

**TEXAS  
PARKS & WILDLIFE  
FOUNDATION**

**2012  
YEAR END  
REPORT**

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department oversees an amazing 1,408,443 acres – an area nearly twice the size of Rhode Island. TPWD manages 96 State Parks and Historic Sites in 98 counties as well as 49 Wildlife Management Areas that provide nearly 1.1 million acres of hunting land for public use.



# Dear Friends

Looking back over the past year, we cannot help but be proud of and inspired by what Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department have achieved together. The numbers are impressive: the Foundation raised over \$4 million dollars to support conservation in Texas – a feat made possible by the exceptional commitment of our supporters, the Foundation’s dedicated Board of Trustees, and the record-breaking success of the Conservation Hall of Fame Dinner – which this year honored the conservation efforts of T. Boone Pickens and raised more than \$1 million for conservation.

But that’s not the whole story. Enclosed in this year-end update you’ll see how we’ve ensured your generosity is making a direct and positive impact on Texas’ lands, waters, fish and wildlife by focusing on projects supported by high quality stewardship and sound science. Projects like:

**Kemp’s Ridley Sea Turtle Conservation Project**, which is bringing back the world’s rarest sea turtle from the brink of extinction; and

**Sabine Lake Oyster Reef Restoration**, which is responsible for restoring oyster reefs which provide critical water filtration and habitat for countless species of fish and other reef organisms; and

**Habitat Management for Northern Bobwhite and Grassland Birds**, a research and conservation initiative focused on habitat restoration methods to determine best practices and improve grassland bird populations.

We also continue to actively promote, conserve, and expand **Texas State Parks**, recognizing that these state treasures are vital to the character and culture of Texas. These special places provide great joy, beauty, outdoor experiences, and inspiration for millions of Texans and their families, opportunities that must remain available to future generations if our proud outdoor traditions are to continue now and to come.

Perhaps most importantly of all, we are hopeful for the future and are poised to elevate our efforts to furthering Texas’ proud traditions of conservation, stewardship and outdoor recreation. There is undoubtedly much to do, but in partnership with you and others who share your commitment, we are confident that the Foundation and the Department will continue to make great strides to conserve and protect the rich natural resources, wildlife, and historic legacy of Texas. We are honored to have your support. Thank you.



Anne Brown  
*Executive Director*  
Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation



Carter Smith  
*Executive Director*  
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department



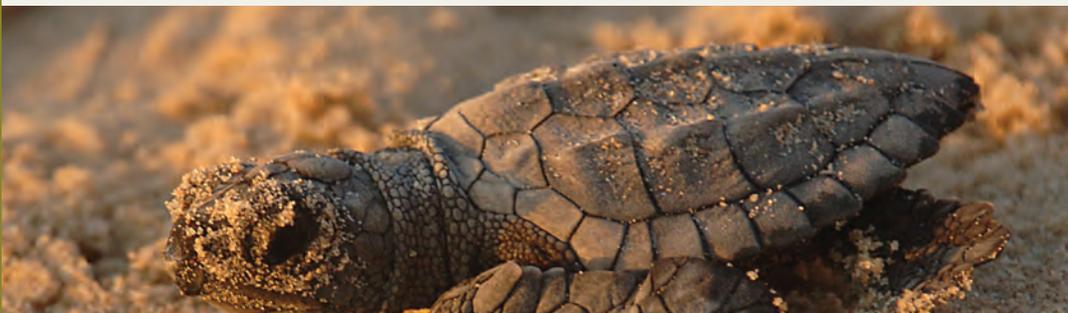
TPWD also assists in the stewardship of Texas’ 3,700 named streams, 15 major rivers, countless lakes and ponds, and 3,300 miles of tidal shoreline along the Gulf Coast.



## A Year in Conservation

### 2012-13 Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation Key Priorities

The following highlighted projects illustrate the breadth and array of strategies employed at Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to conserve and protect Texas' vast natural resources.



### Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle Conservation Project

The primary beaches for the most endangered sea turtle in the world are located in the Gulf of Mexico between Tampico, Tamaulipas and Corpus Christi. Working with several key partners, TPWD has brought the Kemp's ridley back from the brink of extinction to a rapidly recovering population. If the ongoing recovery work can be maintained, the Kemp's ridley could be removed from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Endangered Species List.



### Sabine Lake Oyster Reef Restoration

Situated on the border between Louisiana and Texas, the oyster reef system in this 90,000-acre estuary is likely the largest un-fished oyster reef in the U.S. With Louisiana taking steps to open their side to commercial oyster fishing, TPWD plans to restore 26 acres of oyster habitat. These reefs will provide critical water filtration, foraging territory for large predatory fish and habitat for small reef organisms.

TPWD operates  
8 state  
fisheries that  
annually stock  
approximately 41  
million fish into  
Texas waters.  
Coastal fisheries  
stocked 27.5  
million fish into  
coastal bays,  
including 16.2  
million saltwater  
red drum, 9.4  
million spotted  
seatrout and  
1.79 million  
freshwater red  
drum and 3,823  
flounder.



### Conserving Texas Rivers

TPWD is enhancing the conservation of valuable Texas rivers by expanding its partnerships with private landowners and local community organizations. These partnerships are facilitating improvements along the rivers to reduce erosion, improve water quality, restore and preserve native plant communities, and support healthy in-stream habitats for fish and other aquatic resources.



### Monitoring Habitat Management for Northern Bobwhite and Grassland Birds

Grassland birds as a whole are declining faster than any other group of birds in North America. TPWD is studying the effectiveness of landscape-level habitat enhancement practices by selecting three to four Texas eco-regions and determining if there are differences in species abundance between focus landscapes and surrounding areas.



### Pronghorn Restoration in the Trans-Pecos

Pronghorn numbers have reached an all-time low in the Trans-Pecos. Landowners, TPWD, the Trans-Pecos Pronghorn Working Group, and the Borderlands Research Institute (BRI) have formed a partnership to identify causative factors for the pronghorn decline and determine the best methods to restore pronghorn populations. In addition, TPWD and its partners will evaluate the effects of fire on pronghorn and their habitat through a two-year study.

Inland fisheries stocked 13.4 million fish including 110,440 blue catfish, 338,552 bluegill sunfish, 431,591 channel catfish, 10.55 million largemouth bass, 168,338 Guadalupe bass, 1.3 million hybrid striped bass, 288,939 smallmouth bass, 50,687 striped bass and 105,549 saugeye.

In 30 years, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has more than doubled its acreage to enhance outdoor recreational access and opportunities and preserve important wildlife habitat in the state, with valuable acquisitions like Big Bend Ranch State Park (215,000 acres), Palo Pinto Mountains State Park (3,300 acres) and an addition to the Devils River State Natural Area (17,639 acres).



## Texas State Parks

Texas State Parks provide millions of visitors and families each year opportunities to experience the extraordinary natural and cultural heritage of Texas. Today, 96 State Parks safeguard 621,492 acres of astoundingly diverse forests, mountains, marshes, prairies, waterways and coastlines in nearly every region of Texas; numerous outdoor recreational and educational opportunities; and foster an understanding of Texas' rich history.

Few states can match the breadth of activities offered by Texas State Parks – they are unique and beautiful places with breathtaking scenery, opulent stories to share, and a wide range of activities to enjoy – from horseback riding and aerial tram rides to world-class fishing, hiking and biking. Texas State Parks are also more than just great places to visit – they provide tremendous economic benefits to surrounding communities, creating jobs and increasing visitor traffic. In fact, a 2008 report found that Texas State Parks generated an average



Garner State Park



Big Bend Ranch State Park

**Texas Parks and Wildlife Department works hard to protect its visitors, wildlife, land and water. TPWD maintains a force of 697 commissioned peace officers that serve as game wardens and state park officers. Last year they patrolled over 10.8 million miles by vehicle and 160,654 hours by boat and helped save hundreds of lives.**

of \$3 million in retail sales and \$1.5 million in resident income per county.

Unfortunately, recent budget shortfalls, unforeseen natural disasters and severe drought have created unprecedented financial challenges for Texas State Parks. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has implemented significant reductions to help keep parks open – but still suffers from funding gaps that must be met to ensure State Parks can continue to offer families and their communities access to outdoor recreation and

enjoyment at Texas’ most special natural places. Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department are partnering to explore alternative solutions for these gaps – including securing new public and private partnerships and sustaining valuable educational and outreach programs like Texas Outdoor Family and Outdoor Activity of the Month to increase awareness and visitation – ensuring State Parks remain places of recreation, rest, and reflection for all to enjoy.



Hill Country State Natural Area



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## **Thank you to our 2012 Supporters**

In 2012, 4,485 individuals, corporations, foundations, and organizations generously donated over \$4 million to support the mission of Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation and ensure the protection and preservation of Texas' natural treasures for current and future generations. Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation is tremendously grateful for their partnership.



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**"I am both honored and humbled to have been selected by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation as its 2012 inductee into the Texas Conservation Hall of Fame. The responsible management and conservation of our state's vast natural resources is an important mission and one in which I am proud to be involved."**

**T. Boone Pickens**  
2012 Conservation  
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*Please note all gifts are reflective of Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation's fiscal year date ranges*



Founded in 1991, Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation raises private funds to help Texas Parks and Wildlife Department manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas for present and future generations.



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214 720 1478 [www.tpwf.org](http://www.tpwf.org)

*All photos courtesy of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department*