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**A WORD FROM OUR TRUSTEE CHAIRMAN
BILL BLACKWELL**

Thank you to our donors and partners for your dedicated support of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust (GBRT). When thinking about what lies ahead for the GBRT over the next few months, I am both optimistic and realistic.

I am optimistic because GBRT is an organization that continues to do an outstanding job of working to preserve the pristine Guadalupe River Basin. However, I am also realistic and aware of the challenges we face due to this unprecedented pandemic virus known as COVID-19. We are proud Texans and it is our culture to solve problems and overcome obstacles. We will continue to work hard, be smart and strive to stay well as we continue to think of new ways to conduct business.

Our Executive Director, Tyler Sanderson, and Development Director, Lisa Adams, both started their jobs last October. Unbeknownst to any of us, the 'Coronavirus' was right around the corner. Following the executive order and guidelines of Texas Governor Greg Abbott, both staff members have been working remotely since March. The GBRT will continue to monitor the reports on COVID-19. In the best interest of the staff and their families, GBRT will abide by the policies set in place for Texas. As Texas continues to re-open for business, the Trust will also begin the transition back to the office by June 1st.

As with most non-profits, I know we must always keep fundraising as a high priority. The costs of planning and stewardship continue to rise. Now, with COVID-19 affecting the economy, the challenges are even larger. Nevertheless, as we look ahead of 2020, I, and the rest of the Board of Trustees, continue to support the work of the GBRT, as well as Tyler and Lisa's efforts. Their current efforts are focused on a variety of projects that seem promising to grow the Trust. They are also developing an annual plan for strengthening our network of landowners, donors, and partners in order to increase the visibility of the Trust's mission.

I am confident that Texas and the United States will persevere. Life is difficult and challenging in a number of different ways in the time of COVID-19. As always, when times are tough, Americans always seem to come together. I am confident that there will be better days ahead of us. We will shake hands and hug our friends and family in a matter of time. As the saying goes, "This too shall pass." -- Bill Blackwell, Chairman



The Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust is sharing a *public announcement* on our website regarding the land trust accreditation program. We are pleased to announce our application for accreditation. A public comment period is now open. To view the announcement, please visit our website at www.GBRTX.org.



A WORD FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TYLER SANDERSON

As I sit down to compose this article for our Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust (GBRT) summer newsletter, I find it unsettling that, two months ago, I wrote about the concerns of social distancing due to the COVID-19 virus. Unfortunately, it is beyond that. The pandemic has the entire world on lock down. One thing is for sure, we will endure and come out of this stronger, wiser, more thoughtful and efficient as we return to business as usual. The overall response of our communities has been inspiring and uplifting. It is comforting to hear about the stories of people looking out for each other and giving aid to those in need as their families and livelihoods have been derailed by this unprecedented pandemic.

As I was driving to the coast this month to visit some ranches, I found myself deep in thought about many topics. So, I turned off my Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation podcast and drove the rest of the trip in silence with only the wandering mind of a madman to keep me company. As I observed the countryside of the lower basin in Refugio County, I thought about those who make their living off the land in this great state. I considered the struggles many must be enduring, unable to take product to market, or the plummeting price of agricultural commodities. I pondered the store owners in the small towns of the Texas mid-coast and how hard it must be for them to keep their doors open in this age of lockdown. The thought of feeling isolated and separated can be disconcerting for some.

Speaking of isolation, it made me think about my grandparents and how I haven't been able to see them in several months. Their great-granddaughter is growing quickly causing them to miss some special events with her. I planned a trip to visit family back home in Kentucky, West Virginia and Ohio. Unfortunately, these visits are postponed. I know I am blessed seeing that this is one of the biggest obstacles in my personal lockdown.

Eventually, my drive took me through Tivoli, TX. As I crossed the Guadalupe River, my thoughts switched to how diverse this river really is. I love driving the entire extent of GBRT's area of interest ranging from the rocky hills of the Edwards Plateau, through the cities along the IH-35 corridor and small towns throughout our 15 county range, into the fertile Blackland Prairies and Post Oak Savannah, and down to the lower basin with the Gulf Coast Prairies and Marshes. Much of the watershed is rural, made up of hardworking ranches with a wide variety of products. The selection of ranching practices is indicative of the diverse conservation goals GBRT retains. This watershed is the definition of diversity. Diversity in people, in habitats, species and landscapes, diversity in ranching practices and in our work as a land trust. Our broad range brings many potential opportunities for the GBRT to conserve this great watershed.

All of my reflection collectively represents one word, resilience. Texas is a strong state because of its resilient reputation. The ability to recover quickly from difficulties is what makes us human. Creativity and resourcefulness makes us strong. Look at the natural environment around us. The most successful species are what we call generalists. Generalists have the ability to adapt and persevere. If one element of their livelihood disappears, they find another element to replace it. This is what we as a population are doing right now. The successful businesses and endeavors are not specialists, focusing on one niche. They are generalists able to overcome and adapt.

The world is overcoming and adapting to the COVID-19 roadblock. We are standing united, supporting one another, and continuing to progress. Together and through all the diversity of people, places and actions, we are resilient.

— Tyler Sanderson, Executive Director



Thank you to our friend and photographer, Carlos Fiol, for taking these pictures at our Plum Creek Wetland Preserve (PCWP). The purpose and mission of the Plum Creek Wetlands Preserve is to conserve water quality with responsible management of wetlands, to protect wildlife habitat and to promote an appreciation of the natural world through meaningful educational, recreational, and research opportunities. To learn more about PCWP or to make a donation, please call 830-560-3981 or visit www.GBRTX.org.



The Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust has graciously accepted a donation from EarthShare for \$3,637. Each year, tens of thousands of environmental supporters give through EarthShare, a national nonprofit that connects the most influential environmental organizations with employers, people, and communities to protect our planet. With a network of more than 500 nonprofit partners, EarthShare delivers strategic programs that give people a voice in how they take action — from impacting air quality, clean water, and climate change to preserving the land and wildlife in their own backyard. For more information, visit www.EarthShare.org. Special thanks to H-E-B for making these donations possible by partnering with EarthShare. H-E-B supports many EarthShare of Texas organizations with corporate grants or in-kind contributions. Thank you EarthShare and thank you H-E-B!



Due to COVID-19, we have postponed our fundraiser, Operation: Hats Off For Veterans featuring Texas country artist Roger Creager. Please save the new date – April 11, 2021. The Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust is very appreciative to our committed partners, sponsors, and volunteers who have agreed to return in 2021.



-- Lisa Adams, Development Director



Thanks to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), GBRT has been awarded \$12,075 through their Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP).

SEPs are environmentally beneficial projects that a respondent agrees to undertake in settlement of an enforcement action. Dollars directed to TCEQ-approved environmental projects may be used to offset assessed penalties in enforcement actions.

Thanks to the two organizations who chose GBRT to receive these funds. The money has been earmarked to support GBRT's Shorebird and Waterfowl Habitat Conservation and Restoration project and the Guadalupe River Basin Monitoring SEP program.



Pictures courtesy of Carlos Fiol



Please welcome our new GBRT Summer Intern Kinsey Kuehn.

She joins us from Texas State University and will be graduating in August 2020 with a Bachelor's Degree in Applied Sociology.



Welcome Kinsey!

Thank you to our friends
at Texas State University
for your support!



DID YOU KNOW?

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust
has a new website.

Please visit www.GBRTX.org
to check out our new look!

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