Creating Wildlife Corridors in West Texas

Texans across the state know that caring for our magnificent natural landscapes and the wildlife they contain doesn’t have to come at the expense of land productivity.

The following project ideas benefit native wildlife with minimal impact on operations, creating a harmony on your land that benefits the people, prosperity, and natural resources of Texas. We hope you’ll join us in ensuring future generations can call themselves Texan by Nature, just like you!

**PRIORITY 1**

**WATER FOR WILDLIFE**

The Chihuahuan Desert typically receives 10 inches or less of rainfall per year, making every drop precious. Plans to mitigate runoff and collect and store surface water through water guzzlers are essential for habitat management in the region. Ridges and other higher features not only allow for increased rainwater catchment, but are also favored by many wildlife species who avoid lower ground when possible to avoid predators. There are many types of guzzlers, most common are the slickrock, traditional, and Nevada-style guzzlers.

**PRIORITY 2**

**INVASIVE SPECIES CONTROL**

“Invasive species” are a species that is non-native or alien to the ecosystem and cause or is economic or environmental harm or harm to human health. Private landowners are in a position to help control and limit the spread of these species, ensuring a healthy West Texas landscape in the future. Species of concern include: Aoudad are a threat to mule deer and Bighorn sheep because of direct competition for food and habitat resources. Feral Hog rooting habits disrupt vegetation and soil, and cause shifts in plant succession on the disturbed site. Feral pigs also compete with several species of wildlife for certain foods. Carizzo Cane is a significant fire hazard. It does not serve as a food source and pushes out native vegetation. Saltcedar disrupts the structure and stability of native plant communities and degrades native wildlife habitat by outcompeting and replacing native plant species, monopolizing limited sources of moisture, and increasing the frequency, intensity and effect of fires and floods.

Invasive species: Aoudad, Feral Hogs, and Saltcedar
PRIORITY 3

EROSION CONTROL

When dry, cracked earth is inundated with heavy amounts of water, especially running downhill, beneficial topsoil is quickly swept away. However, there are many ways to slow the movement of soil and improve the health of the desert landscape, including installing berms and swales along contours, slowing the movement of stormwater, improving groundwater recharge, filling catchment devices, and reducing erosion. Placing gabions where there is a high amount of rainwater or other runoff slows the dissipation of topsoil and helps control erosion and improve soil quality, as well as provides temporary water sources for wildlife after rain events.

PRIORITY 4

HABITAT MANAGEMENT

These opportunities not only encourage growth in wildlife populations, but also provide landowners with wildlife viewing, hunting, and other opportunities that improve the value of their lands. Quail feeding provides safe, sheltered feeding areas for these birds, allowing them to find nourishment among scarce resources that is safe from predation. Many species, such as Gambel’s and Scaled Quail, as well as other birds, greatly benefit from supplemental feeding and watering. Removing unused fencing so that large mammals, such as Bighorn Sheep and Mule Deer, are not susceptible to entanglement in old wire fencing, which can lead to serious injury or death of the animal. Removing fencing prevents dangerous situations for these animals! Increasing biodiversity by planting trees and plants that benefit birds and pollinators. This enhances biodiversity and increases habitat along the landscape. Examples of trees and plants include milkweed, cottonwood trees, native wildflowers and grasses, and much more.

HOW TO GET STARTED

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