restore soils disturbed by previous development
- Minimize generation of greenhouse gas emissions and exposure to localized air pollutants during construction

A brownfield site (or simply a brownfield) is land previously used for industrial purposes or certain commercial uses. The land may be contaminated by low concentrations of hazardous waste or pollution, and has the potential to be reused once it is cleaned up. For instance, a former landfill site may be transformed into a community park.

### Site Development Impact

Cities are getting larger, squeezing out the open spaces for parks and disconnecting the state's biological resources. Re-developing areas rather than building on previously undisturbed land minimizes the impacts of sprawl. Limiting development on open spaces protects the habitats of threatened or endangered species and limits development on soils with prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland importance.

### Construction Impact

Minimizing the impacts of development can have several positive impacts on the natural environment. Controlling and retaining construction contaminants helps minimize pollutants that enter the watershed and ultimately the community drinking water supply. Restoring soils disturbed during construction and other development helps to encourage plant growth which minimizes additional stormwater runoff. (See the Water Conservation and Stormwater Management sections for more information.)

## Building Materials

The choice in building materials can have a significant impact on the degree of sustainability in park design. By choosing recycled, reused, or sustainably sourced materials, recreation providers can drastically reduce the negative impacts associated with construction. Furthermore, by planning into the future and using materials that can easily be deconstructed and reused, recreation providers can further ensure sustainability efforts for future generations. Another sustainable way to cut down construction costs for outdoor recreation areas is to utilize Natural Play Elements over traditional playscapes. The following sections go into further detail regarding sustainable choices for building materials.

### Reused Materials

Reuse of building materials is one of the most sustainable activities associated with our built environment. Buildings can be deconstructed in such a way that the materials being removed may be reused for new construction. Through the reuse of the materials, rather than disposal, landfill waste is minimized, consumption of new and raw materials is reduced, and fuel pollution and consumption is mitigated when materials are reused on-site. The American Society of Landscape Architects has put together an excellent video showcasing how the deconstruction and reuse of building materials may be used to develop a sustainable park. See the video here: [vimeo.com/18507807](https://vimeo.com/18507807)

More Information:

- Building Materials Reuse Association - [www.bmra.org/](http://www.bmra.org/)
- Habitat for Humanity Re-Store - [www.habitat.org/restores/](http://www.habitat.org/restores/)

### Building Materials

SSI Areas Addressed: P5.1, C5.3, C5.4, C5.5, C5.6, C5.7

- Eliminate the use of wood from threatened tree species
- Design for deconstruction and disassembly
- Reuse salvaged materials and plants
- Use recycled content materials
- Use certified wood
- Use regional materials

### Recycled Materials

Thanks to the work of educators, government programs, and community organizations the word “recycled” is a familiar term to most individuals, but determining exactly what benefit to the environment is being achieved can sometimes be difficult to discern. Products can be purchased that tout that they are recyclable, are made of recycled content, and are made from post-consumer content, however, they do not all carry the same positive impact on the environment.

**Recycled-content products** are made from materials that would otherwise have been discarded. That means these products are made at least partially from materials that have been recycled. When a product is labeled ‘recycled content,’ the material might have come from excess or damaged items generated during normal manufacturing processes and not collected through a traditional recycling program. Most of the time when people consider the term ‘recycled’ they are thinking of post-consumer products.

**Post-consumer content** is a material that has served its intended use and instead of being disposed of it is being reused in a different product.

**Recyclable products** can be collected and remanufactured into new products after they’ve been used. These products do not necessarily contain recycled materials and only benefit the environment if people recycle them after use.

The EPA has published a document helping to guide the purchase of recycled content materials for parks & recreation products and provide a minimum suggested recycled content level. This document can be found by searching for the [2007 Buy-Recycled Series: Park and Recreation Products](#).

### Sustainable Materials

The use of sustainable materials is a way to minimize impact on the environment by selecting materials that are easily renewed, reused, or recycled. An excellent example of a sustainable material is bamboo. It grows quickly with few resources (a.k.a. rapidly renewable) and can be used in place of endangered hardwoods that require long growing periods. The Forest Stewardship Council provides a certification system to verify woods that are harvested and manufactured using principles of sustainability. The use of local or regionally manufactured materials can also be considered sustainable because the products do not require as much fuel traveling to the work site.

More Information:

- Forest Stewardship Council - [www.fscus.org/](http://www.fscus.org/)

### Natural Play Elements

Playgrounds over the past 20 to 30 years have been narrowly designed for specific age ranges, practically eliminating appropriate playgrounds for pre-teens and teenagers. These “sterile” playgrounds constrict the learning and play possibilities for all children. Playgrounds have become less and less challenging and interesting for children. Over the past several years the interest in “adventure” or “natural” playgrounds has increased tremendously, especially in urban neighborhoods. These types of playgrounds are based on the belief that children should be offered a safe place to play, where they can manipulate and create their own play environment. This in turn helps children develop skills, no matter the age, to solve problems, be creative, invent, and organize.



*The use of reclaimed surplus oil field pipe at the Sheldon Learning Center Observation Tower is located in an industrial area, east of Houston, an area known for oil production.*

Natural play elements consist of loose materials such as wood blocks, logs, and limbs; tires, sand, water, or anything that might be found around the site.

Natural terrain, vegetation, rock outcroppings, and other natural features feed into the play experience. As these types of playgrounds may not be appropriate for all situations and sites, planners and designers are encouraged to analyze all aspects to assess the feasibility for such facilities, including the feasibility for long term maintenance of the area.

Several resources on this subject may be found on the internet and in various books, one of which is by Lisa Horne, entitled *Nature in Play*.

### **Building Deconstruction**

Building materials reuse is one of the most sustainable activities associated with our built environment. Deconstruction is the practice of disassembling a building in such a way that the materials (joists, flooring, siding, fixtures, and more) can be reused for new construction. With some planning and forethought, deconstruction is a cost competitive alternative to conventional building demolition.

### **Energy Conservation**

Reducing energy consumption is an important feature of sustainable park design. By curbing energy usage, recreation providers can reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with energy consumption. There are multiple techniques available to accomplish this goal including the use of renewable energy sources. Additionally, utilizing more efficient materials, such as energy efficient lighting and efficient mechanical systems, can help reduce energy consumption. Another important component for recreation providers to consider is the use of alternative transportation for internal usage. This section identifies strategies for achieving greater energy conservation.

### **Renewable Energy Sources**

The Texas Legislature defines renewable energy as "any energy resource that is naturally regenerated over a short time scale and derived directly from the sun (such as thermal, photochemical, and photoelectric), indirectly from the sun (such as wind, hydropower, and photosynthetic energy stored in biomass), or from other natural movements and mechanisms of the environment (such as geothermal and tidal energy). Renewable energy does not include energy resources derived from fossil fuels, waste products from fossil sources, or waste products from inorganic sources" (Public Utility Commission of Texas).

#### **Energy Conservation**

SSI Areas Addressed: C1.7, C8.4, C8.5, C8.8

- Select sites that encourage non-motorized transportation and use of public transit
- Reduce outdoor energy consumption for all landscape and exterior operations
- Use renewable sources for landscape electricity needs
- Reduce emissions and promote the use of fuel-efficient vehicles



One of the most important benefits of renewable energy is the fact that it's non-polluting. An often overlooked advantage of renewable energy is that it benefits the local economy because most of the money invested in renewable energy stays within its same state or county. Additionally, once the initial investment has been paid off, a renewable energy system can make a large impact on reducing energy costs. Photovoltaic solar panels currently have a life span of up to 50 years!

### **Efficient Lighting**

Efficient outdoor lighting can produce significant energy and cost savings. Additionally, when combined with dark sky principles, which seek to minimize the amount of light pollution created by outdoor lighting, it can have an even more significant impact on the environment. There are many efficient outdoor lighting products on the market and newer, more efficient alternatives are being introduced each year. Communicate to your designer that you want to invest in the most efficient lighting product that will meet your needs. Evaluate the equipment that will work best for the specific situation and examine the full operational cost along with the initial "first" cost of the equipment to determine the most sustainable choice. Do not forget to consider the operations cost of bulb replacement and maintenance. Having to rent expensive equipment to reach high places can sometimes offset the added cost of more expensive equipment if it has a longer anticipated burn time.

#### More Information:

- Department of Energy Day lighting Information – <https://energy.gov/energysaver/energy-saver>

### **Efficient Mechanical Systems (Pumps and Motors)**

Selecting efficient mechanical equipment will have a long-term impact on the energy use of a site. Pumps and motors can have increased efficiency with Variable Frequency Drive (VFD) Motors, which can operate at partial capacity when only a portion of the work is needed, thereby conserving energy. If your site has air conditioning, selecting a unit with a higher Energy Efficiency Rating (EER) or Seasonal Energy Efficiency Rating (SEER) can also make a noticeable impact on utility savings. Currently, many areas have a code that requires a minimum efficiency of 13 SEER on smaller rooftop HVAC units. Upgrading that unit beyond current code, to a 16 or 17 SEER unit, for example, will cost more up-front and may need to be pre-ordered by the contractor, but can yield savings over time that pay down the upfront expense of that unit. Ask your HVAC technician or contractor to see what types of efficient equipment are available for your needs. Additionally, a smaller unit may be used if you have taken supplementary measures to improve the envelope (walls, flooring, and roof) surrounding your building, which can help reduce initial unit cost.

#### More Information:

- CEE Paper on System Efficiency – <http://www.advancedbuildings.net/29-mechanical-systems-efficiency>



A 3kW wind turbine provided by the Galveston Island State Park Friends Group.

## Alternative Transportation

About half of the energy used in the US is consumed through the use of automobiles and trucks, and burning just one gallon of gasoline emits almost 20 pounds of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas. There are several ways to encourage park users to utilize alternative transportation. Parks may offer more traditional support for alternative transportation such as bike lanes and safe bike parking, as well as bus stops, sidewalks, and connecting trails. Some sites implement preferred alternative fuel vehicle parking and electric vehicle charging stations to encourage site users to invest in and use alternative transportation.

More Information:

- NPS Program at Glacier Bay – [www.nps.gov/glba/parknews/alternative-transportation-program-at-glacier-bay.htm](http://www.nps.gov/glba/parknews/alternative-transportation-program-at-glacier-bay.htm)
- NPF Program – [www.nationalparks.org/news/?fa=viewArticle&articleID=2516](http://www.nationalparks.org/news/?fa=viewArticle&articleID=2516)

## Water Conservation

Ensuring water conservation is a top element in sustainable park system design. Water conservation is particularly important in Texas, where a large portion of the state's climate ranges from semi-arid to arid. There are several methods available to reduce water consumption in an outdoor recreation area including using limited irrigation on landscapes, implementing a rainwater catchment system, in addition to reusing or recycling water for various needs. Methods for improving water conservation efforts are outlined below.

### Irrigation

Licensed irrigation designers need to work hand-in-hand with landscape architects to ensure proper amounts of water are applied specific to the plant material installed. Overwatering of plant material can weaken the plant and allow disease and pests to attack the weak plant. Overwatering can also cause soil compaction. Efficient design of the system to avoid over spraying in some local governments is mandated by law and/or ordinance and should be investigated. Water for irrigation can also be utilized for rainwater catchment systems.

### Water Conservation

SSI Areas Addressed: P3.1, C3.2, C3.8

- Reduce potable water use for landscape irrigation by 50% from established baselines
- Reduce potable water use for landscape irrigation by 75% or more from established baselines
- Maintain water features to conserve water and other resources

## Rainwater Catchment

Rainwater harvesting is the capture and storage of rainwater for landscape irrigation, potable and non-potable indoor use, and stormwater abatement. Harvested rainwater can be particularly useful when no other source of water supply is available, or if the available supply is inadequate or of poor quality. Collecting rainwater can also provide a consistent water resource for wildlife, help to reduce water utility bills, and mitigate the negative impact of stormwater runoff on local streams and rivers. Even a small roof can collect a large amount of rainwater. For example, a 1,000 square-foot roof could yield about 600 gallons of water for every inch of rain that falls! ( $1000 \times 0.6 = 600$ ) Rainwater catchment is a powerful water conservation tool that will become more important in the future.

In 2011, Texas faced one of the most serious droughts on record. Rainwater catchment helps conserve precious fresh water resources both for humans and wildlife.



### More Information:

- American Rainwater Catchment Systems Association - [www.arcsa.org/](http://www.arcsa.org/)
- Texas Water Development Board - <http://www.twdb.texas.gov/innovativewater/rainwater/>

## Water Reuse

Water reuse is an important water management strategy to help meet the growing demands being placed on available water supplies. Although it is a relatively new sustainability practice, it is rapidly becoming a more accepted method of conserving scarce water resources. Water reuse involves using recycled water in a wide variety of applications, including landscape and agricultural irrigation, toilet and urinal flushing, industrial processing, power plant cooling, wetland habitat creation, restoration and maintenance, and groundwater recharge.

## Stormwater Management

Incorporating stormwater management techniques into a park system can help recreation providers save money by maintaining and encouraging natural filtration systems. Having an appropriate stormwater management system can reduce runoff and reduce the heat island effect. An effective way to incorporate stormwater management into a sustainable park design is to utilize erosion control mechanisms.

### Stormwater Management

SSI Areas Addressed: P1.2, C3.5, C3.6, C3.7

- Protect floodplain function
- Manage stormwater on site
- Protect and enhance on-site water resources and receiving water quality
- Design rainwater/stormwater features to provide a landscape amenity

## Erosion Control Mechanisms

Erosion control mechanisms can make a significant impact on community water quality by limiting the disruption of natural hydrology, increasing on-site filtration and even reducing pollution and contaminants in local rivers and streambeds. This is achieved by directing stormwater and other contaminated sources through manufactured wetlands or other natural filtration devices.

Reducing impervious cover may also act as an effective filter for stormwater runoff and while simultaneously reducing the heat island effect. Innovative products, such as permeable paving, are now on the market to help achieve these measures. There are also local and national ordinances and laws that regulate this based on the size of the project. Designers should check to verify rules that may govern individual projects.



### More Information:

- Stormwater Management Handbook for the Houston Area - [www.cleanwaterways.org/downloads/professional/construction\\_handbook\\_full.pdf](http://www.cleanwaterways.org/downloads/professional/construction_handbook_full.pdf)
- TCEQ Stormwater Regulations - [www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/wastewater/industrial/](http://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/wastewater/industrial/)
- Permeable Pavement - [www.perviouspavement.org/](http://www.perviouspavement.org/)
- TX State Soil & Water Conservation Board - [www.tsswcb.texas.gov/en/EQIP-319](http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/en/EQIP-319)

## Wetlands, Streams, and Shorelines

Wetlands, streams, and shorelines provide a natural buffer during tropical storms and natural flooding events. They can act as a filter of contaminants and provide valuable scenic opportunities. These areas also provide hatchery and nursery areas for many fish and other wildlife. Designers should comply with any governmental regulations or ordinances that may govern individual projects.

### More Information:

- Texas Treasures - [www.tpwd.state.tx.us/publications/pwdpubs/media/pwd\\_bk\\_k0700\\_0908.pdf](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/publications/pwdpubs/media/pwd_bk_k0700_0908.pdf)

### Wetlands, Streams, and Shorelines

SSI Areas Addressed: P1.3, C3.3, C3.4

- Preserve wetland
- Protect and restore riparian, wetland, and shoreline buffers
- Rehabilitate lost streams, wetlands, and shorelines



These wetlands at the Sheldon Environmental Learning Center provide habitat to nearly 250 bird species throughout the year including the Rosette Spoonbill, Osprey, and Bald Eagle.

## Landscaping

Texas is geographically large and there are many climate and ecosystems that exist in the state. As such, specifics for the categories listed below can change from region to region of the state, and may even vary within a county. It is recommended that recreation providers contact the Texas County AgriLife Extension Service in the county in which the project resides for help on specific projects.

### Landscaping

SSI Areas Addressed: C7.5

- Reuse or recycle vegetation, rocks, and soil generated during construction

### Integrated Pest Management Strategies

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a strategy used in home, commercial, public, and horticultural/agricultural landscapes to manage insect pests by using economically and environmentally sustainable management practices. IPM programs do not eliminate or eradicate pests, but are geared more to strengthen a plant and its ecosystem so that plants are able to combat problems. The concepts used in today's IPM strategies evolved from those used in apple and cotton production during the 1950s and 1960s. Using chemical treatment to combat plant pests is no longer viable, environmentally or culturally.

IPM utilizes a combination of landscape practices to combat pest problems before they crop up. These practices include:

- Utilizing disease and pest resistant varieties of plants
- Ensuring proper site and soil preparation as the effects of this on the health of installed plant materials greatly affects the plant's ability to ward off disease and pests.
- Only using a combination of cultural (non-chemical), mechanical, biological (predators, parasites, and pathogens), and as a last resort, chemical (least toxic) methods of pest management.

It is recommended that if an IPM program is desired, that an IPM Program Plan be developed to aid your entity and your staff in implementation of the program.

## Invasive Species

In landscape terms, an invasive species is a non-native plant species that is highly adaptive to new natural habitats and that adversely affects the biological makeup of a natural landscape. Many introduced and common landscape plants have become invasive species throughout Texas including Bamboo, Chinaberry, Chinese Tallow, Kudzu, Ligustrum, Nandina, English Ivy, and Elephant Ear.

Invasive species are spread by seeds with the aid of birds and mammals, and by other means, and can quickly spread to nature preserves, conservation areas, fallow farmland, and other non-developed areas of a community. They can out-compete native species for nutrients, light, space, water, and food. The impacts can be felt in the local ecology, in genetic pollution, and in the local economy.

It is recommended that plants listed in your local area as "invasive" should not be used in the landscape on project sites, and native, or at least non-invasive species be used. Consult a local professional for specific recommendations.

## **Native, Adaptive, Appropriate Landscapes**

Native and appropriate plant material should be utilized on project sites that are suitable for the specific project and for the specific use and desired effect. Consult a local professional for specific recommendations.

### **Organics**

Organic landscape development involves the use of essential practices and principles of soil building, conservation, pest and disease management, and plant selection. It includes the use of only naturally produced fertilizers and non-chemical means of pest control, as well as other sustainable techniques discussed in this document. Consult a local professional for specific available resources in your area, and for specific recommendations for the project site.



### **Re-Used Plants**

Re-using vegetation, rocks, and soil displaced by construction is a positive way to reduce costs, minimize waste, and encourage the preservation of native natural elements. Pre-planning what will be re-used, where it will be stored during construction (if needed), and other specific needs of the vegetation may impact your decision to attempt this sustainability measure. However, the potential cost savings may be significant and worth the added effort.

See Building Materials for more information.

## **Waste and Recycling**

Recycling is often one of the first strategies that come to mind for citizens and recreation providers alike when questioned about sustainability. Providing adequate recycling facilities onsite can have an incredible impact on waste reduction. Furthermore, composting and mulching can help curb organic waste, such as fall leaves or fallen branches. This section provides details regarding recycling and organic waste disposal.

### **Waste and Recycling**

SSI Areas Addressed: P8.2, C7.4, C8.3

- Provide for storage and collection of recyclable
- Divert construction and demolition materials from disposal
- Recycle organic matter generated during site operations and maintenance

### **Waste Diversion**

Waste diversion involves diverting construction and demolition materials from the landfill to recycling or reuse. To achieve this goal, a job site must be well-managed and organized. Waste diversion helps to save money through lower tipping (landfill dumping) fees and by providing a cleaner site, which is safer to walk through, resulting in fewer opportunities for falls, injuries, or fire.

### **Recycling**

Just a few years ago it was a common practice to throw empty beverage containers into the trash can. Times have changed and people young and old understand the sustainable benefits of recycling.

Today park users expect facilities to offer recycling opportunities. Not only does this help reduce waste disposal fees, recycled material could also generate revenue for parks. If recreation providers are interested in starting a recycling program in their park, a good place to begin is by contacting a local waste disposal contractor. Many contractors also offer recycling programs and this service can be negotiated into current contracts.

## Compost

Compost is a soil amendment made from biodegradable landscape items such as tree trimmings and lawn clippings, and is an excellent source of nutrients for landscape areas. Compost approximates the naturally occurring decomposition material found on forest floors that feeds native habitats. The use of compost in landscapes can reduce the use of water, fertilizers, and pesticides. Additionally, composting can suppress plant diseases and pests by making plants and soils stronger and healthier. To determine the amount and type of compost to be added as a soil amendment, a soils test should be conducted on the project site. Consult a local professional for specific recommendations.

## Mulch

Mulch is a protective layer that mimics the natural leaf cover found on forest floors; it is placed over the soil in landscaped areas to retain moisture, reduce erosion, provide nutrients (as it breaks down), and suppress the growth and seed germination of weeds. Materials used as mulch vary and selection of the appropriate material should be based on several factors including availability, cost, appearance, and the effect the mulch will have on the soil (pH, durability, combustibility, rate of decomposition, and cleanliness). Mulch materials may be organic (leaves, bark chips, wood chips, straw, grass clippings, shredded bark or wood, and gravel) or inorganic (shredded rubber, plastic, and crushed glass). Native mulch derived from native and local trees is preferred to provide nutrients back to the local soils. Local sources are also preferred as some chemical reactions and pH issues may be at issue if non-local sources are used. To determine the amount and recommended type of mulch to add, you should consult a local professional for specific recommendations.

## Social Impacts

Recreation providers understand the importance of considering the social impacts of their respective park systems. It is important to ensure that public outdoor recreation areas are safe and accessible for the community. In terms of incorporating sustainability, by minimizing exposure to second hand smoke and other air pollutants, recreation providers can further improve the local/state park environment for park visitors and the community at large.

### Social Impacts

SSI Areas Addressed: C8.6, C8.7

- Minimize exposure to environmental tobacco smoke
- Minimize generation of greenhouse gases and exposure to localized air pollutants during landscape maintenance activities

## Accessibility

Parks are for everyone. Ensuring they are accessible to all is an important part of a sustainable community. All public projects in the state of Texas are required to comply with the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. Although the requirements are state and federal laws, providing facilities for all to use is important in communities, as social integration is an important tool in developing community cohesion and a sense of belonging and place.

For requirements specific to individual projects, planners and designers should confer with the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR), the organization tasked with administering the TAS. For information contact the TDLR at 1-800-803-9202 or visit their website at <https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/ab/ab.htm>.

In addition, there is a state law that requires that any playground built with public funds shall be accessible. (Texas Health and Safety Code 756.061 effective September 1, 1997)



## Multi-Ethnic and Multi-Cultural

Texas is home to people from many different ethnicities and cultures. A recent trend in the discussion on sustainability involves the considered inclusion of these ethnicities and cultures. Diverse populations residing in our communities and using our parks can create cultural opportunities that bring diverse populations together. Increasing diversity enhances the fabric of the community, helps to overcome social barriers, and brings communities together.

## Health

Parks offer a wide range of health benefits including space to exercise, relax, and breathe fresh air. In order to ensure that all park visitors have full access to the maximum amount of fresh air, some jurisdictions have imposed smoking bans in parks, most recently New York City. Minimizing exposure to environmental tobacco smoke is important, and although you might not be ready to institute an outright ban on cigarette smoke, encouraging designated smoking areas helps minimize second hand smoke exposure and reduces litter from cigarette butts.

Another practice that can have a negative impact on clean air in parks is the use of landscape maintenance equipment. Minimizing the generation of greenhouse gases during landscape maintenance helps keep ozone levels low and reduces the impact of emissions on park users. Depending on the alternatives used, it can also positively impact noise pollution problems.

## Operations and Maintenance

Once a park facility is developed and put in place, it is often used for ten years or more. Durability is imperative in park facilities and can lead to long term savings because well-built facilities require less maintenance. Sustainability is achieved through the reduction in need for utilities, additional repair materials, transportation, and construction waste. By incorporating sustainable park design into a park system, recreation providers will see positive results in terms of reduced operating costs, in

addition to reduced maintenance costs. Furthermore, given recent economic challenges in Texas and the rest of the United States, doing more for a community with less fiscal resources will become increasingly important.

## **Walking the Walk**

Sustainable building is becoming more popular every day because it is not only environmentally responsible, it also saves money and looks great. With the increased adoption of these techniques, it is becoming easier to find examples of sustainable buildings in your own area. TPWD has been working to incorporate these principles of sustainability into our sites and have illustrations scattered throughout the state. We invite you to come out and visit a Texas Parks and Wildlife site near you.

## **Sustainable Design Checklist**

The Sustainable Design Checklist can be helpful through all stages of a project. Initially, it can be used to identify the “green” features of a project that are particularly important to the organization, user, client, or site environment. The checklist can be included in contracting documents as a reinforcement message that the items checked are expected to be included in all bid proposals.

During project construction it can be used to ensure that sustainability goals are communicated and budget or project changes do not impact the sustainable intent of the project without further evaluation and discussion. Lastly, the checklist can be shared with the site manager, at completion of the project, to help them understand the sustainable design elements that have been included in the project. The site staff can work to interpret sustainable features to site visitors so that they can learn sustainable design and construction and hopefully integrate that work into their own residential projects.

## Sustainable Design Checklist

This list identifies several resource conservation strategies that a project team may want to consider when developing a recreation facility or site. This list can be included in all phases of the project from scope to construction to help ensure sustainable project goals are met.

The checked items have been identified by the Project Team for implementation on this project.

<b>Site Resource Conservation</b>	Preserve Floodplain Functions	<b>Energy Conservation</b>	EnergyStar Appliances
	No/Limited Wetland Development		Building Envelope (Exceed IECC Codes)
	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan		LED Lighting
	Native Vegetation/Landscaping		Conduit for Solar-Ready Building
	Reuse soil/rock materials generated onsite		Renewable Solar Energy
	Passive Orientation Strategies		Solar Hot Water
	Dark Sky Lighting / Reduce Light Pollution		Building Controls / Advanced Metering
	Reduce Heat Island Impact		High Efficiency Mechanical Equipment
	Alternative Transportation Measures		Net-Zero Building
	Restore Disturbed Soils		Daylighting
	Limit Development/ INF Footprint		
<b>Water Resource Conservation</b>	Storm Water Features (ex: bioswales)	<b>Material Resource Conservation</b>	Regional Materials (min 50%)
	Surface/Groundwater Contamination		Recycled Content (min 20%)
	No/Limited Impact on Threatened or Endangered Species Habitat		FSC Certified Wood Products
			Low VOC Emitting Materials
	No Irrigation (after established, 1yr max)		Construction Waste Management Plan
	Drip Irrigation System		Recycling Station
	Gray-water Reuse		Material Reuse/Salvage (min 20%)
<b>Material Resource Conservation</b>	Double Plumbed	<b>Other</b>	Zero CFCs
	Rainwater Catchment		Resiliency
	Low-flow Fixtures		Operation and Maintenance
	Meter Water Use		Aesthetics; "Life's Better Outside"
			Educational / Community Engagement

Project Site Name:

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# **Open Project Selection Process**

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Each year the LWCF apportionment is split between the State Park Program and the Local Park Program. As needs differ slightly for each program, separate project selection criteria have been developed. The Local Park Grants Program Selection Criteria are designed to give recreation providers positive incentives for improving project design, while the State Park Program Project Selection Criteria are based on achieving strategic and cost-effective land acquisitions that are in-line with the TPWD Land and Water Resources Conservation and Recreation Plan (Land and Water Plan).

## **Local Park Grants Program Project Selection Criteria**

The Local Park Grants Program is managed by the Recreation Grants Branch, which is housed in the State Parks Division of TPWD. The Local Park Grants Program manages the federal LWCF as well as the state funded Texas Recreation and Parks Account, and the Large County and Municipality Recreation and Parks Account.

The Local Park Grants Program currently manages the following grants:

- Non-Urban Outdoor Recreation Grant\*
- Small Community Grant\*
- Non-Urban Indoor Recreation Grant
- Urban Outdoor Recreation Grant\*
- Urban Indoor Recreation Grant

Of these programs, three are eligible to receive LWCF money, including the Non-Urban Outdoor Recreation, Small Community, and Urban Outdoor Recreation grants. All Local Park Grant Program applications submitted to TPWD are evaluated for program eligibility and prioritized with the criteria in the following scoring systems. Scored applications are presented to the TPW Commission for approval.

**Table 7.1**  
**Non-Urban Outdoor Recreation Grant Project Priority Scoring Criteria**

<b>APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY</b>	All previously completed Recreation Grant Projects must be in compliance with all program guidelines and all terms of the Project Agreement under which they received assistance.
<b>MASTER PLAN</b>	Applicant has a current department-endorsed master plan or other comprehensive plan on file with the department at the time of application.
<b>RECREATION DIVERSITY</b>	Project will provide diversity of park and recreation facilities.
<b>WATER-BASED RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES</b>	Project will expand access to water-based recreation opportunities along existing natural water bodies, provide desirable conditions for fish and wildlife, and not degrade the resource.
<b>GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION</b>	Project will improve the geographic distribution of park and recreation lands and facilities in the project's intended service area or within the applicant's jurisdiction.
<b>OUTDOOR RECREATION /CONSERVATION VS. SUPPORT COSTS</b>	Project maximizes the use of development funds for outdoor recreation and conservation opportunities.
<b>UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS</b>	Project improves park and recreation opportunities for low income, minority, and/or physically/mentally challenged citizens.
<b>LOCAL RESOURCES AND PARTNERSHIPS</b>	The project involves local resources or documented cooperation between the applicant and other public or private entities to provide park and recreation opportunities at the project site.
<b>LAND ACQUISITION</b>	Project provides for the acquisition and conservation of park and recreation lands, which consist of natural resources or provides desirable open space or needed parkland.
<b>RENOVATION OR ADAPTIVE REUSE</b>	Project provides for the renovation or adaptive reuse of an existing obsolete park and recreation area or facilities
<b>SUSTAINABLE PARK DESIGN</b>	Project promotes sustainable park design.
<b>LINKAGE</b>	Project provides linkage via trail to other public park and conservation areas.
<b>TPWD GOALS</b>	Project supports the department's Land and Water Resources Conservation and Recreation Plan.
<b>COMPLIANCE</b>	Applicant is in compliance with previously funded projects.
<b>APPLICATION MATERIALS</b>	A complete application was received by the application deadline.

**Table 7.2**  
**Small Community Recreation Grant Priority Scoring Criteria**

<b>SPONSOR ELIGIBILITY</b>	All previously completed Recreation Grant Projects must be in compliance with all program guidelines and all terms of the Project Agreement under which they received assistance.
<b>POPULATION</b>	Population of the applicant is 2,500 or less based on the most recent federal census data.
<b>GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION</b>	The project will improve the geographic distribution of park and recreation lands and facilities in the project's service area or within the applicant's jurisdiction.
<b>OUTDOOR RECREATION/CONSERVATION vs. SUPPORT COSTS</b>	Project maximizes the use of development funds for direct outdoor recreation and conservation opportunities.
<b>UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS</b>	Project improves park and recreation opportunities for low income, minority, and/or physically/mentally challenged citizens.
<b>LOCAL RESOURCES AND PARTNERSHIPS</b>	The project involves local resources or documented cooperation between the applicant and other public or private entities to provide park and recreation opportunities at the project site(s).
<b>RENOVATION</b>	Project provides for the renovation of an existing obsolete area or facility.
<b>SUSTAINABLE PARK DESIGN</b>	Points for this category will be awarded based on how the overall project embraces sustainable techniques in the design and construction of the park, including but not limited to the diversity, innovative nature and/or cost of the project elements.
<b>TPWD GOALS</b>	Project supports the department's Land and Water Resources Conservation and Recreation Plan.
<b>COMPLIANCE</b>	Applicant is in compliance with previously funded projects.
<b>APPLICATION MATERIALS</b>	A complete application was received by the application deadline



**Figure 7.3**  
**Urban Outdoor Recreation Grant Priority Scoring Criteria**

<b>APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY</b>	All previously completed Recreation Grant Projects must be in compliance with all program guidelines and all terms of the Project Agreement under which they received assistance.
<b>MASTER PLAN</b>	Project applicant has a locally adopted and department-approved parks, recreation and open space master plan or other jurisdiction-wide plan that addresses outdoor recreation needs.
<b>THREAT</b>	Project reduces the threat to the public availability of a conservation or recreation opportunity.
<b>LAND ACQUISITION</b>	The project proposes to acquire land.
<b>DEVELOPMENT</b>	Project proposes the development of neighborhood park, natural resource based site, park/conservation area of regional significance, outdoor aquatic recreation and/or multi-purpose facility.
<b>SUSTAINABLE PARK DESIGN</b>	The project embraces sustainable techniques in the design and construction of the park or includes wildlife habitat improvement/restoration.
<b>RESTORATION AND RENOVATION</b>	Project provides for the restoration and/or renovation of existing infrastructure or other facilities that is no longer usable for its intended or original purpose.
<b>TRAILS/CORRIDORS/GREENWAYS</b>	Project proposes one or more trails.
<b>SPORTS FACILITIES</b>	Project proposes the development of one or more large capacity intensive use sports facility and/or competition or practice facilities in close proximity to users.
<b>UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS</b>	Project provides more equitable geographic distribution of facilities, improves opportunities for low-income citizens, improves opportunities for ethnic minority citizens, and/or provides park and recreation opportunities for physically/mentally challenged citizens which exceed the federal and state required accessibility standards.
<b>LOCAL RESOURCES AND PARTNERSHIPS</b>	Project involves public or private cooperation and/or project includes documented contributions via the applicant or outside resources above the 50% required match.
<b>HISTORICAL/CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>	Project provides park and recreation opportunities that enhance and encourage appreciation and preservation of site-based cultural, natural, historical or archaeological resources by means of interpretation, facilities, or preservation strategies.
<b>TPWD GOALS</b>	Applicant must specifically describe how the project meets the goals of the TPWD Land and Water Resources Conservation & Recreation Plan.
<b>URBAN BIOLOGIST CONSULTATION</b>	Applicant has consulted with an urban biologist from the department regarding the proposed site plan at least 30 days prior to the application deadline and the biologist's comments are included in the application materials.
<b>COMPLIANCE</b>	Applicant is in compliance with previously funded projects.
<b>APPLICATION MATERIALS</b>	A complete application was received by the application deadline.

## State Park Program Project Selection Criteria

As more and more Texans reside in urban areas, there is an increasing disconnection between people and their natural and cultural heritage. Access to high quality affordable outdoor recreational and educational opportunities is more important than ever for physical health, mental health, and quality of life. TPWD helps meet these needs by acquiring, developing, and managing lands for public access. With extremely limited funding, it is critical that land acquisitions be strategic and cost-effective. The basis for prioritizing and evaluating potential land acquisitions in light of the agency's mission and goals is found in the Land and Water Plan. Among other things, this plan places a high value on the acquisition of lands that represent all major ecoregions of Texas, lands that are readily accessible to people living in urban centers, and lands that offer a diverse range of outdoor opportunities for present and future generations.

There are many factors that affect the suitability of land for use as a state park, and objectively quantifying the value of one tract over another can be difficult. Nonetheless, there are a number of criteria that can be evaluated to help assess and rank the value of any given tract or tracts of land. TPWD only acquires land from willing sellers or donors, eliminating from consideration many tracts that might otherwise be desirable. Due to the high cost of acquiring lands of sufficient scope for new parks, and the high cost of developing, staffing, and operating new parks, most acquisition effort is geared toward expanding existing sites, and acquiring tracts within existing sites (in-holdings), especially sites which protect rare and critical habitats or are heavily used by the public.

Every transaction is unique, and even with established evaluation guidelines, assessment of some criteria, such as aesthetic values or visitation projections, will always be subjective or speculative, and subject to best professional judgment. Nonetheless, all acquisitions are evaluated for their attributes in the following four areas: site attributes, location, recreation, in addition to social and economic value. The relative importance of each parameter within these four areas will vary from proposal to proposal, depending upon the specific needs and goals of TPWD at the time of consideration.



Powderhorn Ranch, Calhoun County  
©TPWD

*The purchase of the 17,351 acre Powderhorn Ranch became the largest conservation investment in Texas history. The land was partially acquired by LWCF grant 48-01131 as a State Park & Wildlife Management Area*

**“In Texas, there is no more important natural resource than water. The conservation of our water resources and the preservation of flowing rivers are critical for both the people and the environment of our state.”**

*Ken Kramer,  
Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club*

## Selection Criteria

### Site Attributes

(\*\*Supports TPWD Land and Water Plan Objectives)

- Quality of natural resources require little to no restoration
  - Indigenous soils, topography, hydrology, and species communities intact
  - If restoration is required, appropriate funding and other resources have been considered and are available
- Physical size of the site offers opportunity to preserve ecosystem scale processes and landscapes
  - Will fire be practical if appropriate?
  - Is there sufficient habitat to support species recovery, where appropriate, large herbivores and predators where appropriate, and the desired compatible recreation?
- Contributes to watershed health\*\*
- Opportunity for research and demonstration\*\*
- Site will fill a gap in representation of publicly-owned and managed cultural sites, recreational opportunities, and/or conservation properties\*\*
- Offers outstanding aesthetic qualities
- Offers significant features including rare or listed species or communities\*\*
- Existing TPWD sites in this eco-region or area of the state\*\*
- Ownership of the associated mineral estate; implications for potential future exploration and recovery operations
- Suitable and adequate access
- Past land uses with potential for contamination or other environmental liability

### Location

- Expansion of an existing TPWD facility (in-holding or adjacent tract)\*\*
  - Existing TPWD sites in this eco-region or area of the state\*\*
  - Would this site or facilities be significantly different?
- Is there a demonstrable need for additional facilities?
- Site serves a population center or potentially serves a large public audience\*\*
- Likelihood of available housing for park staff
- What are prospects for expanding in the future?\*\*
- Land uses occurring or expected to occur on adjacent or nearby properties that would diminish fish and wildlife and recreational value
- Aesthetic qualities of the drive to the site; i.e. is it through rural countryside or through a neighborhood?

## **Recreation**

- Offers outstanding aesthetic qualities or other exceptional recreation amenities\*\*
- Offers special topographic or geographic features such as springs or canyons
- Offers recreation opportunities that are in demand, but unmet in the area\*\*
- Potential for public hunting and or fishing\*\*
- Utilities available and sufficient for park operation
- Other local recreational resources (city, county parks)
  - Will the acquisition duplicate existing recreation opportunities?
  - Would a TPWD facility compete with existing recreational facilities?
  - Proposed acquisition site expands an existing recreation opportunity or creates a new recreation opportunity

## **Social and Economic**

- Current owner(s) is a willing seller\*\*
- Good financial value
  - Based on cost comparison to undeveloped land in the region
  - In relation to expected fish and wildlife and public benefits
  - Do the added values justify the expense?
  - Would the acquisition and development costs accomplish more elsewhere?
- Presents an opportunity in funding to partner with a willing donor, local land trust, non-government organization, or the property is eligible for funding through grants (endangered species, migratory waterfowl, wetlands)\*\*
- Local community and local government support proposed acquisition

## **Ranking**

As mentioned above, every potential land acquisition proposal is different, and ascribing purely objective values to each of the attributes listed above to yield a numeric ranking order for multiple proposals is not possible. However, the Land and Water Plan provides guidance regarding the relative importance of some of these attributes, and by assigning priorities to them, it is possible to generate a ranking system helpful for evaluating the relative importance of diverse properties. This system should not be the sole guide for prioritizing TPWD land transactions. In deliberating the importance of a given transaction, unique factors, not adequately reflected here, such as truly spectacular vistas, strategic water resources such as major springs, endemic or listed species, cultural resources of statewide significance, or land uses that threaten the viability of adjacent TPWD facilities, to name just a few, must be given special consideration.

The following characteristics are assigned scoring based on their relative values. The numbers are arbitrary rather than quantitative. Maximum scores should be applied only in cases where values are truly exceptional.

## Ranking Criteria

- Mission criticality (possible 100 points)
  - Legislative mandate
  - Obvious health/safety need
  - Necessary for viability of existing or planned TPWD site/facility
  - Fills a specific gap in ability to fulfill Mission or Land and Water Plan
- Value (possible 80 points)
  - Unusually high density of recreational or resource values
  - Bargain sale
  - Increases viability of existing conservation or recreation facilities
- Opportunity (possible 70 points)
  - Transaction is important and time critical
  - Land owner is motivated
- Location (possible 70 points)
  - Location near urban center
  - Fills recreational or ecosystem gap
  - Public demand
- Partnerships (possible 70 points)
  - Potential funding assistance
  - Potential development assistance
  - Potential management or operations assistance
- In holdings (possible 50 points)
  - Inholding represents immediate threat to planned or current TPWD site uses
  - Acquisition simplifies or enhances site development, management or operation
  - Acquisition addresses access or incompatible use issues
- Adjacent lands (possible 40 points)
  - Acquisition prevents compromises to TPWD site use
  - Acquisition adds natural, cultural, or recreational resource opportunities
  - Acquisition protects viewshed and/or watershed
- High resource values (possible 40 points)
  - Unique features (i.e. springs, mountain tops, rock shelters, etc.)
  - Rare or listed species and habitats
- Threatened resources (possible 40 points)
  - Important natural or cultural resources in immediate danger of destruction

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## TPWD Internal Data and Published Reports

The 2018 TORP draws from many internal resources and data sources at TPWD, including previously authored reports and personal knowledge from staff working in the field. Chapter authors have included links to relevant TPWD reports where they are useful and relevant. These links have not been replicated as sources in this section. Additional data and sources may be found on the TPWD website, including a public repository of GIS data, available here: <https://tpwd.texas.gov/gis/>.

# **APPENDIX A. The Land & Water Conservation Fund Act**

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**Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, Public Law 88-578 Title 16, United States Code Selected Relevant Parts – State Assistance Program**

For full code section:

[http://www.access.gpo.gov/uscode/title16/chapter1\\_subchapterIxix\\_partb\\_.html](http://www.access.gpo.gov/uscode/title16/chapter1_subchapterIxix_partb_.html)

## **§ 460I–4. Land and water conservation provisions; statement of purposes**

The purposes of this part are to assist in preserving, developing, and assuring accessibility to all citizens of the United States of America of present and future generations and visitors who are lawfully present within the boundaries of the United States of America such quality and quantity of outdoor recreation resources as may be available and are necessary and desirable for individual active participation in such recreation and to strengthen the health and vitality of the citizens of the United States by

- (1) providing funds for and authorizing Federal assistance to the States in planning, acquisition, and development of needed land and water areas and facilities and
- (2) providing funds for the Federal acquisition and development of certain lands and other areas.

## **§ 460I–5. Land and water conservation fund; establishment; covering certain revenues and collections into fund**

During the period ending September 30, 2015, there shall be covered into the land and water conservation fund in the Treasury of the United States, which fund is hereby established and is hereinafter referred to as the “fund”, the following revenues and collections:

- (a) Surplus property sales All proceeds (except so much thereof as may be otherwise obligated, credited, or paid under authority of those provisions of law set forth in section 572 (a) or 574 (a)–(c) of title 40 or the Independent Offices Appropriation Act, 1963 (76 Stat. 725) or in any later appropriation Act) hereafter received from any disposal of surplus real property and related personal property under the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, as amended, notwithstanding any provision of law that such proceeds shall be credited to miscellaneous receipts of the Treasury. Nothing in this part shall affect existing laws or regulations concerning disposal of real or personal surplus property to schools, hospitals, and States and their political subdivisions.
- (b) Motorboat fuels tax. The amounts provided for in section 460I–11 of this title.
- (c) Other revenues:
  - (1) In addition to the sum of the revenues and collections estimated by the Secretary of the Interior to be covered into the fund pursuant to this section, as amended, there are

authorized to be appropriated annually to the fund out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated such amounts as are necessary to make the income of the fund not less than \$300,000,000 for fiscal year 1977, and \$900,000,000 for fiscal year 1978 and for each fiscal year thereafter through September 30, 2015.

(2) To the extent that any such sums so appropriated are not sufficient to make the total annual income of the fund equivalent to the amounts provided in clause (1), an amount sufficient to cover the remainder thereof shall be credited to the fund from revenues due and payable to the United States for deposit in the Treasury as miscellaneous receipts under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, as amended (43 U.S.C. 1331 et seq.): Provided, That notwithstanding the provisions of section 460l–6 of this title, moneys covered into the fund under this paragraph shall remain in the fund until appropriated by the Congress to carry out the purpose of this part.

## **§ 460l–7. Allocation of land and water conservation fund for State and Federal purposes**

There shall be submitted with the annual budget of the United States a comprehensive statement of estimated requirements during the ensuing fiscal year for appropriations from the fund. Not less than 40 per centum of such appropriations shall be available for Federal purposes. Those appropriations from the fund up to and including \$600,000,000 in fiscal year 1978 and up to and including \$750,000,000 in fiscal year 1979 shall continue to be allocated in accordance with this section. There shall be credited to a special account within the fund \$300,000,000 in fiscal year 1978 and \$150,000,000 in fiscal year 1979 from the amounts authorized by section 460l–5 of this title. Amounts credited to this account shall remain in the account until appropriated. Appropriations from the special account shall be available only with respect to areas existing and authorizations enacted prior to the convening of the Ninety-fifth Congress, for acquisition of lands, waters, or interests in lands or waters within the exterior boundaries, as aforesaid, of—

- (1) the national park system;
- (2) national scenic trails;
- (3) the national wilderness preservation system;
- (4) federally administered components of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System; and
- (5) national recreation areas administered by the Secretary of Agriculture.

## **§ 460l–8 [Sec 6]. Financial assistance to States**

(a) Authority of Secretary of the Interior; payments to carry out purposes of land and water conservation provisions

The Secretary of the Interior (hereinafter referred to as the “Secretary”) is authorized to provide financial assistance to the States from moneys available for State purposes. Payments may be made to the States by the Secretary as hereafter provided, subject to such terms and conditions as he considers appropriate and in the public interest to carry out the purposes of this part, for outdoor recreation:

- (1) planning,

- (2) acquisition of land, waters, or interests in land or waters, or
- (3) development.

(b) Apportionment among States; finality of administrative determination; formula; notification; reapportionment of unobligated amounts; definition of State

Sums appropriated and available for State purposes for each fiscal year shall be apportioned among the several States by the Secretary, whose determination shall be final, in accordance with the following formula:

- (1) Forty per centum of the first \$225,000,000; thirty per centum of the next \$275,000,000; and twenty per centum of all additional appropriations shall be apportioned equally among the several States; and
- (2) At any time, the remaining appropriation shall be apportioned on the basis of need to individual States by the Secretary in such amounts as in his judgment will best accomplish the purposes of this part. The determination of need shall include among other things a consideration of the proportion which the population of each State bears to the total population of the United States and of the use of outdoor recreation resources of individual States by persons from outside the State as well as a consideration of the Federal resources and programs in the particular States.
- (3) The total allocation to an individual State under paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection shall not exceed 10 per centum of the total amount allocated to the several States in any one year.
- (4) The Secretary shall notify each State of its apportionments; and the amounts thereof shall be available thereafter for payment to such State for planning, acquisition, or development projects as hereafter prescribed. Any amount of any apportionment that has not been paid or obligated by the Secretary during the fiscal year in which such notification is given and for two fiscal years thereafter shall be reapportioned by the Secretary in accordance with paragraph (2) of this subsection, without regard to the 10 per centum limitation to an individual State specified in this subsection.
- (5) For the purposes of paragraph (1) of this subsection, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (when such islands achieve Commonwealth status) shall be treated collectively as one State, and shall receive shares of such apportionment in proportion to their populations. The above listed areas shall be treated as States for all other purposes of this title.

(c) Matching requirements

Payments to any State shall cover not more than 50 per centum of the cost of planning, acquisition, or development projects that are undertaken by the State. The remaining share of the cost shall be borne by the State in a manner and with such funds or services as shall be satisfactory to the Secretary. No payment may be made to any State for or on account of any cost or obligation incurred or any service rendered prior to September 3, 1964.

(d) Comprehensive State plan; necessity; adequacy; contents; correlation with other plans; factors for formulation of Housing and Home Finance Agency financed plans; planning projects; wetlands consideration; wetlands priority plan

A comprehensive statewide outdoor recreation plan shall be required prior to the consideration by the Secretary of financial assistance for acquisition or development projects. The plan shall be adequate if, in the judgment of the Secretary, it encompasses and will promote the purposes of this part: Provided, That no plan shall be approved unless the Governor of the respective State certifies that ample opportunity for public participation in plan development and revision has been accorded. The Secretary shall develop, in consultation with others, criteria for public participation, which criteria shall constitute the basis for the certification by the Governor. The plan shall contain—

- (1) the name of the State agency that will have authority to represent and act for the State in dealing with the Secretary for purposes of this part;
- (2) an evaluation of the demand for and supply of outdoor recreation resources and facilities in the State;
- (3) a program for the implementation of the plan; and
- (4) other necessary information, as may be determined by the Secretary. The plan shall take into account relevant Federal resources and programs and shall be correlated so far as practicable with other State, regional, and local plans. Where there exists or is in preparation for any particular State a comprehensive plan financed in part with funds supplied by the Housing and Home Finance Agency, any statewide outdoor recreation plan prepared for purposes of this part shall be based upon the same population, growth, and other pertinent factors as are used in formulating the Housing and Home Finance Agency financed plans.

The Secretary may provide financial assistance to any State for projects for the preparation of a comprehensive statewide outdoor recreation plan when such plan is not otherwise available or for the maintenance of such plan. For fiscal year 1988 and thereafter each comprehensive statewide outdoor recreation plan shall specifically address wetlands within that State as an important outdoor recreation resource as a prerequisite to approval, except that a revised comprehensive statewide outdoor recreation plan shall not be required by the Secretary, if a State submits, and the Secretary, acting through the Director of the National Park Service, approves, as a part of and as an addendum to the existing comprehensive statewide outdoor recreation plan, a wetlands priority plan developed in consultation with the State agency with responsibility for fish and wildlife resources and consistent with the national wetlands priority conservation plan developed under section 3921 of this title or, if such national plan has not been completed, consistent with the provisions of that section.

(e) Projects for land and water acquisition; development

In addition to assistance for planning projects, the Secretary may provide financial assistance to any State for the following types of projects or combinations thereof if they are in accordance with the State comprehensive plan:

(1) For the acquisition of land, waters, or interests in land or waters, or wetland areas and interests therein as identified in the wetlands provisions of the comprehensive plan (other than land, waters, or interests in land or waters acquired from the United States for less than fair market value), but not including incidental costs relating to acquisition. Whenever a State provides that the owner of a single-family residence may, at his option, elect to retain a right of use and occupancy for not less than six months from the date of acquisition of such residence and such owner elects to retain such a right, such owner shall be deemed to have waived any benefits under sections 4623, 4624, 4625, and 4626 of title 42 and for the purposes of those sections such owner shall not be considered a displaced person as defined in section 4601 (6) of title 42.

(2) For development of basic outdoor recreation facilities to serve the general public, including the development of Federal lands under lease to States for terms of twenty-five years or more: Provided, That no assistance shall be available under this part to enclose or shelter facilities normally used for outdoor recreation activities, but the Secretary may permit local funding, and after September 28, 1976, not to exceed 10 per centum of the total amount allocated to a State in any one year to be used for sheltered facilities for swimming pools and ice skating rinks in areas where the Secretary determines that the severity of climatic conditions and the increased public use thereby made possible justifies the construction of such facilities.

(f) Requirements for project approval; conditions; progress payments; payments to Governors or State officials or agencies; State transfer of funds to public agencies; conversion of property to other uses; reports to Secretary; accounting; records; audit; discrimination prohibited

(1) Payments may be made to States by the Secretary only for those planning, acquisition, or development projects that are approved by him. No payment may be made by the Secretary for or on account of any project with respect to which financial assistance has been given or promised under any other Federal program or activity, and no financial assistance may be given under any other Federal program or activity for or on account of any project with respect to which such assistance has been given or promised under this part. The Secretary may make payments from time to time in keeping with the rate of progress toward the satisfactory completion of individual projects: Provided, That the approval of all projects and all payments, or any commitments relating thereto, shall be withheld until the Secretary receives appropriate written assurance from the State that the State has the ability and intention to finance its share of the cost of the particular project, and to operate and maintain by acceptable standards, at State expense, the particular properties or facilities acquired or developed for public outdoor recreation use.

(2) Payments for all projects shall be made by the Secretary to the Governor of the State or to a State official or agency designated by the Governor or by State law having authority and responsibility to accept and to administer funds paid hereunder for approved projects. If consistent with an approved project, funds may be transferred by the State to a political subdivision or other appropriate public agency.

(3) No property acquired or developed with assistance under this section shall, without the approval of the Secretary, be converted to other than public outdoor recreation uses. The Secretary shall approve such conversion only if he finds it to be in accord with the then existing comprehensive statewide outdoor recreation plan and only upon such conditions as he deems necessary to assure the substitution of other recreation properties of at least equal fair market value and of reasonably equivalent usefulness and location.: Provided, That wetland areas and interests therein as identified in the

wetlands provisions of the comprehensive plan and proposed to be acquired as suitable replacement property within that same State that is otherwise acceptable to the Secretary, acting through the Director of the National Park Service, shall be considered to be of reasonably equivalent usefulness with the property proposed for conversion.

(4) No payment shall be made to any State until the State has agreed to (1) provide such reports to the Secretary, in such form and containing such information, as may be reasonably necessary to enable the Secretary to perform his duties under this part, and (2) provide such fiscal control and fund accounting procedures as may be necessary to assure proper disbursement and accounting for Federal funds paid to the State under this part.

(5) Each recipient of assistance under this part shall keep such records as the Secretary shall prescribe, including records which fully disclose the amount and the disposition by such recipient of the proceeds of such assistance, the total cost of the project or undertaking in connection with which such assistance is given or used, and the amount and nature of that portion of the cost of the project or undertaking supplied by other sources, and such other records as will facilitate an effective audit.

(6) The Secretary, and the Comptroller General of the United States, or any of their duly authorized representatives, shall have access for the purpose of audit and examination to any books, documents, papers, and records of the recipient that are pertinent to assistance received under this part.

(7) Repealed. Pub. L. 104–333, div. I, title VIII, § 814(d)(1)(H), Nov. 12, 1996, 110 Stat. 4196.

(8) With respect to property acquired or developed with assistance from the fund, discrimination on the basis of residence, including preferential reservation or membership systems, is prohibited except to the extent that reasonable differences in admission and other fees may be maintained on the basis of residence.

(g) Coordination with Federal agencies

In order to assure consistency in policies and actions under this part with other related Federal programs and activities (including those conducted pursuant to title VII of the Housing Act of 1961 [42 U.S.C. 1500 et seq.] and section 701 of the Housing Act of 1954) and to assure coordination of the planning, acquisition, and development assistance to States under this section with other related Federal programs and activities, the President may issue such regulations with respect thereto as he deems desirable and such assistance may be provided only in accordance with such regulations.

(h) Capital improvement and other projects to reduce crime

(1) Availability of funds In addition to assistance for planning projects, and in addition to the projects identified in subsection (e) of this section, and from amounts appropriated out of the Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund, the Secretary may provide financial assistance to the States, not to exceed \$15,000,000, for projects or combinations thereof for the purpose of making capital improvements and other measures to increase safety in urban parks and recreation areas, including funds to—

(A) increase lighting within or adjacent to public parks and recreation areas;

- (B) provide emergency phone lines to contact law enforcement or security personnel in areas within or adjacent to public parks and recreation areas;
  - (C) increase security personnel within or adjacent to public parks and recreation areas; and
  - (D) fund any other project intended to increase the security and safety of public parks and recreation areas.
- (2) Eligibility In addition to the requirements for project approval imposed by this section, eligibility for assistance under this subsection shall be dependent upon a showing of need. In providing funds under this subsection, the Secretary shall give priority to projects proposed for urban parks and recreation areas with the highest rates of crime and, in particular, to urban parks and recreation areas with the highest rates of sexual assault.
- (3) Federal share Notwithstanding subsection (c) of this section, the Secretary may provide 70 percent improvement grants for projects undertaken by any State for the purposes described in this subsection, and the remaining share of the cost shall be borne by the State.

#### **§ 460I–10. Availability of land and water conservation fund for publicity purposes; standardized temporary signing; standards and guidelines**

Moneys derived from the sources listed in section 460I–5 of this title shall not be available for publicity purposes: Provided, however, That in each case where significant acquisition or development is initiated, appropriate standardized temporary signing shall be located on or near the affected site, to the extent feasible, so as to indicate the action taken is a product of funding made available through the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Such signing may indicate the per centum and dollar amounts financed by Federal and non-Federal funds, and that the source of the funding includes moneys derived from Outer Continental Shelf receipts. The Secretary shall prescribe standards and guidelines for the usage of such signing to assure consistency of design and application.

# **APPENDIX B. Legal Authority**

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<u>TITLE 31</u>	NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION
<u>PART 2</u>	TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT
<u>CHAPTER 61</u>	DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION
<u>SUBCHAPTER B</u>	PROCEDURAL GUIDE FOR LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND PROGRAM

## **RULE §61.81 Application Procedures**

- (a) The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department adopts the procedural guide for Land and Water Conservation Fund Program, as published in August 1978, and as amended in January, 1980, by reference. The department is the state agency designated to cooperate with the federal government in the administration of the provisions of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965. This procedural guide is designed to assist local governments in making application for federal funds, and describes the rules and regulations governing the disbursement of such funds.
- (b) Copies of the procedural guide are available at the Parks and Wildlife Department, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, Texas 78744.

## **Parks and Wildlife Code**

### CHAPTER 24. STATE ASSISTANCE FOR LOCAL PARKS SUBCHAPTER A. LOCAL PARKS FOR SMALLER COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES AND OTHER POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS

#### **§ 24.001. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:**

- (1) "Political subdivision" means a county, municipality, special district, river authority, or other governmental entity created under the authority of the state or a county or municipality.
- (2) "Urban area" means the area within a standard metropolitan statistical area (SMSA) in this state used in the last preceding federal census.
- (3) "Park" includes land and water parks owned or operated by the state or a political subdivision.
- (4) "Open space area" means a land or water area for human use and enjoyment that is relatively free of man-made structures.

- (5) "Natural area" means a site having valuable or vulnerable natural resources, ecological processes, or rare, threatened, or endangered species of vegetation or wildlife.
- (6) "Parks, recreational, and open space area plan" means a comprehensive plan that includes information on and analyses of parks, recreational, and open space area objectives, needs, resources, environment, and uses, and that identifies the amounts, locations, characteristics, and potentialities of areas for adequate parks, recreational, and open space opportunities.
- (7) "Federal rehabilitation and recovery grants" means matching grants made by the United States to or for political subdivisions for the purpose of rebuilding, remodeling, expanding, or developing existing outdoor or indoor parks, recreational, or open space areas and facilities, including improvements in park landscapes, buildings, and support facilities.
- (8) "Account" means the Texas recreation and parks account.
- (9) "Rural area" means any area not included in an urban area.
- (10) "Cultural resource site or area" means a site or area determined by the commission to have valuable and vulnerable cultural or historical resources.
- (11) "Nonprofit corporation" means a nonpolitical legal entity incorporated under the laws of this state that has been granted an exemption from federal income tax under Section 501(c), Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.
- (12) "Underserved population" means any group of people that is low income, inner city, or rural as determined by the last census, or minority, physically or mentally challenged youth at risk, youth, or female.

Added by Acts 1979, 66th Leg., p. 1733, ch. 710, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1979. Amended by Acts 1983, 68th Leg., p. 2024, ch. 367, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1983; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 679, § 28, eff. Sept. 1, 1993; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 267, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Amended by: Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. [1159](#), § 31, eff. June 15, 2007.

## **§ 24.002. TEXAS RECREATION AND PARKS ACCOUNT.**

The Texas recreation and parks account is a separate account in the general revenue fund. Money in the account may be used only for:

- (1) grants under this subchapter to a county or municipality with a population of less than 500,000;
- (2) grants under this subchapter to any other political subdivision that is not a county or municipality; or
- (3) planning for, and acquisition, operation, and development of, outdoor recreation and conservation resources of this state and the administrative expenses incident to the projects or programs authorized under Subchapter D, Chapter 13.

Added by Acts 1979, 66th Leg., p. 1733, ch. 710, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1979. Amended by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 679, § 29, eff. Sept. 1, 1993.

Amended by: Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. [1159](#), § 32, eff. June 15, 2007.

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. [952](#), § 10, eff. September 1, 2009.

### **§ 24.003. ACCOUNT REVENUE SOURCE; REVENUE DEDICATION.**

- (a) The department shall deposit to the credit of the Texas recreation and parks account:
  - (1) an amount of money equal to 15 percent of the credits made to the department under Section 151.801, Tax Code; and
  - (2) money from any other source authorized by law.
- (b) The department may deposit to the credit of the Texas recreation and parks account:
  - (1) private contributions, grants, and donations received in connection with this subchapter or Subchapter D, Chapter 13; and
  - (2) federal funds received in connection with this subchapter or Subchapter D, Chapter 13.

Added by Acts 1979, 66th Leg., p. 1733, ch. 710, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1979. Amended by Acts 1983, 68th Leg., p. 2024, ch. 367, § 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1983; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 679, § 30, eff. Sept. 1, 1993.

Amended by: Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. [1159](#), § 33, eff. June 15, 2007.

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. [952](#), § 10, eff. September 1, 2009.

### **§ 24.004. ASSISTANCE GRANTS.**

- (a) The department may make grants of money from the account to a political subdivision for use by the political subdivision as all or part of the subdivision's required share of funds for eligibility for receiving a federal rehabilitation and recovery grant.
- (b) In order to receive a grant under this section, the political subdivision seeking the federal grant shall apply to the department for the grant and present evidence that the political subdivision qualifies for the federal grant.
- (c) A grant under this section is conditioned on the political subdivision qualifying for and receiving the federal grant.

Added by Acts 1979, 66th Leg., p. 1733, ch. 710, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1979. Amended by Acts 1983, 68th Leg., p. 2025, ch. 367, § 3, eff. Sept. 1, 1983; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 679, § 31, eff. Sept. 1, 1993.

### **§ 24.005. DIRECT STATE MATCHING GRANTS.**

- (a) The department shall make grants of money from the account to a political subdivision to provide one-half of the costs of the planning, acquisition, or development of a park, recreational area, or open space area to be owned and operated by the political subdivision.
- (b) In establishing the program of grants under this section, the department shall adopt rules and regulations for grant assistance.
- (c) Money granted to a political subdivision under this section may be used for the operation and maintenance of parks, recreational areas, cultural resource sites or areas, and open space areas only:

- (a) if the park, site, or area is owned or operated and maintained by the department and is being transferred by the commission for public use to a political subdivision for operation and maintenance; and
  - (b) during the period the commission determines to be necessary to effect the official transfer of the park, site, or area.
- (d) The department shall make grants of money from the account to a political subdivision or nonprofit corporation for recreation, conservation, or education programs for underserved populations to encourage and implement increased access to and use of parks, recreational areas, cultural resource sites or areas, and open space areas by underserved populations.
- (e) The department may provide from the account for direct administrative costs of the programs described by this subchapter.

Added by Acts 1979, 66th Leg., p. 1733, ch. 710, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1979. Amended by Acts 1983, 68th Leg., p. 2025, ch. 367, § 4, eff. Sept. 1, 1983; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 679, § 32, eff. Sept. 1, 1993; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 267, § 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Amended by: Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. [1159](#), § 34, eff. June 15, 2007.

## **§ 24.006. FUNDS FOR GRANTS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.**

When state revenues to the Texas recreation and parks account exceed \$14 million per year, an amount not less than 15 percent shall be made available for grants to local governments for up to 50 percent of the cost of acquisition or development of indoor public recreation facilities for indoor recreation programs, sports activities, nature programs, or exhibits.

Added by Acts 1979, 66th Leg., p. 1733, ch. 710, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1979. Amended by Acts 1983, 68th Leg., p. 2025, ch. 367, § 5, eff. Sept. 1, 1983; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 679, § 33, eff. Sept. 1, 1993; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 267, § 3, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Amended by: Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. [952](#), § 10, eff. September 1, 2009.

## **§ 24.007. ACCOUNT USE TO BE CONSISTENT WITH PLANS.**

No grant may be made under Section 24.005 of this code nor may account money be used under Section 24.006 of this code unless:

- (1) there is a present or future need for the acquisition and development of the property for which the grant is requested or the use is proposed; and
- (2) a written statement is obtained from the regional planning commission having jurisdiction of the area in which the property is to be acquired and developed that the acquisition and development is consistent with local needs.

Added by Acts 1979, 66th Leg., p. 1733, ch. 710, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1979. Amended by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 679, § 34, eff. Sept. 1, 1993.

## **§ 24.008. ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY.**

- (a) No property may be acquired with grant money made under this subchapter or by the department under this subchapter if the purchase price exceeds the fair market value of the property as determined by one independent appraiser.
- (b) Repealed by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 267, § 7, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
- (c) Property may be acquired with provision for a life tenancy if that provision facilitates the orderly and expedient acquisition of the property.
- (d) Repealed by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 267, § 7, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
- (e) If land or water designated for park, recreational, cultural resource, or open space use is included in the local and regional park, recreational, cultural resource, and open space plans for two or more jurisdictions, the two or more jurisdictions may cooperate under state law to secure assistance from the account to acquire or develop the property. In those cases, the department may modify the standards for individual applicants but must be assured that a cooperative management plan for the land or water can be developed and effectuated and that one of the jurisdictions possesses the necessary qualifications to perform contractual responsibilities for purposes of the grant.
- (f) All land or water purchased with assistance from the account shall be dedicated for park, recreational, cultural resource, indoor recreation center, and open space purposes in perpetuity and may not be used for any other purpose, except where the use is compatible with park, recreational, cultural resource, and open space objectives, and the use is approved in advance by the department.

Added by Acts 1979, 66th Leg., p. 1733, ch. 710, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1979. Amended by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 679, § 35, eff. Sept. 1, 1993; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 267, § 4, 7, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Amended by: Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1159, § 35, eff. June 15, 2007.

## **§ 24.009. PAYMENTS, RECORDS, AND ACCOUNTING.**

- (a) On the approval of a grant under this subchapter and on the written request by the director, the comptroller of public accounts shall issue a warrant drawn against the Texas recreation and parks account and payable to the political subdivision or nonprofit corporation in the amount specified by the director.
- (b) Each recipient of assistance under this subchapter shall keep records as required by the department, including records which fully disclose the amount and the disposition of the proceeds by the recipient, the total cost of the acquisition, a copy of the title and deed for the property acquired, the amount and nature of that portion of the cost of the acquisition supplied by other funds, and other records that facilitate effective audit. The director and the comptroller, or their authorized representatives, may examine any book, document, paper, and record of the recipient that are pertinent to assistance received under this subchapter.
- (c) The recipient of funds under this subchapter shall, on each anniversary date of the grant for five years after the grant is made, furnish to the department a comprehensive report detailing the present and anticipated use of the property, any

contiguous additions to the property, and any major changes in the character of the property, including the extent of park development which may have taken place.

Added by Acts 1979, 66th Leg., p. 1733, ch. 710, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1979. Amended by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 679, § 36, eff. Sept. 1, 1993; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 267, § 5, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Amended by: Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1159, § 36, eff. June 15, 2007.

### **§ 24.011. NONCOMPLIANCE WITH SUBCHAPTER.**

The attorney general shall file suit in a court of competent jurisdiction against a political subdivision or nonprofit corporation that fails to comply with the requirements of this subchapter to recover the full amount of the grant plus interest on that amount of five percent a year accruing from the time of noncompliance or for injunctive relief to require compliance with this subchapter. If the court finds that the political subdivision or nonprofit corporation has not complied with the requirements of this subchapter, it is not eligible for further participation in the program for three years following the finding for noncompliance.

Added by Acts 1979, 66th Leg., p. 1733, ch. 710, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1979. Amended by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 267, § 6, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Amended by: Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1159, § 37, eff. June 15, 2007.

### **§ 24.012. ACCOUNT NOT TO BE USED FOR PUBLICITY.**

No money credited to the account may be used for publicity or related purposes.

Added by Acts 1979, 66th Leg., p. 1733, ch. 710, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1979. Amended by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 679, § 38, eff. Sept. 1, 1993.

### **§ 24.013. AUTHORITY OF POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS TO HAVE PARKS.**

This subchapter does not authorize a political subdivision to acquire, develop, maintain, or operate a park, recreational area, open space area, or natural area.

Added by Acts 1979, 66th Leg., p. 1733, ch. 710, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1979.

Amended by: Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1159, § 38, eff. June 15, 2007.

## **SUBCHAPTER B. PARKS FOR LARGE COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES**

### **§ 24.051. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:**

- (1) "Account" means the large county and municipality recreation and parks account.
- (2) "Cultural resource site or area" means a site or area determined by the commission to have valuable and vulnerable cultural or historical resources.
- (3) "Federal rehabilitation and recovery grants" means matching grants made by the United States to or for political subdivisions for the purpose of rebuilding, remodeling, expanding, or developing existing outdoor or indoor parks, recreational, or open space areas and facilities, including improvements in park landscapes, buildings, and support facilities.
- (4) "Large county or municipality" means a county or municipality with a population of 500,000 or more.

- (5) "Natural area" means a site having valuable or vulnerable natural resources, ecological processes, or rare, threatened, or endangered species of vegetation or wildlife.
- (6) "Nonprofit corporation" means a nonpolitical legal entity incorporated under the laws of this state that has been granted an exemption from federal income tax under Section 501(c), Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.
- (7) "Open space area" means a land or water area for human use and enjoyment that is relatively free of man-made structures.
- (8) "Park" includes land and water parks owned or operated by the state or a political subdivision.
- (9) "Parks, recreational, and open space area plan" means a comprehensive plan that includes information on and analyses of parks, recreational, and open space area objectives, needs, resources, environment, and uses, and that identifies the amounts, locations, characteristics, and potentialities of areas for adequate parks, recreational, and open space opportunities.
- (10) "Political subdivision" means a county, municipality, special district, river authority, or other governmental entity created under the authority of the state or a county or municipality.
- (11) "Underserved population" means any group of people that is low income or inner city, as determined by the last census, or minority, physically or mentally challenged youth at risk, youth, or female.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. [1159](#), § 39, eff. June 15, 2007.

## **§ 24.052. LARGE COUNTY AND MUNICIPALITY RECREATION AND PARKS ACCOUNT.**

The large county and municipality recreation and parks account is a separate account in the general revenue fund. Money in the account may be used only as provided by this subchapter or Subchapter D, Chapter 13.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. [1159](#), § 39, eff. June 15, 2007.

Amended by: Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. [952](#), § 10, eff. September 1, 2009.

## **§ 24.053. ACCOUNT REVENUE SOURCE; DEDICATION.**

- (a) The department shall deposit to the credit of the large county and municipality recreation and parks account:
  - (1) an amount of money equal to 10 percent of the credits made to the department under Section 151.801, Tax Code; and
  - (2) money from any other source authorized by law.
- (1) The department may deposit to the credit of the large county and municipality recreation and parks account:
  - (1) private contributions, grants, and donations received in connection with this subchapter or Subchapter D, Chapter 13; and
  - (2) federal funds received in connection with this subchapter or Subchapter D, Chapter 13.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. [1159](#), § 39, eff. June 15, 2007.  
Amended by: Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. [952](#), § 10, eff. September 1, 2009.

#### **§ 24.054. ASSISTANCE GRANTS.**

- (a) The department may make grants of money from the account to a large county or municipality for use by the county or municipality as all or part of the county's or municipality's required share of funds for eligibility for receiving a federal rehabilitation and recovery grant.
- (b) In order to receive a grant under this section, the county or municipality seeking the federal grant shall apply to the department for the grant and present evidence that the county or municipality qualifies for the federal grant.
- (c) A grant under this section is conditioned on the county or municipality qualifying for and receiving the federal grant.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. [1159](#), § 39, eff. June 15, 2007.

#### **§ 24.055. DIRECT STATE MATCHING GRANTS.**

- (a) The department shall make grants of money from the account to a large county or municipality to provide one-half of the costs of the planning, acquisition, or development of a park, recreational area, or open space area to be owned and operated by the county or municipality.
- (b) In establishing the program of grants under this section, the department shall adopt rules and regulations for grant assistance.
- (c) Money granted to a county or municipality under this section may be used for the operation and maintenance of parks, recreational areas, cultural resource sites or areas, and open space areas only:
  - (1) if the park, site, or area is owned or operated and maintained by the department and is being transferred by the commission for public use to the county or municipality for operation and maintenance; and
  - (2) during the period the commission determines to be necessary to effect the official transfer of the park, site, or area.
- (d) The department shall make grants of money from the account to a large county or municipality or to a nonprofit corporation for use in a large county or municipality for recreation, conservation, or education programs for underserved populations to encourage and implement increased access to and use of parks, recreational areas, cultural resource sites or areas, and open space areas by underserved populations.
- (e) The department may provide from the account for direct administrative costs of the programs described by this subchapter.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. [1159](#), § 39, eff. June 15, 2007.

#### **§ 24.056. FUNDS FOR GRANTS TO LARGE COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES.**

When state revenue to the large county and municipality recreation and parks account exceeds \$14 million per year, an amount not less than 15 percent shall be made available for grants to large counties and municipalities for up to 50 percent of the cost of acquisition or development of indoor public recreation facilities for indoor recreation programs, sports activities, nature programs, or exhibits.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. [1159](#), § 39, eff. June 15, 2007.

Amended by: Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. [952](#), § 10, eff. September 1, 2009.

### **§ 24.057. ACCOUNT USE TO BE CONSISTENT WITH PLANS.**

No grant may be made under Section 24.055 nor may account money be used under Section 24.056 unless:

- (1) there is a present or future need for the acquisition and development of the property for which the grant is requested or the use is proposed; and
- (2) a written statement is obtained from the regional planning commission having jurisdiction of the area in which the property is to be acquired and developed that the acquisition and development is consistent with local needs.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. [1159](#), § 39, eff. June 15, 2007.

### **§ 24.058. ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY.**

- (a) No property may be acquired with grant money made under this subchapter or by the department under this subchapter if the purchase price exceeds the fair market value of the property as determined by one independent appraiser.
- (b) Property may be acquired with provision for a life tenancy if that provision facilitates the orderly and expedient acquisition of the property.
- (c) If land or water designated for park, recreational, cultural resource, or open space use is included in the local and regional park, recreational, cultural resource, and open space plans for two or more large counties or municipalities, the two or more large counties or municipalities may cooperate under state law to secure assistance from the account to acquire or develop the property. In those cases, the department may modify the standards for individual applicants but must be assured that a cooperative management plan for the land or water can be developed and effectuated and that one of the counties or municipalities possesses the necessary qualifications to perform contractual responsibilities for purposes of the grant.
- (d) All land or water purchased with assistance from the account shall be dedicated for park, recreational, cultural resource, indoor recreation center, and open space purposes in perpetuity and may not be used for any other purpose, except where the use is compatible with park, recreational, cultural resource, and open space objectives, and the use is approved in advance by the department.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. [1159](#), § 39, eff. June 15, 2007.

### **§ 24.059. PAYMENTS, RECORDS, AND ACCOUNTING.**

- (a) On the approval of a grant under this subchapter and on the written request by the director, the comptroller shall issue a warrant drawn against the large county and municipality recreation and parks account and payable to the county, municipality, or nonprofit corporation in the amount specified by the director.
- (b) Each recipient of assistance under this subchapter shall keep records as required by the department, including records that fully disclose the amount and the disposition of the proceeds by the recipient, the total cost of the acquisition, a copy of the title and deed for the property acquired, the amount and nature of that portion of the cost of the acquisition supplied by other funds, and other records that facilitate effective audit. The director and the comptroller, or their authorized representatives, may examine any book, document, paper, and record of the recipient that are pertinent to assistance received under this subchapter.
- (c) The recipient of funds under this subchapter shall, on each anniversary date of the grant for five years after the grant is made, furnish to the department a comprehensive report detailing the present and anticipated use of the property, any contiguous additions to the property, and any major changes in the character of the property, including the extent of park development that may have taken place.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. [1159](#), § 39, eff. June 15, 2007.

#### **§ 24.060. NONCOMPLIANCE WITH SUBCHAPTER.**

The attorney general shall file suit in a court of competent jurisdiction against a county, municipality, or nonprofit corporation that fails to comply with the requirements of this subchapter to recover the full amount of the grant plus interest on that amount of five percent a year accruing from the time of noncompliance or for injunctive relief to require compliance with this subchapter. If the court finds that the county, municipality, or nonprofit corporation has not complied with the requirements of this subchapter, it is not eligible for further participation in the program for three years following the finding for noncompliance.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. [1159](#), § 39, eff. June 15, 2007.

#### **§ 24.061. ACCOUNT NOT TO BE USED FOR PUBLICITY.**

No money credited to the account may be used for publicity or related purposes.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. [1159](#), § 39, eff. June 15, 2007.

#### **§ 24.062. AUTHORITY OF LARGE COUNTY OR MUNICIPALITY TO HAVE PARKS.**

This subchapter does not authorize a large county or municipality to acquire, develop, maintain, or operate a park, recreational area, open space area, or natural area.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. [1159](#), § 39, eff. June 15, 2007

# **APPENDIX C. State Strategies Met**

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The 2018 Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan addresses the following State strategies and action items either explicitly or indirectly:

## **Land and Water Resources Conservation and Recreation Plan 2015**

- Str 1.C.3 : Inventory conservation, recreation and historic properties to identify gaps in representation and protection
- Str 1.C.4: Pursue funding for acquisition of land, conservation easements, and the purchase of development rights from willing sellers
- Str 1.G.1 Work with international, federal, state, local and private organizations and the public to generate creative ways to achieve landscape-scale habitat management
- Str 1.J.3 Evaluate the environmental advantages and disadvantages of emerging energy, utility and fuel technologies
- Str 2.A.1 Increase public fishing and hunting opportunities
- Str 2.A.2 Provide diverse outdoor recreational opportunities, from urban programs to paddling trails to wilderness backcountry camping
- Str 2.A.4 Expand and enhance agency sites by acquiring in-holdings and adjacent tracts from willing donors and sellers
- Str 2.A.5 Construct facilities and amenities to broaden access to the outdoors, protect natural resources, and enhance the quality of experience for people of all ages, abilities and interests
- Str 2.A.8 Seek opportunities to create new state parks of high biological and recreational value near metropolitan centers
- Str 2.B.1 Partner with federal, state and local agencies to provide increased access to public lands and waters
- Str 2.B.6 Promote paddling trails, recreational fishing and other forms of aquatic-based recreation in and around urban areas
- Str 2.D.2 Assist local communities and private landowners in developing economically viable recreational venues for activities such as wildlife-watching, stargazing, photo safaris, camping and other nature-based recreation
- Str 3.E.2 Provide recommendations and assistance to local governments regarding the importance of green space, watersheds, aquifer recharge zones and park lands
- Str 4.A.7 Develop a tool to prioritize opportunistic land acquisitions that are biologically, recreationally and/or culturally significant
- Str 4.B.3 Involve Texans through expanded social media tools, public meetings, public forums, one-on-one conversations and customer surveys

- Str 4.C.2 Identify and leverage new and existing revenue streams to maximize recreation and conservation efforts
- Str 4.C.4 Maximize federal aid reimbursement through appropriate allocation of funds to approved projects
- Str 4.C.5 Seek additional grant opportunities
- Str 4.G.2 Keep agency policies, procedures, plans and programs relevant through periodic review

# **APPENDIX D. Statewide Citizen Survey**

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## **Telephone Survey**

### **Introduction**

*Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I'm calling on behalf of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to ask you some questions about outdoor recreation in Texas, although participation in outdoor activities is not necessary to answer the questions. Do you have a few minutes to answer some questions?*

*Are you a Texas resident at least 18 years of age?*

(CHECK ONLY ONE ANSWER)

- Yes (CONTINUE SURVEY)
- No (END SURVEY: *I'm sorry, but right now we are only interviewing those who are residents of Texas and at least 18 years old. Thank you for your time and willingness to participate.*)
- Don't know (END SURVEY: *I'm sorry, but right now we are only interviewing those who are residents of Texas and at least 18 years old. Thank you for your time and willingness to participate.*)

### **Gateway Outdoor Recreation Activity**

*First, growing up, what were the most important outdoor recreational activities that made you enjoy spending time outdoors? (open-ended; enter specifics)*

*(respondent will be able to list up to five activities; answer options will also include "don't know" and "no specific activities")*

## Adult Participation In Outdoor Recreation Activities

*Next, I'm going to read a list of outdoor recreation activities, and I'd like to know if you personally participated in them anywhere in Texas in the past 12 months. Please answer "yes" only for those activities you personally did in Texas in the past 12 months.*

(ADMINISTERED IN RANDOM ORDER)

- Walking for pleasure
- Running or jogging
- Viewing or photographing birds
- Viewing or photographing wildlife or nature
- Day hiking
- Backpacking
- Visiting nature centers
- Visiting historical or cultural sites
- Swimming in a swimming pool
- Swimming in lakes, streams or rivers
- Sightseeing
- Bicycling

[IF YES TO BICYCLING]:

- Mountain biking
- Road biking
- Picnicking, cookouts, or other gathering
- Motorized boating, such as boating with a motorboat, speedboat, powerboat, or personal watercraft (IF ASKED: Jet skis and PWCs are personal watercraft and are included.)
- Non-motorized boating, such as boating with a sailboat, canoe, kayak, or rowing

[IF YES TO NON-MOTORIZED BOATING]:

- Sailboating
- Canoeing
- Kayaking
- Rowing
- Paddle boarding
- Windsurfing
- Driving off-road with an ATV, dirt bike, or other off-road vehicle, including 4-wheel drive trucks? (IF ASKED: Includes SUVs and Jeeps.)
- Camping

[IF YES TO CAMPING]:

- Primitive camping
- Cabin camping
- RV camping
- Tent camping
- Outdoor team sports, such as baseball, basketball, soccer, or other similar sports (Include them only if you play them outside—it does not include basketball played inside.)

- Attending outdoor festivals, shows, or other events
- Fishing
  - [IF YES TO FISHING]:
    - Freshwater fishing
    - Saltwater fishing
- Hunting with a firearm or bowhunting
- Archery, not including bowhunting
- Horseback riding
- Golf
- Disc golf
- Outdoor activities using apps or other technology, such as geocaching or Pokemon Go

(CHECK ONLY ONE ANSWER FOR EACH)

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

## **Missing Facilities and Opportunities**

*Are there any OUTDOOR recreation opportunities that your community currently lacks, or that you would like to see more of in your community? (check only one answer)*

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

(IF YES, THERE ARE OUTDOOR OPPORTUNITIES LACKING)

*Which OUTDOOR recreation opportunities does your community currently lack, or would you like to see more of in your community? (open-ended; enter specifics)*

## Youth Participation In Outdoor Recreation Activities

*We're also measuring the most important outdoor recreation activities in which youth participate.*

*Do you have any youth, age 17 or younger, currently living in your household? (check only one answer)*

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

(IF YES, HAS YOUTH LIVING IN HOUSEHOLD)

*What are the most important outdoor recreation activities these youth participated in, within the past 12 months in Texas? (open-ended; check all that apply)*

(NOTE THAT THE FOLLOWING LIST WILL NOT BE READ; INTERVIEWERS WILL SELECT ALL ACTIVITIES MENTIONED, AS WELL AS ANY OTHERS NAMED)

- Playing outside in general / no specific activities
- Visiting or playing at a park or designated recreation area
- Soccer
- Basketball
- Football
- Baseball
- Softball
- Tennis
- Golf
- Swimming
- Running or walking
- Roller skating
- Ice skating
- Skateboarding
- Volleyball
- Biking
- Hiking
- Camping
- Fishing
- Hunting
- Other (enter specifics)
- None—youth did not participate in any outdoor activities
- Don't know

## Visitation To Local Parks

*Have you visited any LOCAL parks in Texas in the past 12 months? By LOCAL parks I mean county, town, or city parks within 30 minutes of your home, and not state or national parks. (check only one answer)*

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

(IF HAS VISITED LOCAL PARKS)

*How many times have you visited any LOCAL parks in Texas in the past 12 months? (enter number of times)*

*Are there any features or facilities that your LOCAL parks currently lack, or that you would like to see more of at your local parks? (check only one answer)*

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

(IF YES, THERE ARE FEATURES/FACILITIES LACKING)

*Which features or facilities do your LOCAL parks currently lack, or would you like to see more of at your local parks? (open-ended; enter specifics)*

(IF HAS NOT VISITED LOCAL PARKS)

*What are the main reasons that you haven't visited a LOCAL park in Texas in the past 12 months? (open-ended; do not read list; check all that apply)*

- No time
- No interest
- Moved to Texas recently No parks close to home
- Don't know if any local parks are close by
- Parking fee
- Age / health
- Other (enter specifics)
- Don't know

(IF HAS NOT VISITED LOCAL PARKS)

*Is there anything that would encourage you to visit a LOCAL park in Texas? (check only one answer)*

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

(IF HAS NOT VISITED LOCAL PARKS)

*What would encourage you to visit a LOCAL park in Texas? (open-ended; enter specifics)*

## **Perceptions Of State Parks**

*Now I'd like to ask you about STATE parks in Texas. First, what comes to mind when you think about STATE parks in Texas? (open-ended; enter specifics)*

*What activities do you most associate with state parks in Texas, regardless of whether you do them? (open-ended; enter specifics)*

## Visitation To State Parks

*Have you visited any STATE parks in Texas in the past 12 months? (CHECK ONLY ONE ANSWER)*

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

*How many times have you visited any STATE parks in Texas in the past 12 months? (enter number) (IF HAS VISITED STATE PARKS)*

*How long, in terms of time, do you typically travel one-way to visit a STATE park in Texas? (enter time in minutes/hours as necessary)*

*On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is very poor and 10 is excellent, how would rate the experience of a typical visit to a STATE park in Texas? (enter numerical rating)*

*What would you say is the most important reason you visit STATE parks in Texas? Is it for the sport or recreation, for relaxation, to spent time with family and friends, to be active and healthy, or to be close to nature? (check only one answer)*

- For sport or recreation
- For relaxation
- To spend time with family and friends
- To be active and healthy
- To be close to nature
- Don't know

*Are there any features or facilities that STATE parks in Texas currently lack, or that you would like to see more of at state parks in Texas? (check only one answer)*

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

*(IF YES, THERE ARE FEATURES/FACILITIES LACKING)*

*Which features or facilities do STATE parks in Texas currently lack, or would you like to see more of at state parks in Texas? (open-ended; enter specifics)*

(IF HAS NOT VISITED STATE PARKS)

*What are the main reasons that you haven't visited a STATE park in Texas in the past 12 months? (open-ended; do not read list; check all that apply)*

- No time
- No interest / didn't think about it
- Moved to Texas recently
- No parks close to home
- Don't know if any state parks are close by
- Limited outdoor skills
- Entrance fees
- Activity fees
- Too crowded
- Too difficult to get to camping site Safety concerns
- Age / health
- Other (enter specifics)
- Don't know

(IF HAS NOT VISITED STATE PARKS)

*Is there anything that would encourage you to visit a STATE park in Texas? (check only one answer)*

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

(IF HAS NOT VISITED STATE PARKS)

*What would encourage you to visit a STATE park in Texas? (open-ended; enter specifics)*

## Preferred Information Delivery Methods

*What would be the best ways for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to provide you with information about state parks and other recreation opportunities? We are not sending any information out at this time; we are simply measuring the best ways to reach residents. (open-ended; do not read list; check all that apply)*

- Direct mail
- Television
- Radio
- Newspapers
- Internet in general
- Social media in general
- Printed brochures (enter specifics)
- Facebook (enter specifics)
- Twitter (enter specifics)
- Instagram (enter specifics)
- Snapchat (enter specifics)
- Email newsletters (enter specifics)
- Mobile app (enter specifics)
- Texas Parks and Wildlife website
- Texas Parks and Wildlife magazine
- Texas Parks and Wildlife Facebook page
- Texas Parks and Wildlife Twitter account
- Texas State Parks mobile app
- Other (enter specifics)
- Don't know

## DEMOGRAPHICS

*Great! We are just about through. The final questions are for background information and help us analyze the results.*

*What is your zip code? (enter zip code)*

*What is the highest level of education you have completed? (check only one answer)*

- Not a high school graduate
- High school graduate or equivalent
- Some college or trade school, no degree
- Associate's or trade school degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Professional or doctorate degree (e.g., M.D., Ph.D.)
- Don't know
- Refused

*Which races or ethnic backgrounds do you consider yourself? Please name all that apply.  
(Read list as necessary; check all that apply)*

- White or Caucasian
- Black or African-American
- Hispanic or Latino (includes Mexican, Central American, etc.) Native American or Alaskan native or Aleutian
- Native Hawaiian Middle Eastern
- East Asian (from Japan, China, Korea, Philippines, etc.) South Asian (from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, etc.) African (NOT African-American)
- Other (enter specifics) Don't know
- Refused

*And finally, may I ask your age? (open-ended; enter age)*

*Gender (recorded from interviewer's observation)*

- Male
- Female
- Don't know

# APPENDIX E. Provider Survey

## **2017 Local Park Grants Program Provider Survey**

The Recreation Grants Branch at Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) is conducting a survey of Texas recreation providers to assess the evaluation criteria for awarding Local Park Grants. In addition, we are asking for feedback regarding the application and grant management processes. Your responses will assist us in keeping the evaluation criteria relevant for all applicants, and for all five Local Park Grant Opportunities. These include the Urban Outdoor Recreation, Non-Urban Outdoor Recreation, Small Community Outdoor Recreation, Urban Indoor, and Non-Urban Indoor Grant Programs.

**1. What type of government or other entity do you represent?**

- City or County, population above 500,000
- City or County, population between 20,000 & 499,999
- City or County, population less than 20,000
- Special District (example: MUD, River Authority, Water Dist., PID, etc.)
- State of Texas
- U.S. Government
- Private Consultant
- Other, please specify

**2. Have you applied for a Local Park Grant within the last 5 years?\***

This includes Small Community, Non-Urban Outdoor, Urban Outdoor, Non-Urban Indoor and Urban Indoor applications.

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

**3. Rate the ease of the application process.**

- Difficult
- Neutral
- Easy
- No Opinion

**4. Have you attended a TPWD sponsored Local Park Grant Writing Workshop in the last 5 years?**

\*

- Yes

- No
- Don't Know

5. Rate the usefulness of the workshop in assisting you with the application process.

- Not at all Useful
- Somewhat Useful
- Very Useful
- No Opinion

6. Have you **received a Local Park Grant** in the last 5 years?\*

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

7. Rate the ease of the grant management process.

- Difficult
- Neutral
- Easy
- No Opinion

8. Have you **attended a TPWD sponsored Local Park Grant Management Workshop** in the last 5 years?\*

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

9. Rate the usefulness of the workshop in assisting you with the grant management process.

- Not At All Useful
- Somewhat Useful
- Very Useful
- No Opinion

10. Have you **interacted with the Local Park Grant Staff** in the last 5 years?\*

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

11. How would you rate your overall experience with Local Park Grant Staff?

- Poor
- Good
- Excellent
- No Opinion

12. Have you utilized the **Rec Grants Online Portal** to apply or manage grants?\*

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

13. Rate your overall satisfaction with TPWD Rec Grants Online.

- Very Dissatisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Very Satisfied
- No Opinion

14. Please provide comments regarding your experience with the Local Park Grant Programs and Staff.



## LOCAL PLANNING

15. Do you have a TPWD endorsed master plan or other comprehensive plan for parks and recreation sites and facilities?\*

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

### Rate the USEFULNESS of your TPWD endorsed master plan or comprehensive plan based on the following criteria:

16. Rate the USEFULNESS of your TPWD endorsed master plan or comprehensive plan based on the following criteria:

	Not at all Useful	Somewhat Useful	Very Useful	No Opinion
Solicit public input/involvement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inventory existing facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assess maintenance needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Establish system-wide goals and objectives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assess outdoor and indoor recreation needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Establish local facility standards vs. standardized facility criteria	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overall priorities for parks and recreation facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

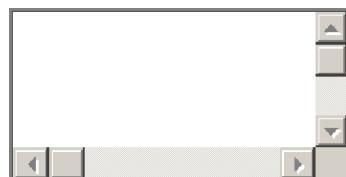
17. Is your master plan used to provide guidance to local decision makers?\*

- Yes
- No

18. What are the reasons that you do not have a TPWD endorsed master plan or comprehensive plan? **Check all that apply.**

- Lack of funding/resources to prepare a plan
- Lack of community interest/involvement
- Never really considered it
- Other, please specify

19. Identify the methods you use to determine the wants/needs of your citizens for parks and recreation facilities and programs.



20. Rate the usefulness of your method to determine wants/needs of your citizens for parks and recreation facilities and programs.

	Ineffective	Somewhat Effective	Effective	No Opinion
Obtaining public input/involvement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Identifying existing facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Determining maintenance needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Establishing system-wide goals & objectives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Determining outdoor & indoor recreation needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Establishing facility standards vs. using standardized facility criteria	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Itemizing an overall priority for park & recreation facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Rate the importance of the following ELIGIBILITY criteria to receive grant funds through the Local Park Grant Program.**

21. All active projects, which are at least two years old, ***must be reimbursed*** for a minimum of the percentage of the approved grant funds.

	Very Unimportant	Somewhat Important	Very Important	No Opinion
At least 25% for Urban Grants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
At least 50% for Non-Urban and Small Community Grants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

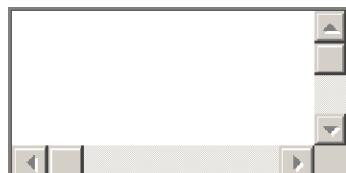
22. The total of approved grant funds, ***which have not been reimbursed***, may not exceed:

	Very Unimportant	Somewhat Important	Very Important	No Opinion
\$4 million for all active Urban Grant projects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
\$2 million for all active Non-Urban and Small Community Grant projects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

23. For applicants that have had previous grants through the Local Park Grant Programs.

	Very Unimportant	Somewhat Important	Very Important	No Opinion
In compliance with previously funded TPWD grants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ability to maintain park & recreation facilities in the future	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

24. Please provide comments that can assist us in evaluating the ELIGIBILITY criteria.

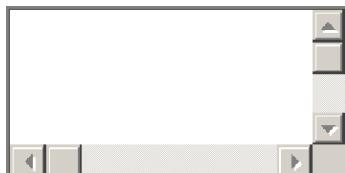
A large rectangular text input field with a thin black border. At the bottom of the field, there is a horizontal toolbar containing several small icons: a double arrow (zoom), a magnifying glass (search), a trash can (delete), a bold button, a italic button, a underline button, a font style dropdown, a font size dropdown, and a color palette. To the right of the toolbar, there are vertical scroll bars.

**Rate the importance of the following PUBLIC INPUT criteria to evaluate and rank local park grant applications**

25. Rate the importance of local planning

	Very Unimportant	Somewhat Important	Very Important	No Opinion
Having a current (less than 5 years old) comprehensive parks and recreation master plan on file with TPWD Local Park Grants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having current (less than 5 years old) public input regarding community-wide parks and recreation needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Addressing the top 5 priorities listed in the master plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Addressing any needs identified in the master plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Addressing the top 5 priorities from public input	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Addressing any needs identified from public input	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

26. Please provide comments that can assist us in evaluating PUBLIC INPUT criteria.



**Rate the importance of the following ACQUISITION criteria with regard to evaluating and ranking Local Park Grant applications**

27. Rate the importance of ACQUISITION in a Local Park Grant application

	Very Unimportant	Somewhat Important	Very Important	No Opinion
Acquisition of new public parkland	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dedicating publicly owned non-parkland to public parkland	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Threat of the loss of an opportunity to acquire land if not funded	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unique attributes of acquisition sites by # of acres & quality of land	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

28. Please provide comments that can assist us in the evaluating ACQUISITION criteria.

**Rate the importance of DEVELOPMENT criteria with regard to evaluating and ranking Local Park Grant applications**

29. Rate the importance of DEVELOPMENT in Local Park Grant applications.

	Very Unimportant	Somewhat Important	Very Important	No Opinion
Shovel readiness of the project	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Renovating park facilities that have outlived their useful life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Project provides unique attributes and/or features	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Project provides direct recreation facilities (sports fields, playgrounds, trails, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Project provides recreation support facilities (restrooms, parking, area lighting, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Project provides a diversity of recreation opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Project provides specific recreation opportunity (nature-based, sports complex, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Linking the park to other green spaces	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Linking parks to other public spaces	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Burying existing and future overhead utility lines in the recreation area of the park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

30. Please provide comments that can assist us in evaluating DEVELOPMENT criteria.

#### Rate the importance of CONSERVATION with regard to evaluating and ranking Local Park Grant applications

31. Rate the importance of CONSERVATION.

	Very Unimportant	Somewhat Important	Very Important	No Opinion
Prior consultation with resource agencies (TPWD, Corps of Engineers, TX Historical Commission, US Fish & Wildlife Service)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Project uses sustainable park design and/or conservation techniques (solar lights, recycled materials, rainwater	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

collection, habitat restoration, etc.)

Project dedicates a portion of the park as natural open space/wildlife habitat that will NOT be developed for high impact recreation

32. Please provide comments that can assist us in evaluating CONSERVATION criteria.

**Rate the importance of ACCESS/GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION criteria with regard to evaluating and ranking Local Park Grant applications**

33. Rate the importance of the ACCESS/GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION criteria.

	Very Unimportant	Somewhat Important	Very Important	No Opinion
Project will improve the geographic distribution of park & recreation opportunities in the community				
Project provides the first public park in the community				
Project improves park and recreation opportunities of low income citizens				
Project improves park and recreation opportunities for ethnic minority citizens				
Project improves park and recreation opportunities for physically/mentally challenged citizens				

34. Please provide comments that can assist us in evaluating ACCESS/GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION criteria.

**Rate the importance of PARTNERSHIPS with regard to evaluating and ranking Local Park Grant applications**

35. Rate the importance of the PARTNERSHIP criteria.

	Very Unimportant	Somewhat Important	Very Important	No Opinion
Number of partnerships created to complete the proposed project				
Amount of match provided from outside partners				
Ability to leverage grant funding for the project				

36. Please provide comments that can assist us in evaluating PARTNERSHIPS criteria.

37. What other criteria would you like to see included in the evaluation of Local Park Grant Applications?

38. Below are the current ceiling request for each Local Park Grant Program. Rate your satisfaction with the current ceiling request for each program. All Local Park Grant Programs have a \$1 to \$1 match requirement.

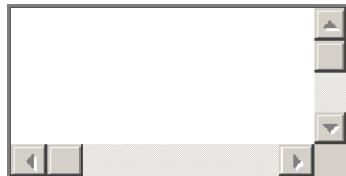
	Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied	No Opinion
Urban Outdoor Recreation - \$1 million	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Urban Indoor Recreation - \$1 million	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Non-Urban Indoor  
Recreation - \$750,000

Non-Urban Outdoor  
Recreation - \$500,000

Small Community  
Recreation - \$75,000

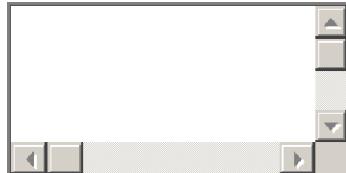
39. Please provide comments that can assist us in evaluating MATCH CEILINGS.

A large rectangular input field for text entry, featuring a vertical scroll bar on the right side and horizontal scroll bars at the bottom.

40. What is your position within your organization?\*

- Executive/Director/Regional Director (in charge of the overall organization)
- First Line Management/Park Superintendent
- Supervisory - Parks
- Supervisory - Recreation
- Field Staff - Parks
- Field Staff - Recreation
- Administrative
- Grant Administrator
- Prefer not to answer
- Other, please specify

41. What is your zip code?\*

A large rectangular input field for text entry, featuring a vertical scroll bar on the right side and horizontal scroll bars at the bottom.

42. Name of your organization (**optional**)



43. What is your gender? **(optional)**

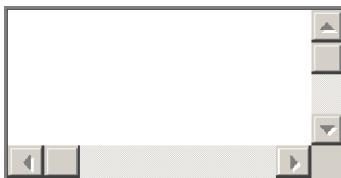
- Female
- Male

44. Which races or ethnic backgrounds do you consider yourself? Check all that apply. **(optional)**

- White or Caucasian
- Black or African-American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native American, Alaskan Native, Aleutian
- Native Hawaiian
- Middle Eastern
- East Asian (from Japan, China, Korea, Philippines, etc.)
- South Asian (from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, etc.)
- African (NOT African-American)
- Don't Know
- Decline to Answer
- Other, please specify



45. Do you have any other comments or information you would like to provide?



# **APPENDIX F1. Non-Urban Outdoor Scoring System**

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## **PROJECT PRIORITY SCORING SYSTEM**

### **Texas Recreation & Parks Account**

#### **Non-Urban Outdoor Recreation Grant Program**

(Effective May 1, 2014)

## **Applicant Eligibility**

All previously completed Recreation Grant Projects must be in compliance with all program guidelines and all terms of the Project Agreement under which they received assistance.

For active grants, all required project documentation must be complete and have been received on schedule.

All active projects which are at least two years old must be reimbursed for a minimum of 50% of the approved grant amount at the time of application.

The total of approved grant funds which have not been reimbursed may not exceed \$2 million for all active grant projects at the time of application.

## **1. Master Plan**

Total Range: 0-15 points

Applicant has a current department-endorsed master plan or other comprehensive plan on file with the department at the time of application. (5 points); **and**

- Project meets 3 of the top 5 priority needs identified in the plan (10 points) **or**;
- Project meets 2 of the top 5 priority needs identified in the plan (6 points) **or**;
- Project meets 1 of the top 5 priority needs identified in the plan (3 points)

## **2. Recreation Diversity**

Total Range: 0-10 points

Project will provide diversity of park and recreation facilities. One point will be awarded for each type of significant and diverse recreation facility.

Each facility must be identified as a need in the applicant's locally adopted park, recreation and open space master plan or, if the applicant does not have an adopted master plan, by a documented public input process. (0-10 points)

### **3. Water Based Recreation**

The project will expand access to water-based recreation opportunities along existing natural water bodies, provide desirable habitat conditions for fish and wildlife, and will not degrade the resource. Scoring shall be as follows:

- Project expands access to water-based recreation on an existing wetland, river, continuous flow stream, pond, lake, gulf, bay, or estuary (1 point); **and**
- Project preserves, restores, or improves habitat conditions for fish and wildlife (1 point); **and/or**
- Project is provided in an area that currently has limited public access to water-based recreation along existing natural water bodies (1 point); **and/or**
- Project provides a link to existing natural water bodies that support water-based recreation opportunities (1 point)

### **4. Geographic Distribution**

Total Range: 0-10 points

The project will improve the geographic distribution of park and recreation lands and facilities in the project's service area or within the applicant's jurisdiction.

- Project provides the first public park in the applicant's jurisdiction or intended service area (10 points); **or**
- Project provides significantly new and different park and recreation opportunities (other than school facilities) at the project site. Points for this item shall be awarded only if specific recreation elements are identified as a need in a locally adopted park, recreation, and open space master plan or, if the applicant does not have an adopted master plan, by a documented public input process. Point awards shall be calculated as follows: new and different facility costs, divided by total construction costs, multiplied by 10. (0-10 points)

### **5. Outdoor Recreation/Conservation vs. Support Costs**

Total Range: 0-20 points

Project maximizes the use of development funds for outdoor recreation and conservation opportunities determined by dividing the direct recreational and conservation costs by the total construction costs and multiplying the result by 20. (0-20 points)

## 6. Underserved Populations

- Project improves opportunities for low-income citizens based on economic and demographic data for the service area from the most recent federal census data; determined by multiplying the percentage of population qualifying as low-income by 5. (0-5 points); **and/or**
- Project improves opportunities for ethnic minority citizens, based on economic and demographic data for the service area from the most recent census data; determined by multiplying the percentage of population qualifying as minority by 5.(0- 5 points); **and/or**
- Project provides park and recreation opportunities for physically/mentally challenged citizens, which exceed the federal and state required accessibility standards. (2 points)

## 7. Local Resources and Partnerships

Total Range: 0-20 points

The project involves local resources or documented cooperation between the applicant and other public or private entities to provide park and recreation opportunities at the project site.

- Project involves the contribution of resources from sources other than the applicant, including publicly owned non-parkland, which serves as all or part of the applicant's matching share of funds. Points shall be awarded on a percentage basis, determined by dividing the total outside contribution value by the total match and multiplying the result by 15. (0-15 points); **and/or**
- Project includes documented contributions via the applicant or outside resources above the 50% required match. Points will be awarded based on the following criteria:  $(\text{Additional Contribution Amount} / \text{Required Match}) \times 5 =$  (0-5 points)

## 8. Land Acquisition

Total Range: 0-25 points

Project provides for the acquisition and conservation of park and recreation lands, including publicly owned non-parkland, which consist of natural resources or provides desirable open space or needed parkland.

- Project provides for the acquisition and conservation of a government- identified natural area which is recognized in an acceptable, published planning document for having valuable or vulnerable natural resources, ecological processes, or rare, threatened, or endangered species of vegetation or wildlife. Points based on acreage and/or quality (0-25points); **or**
- Project provides for the acquisition and conservation of natural open space that is two acres or larger in size, relatively free of man-made structures and which is identified in an acceptable and adopted local, jurisdiction-wide open space plan or master plan. Points based on acreage and/or quality (0-15 points); **or**
- Project provides for the acquisition of needed parkland. Points awarded based on the quality, size and how well the narrative justifies need. (0-5 points)

## **9. Renovation and Adaptive Reuse**

Total Range: 0-25 points

Project provides for the renovation or adaptive reuse of an existing obsolete facility, determined by dividing the renovation cost by the total construction cost and multiplying the result by 25. (0-25 points)

## **10. Sustainable Park Design**

Total Range: 0-10 points

Project promotes sustainable park design. Points for this category will be awarded based on how the overall project embraces sustainable techniques in the design and construction of the park, including but not limited to the diversity, innovative nature and/or cost of the project elements. (0-10 points)

## **11. Linkage**

Total Range: 0-3 points

Project provides linkage via trail to other public park and conservation areas. Points shall be awarded based on the significance of the linkage. (0-3 points)

## **12. TPWD Goals**

Total Range: 0-5 points

Project supports the department's Land and Water Resources Conservation and Recreation Plan. Applicant must address how the project meets the goals of the Plan in the proposal narrative. (0-5 points)

## **13. Compliance**

Total Points Deducted: (-5 points)

Applicant is in compliance with previously funded projects. If applicant is not in compliance with existing grant obligations, 5 points will be deducted from the project score. (-5 points)

## **14. Application Materials**

Total Points Available: (5 points)

A complete application was received by the application deadline. (5 points)

# **APPENDIX F2. Small Community Scoring System**

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## **Project Priority Scoring System**

**Texas Recreation & Parks Account**

### **Small Community Grant Program**

**(Effective May 1, 2014)**

#### **Applicant Eligibility**

All previously completed Recreation Grant Projects must be in compliance with all program guidelines and all terms of the Project Agreement under which they received assistance.

For active grants, all required project documentation must be complete and have been received on schedule.

All active projects which are at least two years old must be reimbursed for a minimum of 50% of the approved grant amount at the time of application.

The total of approved grant funds which have not been reimbursed may not exceed \$2 million for all active grant projects at the time of application.

#### **1. Population**

Total Range: 0- 3 points

Population of the applicant is 2,500 or less based on the most recent federal census data. (3 points)

#### **2. Geographic Distribution**

Total Point Range: 0-10 points

The project will improve the geographic distribution of park and recreation lands and facilities in the project's service area or within the applicant's jurisdiction.

- Project provides the first public park in the applicant's jurisdiction or intended service area. (10 points); **or**
- Project provides significantly new and different park and recreation opportunities (other than school facilities) at the project site. One point per facility identified by documented public input process to be a need. (0-3 points)

### **3. Outdoor Recreation/Conservation vs. Support Costs**

Total Range: 0-10 points

Project maximizes the use of development funds for direct outdoor recreation and conservation opportunities as determined by dividing the direct recreational and conservation costs by the total construction costs and multiplying the result by 10. (0-10 points)

### **4. Underserved Populations**

Total Range: 0-12 points

- Project improves opportunities for low-income citizens based on economic and demographic data for the service area from the most recent federal census data. Points will be calculated by multiplying the percentage of population qualifying as low income by five. (0-5 points); **and/or**
- Project improves opportunities for ethnic minority citizens based on economic and demographic data for the service area from the most recent federal census data. Points will be calculated by multiplying the percentage of population qualifying as minority by five. (0-5 points); **and/or**
- Project provides park and recreation opportunities for physically/mentally challenged citizens which exceed the federal and state required accessibility standards. (2 points)

### **5. Local Resources and Partnerships**

Total Range: 0-10 points

The project involves local resources or documented cooperation between the applicant and other public or private entities to provide park and recreation opportunities at the project site(s).

- Project involves the contribution of resources from sources other than the applicant, including publicly owned non-parkland, which serves as all or part of the applicant's matching share of funds. Up to five points may be awarded on a percentage basis, as determined by dividing the total outside contribution value by the total match and multiplying the result by five. (0-5 points); **and/or**
- Project includes documented contributions via the applicant or outside resources above the 50% required match. Up to five points will be awarded based on the following criteria:  $(\text{Additional Contribution Amount} / \text{Required Match}) \times 5 = (0-5 \text{ points})$

### **6. Renovation**

Total Range: 0-10 points

Project provides for the renovation of an existing obsolete area or facility, as determined by dividing the renovation cost by the total construction cost and multiplying the result by ten. (0-10 points)

## **7. Sustainable Park Design**

Total Range: 0-5 points

Points for this category will be awarded based on how the overall project embraces sustainable techniques in the design and construction of the park, including but not limited to the diversity, innovative nature and/or cost of the project elements. (0-5 points)

## **8. TPWD Goals**

Total Range: 0-2 points

Project supports the department's Land and Water Resources Conservation and Recreation Plan. Applicant must address how the project meets the goals of the Plan in the proposal narrative. (0-2 points)

## **9. Compliance**

Total Points Deducted: -5 points

Applicant is in compliance with previously funded projects. If applicant is not in compliance with existing grant obligations, 5 points will be deducted from the project score. (-5 points)

## **10. Application Materials**

Total Range: 0- 5 points

A complete application was received by the application deadline. (5 points)

# **APPENDIX F3. Urban Outdoor Scoring System**

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## **Project Priority Scoring System**

**Large County & Municipality Recreation & Parks Account**

### **Urban Outdoor Recreation Grant Program**

**(Effective May 1, 2014)**

#### **Applicant Eligibility**

All previously completed Recreation Grant Projects must be in compliance with all program guidelines and all terms of the Project Agreement under which they received assistance.

For active grants, all required project documentation must be complete and have been received on schedule.

All active projects which are at least two years old must be reimbursed for a minimum of 25% of the approved grant amount at the time of application.

The total of approved grant funds which have not been reimbursed may not exceed \$4 million for all active grant projects at the time of application.

#### **1. Master Plan**

Total Range: 0-10 points

- Project applicant has a locally adopted and department-approved parks, recreation and open space master plan or other jurisdiction-wide plan that addresses outdoor recreation needs (5 points); **and**
- Project satisfies 1 of the top 5 priority needs (5 points)

## 2. Threat

Total Range: 0-3 points

Project reduces the threat to the public availability of a conservation or recreation opportunity. The project narrative must include a discussion of the particular compelling circumstances involving the project, such as imminent loss of opportunity, or time-sensitive economic factors (i.e. loss of potential funding partner if action is not undertaken quickly).

- No evidence of threat is presented (0 points); **or**
- Minimal threat; the conservation or recreation opportunity appears to be in no immediate danger of loss in the next 36 months (1 point); **or**
- Actions under consideration could result in the conservation or recreation opportunity becoming unavailable for public use (2 points); **or**
- Actions will be taken that will result in the conservation or recreation opportunity becoming unavailable for future public use or a threat situation has occurred or is imminent that will result in the acquisition of rights to the land by a land trust at the request of the applicant (3 points).

## 3. Land Acquisition

Total Range: 0-19 points

The project proposes to acquire land that would satisfy one or more of the following:

- An area that is significant for a relatively undisturbed ecosystem that exhibits regionally representative geological, floral, faunal, or hydrological features and has the potential to serve regional or statewide recreation needs. Natural areas can serve as: greenbelts/open spaces; locations for passive activities; preservation areas for unique natural features; and interpretive sites which highlight or explain ecosystem processes. Points based on acreage and quality. (0-4 points); **and/or**
- Green corridor/connectivity to existing protected areas. Points based on acreage and quality. (0-4 points); **and/or**
- Pocket parks defined as 1 acre or less in size with a service area of one-quarter mile.(2 points); and/or
- Intensive-use recreation facility such as an athletic complex. (2 points); **and/or**
- Future conservation and recreation purposes that initially provide limited public access. Points based on quality and size. (0-4 points); **and/or**
- Expansion, to include in-holdings, of existing parks and conservation areas. (2 points); **and/or**
- Adaptive reuse for recreation or conservation of lands that have limited use in their existing state. (1 point)

## 4. Development

Total Range: 0-9 points

- Neighborhood park defined as 1-15 acres in size with a service area of one-half mile (3 points); **and/or**
- Natural resource based sites developed for outdoor recreation and education purposes such as trails, wildlife viewing, interpretive signage, etc. NOTE: Indoor facilities are not eligible under this program (2 points); **and/or**
- Park and conservation area of regional significance (project is a component of a comprehensive or park and recreation master plan for 1 or more political jurisdictions). (2points); **and/or**
- Multi-purpose recreation facility (1 point); **and/or**
- Outdoor aquatic recreation (1 point)

## 5. Sustainable Park Design and Development

Total Range: 0-5 points

The project embraces sustainable techniques in the design and construction of the park or includes wildlife habitat improvement/restoration. Points will be awarded based on but not limited to diversity, innovative nature and/or cost of the project elements. (0-5 points)

## 6. Restoration and Renovation

Total Range: 0-10 points

Project provides for the restoration and/or renovation of existing infrastructure or other facilities that is no longer usable for its intended or original purpose:

- Restoration of existing infrastructure: Points will be awarded based the following calculation (Renovation Cost divided by the Total Construction Cost multiplied by ten). (0-10 points); **and/or**
- Adaptive reuse of existing structures and facilities to provide new or different recreation opportunities (use of an existing slab from a demolished building as a recreation court, the reuse of a bridge for recreation purposes, remediated brownfield, etc.). Points will be awarded according to the following formula: (Reuse Costs divided by Total Construction Costs multiplied by five) (0-5 points)

## 7. Trails/Corridors/Greenways

Total Range: 0-25 points

Project proposes one or more of the following. Points awarded based on length of trail.

- Major linear development of 1 mile or longer (0-6 points); **and/or**
- Development that connects or extends an existing trail system or wildlife corridor (0-5 points); **and/or**
- Major loop development of 1 mile or more (0-4 points); **and/or**
- Neighborhood/loop trail development (0-4 points); **and/or**
- Off-road trail development for non-motorized use (0-2 points); **and/or**
- Aquatic paddling trail development (0-2 points); **and/or**
- Interpretive nature trail development (0-2 points)

## 8. Sports Facilities

Total Range: (0-10 points)

Project proposes the development of one or more of the following:

- Large capacity, intensive-use sports facility (7 points);**and/or**
- Competition or practice facilities in close proximity to users (3 points)

## 9. Underserved Populations

Total Range: 0-10 points

- Project provides more equitable geographic distribution of facilities. Project proposal shall provide a map showing current distribution of parks in entire service area to support a need in a particular location. (4 points); **and/or**
- Project improves opportunities for low-income citizens based on the economic demographic information of the service area from the most recent census data, determined by multiplying the percentage of population qualifying as low-income by 2 (0-2 points); **and/or**
- Project improves opportunities for ethnic minority citizens based on the demographic information of the service area from the most recent census data: determined by multiplying the percentage of population qualifying as ethnic minority by 2 (0-2 points); **and/or**
- Project provides park and recreation opportunities for physically/mentally challenged citizens, which exceed the federal and state required accessibility standards. (2 points)

## **10. Local Resources and Partnerships**

Total Range: 0-8 points

- Project involves public or private cooperation based on the percentage of the match contributed by partners. Points are calculated by dividing the partner contribution by the total match and multiplying by five. (0-5 points); **and/or**
- Project includes documented contributions via the applicant or outside resources above the 50% required match. Points will be awarded based on the following criteria:  $(\text{Additional Contribution Amount} / \text{Required Match}) \times 3 =$  (0-3 points)

## **11. Historical/Cultural Resources**

Total Range: 0- 2 points

Project provides park and recreation opportunities that enhance and encourage appreciation and preservation of site-based cultural, natural, historical or archaeological resources by means of interpretation, facilities, or preservation strategies (2 points).

## **12. TPWD Goals**

Total Range: 0-10 points

Applicant must specifically describe how the project meets the goals of the TPWD Land and Water Resources Conservation & Recreation Plan. (0-10 points)

## **13. Urban Biologist Consultation**

Total Range: 0-5 points

Applicant has consulted with an urban biologist from the department regarding the proposed site plan at least 30 days prior to the application deadline and the biologist's comments are included in the application materials (5 points)

## **14. Compliance**

Total Points Deducted: -5 points

Applicant is not in compliance with previously funded projects. (-5 points)

## **15. Application Materials**

Total Range: 0-5 points

A complete application was received by the application deadline. (5 points)

# **APPENDIX F4. Non-Urban Indoor Scoring System**

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## **Project Priority Scoring System**

**Texas Recreation & Parks Account**

### **Non-Urban Indoor Recreation Grant Program**

**(Effective May 1, 2014)**

#### **Applicant Eligibility**

All previously completed Recreation Grant Projects must be in compliance with all program guidelines and all terms of the Project Agreement under which they received assistance.

For active grants, all required project documentation must be complete and have been received on schedule.

All active projects which are at least two years old must be reimbursed for a minimum of 50% of the approved grant amount at the time of application.

The total of approved grant funds which have not been reimbursed may not exceed \$2 million for all active grant projects at the time of application.

#### **1. Master Plan**

Total Range: 0-15 points

Applicant has a current department-endorsed master plan or other comprehensive plan on file with the department at the time of application. (5 points); **and**

- Project meets 3 of the top 5 priority needs identified in the plan (10 points) **or**;
- Project meets 2 of the top 5 priority needs identified in the plan (6 points)
- Project meets 1 of the top 5 priority needs identified in the plan (3 points)

## **2. Recreation Diversity**

Total Range: 0-10 points

Project will provide diversity of public indoor recreation facilities or opportunities. Points shall be awarded based on the number of indoor recreation facilities provided. One point will be awarded for each type of recreation facility provided that each recreation element is identified as a need in a locally adopted master plan or, if the applicant does not have an adopted plan, by a documented public input process. The department will not consider project elements that do not support a recreational activity. (0-10 points)

## **3. Geographic Distribution**

Total Range: 0-20 points

- Project provides the first public indoor recreation facility in the applicant's jurisdiction or intended service area. (20 points); **or**
- Project provides significantly new and different public indoor recreation facilities (other than school facilities) in the applicant's jurisdiction or intended service area, based on 5 points per opportunity, provided the individual recreation elements are identified as a need in a locally adopted master plan or, if the applicant does not have an adopted plan, by a documented public input process. (0-15 points)

## **4. Local Resources and Partnerships**

Total Range: 0-20 points

- Project involves the contribution of resources, including publicly owned non-parkland, from sources other than the applicant, which serves as all or part of the applicant's matching share of funds. Points shall be awarded on a percentage basis, determined by dividing the total outside contribution value by the total match and multiplying the result by 15. (0-15 points); **and/or**
- Project includes documented contributions via the applicant or outside resources above the 50% required match. Up to five points will be awarded based on the following criteria:  $(\text{Additional Contribution Amount} / \text{Required Match}) \times 5 =$  (0-5 points)

## **5. Renovation and Adaptive Reuse**

Total Range: 0-25 points

Project provides for the renovation or adaptive reuse of an existing facility, determined by dividing the renovation cost by the total construction cost and multiplying the result by 25. (0-25 points)

## **6. Underserved populations**

Total Range: 0-12 points

- Project improves opportunities for low-income citizens: determined by multiplying the percentage of population qualifying as low-income by 5 and dividing by 100. (0-5 points); **and/or**
- Project improves opportunities for minority citizens: determined by multiplying the percentage of population qualifying as minority by 5 and dividing by 100. (0-5 points); **and/or**
- Project provides park and recreation opportunities for physically/mentally challenged citizens, which exceed the federal and state required accessibility standards. (2 points)

## **7. Sustainable Park Design**

Total Range: 0-10 points

Points shall be awarded based on how the overall project embraces sustainable techniques in the design and construction of the facility including but not limited to the diversity, innovative nature and/or cost of the project elements. (0-10 points)

## **8. TPWD Goals**

Total Range: 0-5 points

Project supports the department's Land and Water Resources Conservation and Recreation Plan. Applicant must address how the project meets the goals of the Plan in the proposal narrative. (0-5 points)

## **9. Compliance**

Total Points Deducted: -5 points

Applicant is in compliance with previously funded projects. If applicant is not in compliance with existing grant obligations, 5 points will be deducted from the project score. (-5 points)

## **10. Application Materials**

Total Points Available: 5 points

A complete application was received by the application deadline. (5 points)

# **APPENDIX F5. Urban Indoor Scoring System**

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## **Project Priority Scoring System**

**Large County & Municipality Recreation & Parks Account**

### **Urban Indoor Grant Program**

**(Effective May 1, 2014)**

#### **Applicant Eligibility**

All previously completed Recreation Grant Projects must be in compliance with all program guidelines and all terms of the Project Agreement under which they received assistance.

For active grants, all required project documentation must be complete and have been received on schedule. All active projects which are at least two years old must be reimbursed for a minimum of 25% of the approved grant amount at the time of application.

The total of approved grant funds which have not been reimbursed may not exceed \$4 million for all active grant projects at the time of application.

#### **1. Master Plan**

Total Range: 0-10 points

- Applicant has a locally adopted and department-endorsed parks, recreation and open space master plan, or other jurisdiction-wide plan, that addresses outdoor recreation needs. (5 points); **and**
- Project satisfies 1 of the top 5 priority needs (5 points)

#### **2. Underserved Populations**

Total Range: 0-10 points

- Project provides more equitable geographic distribution of facilities. Project proposal shall include a map showing the current distribution of parks in the entire service area to support a need in a particular location entire service area to justify additional facility. (4 points); **and/or**
- Project improves opportunities for low-income citizens based on economic and demographic data for the service area from the most recent federal census data: determined by multiplying the percentage of population qualifying as low-income by 2. (0-2 points); **and/or**
- Project improves opportunities for minority citizens based on economic and demographic data for the service area from the most recent federal census data: determined by multiplying the percentage of population qualifying as minority by 2. (0-2 points); **and/or**
- Project provides park and recreation opportunities for physically/mentally challenged citizens, which exceed the federal and state required accessibility standards. (2 points)

### **3. Local Resources and Partnerships**

Total Range: 0-8 points

- Project involves public-public or public-private cooperation based on the percentage of the match contributed by partners. Points are calculated by dividing the partner contribution by the total budget and multiplying by five. (0-5 points); **and/or**
- Project includes documented contributions via the applicant or outside resources above the 50% required match. Up to 3 points will be awarded based on the following criteria: (Additional Contribution Amount / Required Match) X 3 = (0-3 points)

### **4. Development**

Total Range: 0-9 points

- Nature center that provides natural resource conservation or environmental education visitor experiences (5 points); **and/or**
- Multi-purpose recreation facilities (1 point); **and/or**
- Diverse recreation facilities within the applicant's jurisdiction; one point awarded for each type of significant recreation opportunity. (0-3points)

### **5. Restoration**

Total Range: 0-15 points

Project provides for the renovation of existing recreation and conservation facilities that are no longer usable for the intended or original purpose; renewal or revival of existing facilities. Basic maintenance is not an eligible expense.

- Points will be awarded based on percentage of the budget dedicated to restoration of an existing structure. (0-15 points); **and/or**
- Adaptive reuse of existing structure or facility to provide new or different recreation opportunities; points will be awarded based on the percentage of the budget dedicated to the adaptive reuse (0-10 points)

### **6. Threat**

Total Range: 0-3 points

Project reduces the threat to the public availability of a recreation opportunity. The project narrative must include a discussion of the particular compelling circumstances involving the project, such as imminent loss of opportunity or time-sensitive economic factors (i.e. loss of potential funding partner if action is not undertaken quickly).

- Minimal threat; the recreation opportunity appears to be in no immediate danger of loss in the next 36 months (1 point); **or**
- Actions under consideration that could result in the recreation opportunity becoming unavailable for public use (2 points); **or**
- Actions under consideration that will result in the recreation opportunity becoming unavailable for future public use or a threat situation has occurred or is imminent that will result in the acquisition of rights to the land by a land trust at the request of the applicant. (3 points)

## **7. Urban Biologist Consultation**

Total Range: 0-5 points

Applicant has consulted with an urban biologist from the department regarding the proposed site plan at least 30 days prior to the application deadline and the biologist's comments are included in the application materials. (5 points)

## **8. Sustainable Park Design and Development**

Total Range: 0-5 points

The project embraces sustainable techniques in the design and construction of the facility. Points will be awarded based on diversity, innovative nature and/or cost of the project elements. (0-5 points)

## **9. Historical/Cultural resources**

Total Range: 0-2 points

Project provides park and recreation opportunities that enhance and encourage appreciation and preservation of site-based cultural, natural, historical or archaeological resources by means of interpretation, facilities, or preservation strategies. (2 points)

## **10. TPWD Goals**

Total Range: 0-10 points

Applicant must specifically describe how the project meets the goals of the Land and Water Conservation Plan. (0-10 points)

## **11. Compliance**

Total Point Reduction: -5 points

Applicant is not in compliance with previously funded projects. (-5 points)

## **12. Application Materials**

Total Range: 0-5 points

A complete application was received by the application deadline. (5 points)