

Work Authorization for a Public Awareness and Education Program for the Williamson County Regional Habitat Conservation Plan

The Williamson County Regional Habitat Conservation Plan (RHCP) is a regional approach to conservation planning and management of endangered species within Williamson County, while allowing development to move forward in an orderly and efficient manner consistent with the protection of rare species. One of the goals of the RHCP is to increase public awareness of the appropriateness and value of conserving endangered and additional rare species within Williamson County. The RHCP specifies that the plan will develop a public awareness and education program that will include (1) creation of a 4-6 page brochure describing the RHCP; (2) development of PowerPoint presentations on the RHCP for real estate interests and developers, community groups, middle school students, and high school students; and (3) a 10-minute video describing the RHCP. This proposal outlines a project to produce and distribute the first of these required educational products: a 4-6 page brochure and three PowerPoint presentations appropriate for community and real estate groups, middle-school students, and high school students.

This project will be carried out by Ashley Wall, a junior biology major at Southwestern University. Her work will be supervised by Dr. Ben Pierce, Professor of Biology and Dr. Michael Kamen, Professor of Education, both at Southwestern University. Ashley will create four educational products: (1) An interactive PowerPoint presentation and associated materials on endangered species targeted toward middle and elementary school students; (2) an interactive PowerPoint and associated materials on endangered species and conservation targeted toward high school students; (3) a PowerPoint presentation on the Williamson County Regional Habitat Conservation Plan targeted towards real estate interests, developers, and community groups; and (4) a 4-6 page brochure on the Williamson County Regional Habitat Conservation Plan targeted towards real estate interests, developers, and community groups.

The PowerPoint presentations for elementary/middle and high school students will include information about the regional conservation plan and will focus on the endangered and threatened species covered in the plan. An interactive, hands-on component will engage students and encourage participation. A PowerPoint presentation and brochure will be created to inform land owners, developers, and community groups about the RHCP and the work of the Williamson County Conservation Foundation. These products will encourage stakeholder support by focusing on RHCP details and benefits.

Development of the educational products will involve a six-step process:

1. Collect information.
2. Contact and interact with curriculum specialists, teachers, landowners, developers, and other stakeholders.
3. Develop initial drafts of products.
4. Collect feedback on initial draft of products.
5. Develop final versions of products.
6. Disseminate and assess products.

Ashley will begin by collecting information on the endangered species in Williamson County, including their life history traits, habitats, and conservation. She will investigate the Williamson County RHCP and other regional conservation plans to provide further insight into the importance of conservation plans. She will investigate school curricula to align the scope of the information provided in the interactive PowerPoints with current courses and with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). During this time and before developing initial drafts of the products, she will contact and interact with educators in Williamson County school districts (including curriculum development specialists and teachers),

stakeholders with potential interest in the RHCP (including developers and land owners), and programs with which we might work (such as the Williamson County Museum). Collection of information and interaction with educators and stakeholders will take place February – May, 2011.

Based on the information gathered in the initial phase, Ashley will develop initial drafts of the products. This will take place during the summer of 2011. Dr. Michael Kamen, a nationally-recognized expert in environmental education, will serve as a consultant for the development of the interactive PowerPoint presentations and the brochure. We anticipate that an initial draft of each of the products will be finished by mid August 2011. These initial drafts will then be reviewed by members of the Board of the Williamson County Conservation Foundation, educators, developers, and community leaders, who will provide feedback on the effectiveness of the PowerPoints and the brochure and how they can be improved. Review of the products will take place in August and September, 2011. This review will provide suggestions and revisions for effective products. After receiving feedback, Ashley will revise the products and put them into final form. Revision of the products will occur during October, 2011. The final products will be disseminated to schools, developers, community groups, and other stakeholders during November – December 2011. A brief survey will be developed for each product to assess its effectiveness in educating and increasing public awareness about endangered species and the Williamson County RHCP. Results of this survey will be compiled and shared with the Williamson County Conservation Foundation.

Bar Coding Project – During the spring of 2011, Ashley will meet with Williamson County technology personnel and Parks and Recreation Department personnel to begin planning a project that will incorporate smart phone technology and bar code readers to provide interactive information for park users. On the basis of initial discussions and planning, she will begin compiling information in the fall of 2011 about endangered species, common species, habitats, and other information of interest for use in a project. The information will be provided it in a format that can be incorporated into an interactive web site. Ashley will continue work on this project in the spring of 2012. Specific deliverables for this project will depend on the outlines of the project that emerge from planning initiated in the spring of 2011.

Timeline –

February-April 2011: Collect information; contact and meet with educators, stakeholders, and appropriate programs.

May-August 2011: Develop initial draft of products.

September 2011: Review products; bar coding project.

October 2011: Revise products; bar coding project.

November-December 2011: Disseminate and assess projects; bar coding project

January-April 2012: Finish bar coding project

Administration of Project - The project will be administered by Southwestern University. Dr. Ben Pierce, Professor of Biology, will serve as Ashley's supervisor and will provide oversight for the project. Dr. Michael Kamen, Professor of Education, will serve as an environmental education consultant, providing ideas and pedagogical context for the PowerPoints for students, as well as contacts with teachers and curriculum specialists. Ashley will work on the project 5 hours per week during the spring and fall semesters in 2011 and for 80 hours during the summer of 2011.

Proposed Budget

Item	Explanation	Cost
Ashley Wall, wages during spring semester, 2011	Feb-May, 2011, 5 hrs/wk x 15 wks x \$10/hr	\$ 750.00
Ashley Wall, wages during summer, 2011	June-July, 2011, 80 hrs x \$10/hr	\$ 800.00
Fringe benefits on student wages during summer	7.65% of hourly wages	\$ 61.20
Ashley Wall, wages during fall semester, 2011	Sept-Dec, 2011, 5hrs/wk x 17 wks x \$10/hr	\$ 850.00
Ashley Wall, wages during spring semester, 2011	Jan-April, 2012, 5 hrs/wk x 15 wks x \$10/hr	\$ 750.00
Mileage	200 miles x \$0.51/mile	\$ 102.00
Supplies	manipulatives, office supplies, CDs, etc	\$ 500.00
Dr. Michael Kamen, environmental education consultant, wages	Environmental education consultant, Dr. Michael Kamen, \$76/hr x 10 hrs	\$ 760.00
Fringe benefits on faculty wages	23% of hourly wages	\$ 174.80
Dr. Ben Pierce, scientific personnel and project administrator	\$76/hr x 10 hrs	\$ 760.00
Fringe Benefits on faculty wages	23% of hourly wages	\$ 174.80
Total Direct Costs		\$ 5682.80
Southwestern University administrative fee	10% of direct costs	\$ 568.28
Total direct and indirect costs		\$ 6,251.08

This Work Authorization is hereby accepted and acknowledged below.

For Southwestern University:

Williamson County Conservation Foundation:

By: _____
Signature

By: 
Signature

Printed Name

DAN GATTIS
Printed Name

Title

COUNTY JUDGE
Title

Date

2-27-11
Date