



Take Action. Protect Wildlife.



Texas Conservation Alliance

TCA Board Directory

Updated December 2024

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TCA Mission

Texas Conservation Alliance educates Texans and builds alliances to enhance and sustain wildlife habitat and protect our land, air, and water for future generations.

TCA History

For over 50 years Texas Conservation Alliance (TCA) has advocated for wildlife, wildlife habitats, and protection of Texas' waterways. TCA's founder, Ned Fritz, a legend among Texas conservationists, launched TCA January 1, 1971, with the vision, energy, and integrity to ensure decades of success.

TCA has built public support to establish numerous wildlife refuges, state and federal parks, wilderness areas, and other wildlife areas, resulting in more than 250,000 Texas acres under public protection. TCA's efforts prevented damming Texas rivers with five unnecessary reservoirs that together would have permanently flooded 150,000 acres of bottomland habitat including forests and prairie. TCA's forest work ended clearcutting on 200,000 acres of national forests in Texas and led to better management of all our country's national forests. TCA has played key roles in coalitions that stopped a private toll road through the Big Thicket National Preserve, prevented canal dredging through Caddo Lake and up the Trinity River to Dallas, obtained increased funding for Texas state parks, promoted water conservation, and secured higher water quality standards for Texas rivers and creeks. TCA provides program support for our 49 member organizations and trains community groups to address pressing, local environmental issues. TCA has recruited thousands of Texans to active conservation and advocacy, and has served as a pipeline for many advocates into conservation leadership roles including through our robust, TCA Careers In Conservation Internship Program.

TCA has long observed that Texans are much more likely to protect an area they have visited and come to love. TCA conducts education programs and outdoor activities associated with issue projects to connect families to nature and foster a conservation ethic. TCA's Texas Conservation Action Team is a community-driven, hands-on habitat restoration program with three key purposes: 1) restore habitats by planting trees or prairie, removing invasive species, and removing litter pollution 2) educate new communities and young people about how to become involved in conservation and about the big environmental issues facing our state, and 3) promote and cultivate a commitment to Texas environmental conservation into the future.

TCA's programs to protect wildlife habitat and water resources benefit all Texans by safeguarding nature's essential ecosystem services such as water filtration, flood control, carbon sequestration, air purification, and more. By protecting landscapes and advocating for public lands, our work supports experiential education opportunities such as hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, birding, nature study, and other outdoor activities. Time outside has been shown to be essential to physical and mental wellbeing, benefits that every Texan deserves.



Take Action. Protect Wildlife. 
Texas Conservation Alliance

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Dallas

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Vice Chairman
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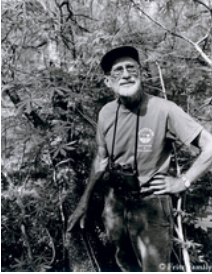
Zeshan Segal
Dallas

John Shepperd
Austin

David Todd
Austin

Bruce Walker
Beaumont

Special Acknowledgement



Ned & Genie Fritz

ee Fritz@hotmail.com



For more than 40 years, TCA founders Ned and Genie Fritz formed an environmental protection partnership leading conservation in Texas. Ned and Genie donated time, knowledge, persistence, financial resources, and extraordinary vision to protect wildlife habitat in Texas and throughout the country.

Ned Fritz (1916 - 2008) is widely acknowledged as Texas' premiere conservationist and was honored nationally for his accomplishments. With Genie's help, Ned founded Texas Conservation Alliance, the Texas Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, the Texas League of Conservation Voters, Texas Land Conservancy, Audubon Dallas, the Texas Consumers Association, a national network to end clearcutting on national forests, and other organizations. His efforts led to creation of five wilderness areas in East Texas, the Big Thicket National Preserve, the Great Trinity Forest, and numerous national wildlife refuges and state and local parks, protecting a total of more than half a million acres of public land.

Ned formed a coalition that stopped the Trinity Barge Canal. His work with land trusts led to protection of more than 100,000 acres in private preserves. Ned's landmark endangered species lawsuit ended clearcutting on 200,000 acres of Texas' national forest land and set management guidelines for Red-cockaded woodpecker habitat throughout the Southeast. His legislative and litigative efforts led to widespread reform of how the country's national forests are managed, improved water quality standards, and provided extensive case law that gives protection to consumers.

Ned served on boards, committees, or as senior advisor to many groups: American Rivers, Friends of the Earth, the Texas Academy of Sciences, and Texas Organization for Endangered Species.

He served as a consumer affairs advisor to the Lyndon B. Johnson Administration, traveling regularly to Washington, D.C. Ned authored three books, the award-winning *Sterile Forest* in 1983, *Clearcutting: A Crime Against Nature* in 1989, which has received national acclaim, and the beautiful *Realms of Beauty: The Wilderness Areas of East Texas*. Ned has been featured in numerous articles, including a January 2000 feature story in *Texas Parks and Wildlife Magazine*.

As the daughter of a diplomat, Genie grew up travelling widely, particularly in Latin America, leading her to complete a degree in economics and government at University of Texas Institute for Latin American Studies. Genie served as President and a long-time Board Member of the Dallas League of Women Voters (LWV) and was Secretary of the Overseas Education Fund for LWV, which focused on teaching women about democracy.

For years, Genie served on the board of the Texas Land Conservancy, the state's largest land trust not affiliated with a national organization. She served as President of the Women's Southwest Federal Credit Union, a Board Member of the Tejas Council of Girl Scouts, where she led two Girl Scout troops, Treasurer and President of the Greater Dallas Housing Opportunity Council, and a Board Member at the First Unitarian Church Dallas. As co-Founder of Texas Conservation Alliance, Genie for years handled the organization's finances. Genie continued to inspire future conservation leaders until her recent passing at the age of 100.





Justin Lannen
Chairman of the Board

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Serving as Texas Conservation Alliance's office manager between college and law school sparked a long-term relationship for Justin Lannen and TCA that has brought him into leadership roles first as Secretary, and now as Vice Chairman of TCA.

Justin's professional career has also been focused on the environment. He is currently an environmental enforcement attorney for a federal government agency, where he specializes in air quality issues.

Prior to joining the federal government, Justin worked as a staff attorney for the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) from 2004-2008. In 2003-2004, Justin practiced civil litigation with a small law firm in Dallas.

Justin received his J.D. from Texas Tech University School of Law in 2003 and his B.A. in History from Boston College in 1996. Prior to attending law school, Justin worked for the Texas General Land Office, then later for TCA when it was known as Texas Committee on Natural Resources (TCO NR).

Justin served as the Chair of the Environmental Law Section of the Dallas Bar Association. He has also served on the Dallas Association of Young Lawyers' Environmental Awareness Committee, where he advocated for improved recycling efforts in government-owned buildings in Dallas.

Justin enjoys camping, hiking, sports, and spending time with his wife Shiela, an oncologist, and their three children.



Richard LeTourneau
Vice Chairman

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A retired business owner from Longview, with 25 years' experience in the metal fabricating industry, TCA Vice Chairman Richard LeTourneau has served on a number of public boards, particularly regarding water issues. He's been a member of the North East Texas Water Planning Group, known as Region D, for much of its 20 years and twice served as Chairman.

Richard served on the Texas Water Conservation Implementation Task Force formed by the Texas Water Development Board to make recommendations to the Legislature, and also on the Texas Wetlands Study Commission for Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Caddo Lake Watershed Protection Initiative.

An ardent conservationist and outdoorsman, Richard volunteers much of his time to protect wildlife habitat. He worked with Texas Conservation Alliance and other groups on projects to help establish the Neches River National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), to prevent loss of old growth bottomland hardwood forest in the Old Sabine Bottoms Wildlife Management Area and the Little Sandy NWR north of Tyler, and to establish the Caddo Lake NWR. These projects protect tens of thousands of acres of prime forest and river habitat.

A graduate of The University of Texas at Tyler, Richard's interests include fishing, hunting, camping, walking, paddling, exploring old growth hardwood bottomlands, and studying and enjoying native ecosystems.



Peggy Anderson Carr
Secretary

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While growing up in Memphis, TN, Peggy spent five summers at Camp Miramichée in Hardy, Arkansas—loving the outdoors. Her family spent many weekends at area lakes, fishing, and boating. After graduation from Mary Baldwin College in Virginia, she moved to Dallas in 1967 and four years later, married a Dallas native Web Carr (now deceased) “who taught many to fish and hunt as well as the responsibility that we all have to take care of the land we are able to enjoy. He had an intense love of nature, especially for birds and spent many hours watching and identifying birds.” Web shared with Peggy his love of fishing in east Texas, hunting in Texas, and fly fishing in Colorado.

Peggy taught teenagers with special needs/mental challenges for 10 years before heading into the volunteer/non-profit area. She has spent nearly 50 years in all areas of Saint Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church, holding leadership roles there and in many other organizations including Junior League of Dallas, Lone Star Council of Campfire, Trinity River Audubon Center, Dallas Garden Club, Friends of WRR, The Hockaday School, Mary Baldwin College, and College of Charleston. This past fall, she participated in Lights Out Dallas (when Ben Jones calls at 9 PM and asks, “Do you want to meet me downtown at 6:15 AM tomorrow and look for dead birds?” what can you say but YES!) She has shared her love of backyard birds with her 3 ½ year old grandson Weatherby. He loves to help fill up the bird feeder and watch for cardinals, woodpeckers and jays.

Peggy loves to read the newspaper (the real thing) every day, needlepoint, hike, read, write letters and was a Tomato Judge for the Dallas Morning News one summer, has watched all 99 Perry Mason shows and tested all 85 recipes for Paula Lambert’s Cheese Glorious Cheese cookbook.



Hon. Jesse Oliver

Treasurer

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Jesse Oliver comes to Texas Conservation Alliance with an impressive professional resume and an exceptional record of community service. He recently retired as the Deputy Executive Director for Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART). Jesse is a former State Legislator, State Judge, Executive Assistant Texas Attorney General, and General Counsel for the Texas Department of Agriculture. An avid supporter of DART from its beginnings, he served as Chairman of its Board for ten years, during which time he was recognized as Transit Board Member of the Year by the American Public Transportation Association.

As an attorney in private law practice, Jesse represented individuals, organizations, major corporations and federal, state, and local government agencies.

He has received many honors and awards from institutions and organizations. They include from his former academic institutions, The University of Texas School of Law at Austin, he was named a distinguished alumnus of both Dallas Baptist University and The University of Texas at Arlington which also inducted him into its Walk of Fame. He has been honored with too many awards by national, state, and local organizations to name here, including being named in lists of “Ten Best Texas Legislators” by the State Bar of Texas Family Law Section, the Texas Observer, and Texas Monthly.

Jesse’s service on a host of nonprofit and government-related boards includes currently chairing the board of Homeward Bound Inc., a long-time seat on the board of the Pegasus School, and serving as Treasurer of TCA. He currently serves as Chair of the City of Dallas 2021 Redistricting Commission.



Susan Schmidt
Communications

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For the past eleven years, Susan Schmidt's primary focus has been her Regenerative Sciences Research (RSR) anti-aging service, specific to all forms of cellular regeneration, stem cell therapy and precision testing. She manages a private membership group of individuals seeking anti-aging information. Susan has researched and tested the effects of lifestyle choices through telomeres, whole body regeneration, and intracellular micronutrients. Susan found her interest in science at Stephens College with her first anatomy and physiology class. Today, she sits on the Board of Trustees at Stephens and encourages young women toward STEM education.

With education as a theme in her family growing up, Susan opened a nonprofit in 1994 for children who loved to write, were born storytellers, and wanted to be published. Children Writing for Children has published 17 books all written and illustrated by children. One of CWC's authors became a noted architect and another a Rhodes Scholar.



Victoria L. Calder, Ph.D.

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Victoria Calder, a sixth-generation Texan, developed a life-long love of the outdoors while growing up in Fort Worth exploring the fields, sailing on area lakes, canoeing on the Brazos River, and camping outdoors under the stars. Victoria and her husband Skip lived on the Brazos River for 12 years, where they enjoyed paddling and exploring the river's wild and beautiful tributaries. Victoria serves on the Board of Friends of the Brazos, a TCA member organization. She has led a project for over three years, involving citizens and businesses in keeping the Brazos River clean and viable through opposition to a proposed wastewater plant discharge of effluent down a shallow tributary of the Brazos in Hood County.

Victoria holds a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from the University of Texas at Austin and is licensed as a clinical psychologist and school psychologist. Her areas of specialization include school-based emergency management, threat management, and disaster behavioral health. She was in private practice in Dallas for 16 years, served as an administrator in the Dallas Independent School District, and contracted with FEMA/Homeland Security as a lead instructor at the National Emergency Management Institute in Maryland. Prior to retiring in 2015 from serving as the Executive Director of the Texas School Safety Center, Victoria served on the Texas Homeland Security Council, the Central Texas Counterterrorism Working Group, and the Texas Disaster Behavioral Health Consortium. She is a frequent presenter and keynote speaker at national and international conferences and volunteers with the Red Cross as a member of the Mental Health Disaster Response Team.

Victoria enjoys traveling, boating, painting, collecting seashells on the beaches of Pawley's Island, and spending time with her husband Skip, Goldendoodles Tucker and Chloe, family, and friends.



Allyn Dukes

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Allyn Dukes has had a life-long passion for wildlife and natural ecosystems. A member of the National Wildlife Federation for over thirty years, as Vice Chair of the NWF Board for the Central Region of the U.S. She currently co-chairs the NWF Board Finance Committee and serves on the Innovation and Audit Committees and the NWF publication redesign and review advisory council. Allyn has worked closely with the NWF South Central Region education staff supporting the Monarch Heroes program in the Houston school district.

Allyn and husband Cliff operate a business in Houston, with primary focus on commercial real estate. She oversees human resources and employee benefits. Allyn's business experience has led her to multiple community service roles and philanthropic opportunities. She has been recognized in the Katy and Spring Branch school districts for her volunteer leadership in student support programs. In cooperation with other community organizations, she is a small group facilitator, advocate and mentor for adults and teens in recovery from family crises.

Allyn has hosted NWF education displays at scouting events. She recently helped a church achieve Earth Care Congregation certification which included installing a certified habitat prayer garden on the campus. She has also created certified habitats at a local elementary school and at her family home and ranch. As a member of the Native Plant Society of Texas, Allyn is an avid advocate for the use of native plants and she finds "working" in the gardens to be a spiritual experience. Allyn holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree from the University of Iowa. She and Cliff have two sons, two grandchildren and have rescued and rehomed many dogs.



David B. Gray
Former Chairman

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David Gray served several years as chairman of Texas Conservation Alliance and he and his wife, Nancy Bateman, continue an active role. After growing up in several places around the U.S., David graduated from Rice University with a double degree in Physics and Math Science, followed by an M.S. in Geosciences from the UT at Dallas.

David's career spanned work in the oil and gas industry, serving as product support manager and project manager for Convex Computer Corporation, and holding several positions with Hewlett-Packard after Convex was acquired, becoming a senior technical leader in computer systems development. After retiring in 2015, David enrolled in graduate school at the University of North Texas to do research in Renewable Energy Engineering.

In addition to David's long years of volunteering with Texas Conservation Alliance, he volunteered with the Trinity River Corridor Citizens Committee until 1998 when he became chairman of the Save the Trinity River coalition, and a leader of the Trinity Vote campaign.

For Dallas Sierra Club, David has been the Conservation Co-Chairman and an Executive Committee member. He served on the Executive Committee of the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club, and serves on the Save Open Space board. He and Nancy are active in the Lake Highlands neighborhood TriAlliance security committee. At home, David enjoys doing chores (joke), woodworking, "perpetual" piano lessons, gardening, reading, and watching the Mavericks and Rangers.



Earl B. Matthew, M.D.

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Raised on a ranch in Yoakum, with frequent trips to Rockport, Earl Matthew wanted to become a wildlife biologist. When he became a doctor in Infectious Diseases/Internal Medicine, he told people it was to work with tiny wildlife - infectious microorganisms. After graduating from UT Austin, Earl received medical training at UT Southwestern Medical School, the University of Florida in Gainesville and UTHSC San Antonio, and a research fellowship/infectious diseases at National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, MD.

As one of the four founders of Texas Infectious Diseases Society, Earl has had an exceptional career, serving on the Faculty at UTHSCSA, directing physician residency programs for the Central Texas Medical Foundation for 22 years, and continuing to work as an infectious disease and wound care physician.

The environmental advocacy of Earl and his wife Lonnie, a retired nurse and past state chairman of the Texas Master Gardeners, has achieved wonderful results. They built extensive public-private partnerships to spur development of the Storm Water Management Plan and of the Aransas Pathways Project, which has preserved and enhanced many key areas in Aransas County for birding, historic interest, kayaking, biking, and trail walks.

Earl has long led Aransas First to preserve the critical Habitat of Aransas county (or Live Oak Peninsula of the Coastal Bend). He served as a regional board member for National Wildlife Federation (1999-2008). He sits on the board for Texas Land Conservancy and is stewardship chairman of Ivy Payne Wildlife Preserve near Elkhart.



Susan Petersen
Former Chairman

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While pursuing her degree at Texas Tech University, Susan Petersen discovered both a satisfying career in the production end of the newspaper business and also the joys of volunteer activism. Susan's exceptional career saw her in numerous leadership roles at first the Dallas Times Herald, then the Austin American Statesman. As Texas Conservation Alliance's longest-serving board member, including several years as chairman, Susan has put her broad range of skills to use for conservation.

Ned Fritz was famous for putting volunteers into fun and unexpected positions. Susan loves to tell the story that the first thing she did as a new TCA recruit was to help decide the boundaries of a potential new state park!

Susan has often represented TCA at public functions and in meetings with colleague groups and has a particular interest in creation and management of state parks and other public wildlife areas. She worked with National Wildlife Federation board and staff to establish TCA as the NWF state affiliate in 1999, and served as TCA's delegate to NWF annual meetings for several years.

Susan served as president of Texas Land Conservancy, then named Natural Area Preservation Association. Her long association with the Austin American Statesman offered a variety of volunteer opportunities to help at charitable events.

Today, Susan continues newspaper consulting work as part owner of a business that provides services to small-town papers.



Zeshan Segal

Zeshan Segal is a new father, technology professional, and well-practiced storyteller with a decade of community leadership in the nonprofit sector. Zeshan uses stories to authentically share his experiences and inspire others.

A consultant for Yardi Systems, a global software company that provides property management solutions in the real estate market, Zeshan advises business executives on data analysis and software issues. He is proud of his service on the Yardi Non-Profit Advisory Committee for Dallas and Irving, which donates over \$250,000 to local non-profits every year.

Zeshan's five years with the National Audubon Society as a lead education manager for the Trinity River Audubon Center in Dallas launched him on a path of environmental stewardship and engaging students in outdoor education. His work with the Council on At-Risk Youth in Austin provided behavioral therapy for under-privileged youth. He then pursued a career in project management within the technical world.

Zeshan served as a founding member and treasurer for Artstillery, which creates performances centered around issues of racial, cultural, and social injustice, and helped establish Gift of Reading, a non-profit focused on promoting literacy and love of reading.

When Zeshan is not working or spending time with his wife, Puja or new son, Saavan, he can be found exploring live music, discovering new outdoor experiences, and cultivating new community relationships.



John Shepperd

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John Shepperd, Executive Director of the Texas Foundation for Conservation and the Texas Coalition for Conservation, brings a wealth of experience in public policy and ecosystem conservation to the Texas Conservation Alliance board.

Beginning his career as a Policy Analyst at the Texas Capitol, John's next position came with the Texas A&M University System as a Research Associate in the departments of Forest Science, Rangeland Ecology and Management, and Agricultural Economics, where he planted trees, worked in a lab, restored coastal habitat, modeled financial impacts of flood events, surveyed wetlands and saltwater marshes, and built the first nursery in Texas dedicated to growing dune plants. Then John served as a liaison between the Army Corp of Engineers, TAMU Department of Agriculture Economics, and dozens of South Texas ranchers and farmers.

In 1996, John exchanged his muddy boots for a coat and tie and worked for the Senate Natural Resources Committee as a Policy Analyst, working primarily with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Department of Agriculture. As Director of Operations for Blackridge Governmental Affairs, he worked on a multitude of projects, including analyzing and tracking legislation. A stint as Director of Community Based Relations with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation led to his current positions.

John was raised in San Antonio and graduated from UT-Austin with a degree in American Studies.



David Todd

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David Todd has put his impressive academic credentials to work for many branches of conservation: B.A. Princeton University (1981) (Architecture and Urban Planning - cum laude), M.S. Rice University (1984), J.D. Emory University, School of Law (1991).

As founder and executive director of the Conservation History Association of Texas, David has worked to document, celebrate, and share the history of natural resource and public health protection in the state. His book with David Weisman, *Texas Legacy Project: Stories of Courage and Conservation* (Texas A&M University Press, 2010), profiles more than 60 interviews with leading environmentalists in the state. David's recent book with Jonathan Ogren, *Texas Landscape Project* (Texas A&M University Press, 2016), is a multi-media depiction that maps and tracks environmental events and conservation efforts in the state. David is currently working on a Texas wildlife conservation archive (www.texasfauna.org), featuring interviews with many veteran biologists in the state.

David's philanthropic work is widely known from his serving as a trustee of the Magnolia Charitable Trust and Wray Charitable Trust, and the ongoing benefits of the Texas Environmental Grantmakers Group he co-founded. His deep concern for habitat conservation and restoration is reflected in his co-founding the Blunn Creek Partnership and Cullinan Park Conservancy. David is also involved in a family beef cattle operation that is working on habitat protection and prairie recovery.

David's wife, architect Wendy Todd, has partnered with him in many accomplishments and in teaching courses at Rice University.



Bruce Walker

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Bruce Walker lives in Beaumont but calls Nacogdoches his hometown. There he received his B.S. Degree from SFASU and there he married Kathryn, fifty years ago. They have one son, one daughter, and four grandchildren, all in the Dallas area. Bruce is retired from Time Warner Media Sales.

Besides TCA, Bruce has a long and active history with a host of conservation and environmental organizations where he serves on the boards of Clean Air & Water and the Sabine Neches Chapter of Texas Master Naturalist. He is a past Chair of the Golden Triangle Sierra Club and previously served on the Lone Star Chapter Sierra Club State Board. Bruce is a Past President of the Nacogdoches Fredonia Rotary Club, and current member of the Downtown Beaumont Rotary Club.

Bruce is a past Executive Director of the Big Thicket Association (BTA), a conservation and preservation non-profit and a Friends Group of the Big Thicket National Preserve. Bruce was instrumental in establishing BTA's Neches River Adventures program, which operates a 45ft pontoon boat (floating classroom) offering free environmental education classes to area students, as well as public and private eco-history tours on the Neches River and into the backwater channels and bayous of the Preserve. He has been actively involved in establishing two State Paddling Trails and worked with BTA volunteers to establish the Neches River Rally, which is BTA's main fundraising event.

Bruce says that serving on the TCA Board has been a great experience for him. He enjoys supporting TCA initiatives and, most of all, he enjoys meeting the extraordinary people associated with Texas Conservation Alliance.

TCA Team Members

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TCA Member Organizations

Aransas First
Audubon Dallas
Audubon Texas
Big Thicket Association
Big Thicket Biosphere Reserve
Big Thicket Natural Heritage Trust
Caddo Lake Institute
Camp Tyler Foundation
Conservation History Association of Texas
Dallas Down River Club
Dallas Safari Club
Dallas Woods and Waters Club
East Texas Woods & Waters Foundation
Environment Texas
Fort Worth Audubon Society
Friends of the Brazos River
Friends of Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge
Friends of the Fort Worth
 Nature Center and Refuge
Friends United for a Safe Environment
Frontera Audubon Society
Galveston Bay Foundation
Greater Caddo Lake Association
Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance
Gulf Restoration Network
Houston Audubon Society

TCA Member Organizations

Houston Canoe Club

Houston Safari Club

National Parks Conservation Association

National Wild Turkey Federation -

Cherokee Chapter

Native Plant Society of Texas

Native Prairies Association of Texas

Pineywoods Audubon Society

Primitive Texas

Quail Coalition

Save Open Space

Scenic Texas

Sulphur River Oversight Society

Texas Association of Bass Clubs

Texas Black Bear Alliance

Texas Foundation for Conservation

Texas Historic Tree Coalition

Texas Land Conservancy

Texas League of Conservation Voters

Texas Native Cats

Texas Rivers Protection Association

Texas State Railroad Society

Travis Audubon

Trinity River Audubon Center

Tyler Audubon Society

Wild for the World - The Conservation Branch of

Wildlife on the Move

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Sulphur River 2022