

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Phillips 66 Donation Improves Visitor Experience at Sea Center Texas

LAKE JACKSON- Thanks to generous donations from Phillips 66, visitors to Sea Center Texas can now enjoy an enhanced experience at the marine aquarium, fish hatchery and education center. New visitor amenities were celebrated at a ribbon-cutting ceremony on April 20.

Phillips 66 donated \$75,000 in 2015 to fund improvements to a wetlands walkway to make it more accessible to encourage greater use of the area for birding and other wildlife observation. In 2016, a second gift of \$93,000 allowed for the construction of a new outdoor classroom, pavilion and observation deck.

“Phillips 66 is proud to support Sea Center Texas,” said David Erfert, General Manager of the Phillips 66 Sweeny Refinery in Brazoria County. “We stand behind their mission to conserve coastal resources and promote education around sustainability. These new facilities are a great addition to our community, and we hope they will be enjoyed by all who visit.”

Sea Center Texas was built in 1996 by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and is the world’s largest redfish hatchery. The site’s visitor center educates through a “touch tank” and native Texas aquarium exhibits depicting a salt marsh, jetty, reef and open Gulf waters. The center’s wetland area is part of the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail where more than 200 species of birds have been identified. Visitors can frequently see damselflies, dragonflies, butterflies, frogs and turtles off the improved walkway. The new walkway now extends from the freshwater wetlands to the 8-acre recreation area. The newly enhanced outdoor classroom

and pavilion will provide a place where thousands of children and adults can learn about the importance of wetland habitats.

“These improvements will provide enhanced access and a better experience for the many visitors who come through Sea Center Texas each year,” said Anne Brown, Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation Executive Director. “We’re very appreciative of Phillips 66 for making this possible.”

About 55,000 visitors come to Sea Center Texas annually, and the facility has seen more than one million visitors since it opened. Admission is free.

“Educating the public about why wetland habitat is important is an essential part of our mission,” said David Abrego, Director of Sea Center Texas. “These improvements will help us spread the message about the value of coastal conservation.”

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Since 1991, Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation (TPWF) has leveraged public funds with private philanthropy to advance Texas’ proud outdoor traditions and conserve our state’s wildlife, habitat, recreational areas, and natural resources. Since its inception, TPWF has raised more than \$170 million to help ensure that all Texans, today and in the future, can enjoy the wild things and wild places of Texas.

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