

# Houston Endowment Annual Report

H.E. Grant 2012-331-0332-01 awarded to the Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges

December 8, 2015

## Organization Financials

### When did your last fiscal year end?

December 31, 2014

### For that year, what were your:

**Total Operating Expenses: \$219,954**

**Total Operating Revenues: \$775,805**

**Financial Documents:** Please see below for the use of grant funds by the Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges.

### Significant changes to our organization (leadership, major programming, financial position, etc.) since receiving this grant.

There have been no changes to our organization since our September, 2014 Annual Report.

### List, with amounts, how remaining funds will be spent:

As of December 4, 2015, there is \$8,828.33 remaining in the \$300,000 Houston Endowment Grant 2012-331-0332-01. It is expected that these remaining funds will be spent by year end to cover costs of support from Thomas Smith of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and appraisals of potential land purchases for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Since our last report, \$188,035.09 was spent on pre-land purchase discovery activities.

### Update on the work of FOBWR since Last Report to H.E.

From our last report on September 29, 2014 to the present, our work continues on our four areas of focus: Environmental Education, Community Outreach, Fundraising, and the prosecution of grants awarded to us for land conservation and public use.

During the 2014-2015 school year, about 3,500 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> grade children from area school districts participated in our Discovery Environmental Education Program (DEEP) held at the Brazoria and San Bernard National Wildlife refuges. This program engages students in several hands-on nature activities throughout their six-hour visits. This fall, as part of the Urban Initiative Program of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, youth from Houston's intercity were included in the DEEP program.

For two weekend days in April, 2015, we conducted our annual Migration Celebrations which each drew over 900 visitors to the San Bernard NWR; heavy rain on Saturday diminished attendance to about half that of previous years. Most of the participants are families with young children, and the other half adults unaccompanied by children, and over 40% of the attendees are first-time visitors. This event was

supported by \$8,700 in profits from our fundraising activities and \$8,600 from donations from corporations and individuals.

Preceding and during Migration Celebration, FOBWR sponsors visits to area schools by EarthQuest, who display birds-of-prey and teach their habits including demonstration flight of these birds. For 2015, a record 20,000 people, including over 18,000 students and teachers at 34 elementary schools, saw this program. This attendance is a 28% increase over 2014. To pay for these programs, we received over \$21,000 from our solicitation campaign; donors included Parent-Teacher Organizations, individuals, civic organizations, small businesses, and large corporations.

Community Outreach events included our educational booth at the Brazoria Heritage Day, the Lake Jackson Festival of Lights, the Bay City Rice Festival, and the reopening of Buffalo Bayou in downtown Houston. In October of 2015, FOBWR participated at the Kellogg Brown, and Root “Kids Day” on Buffalo Bayou where an estimated 1,000 visitors had close encounters with our reptiles and butterflies and were informed about the National Wildlife Refuges in the Houston area.

In June of 2015, FOBWR was notified that we will receive a \$160,000 grant from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Recreational Trails Fund for the repair and extension of the Bobcat Woods Trail at the San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge. This grant requires that we provide a match of \$40,000 for this project. Toward this end, we held our second *A Taste for Nature* fundraiser in October, which netted over \$54,000.

During the 14 months covered by this report (from September 29, 2014 to the present), the current Houston Endowment grant has been used for pre-purchase discovery of an additional four tracts of land totaling 547 acres. Details are presented in Table 1 below, which lists all properties acquired with the aid of the current Houston Endowment funding for pre-acquisition activities.

**Table 1**

Tracts acquired by purchase or donation (\*) during second Grant with pre-acquisition funding provided by Houston Endowment from August 2013 to present.

<b>Tract Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Tract No.</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Purchase Price</b>	<b>Partners **</b>
Brothers River	4/03/13	57	1,441	\$2,589,700	TPL/NFWF/HE/FWS
Conwell Sand Pit	7/12/13	147	15	<u>\$125,000*</u>	TPL/NFWF
BSR-RRG (Roye)	8/05/13	138	212	\$372,000	MBCC/NFWF
Dr. Gilbert	12/06/13	141C	13	<u>\$44,600*</u>	Gilbert/NFWF
Braniff	9/19/14	149	425	\$1,500,000	NAWCA/Chevron/NFWF
Stautberg	9/23/14	145	29	\$138,500	MBCC/NFWF
May-Monie	12/04/14	150C	36	<u>\$81,800*</u>	May-Monie/NFWF
Holman Trust	6/25/15	151	122	\$671,402	FBR/Mitigation/NFWF
Vallet	10/01/15	152	360	\$1,080,000	MBCC/NFWF

**9 Tracts (Totals): 2,653-acres with Land Value including 3 donations\*, Total of \$6,603,002.**

Refuge additions in Brazoria and Fort Bend Counties as of November 9, 2015 using Houston Endowment (HE) second grant pre-acquisition funding support. Major Project Partners include the Friends of the Brazoria Wildlife Refuges (FBR), Trust For Public Land (TPL), National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), The Conservation Fund (TCF), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS-MBCC).

**Update on this specific project. Has the Program been completed? If so, provide a summary of the work that was accomplished and the benefits currently being provided as a consequence.**

Lands acquired are shown in Figure 1 below. These lands contribute to the goal of the US Fish and Wildlife Service to add up to 70,000 acres to the San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge within the approved acquisition zone. From February, 2012 to the present, using the leverage of our two grants from Houston Endowment, 10,964.75 acres have been acquired (Table 2). A detailed description of the benefits provided as a consequence can be found in our grant application.

**Table 2**

**Columbia Bottomlands Conserved with the aid of Houston Endowment grants for pre-acquisition discovery.**

<b>Tract Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Land Value \$</b>
Eagle Nest Lake	2/15/12	4,471.00	\$4,452,450.00
Brothers BRI	5/3/12	497.71	\$1,269,200.00
Yelderman	7/11/12	1,350.21	\$2,362,868.00
Carl	8/20/12	850.00	\$1,530,000.00
Kelly	2/25/13	12.49	\$29,400.00
Carl Lots	3/8/13	41.61	\$87,000.00
Brothers River	4/3/13	1,440.99	\$2,589,700.00
Conwell	7/12/13	14.30	\$125,000.00
BSR-RRG	8/5/13	212.63	\$372,000.00
Gilbert	12/6/13	12.74	\$44,600.00
Braniff	9/19/14	425.03	\$1,500,000.00
Stautberg	9/23/14	28.48	\$138,500.00
May-Monie	12/4/14	35.49	\$81,800.00
Holman	6/25/15	122.07	\$671,402.00
Vallet	10/1/15	360.00	\$1,080,480.00
Westcap	soon	1,090.00	\$1,962,000.00
<b>Totals</b>		<b>10,964.75</b>	<b>18,296,400.00</b>

**If the project or program has not been completed, provide a report on the progress of the initiative thus far and detail what work remains.**

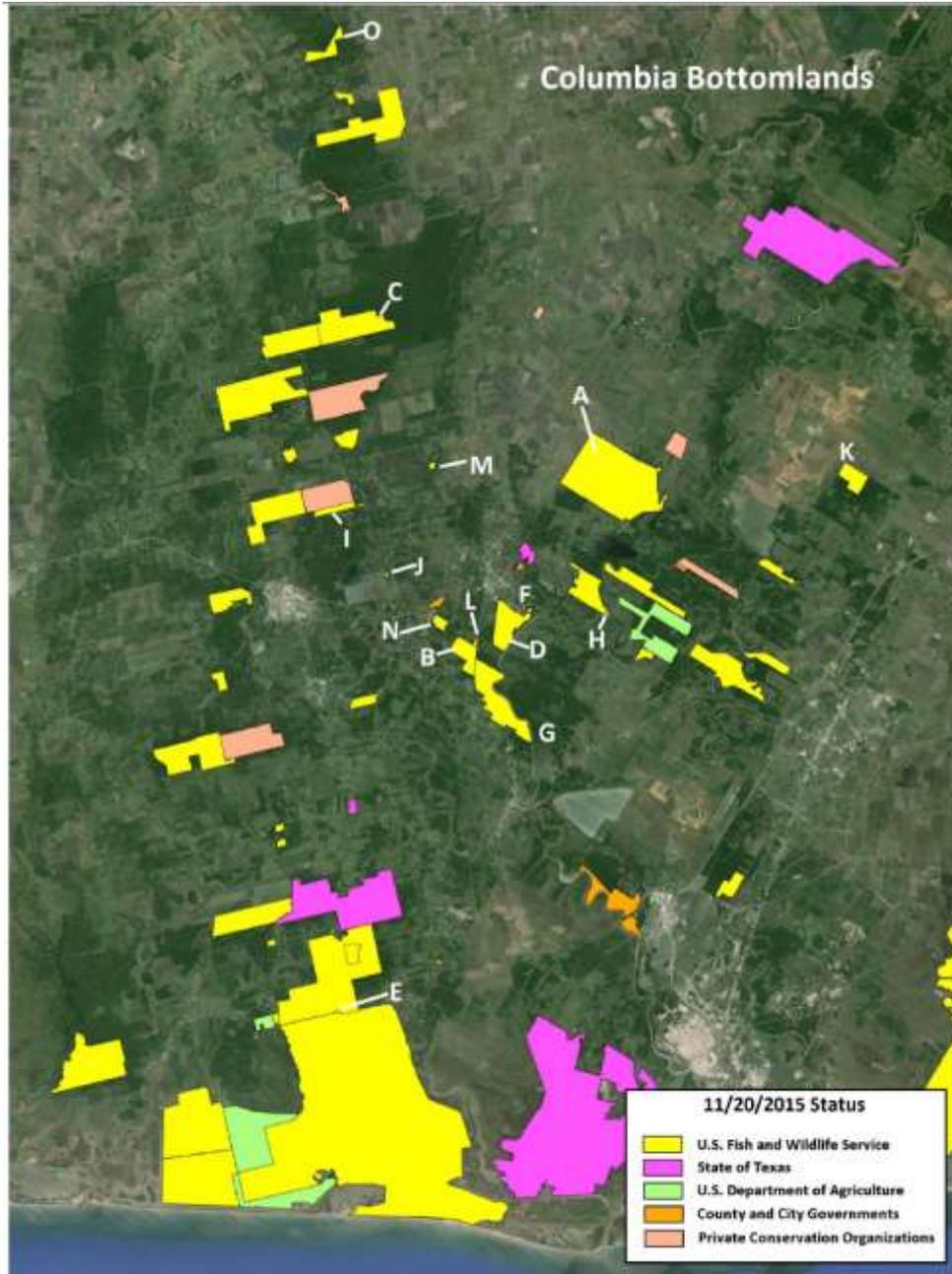
Per above, \$8,828.33 remaining in the \$300,000 Houston Endowment Grant 2012-331-0332-01 is expected to be spent by year end, pending submission of outstanding invoices for payment.

Table 2 shows the 1,090-acre Westcap tract which was approved for purchase at the September 2015 MBCC meeting, the contract accepted and \$1,962,000.00 funding obligated. Trust for Public Land (TPL) is closing this purchase soon and will transfer title to FWS shortly thereafter.

Currently we are working on 5 additional tracts for purchase in FY 2016, total of about 2,800-acres.

**Figure 1**

Tracts of Columbia Bottomland protected by government and NGO entities. Letters designate tracts acquired using Houston Endowment funds for pre-acquisition funding.



**Houston Endowment - Tracts and Acres Acquired:**

First Grant

A. Eagle Nest Lake - 4,471	D. Carl - 850
B. Brothers BRI - 498	E. Kelly - 12
C. Yelderman - 1,350	F. Carl Lots - 42

Second Grant

G. Brothers River - 1,441	L. Stautberg - 29
H. Conwell Sand Pit - 15	M. May-Monie - 36
I. BSR-RRG - 213	N. Holman - 122
J. Gilbert - 13	O. Vallet - 360
K. Braniff - 425	

Submitted by Marty Cornell

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