



Texas Conservation Alliance

Protecting Texas Wildlife and Wild
Habitat for More Than 55 Years!



www.tcatexas.org



Summer 2026



Texas Conservation Alliance Expands Leadership Team

From Grahame Jones, Executive Director of TCA

As Texas continues to face growing challenges related to water, wildlife habitat, working lands, and rapid population growth, Texas Conservation Alliance is investing in the people needed to meet those challenges. We are excited to welcome two outstanding conservation professionals to our leadership team: Katy Gilray as Statewide Director of Conservation and Skyler Nix as Director of Policy and Advocacy.

Based in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, Katy Gilray brings more than 25 years of experience in agriculture, animal health, conservation operations, and organizational leadership. Most recently, she served as Director of Hospital Operations at the Dallas Zoo Veterinary Hospital. Katy will oversee and help advance TCA's conservation programs, staff, and partnerships across Texas.

Skyler Nix joins TCA as Director of Policy and Advocacy after building an impressive conservation resume that includes work with The Nature Conservancy, National Audubon Society, Ducks

Unlimited, and the Houston Zoo. A graduate of Texas A&M University and a Yale Conservation Scholar through the Yale School of the Environment, Skyler will help lead TCA's efforts to advance science-based conservation policy and engage decision-makers on issues affecting Texas water resources, wildlife habitat, working lands, and outdoor traditions.

Together, Katy and Skyler strengthen TCA's ability to address the increasingly complex conservation issues facing our state. Their experience, energy, and commitment to collaborative, solutions-oriented conservation will help ensure that Texas Conservation Alliance continues to be an effective voice for Texas' lands, waters, wildlife, and people for years to come.



Quick Links

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Gift Shop



Save the Date

Connected Through Conservation
November 19th

Join Texas Conservation Alliance and Gulf Trust for Connected Through Conservation, a special evening celebrating the people, partnerships, and shared values that drive conservation across Texas. Hosted at the YETI Flagship Store in Austin, the event will bring together conservation leaders, outdoor enthusiasts, land stewards, and supporters for an inspiring evening focused on the future of our lands, waters, wildlife, and outdoor heritage. We look forward to sharing more details soon, including special guests, live music, and opportunities to connect with fellow conservation advocates. Mark your calendar and plan to join us for this memorable celebration of conservation in Texas.

New Neches River Film Highlights its Wild and Scenic Beauty

TCA is excited to share an exceptional new film, *The Neches River: Wild Heart of East Texas*, available at <https://www.nechesriverfilm.com>. Produced by Ellen Temple, with direction and cinematography by Curtis Craven, the 57-minute film captures the magic of the beautiful Neches River in East Texas.

“For more than 30 years, TCA has focused on protecting the Neches River, its lovely bottomlands, and its wildlife,” says Janice Bezanson, TCA’s Senior Policy Director. “This film made me fall in love with the Neches all over again.”



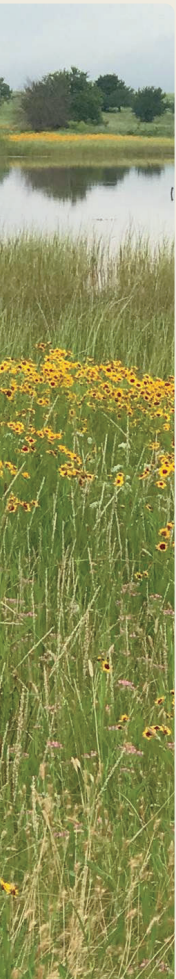
Mtn Lion Rule Change Pulled from Agenda

Thanks to all TCA folks who commented in favor of the proposed rule change to require reporting of mountain lion mortalities. Roughly 70% of the comments received by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission were in favor of adoption. A couple of days before the Commission meeting, however, the proposal was pulled from the agenda. Chairman Paul Foster affirmed the need for data that the rule change would have provided while saying more time was needed to engage with those most affected by the decision. He directed department staff to spend time over the next year collaborating with hunters and private landowners on developing a data collection approach that is practical, achievable, and scientifically valid.

Highlights from TCA Comments on Draft State Water Plan

In late May, TCA submitted lengthy comments to the Texas Water Development Board regarding the Draft 2027 State Water Plan. Below are excerpts of the comments:

- TCA commends TWDB for its continued emphasis on conservation and reuse, which must remain cornerstone strategies in all future versions of the Plan if water providers are to maintain adequate water supplies for Texas’ future.
- The greatest flaw in the Draft 2027 State Water Plan is its continued reliance on large surface water reservoir projects, which increase evaporation of our water resources, cause serious economic and social harm to local communities, and destroy land-based resources needed for agriculture, forestry, and wildlife.
- Typical Texans reading the dramatic rhetoric of [the draft 2027 State Water Plan] picture the day when they turn on the tap and nothing comes out, so they dutifully go to the polls and vote to finance whatever water projects are recommended. But the situation is not as grim as Texans have been led to believe.
- When the projections of future water demand are made without inflating the projected population, with an accurate counting of current water supply, with a reasonable future per capita water use projections, and no speculative industries, it is clear that Lake Ringgold is not needed and should not be a Recommended Water Management Strategy in the State Water Plan.
- Despite projections of future shortages, Region C (DFW Metroplex) residents use substantially more water per person than the statewide average, and an analysis of the region’s population projections, water supply, and water use patterns suggests it already has adequate water supplies for the foreseeable future if conservation remains a priority. Analysis of the population projections and the available water supply for Region C (DFW Metroplex) suggests that Region C already has an adequate supply of water for the foreseeable future.
- Texas Conservation Alliance strongly emphasizes the importance of protecting and maintaining adequate freshwater inflows into bays and estuaries as a critical component of responsible statewide water planning.



From: Katy Gilray Statewide Director of Conservation

This spring has been nothing short of amazing. As our Executive Director, Grahame Jones, always says, "Conservation is a team sport." That spirit of collaboration has been evident at Texas Conservation Alliance since I joined in January 2026.

Together, our team has grown more than 6,000 plants, sold over 2,000, and donated 4,000 to organizations making a meaningful difference in their communities. We also launched an Education Department that is already creating impact through classroom and community activities, along with a one-of-a-kind Lights Out curriculum developed by our own team of experts.

It has been incredibly encouraging to see so many people join in these efforts to become better stewards of our land and natural resources. Conservation in Texas is alive and well, and we are just getting started on exciting new projects that will continue to grow and strengthen these efforts. Thank you all so much. You truly make a difference!



Above, left to right: Katy Gilray, Larry Shelton, Ashley Moyer, and Janice Bezanson

**More than
6000 native plants
sold or donated
this spring!**



Over 200 pounds!



**40 bags / 200 lbs
of litter pollution
removed from the
Trinity River floodway
on Feb. 28th**

Educational Outreach

This spring was a season of grassroots engagement, featuring 12 diverse speaking engagements and classroom visits that reached more than 1,000 participants. Our outreach spanned from personal conversations at community tabling events to classroom sessions with homeschool students and specialized workshops for educators.

A central pillar of this season was sharing the *Lights Out, Texas!* curriculum. Through these programs, students and teachers explored the wonders of bird migration while gaining actionable skills to prevent window collisions. We concluded the season by hosting our first hands-on Acopian BirdSaver workshop. Participants learned to build and install DIY "Zen wind curtains" - an affordable and effective solution that empowers individuals to implement prevention methods at home to protect migratory birds.



Native Plant Propagation Center

TCA sends a very special thank you to longtime greenhouse volunteers Patrick and Sandra; to Evanne, Catherine and Andreo for their great help during this season's plant sales; and, to Linda, Jon, Tracy and Rudy, new plant helpers in Spring 2026!



**Thank You
Volunteers and
Staff!**

Many thanks to TCA's Conservation and Communications Coordinator, Nick Kowalske, for his support at the greenhouse, at outdoor events, and promoting @TCATEXAS on social media outlets. Job well done!



Johana Franco is TCA's Native Plant Propagation Coordinator. Among her favorite species grown at the propagation center are American Basketflower (shown left), Brazos Penstemon, Golden Alexander, Button Bush, and Moon Flower.



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Texas Conservation Alliance

P.O. Box 822554
Dallas, TX 75382-2554

Scan the code to make a donation:
<https://www.tcatexas.org/support-us>



SCAN ME

Fall 2026 Internship Program

Building future leaders remains central to TCA's mission. From classrooms to field sites, our interns are shaping the future of conservation in Texas through hands-on experience with restoring habitats, propagating native plants, and inspiring communities to take action for wildlife.

Applications for the Fall 2026 semester will be available soon on TCA's website. Find it online at <https://www.tcatexas.org/internships>.

TCA Annual Meeting

Make plans to join us at the Fort Worth Nature Center and Refuge in late September for our Annual Meeting.

This family-friendly event includes a free guided tour of the grounds, a free lunch, and free entry to TCA's meeting.

Check out www.tcatexas.org/annual-meeting-2026 for exact dates and schedule.

Nature Center location: 9601 Fossil Ridge Rd, Fort Worth, Texas 76135

