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## Fort Worth Prairie Park

<b>Applying Organization</b>	Great Plains Restoration Council	<b>Application Date</b>	5/15/2026
<b>Applying Contact</b>	Jarid Nidal Manos	<b>Status</b>	Submitted
<b>Record Type</b>	Member Collective	<b>Created By</b>	Jarid Nidal Manos, 5/15/2026, 4:33 PM
		<b>Create Account</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Project Overview

<b>Project Name</b>	Fort Worth Prairie Park	<b>Requested Amount</b>	\$50,000.00
<b>Project/Campaign Name</b>	Fort Worth Prairie Park		
<b>Type of Project</b>	Restoration	<b>Project Multiple Locations</b>	
<b>Project Location (State or Territory)</b>	TX	<b>Longitude</b>	-97.4523756
<b>Latitude</b>	32.6062800		

### Organization Details

<b>Organization Name</b>	Great Plains Restoration Council	<b>Primary address for organization</b>	PO Box 1206 Fort Worth, Texas 76101 United States
<b>Contact Name</b>	Jarid Manos	<b>Contact Title</b>	Founder
<b>Contact Email Address</b>	greatplains@gprc.org		
<b>Annual Operating Budget</b>	\$410,500.00	<b>Tax Status/Organization Type</b>	501c3 Organization
<b>Staff Size</b>	5	<b>Main Phone</b>	8325984772
<b>Total Membership</b>	1,600	<b>Organization Website/Social Media Feed</b>	https://gprc.org
<b>BIPOC-led</b>	Yes	<b>C-Suite Staff</b>	80%

### Grant Details

<b>Awarded Amount</b>		<b>Awarded Date</b>	
<b>Funding Program</b>			
<b>Primary Project Type</b>		<b>Secondary Project Type</b>	
<b>Term Start Date</b>		<b>Term End Date</b>	

### Proposal Questions

<b>Mission/History Of Organization</b>	Mission Statement: Great Plains Restoration Council (GPRC) is a 501(c)3 non-profit Ecological Health organization that helps people take care of their own health through restoring and protecting	<b>Location Details</b>	In southwest Fort Worth, TX, on the backdoor of 8 million people lies the last stronghold of the once 1.3 million acre native Fort Worth Prairie ecosystem. The FW Prairie is now one of the most
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native ecosystems, particularly damaged prairies, plains, and waters. Great Plains Restoration Council (GPRC) is headquartered in Fort Worth, TX. Before becoming a non-profit, after several years of rescuing prairie dogs from poisoning, shooting, and bulldozing on the High Plains of Colorado, Kansas and Texas in the late 90s, GPRC was created as a formal 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in October 1999 that wanted to approach the environmental movement in a new way that included people.

GPRC was founded out of the awareness that the violence people do to the Earth mirrors the violence people do to each other and often accept into ourselves. GPRC works to bring people of all colors, cultures and communities together to protect the Earth and our children's health and future.

endangered ecosystems in North America. It is a unique, formal, internationally-recognized tallgrass/mixed grass prairie ecosystem on America's Dry Line, between the East and West Cross Timbers (which were long ago created by the massive north-south flight migrations of the now extinct Passenger Pigeon). The Fort Worth Prairie Park effort is the only chance to preserve a public, landscape-level, ecologically protected area of this lush, irreplaceable 10,000 year old grassland ecosystem critical to so much wildlife, from rapidly declining grassland nesting birds and pollinators to migratory birds on the southern Central Flyway to an explosion of local biodiversity. It's important to public health via outdoor recreation and access to wild nature; Fort Worth is park poor, and our effort provides wild prairie hiking opportunities at a scale that exists nowhere else near a major city in the (nearly destroyed) tallgrass prairie region.

Location: Upper Clear Fork of the Trinity River watershed, North Texas.

The Fort Worth Prairie Park is nearing completion after all these years. TCA funding will help GPRC's youth program complete Phase 4, restoring the south side of the heavily degraded federal core public lands, which have become so choked out by a wall and snarl of trees, brush, invasive Chinese privet, briars, brambles and poison ivy that they no longer function as prairie at all. GPRC also is working with the City and the State for public acquisition and conservation of remaining private lands of wild prairie east of Lake Benbrook and Rocky Creek for a total of several thousand acres to create the largest tallgrass prairie preserve in a major metropolitan area in the United States.

The City has so far spent over \$10 million to acquire land on the southern end of the complex. Each acre in our target area is now worth around \$50,000, and we warned them long ago to act, but we had to build a conservation culture. Now there is even a City Open Space Dept.

GPRC's Restoration Not Incarceration™ youth program of paid outdoor green jobs and nature-based work therapy has expanded to include youth facing other struggles like social/emotional stressors and distress. We now have a much larger operation. Prairie restoration costs a lot of money but the returns are exponential.

#### Final Success

By the end of 2027, Great Plains Restoration Council will have completed tree and brush removal and other

#### Impact on Climate and Biodiversity

Climate resiliency: Native prairie sends roots deep into the ground, absorbing water directly during heavy rainstorm

restoration on over 200 acres of federal public land in the core of the Fort Worth Prairie Park complex, completed third year recovery on 100 adjacent private acres to the north, staged a prescribed burn, rehabilitated one mile of two newly named creeks hidden within our prairie complex, and improved public opportunity, access and experience for people of all colors, cultures and communities to hike, bird, recreate, re-center, photograph, and have quiet time in wild North Texas tallgrass prairie.

events, which are increasing in intensity. Right now the unrecovered area has a lot of muck and mud runoff especially around the horse trails that sends sediments in the Upper Clear Fork Trinity River system.

Also, healthy native prairies are the unsung heroes of atmospheric carbon sequestration.

“Using prairie [restoration projects on already damaged land]} ... “even when grown on infertile soils” ... “would lead to the long-term removal and storage of from 1.2 to 1.8 U.S. tons of carbon dioxide per acre per year. This net removal of atmospheric carbon dioxide could continue for about 100 years, the researchers estimate.” (National Science Foundation report, 7 December 2006.) Furthermore, if left undisturbed, native prairies are remarkably strong and patient, naturally withstand climate extremes, and can store atmospheric carbon in the soil for 8,000 years or more.

Since we're on the Dry Line, we also have Western prairie ecotypes of shorter grasses. We hope to reintroduce a black-tailed prairie dog colony. Fort Worth is the easternmost extent of their historic range; they were eradicated long ago. Continentwide only 2 percent are left. Prairie dog colonies boost climate resiliency in that their burrow systems hold more water in the soil; for biodiversity, like coral reefs in the sea of grass they serve as haven and habitat for over 160 native vertebrate wildlife species.

Continentially migrating grassland nesting birds, and pollinators, have plummeted in population; Monarch butterflies are listed as Endangered. The FWPP provides key prairie habitat after travel from Mexico over subpar or lost habitat. This year the American and Southern Plains bumblebees are due for listing.

On the FWPP, our grassland nesting birds, from grasshopper sparrows to the Harrier hawk and much more, are helping build up the nation's numbers because of our work. The Texas horned lizard is very endangered in Tarrant County, due to lack of Comanche harvester ants caused by invasive fire ants and ruin of habitat. We have so far identified two ancient colonies of Comanche harvester ants on the FWPP.

Bobwhite quail, once abundant in our beautiful thick prairies, are rarely seen anymore, and status-wise are where the (now endangered) lesser prairie chicken was 15 years ago. Prevention of further loss, and safety boosting, is urgent. We have rare aquatic species too.

**Expected Economic & Recreational Impact**

The most important economic impacts to us are the paid outdoor green jobs we offer to our youth that deliver checks of good money (more than double the Texas minimum wage), which they can earn through their good hard work of restoring the prairie. GPRC's model of paid outdoor green jobs and nature-based work therapy should be adopted by communities nationwide, with budget line items directly allocated, considering the extreme climate resilience and biodiversity needs, not to mention the benefits in youth mental and economic health recovery and public well-being, instead of just giving the work to contractors.

On a larger scale, the Fort Worth Prairie Park is now a public lands natural amenity, with all those attendant economic benefits.

**Outdoor recreation:**

Firstly, although it's work, our youth are outside all day, they really dig it, and have become intimately familiar with the prairie and it's struggling wildlife large and small they're helping recover. So this immersive, all day long, months long program phone free alongside their GPRC work family resets their brains from their apartment complexes and personal pressures (and in some cases, post-incarceration release.)

For the general public, this year we have had more prairie hikers and birders than our entire history. This week we just installed our official Welcome sign and the first of two interpretive signs. It's great to see people of all demographics coming out to see the grasslands. Just in time to see the red tubular flower standing cypress flowers which are now blooming 3 feet tall, after we planted some two years ago. It's the first time we've ever seen standing cypress wildflowers on the Fort Worth Prairie. So public outdoor recreation on the FW Prairie is just beginning.

**Key Decision Makers**

GPRC has an official MOU with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which acquired high ground well beyond the

**Strategy & Timeline For Final Success**

GPRC is the main non-profit management partner for the US Army Corps of Engineers federal public lands that comprise the heart of the Fort Worth Prairie Park complex. We can send TCA the Restoration Work Plan pdf by email. Most of Phase 4 of the project described above is expected to be completed by summertime 2027.

How it works: Contract chainsaw crews move into heavily choked areas of cedar elms, hackberry trees, junipers, green briar snarls, brambles, and Chinese privet and start to cut down and clear. Often our youth team needs to first go in with a Stihl electric weed whacker and cut out the snarl of undergrowth that like a sore festers around the encroachment of each tree. (The similarities to disease of a body are so striking.) The trees are felled and sectioned into 50 to 100 pound logs, and manageable branches, and stacked in compressed piles in selected locations, and like this we move progressively through the invasion. Allelopathy, where the trees have invaded the prairie and choked out all prairie life, leaves the ground covered in dead leaves and no sunlight and a dead zone. Once an area has been cleared, we decided what prep if any the soil needs such as raking, and then lay down thousands of dollars' worth of carefully sourced native seed from Native American Seed company, depending upon the soil type. (The Fort Worth Prairie has many geographic and topographic types within its diversity range.) If able to before the growing season, we stage a prescribed burn in partnership with the Texas Forest Service, which manages wildfire season and fire as a management tool in Texas, along with Fort Worth's Natural Resources Dept. and local fire departments. Then we follow up with any touch-up needed, such as root pulling invasive Johnson grass and bastard cabbage, and any other maintenance. The key is to manually reset the daylighted balance that these 10,000 year old grassland soils had back when they were managed by bison and fire and the Indigenous Wichita and Caddo people.

Concurrently our youth team leads prairie tours for the public, especially elected officials, so they can firsthand see and experience (and support) what the prairie is that their city was founded upon and which until recently was forgotten due to most of it being destroyed.

**Working With Business Community**

Yes – financial support and word of mouth awareness raising would be beneficial. This is a project of

floodplain in a fluke during the 1940s FDR administration when they built the Benbrook Lake dam. This fluke of federal public land ownership of native Fort Worth Prairie has served as the anchor for the last opportunity to save a landscape-level preserve of this native prairie ecosystem. Even before today's administration the Corps had no money for ecological management let alone restoration. GPRC serves as the main management partner. We just spend \$230,000 for this year's Jan. to June restoration season. So with our agreement in place and expertise, GPRC is essentially the primary manager and caretaker of these federal public lands, which we have folded in under the umbrella of the Fort Worth Prairie Park public-private initiative.

As for public acquisition conservation of remaining unprotected lands in the complex which are still in private hands, all landowners have been contacted, and the City and the State are in talks with them. GPRC teed all this up via years of on-the-ground work. The Mayor recently came out on a visit and GPRC youth took her on a hike and she is actually pretty cool. She has created a Citywide "Good Natured" program to guide conservation of rapidly disappearing wild lands before they are lost to development.

#### Elevate Voices

For many early years we partnered with the Fort Worth-based American Indian Chamber of Commerce of Texas as we grew our Plains Youth InterACTION youth program (the predecessor to the more specialized Restoration Not Incarceration™) and worked to build awareness and concern for the Fort Worth Prairie and prairies in general, but they went inactive over ten years ago. Unfortunately, there isn't a large Indigenous community in Fort Worth; in most of Texas almost all Tribes were warred upon and survivors completely pushed up to Oklahoma Territory. (See the important book *The Conquest of Texas*).

As for communities of color, while our work on the prairie is for people of all colors, cultures and communities, youth prairie work is generally comprised of and led by 99% POC. Select youth are colleague-referred to us mostly from collaboration partners Youth Advocate Program, Tarrant County and Johnson County Juvenile Justice, and Everman ISD. GPRC has been a longtime non-profit in the "Breaking the Color Barrier in the Great Outdoors" movement.

Beyond this, for local communities and the general public we are working to engage everybody. For example, we just

international importance, our Ecological Health model of blending conservation, restoration ecology and social work is unique and effective and can help everybody, but the support we have received is small compared to the massively outsized outcomes we deliver.



#### Measurable On-Ground Outcomes

1. The south side of the federal Rocky Creek Park unit down to the lake (west) and up to the Prairie Barrens hilltop outcrop south will be cleared and daylighted.
2. Both the north and south sides of the Rocky Creek Park unit will be burned and reseeded, thus completing the main Phases 1-4 of the Restoration Work Plan.
3. Cottonwood-Tallgrass Creek will be restored with transplants of donated cottonwood saplings from the Fort Worth Nature Center.
4. Several returning youth will be graduated and promoted with pay raises to Tier 2 and Tier 3 of GPRC's Ecological Health prairie restoration work program:  
Tier 1: Knowledge & Retention  
Tier 2: Teamwork & Application  
Tier 3: Leadership & Teaching
5. We hope the City can complete its acquisition of the 91 acre Walsh property directly adjacent to the federal unit, and perhaps even the 300 acre Bass property, which would expand the ecological corridor south to the City's \$10 million acquisition. We have been working on this for 3 years.

had an older retired gentleman who brought his grown daughter out and he asked if we needed any help with citizen science or volunteer support and we said yes we are trying to create a species list plus always need help spot-pulling any patches of invasive Johnson grass or bastard cabbage and he wants to engage plus help spread the word. We're also going to offer a disability hikers day on the prairie next year that we are excited about. One of our new youth was never in trouble but he has been almost a shut-in for most of his life as the caretaker for his quite-disabled brother and coming out to work raw and real and expansive in sun, wind, grass and blue sky has been so energizing for him, so we thought how it would be for those physically handicapped. His name is Dominique and he and his brother are going to help lead that.

#### TCA Funding Plan

TCA support would immensely help. Little money exists for the Great Plains, especially southern prairies, because America so waged war against them and their original inhabitants first with guns and traps and Indian Removal in the 1800s and then the poisons and plows of the first half of the 1900s that our region was left for dead and we became "Flyover Country". Forgotten and unvalued/devalued. Even though America's vital prairie plains grasslands were once the most colossally abundant terrestrial landscapes on Earth. There has been little public consciousness and connection with prairies, though this is changing; we have worked long and hard for that. Further challenges: GPRC is a non-derivative organization that does conservation through people and blends social work with restoration ecology. TCA funding would help us reach 9% of our 2027 budget, and meet our timeline goal of completing Phase 4 by the end of next year. We would leverage TCA support for additional funding.

#### Other Relevant Application Details

- a.) The photo is the westward overlook of the FW Prairie Park federal project area.
- b. On the map, this proposal's project work area includes all of the central Rocky Creek Park unit plus #2 on the map (St. Francis Village), plus 4 and 3 (Walsh and Bass private holdings, plus part of the contiguous USACE East Side Ecosystem Mgmt Area to the south.

Year End Video: "We Will Remember This" Fort Worth Prairie Park  
<https://gprc.org/end-of-2025-prairie-restoration-season/>

#### Confidential Items

The only thing that needs to be kept confidential are the names of the private landowner families Walsh and Bass who the City is trying to work with to acquire those important contiguous tracts. Additionally, this proposal confides internally with TCA via a frank, "inside-movement" perspective and discussion, and we'd prefer it not to be shared publicly online on the Internet etc. Thanks! And thanks for your care and consideration. Keeping Earth alive and livable is a central pillar of social justice and well-being, yet for far too long the Earth and its living ecosystems and wildlife have been seen as "just there".