



April 20, 2023

Life's better outside.®

Dear Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Volunteers:

For many of our visitors, their initial contact at our state parks, state natural areas and outreach events is with you, our Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) volunteers. TPWD volunteers share their wisdom and passion with first-time visitors and outdoor enthusiasts teaching them about conservation, stewardship, and outdoor recreation. Thank you for supporting our mission!

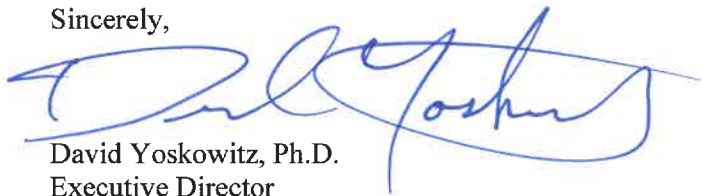
In 2022, Hunter education celebrated 50 years and recognized their 1.5 millionth certified student! Currently, 2,800 active volunteers endeavor to reduce the number of hunting and firearm accidents, increase compliance to hunting regulations, and improve the image of hunters and hunting. TPWD in partnership with Joint Base San Antonio, is participating in the Department of Defense's Skillbridge program, which allows active-duty service members to gain valuable civilian workforce experience during their last 180 days of service. TPWD has hosted 17 Skillbridge Interns of which 12 have served with State Parks and assisted with all aspects of park operations. Our Community Archery and National Archer in the Schools Programs (NASP) volunteers increased their reported hours by 53 percent this year to 6,165 hours. Huge thanks to those folks for their commitment and effort to reporting their service!

Through your volunteer efforts, you are instilling a spirit of conservation in Texans young and old by enhancing stewardship of our great state's natural and cultural resources. You facilitate critical hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation opportunities throughout the state. Volunteers like you are often the ones who teach a child to catch their first fish, shoot their first arrow, pitch their first tent, or take their first hike. These outdoor "firsts" create memories for a lifetime.

All of us at TPWD are deeply grateful for your service. I hope you will take great pride knowing in 2022, you and your fellow volunteers contributed over 1 million hours to conservation and recreation. This is equal to 528 full-time employees and has an estimated value of more than \$32.9 million! I would like to personally express my appreciation to each of you who do so much for all of us who live and visit here.

So again, on behalf of TPWD, thank you for caring about our wild things and wild places. They need your care and time, now more than ever!

Sincerely,



David Yoskowitz, Ph.D.
Executive Director

DY:KS:dh

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