

| | |
|--|---|
| Grant Title/Project Name: | Habitat Conservation Planning Assistance Grant |
| Department: | Williamson County Conservation Foundation |
| Requestor: | Gary Boyd |
| Contact Email: | gboyd@wilco.org |
| Contact Phone Number: | 512-943-1921 |
| Start Date: | 1/1/2021 |
| End Date: | 1/1/2023 |
| Please select request category: | Planning assistance |
| Describe the purpose of the grant in detail to include all requirements. | <p>The Williamson County Conservation Foundation (the "Foundation") on behalf of Williamson County (the "County") (collectively) seek a Habitat Conservation Planning Assistance grant to fund scientific research and administrative efforts to add five listed species - (common names shown here) Georgetown salamander, Salado salamander, Jollyville Plateau salamander, Tooth Cave spider, Coffin Cave mold beetle (differentiate as B. cryptotexanus) (collectively, Proposed Species) - as covered species under the existing Williamson County Regional Habitat Conservation Plan (RHCP). The RHCP was developed by the permittees in support of an individual take permit (Permit), which was issued to Permittees by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in October 2008 pursuant to section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The Permit currently authorizes take of five listed species (common names here): Golden-cheeked warbler, Black-capped vireo, Bone Cave harvestman, and the Coffin Cave mold beetle (differentiated here as B. texnus)(collectively Covered Species) issued by the USFWS to the County and the Foundation in 2008, already provides conservation benefits to the Proposed Species, but does not provide incidental take coverage. Adding the Proposed Species to the RHCP and amending the associated incidental take permit would ensure coordinated conservation of the Proposed Species and incidental take coverage for public and private activities throughout the County (and the permit area) for the duration of the permit. The funding would not only be used for scientific research and community education and outreach, but also for the development of specific conservation actions in the RHCP to be implemented by incidental take permittees, including measures futhering the potential for recovery of listed karst invertebrates, as outlined in the Recovery Plan for Endangered Karst Invertebrates in Travis and Williamson Counties, Texas (USFWS, 1994).</p> <p>Specific results and benefits</p> <p>Amending the RHCP would likely involve formulation of multiple approaches to conservation of the Proposed Species, including but not limited to avoidance and minimization (e.g., through proven and defined best management practices); mitigation of potential take of the Proposed Species through implementation of preservation (including habitat preservation), and potentially restoration, and/or enhancement measures; and implementation and compliance monitoring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a strategy for calculating and monitoring the potential amount of incidental take that would be authorized under the Amendment; • Research and identify avoidance and minimization measures specific to the Proposed Species to be included in the Amendment; |

- Develop a strategy for minimizing impacts to and preserving Proposed Species' habitat within the RHCP area, including protecting water quality for the Salamander Species, and for minimizing habitat fragmentation, to be included in the Amendment;
- Develop strategies for mitigating impacts of authorized take of the Proposed Species to be included in the Amendment;
- Develop a program for monitoring and reporting and adaptive management strategies specific to the Proposed Species; and
- Achieve compliance with the requirements for the development of regional habitat conservation plans by governmental entities pursuant to Chapter 83 of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code (Chapter 83), including, but not limited to, the appointment and convention of a Biological Advisory Team and Citizens Advisory Committee, and compliance with open meetings, open records, and public notice and hearing requirements, as described in more detail below.

Amending the RHCP to include the Proposed Species as Covered Species would provide a significant benefit to the Proposed Species, to ecosystem conservation, to USFWS from an administrative perspective, and to the County and its constituents.

The funding will be used for coordination among relevant public agencies and stakeholders, baseline data collection, effects analyses, stakeholder outreach, including any required under Chapter 83, preparation of the draft RHCP amendment, and coordination with USFWS to process the Amendment and the amendment to the Permit. Relying on the expertise of the County, Foundation, and its RHCP team, the approach to amending the RHCP and applying for a Permit amendment specifically will include at least the following tasks:

- Working with USFWS and TPWD, develop a specific scope for development of the Amendment and NEPA documentation;
- Identifying and reviewing existing scientific information about the Proposed Species' distribution, occurrence, ecology, and any ongoing conservation efforts, as well as identifying various conservation strategies to meet the needs of the Proposed Species and the goals of the County and Foundation;
- Develop a process for input and establish a Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) to the extent required pursuant to Texas law that would include representative interests from the community and other stakeholders. The County and Foundation expect this

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p>committee would be comprised of approximately [insert] representatives, including representatives from one or more of the following public or private entities: USFWS, TPWD, Texas Department of Transportation, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, the County, the City of Georgetown, [others? Board of Realtors? Conservation group such as Hill Country Conservancy or The Nature Conservancy? School Districts?];</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a process for scientific input and, to the extent required under Chapter 83, establish a Biological Advisory Team (BAT) that would include experts on the Proposed Species and conservation biology, including one member appointed by TPWD, one member appointed by landowner members of the CAC, and other local technical experts; • Review initial results of the Amendment development process (i.e., goals, objectives, opportunities, and recommendations) and solicit comments from the CAC and BAT, if applicable; • Identify and describe actions within the County a) that are likely to result in incidental take of the Proposed Species and b) that are reasonably certain to occur over the life of the Permit, and develop support for method of assessing take of Proposed Species, including but not limited to developing appropriate surrogates where expressing the number of individual species taken is not practicable; • With assistance from USFWS and the BAT and CAC, as applicable, develop a mitigation program that will minimize and mitigate impacts of the take of Proposed Species to the maximum extent practicable; • Incorporate CAC and BAT comments, if applicable, on the various components of the Amendment, and establish the general framework for the same, including covered area, solidification of list of Proposed Species, goals and objectives, likely conservation strategies, monitoring and reporting, and funding; • In coordination with USFWS, begin the NEPA process; • Introduce the concept of the Amendment and present the framework to the general public with public meetings and notices through local media, and solicit additional comments; • Fine-tune Amendment framework and prepare a first draft of the Amendment, with assistance of the CAC and BAT, as appropriate, for initial review and comment by USFWS; • If requested, prepare preliminary draft of NEPA document for initial USFWS review and comment; • Prepare second draft of Amendment and NEPA documentation addressing USFWS comments, with guidance from the CAC and BAT, if applicable; • Hold second round of public meetings and update public notices to describe the conservation program, answer questions, and gather comments; • Finalize the Amendment and draft NEPA document, complete the application for Permit amendment, and submit the package of materials to USFWS for coordination and processing. • Provide final report to TPWD within 90 days after completion of the last grant segment. |
| Select the type of grant your department is applying for: | Federal |
| What is the amount of the grant? | \$1,000,000.00 |
| Please provide a breakdown of the total cost above. | <p>The total budget is still in development but specific numerical values will be available by March 2.</p> <p>Pursuant to TPWD requirements, a \$5,000.00 TPWD administrative fee will be charged to the federal share. The County and Foundation propose to provide at least a 25% cost share, or \$_____.00 for the cost of completing the RHCP amendment, Permit amendment application, and NEPA documentation, with the federal government providing no more than 75% in grant funds, or \$_____.00 (including TPWD fee)</p> |

| <u>Budget.</u> | | Amount |
|----------------|---|--|
| | - | Prepare and process complete Permit amendment application package, including RHCP amendment, Permit amendment application, and Implementing Agreement, if required. |
| 1. | - | 000,000.00 \$ |
| | - | Prepare and process NEPA document, including any required public scoping or public meetings, review and incorporate public comments, and process through finalization of NEPA process. |
| 2. | - | 000,000.00 \$ |
| | - | Complete section 7 consultation. |
| 3. | - | 00,000.00 \$ |
| | - | TPWD Administrative Fee. |
| 4. | - | 5,000.00 \$ |
| - | - | Total Project Cost |
| - | - | 000,000.00 \$ |
| - | - | Federal Share |
| - | - | 000,000.00 (75%) \$ |
| - | - | Non-federal Share |
| - | - | 000,000.00 [1] (25%) \$ |

[\[1\]](#) NOTE: In previous applications for local governments, we have indicated that a portion cost share will be in the form of work performed by County employees.

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Is there a match requirement? | Yes |
| What is the source of the match? | WCCF equity balance AKA WCCF investment corpus |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Does the grant cover the cost of the request 100%? | Yes |
| If not, how much is left unpaid? | |
| What is the plan to obtain grants/funds for the remaining amount? | |
| List other similar assets in the County and/or region and if they are available for use? | |
| How is this asset request different from any similar assets currently in the County and/or region? | |
| What types of events/purpose would this asset be used for that cannot be accomplished with a current County asset? | |
| How often do these events occur? | |
| Identify the number of personnel required to operate this asset and/or be available for the function where it is to be used? How much time is required of those personnel? What is the cost of the personnel? | |
| Where will the asset be stored? | |
| What is the useful life of the asset? | |
| Will a replacement be requested from general funds when useful life has been exhausted? | |
| Will other agencies be billed for the use of this asset (e.g. vendors paid, employee worked hours and paid, inventory costs etc.)? | |
| Does this asset require insurance coverage? | |
| If yes, what is the estimate of asset insurance coverage? | |
| Will this asset require on-going maintenance? Please describe the maintenance required along with an estimate for these costs. | |
| How will this asset be funded when the grant ends? | |
| What is the impact if the grant is not received? | |
| New Personnel position is: | |
| Where will this position office? | |
| Who will this position report to? | |
| What tasks will this position perform? Include the five primary functions and the percentage of time spent to be spent on each function. | |
| Will this position take over tasks from current County employee? | |
| If yes, please explain the impact to current employee. | |
| How will this position be funded when the grant ends? | |
| Does this position or a similar position currently exist within the department? | |
| If "yes" how many of these similar positions exist | |

| | |
|--|--|
| Describe any alternatives considered to achieve desired outcome in lieu of a position (i.e. equipment, software, technology or change in business practice). | |
| Describe how workload will be accomplished/re-allocated should grant not be approved. | |
| List other similar items in the County and/or region and if they available for use? | This is for an amendment/appendment to the County's existing RHCP. |
| How is this item request different from any similar assets currently in the County and/or region? | Complimentary to the County's existing RHCP. |
| What types of events/purpose would this item be used for that cannot be accomplished with a current County asset? | No current County assets meet this purpose. |
| Identify the number of personnel required to operate this item and/or be available for the function where it is to be used? | Existing Foundation Staff |
| Please explain how this item will create the need for more or less personnel (or mark n/a for no change)? | N/A |
| Where will the item be stored? | N/A |
| What is the useful life of the item? | In general permits issued by USFWS are for multi-decadal terms; the current permit runs through 2038. |
| Will other agencies be billed for the use of this item (e.g. vendors paid, employee worked hours and paid, inventory costs etc.)? | |
| Does this item require insurance coverage? | No |
| Will this item require any form of licensing? | No |
| Will this item require on-going maintenance? Please describe the maintenance required along with an estimate for these costs? | N/A; funding beyond the Amendment/Appendment will be provided under the existing Foundation funding sources. |
| How will this item be funded when the grant ends? | N/A; funding beyond the Amendment/Appendment will be provided under the existing Foundation funding sources. |
| What is the overall budgetary impact? (i.e. revenue generation, expense reduction, etc.) | Buegetary impact is already incorporated into existing agreements between the County and the Foundation. |
| Please identify any additional equipment needed/required (now or in the future) should the grant/asset is awarded. | N/A |
| What is the cost and frequency to maintain/update the additional equipment? | N/A |
| What is the impact of this grant application on other internal/county departments? | Streamline project design and construction - Road Bond Program |
| If yes, what is the estimate of that license fee? | |
| If yes, what is the estimate of insurance coverage? | |
| Will a replacement be requested from general funds when useful life has been exhausted? (OR) | No |
| If yes, how much is the match amount? | 25% |
| ID | 45 |
| Version | 2.0 |
| Attachments | False |

| | |
|-------------|-------------------|
| Created | 2/26/2020 3:47 PM |
| Created By | Gary Boyd |
| Modified | 2/26/2020 4:17 PM |
| Modified By | Gary Boyd |