

# Rural and Small Town Downtown Summit: Nature Tourism Development in Your Own Backyard



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# Determining if Nature Tourism is a Good Fit for Your Community

- Tourism based on an area's natural attractions (wildlife viewing, hunting, fishing, photography, visiting parks)
- Responsible travel to natural areas, which conserves the environment and improves the welfare of local people



# Goals of Nature Tourism

- Sustainable economic development
- Habitat conservation
- Support for conservation programs
- Recreational and learning opportunities for the public





# Nature Tourism is usually:

- Small scale and low tech
- Developed around local and natural features and attractions
- Compatible with agriculture and other landowner businesses
- In communities with a “sense of place”





# How Popular is Nature Tourism?

- More Americans camp than play basketball.
- The number of Americans who participate in bicycling is double the population of Canada.
- More Americans paddle (kayak, canoe, raft) than play soccer.

*Source: Outdoor Industry Foundation; Sporting Goods Manufacturing Association (SGMA) estimates 32 million Americans 6+ played basketball in 2005; SGMA estimates 17 million Americans 6+ played soccer in 2005.*



# National Economics

- Nature Tourism: \$144.7 billion



*\* National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, USFWS 2011*



# Wildlife-Associated Recreation in Texas

- Fishing \*
- 2.2 million anglers
- Expenditures: \$2 billion
- Economic Impact: \$3.6 billion
- Hunting \*\*
- 1.1 million hunters
- Expenditures: \$2.1 billion
- Economic Impact: \$3.7 billion
- Wildlife Watching \*\*\*
- 4.4 million participants
- 2.2 million birders
- Expenditures: \$1.8 billion
- Economic Impact: \$13.8 billion

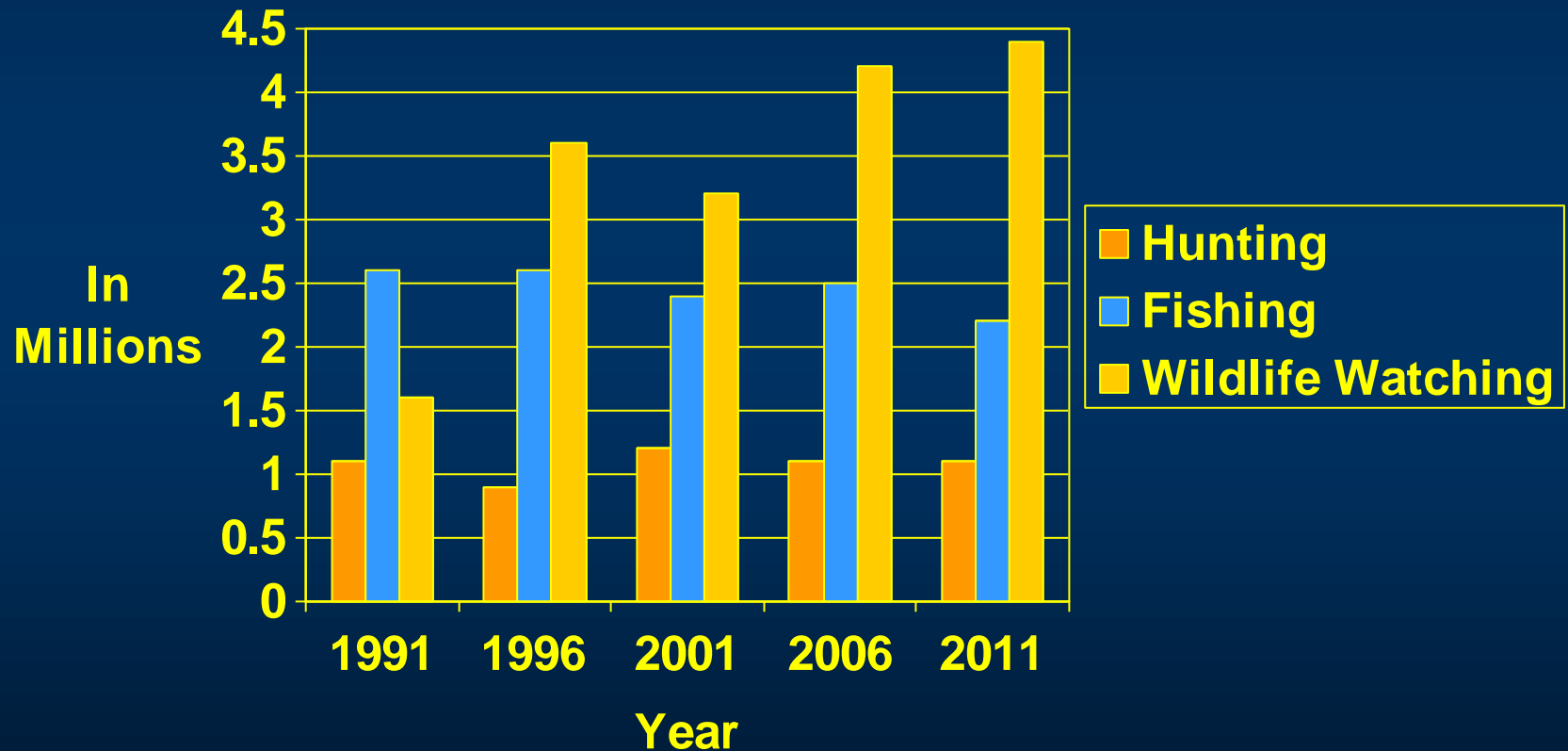
\* Source: *SportFishing in America*, American Sportfishing Association, Southwick Associates, January 2013

\*\* Source: *Hunting in America*, National Shooting Sports Association, Southwick Associates, January 2013

\*\*\* Source: *Wildlife Watching in the U.S.: The Economic Impacts of National and State Economies in 2011*, Addendum to the 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation



# Texas Hunting, Fishing and Wildlife Watching Participants 1991-2011





# Identify Your Reasons for Exploring Nature Tourism

- Supplement existing income for businesses
- Expand entertainment options available
- Preserve/maintain desired lifestyle
- Create shoulder season for tourism in the region
- Invest in projects supporting personal hobbies
- Help others understand local resources
- Conservation of local resources
- Other goals?



# Preliminary Inventory and Existing Opportunities

- Determine your community's interests
  - History
  - Nature
  - Culture
  - Shopping
  - Hunting
  - Other?





- Inventory existing infrastructure, activities and sites you are familiar with or that might work well:
  - Parks, museums, historic sites, local jewels
  - Locations that could be developed over time or with grant funding





# Research, Research, and More Research!

- Research available tools and resources (books, websites, agencies, organizations)
  - <https://naturetourism.tamu.edu/>
  - <https://tpwd.texas.gov/naturetourism>
- Research existing operations (on the internet and in person) – Don't reinvent the wheel!
  - Ideas for website, publications
  - Successful business models, pricing
- Consider potential partners for *regional* tourism (think in terms of 60-mile radius)



# Use Existing Marketing Opportunities: Nature Tourism Programs

## Great Texas Wildlife Trails





# Great Texas Wildlife Trails



[www.tpwd.texas.gov/wildlifetrails](http://www.tpwd.texas.gov/wildlifetrails)



# Great Texas Wildlife Trails

## Goal:

- Increase awareness, appreciation and conservation of Texas's wildlife and native habitats.

## Objectives:

- Promote wildlife watching as a recreational activity in Texas.
- Demonstrate the economic value of wildlife through tourism \$\$\$.

## Tactic:

- Unify existing and potential sites into a single, cohesive marketing platform.





# The Great Texas Wildlife Trails: Over 920 Wildlife Viewing Sites!





Palo Duro Canyon – PHP #040



**Public  
sites...**

Concho River at Paint Rock – HOTW #115



**...and private  
sites are  
represented  
on the trails.**



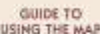
# Types of viewing facilities

- Trails
- Signs
- Observation platforms
- Driving routes
- Visitor centers
- Photography blinds





## GREAT TEXAS COASTAL BIRDING TRAIL

[illegible]

The authors have no financial or personal relationships with other people or organizations that could inappropriately influence or bias the work reported in this manuscript.

- There is a significant and divergent impact on welfare outcomes
- There is significant day-to-night
- Long-term increases in the physical health symptoms are associated with increases in emotional health

Copyright © 2006 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

His children, much smaller in stature, could hardly see the expert at large. I walked the old bridge, built just four years ago, to see if the bridge kept, and the long argument about that I have recorded in *Notes on the River*.

Disadvantages of the order form include the time, cost, and trouble involved in checking orders, maintaining the system to comply, and ensuring the continued effectiveness. The order form may be a required technology for a business because of customers, competitors, and future customers' requests for more information, streamlined ordering, and lower prices. It may not be a required tool from these organizations. Several advantages may not apply to the business. Additional research is required to see that the business meets the criteria for using the order form as a required technology.

It is important to take a critical look at these signs. Although it is the best idea to get home signs, it will be a waste of money if the information on the sign just leads to the wrong sign, or if the sign does nothing about the fact that you are in the wrong place.



The most basic WFP food programs are designed & needed to make sure that people in their countries have enough to eat. There is a good reason for this. 170 million of the world's population is hungry for some reason or another. Food distribution has been a big issue since the beginning of mankind's economic development (food distribution).

Widely available to lay persons to foster WHO's position, participants (17 authors) of whom participation in earlier activities had at several occasions helped to foster WHO's position in the field, met. WHO's current operations could be taken to foster participation of laypersons WHO's role could be seen, and the conference could foster WHO's role, since, amongst numerous other participants, many of experienced working for and being the highest scientific levels. (p. 4-5) (2002)

have resulted from a collaborative strategy with the local building trade program, strategies go to school and create job skills, and throughout the time and suggest that small enterprises, despite finding a small revenue stream, and some of them will provide additional support to increase the size and number of enterprises in the local community. The business plan is a critical element in the local community, and the business plan is a critical element in the local community, and the business plan is a critical element in the local community.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

From Parks and Wildlife Information  
9800-770-4433  
www.parks.wa.gov

Best Way Film and Graphics  
P.O. Box 1000  
St. Louis, MO 63101

Source: <http://www.fishbase.org>

From these data, the following information can be obtained:



# Marketing Products:

- Printed maps for all 9 regional trails
- Great Texas Wildlife Trails website
- Informational rack cards about the program
- Advertising – online, magazines, email




# Map Distribution

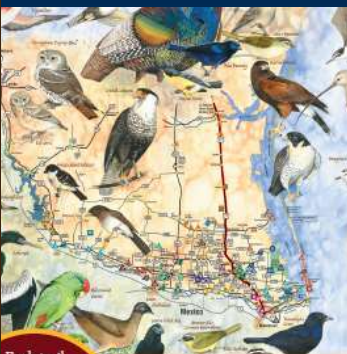
- Available for purchase at bulk rates!
- Sell maps to visitors for profit or cost recovery
- Distribute maps at events/festivals
- Free rack cards available, too!

Discover the Wildlife of Texas!

## Great Texas Wildlife Trails



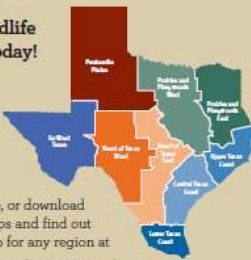

With over 950 sites, these wildlife trail maps will guide you to the best wildlife-viewing spots in the state to observe birds, butterflies, bats, pronghorns and more.




Each trail is marked with a unique site number on the map that coincides with a detailed description and viewing directions on the map.

Grab your binoculars and your camera, and hit the road to explore Texas' great outdoors!

Your Wildlife Maps Today!



Get them now by scanning this code, or download any of the maps and find out where to go to get a map for any region at [pwd.state.tx.us/wildlifetrails/](http://pwd.state.tx.us/wildlifetrails/)



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Life's better outside

**TEXAS**  
Department of Transportation

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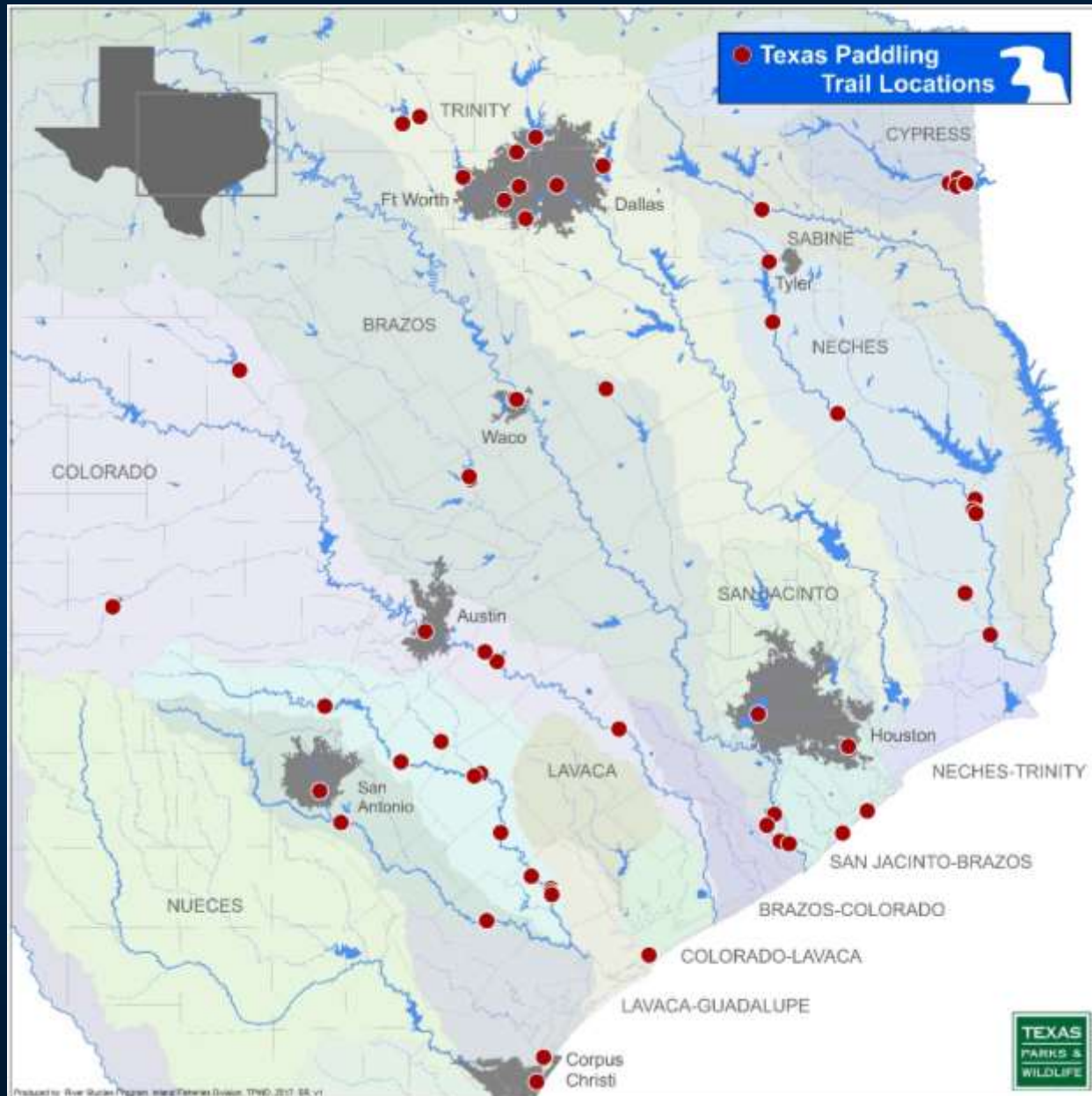
# Texas Paddling Trails



[www.tpwd.texas.gov/paddlingtrails](http://www.tpwd.texas.gov/paddlingtrails)



# 78 Texas Paddling Trails





# Program Goals

- Increase public access to water-based recreation
- Create family-friendly water trails statewide
- Develop partnerships to manage, develop and improve water access sites
- Promote habitat conservation





# General Texas Paddling Trail Criteria

- 4 - 12 mile segments
- Public access and parking
- Natural or historical attractions
- Adequate water quality, depth or river flows
- Population center nearby



# Program Details:

- New or improved water access sites on all trails.
- Project is not fully funded, so community partnership model is important.
- TPWD – provides technical expertise and marketing assistance.
- Community partner – provides on-the-ground site management and signage.



# Local Marketing and Promotion Potential

- Organizations – paddle clubs, paddling trail committee, local instructors
- Annual events – flotillas, races, festivals
- Local promotion – table toppers, brochures, t-shirts, bumper stickers





# Magazine Advertising

Discover the Natural Wonders  
of the Texas Coast!

The Texas Coast has it all ...  
14 paddling trails to and explore, 26 species  
of saltwater fish waiting to be caught, more  
than 450 kinds of birds to spot and 12 scenic  
state parks to enjoy—all along the coast.

Start planning your Texas Coast adventure!  
[tpwd.texas.gov](http://tpwd.texas.gov)



Life's better outside.®

ADVENTURES IN THE WILD  
MADE  EASY

TEXAS  
PARKS &  
WILDLIFE

Life's better outside.®



With over 70 designated trails, it's easier than ever to go  
paddling! Each trail has a map and photos, directions to  
access sites, rental info, fishing and wildlife, and more!

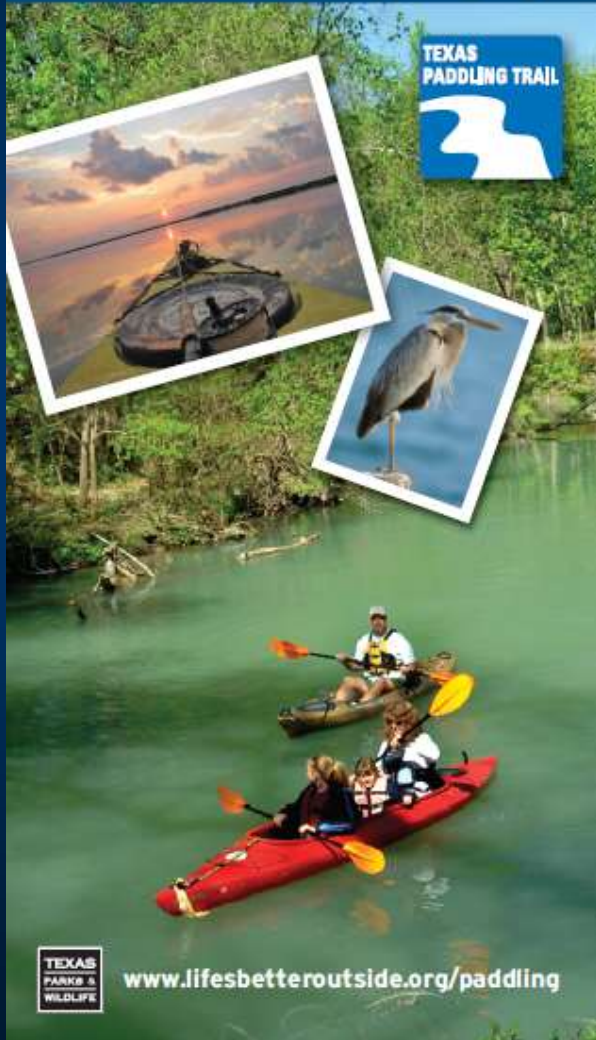
[www.tpwd.texas.gov/paddling](http://www.tpwd.texas.gov/paddling)



# Paddling Trails

in Texas

Kayaking and Canoeing Made Easy



## Paddling Trails Rackcards

- Free to CVBs, Chambers, Tourist Offices, TXDOT TICs, etc.
- Explains how to navigate and use the Paddling Trails website

*Texas Paddling Trails offer you a brand-new perspective on the world. Get in the water to experience a closer view of wildlife and scenery, drop a fishing line or just relax.*

### Explore a trail today!

Visit [www.lifesbetteroutside.org/paddling](http://www.lifesbetteroutside.org/paddling) for all the information you need to follow these easy steps to start paddling:

- 1 Select a paddling trail.**  
There are river, lake and bay trails throughout the state. Use the website to narrow down your choice based on its location, length and estimated paddling time. Learn about the wildlife, trail conditions, area attractions and get fishing tips for each trail.
- 2 Get your gear and go.**  
Each trail's website lists rental and shuttle companies that serve the area, making it easier for you to rent kayaks, canoes and life jackets. Arrange for a shuttle to drop you off and pick you up for your trip.
- 3 Be safe and ethical on the water.**  
It's important to play it safe and be responsible on the water. Before you go, check the FAQs and Safety & Ethics sections of the website.
- 4 Put-in, Paddle and Play!**  
Maps to all trailheads are available online and they are easily identified by Texas Paddling Trail information kiosk and signs.

**NOTE:** Be sure to identify if the trail is a "loop" or one-way. The one-way trails have access sites miles apart, so arranging for transportation is a must! If you are bringing your own gear, be sure to arrange for a shuttle or leave a second car at the trail's take-out access site.

Sunset photo: © Slowtide Guide Services



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[www.tpwd.state.tx.us](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us)

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# Great Texas Birding Classic



[www.birdingclassic.org](http://www.birdingclassic.org)



# 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Great Texas Birding Classic

- 2013: after a 16-year history on the coast event became statewide!
- What is it?
  - Fun and friendly competitive birding for casual and expert birders and naturalists
  - Promotes nature tourism to TX communities while raising \$\$ for birds and birding



























# How does the Birding Classic work?

- Teams choose sunrise to noon, full 24-hour day, or weeklong tournament categories.
- Teams compete for the right to direct conservation money to approved projects located along the Great Texas Wildlife Trail.
- All funds are raised through registration fees and corporate/community sponsorship dollars.
- All materials available online.



# 2022 Event

- Registration deadline: April 1
- Conservation Grant deadline: May 1
- Tournament: April 15-May 15

[www.birdingclassic.org](http://www.birdingclassic.org)







<https://www.birdcitytexas.org>





# Bird City Texas Focus: 3 Key Areas

- Creating safer spaces for birds
- Habitat enhancement and protection
- Community engagement





# Evaluating Success

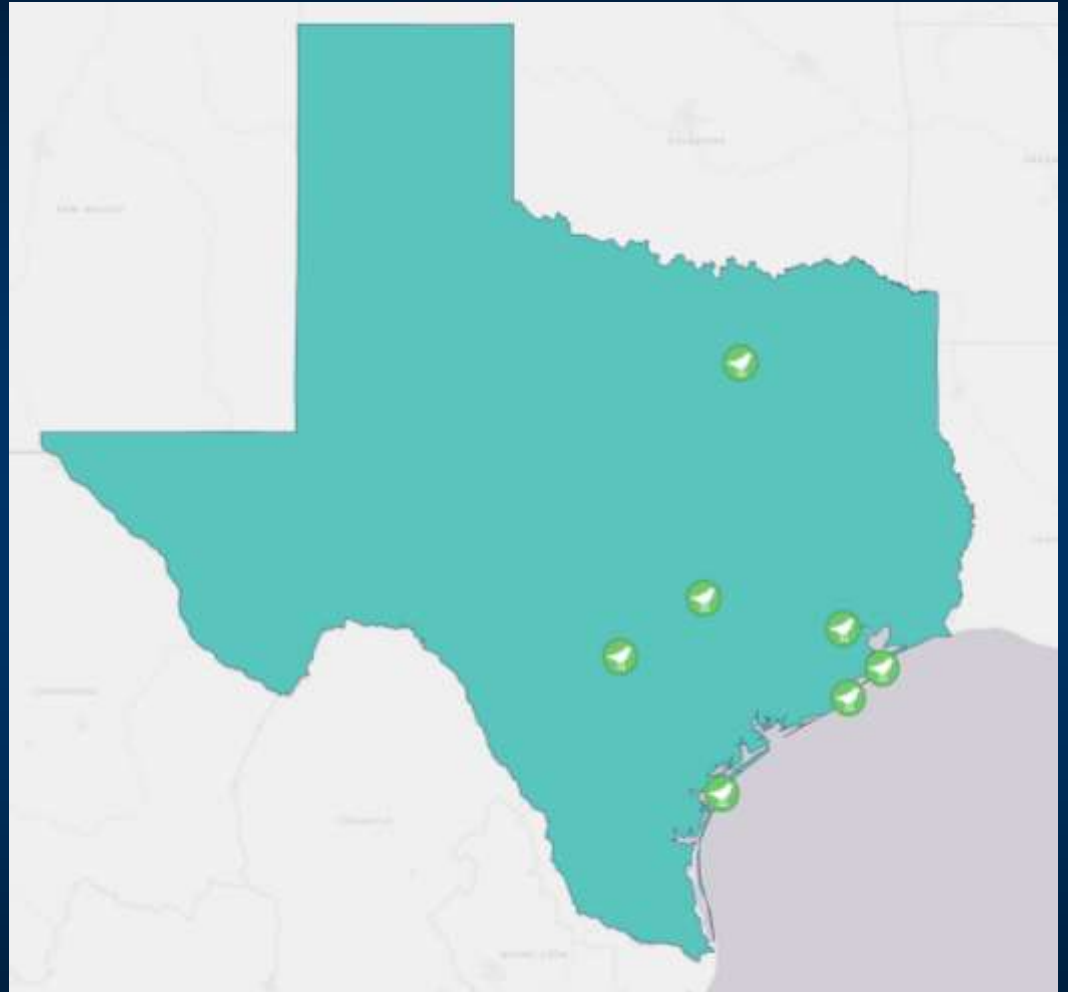
- Evaluative metrics determined by the community
- Some criteria have required metrics
  - # of acres
  - # of people
  - # of native plants planted
- Annual report due every December





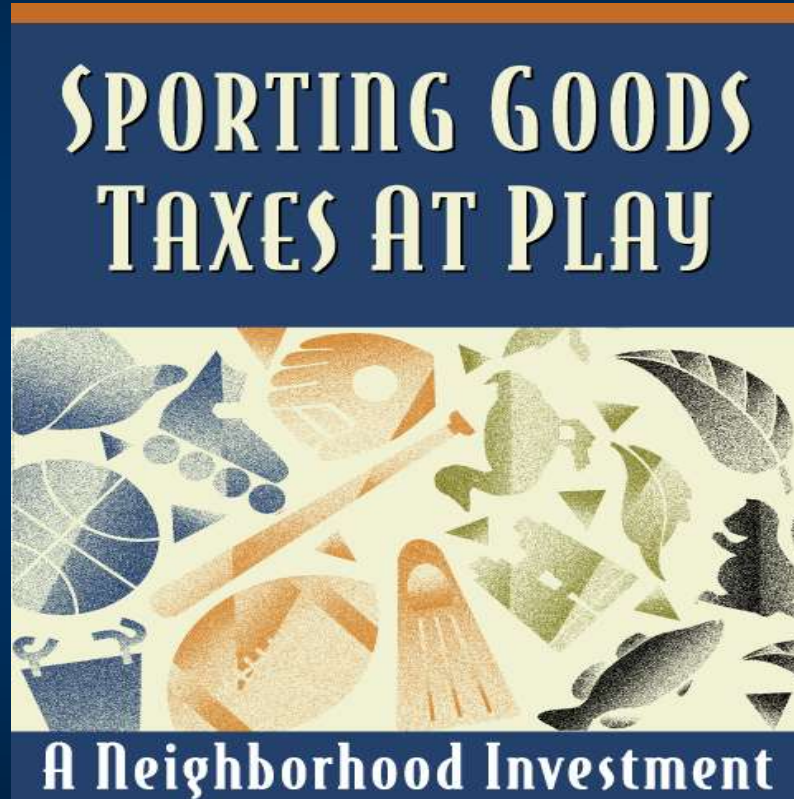
# 7 Certified Communities!

- 2019
  - Bastrop
  - Dallas
  - Houston
  - Port Aransas
- 2020
  - Galveston
  - San Antonio
  - Surfside Beach





# TPWD Grant Programs



**<https://tpwd.texas.gov/grants>**



# Local Assistance Grants

**Include a range of opportunities:**

- Outdoor Recreation Grant
- Indoor Recreation Grant
- Small Community Grant
- Community Outdoor Outreach Grant
- Recreational Trails Grants
- Boat Access Grants



# Nature Tourism Opportunities

- New sites for the Great Texas Wildlife Trail
- New Texas Paddling Trails
- Participate in the Great Texas Birding Classic (youth teams, adult teams, Big Sits!)
- Conservation Grant opportunities from Birding Classic (enhancement, restoration, acquisition)
- Bird City Texas certification
- Local grant opportunities through TPWD



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