



Texas News



Members of the San Antonio Audubon Society Survey Team near Rutledge Creek in Poteet.

PROJECTS & PARTNERS 2012

- 1. Connecting Brownsville's Historical Trail**
City of Brownsville
- 2. Poteet Middle Camino Real Recreation Trail**
El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association, City of Poteet
- 3. Connect Trails to Parks: San Antonio Missions National Historical Park Feasibility Study**
San Antonio Missions National Historical Park, El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail, and the San Antonio River Authority
- 4. Greens Bayou Corridor**
Greens Bayou Corridor Coalition
- 5. Montopolis Tributary Trail Network**
Montopolis Tributary Trail Association
- 6. Northeast Texas Trail**
Friends of the NE Texas Trail
- 7. Kleberg Trail**
Friends of the Kleberg Trail and Kleberg Community Development Corporation
- 8. Aransas Pathways**
Aransas Pathways Steering Committee Development Corporation
- 9. Brazos River Recreation Master Plan**
Fort Bend Green
- 10. Llano River Biodiversity Trails**
Texas Tech University, Llano River Field Station
- 11. Corpus Christi Trails**
Corpus Christi Parks & Recreation Department

Find out more about each project starting on page 3

Recent Successes

Poteet Wins Funding for Middle Camino Real Recreation Trail

The City of Poteet, a small community just south of San Antonio, is progressively moving closer to building the proposed two-mile Poteet Middle Camino Real Recreation Trail along a beautiful tributary traversing the heart of the community and navigating through a serene natural area.

Beginning in November 2010, the City has benefitted from RTCA assistance through a partnership with El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association for development of this project. Shortly after, a resolution was passed by the Poteet City Council supporting this effort and extending a strong commitment to a project that could provide multiple social, economic, environmental, and educational benefits to the Poteet community. Over the past year, RTCA, the Association, and the City have held multiple public workshops and meetings in the city to gain community input and involvement in the project. In addition, experts from the Master Naturalists and the Audubon Society visited Poteet to conduct a plant species and avian survey for the natural area of the proposed trail. This inventory of natural resources provides the framework for identification of invasive species and for the development of interpretation

continued on page 2

ABOUT US

The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program is the community assistance arm of the National Park Service. RTCA staff provides technical assistance to community groups and local, state, and federal government agencies working to protect natural areas and water resources and enhance close-to-home outdoor recreation opportunities. We help communities plan, organize partnerships, and achieve on-the-ground success on projects they initiate.

We're Here For You.

Could your project benefit from RTCA Staff Assistance? Contact us to find out.

Kathryn Nichols

512.245.7246

kathryn_nichols@nps.gov

Marta Newkirk

512.245.7232

marta_newkirk_de_la_garza@nps.gov

Krista Sherwood

210.627.1203

krista_sherwood@nps.gov

Chance Kinnison

512-245-7232

Chance_kinnison@nps.gov

Hugh Osborne

303.969.2781

hugh_osborne@nps.gov

2011 Nationwide Partnership Success

1,991 Miles of Trail Developed

1,925 Miles of River Conserved

33,230 Acres of Open Space and Parkland Protected

94% Percentage of Community Partners Satisfied

Find more information online at

www.nps.gov/rtca



EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

Recent Successes cont.

opportunities for bird watching, plant identification, and detailing the historical significance of certain plant species.

In early 2011, through collaboration with RTCA and the Association, the City developed a successful application for a grant program and was awarded nearly \$125,000 from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for trail development. In addition, RTCA developed a Master Plan for the City detailing project information and the past year's process. The plan also provides a conceptual design of the trail developed through the community involvement process.

Northeast Texas Trail Makes Miles of Progress

Since the mid-1990s, an eclectic mix of non-profits and local governments have been piecing together segments of two long railbanked corridors that together would create a continuous 130-mile trail experience. The corridor stretches from Farmersville, not far from Dallas, to New Boston, near Texarkana, in the Northeast part of the Texas. A number of trail enthusiasts from the towns along the corridor sought assistance from the RTCA program to help expedite the efforts.

In the year since RTCA's planning assistance, three partners – Lamar County and the Cities of Paris and Farmersville – have been awarded Texas Parks and Wildlife Recreational Trail grants, totally \$600,000, plus \$326,000 in-matching funds and in-kind contributions, to add seven surfaced miles to the existing 24 miles of open trail. Additionally, Bowie County dedicated road crews and equipment to blade and clear a natural-surfaced segment, totally 19 miles, usable by equestrians, mountain bikers, and hikers. Several other partners are slated to open portions in the coming year.

RTCA helped project leaders put on an initial workshop in Paris, Texas to expand active support numbers. The group held planning meetings all along the trail corridor and found that each small town was enthusiastic about the economic development potential that an improved and marketed trail could bring. The group is currently garnering the help of cyclists, from Dallas and Texarkana, anxious for the long trail rides.

A newly forming Northeast Texas Trail Association is incorporating and filing for non-profit status and developing a committee structure to accomplish its many goals – seeing the whole trail developed and maintained through partnerships, promoting its use when open, and coordinating the marketing of the trail and the community events in the towns along the trail.



Volunteers deck and rail a bridge. Photo: Friends of DeKalb Trace

Current Projects



Runner in Alpine

1. Connecting Brownsville's Historical Trail

Partner: City of Brownsville
RTCA Contact: Krista Sherwood
Location: Brownsville

Project Goal

Expand and enhance the Historic Battlefield Hike/Bike Trail an additional 1.3 miles to connect four key historic sites in the Brownsville including the Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Park. The existing trail is currently over 7 miles in length.

RTCA Role

Assistance will be provided to develop a viable strategic project plan, identify and recruit additional project partners, define partnership roles, establish project bench marks, assist with youth engagement and employment opportunities, and provide guidance for potential funding sources.

2. Poteet Middle Camino Real Recreation Trail

Partner: El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association, City of Poteet
RTCA Contact: Krista Sherwood
Location: Poteet

Project Goal

Development of a 2-mile bike and pedestrian trail connecting neighborhoods and places in downtown Poteet and providing an opportunity to promote the historical heritage and natural resources of the area.

RTCA Role

Assist partners with public outreach and partnership building, provide technical assistance with trail design, interpretive signage, and preservation strategies, and help with identifying funding and technical resources.

3. Connect Trails to Parks: San Antonio Missions National Historical Park Feasibility Study

Partner: San Antonio Missions National Historical Park, El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail, and the San Antonio River Authority
RTCA Contact: Krista Sherwood
Location: Bexar and Wilson County

Project Goal

The development of a feasibility study with clear alternatives to connect identified sites and routes associated with El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail to San Antonio Missions National Historical Park at Mission San Francisco de la Espada (Espada) in San Antonio, Texas and Rancho de las Cabras (Rancho) in Floresville, Texas. Overall, the opportunities identified will include ways to enhance resource protection, interpretation, recreation, education, public health, and youth engagement in the outdoors.

RTCA Role

Provide project management, planning development, public outreach and civic engagement, partner coordination, and study development.

4. Greens Bayou Corridor

Partner: Greens Bayou Corridor Coalition
RTCA Contact: Kathryn Nichols
Location: Harris County and cities of Houston, Jersey Village, Jacinto City, Galena Park, and Humble

Project Goal

Improvements to a 45-mile bayou corridor including parkland and easement acquisition, trail development, 9-mile paddle trail establishment, bayou cleanup programs, and corridor landscaping.

RTCA Role

Help Coalition develop a strategic plan for Greens Bayou Corridor, focusing on park/preserve acquisition and park development; land & water trails; conservation & landscaping. Develop community workshops and survey for plan input; help engage new partners; assist with mapping goals and analysis of input; participate in strategic corridor plan development and funding strategies.



Poteet Rutledge Creek

Current Projects cont.

5. Montopolis Tributary Trail Network

Project Partners: Montopolis Tributary Trail Association

RTCA Contact: Kathryn Nichols

Location: Austin, TX

Project Goal

Complete a 2-mile network of multimodal and recreational trails that will link this neighborhood with Austin's larger hike and bike trail system. Restore a highly degraded urban creek corridor.

RTCA Role

Assist with trail design, site assessment, and identification of additional partners who can offer resources. Assist with community-level discussions about watershed protection and restoration, especially with regard to runoff from planned upstream development. Design and deliver a community-expert workshop for strategy development.

6. Northeast Texas Trail

Project Partner: Friends of the Trail

RTCA Contact: Kathryn Nichols

Location: 130-mile corridor between Texarkana and Farmersville, near Dallas

Project Goal

Create a continuous, well-marked, 130-mile non-motorized trail with improved surfacing along an abandoned rail corridor, protected by Interim Trail Use Agreement. Establish an organization to collaboratively develop and maintain the trail and promote it for tourism.

RTCA Role

Provide guidance in convening stakeholder meetings and workshops to develop a suitable organizational structure and strategies for trail development, maintenance, operation, and marketing. Identify funding sources and partnership opportunities.

7. Kleberg Trail

Project Partners: Friends of the Kleberg Trail and Kleberg Community Development Corporation

RTCA Contact: Kathryn Nichols

Location: Southeast Dallas and Seagoville

Project Goal

An improved 8.25-mile trail along an abandoned rail corridor linking a light rail station to the Kleberg community and several city and county parks along with a network of additional side trail linkages to other area resources, schools, an outdoor education center, and a private wetland mitigation bank.

RTCA Role

Identify stakeholders and develop and conduct the community involvement to develop a plan for a trail network centered around an 8 to 12-mile abandoned rail line; analyze input and work in conjunction with a trail design firm on the concept plan; provide technical expertise on national, state, and local partnership opportunities; and facilitate student involvement.



Field workshop participants assess trail routes

8. Aransas Pathways

Project Partner: Aransas Pathways Steering Committee

RTCA Contact: Hugh Osborne

Location: In and around the communities of Fulton and Rockport, TX; approximately 45 miles northeast of Corpus Christi on the Texas Gulf Coast

Project Goal

Create an innovative system to connect the many popular historic buildings, birding sites, artistic attractions, and recreational opportunities in Rockport, Fulton, and Aransas counties. The Pathways system will include separated



Kleberg Trail corridor awaiting development.

Current Projects cont.

trails and paths, sidewalks and streets, and water routes to showcase the remarkable natural and historic resources of the area, while providing a great opportunity for active outdoor recreation.

RTCA Role

Work with partners and other stakeholders in assessing the resources to be linked and provide technical assistance in the most sustainable trail and pathway options to create those linkages; collaborate with other resource managers and experts on methods to maximize the protection of critical habitat and the provision of recreational and educational opportunities; provide information on potential sources of matching funding and grant application editing assistance.

9. Brazos River Recreation Master Plan

Project Partners: Fort Bend Green, Fort Bend County

RTCA Contact: Marta Newkirk

Location: Fort Bend County

Project Goal

A Recreation Master Plan for the Brazos River Corridor in Fort Bend County, which identifies recreation and conservation opportunities for Fort Bend County and helps to clarify projects and partners for specific priority projects.

RTCA Role

Help form and assist a leadership team to guide the overall planning process which will look at multiple recreation and conservation opportunities along the Brazos River; identify stakeholders and stakeholder resources; provide technical guidance on paddle trail development; identify funding sources and other sources of assistance.



Potential scenic trail at Texas Tech University Llano River Field Station

10. Llano River Biodiversity Trails

Project Partners: Texas Tech University, Llano River Field Station

RTCA Contact: Marta Newkirk

Location: Junction, Texas

Project Goal

Development of 3.2 miles of land trails which connect with a newly designated 4.4 mile paddle trail along the Llano River. Development of 6 different Best Management Practices demonstration areas: native plant gardens, rainwater harvesting systems, mesquite brush control, wildlife guzzlers with game cameras, invasive species management, and instream fish habitat improvement structures.

RTCA Role

Facilitate development of a trail plan that allows the trails to serve as self-guided educational experiences through various resource conservation demonstrations. Work with key partners to develop an appropriate public access plan for the trails on University property. Assist University in engaging youth in natural resource planning.

10. Corpus Christi Trails

Project Partners: Corpus Christi Parks and Recreation Department

RTCA Contact: Marta Newkirk

Location: City of Corpus Christi

Project Goal

Development of a trail network from Corpus Christi to Oso Bay. The proposed trails along Oso Creek will total 14 miles on land and 17 miles on water. Development of a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities, including kayaking, hiking, walking, biking, and horse-back riding. Also: a large-scale outdoor learning center at the confluence of Oso Creek with Oso Bay, where partners, such as the Padre Island National Seashore, will conduct programming and exhibits.

RTCA Role

Develop a process to broaden and expand diverse stakeholder participation; coordination of partnership activities, identification of financial needs and funding sources, and building collaboration between parties.