



Texans for State Parks

P. O. Box 41480
Austin, TX 78704-0025

Citizens working to preserve and enhance the state park system for the benefit of the people of Texas and their guests.

August 24, 2020

Texas Sunset Advisory Commission
ATTN: Ms. Danielle Nasr, Project Manager
Robert E. Johnson Bldg., 6th Floor
1501 North Congress Avenue
Austin, TX 78701

Re: Request Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) recommendation for expansion of statewide trails

Dear Texas Sunset Commissioners,

Texans for State Parks (TfSP), a 501(c)(3) non-profit, supports the preservation and enhancement of the state parks, state historic sites, and state natural areas of Texas. Texans for State Parks (TfSP) seeks to encourage the development and growth of Parks Partners (volunteer organizations) who help protect and maintain our State Parks. [TfSP, with its newsletters, web page, http://www.texansforstateparks.org/ e-mail and an annual members conference, strives to provide members around the state with information about park related issues.](http://www.texansforstateparks.org/)

TfSP is keenly aware of the heavy use of state parks by the Texas public, which grows rapidly each year. TfSP believes that a growing Texas population needs an expansion of state parks, just like a growing population needs an expansion of highways, schools, and hospitals.

Texans for State Parks asks that an item be included in the Sunset Report recommending that TPWD, in partnership with other state agencies, communities, and interest groups, identify at least one or two trails for study and possible implementation as a starter project.

Trails for hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians that connect communities with each other, with state parks and with other areas of interest have proved to be successful in other states. Texas has the foundation for such trails through two actions by TxDOT which involves TPWD. First is the Texas Bicycle Tourism Act found in Texas Transportation Code Section 201.9025 (2005), and second is the TxDOT Texas Bicycle Tourism Trails Study (2018).

<https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/modes-of-travel/bicycle/plan-design/tourism-study.html>

Virtually all of Texas has resources and points of interest to make these connections. For example, a trail system following the Colorado River Basin (or any Texas river) can connect state parks with communities along and near the river, and connect with parks and put-in points on the river. The Texas Paddling Trails network is already a resource in place on a number of Texas rivers.

While visitors, both Texans and out-of-staters, can enjoy these trails, the most frequent visitors and beneficiaries are the Texans who live on or near the trail network. A trail is a wonderful amenity for any Texas community.

Thank you for your work and attention to this matter. Please contact me anytime at (512) 470-7548 or jmgosdin@aol.com.

Sincerely,


John M. Gosdin, President

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