



Mission

The Mission of Texans for State Parks is to preserve and enhance the State Park System for the benefit of the people of Texas and their guests.

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Texans for State Parks

Citizens working to preserve and enhance our great state park system

The Voice

April, 2010

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- Commission Chairman Holt named 2010 Texan of the Year
- More Bonds Sold to Fund Park Improvements
- Coming Events in State Parks
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From the President:

Summer and the busy time at all our Parks has come again. This year, visitors will be able to see some of the improvements made to our State Parks with the better funding we have received. There are still major repairs and projects to be completed, but we have a start on improving our Parks. We are still 50th out of 50 States nationwide in funding Parks and Historic Sites. With the economy in the state it is, we are going to have a 5% reduction in our funding over the next two years. Our job is to do what we can to keep this from becoming more of a problem.

Texans for State Parks is working hard for all of our Parks in regards to the funding issue. We need everyone's help with this. Contact your Member of the House of Representatives and your Senator and ask them for help with Texas State Parks funding.

Over the next several months, our website, www.texansstateparks.org will be updated showing the progress we are all making towards funding issues.

We are also starting a new feature on our website, with a different Park and a different Friends Group every quarter. Look for this within the next few weeks. *John Cobb, President*

TfSP Board Plans Ahead

TfSP Directors participated in a planning meeting at McKinney Falls March 20. The workshop was an outcome of issues discussed during the Annual meeting in February, and was facilitated by Bob Ashcroft who has worked with other parks groups on similar missions. The participants reviewed the mission and goals as defined when TfSP was organized and discussed whether those goals are still relevant, and if they are being met. The group also discussed the nature of the working relationship between the TfSP Board of Directors and Texas Parks & Wildlife Department and determined that we should continue to have an independent and mutually beneficial working relationship.

Those participating in the workshop identified the essential roles of TfSP as an advocate and an educator for state park

system issues, determined key responsibilities for the board as well as for individual directors, and discussed how best to fulfill those responsibilities.

Priorities for the short term include:

- Increasing membership for a stronger voice on park system issues;
- Begin working with P&W to determine priorities for the coming legislative session.
- Identifying allies and how best to partner with them during the session and in general on behalf of state park system issues.
- Developing a plan for long term funding to support TfSP in fulfilling our mission and goals.

Ad Hoc Committees were established to put the plans in action, and to date, the Legislative committee and membership committee have begun work on their areas of responsibility.

For a full outline of the plan and issues addressed during the workshop, see www.texansstateparks.org. TfSP members are welcome to work with directors on these issues. Contact President John Cobb, cobbfarm@airmail.net, or Linda Evans, leevans@texas.net if you're interested in working with one of the committees.

A brief board meeting was held following the workshop, and John Gosdin was appointed to fill the director vacancy created by the resignation of Beth McDonald. We're pleased to welcome John, who has been a long time member and involved in park issues, both with Parks and Wildlife and in his position with the LCRA, for many years.

Commission Chairman Holt named 2010 Texan of the Year

Commission chairman Peter Holt has been named 2010 Texan of the Year. The honor was presented on March 18 at the 44th annual Texas Legislative Conference in New Braunfels.

"He's a true Texan," said State Rep. Edmund Kuempel, who introduced Holt. "With what he's been able to do...with Texas Parks and Wildlife, he epitomizes what makes the United States the greatest country in the world and Texas the greatest state in the country." Past winners have included Barbara Jordan, George W. Bush, Kay Bailey Hutchison, and T. Boone Pickens.

Holt has served on the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission since 2003, and gained appointment as chairman in 2007.

More Bonds Sold to Fund Park Improvements

General obligation bonds have been sold to fund more than \$20 million in renovations and repairs to state park cabins, bathrooms, electrical and water systems, and other state park infrastructure. The funding for the 42 repair projects at 28 parks comes from the sale of the few remaining, older Proposition 8 general obligation bonds and about half of the \$52 million in Proposition 4 bonds overwhelmingly approved by voters in 2007 to fix up parks and dry berth the Battleship TEXAS for repairs. Some repair projects begin this week with the remainder to begin over the next four months. Construction on most projects should wrap up by early next year.

Coming Events in State Parks

April 17, Government Canyon SNA: *Mountain Bike 101*:

Join Sage Cycles for a beginner mountain biking program from 9 a.m. to noon. The day will begin with basic terminology and major bike components, a discussion of what equipment should be carried while mountain biking and problems that can occur. Learn what to check on a pre-ride inspection and how to change a flat tire.

Following the classroom portion attendees will ride trails depending on group abilities. Bikers will have an opportunity to practice basic skills such as shifting, descending hills, and climbing. Bikers must bring their bikes and helmets and water (bottles or hydration pack) and will be required to wear helmets. Reservations are required and are being accepted until noon on April 16. Call 210/688-9055, ext. 291 or E-mail reservations@friendsofqc.org with names of participants (including age if under 18), e-mail address and telephone number.

April 24, Guadalupe River SP *Grand Opening & Earth Day Celebration*:

See the new Discovery Center, a museum for small children.

Presenters be available for walk and talks and show and tells along with other Earth Day activities. Free hot dog lunch and water provided. 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. (830) 438-2656.

April 24, Hill Country SNA *Hosts Ranch Heritage Day*:

Free family fun 10 a.m.-5 p.m. includes hay rides, stick

horse rodeo, Young Guns mutton bustin', a chuck wagon, horse clinics, cowboy music, flint knapping, western exhibitors, a trick roper and the big event at 1 p.m., the Original Dude Ranch Wrangler Rodeo. Accessible for the mobility, visually and hearing impaired. (830) 796-4413.

May 16, San Jacinto Battleground SHS Presents 20th Annual Monumental Bug Bash: The Bay Area

Volkswagen Club hosts their annual car picnic. Oodles of bugs and beetles are featured! All makes and models of VW's welcome. Food and drinks are available or bring your own picnic lunch and enjoy the day. 9:00 AM-4:00 PM; for more information, visit the club's Web site www.bayareavwclub.com or contact David Saucier at 832/205-2300; 281/479-2431.

13 State Parks to Host Go Fish! Events This Spring:

TPWD has renamed and expanded its learn-to-fish initiative to include dozens of special springtime events being held at 13 state parks throughout Texas. For the parks participating, click on the *title link* above.

For more park events, see <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/newsmedia/calendar/>.

Other Parks & Wildlife News

Subscription-based Online News Available for Retirees and the General Public

If you are a TPWD retiree who used to receive "Tracks and Trails," the newsletter has moved to an online format and has been renamed "Inside Track." According to Parks & Wildlife, as times change, so do publications. In order to save

the state money and take advantage of the latest Web technology, **Tracks & Trails** has moved to a new online format. This month P&W begins the new version, called **Inside Track**, an employee communiqué housed on an internal-only intranet.

Non-employees aren't able to access the intranet, so P&W has created a version especially for retirees to subscribe to a monthly e-newsletter free of charge by clicking on the link below and selecting the option to sign up for "Inside Track for Retirees"

In addition to the news for retirees, anyone can sign up to receive free email updates on a wide range of topics, such as fishing, boating, state parks, hunting, and more with the same link, and clicking on [Sign up to receive additional email updates \(choose from a list of topics\)](#).

Subscribe to these news options at the TPWD Website, www.tpwd.state.tx.us/publications/newsletters/tracks_and_trails/.

TPWD Awarded More Than \$3.5 million in Solar Grants

More than \$3.5 million in competitive federal stimulus grants are available to P&W for solar installations as part of the Distributed Renewable Energy Technology Program offered as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. It will cover up to 20% of the total cost of the projects.

All 17 projects proposed were funded and the grants will go toward installing solar power at the main headquarters in Austin and various state parks and fisheries across Texas. This helps TPWD reach one of its goals in the most recent Land & Water Plan (page 35) to install

solar panels at 15 sites by December 2011.

For facilities benefiting, see tpwd.state.tx.us/newsmedia/releases/?req=20100401c&nrttype=all&nrspace=2010&nrspace=

Forums Scheduled on Revised Land & Water Plan

Field employees and outside stakeholders are meeting across the state this spring to discuss ways to implement the revised Land and Water Resources Conservation and Recreation Plan. The forums (TxCRF) were established last year in twelve planning regions based on river watersheds, with a TPWD staff member serving as official point of contact for each.

See a PDF copy of the plan at [View PDF Version of the Printed 2010 Plan](#)  (PDF 5.9 MB)

For a map showing forum region boundaries and the revised Plan, check on meeting dates and locations, or contact forum staff contacts see tpwd.state.tx.us/publications/nonpdpubs/land_and_water_plan/.

More TPWD News Releases are available online at:

www.tpwd.state.tx.us/newsmedia/releases/.

Texans for State Parks invites you to join in protecting Texas treasures.

Texans for State Parks is a statewide, not-for-profit organization that works exclusively in support of the preservation and enhancement of the state parks, state historic sites, and state natural areas of Texas.

Find a Membership Application on the website www.texansstateparks.org and join today!

