



## 2009 Envision Central Texas Community Stewardship Awards



### Application Form

#### Instructions for completing this application

- Save this document to your computer. Enter in the information requested in the form fields within the application and save the document. Email the completed application document to **dmiller@envisioncentraltexas.org** by Noon on February 20, 2009.
- In a separate email, send additional background material (photos, articles, brochures) to **dmiller@envisioncentraltexas.org** by Noon on February 20, 2009.
- Within seven days, you will receive an email confirmation from dmiller@envisioncentraltexas.org that your application has been received. **If you do NOT receive this confirmation email, call Diane Miller at Envision Central Texas at (512) 916-6037 to ensure that it was received.**
- The entry deadline is **Noon on February 20, 2009.**
- Questions can be directed to Diane Miller at Envision Central Texas, (512) 916-6037, dmiller@envisioncentraltexas.org.

Central Texas will add more than a million people over the next 20 to 40 years. The challenges and opportunities that accompany this growth must be considered and planned for in ways that will enable us to preserve and enhance our quality of life. It will require us to address critical issues, such as how and where land is developed for housing and jobs, the types of homes we live in, how we travel around the region and how we preserve and protect our environment.

The Envision Central Texas (ECT) Community Stewardship Awards program has been created to recognize and honor the innovative people, projects and processes that are addressing the challenges facing our region in ways that will help ensure our quality of life for generations. The ECT Vision, which was derived from the input of thousands of Central Texas citizens, paints a vivid portrait of what we would like our region to be like in the future.

## Key Elements of the Vision

- **An effective transportation system** that improves mobility throughout the region, increases choices of how we get around – including roads, rail, trails and bikeways – and is coordinated with land use planning.
- **Protection of our environment and natural resources** so we will have the open space, parks and trails that people cherish, preserve our ecologically sensitive land and ensure sustainable clean water and air for future generations.
- **A diverse and thriving economy** with a robust base of businesses throughout the region and quality job opportunities for our citizens.
- **A variety of housing choices** that are affordable for everyone in the region and offer a mix of styles, such as neighborhoods with pedestrian-friendly streets or housing within walking distance of transit and stores.
- **Preservation of our region's unique character** by protecting and enhancing our neighborhoods, towns, rural areas, historic sites and special sense of place.
- **An understanding that social equity and racial harmony are core values** that strengthen us and actions that foster respect, civility, and opportunities for all.
- **A region-wide understanding that our fortunes are tied together** requiring planning, participation and collaboration by stakeholders throughout our region to ensure a successful and livable Central Texas in the future.

The ECT Community Stewardship Awards will recognize those entities that exemplify or promote the elements of the vision in their work and support the overall mission of Envision Central Texas. The awards will be presented at the ECT Community Stewardship Awards Luncheon on May 8, 2009 at the Hyatt Regency Austin. Through this celebration, award recipients will be acknowledged and their work exhibited to others in the region as outstanding examples of ways to make tomorrow's vision a reality today.

## 2009 Envision Central Texas Community Stewardship Award Categories

The winners of five award categories will be selected by a jury made up of recognized experts from around the country and their decisions will be based on how the projects exemplify or reflect some or all of the seven elements of the Envision Central Texas Vision. The Awards Jury reserves the right to determine the number of finalists for each category. The W. Neal Kocurek Award recipient will be selected by a local panel. Submissions are eligible for awards in the following categories:

### 1. New Development

Recognizes developments that are constructed on previously undeveloped sites and successfully exemplify the ECT Vision. Entries must be under construction or completed within the last three years.

### 2. Redevelopment

Recognizes developments that re-use existing structures or sites and successfully exemplify the ECT Vision.

New Development and Redevelopment submittals may include, but are not limited to: large and small-scale projects, single or multiple buildings, residential, mixed use, infill, commercial, transportation

projects, recreational and public developments. Entries must be under construction or completed within the last three years.

### **3. Pioneer**

Recognizes an individual, company, organization or governmental entity that has left familiar territory and taken a different path that reflects the ECT Vision.

### **4. Public Planning and Policy**

Recognizes an organization or governmental entity for implementing a program or policy that facilitates and promotes the ECT Vision. The program, policy or plan must have been adopted by the local government between February 20, 2006 and the submission deadline of February 20, 2009.

Submittals may include, but are not limited to:

- Adopted policies, programs, ordinances, and guidelines (mixed use, open space, natural features protection, public space, historic preservation, design standards, incentives) that can include a public/private initiative;
- Comprehensive, neighborhood, area or strategic plans.

### **5. Raising Public Awareness**

Recognizes an organization (and/or individual) for educating the public or raising awareness of the ECT Vision or its principles.

Submittals may include, but are not limited to:

- A media outlet in the 5-county region for a story or series;
- An organization or local government for a public education campaign.

### **6. W. Neal Kocurek Legacy Award**

Recognizes an individual who models the collaborative leadership style of Neal Kocurek with regard to the ECT Vision.

Individuals who would qualify for the award have demonstrated the capacity to define and inspire support for a visionary initiative that benefits the region, build bridges between disparate stakeholders, inspire individuals to grow beyond their self-imposed limitations and engage with individuals in the community from grassroots to the grasstops to empower their ideas for positive social change in the region.

#### **Submittal Directions:**

- Entry deadline is Noon on February 20, 2009.
- Entries must be submitted as an email attachment using this form to [dmiller@envisioncentraltexas.org](mailto:dmiller@envisioncentraltexas.org).
- Up to four images, in either PowerPoint slides, JPEG, EPS or TIFF formats, may be submitted as background material for this application. Images should be compressed so that they can be emailed. These items should be sent in a separate email from the application form.
- In addition, you may also submit via email electronic copies of up to three articles or brochures related to the project/individual, preferably in a PDF format. These items should be sent in a separate email from the application form.

- Applications are available on the Envision Central Texas web site at [www.envisioncentraltexas.org](http://www.envisioncentraltexas.org).
- Questions can be directed to Diane Miller at Envision Central Texas, (512) 916-6037, [dmiller@envisioncentraltexas.org](mailto:dmiller@envisioncentraltexas.org).

**Eligibility:**

- Submitted projects or activities must exemplify and/or promote one or more of the key elements of the Vision.
- Submitted projects or activities must be located in the five-county central Texas region, defined as Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis and Williamson counties.
- Joint or team applications are encouraged where applicable and all major participants identified will be recognized.
- Competing applications for the same project or activity will not be accepted.
- Entries in the New Development and Redevelopment categories must be under construction or completed in the last three years.
- For entries in the Public Policy and Planning, the program, policy or plan must have been adopted by the local government between February 20, 2006 and the submission deadline of February 20, 2009.

The committee or jury reserves the right to re-categorize application award categories at their discretion. You may be asked by the jury to provide more information.

Award finalists will be notified by e-mail by the third week of April 2009.

**REMEMBER TO SAVE THIS DOCUMENT TO YOUR COMPUTER AND EMAIL THE COMPLETED APPLICATION AS AN ATTACHMENT TO DMILLER@ENVISIONCENTRALTEXAS.ORG (see instructions for completing application at the beginning of this document).**

Date: q1

Project Title or Individual's Name: Environmental Stewardship of Bastrop County

Location (City/County): City of Bastrop, Bastrop County

**Application Contact** (this person provides the application information and coordinates award ceremony attendance with ECT if project is selected).

Applicant Name: Christy Kosser

Company / Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: 149 Mahalo Ct.

City: Bastrop, State: TX Zip: 78602

Phone: 512-303-0379

Email: cjkosser@yahoo.com

For public applications only: Is this contact person authorized by elected officials to submit this application? ☐ Yes ☒ No

**Project or Individual's Information**

Primary contact person: Steve Box

Primary contact person's title: Executive Director

Company/Organization: Environmental Stewardship

Mailing address: P.O. Box 1423

City: Bastrop, State: TX Zip: 78602

Physical address (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

City: Bastrop, State: TX Zip: 78602

Phone: 512-300-6609

Email: Steward@environmental-stewardship.org

Web site: environmental-stewardship.org

What organization, entity or agency does the primary contact person represent?: Environmental Stewardship

**Award Category** (select one)

1. ☐ **New Development**
2. ☐ **Redevelopment**
3. ☐ **Pioneer**
4. ☐ **Public Planning and Policy**
5. ☒ **Raising Public Awareness**
6. ☐ **W. Neal Kocurek Legacy Award** (see special section at end of application)

**Award Recipient(s)** (individual(s) to receive award if selected)

1. Name: Steve Box  
Title: Executive Director  
Company/Organization: Environmenatal Stewardship
2. (optional) Name: Denise Rodgers  
Title: Treasurer  
Company/Organization: Environmental Stewardship

If more than two, list under "Other Information" below.

## Project Description

Provide a brief statement (maximum of 3000 characters, including spaces) that describes the project or person. ***Applicants for the W. Neal Kocurek Legacy Award should skip this section and proceed to the W. Neal Kocurek Legacy Award Application section below.***

Environmental Stewardship (ES) functions to bring focus to environmental opportunities and issues in the lower Colorado River particularly in Bastrop County. Breaking with traditional advocacy models, ES seeks to lead from a visionary perspective by engaging the community to actualize a broader vision for the region, working to implement that vision while protecting natural resources. Originally working with the Austin-Bastrop River Corridor Partnership (a 2007 winner of the ECT award) and Opportunity Bastrop County (a 2008 finalist for the ECT award) and the Texas Paddling Trails initiative of Texas Parks and Wildlife, ES has grown to be recognized as a key advocate for environmental visionary and guardianship work in Central Texas.

Working on four major fronts, education, outreach, public policy, and on-the-ground stewardship, ES seeks to realize its purpose by helping to meet current and future resource needs of the environment and its inhabitants by protecting and enhancing the earth's natural resources; to restore and sustain ecological services using scientific information; and to encourage public stewardship through education and outreach. This initiative is a continuation of the important work begun in the mid-80's by the Clear Clean Colorado River Association who was responsible for the clean-up point-source pollution by the City of Austin and others. With the current higher standard of the Colorado River, ES is continuing that tradition by protecting and enhancing the rural character and natural resources of the region.

In addition to the initiatives described in the "Award Criteria" section, in 2007 ES initiated "NatureFest" an annual event held in a city park along the Colorado River in historic downtown Bastrop. With 7,500 people in attendance in 2008, the mission is "To educate our communities, counties, and state about nature and all of its beauty so they will recognize the importance of protecting and conserving nature for future generations." The "Kids Challenge" aspect of the event helps children and families reconnect with nature through experiential educational activities. Over 20 environmental/nature related non-profits participated in this regional event, along with TPWD, LCRA, City of Bastrop and 25 corporate sponsors.

ES is spearheading an effort to restore a 30-acre site on the Colorado River, providing leadership and collaboration with local and community partners to develop the Lost Pines Nature Trails.

Working through public policy arenas, ES seeks to inform and participate in public planning processes that involve environmental issues, being involved in activities that include Gilleland Creek Total Maximum Daily Load of bacteria (a TCEQ, LCRA project required by EPA) and participation in the Texas Legislative initiative leading to the Environmental Flows legislation in 2007, the LCRA Colorado River Watch Network, a volunteer water quality monitoring program, and as a Director on Envision Central TX.

## Project Completion Date

If applying in the New Development, Redevelopment, or Public Planning and Policy award categories, please indicate the project completion date or policy adoption date below:

n/a

## Award Criteria

Organizations submitting an application must address at least one of the following criteria to be considered for an award; however, projects will be evaluated using all of the following criteria. **Please**

**check all that apply**, and provide a brief statement (no more than 1000 characters including spaces) that describes how this submission embodies the elements of the vision.

☐ **An effective transportation system** that improves mobility throughout the region, increases choices of how we get around – including roads, rail, trails and bikeways – and is coordinated with land use planning.

☒ **Protection of our environment and natural resources** so we will have the open space, parks and trails that people cherish, preserve our ecologically sensitive land and ensure sustainable clean water and air for future generations.

Opportunity Bastrop County. Working with the Opportunity Bastrop County (OBC) initiative in 2006, ES advocated for an environmental vision to be included in the OBC document adopted by the Bastrop County Commissioners Court on December 10, 2007 and the Smithville City Council on May 13, 2008. Chairing the Environment Subcommittee of the Citizens' Advisory Committee, ES has continued the work of implementing the vision for Bastrop County. (See attached link.)

Groundwater - Surface Water Initiative. ES has monitored and participated in water planning activities in the region and is advocating for protection of the sensitive ecological connection between the Colorado River and the Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer that intersect in Bastrop County. This involves a regional focus that includes (among others) the Central Texas counties of Bastrop, Travis, Williamson, Lee, Burleson, Milam, and Fayette. (See attached link)

☒ **A diverse and thriving economy** with a robust base of businesses throughout the region and quality job opportunities for our citizens.

Nature Tourism: Bastrop Paddling Trails. ES initiated the designation of two paddling trails on the Colorado River by TPWD. The 6-mile El Camino Real Trail was launched Nov. 07 and the 14-mile Wilbarger Trail was designated in Sept. 08, both in connection with NatureFest. Over 3,000 visitors paddled the new trails in 2008, with over half traveling from outside the Bastrop/Austin area. Over 20% stayed overnight in Bastrop's hotels, motels, and bed & breakfasts, bringing additional commerce to the region. (See attached photo of ribbon cutting for Bastrop Paddling trails and link).

NatureFest 2007 & 2008. ES coordinated with the City of Bastrop, LCRA, TPWD to host the first two "Celebrate our River" festivals bringing attention to the River and ecological issues & opportunities in the region. Over 20 businesses provided financial support and over 40 additional businesses and individuals provided in-kind support of the event. (See attached NatureFest Poster and link).

☐ **A variety of housing choices** that are affordable for everyone in the region and offer a mix of styles, such as neighborhoods with pedestrian-friendly streets or housing within walking distance of transit and stores.

☒ **Preservation of our region's unique character** by protecting and enhancing our neighborhoods, towns, rural areas, historic sites and special sense of place.

Lost Pines Nature Trails & River Access. ES coordinated with the Bastrop County Water Control District #2 and the local property owners association to launch a project to restore a 30-acre site located on the Colorado River. ES wrote two grants that were funded by LCRA and TPWD to enhance a Paddling Trail access point and develop a nature tourism hike/bike trails site. ES has administered the grants and has managed trail development and other enhancements at the site, including a parking lot, fencing, picnic

areas and handicapped accessible trails. Adjacent to the Pines & Prairies Land Trust - Colorado River Refuge, this area now comprises a 90-acre destination for nature and river enthusiasts. TPWD recently aired a 7 minute segment on PBS/KLRU entitled "Reclaiming a River" featuring this effort. (See attached link and photo of grant presentation by LCRA and Bluebonnet Electric Coop).

☒ **An understanding that social equity and racial harmony are core values** that strengthen us and actions that foster respect, civility, and opportunities for all.

ES is a member of the El Camino Real de los Tejas National Trails Association and promotes the value of our rich cultural heritage that is tied to our natural resources. This involves a recognition that we come from diverse cultural backgrounds and that the natural environment has played a role in shaping Central Texas and the region. On behalf of the City of Bastrop and other local partners, ES wrote and was awarded a National Parks Service Preserve America Grant for \$70,000. The grant was awarded to promote cultural, historic, and nature tourism, all of which are intertwined as a part of the grander vision for the region. Historic Main Street, El Camino Real, the Colorado River and the Lost Pines are the four areas of cross promotion. Partners in this project are the Bastrop County Historical Society and Visitors Center, Bastrop Chamber of Commerce, Bastrop Economic Development Corporation, and the Texas Main Street Program. (See attached link).

☒ **A region-wide understanding that our fortunes are tied together** requiring planning, participation and collaboration by stakeholders throughout our region to ensure a successful and livable Central Texas in the future.

Discover the Lost Pines Region. ES has been working with the City of Bastrop to continue the work begun by the new Lost Pines Hyatt Resort to develop recognition of the local area as the "Lost Pines Region". Through the Preserve America Grant and promotion of NatureFest, ES has drawn attention to the cultural and natural resources of the region and brought attention to the extent that these are socially, ecologically and economically intertwined throughout this geographic region. (See attached link).

Water Resource Planning. ES has been working to bring a regional perspective to the diverse groups of water planners that impact on the future of the Central Texas region. The following planning authorities have a direct impact on the water future of the region yet have very diverse and often conflicting plans for our water resources: Region K and G Regional Water Planning Groups; Groundwater Management Area 12; Lost Pines & Post Oak Savannah GCDs. (See attached link).

**Other Information:** (Limit 2000 characters including spaces) Please include any additional information that you wish to be considered.

Environmental Stewardship has operated as a non-profit entity for three years and only received 501(c)(3) non-profit status less than one year ago. We are proud of what we have accomplished in just three years. In the forms of grants and in-kind support, ES is responsible for raising nearly \$500,000 for the community and region.

ES was recently awarded two Friends of the Environment Point of Light awards by the Bastrop Chamber of Commerce for our work in protecting the natural resources of the region and for launching the Bastrop Paddling Trails.

In February of 2008, ES was granted support from the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program in the form of consultation, planning, and assistance in coordinating with locals groups and governments.

The scope of our community involvement is vast as we interface and collaborate with fellow non-profits, corporations, municipalities, state and federal agencies, and civic organizations.



The non-profits we partner with are: Sierra Club, Austin, National Wildlife Federation, Environmental Defense, River Systems Institute, Audubon Society of Bastrop, Pines & Prairies Land Trust, Tahitian Village Property Owners Association, Boy Scouts, 4H Wildlife Habitat Program, McKinney Roughts Nature Park, Opportunity Bastrop County, Austin-Bastrop River Corridor Partnership, Texas Master Naturalists, Campfire USA, Central Texas Clean Cities, City of Austin AQ, Bastrop Education Foundation, & Kerr Community Center.

Federal, state, and other municipal agency partners are: Bastrop County Water District, Aqua Water Supply Corporation, City of Bastrop, Bastrop Economic Development Corporation, LCRA, Blue Bonnet Electric Coop, Bastrop Independent School District, Texas Department of Agriculture—Texas Yes!, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, & TPWD.

Among the businesses we partner with are: ATT, Home Depot, REI, First National Bank, Frontier Bank, Gore-Tex, Hyatt Lost Pines, and State Farm Insurance.

### **W. Neal Kocurek Legacy Award Application**

W. Neal Kocurek, the founding chairman of Envision Central Texas, respected and admired acts of civic leadership in all arenas of community and civic life. Neal's career as a corporate leader, civic entrepreneur, colleague, mentor, and friend inspired people to seek out and work for the benefit of their neighborhoods, their communities, and the Central Texas region. He believed that each person can and should try to make a difference. In particular, he loved Central Texas: the place, its people, and the community.

Envision Central Texas has created the W. Neal Kocurek Legacy Award to honor Dr. Kocurek and recognize and celebrate the qualities of civic leadership that he admired most. The W. Neal Kocurek Legacy Award seeks to make Central Texans aware of the thoughtful, selfless, and visionary acts of their citizenry and to encourage the community to do those things that will make a difference in the long term quality of life of our region rather than those things that are expedient.

The award will be presented as appropriate to elected or appointed officials, business leaders, community leaders, or Central Texas citizens whose actions best demonstrate the qualities exemplified by the life of Neal Kocurek.

### **Qualifications for the W. Neal Kocurek Legacy Award**

Civic entrepreneurship has many manifestations. As revealed in the life of Dr. Kocurek, this form of leadership refers to individuals who put aside immediate personal or corporate gain to pursue a larger vision for the long-term benefit of the region. Individuals who would qualify for the award would have demonstrated the capacity to:

- Define a visionary initiative that benefits the region and inspire regional support for that initiative.
- Facilitate an initiative with unwavering commitment even in the face of adversity until the effort reaches a successful conclusion.
- Build bridges between disparate stakeholders, which foster collaborative efforts to accomplish an initiative.
- Inspire individuals to grow beyond their self-imposed limitations.
- Engage in grassroots efforts with individuals in the community positioned from grassroots to the grassroots to empower their ideas for positive social change in the region.

### **W. Neal Kocurek Legacy Award Selection Criteria and Eligibility**

- Individuals who reside in the 5-county region of the Austin-Round Rock MSA are eligible for the award.
- Ordinarily, the award will be made to a living person.
- Emphasis will be placed on contemporary acts of visionary leadership.

- Additional attention will be given to individuals who have furthered issues that were among Neal Kocurek's passions, including but not limited to:  
The accomplishment of the principles embodied in the 7 elements of the Envision Central Texas Vision:
  - An environment that is beloved and protected forever.
  - An effective transportation system that "got ahead of the curve."
  - An economy that is dynamic and diverse, with job opportunities throughout the region.
  - A variety of housing choices affordable for everyone in the region.
  - Actions that demonstrate an understanding that social equity and racial harmony are important values that strengthen the region.
  - The protection and enhancement of our neighborhoods, towns, rural areas, historic sites and special sense of place.
  - A region wide understanding and spirit that our fortunes are tied together.
- § Regional efforts to ensure access to primary healthcare and health-related services, superior K – 16 education, or quality recreational facilities, which enable all citizens of Central Texas to participate in the quality of life we enjoy.

### **Description of Nominee**

Provide a brief statement to provide background on the actions or events in which the nominee displayed visionary leadership, as defined within the selection criteria. You may also include news clips and other background materials pertaining to the actions, events, or initiatives described. Please note that supporting materials will not be returned.

Special emphasis should be placed on describing the qualities and capacities of this nominee as it relates to the qualifications described above.

Please provide statement regarding nominee here (limit 3000 characters including spaces).

If possible, please include the names and addresses of persons who can provide further information on the nominee.

Please advise if the nominee will be able to attend the luncheon on May 8, 2009.

☐ Yes ☐ No

### **Selection Process**

The recipient of the W. Neal Kocurek Legacy Award will be selected by a small panel of Central Texas leaders who knew Dr. Kocurek. The award will not necessarily be presented annually, but only when an appropriate candidate is identified.

Thank you for applying!