

September 28, 2012

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### **Pre-Acquisition Grant to the Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges.**

Per the conditions of this grant made on November 15, 2011, we are pleased to provide this first annual summary report on the Columbia Bottomlands Houston Endowment Pre-acquisition activities performed by the Friends of the Brazoria Refuges (Friends) in association with other Texas conservation partners during the past year from October 3, 2011 to the present. This grant has facilitated the purchase, protection and preservation of forest wetland habitat in Brazoria County, Texas. Major partners providing significant expertise and major support to this grant include The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), The Conservation Fund (TCF), The Trust For Public Land (TPL), plus the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) under the Wetland Reserve Program and the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) under the Migratory Bird "Duck Stamp" and the NAWCA Programs.

During this reporting period a total of six important bottomland hardwood tracts were acquired from private landowner willing sellers, at appraised market values, totaling 7,172-acres at a total land cost of \$9,250,000.00. These tracts are now managed as important additions to the Columbia Bottomlands Unit of the San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge. **Completion of these purchases utilizing a variety of funding sources were made possible only by this Houston Endowment Grant providing the required pre-acquisition due diligence money necessary for the FWS to complete these purchase steps in time to meet the deadlines for available land acquisition funding this year!**

Activities completed toward the purchase of additional tracts with this grant funding included contacts with private landowners, land title researching, ordering title commitments from title companies and contracting market value appraisal reports following required federal and state appraisal standards. These include three proposed additions to the Columbia Bottomlands Refuge Unit; i.e., 55-acres on Halls Bayou, 17-lots totaling 43-acres adjacent to the Brazos River Refuge Unit, and 212-acres adjacent to the Dance Bayou Refuge Unit. All three of these private landowners have accepted the purchase offers of the FWS at approved market value appraisals who have applied for the necessary land costs from a variety of sources including grant applications and future Migratory Bird funds in fiscal year 2013 which begins October 1, 2012.

We are also using Houston Endowment Grant funding to initiate fee purchase of three additional forest wetland tracts in Brazoria County. We have contracted market value appraisal reports on a 76-acre tract adjacent to the Buchanan Refuge Unit, and a 177-acre tract also adjacent to the Dance Bayou Refuge Unit, and a 10.5-acre inholding at the San Bernard Refuge. The FWS has also just submitted a request for a market value appraisal report on the 127-acre Orozimbo Plantation located on the Brazos River

adjacent to Nash Prairie which in addition to wetland forest habitat has significant Texas historical values. This appraisal report will be paid for from the Houston Endowment Grand funds.

The FWS is also working with two private landowners on the proposed acquisition of perpetual conservation easement donations; i.e., a 13-acre tract on the San Bernard River and a 4,300-acre Ranch on the Brazos River. Efforts will continue to contact additional private landowners owning old growth forest wetland habitat with priorities on tracts adjacent to existing refuge units and located within the riparian rivers, streams and bayou areas in Brazoria and Fort Bend Counties.

Attached is a current map of the Columbia Bottomlands Unit of the Refuge showing the recent land purchases and proposed additions outlined above. The invoices paid to date for the completed pre-acquisition required activities total \$215,304.24, and are listed below. Based on current outstanding pre-acquisition work outlined above we anticipate paying additional invoices that would expend all the remaining grant funds by the end of December, 2012.

Please let me know if you require further information on the status of this grant. We thank you for your contribution to help preserve key portions of the Columbia Bottomlands Forest.

Sincerely,

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Martin Cornell, Grant Administrator and Member of the Board  
Friends of Brazoria Refuges  
September 28 , 2012

## Expenditures by Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges on Grant 20111115

Date of Invoice	Activity	Submitter	Payee	Amount	Friends Payment
16-Feb-12	Surveying Services- Brothers Tract 129 West of Highway 36, West Columbia, Texas Surveying Services - Boundary Survey of 1942 Acres Along Hwy 36 between Brazoria & West Columbia, Texas	Louis duBois, Senior Land Surveyor	Dovle & Wachtstetter. Inc	\$39,965.20	\$39,965.20
1-Mar-12	Surveying Services- Brothers Tract 129 West of Highway 36, West Columbia, Texas	Louis duBois, Senior Land Surveyor	Dovle & Wachtstetter. Inc	\$16,393.50	\$16,393.50
2-Mar-12	Salary and Expenses	Thomas E. Smith	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)	\$7,113.01	\$14,835.56
	Salary and Expenses	Thomas E. Smith		\$5,081.63	
	Travel	Thomas E. Smith		\$1,155.54	
2-Mar-12	Travel	Thomas E. Smith		\$1,485.38	
2-Mar-12	Owner's policy title insurance for 1.8119 acres John McCrowskey Abst. 84, Cedar Lake Creek, Sweeny, Texas	Gwen Fief	Alamo Title Company	\$757.25	\$757.25
28-Mar-12	Surveying Services- Brothers Tract 129 East of Highway 36, West Columbia, Texas	Louis duBois, Senior Land Surveyor	Dovle & Wachtstetter. Inc	\$45,600.00	\$45,600.00
3-Apr-12	Self-contained appraisal report being <u>Tract 138</u> of the San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge IVIS# F12017 Of 212.627 acres located along the southwest side of FM1459 approximately six miles west of West Columbia, Texas in the western portion of Brazoria County Texas and legally described as 212.627 acres out of the Zeno Phillips League, Abstract No. 118 in Brazoria County, Texas	David W. Oberrender, MAI	Kokel-Oberrender-Wood Appraisal, Ltd.	\$7,800.00	
					\$19,200.00
4-Apr-12	Self-contained appraisal report being <u>Tract 137</u> of the San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge IVIS# F12012 Of 55.678 acres located 0.2 mile southwest of Pearson Road, being approximately seven miles southeast of Alvin, Texas, four miles southeast of Santa Fe, Texas on the Brazoria/Galveston County line and legally described as 55.678 acres out of the A. G. Reynolds League, Abstract No. 121, Brazoria County, Texas	David W. Oberrender, MAI	Kokel-Oberrender-Wood Appraisal, Ltd.	\$11,400.00	
11-Apr-12	Surveying Services - Brothers Tract 129 East of Highway 36, West Columbia, Texas	Louis duBois, Senior Land Surveyor	Dovle & Wachtstetter. Inc	\$7,339.00	\$7,339.00
2-May-12	497.7080 acres S. F. Austin 7 1/3 Leag. Abst. 20, near West Columbia San Bernard NWR Tract (129), West Columbia, Texas		Alamo Title Company	\$7,408.00	\$7,408.00
22-May-12	Salary, Travel, and other expenses	Thomas E. Smith	NFWF	\$20,920.10	\$20,920.10

8-Jun-12	Retainer on appraisal of Gilbert 13.637 Acre Tract (Lawrence E. Gilbert, Jr., ownership) End of County Road 791, east of Highway 1459, near West Columbia; and being acreage of Lot 7 of the Bernard River Land Development Company Subdivision in the B. C. Franklin League, Abstract 192; Brazoria County, Texas	James J. Jeffries, ARA, MAI	\$4,000.00	
				\$8,000.00
8-Jun-12	Retainer on appraisal of Mansfield 75.54 Acres out of the Parent 105.54 Acres Tract (Johanna And Ben Mansfield ownership) West Side of County Road 321, North of County Road 332 near Sweeny; and Being acreage out of Lots 18 through 20; Block 8; Lot 9, Block 9; and Lots 4 through 8, Block 22; of the Third Subdivision of the M. B. Nuckols Survey, Abstract 679, Brazoria County, Texas	James J. Jeffries, ARA, MAI	\$4,000.00	
20-Aug-12	Appraisal of: Mansfield 75.54 Acres out of the Parent 105.54 Acres Tract (Johanna And Ben Mansfield ownership) West Side of County Road 321, North of County Road 332 near Sweeny; and Being acreage out of Lots 18 through 20; Block 8; Lot 9, Block 9; and Lots 4 through 8, Block 22; of the Third Subdivision of the M. B. Nuckols Survey, Abstract 679, Brazoria County, Texas	James J. Jeffries, ARA, MAI	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00
31-Aug-12	Resurvey of the Brothers tracts (57,a) and 129 at San Bernard NWR to correct problem in a previous deed.	Louis duBois, Senior Land Surveyor	\$16,933.30	\$16,933.30
7-Sep-12	Salary, Travel, and other expenses	Thomas E. Smith	\$13,952.33	13952.33
		National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)	\$13,952.33	13952.33
			<b>\$215,304.24</b>	<b>\$215,304.24</b>

**Labeled Tracts were supported by Houston Endowment Grant providing pre-acquisition funds.**

