

People, plants and animals around the world depend on **healthy lands and waters to survive.**

We use science to solve **complex conservation challenges.**

We build **collaborative partnerships** to implement innovative solutions.

Our goal is to ensure **the health and survival of the natural world that sustains us all.**

Protecting natural places in our backyard and **across the globe** is our common cause.

We work with communities to achieve **lasting, measurable results.**

The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.

## Miles and Miles of Texas

One of the most biologically diverse states in the nation, Texas is rich in natural treasures. Yet, the Lone Star State is losing its undeveloped land faster than any other state in the United States. With a commitment to conserving Texas' native animals, plants and landscapes that began in 1964, The Nature Conservancy now owns more than 30 Texas nature preserves and conservation properties and assists private landowners to conserve their land through more than 100 voluntary land-preservation agreements. With public and private partners, we have protected 750,000 acres in Texas.

## Driven by Science

With its vast amount of land and wide variety of habitats, Texas exemplifies the need for conservation scientists to work at a landscape scale to ensure ecological integrity across borders. Conservation by Design is the Conservancy's strategy for guiding conservation action. It is a systematic, science-based approach to identifying and protecting the areas most critical for the long-term protection of ecosystems and wildlife. Through Conservation by Design, the Conservancy works to achieve lasting and measurable results by seeing the big picture.

## Collaborating with Partners

We work collaboratively with landowners, businesses, institutions, government agencies, communities, individuals and other non-profit organizations. Together, we seek non-confrontational, pragmatic, market-based solutions to conservation challenges.

## Community-based Conservation

We work with communities to protect our shared and irreplaceable natural heritage within the context of values and economic needs. Communities across the state are represented by members of Texas' volunteer Board of Trustees. Education and research opportunities, shared resources and best practices, and compatible agricultural, community and ecotourism development are among the potential benefits of community-based conservation. The Nature Conservancy makes these commitments to Texas communities:

- When we acquire land, we work only with willing sellers and donors.
- Our preserves will function as "living laboratories" for researchers and university students, while providing conservation-education programs and opportunities for schoolchildren, educators and civic groups.
- To support local communities, we pay property taxes or make voluntary payments in lieu of taxes on the lands we own.

## Half a Century of History

The Nature Conservancy emerged in 1951 from a professional association of ecologists seeking a way to turn their knowledge of nature into positive action for conservation. The Conservancy initiated its tradition of conservation through private action with a modest 60-acre land purchase. Today, the Conservancy has close to a million members and the scope of our work is worldwide.

The Conservancy's Texas Program began in the 1960s with a handful of volunteers. Our first purchase helped create the Attwater Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge in Colorado County. In Texas today, we employ a professional staff of more than 100 in 22 locations around the state, engaging in on-the-ground conservation on a landscape scale.

## New Conservation Tools

Initially, our primary conservation strategy was to acquire land and conserve it in nature preserves or facilitate its transfer to a government conservation agency. As the organization grew and as the science of conservation evolved, we recognized that it is neither practical nor desirable for all lands of conservation value to be acquired and set aside. We now work with a variety of partners using the following conservation tools:

**Land-preservation agreements:** A voluntary land-preservation agreement is a legally binding contract between a willing landowner and a qualified private or public organization in which the landowner agrees to sell or donate certain rights – often the right to subdivide or develop – and the organization agrees to hold those rights in trust. These restrictions are binding in perpetuity. The Texas Program maintains such agreements with public and private landowners on more than 100 land-protection projects.

**Conservation buyer projects:** Typically, the Conservancy buys land and sells it to a

“conservation buyer” while maintaining a land-preservation agreement on the land to sustain its ecological value. In Texas, conservation buyers have been instrumental in our ability to conserve rare ecosystems in the Davis Mountains, on the Devils River and in the Blackland Prairie.

**Working landscapes:** Places that have hosted ranching, farming, timber activities, and oil and gas extraction for generations are home to nature as well as people. We believe the well-being of people is intricately linked to the health of their lands and waters. Compatible economic development aims to bolster local economies while reducing human-induced threats to ecosystems. The Conservancy's Texas Program works with ranchers, timber and oil companies, tourism communities, hunters, anglers and many others to find the balance where people and wildlife thrive.

## Inspired by Lands and Waters

The majestic beauty of the Davis Mountains wilderness, the rare and spectacular barrier island systems of Padre and Mustang islands, the pure, life-giving waters of the Hill Country, the stately longleaf pine forests of East Texas, the wildflower-painted North Texas prairies where bison now graze once more, and the extraordinary biological diversity of the Laguna Madre and the Rio Grande Valley – these are the ecological treasures the Conservancy's Texas Program has helped preserve.

## We Conserve Your Money, Too

The Nature Conservancy meets the BBB Wise Giving Alliance's Standards for Charity Accountability. In addition, the Conservancy's strong performance is recognized by Charity Navigator as exceeding or meeting industry standards.

### Learn how you can help!

Visit The Nature Conservancy's Texas Program online at [nature.org/texas](https://www.nature.org/texas) or call our San Antonio State Headquarters at (210) 224-8774. Join us in saving Texas' lands and waters.