

# Recreational Trails Application

Created Monday, February 23, 2015

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### Application Checklist

Prior to beginning this application, you may find it helpful to review the Recreational Trails Grant Application Checklist

#### Project Name:

Bobcat Woods Trail Extension

#### Sponsor Name:

Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges

#### City:

Lake Jackson

#### County:

020 Brazoria

#### Sponsoring Entity

#### Contact Person

Martin Cornell

#### Title

Member of the Board of Directors, Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges

#### Mailing Address

Mailing Address	333 Timbercreek Dr
City	Lake Jackson
State	Texas

Zip

77566

## Email Address

marty-carole@comcast.net

## Phone Number

979-297-2235

## Intended Uses

Non-Motorzied Use

## Types of Use

Check all that apply

- Wheelchairs
- Provisions for Disabilities
- Hiking/Walking
- Other: Bird and Viewing other fauna and flora/venue for environmental education programs

## Project Length

Is the intended Project for new trail construction, renovation of an existing trail or for other amenities/infrastructure?

Both New Trail and Renovation of Existing Trail

## Grant Funds Requested:

In whole dollars

\$160,000

## Description of Project

Please provide a clear and concise description of the proposed Project. Include a description of the trail length, width, surfacing, and configuration (loop, linear, network); trailhead and trailside amenities. Detail all work to be performed; any right-of-way or easements to be acquired; the relationship between Project and any other work planned or existing; partnerships and/or community involvement; and educational/interpretive aspects of the Project.

Elements of this project include:

- Repair of the existing 1,000 -foot trail,
- Extend the trail, creating a 0.65 mile, ADA-complying loop trail,
- Add spurs leading to water features and a butterfly garden,
- Construct an understory observation platform,
- Rehabilitate an old water well,
- Install signage and benches.

It is the intent of this project to repair and extend the trail in the Bobcat Woods on the San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge (SBNWR), creating an ADA-complying, six-foot-wide loop trail of about 0.65 miles in length. The existing wood-deck boardwalk trail follows the east side Cocklebur Slough for- 1,000 feet under a hardwood forest canopy, which is a prime location for migrating Neotropical birds and resident passerines. Originally installed in 2002, the wood decking and some of the understructure have deteriorated and need to be replaced, with the new decking material to be a more durable plastic composite. The current trail has two parking areas, one with a handicap parking section and restrooms.

The project will extend this boardwalk trail section, crossing for -530 feet over Cocklebur Slough to form the north end of the loop trail. A wetland levy for moist soil units forms the western boundary of these riparian woods. These open wetlands are prime habitat for waterfowl, both for migrating species of duck and geese as well as for resident birds including the native mottled duck, colonial herons, egrets, ibis the rosette spoonbill, and cormorants. An ADA-complying concrete trail section of about 1,000 feet will extend south along the levy to an existing shelter, and then curve east for about 200 feet along a graveled service road to connect to the south end of the existing boardwalk, completing the loop.

At the shelter, a more heavily reinforced concrete spur of the trail will cross a service road to connect to another new boardwalk section of this project. This section will connect to an existing observation platform situated on the shore of a lake, which is managed waterfowl habitat. Another spur of the trail will connect to an existing butterfly garden; this section will be made of crushed concrete, topped with granite fines and edged with galvanized steel.

An auxiliary feature will include a platform inside the wooded area, raised to the level of the hardwood tree understory, to enhance the birding and photography experience. Access spurs to the slough will be made at two points, each leading to a platform that will allow students and other visitors to enjoy aquatic wildlife ranging from fresh water invertebrates to alligators and other herptiles; An abandoned well will be recommissioned to supply water as needed to pools in the slough, thus insuring that students on field trips will be able to conduct pond life experiments during dry seasons. This project also includes the installation of interpretative signs and the stationing benches along the trail.

## Itemized Budget

Provide an itemized list of all activities to be undertaken and the cost of each activity. Provide as much detail as possible (consider materials: surfacing, lumber, stones, etc; volunteer or paid labor, services contracts, equipment/tool rental and/or value of in-house, land acquisition; Professional Services e.g. design, engineering, or architectural surveys) Costs are limited to 12% of the total grant construction estimate amount. Environmental survey costs (e.g. limited to 12% of the total grant construction estimate amount. Environmental surveys costs (e.g. natural and cultural resource site assessments) may be considered above the 12% professional services limit on a case-by case basis. Sponsor's administrative costs cannot be included. Please contact us with questions for clarification

See Supporting Documents- Itemized Budget- Bill of Materials (2 pages)

## Project Costs and Requested Funds

### Total Itemized Project Costs

From Itemized Budget

\$200,000

### Federal Funds Requested

80% or less (should match total Grant Funds Requested listed above)

\$160,000

### Local Match Required

20% or more (of total Project Cost)

## Proposed Method of Financing Sponsor's Share

Please describe the source of funds, donations, or in-kind contributions that will make up the Sponsor's match (at least 20%) You may include government appropriations; private donations of land, easement, cash, labor, materials and equipment; or in-house labor, equipment and materials:

The matching requirement will be exceeded through a combination of existing general funds in the Friends account, funds from a special Friends fundraising event ( A Taste for Nature) in the fall of 2015, volunteer work details to build or rebuild the boardwalks and the canopy observation platform, and the use of refuge personal and equipment as needed.

Equipment "In-Kind" rental value from the US Fish and Wildlife Service \$ 5,000

Labor "In-Kind" value from the US Fish and Wildlife Service \$ 5,000

Volunteer "In-Kind" Labor \$ 5,000

Cash funds from Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges (Cash reserves and A Taste for Nature fundraiser) \$25,000

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Total Sponsor Financing \$40,000

In-kind sponsor share estimated are based on the experience of the Dow Woods Trail project.

As of December 31, 2014, the uncommitted cash reserves of the Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges includes a \$10,000 gift from Katherine McGovern made on December 22nd for projects at the San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge (Please see the letter from Mrs. McGovern in the Supplemental Documents).

Our first A taste for Nature fundraiser, held in 2013, netted \$15,000 for environmental education projects. This money remains in our uncommitted reserve funds and could be used to support the construction of the Bobcat Woods Trail should this grant be awarded.

Public demand is high for a repeat of A Taste for Nature scheduled for the fall of 2015, and with the position of honorary chairman filled by Earl Shipp, Vice President US Gulf Coast Operations of the Dow Chemical Company, we expect participation to be high. Dow Chemical is the largest employer in Brazoria County and employs 11,000 in its Gulf Coast operations. Please see the Supplemental Documents for the acknowledgement from Mr. Shipp of his support of our fundraising event.

The revitalization and expansion of the Bobcat Woods Trail will be highlighted as the targeted objective for the proceeds from the 2015 A Taste for Nature fundraising event. Our intent is to recruit several significant sponsors from our local business and philanthropic communities, and thereby heighten awareness and support for our wildlife refuges and our environmental education activities.

## Maintenance

Briefly describe the identified commitment to continued operation and maintenance of the Project. Please indicate who will be responsible for which tasks and who will finance them:

Maintenance and repair duties will be performed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, with periodic support from volunteers, who currently maintain the butterfly garden at one entrance to the Bobcat Woods Trail. Maintenance by refuge personal includes routine trash clean-up and sign cleaning, mowing, brush trimming, and parking lot maintenance.

Please see the Supplemental Documents for the support letter from Jennifer Sanchez, Project Leader, Texas Mid-coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex.

## Project Use and Benefits

Provide a brief description of the benefits of the proposed project in terms of the project's quality, geographic scope, recreational needs that are to be met and expected amount of trail use or population to be served:

The wooded corridor along Cacklebur Slough, which is part of the Columbia Bottomlands riparian forest, is a haven for resident and migrating birds, as well as for numerous herptiles and mammals common to Brazoria Country. The adjoining Wolfweed Wetland Complex supports abundant native and migrating waterfowl. For the past two years, the Bobcat Woods Trail has seen over 1,500 visitors per year, which is roughly seven percent of the total visitors to the San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge. The trail is well known and used by experienced birders.

By improving and extending this trail, we expect that a larger number of visitors with more diverse interests will be attracted to explore the varied habitat along its length. Bobcat Woods is just an hour drive from the greater Houston area with a population exceeding five million people. By adding access to the slough an auxiliary source of water, we will enhance this venue both as a place to hold field trips for students of local schools, and a feature of the refuge's annual migration Celebration, which annually attracts over 1,600 visitors during an April weekend of docent-guided activities. The hard-surfaced, ADA-complying trail will facilitate use by the less able, such as senior citizens on group outings.

The San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge intends to highlight the Bobcat Woods Trail as a premier feature of the public access portion of the refuge, using this trail to educate the public on the significant role that the refuge contributes to the well being of native and migrating wildlife.

## Trail Corridor Information

Describe the ownership of the trail corridor. If the land is currently in public hands, identify the name of the public land. If the land is not in the sponsor's ownership, include a statement of permission to construct trail project from the landowner. If land, easement, or other property interest will be acquired, describe how this will be accomplished. If acquisition in fee, include a statement of why easement was not possible.

The Bobcat Woods Trail is totally within the San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge.

## Project Location

### City

Brazoria

### County

020 Brazoria

## Site Map

Upload a Site Map locating the trail for orientation purposes. The trail drawn on a park map or city map will suffice.

assets/survey-uploads/14221/2830801-7XHif92fcF/DOC014.pdf

## USGS Topographic Map

Upload a U.S.G.S. topographic map (7.5 minute series) with the trail location drawn on map. An 8.5 x 11 inch copy of the portion of the map on which the project is located will suffice, but write the name of the quadrangle on the copy. For assistance with Topographic Maps, please click here

assets/survey-uploads/14221/2830801-iOgbCvQZiE/DOC015.pdf

## Photographs of Project Site

Upload Photographs of the Project Site.

## Supporting Documentation

Upload any relevant supporting documentation:

## SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

Please remember that once you have a complete application, you must choose "SUBMIT" below for your application to be turned into Recreation Grants for review. You will receive an email confirmation of your submission.

Paper copies of the application will not be accepted.