

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
January, 2011

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Message from the President of TfSP

February 11~12 could be one of our more important Membership meetings. As you know, the State Budget is a big concern for all State Services, including our Texas State Parks.

Depending on the depth of the cuts (and there will be big cuts in State funding), our Parks will feel it from employees to how we do business. It might even come to the point of some of our Parks having to close. At this time, nobody knows how this will all play out.

You will need to be advised by TPWD Officials, Members from the Legislature, and workshops on how to protect all of our Parks, as well as your own. This is what we are striving to do in this year's meeting.

There is registration information in this edition of our newsletter and you will need to make sure you have someone from your Friends Group, your organization, or yourself as an interested person on hand.

We plan on having workshops on funding of the Park system, networking between Park groups, and having a platform for you to show off your Park. We will have computer, projector, and a sound system there if you have a presentation on your Park to give on Friday night.

I hope to see you in Austin at McKinney Falls State Park. Plan on being there!

John Cobb, President

You are Invited to Texans for State Parks 13TH Annual Conference!
The meeting will be February 11-12, 2011 at the dining hall in McKinney Falls State Park in Austin.

We will begin the evening of February 11 at 6:30 for a 'Meet & Greet' reception and 'Brag Night'. Hot soup and finger foods will be provided, and park Friends Groups are invited to present short programs on their activities.

The business meeting and program will begin at 8:30 Saturday morning with late registration and coffee. The program will begin at 9 AM. A BBQ lunch will be served in the park on Saturday.



If you'd like to make a presentation about park friends groups or other volunteer activities Friday evening, please e-mail leevans@texas.net so we can plan for a timeframe for the programs. If we have more programs than we have time for Friday evening, we will finish Saturday either during lunch or in the afternoon. A projector and computer will be available for programs.

Much of Saturday's program will focus on the impact the Legislative Budget Board's recommendations will have on the State Parks and their programs, and how what we can do to help minimum impact of the budget reductions on parks and the communities where they're located.

The afternoon will include workshops on topics to be announced.

By the date of the meeting we will be prepared to provide everyone with the legislative members of the Culture, Recreation, & Tourism Committee and other contact information as well as information showing the economic importance of parks to various local communities.

You are encouraged to participate in the meeting, and to invite any members of the community, local officials such as mayors, county commissioners and others that are interested in working with their legislators. They might be interested in helping communicate to them the economic and other benefits the parks provide to their communities.

A registration form is included below, and you can also find registration information and developing program information on the website, www.texasstateparks.org, as we confirm times and program presenters.

Directions: McKinney Falls SP is located 5808 McKinney Falls Parkway, Austin, TX 78744. It's 13 miles southeast of the State Capitol in Austin off US Highway 183. Take McKinney Falls Parkway, off US 183 South, straight to the park entrance. From I-35, take East William Cannon Dr. east to McKinney Falls Parkway, turn left and travel 1+ mi. to the park.

For more information about McKinney Falls SP, see www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/mckinney_falls/ or call 512.243.1643.

For meeting information, contact Linda Evans, leevans@texas.net, phone 512.444.8079

Area Lodging:

Camping facilities are available in McKinney Falls SP, Bastrop SP and Lockhart SP, and lucky ones might be able to reserve a cabin at Bastrop State Park.

There are a number of hotels along Ben White nearing the airport, and along south I35. A few are listed below, or you can Google 'hotels south Austin' for more options. Some hotels in south Austin include:

Spring Hill Suites Austin South Hotel, 4501 South I H 35, Austin, TX 78744 (512) 441-8270 austinsouthhotel.com [E William Cannon Dr east to McKinney Falls Pkwy, left on McKinney Falls Pkwy 1+ mi. to park]

Hilton Austin Airport, 9515 Hotel Drive [Hwy 71 E. between Hwy 183 and Montopolis Blvd.] Austin, TX 78719 Reservations: (512) 385-6767 Click [HERE](#) for online hotel reservations

Candlewood Suites Extended Stay Hotel Austin South  4320 Interstate 35 Service S, Austin, TX 78745; (512) 444-8882

Staybridge Suites at 1611 Airport Commerce Dr, contact by phone at 512.389.9767.

Parks Officials Evaluate LBB Recommendations

The Legislative Budget board has made their budget recommendations for Texas Parks and Wildlife, proposing to cut more than \$14.5 million next year from State Park Operations, Parks Minor Repair Program and Parks Support.

Their recommendations include closing or transferring seven parks and the closure of 2 regional offices. (It doesn't specify which parks or offices). The LBB also recommends reducing funding for vehicle and equipment replacement in 2012-13; recommends a 25 percent reduction in park programs for business development, cultural and natural resources, interpretation and exhibits (including 15.4 FTE reductions) and a \$2.3 million decrease to defer minor repair projects

Department officials and staff continue to study the budget recommendations to determine what actions would be necessary to meet the LBB's numbers and what alternatives may be available to offset some of these recommendations.

At the TfSP annual meeting you will have the opportunity to hear more from P&W officials after they've had more time to evaluate the LBB recommendations. We will also discuss how we as park supporters can work to inform our legislators of the impact some of these actions might have on your park and your community in order to ensure that parks' cuts are held to a minimum.

Major Celebration of Texas Independence Slated for Feb. 26-27 [click title for more]

Close to a thousand historical re-enactors and descendants of the original signers of the Texas Declaration of Independence, including special guest U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, are expected to gather at Washington-on-the-Brazos SHS on the banks of the Brazos River next month to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the state's independence.

The free, two-day festival takes place from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Feb. 26-27 at [Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site](#) to celebrate the birth of the Republic of Texas.

The celebration at the 293-acre park along the Brazos River transports visitors back to the time when Texas was a sovereign nation. Costumed re-enactors and members of the Texas Army, along with skilled craftsmen and talented musicians, fill the park as the Lone Star State commemorates its inception. On both days, vendors will be selling food and drinks.

Both Saturday and Sunday, visitors will be able to enjoy a performance of "The Texas Convention: The Birth of a Republic," by the Navasota Theater Alliance in the park amphitheater.

Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site is located between Brenham and Navasota off State Hwy. 105 and FM 1155, approximately one hour northwest of Houston. For directions or more information, call (936) 878-2214.

A schedule of other upcoming Texas 175th anniversary events, such as the San Jacinto Day Festival and Battle Reenactment on April 16, are available at: <http://txindependence175.org>.

Association of Partners for Public Lands Convention & Trade Show

The Association of Partners for Public Lands (APPL) is a national 501(c)(3) umbrella organization of nonprofit groups that support public lands. The annual convention and trade show is coming to Dallas February 21-25, bringing together nonprofit leadership, staff, and volunteers. The Association of Partners for Public Lands would like to extend a special invitation to Texas State Parks and nonprofit partners with special conference rates.

Educational sessions include "Fundraising Basics for Boards" and "Fundraising Regulations – Staying Legal". Click on the PDF file below for program and registration information.



Dallas area invite for
NP & Museums.pdf

Compadres del Rancho Grande, Friends of Big Bend Ranch SP Welcomes Volunteers.

Greetings from Compadres del Rancho Grande, friends of Big Bend Ranch State Park. As friends of the parks of the Big Bend country, we know a place where the night skies are the darkest, the silences are long and adventures loom large. We have experienced a place where capturing a rare glimpse of a bighorn sheep, rafting the legendary Rio Grande or putting a 2nd spare tire to use en route (perhaps even on the same day!) are real possibilities.

If you would like to volunteer your time to help improve park infrastructure at Big Bend Ranch State Park or if you are in a position to make a contribution to Compadres del Rancho Grande for the parks of the Big Bend country of Texas, please visit www.bigbendcompadres.org or contact me directly at 432-386-6929.

Warm regards and abundant adventures from Leslie Hopper, Chair, Compadres del Rancho Grande, P.O. Box 164, Fort Davis, TX 79734, info.cdrq@gmail.com, 432-386-6929.

Far West Texas Wildlife Trail Debut Marks Milestone [click title for full article]

Some of Texas' most remarkable natural history and most iconic wildlife can be found at sites featured on the Far West Texas Wildlife Trail whose debut this month completes a statewide wildlife trail system launched 15 years ago to bolster birding and other forms of nature tourism.

The Great Texas Wildlife Trail system's ninth and final trail spans the vast reaches of West Texas – from El Paso to the Permian Basin to the Big Bend — and features 10 driving loops and 57 sites.

The state's wildlife/birding trail maps can be purchased for \$2 each from the Texas AgriLife Extension Bookstore. The set of nine maps can be purchased together at the discounted price of \$10. The maps will guide you to more than 900 distinct birding and wildlife viewing sites throughout Texas. Each map includes driving loops, and each site is designated with a unique highway sign and site number corresponding to the map. The maps also have information about the wildlife likely to be found at each site. For more information, visit TPWD's Great Texas Wildlife Trails website. <http://beta-www.tpwd.state.tx.us/huntwild/wildlife/wildlife-trails/>

For information on the Texas Heritage Trails visit the Texas Mountain Trail Region (www.texasmountaintrail.com) and Texas Pecos Trail Region (www.texaspecostrail.com) online.

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.

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.

Texans for State Parks – P. O. Box 41480 - Austin, TX 78704-0025

www.Texansstateparks.org

**Texans for State Parks
13th Annual Conference
February 11-12, 2011
McKinney Falls State Park
Registration**

Conference Registration (includes BBQ lunch): **Adults -30; Under 18 -\$10**

Please mail the following registration form with your check made payable to TEXANS FOR STATE PARKS to:

**Texans for State Parks P. O. Box 41480, Austin, TX 78704-0025
by
February 8.**

PLEASE CONTACT LINDA EVANS IN ADVANCE BY E-MAIL, LEEVANS@TEXAS.NET, OR PHONE, 512.444.8079 WITH THE NUMBER OF LUNCHES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Name _____ Phone (H) _____ Bs _____

E-mail _____

Mailing Address _____

Number for Saturday. lunch: _____ Adults Total Enclosed \$ _____

If you would like to present a program Friday evening or Saturday, please note below so we can include the information in the program, or e-mail leevans@texas.net:

Name of Presenter; _____

Representing: _____

Topic: _____

Estimated time needed: _____

Contact Information: e-mail _____ Ph: _____

If you're unable to provide advance information, we'll still welcome any late comers and work you into the schedule. Times don't have to be exact. We will make time for everyone sometime Friday evening or Saturday if we have more programs than we have time for Friday evening.

Texans for State Parks Board Members

John Cobb, President, Bastrop, Texas, 512/332-0371, cobbfarm@airmail.net
Friends of the Lost Pines State Parks

Bob Armstrong, Vice President, Austin, Texas, 512/413-6891, landmanbob@aol.com
Big Bend Ranch State Park Advisory Board

Ruth Jordan, Secretary, San Angelo, Texas, 325/651-7346, RuthJordan@suddenlink.net
Friends of San Angelo State Park

Richard Solis, Treasurer, Canyon Lake, Texas 830/935-4011, Rsolis@GVTC.com
Friends of Guadalupe River & Honey Creek State Parks
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Scott Chase, Dallas, Texas 214/880-0404, schase@airmail.net
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John M. Gosdin, Austin, Texas 512/219-6737
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Wildlife Diversity Advisory Committee, TPWD
Executive Committee Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club

Barbara McKnight, Stephenville, Texas, 254/968-4357, bmcknight3276@msn.com
Texas Equestrian Trail Riders Association

Jamie McNally, Austin, Texas, 512/495-8827, jfm@ctw.com
Friends of Enchanted Rock State Natural Area; Friends of McKinney Falls State Park.

Ken Pollard, Austin, Texas, 512/971-5145, kpollard52@yahoo.com
Texas Parks & Wildlife, Retired
Texas Buffalo Soldier Association

Beth McDonald, President Emeritus, Austin, TX, 512/721-3321 BethMcDonald@austin.rr.com
Friends of Lost Pines State Parks

Linda Evans, News & Administration, Austin, TX 512/444-8079, leevans@texas.net

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.*