Appendix 1
West Fork San Jacinto
Greenprint Criteria Matrix
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Criteria Weights</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Data (Description, Date)</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protect Water Quality</td>
<td>Conserve areas that are at risk from sand and gravel operations</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>Modern river and alluvial deposits are assigned high priority (5).</td>
<td>2014 Geology</td>
<td>United States Geological Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conserve floodplains to prevent incompatible development</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>High priority (5) is assigned to 100 year floodplains.</td>
<td>2015 floodplains</td>
<td>Federal Emergency Management Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protect wetlands and riparian areas</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>High priority (5) is assigned to wetland and riparian areas.</td>
<td>2014 Wetlands</td>
<td>United States Geological Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protect areas that are susceptible to erosion</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Protect erodible soils using the SSURGO &quot;K-factor&quot;, which is an estimated value of soil erosion. The soil erodibility factor (K-factor) is a quantitative description of the inherent erodibility of a particular soil; it is a measure of the susceptibility of soil particles to detachment and transport by rainfall and runoff. High priority (5) = 0.37, 0.43, 0.49, 0.55, 0.64 (K-factor) Medium to High priority (4) = 0.24, 0.28, 0.32 Medium priority (3) = 0.02, 0.05, 0.10, 0.15, 0.20. Thresholds adopted from the Lake Arlington &amp; Lake Lewisville Greenprint Water Quality Analysis.</td>
<td>2014 Ecological Systems of Texas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preserve areas with natural and native vegetation along waterbodies</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Natural and native vegetation 200' from all waterbodies is given high priority (5).</td>
<td>2014 Ecological Systems of Texas, 2015 Streams and Waterbodies</td>
<td>United States Geological Survey National Hydrography Dataset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protect areas that are vulnerable to high-impact development</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Soils with slow infiltration rates and shallower areas are more susceptible to runoff and therefore have a higher need for protection. High priority (5) = hydro group D (Slow or very slow infiltration rates. Soils with layers impeding downward movement of water, or soils that have moderately fine or fine textures. Soils are clayey, have a high water table, or are shallow to an impervious layer.) Medium to High priority (4) = hydro group C (Moderate infiltration rates. Deep and moderately deep, moderately well and well drained soils that have moderately coarse textures.)</td>
<td>Impermeable Soils</td>
<td>Natural Resources Conservation Service SSURGO Soils Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protect areas that are vulnerable to high-impact/unauthorized recreation</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>All road and creek crossings are assigned high priority (5).</td>
<td>2015 Streams</td>
<td>United States Geological Survey National Hydrography Dataset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protect steep stream banks</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Steep slopes within 100' of streams are assigned priority. A percent slope map is reclassified using natural breaks to derive priority breaks.</td>
<td>2015 Digital Elevation Model, 2015 Streams</td>
<td>United States Geological Survey National Hydrography Dataset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protect contiguous intact forest</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Contiguous &quot;core&quot; forests over 50 acres are assigned high priority (5).</td>
<td>2010 Forest Fragmentation Data</td>
<td>National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Coastal Change Analysis Program (C-CAP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal</td>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>Weights</td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Data Source</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floodplains and buffers</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Riparian water quality protection buffers are given high priority (5). The buffers were delineated using a methodology adapted from the City of Austin's water quality protection zones. Riparian buffers coincide with the boundaries of the 100 year floodplain, except: (a) for a minor waterway, the buffer is located not less than 20 feet and not more than 100 feet from the centerline of the waterway; (b) for an intermediate waterway, the buffer is located not less than 100 feet and not more than 200 feet from the centerline of the waterway; (c) for a major waterway, the buffer is located not less than 200 feet and not more than 400 feet from the centerline of the waterway. The San Jacinto River Authority has a 75 foot setback for septic tanks. This is given the highest protection priority (5).</td>
<td>2015 Floodplains</td>
<td>United States Geological Survey National Hydrography Dataset</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect steep slopes</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>A percent slope map is reclassified using natural breaks to derive priority breaks.</td>
<td>Digital Elevation Model</td>
<td>United States Geological Survey National Elevation Dataset</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# West Fork San Jacinto Greenprint Model
## Model Criteria
### February 1, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Criteria Weights</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Data (Description, Date)</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide Opportunities for Water-Based Recreation</td>
<td>Protect opportunities for birding</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>High priority (5) is assigned to Red-Cockaded Woodpecker habitat.</td>
<td>&gt;2013 Red-Cockaded Woodpecker Habitat</td>
<td>USGS Geological Survey National Gap Analysis Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promote development of new water trails for canoeing, kayaking, and tubing</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Potential access points on Lake Creek and West Fork San Jacinto are given high priority (5).</td>
<td>&gt;2016 Potential Put-ins</td>
<td>Tom Bioglass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promote opportunities for fishing (where water quality is good enough) and for hunting</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>Major streams buffered by 500 feet are given high priority (5).</td>
<td>streams and waterbodies</td>
<td>United States Geological Survey National Hydrography Dataset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protect bottomland and hardwood habitat for recreation</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>All bottomland and hardwood habitat are assigned high priority (5).</td>
<td>&gt;2014 Ecological Systems of Texas</td>
<td>Texas Natural Resources Information System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promote connectivity with protected areas</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>High priority (5) is assigned to wetlands, riparian areas, and bottomland and hardwood habitat within 500 feet of streams and waterbodies that are within 2 miles of a park.</td>
<td>Parks and Protected Lands</td>
<td>2014 Ecological Systems of Texas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gaps in accessible lakeshore access</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Identify gaps in pedestrian access to the Lake Conroe shoreline. &quot;Gaps&quot; are identified as locations along the lake with no current parks or open space access to the shoreline. The longer the access gap, the higher the access priority.</td>
<td>waterbodies (Lake Conroe)</td>
<td>Houston-Galveston Areas Council, Montgomery County, City of Conroe, United States Geological Survey, National Hydrography Dataset, Texas Natural Resources Information System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Equity</td>
<td>The Trust for Public Land Park Equity index analyzes public access to existing parks and open space. The analysis incorporates a two-step approach: 1) determines where there are gaps in park availability, and 2) constructs a demographic profile to identify gaps with the most urgent need for parkland. Park gaps are based on a dynamic 1/2 mile service area (10 minute walking distance) for all parks. In this analysis, service areas use the street network to determine walkable distance - streets such as highways, freeways, and interstates are considered barriers. Demographic profiles are based on 2019 Forecast block groups provided by Esri to determine park need for density of kids age 19 and younger, density of individuals in households with income less than 75% of city median income (Montgomery less than $50,000), and population density (people per acre). The combined level of park need result shown on the large map combines the three demographic profile results and assigns the following weights: 50% = population density (people per acre), 25% = density of kids age 19 and younger, 25% = density of individuals in households with income less than $50,000.</td>
<td>Parks and Protected Lands</td>
<td>2019 Forecast Block Groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Montgomery County Median Household Income 2009-2013: $67,766
Lower third from the median (0-75%): $0 - $50,825
Middle third of the median (75-125%): $50,825 - $84,708
Upper third from the median (125% and above) $84,708 - infinity
Walker County Median Household Income 2009-2013: $37,617

Environmental Systems Research Institute
### Fishing Access Equity

- **Weights:** 12%
- **Methodology:** This model employs a demographic profile to inform the need for fishing access on major streams and Lake Conroe.
  - Demographic profiles are based on 2014 Forecast block groups provided by Esri to determine park need for density of kids age 19 and younger, density of individuals in households with income less than 75% of county median income (Montgomery less than $50,000), and population density (people per acre).
  - The combined level of park need result shown on the large map combines the three demographic profile results and assigns the following weights:
    - 50% = population density (people per acre)
    - 25% = density of kids age 19 and younger
    - 25% = density of individuals in households with income less than $50,000
- **Data Source:** 2019 Forecast block groups,
  - Streams and Waterbodies,
  - United States Geological Survey National Hydrography Dataset.

### Protect Bottomland and Hardwood Habitat Around Parks

- **Weights:** 5%
- **Methodology:** High priority (5) is given to bottomland and hardwood habitat a 1/4 mile from parks.
- **Data Source:** Parks and Protected Lands,
  - 2014 Ecological Systems of Texas,
  - Houston-Galveston Area Council, Montgomery County, City of Conroe,
  - Texas Natural Resources Information System.
### West Fork San Jacinto Greenprint Model

**Model Criteria**  
February 1, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
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<th>Methodology</th>
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<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Goal 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal</td>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Data</td>
<td>Data Source</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 4</td>
<td>West Fork San Jacinto Greenprint Model</td>
<td>February 1, 2016</td>
<td>(Description, Date)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### West Fork San Jacinto Greenprint Model

#### Model Criteria
February 1, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model Overlays</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Study Area</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parcels</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Protected Lands</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Streams and Waterbodies</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Major Roads</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Imagery</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2

West Fork San Jacinto Watershed Greeprint Final Report References
Appendix 2: West Fork San Jacinto River Watershed Greenprint References

Planning Context: Related Plans and Reports

Gulf-Houston Regional Conservation Plan. Long-term collaborative of environmental, business and governmental entities working together to create a first-ever ecosystem continuity and connectivity plan for Brazoria, Chambers, Galveston, Fort Bend, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery and Waller Counties. 

http://houstonwilderness.org/gulf-houston-regional-conservation-plan/

Houston-Galveston Region BIG: Implementing a Plan to Protect Recreational Uses. The goal of this project is to reduce bacteria levels in waterways of the Houston area to make them safer for recreation. The stakeholders of the Bacteria Implementation Group (BIG) and the TCEQ developed total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) and their Implementation Plan, which together are the road map to improving water quality. 

https://www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/tmdl/nav/42-houstonbacteria/42-big-houstonarea

Lake Conroe Watershed Protection Plan. The goal of this Plan is to maintain and, when appropriate, improve the excellent water quality condition currently present. The development of this Plan required the SJRA to characterize the current conditions within the watershed in greater detail and to assess the specific sources of potential pollution which may threaten the watershed in the future. 


Houston Region Economic Development Profile. Facts and figures depicting growth in the Houston Region; discussing economic expansion and technological advances. 


Updated Technical Support document for Total Maximum Daily Loads for Indicator Bacteria in Lake Houston, East Fork & West for San Jacinto, and Crystal Creek. The TMDL Program is a major component of Texas’ overall process for managing the quality of its surface waters. The program addresses impaired or threatened streams, reservoirs, lakes, bays, and estuaries (water bodies) in, or bordering on, the state of Texas. The primary objective of the TMDL Program is to restore and maintain the beneficial uses—such as drinking water supply, recreation, support of aquatic life, or fishing—of impaired or threatened water bodies. 


Streamflow and Water-Quality Properties in the West Fork San Jacinto River Basin and Regression Models to Estimate Real-Time Suspended-Sediment and Total Suspended-Solids. To better understand the hydrology (streamflow and water quality) of the West Fork San Jacinto River Basin downstream from Lake Conroe near Conroe, Texas, including spatial and temporal variation in suspended-sediment (SS) and total suspended-solids (TSS) concentrations and loads, this study measured streamflow and collected continuous and discrete water-quality data in the West Fork San Jacinto River Basin downstream from Lake Conroe. 


How’s the Water? Basin Highlights Report, 2004. H-GAC coordinates regional water quality monitoring activities with five local agencies and maintains a regional water quality database for four basins, the San Jacinto River Basin, the Trinity San Jacinto Coastal Basin, the San Jacinto-Brazos Coastal Basin and the San Bernard River in the Brazos-Colorado Coastal Basin. 

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, San Jacinto River, East and West Forks: Protection Recreational Uses. The goal of this current project is to reduce bacteria levels in parts of the San Jacinto River, making them safer for recreation. https://www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/tmdl/82-sanjacintobacteria

Texas Water Quality Integrated Report for Clean Water Sections 305(b) and 303 (d). Evaluates the quality of surface waters in Texas, and provides resource managers with a tool for making informed decisions when directing agency programs. https://www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/assessment/waterquality/assessment/

References from West Fork San Jacinto Watershed Greenprint Final Report

Introduction


Study Area

Waterbodies and Watersheds


Water Quality


Population and Economy


Land Use/Parks and Recreation


Wildlife


Agriculture and Working Lands

Appendix 3
West Fork San Jacinto Greenprint Meeting Summaries
West Fork San Jacinto Watershed Greenprint Kick Off Meeting
Thursday, June 11, 1:00 to 2:30
San Jacinto River Authority Board Room
1577 Dam Site Road, Conroe, Texas 77304

Participants

| Adam Delouche, Johnson Development | John Ross, Burditt Consulting |
| Alice Best, Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept | Justin Bower, Houston-Galveston Area Council |
| Amy Morris, The Trust for Public Land | Krien VerBerkmoes, Lake Creek Greenway |
| Anna Deichmann, Galveston Bay Foundation | Kylah Dias, Bayou Preservation Association |
| Becky Zitterich, Lake Creek Greenway | Laura Harper, Houston Wilderness |
| Bob Wise, Lake Creek Preserve | Lindsey Roche, Houston Wilderness |
| Brandt Mannchen, Houston Sierra Club | Mark Webb, Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept |
| Bret Raley, San Jacinto River Authority | Melissa Lanclos, San Jacinto River Authority |
| Damien Carey, Lake Houston Area Nature Club | Michelle Guidry, San Jacinto River Authority |
| David Parkhill, San Jacinto River Authority | Mike Lange, The Trust for Public Land |
| Davies Mtundu, San Jacinto River Authority | Mike Riggens, City of Conroe Parks Dept |
| Eric Leshinsky, Asakura Robinson | Nate La Breche, Bayou Preservation Association |
| Frank Green, Montgomery County | Ronda Trow, San Jacinto River Authority |
| Fred Gifford, The Trust for Public Land | Scott Parker, The Trust for Public Land |
| Glenda Callaway | Shane Simpson, San Jacinto River Authority |
| Glenn Buckley, Lake Creek Greenway Partnership | Steve Hupp, Bayou Preservation Association |
| Glenn Laird, Harris County Flood Control District | Steven Johnston, H-GAC |
| Harold Hutcheson, Conroe Convention Bureau | Tom Douglas, Galveston Bay Foundation |
| Jennifer Lorenz, Bayou Land Conservancy | Tom Grayson, Lake Creek Greenway/WMPID |

1. Welcome and Introduction

David Parkhill from SJRA and Justin Bower from H-GAC welcomed meeting participants and led round robin introductions.

2. Project Overview

Amy from TPL provided an overview of the Greenprint process; reviewed a case study Greenprint from Chambers County; described the study area and objectives for this project; and presented draft guiding principles (attached). A Greenprint is created through: (1) Holding a community conversation; (2) Collecting data and translating it into a GIS model; (3) Weighting criteria according to community goals; and (4) Creating maps that reflect community priorities. Amy also described the ongoing role of stakeholders, which is to serve as liaisons; identify and review draft conservation goals; provide guidance to the technical advisory team; contribute to action plan; and explain the project to the public. There will be two more stakeholder/steering committee meetings. The slides from the meeting presentation are available here: http://westforkgreenprint.weebly.com/project-documents.html, and key information is summarized below.

Greenprint Objectives

- Help the communities in the study area plan for a future that balances development pressures with protection of important resources, particularly water quality.
- Help foster a strong foundation for economic growth by setting priorities for preserving natural and recreational resources that are critical to local quality of life.
3. **Overview of Greenprint Mapping**

Fred from TPL provided a brief overview of how Greenprint mapping works and described the role of the Technical Advisory Team. Greenprint analysis and mapping involves resource analysis and parcel prioritization. The process translates regional values into objective metrics; reflects each community’s vision and unique resources; and offers a unique blend of science and preference. The technical advisory team (TAT) provides expert guidance regarding design, data, rationale, outcomes, and mapping. There will be two to four TAT meetings (by phone/computer).

4. **Small Group Discussions of Greenprint Goals: (1) Protect Water Quality; (2) Provide Opportunities for Water-based Recreation**

Meeting participants divided into four groups, each led by a facilitator (Amy and Fred from TPL and Justin and Steven from H-GAC). Each group spent 30 minutes discussing potential criteria related to the two Greenprint goals. Ideally, criteria represent location-specific characteristics; are measurable and mappable; reflect prior studies and existing priority areas; and have clear implications for setting conservation priorities.

5. **Report Back on Small Group Discussions**

Each facilitator reported back from their small group discussions. Results of the small group discussions are captured in the draft criteria matrix (attached).

6. **Wrap Up and Next Steps**

Amy thanked everyone for coming and reviewed the next steps for the Greenprint:

- Volunteers needed for Technical Advisory Team (see Fred). TAT will meet between Steering Committee meetings.
- Steering Committee Meeting #2 in fall 2015 to refine maps, discuss prioritization, and begin planning for implementation.
- Steering Committee Meeting #3 in early 2016: finance and implementation workshop.

**Note:** If you have any suggestions for additional stakeholders/steering committee members, please contact Amy (amy.morris@tpl.org). If you would like to volunteer for the TAT or suggest a candidate for the TAT, please contact Fred (fred.gifford@tpl.org).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-Goal/Criteria</th>
<th>Values/Areas to Map</th>
<th>Data Sources</th>
<th>Other Possible Future Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal: Protect Water Quality</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve areas that are at risk from sand and gravel operations</td>
<td>Sand and gravel operations</td>
<td>Bayou Land Conservancy data; TCEQ gravel/sand mining permits</td>
<td>Advocate for stronger permit requirements and enforcement; raise awareness about issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve floodplains to prevent incompatible development</td>
<td>Floodplains</td>
<td>FEMA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect wetlands and riparian areas</td>
<td>Wetlands and riparian areas</td>
<td>NRCS soil data; Texas Parks &amp; Wildlife (TPWD) geomorphology data; land use data from H-GAC and TCEQ; drainage studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect areas that are susceptible to erosion</td>
<td>Steep banks (eg, Lake Creek); areas with low fertility/erosion-susceptible soil</td>
<td>TPWD USGS/Clean Rivers; Texas Stream Team data; BPA/CoC/MC - bacteria sources; City/County MS4 data; TCEQ WWTP permits; SJRA water quality data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect areas with very old cypress and palmetto trees (and endangered tree?)</td>
<td>Reported water quality issues (dissolved oxygen, E coli, etc.)</td>
<td>Fish assemblages (TPWD); angler usage (TPWD)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect areas with known water quality issues</td>
<td>Fish habitat - especially recreational fishing species and any sensitive species</td>
<td></td>
<td>Strategize ways to reduce feral hog issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect fish habitat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reach out to recreational fishing community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preserve areas with natural and native vegetation along waterbodies</td>
<td>Natural and invasive species</td>
<td>TPWD, SJRA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect areas that are vulnerable to high-impact development</td>
<td>Prevent development in areas with impermeable soil.</td>
<td>OSSF permits; H-GAC land use forecast; H-GAC road development forecast</td>
<td>Push for increased enforcement of unauthorized ATV use in bayous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect areas that are vulnerable to high-impact/unauthorized recreation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage agricultural practices that protect water quality</td>
<td>Agricultural land and proximity to waterbodies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Goal/Criteria</td>
<td>Values/Areas to Map</td>
<td>Data Sources</td>
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<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Goal: Provide Opportunities for Water-Based Recreation** | Birding hotspots; migratory flyway; red-cockaded woodpecker habitat  
Canoe trail (from Fish Creek Bridge); proposed floodplain horse trail; proposed low-impact mountain biking trails | Christmas bird count; TPWD - endangered and threatened species | |
| Protect opportunities for birding | Identify areas for new put-ins and take Lone Star College hiking trails; Sam Houston National Forest hiking trails; potential links to WB Jones and Cook's Branch Conservancy; Spring Creek trails; campgrounds and day use parks | | |
| Promote development of new water trails for canoeing, kayaking, and tubing | Promote connectivity with existing on-shore and water trails | TPWD - list of public water bodies; Fish assemblages (TPWD); angler usage (TPWD)  
National Forest Ecological Classification System; National Forest Stand Maps | Recruit more volunteers to help with trail development and trail maintenance |
| Promote connectivity with existing on-shore and water trails | Promote opportunities for fishing (where water quality is good enough) and for hunting | Bait camps; marinas; public beaches | Work with schools; develop educational trails; develop nature center |
| Promote opportunities for fishing (where water quality is good enough) and for hunting | Protect bottomland and hardwood habitat for recreation | | |
| Protect bottomland and hardwood habitat for recreation | Protect areas with native vegetation and native plan re-establishment areas | Native and invasive species | |
| Protect areas with native vegetation and native plan re-establishment areas | Protect areas for combined access points for paddle trails and nature trails | TPWD, SJRA | |
| Protect areas for combined access points for paddle trails and nature trails | Identify safety issues for water-based recreation | Obstructions and pipelines; stormwater issues; seasonal hydrology issues | |
| Identify safety issues for water-based recreation | Promote connectivity with protected areas | Park locations | |
| Promote connectivity with protected areas | | | |
The development of this Greenprint is guided by these principles and core values:

- **Local Values and Priorities.** Programs intended to enhance conservation efforts must be based on local values and priorities. Our local natural, recreational, agricultural, and open space areas are unique.

- **Agriculture.** Residents value our local agricultural heritage. We encourage conservation efforts aimed at protecting agriculture.

- **Economic Opportunity.** Surrounding beauty, recreational opportunities, and open spaces all play a vital role in making our area a desirable place to live and work. Conservation can promote viable agriculture; increase property values; attract ecotourism; and provide income to individual landowners through incentive-based conservation.

- **Conservation is Voluntary.** Greenprint partners only support conservation efforts with willing landowners. We do not support the use of eminent domain intended to result in conservation.

- **We Respect Private Property Rights.**
Meeting Goals
(1) Review Greenprint basics for any new participants;
(2) Discuss approach to creating overall Greenprint map;
(3) Work toward consensus on a scenario for a final overall map;
(4) Begin getting input on action planning/implementation.

Participants

Andrew Isbell, Walker County
Ann Lange
Anna Deichmann, Galveston Bay Foundation
Brandt Manchen, Houston Sierra Club
Bret Raley, San Jacinto River Authority
Brian Koch, Texas State SWCD
Don Dean, Montgomery County
David Parkhill, SJRA
Davies Mtundu, SJRA
Glenda Calloway, Ekistics Corp
Glenn Buckley, Lake Creek Greenway Partnership
Glenn Laird, Harris County Flood Control District
Iris Gonzalez, Bayou Land Conservancy
Jon Henderson, Walker County
Krien VerBerkmoes, Lake Creek Greenway Partnership
Melissa Lanclos, SJRA
Mike Bleier, LCA/SJRA
Mike Lange, The Trust for Public Land
Mozelle Carter, NRCS
Preetal Shah, Asakura Robinson
Rebekah Dye, Asakura Robinson
Ronda Trow, SJRA
Tom Douglas
Steven Johnston, Houston-Galveston Area Council
Justin Bower, H-GAC
Fred Gifford, The Trust for Public Land
Amy Morris, The Trust for Public Land

Meeting Summary
Welcome and Introductions
David Parkhill from San Jacinto River Authority (SJRA) welcomed participants and led introductions.

Overview of Meeting Agenda/Goals
Amy Morris from The Trust for Public Land reviewed the meeting agenda and some basic information about the Greenprint process and Greenprint goals (see attached slides for more detail). She noted that a Greenprint is a set of tools, based on community goals, which help prioritize areas for voluntary, market-based conservation. A Greenprint is not land grab or map of land use prohibitions; it is not related to condemning or taking private property. The objectives of the Greenprint are to: (1) Help communities in the study area plan for a future that balances development pressures with protection of important resources, particularly water quality; and (2) Help foster a strong foundation for economic growth by setting priorities for preserving natural and recreational resources that are critical to local quality of life.
When Amy asked the group for questions, one participant expressed concern about a map that recently appeared in the newspaper for the Lake Creek Greenway. He said that it was very important to get the input of people who have lived in the area for a long time, but cannot come to meetings. He also stated that he was troubled by the level of public agency involvement in the project. Amy responded that the Lake Creek Greenway map did not come from The Trust for Public Land. Glenn Buckley chimed in that his organization, Lake Creek Greenway Partnership, developed the map, but did not intend it as a land grab. Amy emphasized that getting additional feedback from local landowners would be very valuable and that she was happy to reach out one-on-one to people who could not come to meetings.

Greenprint Maps

Fred Gifford from The Trust for Public Land explained that creating the Greenprint maps is a process of translating the goals into mappable criteria and looking for “stacked priorities” – areas where multiple goals or criteria overlap. The final Greenprint should be, in part, a “bang for your buck” map. Andrew Isbell, Director of Planning for Walker County, argued that the Greenprint should identify more impaired, less rural areas that could be restored and used for education. One participant recommended looking at areas along I-45. Fred said that while we could look at areas for potential restoration, current criteria do highlight more intact, less impacted areas.

Jennifer Lorenz from Bayou Land Conservancy noted that they have been examining the parcels from the base of Lake Conroe to the base of Spring Creek and that they are currently working on five mitigation projects. She said they could share their data. Several participants raised concerns about dumping of trash. Fred noted that the Greenprint model does identify areas where roads cross streams as particularly vulnerable to dumping. Justin Bower from H-GAC mentioned that water quality data will be incorporated into the Wetland Protection Plan that H-GAC is working on for the West Fork area, but that there are no water quality standards for trash.

Fred reviewed the current criteria for the Protect Water Quality and Provide Opportunities for Water-based Recreation goals. He also showed maps for each of these goals and two scenarios combining the two goals. These maps are attached here, and the scenarios are described below.

- Scenario A, which weighted Protect Water Quality at 50% and Provide Opportunities for Water-based Recreation at 50%; and

- Scenario B, which weighted Protect Water Quality at 75% and Provide Opportunities for Water-based Recreation at 25%.

Participants used keypads to vote for their preferred scenario. Results showed that 73% preferred Scenario B.

Small Group Discussions of Greenprint Maps

Participants were divided into four small groups facilitated by Justin Bower and Steven Johnston from H-GAC and Amy and Fred from The Trust for Public Land to further discuss the Greenprint map(s). Participants were asked to address: (1) What are the highest priority factors or values for the final Greenprint map? (2) Which criteria should be weighted most heavily? After small group discussions, participants used dot stickers to vote for three top priorities on flip chart notes posted on the meeting room wall. Tables 1 and 2 below summarize the small group discussion results and the priority votes.
Table 1. Results of Small Group Discussions: Criteria to Prioritize

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria to Prioritize</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban areas for education and restoration</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetlands/riparian/floodplains</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Areas with oldest trees (Cypress)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sand and gravel threat/mapping</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land use types associated with water quality</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation - need balance, need place for ATVs (sand/gravel tracts)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steep slopes</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural use/water quality</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link conserved areas</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam Houston National Forest – protect creeks on private land</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Results of Small Group Discussions: Potential Elements for Action Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address illegal dumping</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help create better tax exemptions for landowners</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasize voluntary efforts</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work to improve regulations (no state 404 program)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on restoration (especially removal of invasive species)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address water quality impacts from wastewater and septic systems</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Action Planning

Meeting participants were asked to independently brainstorm about the most important steps for implementing the Greenprint. Participant contributions were compiled and synthesized into the attached draft action plan.

Next Steps and Closing

Amy thanked everyone for coming and told the group that The Trust for Public Land would work on additional refinements of the map for a final Greenprint meeting in early 2016. At the final meeting, stakeholders will discuss revisions to the draft action plan and the finance feasibility report prepared by the Conservation Finance team from The Trust for Public Land.

Timeline

2. Introduction Meeting and Interview Trip (April 2015)
3. Steering Committee Meeting #1 (Kick Off Meeting) – Discuss Project Goals and Identify Criteria
4. Model Design and Implementation (June-October 2015)
5. **Steering Committee Meeting #2 – Model Presentation and Refinement + Implementation Planning (October 2015)**
6. Prioritization (Early 2016)
7. Steering Committee Meeting #3 – Finance and Implementation Workshop (Early 2016)
8. Final Report and Community Messaging (Early 2016)

Next Steps
- The Trust for Public land will refine the Greenprint map based on feedback from stakeholders. In particular, Amy and Fred will work to address the group’s interest in focusing more on restoration in less rural areas.
- Fred will meet with the Technical Advisory Team at least once before the final meeting.
- If there are additional people, particularly rural landowners in the study area who should be contacted about the Greenprint, please let Amy (amy.morris@tpl.org) know.

Attachments
- PowerPoint Presentation from Stakeholder Meeting
- Criteria Matrix
- Overall Maps (Scenarios A and B)
- Draft Action Plan
West Fork San Jacinto Watershed Greenprint
About the Conveners

**H-GAC** is the regional organization through which local governments consider issues and cooperate in solving area wide problems.

**The Trust for Public Land** conserves land for people to enjoy as parks, gardens, and other natural places, ensuring livable communities for generations to come.
Agenda

• Welcome and Introductions
• Overview of Meeting Agenda/Goals
• Greenprint Maps
• Small Group Discussions of Greenprint Maps
• Selection of Overall Scenario
• Action Planning
• Next Steps and Closing
What is a Greenprint?

It is:

• A set of tools (including interactive maps) to guide land conservation and stewardship
• Based on community goals
• Process to identify opportunities to meet multiple goals
• A way to prioritize areas for voluntary, market-based conservation

It is NOT:

• A map of land use prohibitions
• Determined by one (or a few) perspectives
• Limited to protecting wildlife
• Related to condemning or taking land/private property
Community Involvement

Conveners

Steering Committee

Interviews

Polling
West Fork Greenprint Study Area
West Fork Greenprint Objectives

- Help the communities in the study area plan for a future that balances development pressures with protection of important resources, particularly water quality.
- Help foster a strong foundation for economic growth by setting priorities for preserving natural and recreational resources that are critical to local quality of life.
West Fork Greenprint Goals
(what we are planning to map)

- Protect water quality; and
- Provide opportunities for water-based recreation.
Draft Tasks and Timeline

2. Introduction Meeting and Interview Trip (April 2015)
3. Steering Committee Meeting #1 (Kick Off Meeting) – Discuss Project Goals and Identify Criteria
4. Model Design and Implementation (June-October 2015)
5. **Steering Committee Meeting #2 – Model Presentation and Refinement + Implementation Planning (October 2015)**
6. Prioritization (Early 2016)
7. Steering Committee Meeting #3 – Finance and Implementation Workshop (Early 2016)
8. Final Report and Community Messaging (Early 2016)
Greenprint Maps
Mapping Guidelines and Definitions

Goal

- Overall community value related to open space
- Succinct statement that begins with a verb
- Implications for Greenprint outcomes
  - Each goal will be represented in a resource priorities map
  - Provides a thematic framework for guiding resource management and land stewardship

Criteria

- Location-specific characteristic – stewardship/access will guarantee progress towards the Goal
- Measurable and mappable (data exists?)
- Reflect prior studies and existing priority areas
- Implications for Greenprint outcomes
  - Define content for resource goals
  - Weighted and combined by technical advisors to create conservation priorities (goal) maps
Small Group Discussions

• What are the highest priority factors or values for the final Greenprint map?
• Which criteria should be weighted most heavily?
• Is there a particular scenario that already looks right for an overall map?
Selection of Overall Scenario
Action Planning

What steps will be most important in ensuring that project objectives are met and the Greenprint is successfully implemented?

Where possible, please specifically identify who/what/when/where/how for each step.
Thank you!

Amy Morris  
Conservation Vision  
Project Manager  
The Trust for Public Land  
amy.morris@tpl.org  
415-495-4014 x289

Fred Gifford  
Senior GIS Program Manager  
The Trust for Public Land  
fred.gifford@tpl.org  
505-982-6972
Meeting Summary
West Fork San Jacinto Watershed Greenprint
Final Stakeholder Meeting (#3)
Thursday, March 24, 1:00 to 3:00
San Jacinto River Authority Board Room
1577 Dam Site Road, Conroe, Texas 77304

Meeting Goals
1. Review findings from funding study and Montgomery County poll;
2. Review final overall map;
3. Work on vision statements for Greenprint;
4. Revise action plan.

Participants
Anna Deichmann, Galveston Bay Foundation
Ben Plunkett, Texas Forest Service
Brandt Mannchen, Houston Sierra Club
Charlie Head, Johnson Development
David Parkhill, San Jacinto River Authority
Davis Mtundu, San Jacinto River Authority
Elizabeth Love, Houston Endowment
Floyd Nauls, USDA NRCS
Glenda Callaway
Glenn Buckley, Lake Creek Greenway
John Graziano, Operations Manager for the Lovin’ G Ranch LLC
Mike Lange, The Trust for Public Land

Krien VerBerkmoes, Lake Creek Greenway
Melissa Lanclos, San Jacinto River Authority
Richard McNamara, Houston Parks Board
Richard Chapin, City of Houston
Stephanie Prosser, Bayou Land Conservancy
Steven Johnston, H-GAC
Tom Douglas, Galveston Bay Foundation
Tom Smith, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
Warren Oja, Sam Houston National Forest
Amy Morris, The Trust for Public Land
Fred Gifford, The Trust for Public Land

Agenda

1. Welcome, Introductions, Watershed Protection Plan

David Parkhill from the San Jacinto River Authority opened the meeting and welcomed participants. Amy Morris from The Trust for Public Land led the group in introductions. Steven Johnston from Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) briefly discussed the Watershed Protection Plan being developed to improve water quality in the West Fork San Jacinto Watershed with funding from Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the US Environmental Protection Agency. H-GAC will be convening stakeholders for the Watershed Protection Plan for the next 1 to 2 years. The Greenprint will be incorporated into the conservation component of the Watershed Protection Plan.

2. Funding Study and Montgomery County Poll

Amy reviewed the conservation finance options report developed by the Conservation Finance team from The Trust for Public Land. The report addresses federal and state funding, but Amy focused her summary on local financing options: bonds, property taxes, sales tax, and impact fees. Sales taxes are not an option in the study area because local sales taxes and other taxes are already at the maximum rate. Under Texas Code, impact fees for capital improvements must relate only to water, wastewater,
flood control and roadways. Fees could only go to parks/conservation acquisitions if they are connected to a water, wastewater, or flood control project.

Bonds have been used most frequently for local funding of parks and conservation in Texas. Montgomery County: $50 million bond would cost the average household about $21 per year. Grimes County: $50 million bond would cost the average household about $21 per year. Walker County: $7 million bond in Walker County would cost the average household about $23 each year. Property taxes are the largest revenue source for many local jurisdictions. Montgomery County could impose a tax of $0.0079 per $100 and collect roughly $3.8 million annually at a cost of $20 per year to the average homeowner in the county. At the same cost to homeowners, Grimes County and Walker County could generate roughly $539,600 and $489,700, respectively. Although Texas ranks 49th nationally in per capita state spending for conservation, Texas voters have voiced strong support for parks and conservation by approving more than three billion dollars in local bonds and sales taxes.

Please see attached draft of the full Draft Conservation Finance Resource Options Report, and please let Amy (amy.morris@tpl.org) know if you have any questions/concerns/comments.

As part of the overall Greenprint project, The Trust for Public Land received a grant to conduct a public opinion poll in Montgomery County to gauge the level of concern about environmental and conservation issues and potential support for possible local conservation financing. A telephone poll of 405 active voters was conducted by Hill Research Consultants in October 2015. Respondents expressed the highest level of concern about traffic congestion and water supply. Overall, 57% of respondents say that Montgomery County is growing and developing too fast. Sixty-five percent said we can protect land and water while having good jobs and a strong economy.

Seventy-nine percent of survey respondents would support Montgomery County purchasing land to protect water quality; natural areas; lakes, rivers or streams; neighborhood parks; and wildlife habitat. Sixty-one supported this type of program even if it would involve a small tax increase. Sixty-two percent of respondents were willing to pay $100 per year in taxes to protect water quality, natural areas, lakes, rivers, beaches, neighborhood parks and wildlife habitat in their area.

3. Greenprint Maps

Fred reviewed the overall Greenprint map that the group agreed on at the previous meeting. The map weights “protect water quality” at 75% and “access to water-based recreation” at 25%. Fred briefly reviewed the criteria included in each goal. (See attached data matrix for more detail.)

Because we are looking at voluntary land acquisition as a tool, the map focuses on conservation of relatively intact land rather than on restoration of impaired land. Fred is creating a separate layer to designate areas that may be priority targets for restoration that can be queried in the web tool. Restoration targets can be tagged based on stakeholder input. Based on discussion with the group potential restoration targets may be: areas around sand and gravel operations and areas with lower water quality where restoration could help improve water quality.

One stakeholder (John) who is a longtime landowner in the area told the group that he has been feeling harassed and is worried that meeting participants are not hearing (or listening to) other opinions. He is concerned that the Greenprint will lead to a project similar to the Spring Creek Greenway, which used eminent domain and that public access will damage private land that is being well taken care of now. John also said that he was concerned about the validity of the polling results because he believes that if the questions were asked differently, fewer people would support conservation acquisitions. He also
noted that public access to private lands can lead to major issues with trespassing and trash dumping that cost landowners a great deal of money to address.

Richard Chapin expressed the opinion that projects like the Greenprint are the best way to plan for conservation because development is inevitable and many landowners will want to sell their property. Amy and others said that they valued John’s input. Amy also clarified that the Greenprint is not explicitly tied to the Lake Creek Greenway Partnership’s efforts. Amy noted that she would emphasize in the Greenprint report the importance of using only voluntary conservation; the importance of working lands and their stewardship by ranchers and farmers; and the need for careful planning and maintenance of areas with recreation access.

4. Vision Statement Exercise

Participants filled out a brief worksheet about their vision of what the Greenprint should help accomplish. Then they discussed their worksheet answers and the following questions in small groups: (1) What is your vision for the West Fork watershed in the future? (2) What is our most ambitious vision of what the Greenprint could help local communities and local conservation groups accomplish? (3) How can we make sure local farmers and ranchers (and other longtime landowners) are respected as important stewards of the land?

For both the vision statement exercise and the action planning exercise below, participants were asked to use dot stickers to vote for their top three priorities. The vision statement elements that received priority votes were: land ethic, conservation, transparency, proactive planning, voluntary, wildlife, partnership, education, balance between nature and development, and preserving natural conditions and forested areas.

A vision statement is intended to be an aspirational catalyst and a picture of what a project could accomplish in the long-term. Vision statements generated by the group included the following:

- Our vision is a region in which a significant portion of the West Fork of the San Jacinto River Watershed will be protected, preserved, and conserved so that there is ample high-quality water for people and the environment and there are abundant natural streams filled with wildlife.

- Our vision is to preserve, through voluntary strategies that protect landowner rights, the vast majority of riparian areas and floodplains that feed our waters so that all residents can thrive as the region grows.

5. Action Planning

After the vision discussion, participants spent a few minutes reviewing the draft action plan developed based on feedback from the previous stakeholder meeting. Then they discussed the following questions in small groups: (1) What’s missing from the current action plan? (2) Who should see the Greenprint report once it’s finished? (3) Who will use the Greenprint report and the web tool? (4) What are the most realistic ways to fund the Greenprint?

The action plan items that received priority votes (number of votes in parentheses) included: target municipalities (1); transparency in data and action (2); landowners as key partners (1); focus on partners (1); educate young people (2); create funding through bond measures (3); and create demonstration projects that provide training and hands-on experiences (1). A revised version of the action plan is provided as an attachment to this summary.
6. Closing

Amy thanked the group for their participation and for bringing so much energy and expertise to this process.

7. Next Steps
   ■ Amy to work with Stephanie, Glenn, Glenda, and Mike to refine the action plan for the Greenprint.
   ■ Amy to work with Glenn and Stephanie to refine the vision statement and outreach strategy for the Greenprint.
   ■ Amy/TPL to produce a final Greenprint report with all of the results of the stakeholders’ work.
   ■ Fred/TPL to create an online web tool to be used by project partners in prioritizing conservation areas.
   ■ H-GAC to work on integrating the Greenprint results with their Watershed Protection Plan process.

8. Attachments
   ■ Finance Report
   ■ Data Matrix
   ■ Action Plan
Appendix 4
Conservation Finance Resource Options Report
DRAFT

CONSERVATION FINANCE RESOURCE OPTIONS REPORT
DECEMBER 2015

WEST FORK SAN JACINTO WATERSHED, TEXAS
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INTRODUCTION

The Trust for Public Land is a national nonprofit land conservation organization working to protect land for human enjoyment and well-being. The Trust for Public Land helps conserve land for parks, greenways, recreation areas, watersheds and wilderness. To help public agencies or land trusts acquire land, the Trust for Public Land’s Conservation Finance program assists communities in identifying and securing public financing. The Trust for Public Land offers technical assistance to elected officials, public agencies and community groups to design, pass, and implement public funding measures that reflect popular priorities.

Helping communities to secure dedicated conservation funding is often the tipping point that can lead to deeper ecological responsibility, including more prudent land use, better managed growth, and the increased protection of natural landscapes. To stimulate engagement across jurisdictions and constituencies, the Trust for Public Land has historically found effective partnerships among a broad spectrum of players from the environmental left to the fiscally conservative right and recognizes that it is important to consistently explore new tools, such as economic benefits research, that can encourage and strengthen the willpower of the voters to seek dedicated conservation funds. This focused, up-front investment pays dividends over the long-term in voter-supported funding that is dedicated to conservation.

Since 1996, the Trust for Public Land has been involved in more than 450 successful ballot measures that have created more than $47 billion in new funding for land conservation. Voters have approved 82 percent of the ballot measures that have been supported by the Trust for Public Land. In Texas, the Trust for Public Land has supported 26 local conservation finance ballot measures. All but one of these passed, generating over $795 million dollars for parks and land conservation purposes. The Trust for Public Land most recently helped the City of San Antonio pass two sales tax measures in May 2015. The first was a five-year extension of the 1/8th of one percent sales tax for the Linear Creekway Parks Development Program, and the other was a five-year extension of the 1/8th of one percent sales tax for the Edwards Aquifer Protection Program. The measures were approved with 75 and 78 percent support, respectively.

The Trust for Public Land has undertaken a study of potential public funding options to support the strategic planning process to protect the West Fork San Jacinto watershed. This research provides a fact-based reference document that can be used to evaluate a range of available financing mechanisms from an objective vantage point.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Many opportunities exist to protect the West Fork San Jacinto watershed and to provide recreation amenities for residents and visitors. In the context of this study, the West Fork San Jacinto watershed includes the Lake Creek and Lake Conroe watersheds as well. Jurisdictions within these watersheds, including the counties of Montgomery, Grimes, and Walker, all have a potential role to play as do state and federal conservation agencies.

At the heart of the most successful conservation funding programs is a substantial, long-term, dedicated source of local revenue. With a reliable source of funds, local governments can establish meaningful conservation priorities that protect the most valuable resources and meet important goals and values. Local governments with significant funds are much better positioned to secure and leverage funding from the federal government and attract other local and state government or private philanthropic partners.

Communities in Texas have traditionally been able to rely on a mix of funding due to the availability of state funding through the state recreation grants funded by the sporting goods tax allocation and local conservation funding measures. Because of the need to leverage funds, this report describes specific local funding opportunities, state funding sources, and federal programs that may be available for land acquisition, parks, and trails in the West Fork San Jacinto watershed.

This report begins by analyzing local public funding tools available to the counties within the West Fork San Jacinto watershed including revenue generating capacity and estimated costs to taxpayers where relevant. These tools are summarized below.

- **Bonds.** Bonds are far and away the most utilized tool for parks and conservation purposes by local governments in Texas accounting for 79 of 90 measures on the ballot since 1996. Montgomery County could issue a bond for parks and watershed protection purposes. A $50 million bond would cost the average household about $21 per year.

  Grimes County could also issue a bond for watershed conservation. A $7 million bond, for example, would cost the average household about $21 each year. The county currently has no outstanding general obligation bonds.

  Walker County also has capacity to issue a bond for parks and watershed protection purposes. A $7 million bond in Walker County would cost the average household about $23 each year. Walker County also has sufficient capacity to levy property taxes to pay the debt service on a bond.

  Bonds provide several advantages over pay-as-you-go funding, including the opportunity to make significant land acquisitions in the near term, presumably before the price of land increases. However, this mechanism is not always appropriate or feasible (e.g. typically bond proceeds may not be used for stewardship purposes).

- **Property tax.** The property tax is the single largest revenue source for many local jurisdictions and the proceeds may be expended for parks and open space. However there is no authority by which a portion of the tax may be dedicated for this purpose, so expenditures are subject to the annual appropriations process. Additionally, state law limits the tax that a local entity can levy for general fund, permanent improvement fund, road and bridge fund, and jury fund purposes to 80 cents per $100 valuation. However, all three counties have ample capacity under this 80 cent cap. Elected officials in each of the three jurisdictions could impose a levy for the general fund, which could be appropriated to parks and conservation as part of the annual budget. For example, Montgomery County could impose a tax of $0.0079 per $100 and collect roughly $3.8 million annually at a cost of
$20 per year to the average homeowner in the county. At the same price point, Grimes County and Walker County could generate roughly $539,600 and $489,700, respectively.

- **Sales tax.** The Texas state sales and use tax rate is 6.25 percent, and local taxing jurisdictions (cities, counties, special purpose districts, and transit authorities) may impose sales and use tax up to 2 percent for a total maximum combined rate of 8.25 percent. However, counties may not adopt a sales and use tax if the adoption of the tax causes the combined rate of all sales and use taxes imposed by the county and other political subdivisions having territory in the county to exceed 2 percent at any location in the county. Furthermore, counties are limited to a 0.5 percent sales tax, so Grimes County and Walker County are currently at the maximum. Montgomery County does not have a sales tax. However, other taxing jurisdictions within the county are currently at the maximum rate of 8.25 percent, so a sales tax is not a viable option in Montgomery County.

- **Impact fees.** Pursuant to the Texas Code, impact fees for capital improvements must relate only to water, wastewater, flood control and roadways. As such, additional impact fee revenues may be accessed only for park acquisitions that are part of a project serving one of the aforementioned purposes, such as a project in partnership with a municipal water department or the Woodlands Joint Powers Agency.

Finally, the report provides a brief summary of numerous state and federal conservation programs that could potentially be leveraged to support projects within the West Fork San Jacinto watershed.
CHOOSING A LOCAL FUNDING STRATEGY

At the heart of successful conservation funding programs is a substantial, long-term, dedicated source of local revenue. With a reliable source of funds, local governments can establish meaningful conservation priorities that protect the most valuable resources and meet important goals. Local governments with significant funds are much better positioned to secure and leverage funding from the federal government and attract other local and state government or private philanthropic partners.

Generally, there are three broad-based types of revenue sources available to local governments to pay for parks and land conservation: discretionary annual spending (i.e. budget appropriation), creation of dedicated funding streams such as voter-approved special taxes, and the issuance of bonds. The financing options utilized by a community will depend on a variety of factors such as taxing capacity, budgetary resources, voter preferences, and political will. While most local governments can create funding for park and recreation through their budgetary process, this either happens infrequently or does not yield adequate funding.

In the Trust for Public Land’s experience, local governments that create funding via the budget process provide substantially less funding than those that create funding through ballot measures. As elected officials go through the process of making critical budgetary decisions, funding for land conservation lags behind other public purposes and well behind what voters would support. It is often quite difficult to raise taxes without an indisputable public mandate for the intended purpose.

The power of conservation finance ballot measures is they provide a tangible means to implement a local government’s vision. With their own funding, local governments are better positioned to secure scarce funding from state or the federal government or private philanthropic partners. Having a predictable funding source empowers the city, county, or special district to establish long-term conservation priorities that protect the most valuable resources, are geographically distributed, and otherwise meet important community goals and values.

Nationwide, a range of public financing options has been utilized by local jurisdictions to fund parks and open space, including general obligation bonds, the local sales tax, and the property tax. Less frequently used mechanisms have included real estate transfer taxes, impact fees, and income taxes. The ability of local governments and special districts to establish dedicated funding sources depends upon state enabling authority.

Conservation finance ballot measures are not right for every local government or they might not be the best approach at the moment. Budget appropriations and other revenue mechanisms that can be used by the local government, such as developer incentives, may serve as short-term funding options, while parks and conservation proponents develop a strategy and cultivate support for longer-term financing options.

Local governments in Texas have played a leading role in advancing parks, recreation, and land conservation in the state, through the passage of local ballot measures. The property tax is the single largest revenue source for many local jurisdictions and the proceeds may be expended for parks and open space. However there is no authority by which a portion of the tax may be dedicated for this purpose, so expenditures are subject to the annual appropriations process. The only means by which counties and municipalities may generate significant dedicated funds for land conservation is by increasing the sales tax or by issuing general obligation bonds. Increased levy of the sales tax and issuance of general obligation bonds may be authorized only after approval by a majority of the voters. Bonds also require approval by the public finance division of the Attorney General’s office.¹

¹ Government Code § 1201.065
Since 1996, voters across Texas have voiced their strong support for parks and land conservation by approving more than $3 billion for these purposes through increased levy of the sales tax and local bond referenda. The rate of approval for local ballot measures voted upon in Texas is an astounding 91 percent (82 out of 90 measures approved), compared to the nation-wide approval rate of 75 percent. See Appendix A for a list of Texas measures.

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property tax</td>
<td>1027</td>
<td>719</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>$11,918,055,376</td>
<td>$7,237,150,624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales tax</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>$58,634,821,490</td>
<td>$16,632,038,185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>$8,520,679,452</td>
<td>$6,162,866,949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2303</td>
<td>1731</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>$95,775,725,154</td>
<td>$38,601,059,246</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finance Mechanism</th>
<th>Number of Measures</th>
<th>Pass</th>
<th>% Pass</th>
<th>Total Funds Approved</th>
<th>Conservation Funds Approved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bond</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>$2,582,073,084</td>
<td>$900,689,457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales tax</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>$595,907,860</td>
<td>$518,750,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>$3,177,980,944</td>
<td>$1,419,439,457</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Trust for Public Land, LandVote database.

Bonds provide several advantages over pay-as-you-go funding, including the opportunity to make significant land acquisitions in the near term, presumably before development pressure causes the price of land to increase. However, this mechanism is not always appropriate or feasible (e.g. typically bond proceeds may not be used for stewardship purposes). Local governments could benefit from having the option to utilize other dedicated revenue streams, such as a dedicated sales tax.
**Local Conservation Financing Options**

This section of the report presents a range of funding mechanisms for local support of park acquisition in the counties of Montgomery, Grimes, and Walker. Specifically, the following pages provide information related to the use of general obligation bonds, property taxes, sales taxes, and impact fees for park and open space acquisition.

**Bond Issuances**

To raise funds for capital improvements such as land acquisition, cities and counties in Texas may issue bonds. There are two types of bonds: general obligation bonds, which are secured by the full faith and credit of the local property taxing authority, and revenue bonds that are paid by project-generated revenue or a dedicated revenue stream such as a particular tax or fee. The governing body of any municipality, county or flood control district may issue bonds to acquire lands for park or historic purposes. General obligation bonds that are to be paid from property taxes require voter approval at an election. Generally, bond proceeds are limited to capital projects and may not be used for operations and maintenance purposes.

While this watershed is located in three different counties, it is possible to coordinate efforts to put bond measures on the ballot in all three counties at the same election. A similar situation occurred in the St. Louis, Missouri area in 2000. The St. Louis, Missouri region is home to two regional park and recreation districts, spanning five jurisdictions in two states: St. Louis County, St. Louis City, and St. Charles County in Missouri; and Madison County and St. Clair County in Illinois. A combined effort of legislative officials and voters in both states, plus ongoing cooperation, created a unique program intended to improve recreational opportunities and build regional connections.

Enabling legislation for Park and Recreation Districts passed in both states in 1999. The following November, Missouri voters in St. Louis and St. Charles Counties and St. Louis City approved creation of the Metropolitan Park and Recreation District (now Great Rivers Greenway District) and simultaneously authorized up to a 1/10th of 1 cent sales tax. In the same election, Illinois voters in Madison and St. Clair Counties approved creation of the Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD), and authorized a 1/10th of 1 percent sales tax on retailers. The taxes have no designated expiration. Voters in Clinton and Monroe County, IL failed to authorize the measure, which was also on the ballot in those counties.

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2 Texas Constitution, Article XVI, §59(c-1); Local Gov’t Code § 331.004(a) and (c).
3 Gov’t Code § 1251.001.
4 Federal government rules governing the issuance of tax-exempt bonds limit the use of proceeds to capital purposes such that only a small fraction of bond funds may be used for maintenance or operations of facilities. State and local laws may further limit the use of bond proceeds.
5 Article XI, Section 5, of the Texas Constitution is applicable to the City, and limits its maximum ad valorem tax rate to $2.50 per $100 taxable assessed valuation for all City purposes. Administratively, the Attorney General of the State of Texas will permit allocation of $1.50 of the $2.50 maximum tax rate for all general obligation debt service, as calculated at the time of issuance. *Article 835p of the State of Texas Civil Statutes limits cities with a population of six hundred thousand or more according to the last federal census to incur a total bonded indebtedness by the issuance of tax-supported bonds in an amount not exceeding ten (10%) percent of the total assessed valuation of property shown by the last assessment roll of the city.
6 Missouri Revised Statutes 67.1700-67.1769
7 70 ILCS 1605/
8 The Trust for Public Land, LandVote database
Montgomery County General Obligation Bonds

Montgomery County limits the amount of bonds that may be issued to 25 percent of the assessed valuation of property in the county,\(^9\) which was approximately $48.5 billion at the start of FY2016. Staying at or below this benchmark ensures that the county’s debt remains manageable. At the start of FY2016, Montgomery County’s debt obligations totaled $401 million, well below the 25 percent limit. Long-term debt per capita measures the debt burden on citizens. As of August 2014, outstanding long-term debt per capita is approximately $811. Voters approved a road bond for $280 million in the November 2015 election, so the long-term debt per capita will increase. The Commissioner’s Court confines maturity dates to no more than 30 years. The county’s existing debt portfolio is rated as AA+ from Standard & Poor’s and Aa1 from Moody’s, an upgrade from the previous year.\(^{10,11}\)

Six bond elections have been held in Montgomery County since 2013.

- In May 2013, a bond proposition worth $497.7 million for college facilities in the Lone Star College System District was defeated. However, in the following year, voters in the same district approved a bond worth $485 million for the purpose of facility upgrades.
- In May 2014, the City of Panorama Village approved an $850,000 bond for dredging Panorama Lake and parts of Stewart Creek and constructing a structure to capture silt and facilitate drainage.
- In May 2015, voters approved two independent school district bonds, for the purpose of new campuses, renovations, security upgrades, and the purchase of land for future growth.
- Also in May 2015, a road bond worth $350 million was defeated. The bond would have addressed pressing traffic issues by improving and expanding roadways in the county. At the November 3, 2015 election, voters were presented with a revised $280 million road bond, which does not include the controversial extension of Woodlands Parkway. The road bond proposition garnered 63 percent support from voters.

Montgomery County could issue a general obligation bond payable by property taxes for land conservation and parks purposes. For all taxing jurisdictions, the debt service portion of the property tax may rise as high as necessary to cover debt expenses.\(^{12}\) The current debt service property tax is 0.0734 cents per $100 valuation, while the total property tax rate is 0.4767 cents per $100 valuation. The chart to the right demonstrates what various bond amounts for parks and watershed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Montgomery County Bond Financing Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assumes a 20-year bond issue at 5.0% Interest Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015 Net Taxable Value= $48,529,631,203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bond Issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$70,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on average assessed value of household of $253,073.

\(^9\) Montgomery County CAFR 2014, pg. 28
\(^{10}\) http://www.mctx.org/montgomerytexas/uploads/FY_2016_Adopted_Budget___website_copy.pdf
\(^{11}\) http://www.mctx.org/dept/departments_a-b/auditor/docs/CAFR_2014_PDF_1.pdf
\(^{12}\) http://comptroller.texas.gov/taxinfo/proptax/tnt/
protection would cost the average household in Montgomery County. For example, a $50 million bond would cost the average household about $21 each year. Voter approval is required.

The Trust for Public Land’s bond cost calculations provide an estimate of debt service, tax increase, and cost to the average homeowner in the community of potential bond issuances for land conservation. Assumptions include the following: the entire debt amount is issued in the first year and payments are equal until maturity; 20-year maturity; and 5 percent interest rate. Property tax estimates assume that the county would raise property taxes to pay the debt service on bonds; however, other revenue streams may be used. The cost per household represents the average annual impact of increased property taxes levied to pay the debt service. The estimates do not take into account growth in the tax base due to new construction and annexation over the life of the bonds. The jurisdiction’s officials, financial advisors, bond counsel and underwriters would establish the actual terms.

Grimes County General Obligation Bonds

Long-term debt of Grimes County consists of tax notes payable and capital lease obligations, which are issued to provide funds for the acquisition or construction of major capital facilities. At the start of FY2016, the county had total debt outstanding of $63,115. The county’s total debt decreased by $25,405, or about 29 percent, from FY2015 to FY2016. Long-term debt per capita measures the debt burden on citizens. As of August 2014, outstanding long-term debt per capita is approximately $4. Grimes County currently does not have any outstanding general obligation bonds. However, voters within Grimes County have approved four of six independent school district bond proposals since May 2013, ranging from $1.4 million to $19.8 million.13

Grimes County could issue a general obligation bond for parks and watershed conservation. The county’s total property tax rate for FY2016 is $0.530261 per $100 assessed valuation, of which $0.001012 is for debt service. The chart to the right demonstrates what various bond amounts in the county would cost the average household. A $7 million bond, for example, would cost the average household about $21 each year. Voter approval is required.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bond Issue</th>
<th>Annual Debt Service</th>
<th>Tax Increase</th>
<th>Annual cost/ Avg. Household*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$3,000,000</td>
<td>$240,728</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>$9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,000,000</td>
<td>$401,213</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>$15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$7,000,000</td>
<td>$561,698</td>
<td>0.019</td>
<td>$21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000,000</td>
<td>$802,426</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>$30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,000,000</td>
<td>$1,203,639</td>
<td>0.042</td>
<td>$45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on average assessed value of household of $107,078.

13 http://tools.cira.state.tx.us/users/0057/docs/Budgets/ADOPTED%20BUDGET%20FY%202016.pdf
15 http://67.76.234.90/gcad/annualreport.pdf
Walker County General Obligation Bonds

Walker County limits the amount of debt that may be issued to 10 percent of the total assessed valuation of property in the county, which was roughly $2.9 billion at the start of FY2016. Staying at or below this benchmark ensures that the county’s debt remains manageable. In June 2012, when the county was debt free, it issued a certificate of obligation for $20 million for the construction of a county jail, which was completed in May 2014. At the start of FY2016, Walker County’s debt obligations totaled $17.7 million, well below the 10 percent limit. Long-term debt per capita measures the debt burden on citizens. As of August 2014, outstanding long-term debt per capita is approximately $265. The county requires that the term of payment for all debt issuances must be less than the expected life of the asset. The county’s debt portfolio was rated as A1 from Moody’s in May 2012, the most recent rating available. Walker County currently does not have any outstanding general obligation bonds. Since May 2013, there have been two bond elections in Walker County, both for independent school districts. Both measures were defeated.\(^\text{16,17}\)

Walker County could issue a general obligation bond payable by property taxes. The current debt service property tax is 0.0482 cents per $100 valuation, while the total property tax rate is 0.6206 cents per $100 valuation. The chart above demonstrates what various bond amounts for Walker County for parks and watershed protection would cost the average household. For example, a $7 million bond would cost the average household about $23 each year. Voter approval is required.

### Property Tax

In Texas, property taxes are levied by local governments, schools, and special districts. There is no state property tax. Any taxing unit, including a county, has the option of offering an exemption of up to 20 percent of the property’s appraised value, but not less than $5,000. Counties, cities and towns in Texas are constitutionally permitted to levy a property tax up to $0.80 per $100 of taxable valuation for general fund, permanent improvement fund, road and bridge fund, and jury fund purposes.\(^\text{18}\) The total amount of property taxes imposed in any year may not exceed the amount imposed in the preceding year unless the governing body gives notice of its intent to increase taxes and holds a public hearing.\(^\text{19}\)

The table below shows the current tax rate subject to the $0.80 limit in each of the counties within the watershed, the remaining tax capacity under this limit, as well as the maximum tax that could be levied at a cost to the average homeowner of $20 annually. For example, at the $20 per year price point, Montgomery County could impose a tax of $0.0079 per $100 and collect roughly $3.8 million.

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17 [http://www.co.walker.tx.us/egov/docs/1427756001_96771.pdf](http://www.co.walker.tx.us/egov/docs/1427756001_96771.pdf)
18 Texas Constitution, Article XIII, §9
19 Texas Constitution, Article XIII, §21
Property Tax Capacity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Current M&amp;O Rate</th>
<th>Remaining Capacity</th>
<th>Tax Rate (per $100 value)</th>
<th>Annual Cost to Avg. Homeowner</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Montgomery County</td>
<td>0.4033</td>
<td>0.3967</td>
<td>0.00790</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>$3,835,228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grimes County</td>
<td>0.34384</td>
<td>0.45616</td>
<td>0.01868</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>$539,606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walker County</td>
<td>0.5724</td>
<td>0.2276</td>
<td>0.01646</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>$489,673</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unlike a debt service levy which becomes a binding obligation on current and subsequent commissioners’ courts, the general, or maintenance and operations “M&O,” levy is the result of the budgeting process whereby annual requirements are reviewed by the members of the commissioners’ court and must be approved each year.

The property tax rate in Montgomery County has remained unchanged since FY2014, when it decreased by 1.5 percent. The tax rate in Grimes County has not changed since FY2011. In Walker County, the property tax rate has declined since FY2014 by 8.4 percent. The table below demonstrates historical property tax rates (expressed as cents per $100 valuation) for the last five fiscal years for each county.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Montgomery County</td>
<td>0.4767</td>
<td>0.4767</td>
<td>0.4767</td>
<td>0.4838</td>
<td>0.4838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grimes County</td>
<td>0.5303</td>
<td>0.5303</td>
<td>0.5303</td>
<td>0.5303</td>
<td>0.5303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walker County</td>
<td>0.6206</td>
<td>0.6589</td>
<td>0.6778</td>
<td>0.6355</td>
<td>0.5536</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sales Tax

The Texas state sales and use tax rate is 6.25 percent, but local taxing jurisdictions, including counties, may also impose sales and use tax up to 2 percent for a total maximum combined rate of 8.25 percent. However, counties may not adopt a sales and use tax if the adoption of the tax causes the combined rate of all sales and use taxes imposed by the county and other political subdivisions having territory in the county to exceed 2 percent at any location in the county. Furthermore, counties are limited to a 0.5 percent sales tax. Grimes County and Walker County both impose a 0.5 percent sales tax for the purpose of property tax relief. Thus these counties are currently at the maximum rate and cannot levy an additional sales tax. Montgomery County does not have a sales tax. However, other taxing jurisdictions within the county, including the City of Conroe, are currently at the maximum rate of 8.25 percent. Therefore Montgomery County is not able to levy a county-wide sales tax.

Impact Fees

Impact fees, or monetary exactions other than a tax or special assessment, may be imposed by political subdivisions in connection with the approval of a development project to defray all or part of the cost of public facilities related to the development project. However, the Texas Local Government Code specifically excludes the dedication of land for public parks and payments in lieu of dedication of park land from the definition of impact fees. Instead, local governments, special districts, and conservation and reclamation

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20 Texas Tax Code, §151.051.
21 Texas Tax Code, §323.101 (d)
22 Texas Tax Code, §323.103
23 Texas Local Govt. Code §395.001(4)(A).
districts are statutorily authorized to impose impact fees for capital improvements related to water, wastewater, flood control and roadways. As such, additional impact fee revenues may be accessed only for park acquisitions that are part of a project serving one of the aforementioned purposes, such as a project in partnership with a municipal water department or the Woodlands Joint Powers Agency.
STATE CONSERVATION FUNDING PROGRAMS

This section provides information on available state conservation funding programs that potentially could be used to support land conservation in the West Fork watershed. In 2001, Texas voters approved a $100 million bond measure for park facilities (primarily major repairs to state parks), but the bond issuance did not include any funds for park land acquisition. Additionally, in 2007, voters approved Proposition 4, which authorized the issuance of up to $1 billion in general obligation bonds for construction projects, including an allocation of $52 million to state parks. Other state funding programs with a park land acquisition component receive federal funding. In May 2015, House Bill 158 was signed into law, ensuring that the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) will receive full funding from the general sales tax attributable to sporting goods. Before the passage of HB158, allocations remained subject to appropriation by the Legislature, and the department never received “full funding.” It was estimated that revenues for TPWD for the 2014-2015 biennium would be approximately $265 million.

From 1998 to 2008, Texas spent more than $17 million on land acquisitions totaling approximately 105,000 acres. However, when viewed more broadly, Texas ranks 49th nationally in terms of per capita state spending for conservation. The table below shows the average spending per capita of the top five states and five states geographically near to Texas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total state spending</th>
<th>$ per capita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>$204,374,534</td>
<td>$234.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>$3,567,559,516</td>
<td>$194.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>$133,056,808</td>
<td>$193.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>$821,390,608</td>
<td>$94.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>$851,733,148</td>
<td>$92.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total state spending</th>
<th>$ per capita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>$23,041,501</td>
<td>$11.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>$23,966,049</td>
<td>$8.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>$19,657,931</td>
<td>$4.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>$2,764,892</td>
<td>$0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>$13,486,362</td>
<td>$0.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Trust for Public Land, Conservation Almanac
State Conservation History

In 1993, the Texas Legislature passed House Bill 706. This bill switched the revenue source for state and local parks from the state cigarette tax to draw from the general sales tax attributable to sporting goods. However, legislators capped the amount of draw at $27 million for 1993 and 1994. In 1995, the cap was increased to $32 million, and in 2007 the cap was lifted. Beginning in FY2008, 94 percent of sporting goods sales tax collections each biennium was to be credited to TPWD and 6 percent to the Texas Historical Commission. Of this 94 percent, 74 percent went to an account for state parks, 15 percent went to local parks, 1 percent went to TPWD capital construction, and the remaining 10 percent went to a new account for large city and county park grants. However, this 94 percent was not dedicated funding; appropriations were still subject to the Texas Legislature.

In May 2015, House Bill 158 was signed into law, ensuring that the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) will receive full funding from the general sales tax attributable to sporting goods. Before the passage of HB158, allocations remained subject to appropriation by the Legislature, and the department did not receive "full funding." It was estimated that revenues for TPWD for the 2014-2015 biennium would be approximately $265 million.

In 2001, Texas voters approved Proposition 8, which provided $100 million in bond authority for major repairs to state parks and other TPWD sites. This measure passed with 63 percent support. Such bonds require legislative appropriations for debt service funding to pay back the bond issue.

In 2005, the Texas Legislature established the Texas Farm and Ranch Lands Conservation Program. The program enables Texas to purchase conservation easements from willing landowners in order to prevent the development of rural lands with outstanding ecological or cultural value. The Legislature has not appropriated funding for this program to date.

In 2007, Texas voters approved Proposition 4, which authorized the issuance of up to $1 billion in general obligation bonds for construction projects, including an allocation of $52 million to state parks. In September 2008, TPWD received $27.12 million of the Proposition 4 general obligation bond amounts. A total of 85 projects were funded through this source, and as of October 31, 2014 the full amount had been expended and all projects have been completed. The department secured the remaining Proposition 4 general obligation bond authority of $25 million for repairs to the Battleship Texas in July 2009. This project is currently in the construction phase, with a total of $24.9 million expended/encumbered as of the end of October 2014. The 85 projects funded by the Proposition 4 general obligation bond include several in the West Fork San Jacinto area. The table below summarizes these projects.

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24 Excerpted from http://tpwd.texas.gov/publications/pwdpubs/media/pwd_rp_a0900_0679_01_15.pdf
Prop 4 Bond Projects Near West Fork San Jacinto Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>TPWD Site</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grimes</td>
<td>Fanthorp Inn State Historic Site</td>
<td>Renovate Historical Structures</td>
<td>$715,637.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harris</td>
<td>San Jacinto Battleground State Historic Site</td>
<td>Improve Water Treatment Phase II</td>
<td>$1,509,025.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Restroom Improvements</td>
<td>$171,314.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Electrical &amp; Water Upgrades</td>
<td>$339,893.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Repair Water Treatment Plant</td>
<td>$14,495.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mitigate Gasoline Pipeline Leak in Fuel System</td>
<td>$88,334.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polk</td>
<td>Lake Livingston State Park</td>
<td>Upgrade Utilities at All Camp Sites</td>
<td>$1,315,314.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Restroom Improvements</td>
<td>$253,963.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Connect to City Water &amp; Wastewater</td>
<td>$1,255,419.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walker</td>
<td>Huntsville State Park</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)\(^{25}\) generates revenue from the sale of its products and services, such as hunting and fishing licenses, as well as fees for state park entrance and use of facilities. These revenues fund a substantial portion of the budget; however, they are not sufficient to cover all budgeted expenses. Therefore, TPWD is funded by a combination of general revenue, dedicated general revenue, federal funding, and other funds. The FY2015 budget totaled $371.3 million. The State Parks Division was allocated 28.7 percent, or $106.4 million. It is estimated that $12.8 million of this allocation will be passed on to local governments and other entities in the form of grants.

The State Parks Account is the second-largest dedicated funding source for TPWD and accounts for $41.1 million, or 11.1 percent, of the FY2015 operating budget. The funds in this account may be used for the operation of state parks, historic sites, and natural areas. Revenues consist primarily of entrance and use fees for state parks, a portion of the state sales tax on sporting goods, and other revenues, including gifts, grants, donations, oil and gas royalties and leases, federal funds, and interest.

The largest portion of the General Revenue Fund appropriated to TPWD consists of allocations of the sporting goods sales tax, which is used primarily to fund state and local park-related needs. In FY2015, $59.3 million of the revenues from the sporting goods sales tax was appropriated to TPWD. This amount was to be distributed into the specified general revenue dedicated accounts as provided in the General Appropriations Act: 74 percent to an account for state parks, 15 percent to local parks, 1 percent to TPWD capital construction, and the remaining 10 percent to a new account for large city and county park grants.

The next largest portion of the General Revenue Fund appropriated to TPWD is comprised of unclaimed refunds of motorboat fuel taxes. While these funds can be used for any purpose within the responsibilities of TPWD, historically they have been used to subsidize park operations. In FY2015, TPWD was appropriated approximately $15.2 million from the unclaimed refunds.

Recreation Grants Program

TPWD offers a number of distinct recreation grants to local governments for outdoor recreation. Program assistance may be available to acquire lands and waters or interest in lands and waters for public recreation and to develop basic recreation facilities to serve the general public. To be eligible for assistance, there must

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\(^{25}\) https://tpwd.texas.gov/publications/pwdpubs/media/pwd_rp_a0900_0679_01_15.pdf
be a present or future need for the acquisition and development of the property for which the grant is requested or the use is proposed; the project must be endorsed by the regional planning commission or council having jurisdiction in the area where the project is proposed; and the project must be submitted by an eligible sponsor. Funding for the Local Park Grant Programs comes from a portion of the state sales tax on sporting goods through the Texas Recreation and Parks Account and the Texas Large County and Municipality Recreation and Parks Account. Additional funds come from off-shore gas royalties through the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund. The Recreational Trails program receives its funding from a portion of federal gas taxes paid on fuel used in non-highway recreational vehicles. These programs are summarized in the table below.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Name</th>
<th>Grant Ceiling</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local Parks Urban Outdoor Recreation</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>&gt;500,000</td>
<td>October 1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Parks Non-Urban Outdoor Recreation</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
<td>&lt;500,000</td>
<td>October 1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Parks Small Community Recreation</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>&lt;20,000</td>
<td>October 1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Parks Urban Indoor Recreation</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>&gt;500,000</td>
<td>October 1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Parks Non-Urban Indoor Recreation</td>
<td>$750,000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational Trails</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>February 1st</td>
</tr>
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</table>

- **Urban Outdoor Recreation Grants.** Grants are available to cities and counties with populations over 500,000 for the acquisition and development of park land. This assistance program is distributed in the form of 50 percent matching grant funds up to $1,000,000. All grant assisted sites must be dedicated as parkland in perpetuity, properly maintained, and open to the public. The deadline for this grant is October 1st each year.

- **Non-Urban Outdoor Recreation Grants.** This grant program provides 50 percent matching grant funds to municipalities, counties, special districts, and other local units of government with populations less than 500,000 to acquire and develop parkland or to renovate existing public recreation areas. The maximum award is $500,000. Eligible sponsors include cities, counties, river authorities, and other special districts. All grant assisted sites must be dedicated as parkland in perpetuity, properly maintained, and open to the public. The application deadline is October 1st each year.

- **Small Community Recreation Grants.** The Small Community grant program was created to meet the recreation needs of small Texas communities with a population of 20,000 and under. The grant provides 50 percent matching grant funds to eligible municipalities and counties. The maximum grant amount is $75,000. Funds must be used for development or acquisition of parkland. Eligible projects include ball fields, boating, fishing, and hunting facilities, picnic facilities, playgrounds, swimming pools, trails, camping facilities, beautification, restoration, gardens, sports courts and support facilities. All grant assisted sites must be dedicated as parkland in perpetuity, properly maintained, and open to the public. The deadline for this grant is October 1st each year.

- **Urban Indoor Recreation Grants.** Grants are available to cities and counties with populations over 500,000 for the acquisition, construction or renovation of indoor recreation facilities. This assistance is in the form of 50 percent matching grant funds up to $1,000,000. All grant assisted sites must be

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26 http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/grants/trpa/#trpa
dedicated as parkland in perpetuity, properly maintained, and open to the public. The annual application deadline is October 1st.

- **Non-Urban Indoor Recreation Grants.** This grant provides 50 percent matching grant funds to municipalities, counties and other local units of government with populations less than 50,000 to construct recreation centers, nature centers and other indoor recreation-related buildings. The grant maximum is $750,000. All grant assisted sites must be dedicated as parkland in perpetuity, properly maintained, and open to the public. The application deadline is October 1st each year.

- **Recreational Trail Grants.** TPWD administers the National Recreational Trails Fund in Texas under the approval of the Federal Highway Administration. Grants can be up to 80 percent of project cost with a maximum of $200,000 for non-motorized trail grants; there is no maximum for motorized trail grants. Funds can be spent on motorized and non-motorized recreational trail projects such as the construction of new recreational trails, to improve existing trails, to develop trailheads or trailside facilities, and to acquire trail corridors. The application deadline is February 1st each year.

**Texas Historical Commission: Certified Local Government Grants**

For projects with a historical preservation component, the Texas Historical Commission offers Certified Local Government (CLG) grants to participating city and county governments to develop and sustain an effective local preservation program critical to preserving local historic resources. To participate, city and county governments must be certified by the National Park Service as CLGs. Funding for the CLG comes from annual allocations from the Historic Preservation Fund of the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, from which the Texas Historical Commission sets aside at least ten percent for distribution solely to CLGs.

The CLG grants can be used for local historic preservation projects, including surveys of historic properties/districts, preparation of nominations to the National Register of Historic Places and other community-based preservation projects, though further research is required as to whether the grants may be used for land acquisition.

All CLG grants require a local cash match budgeted on a one-to-one (dollar for dollar) match equal to a 50-50 ratio for the total cost of the project. Proposed projects utilizing all or partial matches of verifiable in-kind services and/or goods may also qualify as long as the local match equals a 50-50 ratio for the total cost of the project. Only non-federal monies may be used as a match, with the exception of Community Development Block Grants. The CLG grant applications are typically due in the late summer of each year. CLG grant awards typically range from $2,000 to $30,000.

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FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The U.S. federal government is an important partner for state and local governments, parks and conservation organizations, and community advocates. This report provides a summary of numerous relevant federal conservation funds for open space and urban areas. The programs discussed are administered by federal agencies, but vary in how funds are delivered for conservation projects. For example, some of these program funds are directed to the states, which in turn decide what projects to fund, while other program funds are granted by a federal agency through a competitive process.

Each program has different requirements and offers various partnership opportunities (e.g. applying through the state, working with private landowners, etc.) that should be further evaluated to determine most likely funding outcomes. The descriptions are meant to provide a broad overview of funding sources. The Trust for Public Land can provide additional information on program rules and accessibility.

State Directed Federal Grants

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

An offspring of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), CREP is a voluntary program for agricultural landowners. Through CREP, state and federal partnerships allow landowners to receive incentive payments for installing specific conservation practices. Farmers can receive annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish long-term, resource-conserving covers on eligible land.\(^28\)

State Revolving Fund Programs (Clean Water and Drinking Water SRFs)

Under the Clean Water Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) funds three water quality programs, with the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) being the largest by far.\(^29,30,31\)

- **Clean Water State Revolving Fund (Section 212).** The CWSRF provides loans for water quality improvements and has traditionally been used for wastewater treatment upgrades, although some states have used funding for land conservation. The annual capitalization grants totaled $1.34 billion in FY2014.

  Under the CWSRF, the EPA provides annual grants to states that match the capitalization grants with 20 percent of their own funds. States use these capitalization grants to provide loans to public and private borrowers, with a maximum term of 30 years. Under certain conditions, CWSRF programs may provide up to a fixed percentage of their capitalization grants as additional subsidization in the form of principal forgiveness, negative interest rate loans, or grants. Since the CWSRF Program began in 1987, the federal government has provided more than $37.5 billion in capitalization grants. Building on the federal investment of over $37 billion, the state CWSRFs have provided more than $105.4 billion to communities through 2014. States have provided more than 34,900 low-interest loans to protect valuable water resources.

  States file an intended use plan with the EPA that clearly spells out how they will allocate their CWSRF funds. Since the program’s inception, most states have used their CWSRF primarily for wastewater treatment plants. However, since 1995, more funding has been shifted into nonpoint


\(^29\) [http://www2.epa.gov/cwsrf](http://www2.epa.gov/cwsrf)

\(^30\) [http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/dwsrf/index.cfm](http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/dwsrf/index.cfm)

\(^31\) [http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/nps/cwact.cfm](http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/nps/cwact.cfm)
source pollution control and estuary management, with roughly 6 percent of annual funds going for non-point source pollution, up from 1 percent in prior years. In particular, several states have used their CWSRF to help local governments and nonprofits purchase watershed land, restore watersheds, and reduce flooding.

- **Drinking Water State Revolving Fund.** The EPA awards grants to states to fund their Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (DWSRF). State DWSRFs provide loans and other assistance to eligible public water systems to finance the costs of infrastructure projects, including land acquisition. Up to 15 percent of the funds can be set-aside to fund source water protection activities, including land acquisition, although only 10 percent may go to a single purpose. The funds awarded to states totaled over $844 million in FY 2014.

Under the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996, the EPA is authorized to provide grants to states to capitalize Drinking Water State Revolving Funds. The State Revolving Funds provide loans and other assistance to eligible public water systems to finance the cost of infrastructure projects. States must file an intended use plan describing how they will use the proceeds and must match 20 percent of the grant. Up to 15 percent of the funds can be set-aside to fund source water protection activities, including land acquisition. However, no more than 10 percent of the set-asides can be used for a single type of activity. Grants are allotted to each state based on needs identified in the most recent Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey, which is conducted every four years.

- **Nonpoint Source Program (Section 319).** Provides grants for projects that address nonpoint source pollution, such as best management practices (BMP) implementation, restoration and public education. On a very limited basis, Section 319 has been used for land conservation. Funding for FY 2014 totaled over $159 million.

In 1987 Congress recognized that state and local water authorities needed assistance with developing and implementing measures to control nonpoint source (NPS) pollution. The enactment of Section 319 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) established a national program to control nonpoint sources of water pollution, as well as a means to help fund state and local implementation of nonpoint source management programs.

Under the provisions of Section 319, land acquisition can be used as a nonpoint source management tool. Across the country, fifteen land acquisition projects were approved between fiscal years 1994 and 2010. However, none of these projects occurred in Texas. No land acquisition projects have been funded using Section 319 funds since 2010.

**Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)**

Established by the 2014 Farm Bill, the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands and their related benefits. Under the Agricultural Land Easements component, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) helps Indian tribes, state and local governments, and non-governmental organizations protect working agricultural lands and limit non-agricultural uses of the land. Land protected by agricultural land easements provides many public benefits, including environmental quality, historic preservation, wildlife habitat and protection of open space.

Under the Agricultural Land component, NRCS may contribute up to 50 percent of the fair market value of the agricultural land easement. Land eligible for agricultural easements includes cropland, rangeland, grassland, pastureland and nonindustrial private forest land. NRCS will prioritize applications that protect

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agricultural uses and related conservation values of the land and those that maximize the protection of contiguous acres devoted to agricultural use. To enroll land through agricultural land easements, eligible partners may submit proposals to the NRCS state office to acquire conservation easements on eligible land. In FY2014, over $329.4 million was allocated to states through the ACEP program. Texas received nearly $11.2 million.

Forest Legacy Program (FLP)\(^\text{33}\)

Since 1990, the U.S. Forest Service Forest Legacy Program (FLP) has provided states and U.S. Territories with federal funding to help protect threatened forestland. The program uses conservation easements or fee transactions to prevent land from being converted to non-forest use. A state enters the voluntary program by submitting an Assessment of Need (AON) to the Secretary of Agriculture for approval. These plans establish the lead state agency, the state's Forest Legacy project criteria, and areas within which proposed Legacy projects must be located. Each enrolled state has a Forest Legacy Program coordinator, housed within the agency designated in the AON to administer the program.

The program requires a minimum non-federal match of at least 25 percent of total project cost. Match can consist of state, local, or private funds, donated land value, and in some cases, project costs. This program has protected 2,470,000 acres in its 25 year history by leveraging $669 million to secure land valued at more than $15 billion. Currently, there are 53 states and territories participating.

North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA)\(^\text{34}\)

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act was passed in 1989 to provide matching grants for the acquisition, restoration, and enhancement of wetland ecosystems for the benefit of waterfowl and other wetland-associated migratory species. Administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, grants are available to nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and private individuals in the U.S., Canada and Mexico. Two types of grants are awarded: small grants for up to $75,000 and standard grants for over $75,000. There is a 1:1 non-federal match requirement for each grant.

The NAWCA matching grant program grew steadily from $15 million in FY 2000 to $66.1 million in FY 2006, but has seen decline in recent years. The FY 2013 appropriations level for NAWCA was $33.6 million. These funds are supplemented by funds from other sources and matched by significant levels of non-federal funding.

Since 1995, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act has funded 2,553 projects totaling $1.4 billion in grants. More than 5,000 partners have contributed another $2.9 billion in matching funds to affect 30.7 million acres of habitat.

State Wildlife Grants (SWG)\(^\text{35}\)

Created by Congress in 2001, the State Wildlife Grants Program is a matching grant program available to every state to support cost-effective, on-the-ground conservation efforts aimed at restoring or maintaining populations of native species before listing under the Endangered Species Act is required. In order to maximize the effectiveness of this program, Congress required each state to develop a comprehensive wildlife conservation strategy for the conservation of the state’s full array of wildlife and the habitats they depend

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\(^{33}\) http://blogs.usda.gov/2015/04/17/the-forest-legacy-program-25-years-of-keeping-working-forests-working/

\(^{34}\) http://www.fws.gov/birds/grants/north-american-wetland-conservation-act.php

\(^{35}\) http://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/SWG/SWG.htm
upon. These plans identify species and habitats of greatest conservation need and outline the steps necessary to keep them from becoming endangered.

The State Wildlife Grants Program provides matching funds that are to be used to implement the conservation recommendations outlined in these plans. Grant funds are disbursed to states for approved grants at a maximum federal share of 75% for Planning grants and 65% for Implementation grants. Funds appropriated under the SWG program are allocated to every state according to a formula based on a state size and population. Since its inception in 2001, the State Wildlife Grants Program has played a critical role in the conservation of wildlife in all states. The FY2015 appropriations for the SWG program were nearly $46 million.

**Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)**

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has provided funding to help protect some of Texas’ most special places and ensure recreational access for hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities. Texas has received approximately $567 million in LWCF funding over the past four decades, protecting places such as Big Thicket National Preserve, San Antonio Missions National Historic Park, Padre Islands National Seashore and Balcones Canyonlands and Lower Rio Grande national wildlife refuges.

Forest Legacy Program (FLP) grants are also funded under LWCF, to help protect working forests – supporting timber sector jobs and sustainable forest operations while enhancing wildlife habitat, water quality and recreation at places such as the Turkey Creek Project in Tyler and Hardin County and Burleson Wetland Project in Smith County. The Forest Legacy Program assists states and private forest owners to maintain working forest lands through matching grants for permanent conservation easement and fee acquisitions, and has leveraged approximately $5 million in federal funds to invest $8 million in Texas’ forests, while protecting air and water quality, wildlife habitat, access for recreation and other public benefits provided by forests.

LWCF state assistance grants have further supported hundreds of projects across Texas’ state and local parks. Texas has received approximately $177 million in stateside grants from LWCF.

LWCF expired in September 2015. Congress has yet to reauthorize this program as of December 2015.

**Direct Federal Acquisition**

Federal land holdings are a significant component of the state’s system of protected natural areas including parks, forests and wildlife refuges. However, federal programs should not be expected to make significant contributions towards the state’s conservation goals as the number and size of current and ongoing federal acquisitions is relatively small. As of May 2015, the federal government owned roughly 640 million acres. Four agencies—the National Park Service (NPS), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in the Department of the Interior, and the U.S. Forest Service (FS) in the Department of Agriculture—manage approximately 95 percent of the federal acres. The principal financing mechanism for federal land acquisition is annual appropriations under the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). LWCF is credited with $900 million annually from designated sources, and Congress determines the level of appropriations each year. However, on September 30, 2015, Congress allowed the LWCF to expire, and it is unknown whether the fund will be reauthorized.

There are other, less significant sources of funding for these federal agencies. The FWS receives some funding from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund. The BLM has the authority to retain the revenues of

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36 This section is largely excerpted from http://www.lwcfcoalition.org/files/FY16%20State%20Factsheets/Texas16.pdf
37 https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL34273.pdf
some land sales, primarily in Nevada, to use for subsequent acquisitions and other purposes. All four agencies may, in general, accept land as gifts and bequests.

National Park Service (NPS)

The NPS is not authorized to acquire lands for new or existing units of the National Park System, except in special circumstances. Congress has created most units, and typically includes specific authority for the NPS to acquire nonfederal inholdings within the identified boundaries of a park in the law creating that park unit. Under the Antiquities Act of 1906, the President is authorized to create national monuments on federal lands. Presidential proclamations have created 142 national monuments. These monuments are managed mostly by the NPS, some by the BLM, and some by other agencies.

U.S. Forest Service (FS)

The Secretary of Agriculture has various authorities to acquire lands for the National Forest System (NFS). The NFS is comprised of 282 units of federal land, containing 232.1 million acres, which consists of national forests, national grasslands, purchase units, land utilization projects, and other areas. New NFS units may only be created by an act of Congress; however, the Secretary is authorized to acquire lands within or adjoining the stated exterior boundaries of an NFS unit.

The Sam Houston National Forest, one of four National Forests in Texas, is located 50 miles north of Houston. The forest contains 163,037 acres between Huntsville, Conroe, Cleveland and Richards, Texas. With land in Montgomery, Walker, and San Jacinto counties, the Sam Houston National Forest is intermingled with privately owned timber lands and small farms.38 There are approximately 491,800 acres inside the proclaimed National Forest boundary.39 Only 33 percent (163,037) of these acres are national forest lands. The national forest is scattered and interspersed among private lands and corporate timberlands. The numbers of people settling on private lands adjoining national forest lands is increasing with a corresponding increase in requests for road right-of-ways across national forest lands to access the private lands.40

Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1929 gives the FWS authority to acquire land. After consulting with the relevant governor or state agency and appropriate local government officials, the Secretary of the Interior may provide recommendations of lands which are crucial to the conservation of migratory birds to the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission. The state in which the land acquisition will take place must consent to the acquisition by law. The Secretary is then authorized to purchase or rent lands approved by the Commission and to acquire any land or interest within.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

The BLM has comprehensive, universal authority to acquire lands, mainly under Section 205 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA). Specifically, the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to acquire lands or interests within, by purchase, exchange, donation, or eminent domain. An interest in land is less than full ownership. Examples include conservation easements, access easements, mineral rights, and water rights. The BLM acquires land or interests in land for a variety of reasons, including the protection of natural and cultural resources, increasing opportunities for the public to access land and use it for recreation, and improving the way land is managed.

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38 Excerpted from http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/texas/about-forest/districts/?cid=fswdev3_008443
CONCLUSION

This feasibility study first analyzed local conservation finance options for Montgomery, Grimes, and Walker Counties. Many opportunities exist to protect the West Fork San Jacinto watershed and to provide recreation amenities for residents and visitors. The two main options are general obligation bonds and property taxes. Many local jurisdictions are already at the maximum sales tax level, and impact fees for capital improvements must relate only to water, wastewater, flood control and roadways. As such, additional impact fee revenues may be accessed only for park acquisitions that are part of a project serving one of the aforementioned purposes.

Local governments with significant funds are much better positioned to secure and leverage funding from the federal government and attract other local and state government or private philanthropic partners. This report described several state and federal programs that may be available for land acquisition, parks, and trails in the West Fork San Jacinto watershed. Communities in Texas have traditionally been able to rely on a mix of funding due to the availability of state funding through the state recreation grants funded by the sporting goods sales tax allocation and local conservation funding measures. Combined with a local funding source, the state and federal programs described in this report could offer significant funding for parks and open space.

Despite the fact that Texas ranks 49th nationally in terms of per capita state spending for conservation, Texas voters have voiced strong support for parks and land conservation by approving more than $3 billion for these purposes through increased levy of the sales tax and local bond referenda. The rate of approval for local ballot measures voted upon in Texas is an astounding 91 percent, compared to the nation-wide approval rate of 75 percent. While Texas’ local ballot measures have previously consisted of only sales tax and bond measures, this report provides a fact-based reference document that can be used to evaluate a range of available financing mechanisms from an objective vantage point.
## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Finance Mechanism</th>
<th>Total Funds Approved</th>
<th>Conservation Funds Approved</th>
<th>Pass?</th>
<th>% Yes</th>
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<td>Frisco</td>
<td>5/9/2015</td>
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<td>$32,000,000.00</td>
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<td>77%</td>
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<td>78%</td>
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<td>Williamson County</td>
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<td>75%</td>
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<td>Travis County</td>
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<td>McKinney</td>
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<td>72%</td>
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<td>Richardson</td>
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<td>Hutto</td>
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<td>71%</td>
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<td>58%</td>
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<td>Type</td>
<td>Amount</td>
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<td>Percentage</td>
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<td>73%</td>
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<td>71%</td>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>61%</td>
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<td>$3,000,000</td>
<td>yes</td>
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</table>

Source: Trust for Public Land, LandVote database.
For any questions or more information please contact:

Wendy Muzzy  
The Trust for Public Land  
(206) 274-2914  
wendy.muzzy@tpl.org

Jessica Welch  
The Trust for Public Land  
(206) 274-2907  
jessica.welch@tpl.org
Appendix 5
Montgomery County Telephone Poll Results
Background

Methodology
- Sample of 405 active voters
- Interviews conducted October 13-18, 2015
- Margin of error of ±4.9% for 405 cases
- Typical interview was about 19 minutes

Contributors
- Dr. David B. Hill, Director, Hill Research Consultants
- Dr. Stephen N. White, Assistant Director
- Randy Ellison, Senior Research Consultant
- Jason Nemeck, Project Manager
Direction of things in own part of Montgomery County today

- Right direction: 67%
- Wrong track: 24%
- No opinion: 10%

Note: percentages do not add to 100% due to rounding.
Direction of things in own part of Montgomery County today
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “right direction”

- Tea Party+Libertarian wing: 78%
- Independent 18-54 yrs: 77%
- Moderate/liberal Independent: 76%
- Northwest: 75%
- Tea Party wing: 75%
- GOP male: 74%
- Not strongly GOP: 74%
- Less than 45 years: 74%
- $75K-$100K: 73%
- Comm. Dist. 1 Meador (N): 73%
- North+Central: 73%
- Male 55+ yrs: 73%
- TOTAL: 67%
Direction of things in own part of Montgomery County today
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “wrong track”

Democratic Primary voter: 47%
Democrat 18-54 yrs: 40%
Other South: 39%
Democrat male: 39%
Democrat: 36%
Democrat female: 34%
Democrat 55+ yrs: 33%
Rural areas/farms: 33%
Female 55+ yrs: 31%
Reg. to vote 20 or more years: 30%
GOP Primary voter: 29%
Comm. Dist. 2 Riley (SW): 29%
TOTAL: 24%
Most important conservation or environmental issues or problems currently facing Montgomery County

- Traffic congestion; road construction: 13%
- Water supplies, availability of water: 12%
- Drinking water quality: 6%
- Forests being cut down, logging, clear-cutting: 6%
- Growth & development, urban sprawl: 5%
- Air pollution, smog: 4%
- Population growth; development; urbanization: 4%
- Non-enviro-conservation problem: 4%
- Farmland disappearing, sold off: 2%
- Groundwater contamination, pollution: 2%
- Pollution: 2%
- Wilderness areas being lost: 2%
- Need for more recycling & facilities: 2%
- Floods: 1%
- Climate change, global warming: 1%
- Lake pollution: 1%
- Open space disappearing, being sold off: 1%
- River, stream pollution: 1%
- Sewage, waste: 1%
- Toxic chemicals contaminating food water: 1%
- Other: 2%
- None; no problems: 10%
- No opinion: 14%
Most important conservation or environmental issues or problems currently facing Montgomery County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Conservative Anglo non-GOP</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainline, traditional wing</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent 55+ yrs</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High SES</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat conservative</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male 55+ yrs</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over $100K</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other South</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainline+Evangelical Christian wing</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-64 years</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent female</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOP 55+ yrs</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Most important conservation or environmental issues or problems currently facing Montgomery County
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “traffic congestion; road construction”

Comm. Dist. 3 Noack (S.Central) 23%
Moderate 21%
Not strongly GOP 20%
The Woodlands 18%
Democrat 18-54 yrs 18%
Other South 18%
South 18%
High SES 17%
Tea Party wing 17%
GOP 18-54 yrs 17%
School-aged child in home 17%
GOP male 17%
TOTAL 13%
### Importance of problems in Montgomery County

**Part One**

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<th>Extremely</th>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Not Serious</th>
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<td>Traffic congestion</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount you pay in taxes</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government waste &amp; mismanagement</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling government spending</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>21%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of affordable health care coverage</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs &amp; drug abuse</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of affordable health insurance coverage</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loss of natural areas</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poorly-planned growth &amp; development</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of public education</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of habitat for fish &amp; wildlife</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban sprawl</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of working farms &amp; ranches</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Importance of problems in Montgomery County

*(part two)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Extremely</th>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Not serious</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economy &amp; jobs</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollution of rivers, lakes &amp; streams</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of open space</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime, in general</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of property rights</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of drinking water</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of affordable housing</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of scenic vistas</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air pollution &amp; smog</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of neighborhood parks in your area</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of access to public lands</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of parks in your area</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to boating, fishing &amp; swimming opportunities</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Traffic congestion
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

- Democratic Primary voter: 59%
- Southeast: 54%
- Democrat female: 52%
- Independent 18-54 yrs: 49%
- Reg. to vote 20 or more years: 49%
- Independent male: 49%
- Democrat 55+ yrs: 49%
- Anglo non-GOP: 48%
- Mod/liberal Independent: 48%
- Dem+mod/liberal Indie: 47%
- Democrat: 47%
- Medium SES: 47%
- TOTAL: 39%
Amount you pay in taxes
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

- Minority: 53%
- Medium SES: 33%
- Independent 18-54 yrs: 30%
- Independent female: 28%
- Reg. to vote less than 10 years: 28%
- Comm. Dist. 4 Clark (E): 28%
- Rural areas/farms: 28%
- Female 18-54 yrs: 28%
- School-aged child in home: 27%
- Independent: 27%
- Conservative/moderate Independent: 26%
- Over $100K: 26%
- TOTAL: 22%
Controlling government spending
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of "extremely important"

- Conservative Anglo non-GOP: 37%
- Independent 18-54 yrs: 35%
- Independent male: 34%
- Very conservative GOP: 33%
- Very conservative: 32%
- Conservative/moderate Independent: 31%
- Male 18-54 yrs: 30%
- Tea Party wing: 30%
- Strongly GOP: 30%
- Tea Party+Libertarian wing: 30%
- High school or less: 28%
- Comm. Dist. 1 Meador (N): 28%
- TOTAL: 21%
Government waste & mismanagement
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

- Independent 55+ yrs: 38%
- Rural areas/farms: 37%
- Conservative Anglo non-GOP: 33%
- Very conservative: 33%
- Reg. to vote 20 or more years: 32%
- Comm. Dist. 4 Clark (E): 31%
- Southeast: 31%
- Democrat female: 29%
- Democrat 18-54 yrs: 29%
- GOP Primary voter: 28%
- Female 55+ yrs: 28%
- Democratic Primary voter: 27%
- TOTAL: 21%
Lack of affordable health care coverage
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

- Democrat 18-54 yrs: 51%
- Independent 55+ yrs: 39%
- $50K or less: 34%
- Other South: 34%
- Medium, small towns: 34%
- Independent female: 33%
- Moderate/liberal Independent: 32%
- Democrat male: 32%
- Democrat+moderate/liberal Indep: 31%
- Democrat: 31%
- Conservative/moderate Independent: 30%
- Democrat female: 30%
- TOTAL: 20%
Lack of affordable health insurance coverage profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrat 18-54 yrs</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat female</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comm. Dist. 1 Meador (N)</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other South</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female 18-54 yrs</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat male</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North+Central</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reg. to vote 20 or more years</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Primary voter</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Drugs & drug abuse
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

Comm. Dist. 4 Clark (E) 34%
$50K or less 34%
Comm. Dist. 1 Meador (N) 29%
Some college 27%
Southeast 26%
Low SES 25%
Medium, small towns 25%
Conservative Anglo non-GOP 25%
High school or less 24%
North+Central 24%
Reg. to vote 20 or more years 23%
Female 18-54 yrs 23%
TOTAL 17%
Poorly-planned growth & development
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent 18-54 yrs</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat male</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent female</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male 18-54 yrs</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat 18-54 yrs</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reg. to vote 20 or more years</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Primary voter</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reg. to vote less than 10 years</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low SES</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quality of public education
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrat 18-54 yrs</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent 55+ yrs</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mod/liberal Indie</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem+mod/liberal Indie</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent female</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cons/mod Indie</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50K or less</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat female</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anglo non-GOP</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Loss of natural areas
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

- Not strongly GOP: 30%
- Minority: 28%
- Female 18-54 yrs: 26%
- Mainline, traditional wing: 26%
- Comm. Dist. 3 Noack (S.Central): 25%
- $75K-$100K: 24%
- GOP female: 23%
- Southeast: 22%
- Somewhat conservative: 22%
- Some college: 21%
- GOP 18-54 yrs: 21%
- Reg. to vote less than 10 years: 20%
- TOTAL: 16%
Urban sprawl
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

- $50K or less: 21%
- Rural areas/farms: 20%
- Independent 18-54 yrs: 20%
- Medium SES: 19%
- Minority: 19%
- Independent male: 19%
- Democratic Primary voter: 19%
- Southeast: 19%
- Conservative/moderate Independent: 18%
- Independent: 18%
- $75K-$100K: 18%
- Moderate: 18%
- TOTAL: 14%
Loss of habitat for fish & wildlife
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

- Democrat 18-54 yrs: 32%
- Democrat female: 25%
- Democrat: 22%
- Female 18-54 yrs: 22%
- Independent female: 22%
- Democratic Primary voter: 21%
- Independent 18-54 yrs: 20%
- Comm. Dist. 1 Meador (N): 20%
- Anglo non-GOP: 19%
- Democrat male: 18%
- Female: 18%
- The Woodlands: 17%
- TOTAL: 14%
Loss of working farms & ranches
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

- Rural areas/farms: 31%
- Northwest: 28%
- High school or less: 21%
- Independent 55+ yrs: 21%
- $50K or less: 19%
- Moderate/liberal Independent: 19%
- Moderate: 19%
- Conservative/moderate Independent: 18%
- Independent female: 18%
- North+Central: 18%
- Independent: 17%
- Minority: 17%
- TOTAL: 13%
Pollution of rivers, lakes & streams

Profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

- Democrat 18-54 yrs: 35%
- Democrat female: 32%
- Democrat: 28%
- Democratic Primary voter: 26%
- Comm. Dist. 1 Meador (N): 26%
- Democrat male: 22%
- Democrat 55+ yrs: 21%
- North+Central: 18%
- $50K or less: 18%
- Female 18-54 yrs: 17%
- Minority: 16%
- Female: 15%
- TOTAL: 11%
Economy & jobs
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

- $50K or less: 27%
- Democrat 18-54 yrs: 24%
- Minority: 23%
- Conservative Anglo non-GOP: 19%
- Comm. Dist. 1 Meador (N): 19%
- North+Central: 18%
- Moderate: 17%
- Democrat female: 17%
- Medium, small towns: 17%
- Female 18-54 yrs: 17%
- GOP female: 16%
- Some college: 16%
- TOTAL: 11%
Loss of open space
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

- Democrat 55+ yrs: 18%
- Democratic Primary voter: 17%
- Independent 18-54 yrs: 16%
- Mod/liberal Independent: 16%
- Independent male: 15%
- Dist. 3 Noack (S.Central): 15%
- Other South: 15%
- Moderate/liberal: 14%
- Dem+mod/liberal Indie: 14%
- Anglo non-GOP: 13%
- 45-64 years: 13%
- Over $100K: 13%
- TOTAL: 10%
Quality of drinking water
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

Democratic Primary voter: 36%
Democrat female: 27%
Democrat 55+ yrs: 27%
Democrat: 24%
Dem+mod/liberal Indep: 18%
Democrat male: 17%
Cons. Anglo non-GOP: 17%
Independent female: 15%
Anglo non-GOP: 15%
Dist. 1 Meador (N): 14%
Independent 55+ yrs: 14%
Dist. 4 Clark (E): 13%
TOTAL: 9%
Crime, in general
Profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of "extremely important"

- Minority: 20%
- Rural areas/farms: 20%
- Independent 55+ yrs: 19%
- Democrat female: 15%
- Male 55+ yrs: 15%
- Democratic Primary voter: 13%
- Democrat 55+ yrs: 13%
- Other South: 13%
- 65 or more years: 13%
- Reg. to vote 10-19 years: 13%
- Very conservative: 12%
- Comm. Dist. 3 Noack (S.Central): 12%
- TOTAL: 9%
Loss of property rights
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

- $50K or less: 18%
- Independent male: 15%
- Independent 18-54 yrs: 15%
- Male 18-54 yrs: 15%
- Democratic Primary voter: 14%
- Comm. Dist. 1 Meador (N): 14%
- Democrat male: 14%
- Low SES: 13%
- GOP female: 12%
- Moderate/liberal Independent: 12%
- Conservative/moderate Independent: 12%
- 45-64 years: 12%
- TOTAL: 9%
Lack of neighborhood parks in your area
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

- Comm. Dist. 4 Clark (E): 10%
- Conservative Anglo non-GOP: 9%
- Some college: 9%
- Southeast: 7%
- Democrat female: 7%
- Reg. to vote 10-19 years: 7%
- Medium, small towns: 7%
- Female 55+ yrs: 7%
- Low SES: 7%
- GOP female: 6%
- $50K or less: 6%
- Strongly GOP: 6%
- TOTAL: 4%
Lack of access to public lands
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

- Democratic Primary voter: 11%
- Conservative Anglo non-GOP: 9%
- Independent 18-54 yrs: 9%
- Independent male: 9%
- Some college: 8%
- Comm. Dist. 4 Clark (E): 7%
- Tea Party+Libertarian wing: 7%
- 45-64 years: 7%
- Anglo non-GOP: 6%
- Rural areas/farms: 6%
- $50K or less: 6%
- High school or less: 6%
- TOTAL: 4%
Loss of scenic vistas
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

Independent female
$50K or less
Comm. Dist. 3 Noack (S.Central)
65 or more years
GOP 55+ yrs
Conservative/moderate Independent
Conservative Anglo non-GOP
Independent 18-54 yrs
Moderate/liberal Independent
Female 55+ yrs
Independent
Very conservative GOP
TOTAL

10%
10%
8%
8%
8%
8%
8%
7%
7%
7%
7%
7%
7%
4%
Lack of affordable housing
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

Democratic Primary voter: 26%
Democrat 55+ yrs: 20%
$50K or less: 19%
Democrat female: 18%
Democrat: 15%
High school or less: 14%
Low SES: 12%
Democrat+moderate/liberal Indep: 11%
Female 55+ yrs: 11%
Rural areas/farms: 11%
Minority: 11%
GOP 55+ yrs: 11%
TOTAL: 6%
Air pollution & smog
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

Democrat female: 18%
Democratic Primary voter: 17%
Democrat 55+ yrs: 16%
Democrat: 12%
Minority: 11%
$50K or less: 10%
Democrat+moderate/liberal Indep: 10%
Rural areas/farms: 8%
Female 55+ yrs: 8%
Comm. Dist. 4 Clark (E): 7%
High school or less: 7%
Moderate/liberal Independent: 7%
TOTAL: 4%
Lack of parks in your area
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

- Minority: 15%
- Democratic Primary voter: 11%
- Independent 55+ yrs: 10%
- Democrat female: 10%
- Democrat 55+ yrs: 8%
- $50K or less: 7%
- Comm. Dist. 4 Clark (E): 7%
- Democrat: 6%
- Independent male: 6%
- Southeast: 6%
- Low SES: 6%
- Female 55+ yrs: 6%
- TOTAL: 3%
Access to boating, fishing & swimming opportunities
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “extremely important”

- Minority: 11%
- Democratic Primary voter: 11%
- Democrat female: 10%
- Democrat 55+ yrs: 8%
- $50K or less: 8%
- Democrat: 6%
- Moderate: 6%
- Democrat+moderate/liberal Indep: 5%
- Reg. to vote less than 10 years: 4%
- Moderate/liberal: 4%
- 45-64 years: 4%
- Moderate/liberal Independent: 4%
- TOTAL: 2%
Generally speaking, feel Montgomery County is growing & developing

- Too fast: 57%
- About the right pace: 33%
- Too slowly: 3%
- No opinion: 7%
Generally speaking, feel Montgomery County is growing & developing profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “too fast”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Primary voter</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat male</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent 18-54 yrs</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium, small towns</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate/liberal</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent female</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat+moderate/liberal</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indep</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female 55+ yrs</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reg. to vote 20 or more years</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate/liberal</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat 55+ yrs</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Generally speaking, feel Montgomery County is growing & developing profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “too slowly”

- GOP female: 7%
- Tea Party wing: 7%
- Medium, small towns: 6%
- Comm. Dist. 4 Clark (E): 6%
- Some college: 6%
- Not strongly GOP: 5%
- Independent 55+ yrs: 5%
- Tea Party+Libertarian wing: 5%
- 65 or more years: 5%
- GOP 18-54 yrs: 5%
- No school-aged child in home: 5%
- Female 18-54 yrs: 4%
- TOTAL: 3%
Generally speaking, feel Montgomery County is growing & developing profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “about the right place”
Closer to your own opinion:

a) Can protect land & water & have a strong economy with good jobs at the same time, without having to choose one over the other, OR b) sometimes protections for land & water & a strong economy are in conflict & we must choose one over the other

- No opinion: 3%
- Sometimes land/water & economy in conflict: 32%
- Can protect land & water & have strong economy, good jobs: 65%
Closer to own opinion: Can protect land & water & have a strong economy with good jobs at the same time, without having to choose one over the other, vs. sometimes protections for land & water & a strong economy are in conflict & we must choose one over the other.

Profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “can protect land…”

- Democrat 55+ yrs: 76%
- Moderate: 75%
- $50K or less: 75%
- Conservative Anglo non-GOP: 73%
- Tea Party wing: 73%
- Tea Party+Libertarian wing: 72%
- GOP male: 72%
- Independent 55+ yrs: 72%
- Male 55+ yrs: 72%
- GOP Primary voter: 72%
- Female 55+ yrs: 71%
- Conservative/moderate Independent: 71%
- TOTAL: 65%
Closer to own opinion: Can protect land & water & have a strong economy with good jobs at the same time, without having to choose one over the other, vs. sometimes protections for land & water & a strong economy are in conflict & we must choose one over the other.

Profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “sometimes land/water & economy are in conflict”:

- Democrat 18-54 yrs: 56%
- Less than 45 years: 43%
- Female 18-54 yrs: 42%
- School-aged child in home: 40%
- Minority: 39%
- Democrat male: 37%
- Medium SES: 36%
- Other South: 36%
- Medium, small towns: 35%
- Democrat: 35%
- Over $100K: 35%
- Not strongly partisan: 35%
- TOTAL: 32%
Jobs impact of protections for land, air, water & wildlife

- A positive impact: 33%
- A negative impact: 18%
- Little impact at all: 45%
- No opinion: 4%
Jobs impact of protections for land, air, water & wildlife
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “positive impact”

Democratic Primary voter: 57%
Democrat 55+ yrs: 55%
Democrat male: 54%
Democrat: 46%
Moderate/liberal: 42%
Democrat female: 42%
Democrat+moderate/liberal: 42%
Indep: 42%
Moderate: 40%
Some college: 40%
Rural areas/farms: 40%
Independent male: 39%
Male 55+ yrs: 39%
TOTAL: 33%
Jobs impact of protections for land, air, water & wildlife profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of "negative impact"
Protected open space in Montgomery County

- No opinion: 28%
- Have the right amount: 36%
- Have too little: 33%
- Have too much: 3%
Protected open space in Montgomery County
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “too little”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrat 18-54 yrs</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat male</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat female</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female 18-54 yrs</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat+moderate/liberal</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indep</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Primary voter</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 45 years</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat 55+ yrs</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate/liberal</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High SES</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Protected open space in Montgomery County
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “right amount”

- GOP male: 55%
- Tea Party wing: 49%
- Tea Party+Libertarian wing: 47%
- Male 18-54 yrs: 47%
- Mainline+Evangelical Christian wing: 46%
- Male: 46%
- Very conservative GOP: 46%
- Male 55+ yrs: 45%
- GOP 55+ yrs: 45%
- Conservative GOP: 45%
- GOP Primary voter: 44%
- Independent male: 44%
- TOTAL: 36%
Programs through which Montgomery County would purchase land to protect water quality; natural areas; lakes, rivers or streams; neighborhood parks; & wildlife habitat

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>General mention of program</th>
<th>Required small tax increase mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support</strong></td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Oppose</strong></td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Programs through which Montgomery County would purchase land to protect water quality; natural areas; lakes, rivers or streams; neighborhood parks; & wildlife habitat

Profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “support”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Support Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrat male</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat 55+ yrs</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Primary voter</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat 18-54 yrs</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate/liberal</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat+moderate/liberal</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indep</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat female</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comm. Dist. 3 Noack (S.Central)</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female 18-54 yrs</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-aged child in home</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Programs through which Montgomery County would purchase land to protect water quality; natural areas; lakes, rivers, & streams; neighborhood parks; & wildlife habitat *that required a small increase in taxes*
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “support”

- Democrat male: 97%
- Democrat 18-54 yrs: 96%
- Democrat: 91%
- Democrat 55+ yrs: 88%
- Democrat female: 88%
- Democratic Primary voter: 86%
- Democrat+moderate/liberal: 81%
- Indep: 78%
- Moderate/liberal: 78%
- Moderate: 72%
- Female 18-54 yrs: 71%
- Minority: 70%
- Moderate/liberal: 69%
- Independent: 61%
- TOTAL: 61%
Drop-off in support for Montgomery County land purchases due to small increase in taxes

- Initial support: 79%
- Stayed support: 59%
- Stayed strong support: 30%
- Weakened support: 12%
- Collapsed: 20%
- Initial oppose: 17%
- Initial no opinion: 4%
Drop-off in support for Montgomery County land purchases due to small increase in taxes

Profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “stayed strong support”

- Democrat male: 80%
- Democrat 18-54 yrs: 66%
- Democrat: 57%
- Democrat 55+ yrs: 52%
- Democrat+moderate/liberal Indep: 46%
- Democrat female: 44%
- Moderate/liberal: 44%
- Male 55+ yrs: 37%
- The Woodlands: 37%
- Democratic Primary voter: 37%
- Other South: 37%
- Anglo non-GOP: 36%
- TOTAL: 30%
Drop-off in support for Montgomery County land purchases due to small increase in taxes
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “weakened support”

- Democratic Primary voter: 29%
- Democrat female: 23%
- Democrat 55+ yrs: 23%
- Minority: 21%
- Democrat: 21%
- Independent 18-54 yrs: 19%
- Moderate: 18%
- Southeast: 18%
- Democrat 18-54 yrs: 18%
- Less than 45 years: 17%
- Democrat male: 17%
- Democrat+moderate/liberal Indep: 16%
- TOTAL: 12%
Drop-off in support for Montgomery County land purchases due to small increase in taxes
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “collapsed”

- Independent 55+ yrs: 27%
- Very conservative: 26%
- Very conservative GOP: 26%
- GOP Primary voter: 25%
- Some college: 25%
- High school or less: 25%
- Conservative Anglo non-GOP: 24%
- Mainline, traditional wing: 24%
- Strongly GOP: 24%
- Minority: 24%
- GOP male: 24%
- Low SES: 24%
- TOTAL: 20%
Willingness to pay specified amount per year in taxes to protect water quality, natural areas, lakes, rivers, beaches, neighborhood parks & wildlife habitat in your area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Willing to pay</th>
<th>Very willing to pay</th>
<th>Unwilling to pay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$10 or more</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25 or more</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50 or more</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75 or more</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(note: question series was asked in descending dollar amounts, those who were “very willing” to pay at any dollar amount were not asked subsequent lower dollar amounts, therefore, the “willing to pay” & “very willing” percentages shown are the cumulative total of dollar amounts at that point or higher.)
Willingness to pay specified amount per year in taxes to protect water quality, natural areas, lakes, rivers, beaches, neighborhood parks & wildlife habitat in your area

Profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of "$100"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrat male</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat 18-54 yrs</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat 55+ yrs</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat female</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Primary voter</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat+moderate/liberal</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indep</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate/liberal</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comm. Dist. 3 Noack (S.Central)</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High SES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Willingness to pay specified amount per year in taxes to protect water quality, natural areas, lakes, rivers, beaches, neighborhood parks & wildlife habitat in your area.

Profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “$75+”

- Democrat male: 97%
- Democrat 18-54 yrs: 96%
- Democrat: 94%
- Democrat 55+ yrs: 92%
- Democrat female: 92%
- Democratic Primary voter: 84%
- Democrat+moderate/liberal Indep: 83%
- Moderate/liberal: 78%
- Minority: 74%
- Moderate: 73%
- Comm. Dist. 3 Noack (S.Central): 73%
- High SES: 72%
- TOTAL: 64%
Willingness to pay specified amount per year in taxes to protect water quality, natural areas, lakes, rivers, beaches, neighborhood parks & wildlife habitat in your area

Profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “$50+”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrat male</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat 18-54 yrs</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat 55+ yrs</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat female</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Primary voter</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat+moderate/liberal Indep</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate/liberal</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comm. Dist. 3 Noack (S.Central)</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High SES</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Willingness to pay specified amount per year in taxes to protect water quality, natural areas, lakes, rivers, beaches, neighborhood parks & wildlife habitat in your area

profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “$25+”

- Democrat male: 97%
- Democrat 18-54 yrs: 96%
- Democrat: 94%
- Democrat 55+ yrs: 93%
- Democrat female: 92%
- Democratic Primary voter: 89%
- Democrat+moderate/liberal Indep: 87%
- Moderate/liberal: 85%
- Moderate: 83%
- Comm. Dist. 3 Noack (S.Central): 81%
- Moderate/liberal Independent: 80%
- Minority: 78%
- TOTAL: 71%
Willingness to pay specified amount per year in taxes to protect water quality, natural areas, lakes, rivers, beaches, neighborhood parks & wildlife habitat in your area
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “$10+”

- Democrat male: 97%
- Democrat 18-54 yrs: 96%
- Democrat: 95%
- Democrat 55+ yrs: 95%
- Democrat female: 94%
- Democrat+moderate/liberal Indep: 89%
- Democratic Primary voter: 89%
- Moderate/liberal: 86%
- Moderate: 85%
- Comm. Dist. 3 Noack (S.Central): 83%
- Moderate/liberal Independent: 82%
- Minority: 80%
- TOTAL: 73%
Amount of more taxes very willing to pay to fund programs to protect water quality; natural areas; lakes, rivers, or beaches; etc. by race/ethnicity
Amount of more taxes very willing to pay to fund programs to protect water quality; natural areas; lakes, rivers, or beaches; etc.

by socio-economic status
Amount of more taxes **very willing** to pay to fund programs to protect water quality; natural areas; lakes, rivers, or beaches; etc. 

*by ideology*
Amount of more taxes very willing to pay to fund programs to protect water quality; natural areas; lakes, rivers, or beaches; etc. by party identification.
Montgomery County protecting water quality; natural areas; lakes, rivers, or beaches; neighborhood parks; & wildlife habitat

- Excellent, good job: 45%
- Excellent job: 9%
- Good job: 36%
- Fair, poor job: 39%
- Only a fair job: 28%
- Poor job: 11%
- No opinion: 16%
Montgomery County protecting water quality; natural areas; lakes, rivers, or beaches; neighborhood parks; & wildlife habitat profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “excellent, good job”

- Very conservative GOP: 61%
- Very conservative: 59%
- The Woodlands: 57%
- GOP male: 56%
- Male 55+ yrs: 56%
- Independent 55+ yrs: 55%
- Tea Party+Libertarian wing: 53%
- Strongly GOP: 53%
- GOP Primary voter: 53%
- Mainline, traditional wing: 52%
- GOP 55+ yrs: 52%
- Most likely voter: 52%
- TOTAL: 45%
### Importance of selected reasons for Montgomery County to buy land & protect it from over-development (part one)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Not too + not at all important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protecting drinking water quality as reason for Montgomery County to buy land &amp; protect it from over-development</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting our quality of life as reason for Montgomery County to buy land &amp; protect it from over-development</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting lakes, rivers &amp; streams as reason for Montgomery County to buy land &amp; protect it from over-development</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving the water quality in lakes, streams &amp; rivers as reason for Montgomery County to buy land &amp; protect it from over-development</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting working farms &amp; ranches as reason for Montgomery County to buy land &amp; protect it from over-development</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preserving wildlife habitat as reason for Montgomery County to buy land &amp; protect it from over-development</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting natural areas as reason for Montgomery County to buy land &amp; protect it from over-development</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting water quality of the West Fork of San Jacinto &amp; Lake Creek as reason for Montgomery County to buy land &amp; protect it from over-development</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting historic &amp; cultural sites as reason for Montgomery County to buy land &amp; protect it from over-development</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing opportunities for kids to learn about the environment as reason for Montgomery County to buy land &amp; protect it from over-development</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Importance of selected reasons for Montgomery County to buy land & protect it from over-development *(part two)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Not too + not at all important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creating parks &amp; other places where children can play safely as reason for Montgomery County to buy land &amp; protect it from over-development</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting recreational access to Lake Conroe for fishing, swimming, &amp; boating as reason for Montgomery County to buy land &amp; protect it from over-development</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving public access to parks &amp; natural lands as reason for Montgomery County to buy land &amp; protect it from over-development</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing community trails &amp; greenways as reason for Montgomery County to buy land &amp; protect it from over-development</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing public access for fishing as reason for Montgomery County to buy land &amp; protect it from over-development</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating neighborhood parks as reason for Montgomery County to buy land &amp; protect it from over-development</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting the former Camp Strake property from development as reason for Montgomery County to buy land &amp; protect it from over-development</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting healthier lifestyles by providing safe, attractive places to exercise as reason for Montgomery County to buy land &amp; protect it from over-development</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing sprawl as reason for Montgomery County to buy land &amp; protect it from over-development</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Best 3 package of reasons for buying land & protecting it from over-development

*total sample*

1. 12b: Protecting drinking water quality
2. 12i: Improving water quality in lakes, streams & rivers
3. 12k: Protecting lakes, rivers & streams
4. 12q: Protecting our quality of life
Best 3 package of reasons for buying land & protecting it from over-development

swing voters

12b Protecting drinking water quality
12i Improving water quality in lakes, streams & rivers
12k Protecting lakes, rivers & streams
12q Protecting our quality of life

percent all three very important

percent any three very important

12b/12i/12q
12b/
12k/
12q
Protecting our quality of life as reason for Montgomery County to buy land & protect it from over-development profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “very important”

- Democrat female: 94%
- Democrat 55+ yrs: 87%
- Democrat: 87%
- Democrat 18-54 yrs: 86%
- Female 55+ yrs: 81%
- Democrat+moderate/liberal Indep: 81%
- Female: 81%
- Female 18-54 yrs: 80%
- Moderate: 80%
- GOP female: 80%
- Some college: 79%
- Low SES: 79%
- TOTAL: 68%
Protecting lakes, rivers & streams as reason for Montgomery County to buy land & protect it from over-development

Profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “very important”

- Democrat 18-54 yrs: 94%
- Democrat female: 90%
- Democrat: 87%
- Democrat male: 83%
- Democrat 55+ yrs: 83%
- Minority: 81%
- Democrat+moderate/liberal Indep: 80%
- Female 18-54 yrs: 77%
- Some college: 75%
- GOP female: 75%
- Female: 74%
- Low SES: 74%
- TOTAL: 67%
Improving the water quality in lakes, streams & rivers as reason for Montgomery County to buy land & protect it from over-development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrat 18-54 yrs</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat female</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat male</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Primary voter</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat 55+ yrs</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female 18-54 yrs</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female 55+ yrs</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat+moderate/liberal Indep</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOP female</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low SES</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Effect of statements made by supporters of the proposal to purchase land (part one)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>More inclined to support</th>
<th>Much more</th>
<th>Somewhat more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By protecting natural areas, we can plan better for growth &amp; help limit sprawl, traffic &amp; pollution*</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By protecting natural areas, we can plan better for growth &amp; help limit sprawl, traffic &amp; pollution/Continued growth in our area will lead to more &amp; more development, traffic, &amp; pollution; we must plan carefully for this growth &amp; reduce its negative impacts by preserving clean air, clean water, &amp; open space</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every year, people in our area visit natural areas to hike, fish, camp, hunt, ride horses or simply observe nature; preserving natural areas will ensure that future generations have these opportunities too*</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing is more important than having clean water to drink; by supporting this proposal, we can reduce runoff &amp; toxics in the lakes, rivers &amp; streams that bring us clean drinking water</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We need to protect our rivers, lakes, natural areas &amp; wildlife habitat for future generations; unless we act to protect these areas now, many of our beautiful, natural areas will disappear before our children &amp; grandchildren have a chance to enjoy them</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By protecting open space, natural areas forests &amp; plants, we can protect the quality of the air we breathe; forests provide natural filters that remove dangerous pollutants, making our air healthier</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continued growth in our area will lead to more &amp; more development, traffic, &amp; pollution; we must plan carefully for this growth &amp; reduce its negative impacts by preserving clean air, clean water, &amp; open space*</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Every year, people in our area visit natural areas to hike, fish, camp, hunt, ride horses or simply observe nature; preserving natural areas will ensure that future generations have these opportunities too/In today's digital age it is more important than ever to preserve places where children can safely run, play &amp; experience nature; expanding Montgomery County's system of parks, trails &amp; natural areas, giving more kids access to outdoor activities that will improve their overall physical health &amp; well-being</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Split sample question
## Effect of statements made by supporters of the proposal to purchase land (part two)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>More inclined to support</th>
<th>Much more</th>
<th>Somewhat more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working farms &amp; ranches are a critical part of America's way of life; but as the county grows, more &amp; more farm &amp; ranch land is being developed; proposal will help protect the family farms &amp; ranches that are so important to our county &amp; our state</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We must protect our land, air &amp; water now before it is too late; the longer we wait, the more irreplaceable land, water &amp; wildlife will be destroyed &amp; lost forever*</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our beautiful natural areas are part of God's creation, &amp; we have a moral responsibility to take care of them &amp; protect them</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing more parks, sports fields &amp; recreation areas will mean that our kids have the chance to get involved in something positive like sports, which helps keep them busy &amp; out of trouble after school</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We must protect our land, air &amp; water now before it is too late; the longer we wait, the more [irreplaceable land, water &amp; wildlife will be destroyed &amp; lost forever/expensive it will be to protect land, air, water, &amp; wildlife]</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In today's digital age it is more important than ever to preserve places where children can safely run, play &amp; experience nature; expanding Montgomery County's system of parks, trails &amp; natural areas, giving more kids access to outdoor activities that will improve their overall physical health &amp; well-being*</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We must protect our land, air &amp; water now before it is too late; the longer we wait, the more expensive it will be to protect land, air, water, &amp; wildlife*</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserving land &amp; water will help improve the quality of life in Montgomery County, increasing our county's competitiveness on the national &amp; world stage as we compete for the companies &amp; workers of tomorrow, helping us retain talent &amp; compete against cities like Dallas &amp; Atlanta for companies looking to relocate</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserving land will make Montgomery County healthier because people exercise more regularly when they have access to parks, encouraging physical activity that reduces the risk of a wide range of diseases, including heart disease, diabetes, obesity, &amp; some kinds of cancer</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Split sample question
“Best 3” packages of advocacy statements

**Total sample**

- **13a** Clean drinking water
- **13b** Protect natural areas for future generations
- **13c** Protect family farms & ranches
- **13e** Air quality
- **13j** Plan better, more carefully for growth to reduce negative impacts

Graph showing the percent of the total sample much more inclined to support the packages.
“Best 3” packages of advocacy statements

group voters only

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>percent all three</th>
<th>13a Clean drinking water</th>
<th>13c Protect family farms &amp; ranches</th>
<th>13e Air quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>percent any three</td>
<td>much more inclined to support</td>
<td>13a/13c/13e</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

percent all three much more inclined to support
Protecting drinking water quality as reason for Montgomery County to buy land & protect it from over-development
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “very important”

- Democrat 18-54 yrs: 98%
- Democrat female: 93%
- Democrat: 92%
- Democrat male: 90%
- Democratic Primary voter: 88%
- Democrat+moderate/liberal Indep: 88%
- Democrat 55+ yrs: 87%
- GOP female: 87%
- Low SES: 86%
- Female 55+ yrs: 86%
- Some college: 86%
- Moderate/liberal: 85%
- TOTAL: 77%
Protecting our quality of life as reason for Montgomery County to buy land & protect it from over-development
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “very important”

- Democrat female: 94%
- Democrat 55+ yrs: 87%
- Democrat: 87%
- Democrat 18-54 yrs: 86%
- Female 55+ yrs: 81%
- Democrat+moderate/liberal Indep: 81%
- Female: 81%
- Female 18-54 yrs: 80%
- Moderate: 80%
- GOP female: 80%
- Some college: 79%
- Low SES: 79%
- TOTAL: 68%
Protecting lakes, rivers & streams as reason for Montgomery County to buy land & protect it from over-development profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “very important”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrat 18-54 yrs</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat female</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat male</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat 55+ yrs</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat+moderate/liberal Indep</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female 18-54 yrs</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOP female</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low SES</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Improving the water quality in lakes, streams & rivers as reason for Montgomery County to buy land & protect it from over-development profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “very important”

- Democrat 18-54 yrs: 98%
- Democrat female: 90%
- Democrat: 87%
- Democrat male: 81%
- Democratic Primary voter: 80%
- Democrat 55+ yrs: 80%
- Female 18-54 yrs: 77%
- Female: 77%
- Female 55+ yrs: 76%
- Democrat+moderate/liberal Indep: 75%
- GOP female: 75%
- Low SES: 75%
- TOTAL: 66%
Nothing is more important than having clean water to drink; by supporting this proposal, we can reduce runoff & toxics in the lakes, rivers & streams that bring us clean drinking water.

Profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “much more inclined to support”:

- Democrat 18-54 yrs: 86%
- Democrat male: 79%
- Democrat: 75%
- Democrat female: 72%
- Democratic Primary voter: 68%
- Democrat 55+ yrs: 67%
- Minority: 62%
- Democrat+moderate/liberal Indep: 61%
- GOP female: 59%
- Female 55+ yrs: 58%
- Female: 56%
- Moderate/liberal: 56%
- TOTAL: 49%
By protecting natural areas, we can plan better for growth & help limit sprawl, traffic & pollution profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “much more inclined to support”

- Democrat 18-54 yrs: 77%
- Democrat male: 77%
- $50K or less: 67%
- High school or less: 65%
- Democrat: 62%
- Other South: 60%
- Minority: 58%
- Reg. to vote 10-19 years: 56%
- Female 18-54 yrs: 56%
- Male 18-54 yrs: 55%
- Democratic Primary voter: 54%
- Less than 45 years: 54%
- TOTAL: 48%
Programs through which Montgomery County would purchase land to protect water quality; natural areas; lakes, rivers, & streams; neighborhood parks; & wildlife habitat that required a small increase in taxes (follow-up)
Programs to purchase & to protect water quality; natural areas; lakes, rivers, & streams; etc. & requiring a small increase in taxes variation by 13-year moving average of age
Programs to purchase & to protect water quality; natural areas; lakes, rivers, & streams; etc. & requiring a small increase in taxes

variation by estimated turnout

Support 61%
Oppose 36%
Other 3%
Programs through which Montgomery County would purchase land to protect water quality; natural areas; lakes, rivers, & streams; neighborhood parks; & wildlife habitat that required a small increase in taxes (follow-up) profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “support”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Support Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrat male</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat 18-54 yrs</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Primary voter</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat female</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat 55+ yrs</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat+moderate/liberal Indep</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate/liberal</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comm. Dist. 3 Noack (S.Central)</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75K-$100K</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Open space programs tax increase proposal

- Stayed: 59%
- Support: 42%
- Oppose: 18%
- Moved: 40%
- Toward support: 27%
- Toward oppose: 13%
- Not ascertained: 1%
Open space programs tax increase proposal
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “moved toward support”

- High school or less: 41%
- Democratic Primary voter: 39%
- Independent 55+ yrs: 38%
- Southeast: 36%
- Independent male: 36%
- Strongly GOP: 33%
- Conservative/moderate Independent: 33%
- Somewhat conservative: 32%
- Comm. Dist. 4 Clark (E): 32%
- Conservative Anglo non-GOP: 32%
- Independent: 31%
- South: 31%
- TOTAL: 27%
Open space programs tax increase proposal
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “moved toward oppose”

Northwest 24%
Medium, small towns 22%
Mainline, traditional wing 20%
Strongly GOP 18%
Conservative GOP 17%
GOP 55+ yrs 17%
Very conservative GOP 17%
GOP female 17%
65 or more years 17%
Less than 45 years 16%
Moderate/liberal Independent 16%
Mainline+Evangelical Christian wing 16%
TOTAL 13%
Open space programs tax increase segmentation

- Hard support: 27%
- Hard oppose: 16%
- Swing voter: 56%
- Not ascertained: 1%
Open space programs tax increase segmentation profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of "hard support"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrat male</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat 18-54 yrs</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat 55+ yrs</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat female</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat+moderate/liberal Indep</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate/liberal</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comm. Dist. 3 Noack (S.Central)</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Woodlands</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75K-$100K</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Primary voter</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other South</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Open space programs tax increase segmentation
profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “hard oppose”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservative Anglo non-GOP</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very conservative</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very conservative GOP</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea Party+Libertarian wing</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea Party wing</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOP Primary voter</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent male</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium SES</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male 18-54 yrs</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent 55+ yrs</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Open space programs tax increase segmentation profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “swing voter”

- High school or less: 71%
- Moderate/liberal Independent: 67%
- Tea Party wing: 66%
- Somewhat conservative: 66%
- Mainline, traditional wing: 65%
- Democratic Primary voter: 64%
- Tea Party+Libertarian wing: 64%
- Southeast: 64%
- Independent female: 63%
- Conservative GOP: 62%
- Female 55+ yrs: 62%
- Independent 55+ yrs: 62%
- TOTAL: 56%
Self-reported likelihood of voting in the November 2016 general election for President, Congress, & other offices

- Probably voting: 6%
- Definitely voting: 94%
Self-reported likelihood of voting in the November 2016 general election for President, Congress, & other offices profile of selected categories with the highest percentages of “definitely voting”

Democratic Primary voter: 98%
Very conservative: 98%
Independent female: 97%
Tea Party wing: 97%
Tea Party+Libertarian wing: 97%
Most likely voter: 97%
GOP Primary voter: 97%
Very conservative GOP: 97%
GOP male: 97%
Voted in both '12 & '14 general elections: 97%
Strongly GOP: 97%
Voted in '14 general election: 97%
TOTAL: 94%