

# SAVE OUR TEXAS LAND

OUR WATER. OUR WILDLIFE. OUR WORKING FARMS AND RANCHES.



**PLEASE SUPPORT REP. GEREN'S HB 3632 AND SEN. AVERITT'S SB 2049.**

In 2001, the Governor's Task Force on Conservation concluded that **development and fragmentation of large family-owned farms and ranches pose the greatest threats to water resources, wildlife habitats, and the long-term viability of agriculture in Texas.** The task force recommended that Texas initiate a statewide private lands conservation program.

In 2005, in response to those recommendations, **the Texas Legislature established the Texas Farm & Ranch Lands Conservation Program** with the mission of purchasing conservation easements from private landowners. **To date, the program remains unfunded.**

In 2009, we ask our Texas Legislature to **begin providing funds to preserve and protect our state's greatest asset - our Texas land.**

The Texas Farm & Ranch Lands Conservation Program pays property owners for conservation easements that retire rights to develop and subdivide. With a thoughtful and systematic approach, each easement implements one or more vital public interest priorities such as protection of clean water and food sources, preserving wildlife habitats, providing buffers around parks or military installations, and offering coastal buffers to mitigate the effects of hurricanes.

 **FACT**

Every single minute of every day, America loses two acres of farm and ranch land. Texas leads the nation in high-quality acres lost.

 **FACT**

For every \$1 Texans spend on saving our land, the state could get \$3 of federal funding if we implement this program. Real money could flow to your constituents and voters.

 **FACT**

When Texans vote to tax themselves, they overwhelmingly do so to protect their water and their land.

For more information, contact Cassie Gresham, Stakeholder Liaison, @ (512) 894-5426

# SAVE OUR TEXAS LAND

FRAGMENTATION AND SPRAWL THREATEN US ALL.



(Continued from front)

## Texans Saving Texas

Currently Texans, individually as private landowners, and with a patchwork of assistance on city and county levels, are saving our land. But current funding is insufficient, as development pressure grows increasingly greater.

Moreover, by purchasing conservation easements in this cobbled together fashion, without a formal state program, the people of the state of Texas are losing out on readily available federal matching funds.

## Where is Texas?

The following states have successful programs in place, and are reaping the benefits not only for their land and residents, but in federal matching funds for their states:

COLORADO  
OHIO  
MARYLAND  
CALIFORNIA  
DELAWARE

PENNSYLVANIA  
FLORIDA  
VERMONT  
WYOMING  
NEW YORK

Since its inception in 1994, the Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) program has committed approximately \$650 million to help protect and preserve more than 850,000 open space acres for agriculture, wildlife habitats, and state park buffers.

-  CLEAN WATER SOURCES
-  FOOD SOURCES
-  SAFEGUARDS TO OUR PUBLIC PARKS
-  WILDLIFE HABITATS

## CASE STUDY

Right now, there is a spectacular ranch that protects 1.3 miles of a wild and pristine Hill Country river, and provides 2 miles of buffer for one of our state's most beautiful parks. Developers would pay \$12 million to turn it into dozens of waterfront lots. **The landowner wants to preserve the wildlife, the views from the park, and the clean water in the river.** But he is growing older, and is concerned about the future. He is willing to sell a conservation easement for \$6 million. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other agencies could fund up to 75% of the purchase *if* state and local sources can contribute \$2 million. Despite the best efforts of Texas Parks and Wildlife, the money simply isn't there. **If we had this program in place, a vital piece of Texas would be saved and up to \$4 million in federal funds would flow into our state.**

**This is just one example of many.**

## FACT

If Texas doesn't act now, the future of our water, food, wildlife, state parks, and proud heritage is a bleak one.

**The time to save our Texas land is now.**



TEXANS ARE CURRENTLY LOSING OUT ON READILY AVAILABLE FEDERAL MATCHING FUNDS.