

**Community Development Partnership Program Grant Application**  
**Wetlands Development Project at**  
**Lost Pines Nature Trails (LPNT) & Colorado River Refuge (CRR)**

**B.1 Project Narrative**

(a) The Project - This Wetlands Creation Project will install a multi-acre wetlands habitat along the banks of the Colorado River at the Lost Pines Nature Trails (LPNT) site and the adjacent Colorado River Refuge (CRR) to improve water quality of the Colorado River, increase habitat for migratory and other water-loving birds, provide education opportunities for local children and enhance recreation opportunities for all. An abandoned gravel pit that has had extensive human impact over many years will serve as the primary wetlands habitat. This site was “destroyed” by “mudders”. It has been isolated from vehicle traffic and is ready for habitat creation. A large (48”) culvert that drains onto the Colorado River Refuge will supply water to this proposed wetlands restoration by way of a diversion dam and swale. The culvert has long been the source of serious erosion problems for the CRR trails and also discharges large quantities of silt laden and other non-point source runoff directly into the river. Using the runoff in this manner will help “make lemonade from lemons”.

The proposed project has several partners. Participants are Bastrop County Water Control and Improvement District No. 2 (BCWCID#2 - owners of the LPNT) Pines and Prairies Land Trust (PPLT - owners of the CRR), US Fish and Wildlife Service (US F&WS) and Environmental Stewardship (ES). The project will restore degraded wetland and construct new wetland habitat to improve water quality by filtering non-point source runoff. The project will greatly enhance wildlife habitat in the area as well. An additional benefit is the increased public education and outreach that will be available for the two outdoor education projects that operate at the site; a home-school outdoor classroom and a Bastrop County Department of Juvenile Services project. Many people from all over Central Texas, in addition to the local residents that visit the site, will have the chance to experience a completely different ecosystem. ES will work with PPLT, BCWCID#2, and US F&WS to manage the project for the applicants.

(b) How funds will be used - The CDDP grant funds will be used to do the primary construction work needed to provide diversion of a portion of the water flow from the 48” culvert at the CRR site, change the existing CRR topography to create a swale across the CRR to the LPNT site, install culverts to allow flow under the existing LPNT entrance road and excavate residual gravel deposits at the LPNT site to form an ephemeral pond for waterfowl and wildlife. The CDDP funds will also be used as matching funds for the US Fish and Wildlife portion of the project which will further develop the ecological aspects of the project for water quality and wildlife benefits.

(c) Project Benefits - The CRR and LPNT form a 90 acre low impact, handicapped accessible FREE nature destination with river access, hike and bike trails, picnic tables and other amenities for family friendly outdoor recreation and education. Over the past two years, under TPWD and LCRA Grants, about 0.5 miles of ADA accessible hike and bike trails and picnic areas have been developed, along with about 1.5 miles of natural hiking/biking trails; giving the project area almost 4 miles of hike and bike trails along the Colorado River. In addition, a Texas Paddling Trail river access point has been developed as the take out for the six mile TPWD El Camino Real Paddling Trail. Under a separate HUD grant made available by Congressman Doggett, a dry restroom facility is to be constructed in 2010-11 that will have two restrooms, rainwater harvesting with 1000 gallons of storage, and solar security lighting. In addition, another project is underway in cooperation with Bluebonnet Electric Coop to bring electrical power to the entrance of both the LPNT and CRR and install security lighting.

These existing amenities will be complemented by the wetlands and water quality aspects of this project. Migratory birds (already under duress) will have a safe haven to rest and recharge during their long journeys. Students of all ages will have an easily accessible, clearly interpreted “classroom” to learn about wetland habitats. All users will benefit from the improved access to the LPNT. The CRR handicapped trail will gain usability by providing a concrete landing at the bottom of the ramp where mobility impaired visitors can safely assemble before going onto the ADA trails. The landing will have hand rails on portions and be open where there is natural connection to the wooded environment surrounding the area. The site is the trail-head for two granite trails going up and down river. The concrete landing funded by this grant will tie the trail-heads together. The concrete landing will include

box culverts that allow the diverted storm water to pass under the landing – thus allowing public access during wet seasons – while also regulating the amount of flow into the wetlands. A new bridge over the main culvert out-flow stream-bed will provide safe passage along this area. Currently this area is impassable during rainfall events. An interpretive kiosk will be placed at the site to describe the water diversion project, acknowledge LCRA's support, explain the benefits of wetlands and identify wetlands plants and animals. The CRR nature lesson teachers plan to utilize this area for PPLT sponsored nature lessons.

At the LPNT site the rehabilitated and constructed wetlands habitat will serve the community as a bird & wildlife observation area along with the outdoor education programs mentioned earlier. More importantly, the wetlands will provide a stopping point for migratory birds as they move through our area. Bastrop County is situated in the middle of the North American Central Flyway. The filtration aspect of the wetlands will create improved water quality for the river as well as the alluvial aquifer by providing ecological filtering of sediments and other pollutants from the large subdivision uphill of the project area. Since the soil is primarily gravel, most water will percolate and return to the river as base flow. In addition, the wetlands will restore ecological and hydrological functions to the area and create another inviting area for wildlife. The site is also located in Houston Toad habitat according to the Lost Pines Habitat Conservation Plan. With the addition of a new habitat to explore the nature park will continue to be a recreational and aesthetic asset for Bastrop County.

(d) Economic Impact - The Lost Pines Region, which includes the project area, has been working to increase tourism (culture and nature) in the Bastrop area. The 90 acre project site is increasingly becoming a top-tier destination for these nature tourists. The word is out that folks can access the Colorado River easily here and do some high quality, exciting bird watching. Birders from all over Central Texas and farther will come to view a much larger and more diverse bird population. Studies show that bird watching enthusiasts provide a large economic boost to communities they visit. Joggers, bikers, fishermen, picnickers and more come here to enjoy a free nature experience. This site also combines nicely with other recreational venues in the county including the Lost Pines Hyatt Resort, Bastrop State Park and Lake Bastrop. In fact, master plans for the area include connecting the 90 acre site to Bastrop State Park and the City of Bastrop Riverwalk and Fisherman's Parks by way of hike and bike trails through a newly opened section of CRR and the Bastrop Industrial Park. Local spending on the project will have a ripple effect through the local economy as materials are purchased and companies contracted to do the construction work. The economic impact of a cleaner, clearer Colorado River is equally important. Water sport enthusiasts will be more attracted to our section of the Colorado. Endangered mussel habitat will be improved. Water borne pollutants will be mitigated. These ecological services are invaluable. In addition, mobility impaired outdoor enthusiasts across the nation who seek venues to bird watch, fish, and enjoy nature, will add Bastrop County to their vacation plans. These users are always looking for additional places to get into nature. There is much "pent up" demand for this type of site within the handicapped community. The upgrade in handicapped access at the LPNT and CRR envisioned by this grant will just add to it's desirability for handicapped users.

(e) Maintenance - BCWCID#2 has authorized Environmental Stewardship to work with the Tahitian Village Property Owners Association, Bastrop County and the city of Bastrop to develop a long-term management & security plan for the LPNT site to be included in an inter-local agreement. Currently the property is being maintained by volunteers (Master Naturalists, Juvenile Services, Rising Phoenix, and others coordinated by ES, PPLT, and TVPOA. TVPOA has been providing for the trash removal and portable restroom on the LPNT site.

(f) Documentation of approved funding - (as detailed in line-item budget and commitment letters):  
Bastrop County WCID#2 – will provide use of heavy equipment which will be operated by their staff during after-hours. Labor costs of operators will be compensated by project funds.  
Pines and Prairies Land Trust – will provide a combination of in-kind donations including volunteer labor, materials and cash.  
Environmental Stewardship – will provide a combination of cash from their LPNT development fund and in-kind volunteer labor.  
US Fish and Wildlife will be providing matching funding (50/50) for aspects of the project that are associated with enabling and constructing the wetland structures and habitat development.

(g) Enable Completion - CDPP funding (along with US Fish and Wildlife) will complete the capital structures related to the wetlands rehabilitation and enhancement and will enable completion of the vehicle barriers and parking areas started with previous grant funds. Water quality will be immediately improved through reduction of direct storm water pollution into the Colorado River and the filtration of pollutants through the wetland area.

(h) In Kind – See detailed line-item budget and commitment letters.

(i) Taxing entity – BCWCID#2 was created by the Bastrop County commissioners Court on September 23, 1985. In 1997 House Bill 706 granted the district the powers and duties of a road district. Section 7 of HB 706 prohibits the district's board from issuing bonds or authorizing a tax, unless the tax has been approved by a two-thirds majority of the voters in the district who vote in an election held for that purpose. As such the Water District is not a taxing entity but rather assesses fees for providing water, wastewater treatment and roads to the community. While the Water District owns the land located at 375 Riverside Drive where these improvements are proposed and wants to encourage the lawful use of the land for public recreation purposes, the Water District does not have the authority or duties to provide for such improvements and services as envisioned by this project. Neither the Pines & Prairies Land Trust nor Environmental Stewardship is a taxing entity.

## B.2 Project Budget

### Budget of Project Costs

**Sponsor: Pines & Prairies Land Trust and Bastrop County Water Control & Improvement District #2**

**Project: Wetlands Development Project - Colorado River Refuge & Lost Pines Nature Trails**

Expense Category/Description	Requested LCRA	Sponsor & Partners*	Total	Comments on line items to budget
<b>Project Element</b>				
<b>Diversion Dam</b>				
Construct Diversion Dam	2,000.00	500.00	2,500.00	Contractor/US F&WS
Excavate for dam and diversion channels	500.00		500.00	
Rip-rap & Materials for filling gully and shaping channel		500.00	500.00	PPLT donated materials
			0.00	
<b>ADA Landing and box culverts</b>				
Construct concrete landing and box culverts	10,000.00	1,000.00	11,000.00	Contractor/US F&WS
Steel rails on landing	2,000.00		2,000.00	
			0.00	
<b>Re-routed ADA trail</b>				
70' of granite ADA trail from landing to bridge and 30' beyond bridge	1,300.00		1,300.00	S&S Trails
Construct 20' bridge with hand rails & 5' passage		2,000.00	2,000.00	PPLT cash contribution
Materials: treated lumber, roadbase & granite		750.00	750.00	US F&WS
			0.00	
<b>Signage</b>				
Interpretive Kiosk & signs	700.00		700.00	
			0.00	
<b>Culverts &amp; Entrance Road/Parking work to provide hydraulic connectivity</b>				
Install culverts @ LPNT entrance (contract)	3,300.00		3,300.00	Contractor
Install & grade road base for entrance road (Contract)	1,000.00		1,000.00	Contractor
Road base (Delivered)	800.00		800.00	Contractor
			0.00	
<b>Wetlands pond and waterways in old gravel borrow pit area</b>				
Dig/Contour pond & connecting channels (Contract)	3,000.00	4,000.00	7,000.00	Contractor/US F&WS
			0.00	
<b>Revegetation and contouring of diversion area</b>				
ES volunteer hours - Dale Morrison, supervising Juveniles (240 hrs @ \$10/hr)		2,400.00	2,400.00	
Juvenile Services Volunteers (600 hrs @ \$10/hr)		6,000.00	6,000.00	
Materials: soil, seed, plants, etc. for post-construction restoration of area		3,750.00	3,750.00	US F&WS
Perimeter Signs (Habitat restoration w/partner logos)	400.00		400.00	
			0.00	
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$25,000.00</b>	<b>\$20,900.00</b>	<b>\$45,900.00</b>	
<b>Requested LCRA Grant</b>	<b>\$25,000.00</b>			
<b>Secured US Fish &amp; Wildlife Grant</b>		<b>\$10,000.00</b>		
<b>Sponsor &amp; Partners Share (In Kind &amp; Cash)</b>		<b>\$10,900.00</b>		
<b>Total Project Cost</b>			<b>\$45,900.00</b>	
	<b>Percent of Total</b>	<b>54.5%</b>	<b>45.5%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>NOTES:</b>				
	US F&WS fund expenditures outlined in black		US F&WS	
Sponsors are PPLT and BCWCID#2				
Partners are Environmental Stewardship & US Fish and Wildlife Service				
CDPP funds will be used as spend & matching to US Fish and Wildlife funds (secured).				
ES will execute agreement with US F&WS for their reimbursement funding				

**B.3 Project Timeline** – If awarded in November and funds become available in December, contracting of major structure work will begin as soon as possible to take advantage of dry weather needed for excavation and concrete work. Work on both sites will continue concurrently until completed (within one year from award).

### B.4. Board of Directors:

BCWCID#2 Board of Directors:  
 Victor Gonzalez, President  
 John Creamer, Vice President  
 Stanley Wellso, Secretary  
 Christy Kosser, Treasurer  
 Dale Olson, Asst. Secretary

Pines & Prairies Land Trust Board of Directors:  
 Jeremiah Jarvis, President  
 Joan Russell, Vice President  
 Priscilla Jarvis, Secretary/Membership Chair  
 Alan Jaeger, Treasurer  
 Lee Fritsch  
 Kay Rogers  
 L. David Vogel  
 Travis Brown  
 Smitty Covey  
 Jarle Lillemoen

**B.5 Supporting documentation for matching in-kind and cash contributions of \$1000 or more.**

Environmental Stewardship – (include in letter)what’s this?  
 Pines & Prairies Land Trust – (include in letter)what’s this?

**B.6 Pictures of project (resolution is low to enable inclusion in document – high resolution photos available).**





**LPNT wetland development area. Pond site at center, wrapping to the left and then back across to the river outfall on far right.**



**Diversion canal and culvert from CRR to LPNT will cross under the road just this side of the sign on the left side. Pond site is to the right. Foreground will be finished for parking.**

**B.7 Letters of support**

BCWCID#2  
Pines & Prairies Land Trust  
Environmental Stewardship  
Bastrop Economic Development Corporation

**B.8 copy of IRS tax exemption determination letter, if applicable**

Pines & Prairies Land Trust