

Million Acre Parks Project

Camping, hiking, watching wildlife — Texas' state parks have it all.

1 TEXAS NEEDS TO ADD
MILLION ACRES
OF STATE PARKLAND BY 2030

TEXAS RANKS
35TH
PER CAPITA PARKLAND

Our parks provide us the opportunity to reconnect with nature; they're home to endangered species, from sea turtles to the golden-cheeked warbler; and they protect important sources of drinking water.

But as the state grows rapidly, our parks system is bursting at the seams, struggling to meet public demand for recreation opportunities and protect the flora and fauna that call these parks home. Meanwhile, development continues to transform the iconic rural character so many of us love about Texas and encroach on beloved parks like McKinney Falls and Pedernales Falls.

The state ranks just 35th in the nation for per capita parkland¹ — and it shows, as our existing parks struggle to keep up

with demand. Texans flocked to our parks during the pandemic, but too often were turned away due to park closures and long lines. To get a campsite, you often have to make reservations months in advance.

The upcoming opening of the 4,800 acre Palo Pinto Mountains State Park, the first new state park in twenty years, will help alleviate some of the strain. But according to a Texas Tech study, **Texas needs to add more than 1 million acres of state parkland by 2030²** in order to ensure that we can preserve our state's special places for future generations to enjoy, and to protect critical wildlife habitat. That's going to require a significant investment from the state.



¹According to data obtained from the National Association of State Park Directors

²Texas Parks and Wildlife for the 21st Century https://tpwd.texas.gov/publications/nonpwdpubs/media/tpwd_21st_century.pdf




THE PARK IS
Sold Out
FOR THE DAY




Texas state parks often reach capacity limits and have to turn visitors away.

Right now is the perfect time to make a visionary investment in our parks.

- Voter approval of Proposition 5 in 2019 means TPWD finally has stable revenue to address a backlog of repair needs and maintain existing park facilities.
- The centennial of the Texas state parks system in 2023 provides a unique opportunity to envision, and prepare for, the next century of our parks.
- The state is doing very well financially, and when the Legislature meets again next year, decision-makers will decide how to spend a **\$25 billion surplus**.
- A recent poll found 68% of Texans (**including 61% of Republicans, 69% of Independents and 75% of Democrats**) support investing \$1 billion to build new state parks and improve existing parks.

\$ **25** BILLION
STATE SURPLUS

68 % OF TEXANS
SUPPORT
\$1 BILLION
INVESTMENT

Environment Texas Research and Policy Center, and the Steering Committee of the Million Acre Parks Project, are making the case to the public for making a historic investment in new parkland in Texas.

Million Acre Parks Steering Committee

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| George Cofer | Ethan Hawke |
| Eric Castillo | Andy Sansom |
| Valerie Castillo | Laura Spanjian |
| Doug Deason | Jarid Manos |
| Ann Hamilton | Douglas Brinkley |



³Analysis: A swelling Texas treasury gives 2022 hopefuls room for big ideas" Texas Tribune, Nov. 22, 2021
<https://www.texastribune.org/2021/11/22/texas-election-budget-surplus/>

⁴ Texas Voter Poll, Texas 2036, September 14, 2021
https://3hr27o3s9nj8m84dw4489i31-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Texas-Voter-Poll-Sept_2021.pdf