



## NEWSLETTER



### A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

GBRT is currently seeking a full-time Executive Director. Please share with any connections you think may be interested in joining a team of motivated conservationists.

**We're  
Hiring**

Apply on our homepage or by emailing a resume and cover letter to [info@gbrtx.org](mailto:info@gbrtx.org)

The position description can be found [here](#).

The search will be open until filled.

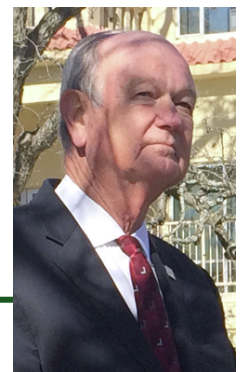
It is with great consideration that I have decided to step away from GBRT in December. I have recently accepted another position in western Kentucky. The decision was difficult, but I think it is ultimately one that will be best for myself and my family. I have greatly enjoyed my four years with GBRT, learned a lot, made many great partners, connections and friends, and am proud of what we were able to accomplish.



During my time here we received accreditation as a land trust meeting the highest national standards for excellence and conservation permanence. We have also gone through a major transition in our organizational structure, prompting our recently completed strategic plan. We have navigated several impactful conservation easement stewardship matters, grown a Supplemental Environmental Program fund for shorebird and waterfowl habitat sevenfold, completed a master plan for our Plum Creek preserve and a vision for a nature center, and built a partnership to support an NRCS Wetland Reserve Enhancement program. In addition, we added more land management projects to our work, receiving grants and beginning restoration and land management projects on both GBRT-owned preserves, including an annual planting event, Re-Leaf, at our Lockhart preserve. But my favorite accomplishment was the creation of a Conservation Easement Assistance Fund. With the help of GBRA, we now have a dedicated grant fund to assist willing landowners with some of the costs of completing a conservation easement. We have already been able to assist the McAlister family with costs they incurred with the donation of a conservation easement on 178 acres in DeWitt County, and we look forward to helping many more Texans dedicated to conservation. CONT. PG. 2

### TRUST BOARD GROWS

The entire GBRT team is proud to welcome our newest board member, William E. West, Jr. He joined our board in September after many years working alongside the Trust as the General Manager of GBRA. He has already made an impact with his contributions in a couple short months. Please help us welcome Bill West as an at-large board member.



## Letter from the Director continued

I want to thank all who have supported me at GBRT and previously at Green Spaces Alliance. It is going to be hard to leave so many strong relationships. The Texas conservation world is vibrant and strong. Whether you are on our email list because of a personal connection to me or because of a connection to GBRT, I strongly urge you to please continue following and supporting GBRT's mission. There are some very exciting projects that will be coming to fruition in the near future, and you'll want to hear what GBRT is accomplishing thanks to the support of our community. We have a strong strategic plan, a dedicated board of directors, and an extremely talented conservation manager in Stephen. I am looking forward to watching GBRT continue to grow and succeed.



## NURTURING NATURE:

### Conservation in Late Autumn

As the year winds down and nature transitions into its quieter phase, we bring you a special feature in our newsletter dedicated to the late autumn season.



**The Subtle Beauty of Late Autumn:** Late autumn brings a unique charm, with trees shedding their leaves, and wildlife adapting to the changing environment. It's a time when the natural world readies itself for winter, presenting both challenges and opportunities for conservation.

**Preserving Wildlife Sanctuaries:** Wildlife, particularly birds and small mammals, seek refuge during the colder months. Our commitment to land conservation ensures that these sanctuaries remain intact, providing a safe haven for creatures adapting to the changing temperatures.

**Stewardship of Fall Foliage:** The beauty of fall foliage is not just a visual delight; it signifies the health of our ecosystems. Our conservation efforts extend to preserving the vibrant colors of autumn, ensuring that these landscapes continue to inspire awe and appreciation.

**Mitigating Seasonal Risks:** Late autumn brings specific risks, including soil erosion and habitat disruption. We're actively implementing measures to mitigate these challenges, protecting our lands against the seasonal elements and ensuring the resilience of our natural spaces.

**Planning for a Regenerative Spring:** Late autumn sets the stage for the regeneration of nature in the coming spring. Our conservation work during this season is integral to creating a foundation for the vibrancy that will unfold in the months ahead.

Thank you for your unwavering support in safeguarding the beauty of late autumn and nurturing the natural wonders along the Guadalupe. Together, let's embrace the changing seasons and foster a resilient environment for all.

~ Stephen Risinger





### FRIENDSHIPS AND LEGACIES

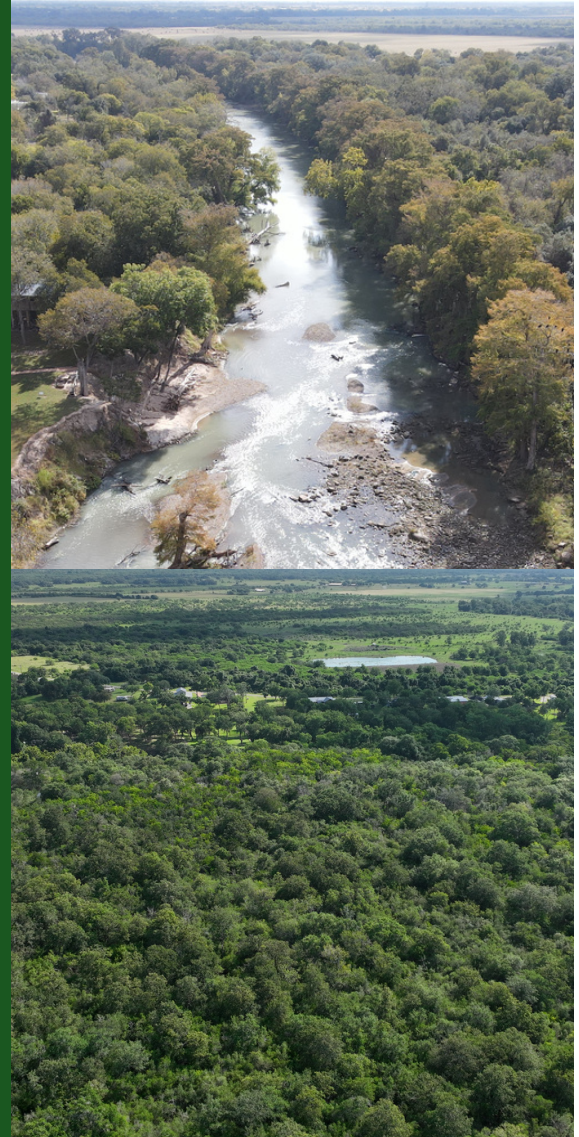
Stephen Risinger

We're thrilled to share two remarkable milestones in our continuous conservation journey, highlighting the power of collaboration and commitment to environmental stewardship.

#### Closing the McAlister Property Conservation Easement: A Collective Triumph

The recent successful closing of the McAlister property conservation easement is a testament to the collaborative spirit driving our conservation efforts. This 178-acre parcel, boasting prime southern post oak savannah habitat and Guadalupe River frontage, adds a unique dimension to our conservation portfolio. Thanks to the dedication of landowners Jen and Cindy and the support of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust (GBRT), this achievement significantly contributes to preserving the natural beauty and ecological integrity of the Guadalupe River watershed as well as honoring their father Wayne McAlister's and their mother, Martha's legacy. Wayne was a retired biology professor at Victoria college who dedicated his life to environmental education. Wayne authored books such as "A Few Paternal Acres" and "Life on Matagorda Island."

GBRT's Landowner Assistance Fund played a pivotal role, thanks to the generous contribution from the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA). This fund, supporting landowners in their conservation endeavors, underscores the importance of community collaboration in our broader conservation initiatives.



#### Twin Oaks Ranch: A New Chapter in Conservation

Simultaneously, GBRT has entered into an executed parcel contract with NRCS ACEP-IRA for the purchase of a conservation easement on Twin Oaks Ranch. This expansive 340-acre property, replete with karst features, stands as a testament to the ecological diversity and historical richness of our region.

Twin Oaks Ranch, a working farm for over 50 years, holds both historical significance and vital ecological value. The commitment of landowner Karen Dietz to sustainable land management aligns perfectly with our mission. Notably, the property has unveiled archaeological discoveries—an exciting revelation that deepens our understanding of the region's rich history.





### FRIENDSHIPS AND LEGACIES

#### The Heartfelt Thanks

As we celebrate these achievements, we extend our deepest thanks to all involved parties—landowners, donors, and our dedicated team members at GBRT. Together, we're making a lasting impact on the Guadalupe River watershed and fostering a legacy of conservation that will endure for years to come.

#### What Lies Ahead

These accomplishments set the stage for future conservation initiatives. Moving forward, GBRT remains committed to fostering partnerships, supporting landowners, and continuing our mission to preserve and protect the natural resources of the Guadalupe River watershed.

Thank you to all who have played a part in these achievements. Together, we're making a difference in the world we share.



### Plum Creek Re-Leaf returns in 2024.

Spring planting events are being planned. Keep an eye out for updates from GBRT as we shoot to plant over 1,000 grass and wildflower plugs native to the Blackland Prairie region of Texas.

Our friends at Reliant Energy have some tips for what you can do to reduce your carbon footprint this winter and help our Texan environment. Did you know? Adding weatherstripping to your exterior doors and windows can save you up to 10% on energy costs – with just a couple hours' of work!

Want to make a bigger impact? Sign up for the Reliant EcoShare (SM) program! In partnership with EarthShare Texas since 2011, you'll be supporting more than 30 environmental organizations in Texas and offsetting your carbon emissions so Texas can stay as beautiful as ever.





## HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT GBRT?

A gracious donation can be made to one of our multiple campaigns either by visiting our website, sending a check to our mailing address, or by clicking [here](#): To donate to a specific purpose, make a note of that with your donation.

Click the links below to learn more about each of our ways to contribute.

**[General Operating](#)**— contribution to our general funds can make a difference in supporting GBRT's mission by helping cover costs that grants and restricted donations can't.

**[Plum Creek Wetlands Preserve](#)**— This restricted account is designated specifically for the maintenance and improvements of the preserve. As we develop the preserve into a nature center, your contribution will help us build the dream.

**[Texas Mid Coast Initiative](#)**— The purpose of this initiative is to work collaboratively with project partners to target and conserve critical coastal habitats in an 8-County range around the San Antonio Bay. Partners include: NRCS, Ducks Unlimited, USFWS, San Antonio Bay Partnership, International Crane Foundation, Texas Audubon, and many others with this regional interest.

### Other ways to support our mission:



**EarthShare**  
TEXAS

Perhaps the coolest way to support natural resources across Texas is to support [EarthShare](#). They raise and distribute unrestricted funds for dozens of conservation organizations in Texas. Visit [earthshare-texas.org](http://earthshare-texas.org) to contribute.



Shopping at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) is a simple and automatic way for you to support GBRT every time you shop. By choosing GBRT as your charity of choice, Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price at no cost to you.

### Look for GBRT on



Facebook

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Instagram

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### DID YOU KNOW?

The Guadalupe River drainage basin is 6,061 square miles in size. That is an area larger than Connecticut.



Crayfish from Plum Creek, Texas



Lobster from Atlantic Ocean, Connecticut