

Citizens working to preserve and enhance the state park system for the benefit of the people of Texas and their guests.



The Voice, Online – TfSP E-News
September, 2012

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From the President:

Fall is on us and it's a great time to get out to your closest Texas State Park and enjoy the cooler weather. Within a few weeks, we will be seeing the fall colors and you will need to take your camera and capture these memories!

In other news, it looks like our Parks will keep their status quo for 2013 since there are no closings or layoffs scheduled at this time. This is great news. Remember, now is the time to contact your Member of the Legislature and show your support of our State Parks. The new Legislative Session begins in January and we need to let them know we want to keep our Parks and maintain them correctly. We need your help on this; it has to be a joint effort on all of our part.

Get out and see our State Parks, hope to see you there. I am one of those wandering around with a camera!

John Cobb, President



Follow Texans for State Parks on our Facebook Page and see more on about TfSP and State Park news on www.texansforstateparks.org.

TPWD Announces 2014-2015 Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR) Facts

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department submitted its Legislative Appropriations Request for the 2014-2015 biennium to the Legislative Budget Board on Aug. 23. TPWD's base budget for 2014-2015 is proposed to stay about the same, incorporating reductions required by the legislature for 2012-2013.

In the Legislative Appropriations Request, the agency is asking for increased funding for 2014-2015 in the form of six Exceptional Items totaling about \$103 million. These include, in two-year biennial totals:

1. \$18.9 million for state park funding needed to maintain current operations. Without this additional funding, at 2014-2015 base budget levels TPWD anticipates closing up to 20 state parks and one regional office and cutting 126 FTE employee positions.
2. \$11.9 million to restore capital budget reductions for vehicles, equipment and information technology
3. \$40 million for capital repair and construction at state parks, wildlife management areas, fish hatcheries and other TPWD facilities. Would be funded in large part with \$32 million in general obligation bond proceeds
4. \$13 million to restore fish and wildlife funding for habitat management and research, enhanced hunting and wildlife-related recreation, landowner technical guidance, inland and coastal fisheries management and hatchery operations
5. \$15.5 million to restore funding for local park grants to cities, counties and others
6. \$3.7 million to manage state Data Center cost increases and fund Information Technology capital needs

Alongside the LAR, TPSD provided a required schedule of reduction options totaling 10% of general revenue related funds, about \$36.8 million. These are not proposed cuts; they are options for lawmakers to consider as they balance the state budget. All figures are two-year totals:

1. \$16.9 million — eliminate funds transferred to the General Land Office for coastal management and erosion projects
2. \$200,000 — reduce Inland Fisheries hatchery production by about 30 percent
3. \$1 million — eliminate all short term leases and cut in half long term leases on private land for public hunting
4. \$573,000 — eliminate various wildlife research contracts
5. \$1.5 million – decrease Coastal Fisheries hatchery production by about 33 percent
6. \$3.6 million – suspend the next game warden cadet class
7. \$13 million – close multiple state parks, reduce state park services

You can use these links to access these documents –

<http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/publications/pwdpubs/media/2014-15%20LAR.pdf>

http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/publications/nonpwdpubs/lar_fact_sheet_2014-15/

State Parks Events

Discovering Hidden Fun at Texas State Parks

You are missing out on a modern day version of treasure hunting if you're not familiar high-tech game of geocaching. This exciting activity gets folks of all ages out of the house to explore the natural beauty that surrounds them and to burn a few calories, all while having a great time. Texas State Park rangers at a number of parks around the state this month are offering visitors the chance to join in the fun by learning how geocaching works

Geocaching uses Global Positioning System (GPS) technology and devices like a Smartphone to guide players to the location of all types of hidden containers. "It is like a walking version of the navigational systems you use in your vehicles," says Robert Owen, a Texas Parks and Wildlife Department ranger. "Some caches are easy, while others more difficult to find. It really gives you some flexibility when you pick your adventure for the day. Visit the TPWD website the dates of more than 30 Geocaching 101 workshops being held this September all over the state: www.tpwd.state.tx.us/calendar/geocaching.

Campers Now Welcome at Government Canyon State Natural Area

Just in time for cool, marshmallow-roasting autumn weather, Government Canyon State Natural Area in west Bexar County is opening up its first campground on Oct. 5. (click on title to visit the TPWD website for more about Government Canyon SNA.)

Falls Fest 2012 announces festival lineup

Grab the kids and text your friends: Falls Fest 2012 is Oct. 13 from 10-4 at McKinney Falls State Park. Activities were announced this week for the annual festival which is free after park admission and open to the public. (click on title to visit the TPWD website for more about McKinney Falls SP activities.)

Texas State Parks Announce Fall Camping Workshops for Outdoor Families

Texas Outdoor Family, a Texas State Park family camping program, announces 26 new workshops at state parks across Texas to teach families the basics of camping and enjoying the great outdoors. The program offers low-cost weekends to help families "unplug" and reconnect with nature and one-another.

Click on story titles for more about these events, and find information about other State Parks events on the TPWD website, <http://tpwd.state.tx.us>.

Big Bend Ranch SNA and Surrounding Counties Become the Home of New Butterfly Species

The *Strymon solitario* was recently described and studied at the Big Bend State Natural Area, and in surrounding counties, such as Presidio and Brewster, located in West Texas. The newly described *Strymon solitario* Texas butterfly was named after "The Solitario" rock formation that can be seen straddling the county line between Presidio and Brewster counties at Big Bend Ranch SNA. The *Strymon solitario*, also known as the Big Bend Scrub- Hairstreak, have been recorded before in the Big Bend area as early as October 1944. Majority of the records collected on this species were during late March-April and also again in September. Photos of the newly discovered butterfly species can be seen on the TPWD website, http://www.butterfliesofamerica.com/L/strymon_solitario.htm.

Big Bend Ranch Tentatively Schedules Longhorn Cattle Auction

For anyone interested in buying Longhorn cattle, there will be an auction at Big Bend Ranch in late October. The date isn't yet finalized the date, but is tentatively set for 10/27. Watch for the news on www.tpwd.state.tx.us and in the next TfSP newsletter

Goliad State Park Presents 'A Cappella Corpus Christi in Concert'

A Cappella Corpus Christi will perform sacred choral music in the historic chapel of Mission Espiritu Santo De Zuniga at Goliad State Park Saturday, October 13 at 2:00 pm. The group was established in 2011 as a traveling vocal group, composed of experienced singers with the desire to achieve artistry as a group rather than as soloists. They traveled to France and performed at Notre Dame Cathedral and the Cathedral of La Madeleine in Paris, in addition to performing at an American cemetery in Normandy- an emotional experience for the group. Currently, they are planning a trip to Austria and northern Italy in the summer of 2013. For more information please call (361) 645-3405. Goliad State Park is located approximately ½ mile south of Goliad on Highway 183. Entry fees are \$3.00 per adult, with children 12 and under free.

Don't forget to send e-mail or other address changes to leevans@texas.net so you will continue to receive news and information about the State Park System. Selected news items from various sources are edited and forwarded by Texans for State Parks. If you have news or an event you would like to include, send it to leevans@texas.net.

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PLEASE JOIN TODAY!

TEXANS FOR STATE PARKS invites you to join with us in protecting our Texas treasures.

Whether you are an individual, organization, school group or represent a small business or a major corporation, membership categories provide a way for you to become involved. For information and a membership application, see www.texansstateparks.org or e-mail leevans@texas.net.

As a member, you will ---

- ✓ Add your voice in support of the Texas State Park System.
- ✓ Receive "The Voice" – E-news keeping you informed of issues and events.
- ✓ Contribute toward activities, events and projects not possible in park budgets.
- ✓ Receive information about legislation and other issues impacting Texas parks.

Individuals

___\$25 Regular
 ___\$50 Family
 ___\$100 Supporting
 ___\$1,000 Benefactor
 ___\$5,000 Life

Organizations

___\$50 Bronze
 ___\$100 Silver
 ___\$250 Gold
 ___\$1,000 Platinum
 ___\$25 Youth Groups under age 18

Business

___\$100 Bronze
 ___\$500 Silver
 ___\$1,000 Gold
 ___\$5,000 Platinum

\$_____ **Additional Donation**

\$_____ **Total Amount Enclosed**

Please note: New member _____ Membership Renewal _____

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone (H) _____ (Bs) _____

Fax _____ E-mail _____

Do you wish to receive TfSP E-news? _____ Yes _____ No

I don't have e-mail. Please put me on a list to receive e-news items by mail. _____

Texans for State Parks is a 501(c)(3) organization; membership dues are tax deductible.

Mail your check today to: Texans for State Parks, P. O. Box 41480, Austin, TX 78704-0025

Goals

- *Provide a united, state-wide voice for users of state parks and related groups on park matters of shared concerns.*
- *Serve as an information resource for interested persons on state park matters.*
- *Educate park users, legislators and the general public about state park matters.*
- *Support stable and adequate financing for the state park system.*
- *Work in partnership with local state park support groups and other interested groups on state park matters.*
- *Advise the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and Commission on State-wide matters of importance to state park users and related groups.*

