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## Public Trails on Dahlstrom Ranch

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### **\$100,000 grant awarded for public trails on Dahlstrom Ranch!**

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) recently awarded Hays County a \$100,000 Texas Recreational Trails Fund grant for public access trails on the 384-acre Howe pasture at Dahlstrom Ranch. The planned trail improvements will provide more than three miles of hiking, jogging, and walking trails on the scenic ranch. In addition, plans are underway to provide educational and interpretive signs along the trail to teach visitors about the natural and cultural history of the ranch and the surrounding Texas Hill Country.

The 2,252-acre Dahlstrom Ranch is permanently protected by a conservation easement with Hill Country Conservancy. Part of this historic agreement was that 384 acres of the family's ranch (an area called the Howe pasture) would be provided for public education and nature activities. Hays County, which will manage this area, is currently negotiating a public access lease with the Dahlstroms. Plans for the trails and public access to the ranch were drafted by the Dahlstrom Ranch Public Access Steering Committee, with public input from Hays County citizens and technical assistance provided by the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program. Additional input and guidance was provided by the Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer District, Buda Parks and Recreation, Kyle Parks and Recreation Department, Hays County Open Space Advisory Board, the City of Austin, Hill Country Conservancy and the Dahlstrom family.

The awarding of this TPWD grant adds to the already diverse partnership that helped to make the Dahlstrom Ranch conservation easement a reality. Hays County, the City of Austin, and Hill Country Conservancy (with funding from the Natural Resources Conservation Service) partnered to purchase the conservation easement on the 2,252-acre Dahlstrom Ranch, thereby protecting the property's karst features, which directly convey abundant clean water to the Edwards Aquifer. The easement will also preserve the historic and natural character of the ranch for future generations.

Learn more from the Hill Country Conservancy at [www.hillcountryconservancy.org](http://www.hillcountryconservancy.org)