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NEWS



News Release

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Oct. 11, 2022

Texas State Parks Invites Texans to Join in Celebrating 100 Years of State Parks in 2023

H-E-B Supports Centennial Celebration with \$1 Million Donation

AUSTIN— The Centennial Celebration of Texas State Parks is right around the corner, and park lovers are invited to get outside and join celebrations across the state. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) in partnership with Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation (TPWF) will celebrate 100 years of Texas State Parks beginning January 2023.

“We invite all Texans to experience these precious public lands that truly belong to them,” said Rodney Franklin, TPWD’s Texas State Parks Director. “We hope this is the year every Texan visits at least one state park. We are going to take advantage of the excitement about the Centennial to showcase everything our parks have to offer, and we’re thrilled that H-E-B will be supporting our celebration.”

H-E-B is the presenting sponsor of the Centennial Celebration and donated \$1 million to help Texas State Parks engage all Texans in discovering and exploring their parks.

“In a state rich with majestic landscapes, our support of this effort aims to provide access to our parks and the beauty of our great state for all Texans to enjoy,” said Winell Herron, H-E-B Group Vice President of Public Affairs, Diversity and Environmental Affairs. “Only a very small fraction of land in Texas is public land, and it’s our commitment to work alongside organizations such as our longtime partner Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation to protect these precious resources, so Texans can use them for generations to come.”

When Governor Pat Neff called for a State Parks Board in 1923, he envisioned a Texas dotted by camping and recreational spaces held in sacred trust for the public good. Texas State Parks have lived up to that vision and so much more. Texas State Parks play a significant role in conserving habitat that benefits people and wildlife, encompassing some 630,000 acres, including 481,000 acres of Texas aquifers, rivers and reservoirs that protect our drinking water. Parks also provide critical habitat for wildlife, including more than 50 threatened and endangered species. They also attract close to 10 million visitors every year, generating \$891 million in economic value and \$18 million in sales tax revenue.

The Centennial Celebration will officially kick off statewide on Jan. 1, 2023, with “First Day Hikes.” New Year’s Day hikers will be welcomed across the state, and many parks will offer ranger-guided walks and hikes for this special event. Throughout the year, TPWD will encourage hikers, campers, picnickers and

nature lovers to share their first-time park experiences on the Texas State Parks Facebook and Instagram pages.

The celebration will continue with special events at 89 state parks throughout the year, inviting Texans to visit with their families and friends. State parks offer a variety of experiences, from easy-to-access playgrounds and picnic and camping areas to back country hiking for the more adventurous.

Park visitors can stay in-the-know about celebrations near them, plan visits with how-to videos, and purchase limited edition state park merchandise on the new Texas State Parks 100 Years website, the Texas State Parks app, and Texas State Parks Facebook and Instagram pages. The TPWD PBS series will feature Centennial programming throughout the 2023 series, and Texas Parks & Wildlife magazine will publish a special issue in May 2023. The State Park Guide, available for free beginning in January 2023, will also feature Centennial-related content. Centennial-branded retail merchandise will be available in Texas State Park stores and online beginning in November 2022.

Throughout the Centennial Celebration, H-E-B will engage with customers to inspire a love of the outdoors with campfire cooking recipes from H-E-B chefs, hosting Texas park rangers in stores; fun, Texas parks-themed merchandise; and more. H-E-B works year-round to champion sustainability initiatives throughout its own operations and across the Lone Star State.

Earlier this year, the retailer announced Field & Future by H-E-B, its line of sustainable, environmentally friendly products, will benefit state parks and wildlife conservation. Through its commitment to Our Texas, Our Future, H-E-B is additionally focused on increasing awareness and education of the environmental stewardship that state parks bring to preserve Texas' land, water, and air.

In addition to celebrating the past, the Centennial is about looking ahead to the next 100 years. In January 2023, TPWF will kick off a Centennial Fundraising Campaign to raise funds for priority projects at state parks across Texas. TPWF's fundraising effort will drive statewide, grassroots giving to raise \$2 million that will deliver equipment and enhancements to the visitor experience for 89 state parks. These donations will allow Texas State Parks to continue delighting visitors of all ages for generations to come.

The Centennial Fundraising Campaign is complementary to the ongoing TPWF fundraising effort for Palo Pinto Mountains State Park, the first new state park in North Texas in 25 years. The new park will be another cause for celebration. Palo Pinto Mountains State Park is located on 4,871 acres of scenic, undeveloped land approximately 75 miles west of Fort Worth and 75 miles east of Abilene.

Philanthropic support raised by TPWF, including donations through Field & Future by H-E-B, will be leveraged with \$21 million in public funds to construct the roads, utilities, buildings, campsites, trails and other facilities necessary to open the park to the public. Fundraising is still underway, and officials are hoping for a soft opening with some facilities available to the public by late 2023.

"Texans are wild about their state parks, with millions choosing to explore Texas' wild side annually," said TPWF Executive Director Anne Brown. "The prospect of a brand-new park also received a warm Texas welcome, and it's gratifying to see the support from generous donors for Palo Pinto. We know we can count on Texans' longstanding support of their parks for the upcoming Centennial Fundraising Campaign, and we owe H-E-B a B-I-G thank you for leading the charge with their Texas-sized show of support for the Centennial."

The Centennial will also be commemorated with “The Art of Texas Parks” exhibit, which will be hosted at several museums, starting in January at the Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin. The exhibit is a visual arts survey of state parks and features 34 parks by some of Texas' best contemporary artists.

For more information on the Centennial Celebration, including signature events, the history of Texas State Parks and how to make a day visit or overnight reservation, visit the newly launched Texas State Parks 100 Years website at TexasStateParks.org/100years.

ABOUT TPWD

The [Texas Parks and Wildlife Department](#) mission balances outdoor recreation and sustainable use of resources with conservation and management of natural and cultural resources. The department operates 89 Texas state parks, natural areas and historic sites, 50 wildlife management areas, three saltwater fish hatcheries and five freshwater hatcheries. TPWD game wardens and wildlife and fisheries biologists work in every Texas county, enforcing laws and encouraging management to conserve fish and wildlife.

ABOUT TPWF

[Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation](#), the official nonprofit partner of TPWD, raises private funds to ensure that all Texans, today and in the future, can enjoy, explore, and be inspired by the lands, waters, and the wildlife of Texas. Since 1991, Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation has raised and invested more than \$220 million to conserve the wild things and wild places of Texas.

ABOUT H-E-B

H-E-B is the Presenting Sponsor of the 100 Years of Texas State Parks Celebration. In April 2022 H-E-B launched their environmental commitment to [Our Texas, Our Future](#) and announced a partnership between TPWF and Field & Future by H-E-B, a clean and green product line which helps preserve state parks and wildlife conservation. Field & Future is made with recycled or recyclable content, biodegradable formulas or plant-based ingredients and without over 165 harsh chemicals. Since 2012, H-E-B has contributed more than \$20 million to over 500 environmental organizations in land and water conservation, habitat and coastal preservation, and community cleanups.



Media Kit