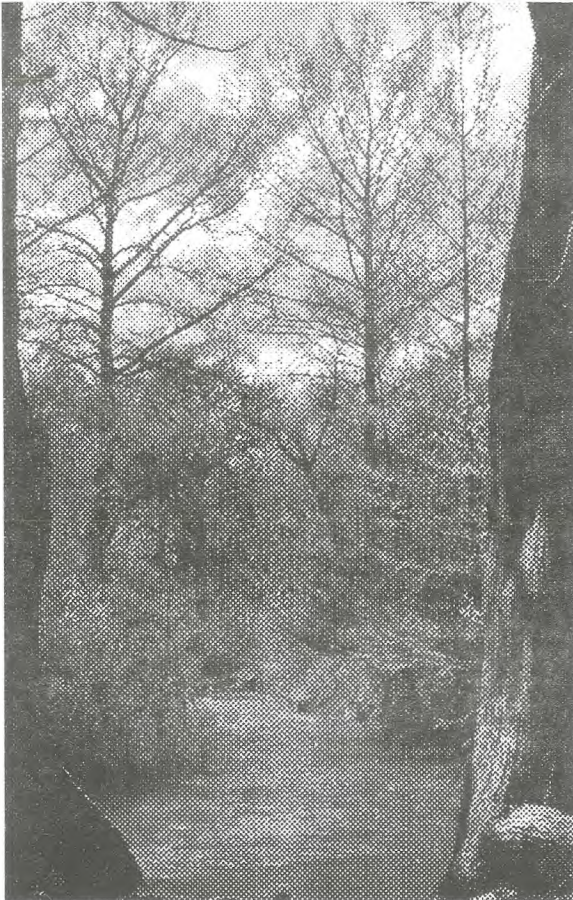


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# 1995 TORP

Open Project Selection Process

An Addendum to the Assessment and Policy Plan



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Consumer Research  
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Austin, Texas  
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STATE OF TEXAS  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

GEORGE W. BUSH  
GOVERNOR

Dear Fellow Texans:

I am pleased to present to you the *1995 Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan*. This plan examines the recreational issues facing our state and recommends actions to address them. The plan was developed through the most extensive public input process in the 30-year history of the plan.

Texas' many outstanding parks and recreational facilities offer opportunities for millions of families to come together every year. Public parks are popular tourist destinations for Texans and people from all over the world, helping to make the tourism industry the third largest sector of the Texas economy. Outdoor recreation will continue to be a vital part of all our lives well into the 21st century.

Today's challenge is how to meet the outdoor recreation needs of a growing and diverse population. Working together, we can continue toward our goal of making Texas a beacon state for natural resource tourism and outdoor recreation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. W. Bush", written in a cursive style.

GEORGE W. BUSH

GWB:kas

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## Open Project Selection Process

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**T**he *Open Project Selection Process* booklet is an addendum to the 1995 Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan—Assessment and Policy Plan (TORP). Its purpose is to meet National Park Service requirements to include the project review procedures as part of the statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan. Copies of the 1995 TORP and other publications referenced in this document may be requested from the Consumer Research Program Area of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, Texas 78744, 512/912-7131. State depository libraries, many local governments, and each of the state's 24 councils of governments will also have copies available for reference.

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### Purpose

The *Open Project Selection Process* (OPSP) describes the procedures used by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) to evaluate projects for the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (L&WCF) Program. This program provides matching funds for the planning, acquisition, and development of outdoor recreation areas and facilities. This booklet does not contain detailed application procedures. Information on the L&WCF program is available from the Consumer Research Program Area, TPWD. The process for evaluating projects has been designed and implemented to ensure that equal opportunity is extended to all eligible

project sponsors to participate in and benefit from the provisions of the federal L&WCF program for meeting outdoor recreation needs.

### Coordination and Public Involvement

The process of establishing the OPSP was coordinated by the Statewide Planning and Research (now Consumer Research) Program Area staff. This process included extensive planning, coordination, and public involvement. Public input is the foundation for both the 1995 TORP and the OPSP.

Beginning with the statewide citizen survey, *Recreation in Texas: The 1993*

*Citizen Survey* (Love, et al. 1993), Texans were asked several questions about needed facilities, improving opportunities, and priorities for spending federal/state moneys. One question asked Texas citizens how they would spend \$100.00 for projects in any or all of the categories with the results shown in table 1. The results are included as part of the scoring criteria in the Project Priority Scoring System.

Respondents ranked public involvement/input in the top ten priorities for what needs to be done to improve outdoor recreation opportunities in Texas, both in their local community and the state (table 5.4, 1995 TORP).

The phase of the public input process to develop the Project Priority Scoring System was to identify the major categories for review and evaluation of grant projects. In the eight regional TORP meetings, participants were asked to identify actions to equitably allocate funds. A total of 147 actions were identified during these meetings.

Registrants to the statewide workshop first voted by mail prior to the workshop. Participants were asked to allocate up to 100 total points for the OPSP actions to reduce the number under consideration.

**Table 1**  
**How Respondents Would Allocate \$100 in Grant Funds**

<u>Category</u>	<u>Average Expenditure</u>
Park/recreation facilities	\$26.71
Natural water-based recreation	\$25.03
Natural areas	\$22.00
Open space	\$17.31
Wetlands	\$ 8.77

Adapted by Eley, Statewide Planning and Research. TPWD 1996 from Love, McGregor, and Crompton 1993.

Note: Total does not equal \$100.00 due to rounding.

The ballot for voting at the Statewide Workshop included 17 action categories and 48 actions.

Using the same process for prioritizing and presenting the issues in the 1995 TORP, only the top 70 percent of the major action categories from the final ballot are considered in the development of the Project Priority Scoring System (table 2). The Parks and Wildlife Commission has designated available funds for use in the state park system.

The prioritized categories and actions are included in tables 3 and 4, respectively, only to document the public input process. If at some future date funds are made available for local projects, then the actions will be integrated into the Project Priority Scoring System.

The *OPSP* was submitted for review through the official Texas Review and Comment System (TRACS) concurrently with the *1995 TORP*. All the participants in the development process were mailed a copy of the draft *OPSP* for their review and comment.

Revisions based on public comments were completed and a final draft of the *OPSP* was submitted to the National Park Service for review. The final procedures were approved by the Governor prior to distribution.

Refer to Appendix A in the *1995 TORP* for complete details of the public input process for this TORP cycle.

### **Land and Water Conservation Fund**

In September 1964, the L&WCF Act, P.L. 88-578 (78 Stat. 897), was enacted to assist federal, state, and local governments in acquiring and

developing outdoor recreation lands and facilities.

Under the Act, Congress may currently appropriate up to \$900 million annually. A minimum of 40 percent of each year's appropriation is to be used for federal agency land acquisition and other needs. Any balance is allocated among the states as grants in aid for improving state or local outdoor recreation opportunities. The last apportionment for the state side of the L&WCF program was in 1994. Revenue for the L&WCF is currently appropriated from federal royalties on offshore oil and gas leases, net proceeds from sales of surplus federal real property, and the existing federal tax on motorboat fuels.

The Fund became effective on January 1, 1965. The Act designated the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (BOR), U.S. Department of the Interior, to administer the fund. In 1978 the BOR was renamed the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service (HCRS) in a federal reorganization. The HCRS was abolished in 1981 and the program transferred to the National Park Service.

Each state is apportioned funds based on formulas which consider a state's population and need. The Secretary of the Interior determines needs according to the federal act. Each state then makes

grants from its apportioned share. States may allocate their apportionment to state and/or local government projects. Grants may not exceed 50 percent of the cost of planning, acquisition, and/or development of approved projects.

To be eligible for L&WCF funding, each state must prepare a statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan for approval by the NPS every five years. In Texas, this plan is titled the *Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan—Assessment and Policy Plan*. All eligible projects financed by the L&WCF in Texas must meet the requirements of the L&WCF Program and Act and be in accord with the current TORP.

In April 1965, the 59th Texas Legislature, sitting in regular session, passed Senate Bill 165 enabling the state to participate in the L&WCF Program (enclosed as Art. 6081r, V.A.C.S., now Sections 11.037, 13.002 and 13.301-13.312, Parks and Wildlife Code).

TPWD is designated as the state agency responsible for interfacing with the NPS and administering the Texas L&WCF Program. Provision of the statute can be found in the Parks and

Wildlife Code. TPWD has operated the program since its inception.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission, on August 26, 1993, voted to allocate the state's apportionment of the L&WCF funds for use by the state park system. Since that time, two state park projects and two planning grants have been authorized by NPS.

### Amending Procedures

Amendments to these procedures may be necessary from time to time. TPWD will make such amendments as required in a scheduled public hearing, in accord with the state's administrative procedures and open meetings statutes. Notices of proposed amendments, commission meetings, and agendas are published in the *Texas Register* and Parks and Wildlife Department news releases.

Any individual, group, or organization may appear before the Parks and Wildlife Commission for the purpose of requesting amendments to the procedures. Requests for amendments may also be submitted to the TPWD staff. Information on testifying before the Commission may be obtained by contacting the TPWD executive office.

## **Project Prioritization Procedures**

Results of the public input process identified the priority categories for evaluating grant projects. These results yield information on types of projects that will help meet some of the most urgent needs in the state. These make the development of recommended priorities for grant projects possible, and allow the establishment of criteria, rating factors, and a point scoring system to prioritize projects.

Projects presented to the Parks and Wildlife Commission will be scored with the criteria, rating factors, and points shown in Parts A and B in the Project Priority Scoring System (table 2). The priority rank of a project will depend on its scores in relation to scores of other projects under consideration.

In keeping with current TPWD policy, only state park system projects will be funded through the L&WCF program. Funding of any projects will depend on the availability of program funds.





**Table 2: Continued**

- Project proposes **development versus acquisition.** **0 - 20**

**Point Allocation**

100% Development	20
75% Development	15
50% Development	10
25% Development	5
100% Acquisition	0

$$\% \text{ development} = \frac{\% \text{ of total project cost allocated to development}}{\text{total project cost}}$$

- Project promotes long-term **maintenance and renovation** as identified in the *1995 TORP*, table 1.2. **0 - 20**
  - Award 4 points for each action in table 1.2 of the *Assessment and Policy Plan*, up to a maximum of 20 points, addressed in the project proposal.
- Project conserves **natural resource areas** as identified in the *1995 TORP*, table 1.3. **0 - 10**
  - Award 5 points for each action in table 1.3 of the *Assessment and Policy Plan*, up to a maximum of 10 points, addressed in the project proposal.

## **Table 2: Continued**

- Proposal includes evidence of **cooperative projects**. **0 - 10**

$$\frac{\text{Amount or estimated value of private contributions}}{\text{Total project match amount}} = \% \times 10$$

$$\frac{\text{Amount or estimated value of other gov't/educational contributions}}{\text{Total project match amount}} = \% \times 5$$

Sum of %'s for all contributions cannot exceed 100% of the total project match.

**Available points for Part A** **0 - 100**

### **Part B**

Scores for Part B are based on the Average Expenditures from table 1 in the *OPSP*. Points have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

<b>Criteria and Rating Factor</b>	<b>Score</b>
● Build park and recreation facilities (such as playgrounds, ballfields, etc. - not open space areas).	27
● Increase access to natural water-based recreational opportunities.	25
● Purchase natural areas (those having few man-made recreational opportunities).	22
● Purchase open space (greenbelts, passive recreation areas, buffers to urban development).	17
● Purchase wetland areas (such as bogs, marshes, and swamps).	9

**Available points for Part B** **0 - 100**

**Total Project Priority Scoring System available points** **0-200**

**Table 3**  
**Priority Categories**  
**for Evaluation of L&WCF Grants**

<u>Categories</u>	<u>Score</u>
1. Needs	2130
2. Small versus Large Projects	1720
3. Development versus Acquisition	1635
4. Maintenance and Renovation	1556
5. Natural Resource Areas	955
6. Cooperative Projects	812
7. Planning	640
8. Water-Based Projects	510
9. Not Eligible Under Land and Water Conservation Fund Guidelines	490
10. Preservation of Resources or Facilities	425
11. Donations/In-Kind	370
12. Single versus Multi-Use Facilities	365
13. Texas Recreation and Parks Account versus Land and Water Conservation Fund	270
14. Special Populations	202
15. Administrative Rules	155
16. Tourism	150
17. General Recommendations	70

Source: Eley, Statewide Planning and Research, TPWD 1994.

**Table 4**  
**Priority Actions for the Open Project Selection Process**  
**Based on the Final Ballot Results**

<u><b>Actions</b></u>	<u><b>Score</b></u>
Break grant fund into separate pots for big and little projects: \$300,000-\$500,000 range and smaller cost projects. Rank them on the same criteria, but make it where the \$100,000 projects do not have to compete with the \$1 million projects.	2795
Make the OPSP more friendly towards local needs. Evaluate the specific needs of a community on a case-by-case basis. Award higher scores for specific community needs than for generalized TORP regional priorities.	2375
Allow those applying for state grants to count property as a match, regardless of when the property was acquired.	2300
Rank cooperative projects higher (public/private, gifts, donations, leases, maintenance, and operations).	2260
Change open project selection process to permit small projects and communities to compete only with each other.	2245
Reward multi-party involvement in projects, such as government/government, government/private, especially in grants.	2065
Scoring system should be responsive to community needs.	1963

**Table 4: Continued**

Base local needs on a comprehensive or five year local plan when allocating grants. Provide funds to help small communities develop these plans.	1915
Development projects must ensure preservation of the resource.	1850
Reward project sites with natural resources (vegetation, wildlife, water).	1820
Base scoring on local needs analysis.	1643
Need more renovation grants. Take care of and update what we have.	1642
Reward development of existing property over new acquisition.	1585
Guideline must be developed to determine local needs.	1479
Rank multi-use facilities higher.	1445
Do not penalize cities without significant water bodies in the grant scoring process.	1380
Reward providers that incorporate a variety of funding sources (other federal grants, foundation funding, in-kind services, volunteer labor, etc.).	1305
Allow the opportunity (grants) to acquire land for future development	1280

**Table 4: Continued**

Have two separate groups for financing. For example, have \$400,000 to \$600,000 match and under \$400,000 match. Have these two groups score separately. Have different criteria. Maybe this would help areas with lower financial abilities to compete.	1255
Allow land acquisition to be reserved for future development (for small cities that must phase their projects).	1245
Require local grant recipients to show maintenance commitment.	1210
Give developers incentive to dedicate a portion of their land for public use.	1200
Renovating old facilities should have higher priority than building new.	1113
Performance track record should be weighed in funding additional projects.	1005
Permit state grants for acquisition ahead of development, and ahead of the tax base, that allow for future repayment of the local government match. Program similar to the Trust for Public Lands.	1000
Reward projects that promote tourism.	1000
Project (scores higher if) includes natural features of resources identified in an adopted local plan.	985
Emphasis of grant scoring should shift from quantity to quality.	955

**Table 4: Continued**

Give priority to projects based on giving: donated land, equipment, materials and labor/maintenance.	945
Develop grants for local five year plans. Have approved grant match	925
Reward good maintenance records. Penalize those that don't maintain.	850
Spend all available state funds on outdoor recreation. Do not spend any state funds on indoor recreation.	800
Get rid of "menu" project approach on grants. Allow local governments to get only what they need.	765
Allow scoring consideration for currently unlisted activities (volleyball, disc golf).	710
De-emphasize development added to acquisition projects to score higher.	705
Establish minimum maintenance standards for grants.	703
Spend \$48 out of every \$100 federal and state grant moneys for parks and recreation on natural area, open space and wetland purchases (based on <i>Recreation in Texas: The 1993 Citizen Survey</i> ).	695
Encourage brevity in grant applications.	685



**Table 4: Continued**

Grant writing abilities/staff of larger cities put smaller cities at disadvantage.	615
Change funding schedule to twice a year (January - March and July - November) to meet local budget cycles.	615
Grants of any size need to be available.	600
Reduce priorities on acquisition and new development.	575
Lessen or eliminate water related scoring.	570
“Needed opportunities in proximity to water” -- should this get credit?	450
Grants should be prioritized to finance maintenance and new projects.	405
TRPA/L&WCF should have single scoring system.	400
Projects must serve youth (constituents of the future).	400
More weight for “... improves recreational opportunity for low income, minority ...”.	400

Source: Eley, Statewide Planning and Research, TPWD 1994.