



NEWS RELEASE

Lake Corpus Christi State Park Celebrates Trail Upgrade with Support from Phillips 66 and Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation

New trail surface improves access to historic park features, honors the park's legacy, and enhances visitor experience through community partnership.

MATHIS, TEXAS – May 20, 2025 – Thanks to funding from Phillips 66 through its longtime partnership with Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation (TPWF), visitors to Lake Corpus Christi State Park (SP) now enjoy improved access to some of its most popular areas, including the birding and educational zone and the historic Civilian Conservation Corps Refectory “The Castle,” which was built in the 1930s.

Phillips 66 funded the resurfacing, installation of new signs, and the extension of a popular interpretive trail, which now leads all the way to this key area of the park. Previously, the trail ended in a rough, grassy patch, with no clear path forward, offering limited access for visitors.

“Whether you were using a mobility aid, a mother pushing a stroller, or a park ranger pulling a wagon full of supplies, getting to this spot used to be a real challenge,” said Lake Corpus Christi SP Superintendent Kelly Malkowski. “With the creation of this unified trail surface, access has been dramatically improved for nearly everyone.”

Lake Corpus Christi SP staff, TPWF, and Phillips 66 celebrated the availability of the new trail on Tuesday, May 20, marking the occasion with the installation of the final trail signs.

For the trail resurfacing, a novel approach was taken by using caliche-crete, the same material used when the park was first developed nearly a century ago. This historic, locally sourced choice was selected over the standard crushed granite to honor the park’s original craftsmanship.

“We really circled back to our roots,” Malkowski said. “Lake Corpus Christi State Park was originally built by the Civilian Conservation Corps, who did incredible work using caliche-crete – they would dig up local caliche, mix it with cement, and create beautiful, long-lasting historic structures. Our beloved Castle Refectory was built using that same method. So, when we were deciding on the best material for the new trail surface, we chose to honor that history by using cement-treated caliche, rolled and pressed.”

She added, “It’s a native product of San Patricio County and a thoughtful nod to the craftsmanship and care that went into the park’s original creation.”

By choosing a locally sourced material, the project team was able to resurface the entire trail — something that wouldn’t have been possible if they had used crushed granite. Bringing in crushed granite would have added significant trucking costs, limiting the scope of the work to only half the trail.

“The park’s original caliche-crete structures have stood strong for nearly 90 years, and the new trail has already proven its durability by holding up well during recent rains,” Malkowski said. In contrast, the previous trail often struggled with ponding and flooding issues. It was built using a mix of large gravel, pea gravel, and river stone – none of which are native to the park.

“The feedback we’re already hearing from the public is that this feels like a real trail – it’s inviting, you know exactly where to go, and you know what to expect,” Malkowski said.

“Plans for the trail have been in the works since the COVID-19 pandemic, and the partnership between TPWF and Phillips 66 is what ultimately made the project possible,” Malkowski said.

“Every person who comes to our park deserves a dignified experience. They should be able to simply enjoy themselves without needing to ask a ranger for help,” Malkowski said. “Anytime we can meet those needs, we strive to do so. This was a need beyond what we could make happen on our own, and we wouldn’t have been able to get this project across the finish line without the support of the Phillips 66 and Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation. Together, we’re creating a net positive for the community we serve.”

“Phillips 66 is committed to supporting and enriching the communities where it operates through partnerships like this one,” said Jessica Follett, Regional Public Affairs Advisor, Phillips 66.

“This initiative underscores our company’s commitment to sustainability and community engagement,” Follett said. “By using locally-sourced materials to resurface the trail, we not only enhance the park’s natural beauty and accessibility, but also support local businesses and reduce our environmental footprint. We believe these improvements will provide a safer and more enjoyable experience for all visitors to Lake Corpus Christi State Park.”

About Lake Corpus Christi State Park

Lake Corpus Christi State Park, located in Mathis, Texas, opened in 1934 and is about an hour inland from the City of Corpus Christi. The park is a multipurpose recreational area offering camping, fishing, hiking, and educational ranger-led interpretive programs. The lake itself serves as one of Corpus Christi’s primary water reservoirs.

About Phillips 66

Phillips 66 (NYSE: PSX) is a leading integrated downstream energy provider that manufactures, transports, and markets products that drive the global economy. The company’s portfolio includes Midstream, Chemicals, Refining, Marketing and Specialties, and Renewable Fuels businesses. Headquartered in Houston, Phillips 66 has employees around the globe who are committed to safely and reliably providing energy and improving lives while pursuing a lower-carbon future. For more information, visit [phillips66.com](https://www.phillips66.com) or follow [@Phillips66Co](https://www.linkedin.com/company/Phillips66Co) on LinkedIn.

About Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation

KEEPING TEXAS WILD

For over 30 years, Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation has been conserving our wild things and wild places. Addressing Texas’ greatest conservation challenges and opportunities, the impact of our work is far-reaching—from the shores of the Gulf Coast to the mountains of West Texas, and everywhere in between.

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