
Project Concept Summary

SH 130 Wetland Mitigation Site –
Lockhart, Texas

Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust



Overview

With the construction of State Highway 130, Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT) was required to mitigate for the impact to wetlands along the entire highway corridor due to the construction. The site that was chosen for this mitigation was a 265-acre tract located along Plum Creek, just north of Lockhart. The property is located west of the southbound lanes of Highway 183 and the entire site is located within the 100-year floodplain of Plum Creek.

Management Goals

The mission of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust (GBR Trust) is to preserve the unique natural heritage of the Guadalupe watershed for future generations, by protecting open landscapes, working farms and ranches, and wildlife habitat through conservation easements, education, and outreach that connects people to the water and the land. The GBR Trust is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit land trust organization that was created to conserve land in the Guadalupe River Watershed for its natural, recreational, scenic, historic and productive value. The primary management goals for this project are:

1. Protect, maintain and enhance the wetland, riparian and additional wildlife habitat on the property.
2. Provide appropriate outdoor recreational opportunities while protecting the conservation values of the property.
3. Provide scientific and educational opportunities related to wetlands, wildlife and conservation.

Project Proposal

The GBR Trust is proposing to take title to the 265-acre wetland mitigation site from TXDOT. Upon obtaining title to the property, the GBR Trust will utilize the \$400,000 in management funds from TXDOT to leverage additional grant dollars to be applied directly to conservation and management efforts on the property. The GBR Trust would establish a permanent endowment for the stewardship and management of the property. By working strategically with a variety of partners, this property has the potential for providing high quality habitat, outdoor recreation and educational opportunities for Caldwell County and the surrounding area.

1. Protect, maintain and enhance the wetland, riparian and additional wildlife habitat on the property.

The protection, maintenance and enhancement of the property, including the wetlands and riparian habitat, will be a critical component of the project. The GBR Trust has a history of protecting significant open



space properties throughout the fifteen county area in Texas that the organization covers. To date, the GBR Trust has permanently protected over 10,000 acres for wildlife, agricultural and recreational uses. Interested project partners include Ducks Unlimited and the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority. Both the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service will be contacted regarding partnership on different aspects of the habitat management and enhancement.

2. Provide appropriate outdoor recreational opportunities while protecting the conservation values of the property.

Management activities on the property will also include appropriate and compatible outdoor recreation opportunities. A high-quality compacted gravel road system exists throughout the property providing an ideal setting for hiking, mountain biking and cross country running. Multiple additional trails are present on the property traversing through the elms and cottonwoods along Plum Creek, across the Texas wintergrass prairie and along the wetlands. Altogether, the nearly three miles of trails can provide a substantial recreational opportunity for hiking and bird watching. Limited hunting for numerous species, include ducks, deer and hogs could also be investigated. Potential partners for these activities could include the Texas Master Naturalists, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and local volunteer docents.



3. Provide scientific and educational opportunities related to wetlands, wildlife and conservation.

The proximity to a large population base allows for significant usage of the property by schools and other community groups as an outdoor classroom and additional education programming. Field trips could take place addressing various topics; water, ecology, central Texas wildlife and plants and wetlands. Institutions of higher education in close proximity such as Texas State University, University of Texas and Texas Lutheran University could utilize the property for research projects. The development of appropriate educational materials, including informational and historical kiosks at the property, will be central to connecting visitors to the importance and uniqueness of the site.