

TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST™ PROGRAM

This program is a collaborative effort between Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas Parks & Wildlife, and Texas Forest Service

**TRANS – PECOS CHAPTER
C/O TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE
301 MANNY MARTINEZ 2nd FLOOR
EL PASO, TX 79905
Phone- 915-771-2536
Fax 915-771-2356**

January 2017

Dear Texas Master Naturalist Program Applicant:

We would like to invite you to become involved in an exciting program for the El Paso area - the TRANS-PECOS CHAPTER of the Texas Master Naturalist Program. The mission of this program is to develop and certify a group of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated toward the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within our community.

This program will offer participants with 16 weeks of training (including 6 trips), essential information and strategies to restore and conserve our indigenous species and habitats. Throughout the training classes, professionals from various agencies and local experts will cover interesting topics about our natural resources and lead hands-on field trips to local ecosystems. Specific class and field trip topics are listed in the Class Schedule. Texas Master Naturalist trainees may select from a wide variety of approved local projects to volunteer their time. Projects may include habitat restoration, native plant rescues, prairie seed collection, school habitats, educational presentations, or projects of your own design.

To become a Certified Texas Master Naturalist of the Trans-Pecos Chapter, trainees must fulfill the following requirements:

- Attendance at all training classes, including field trips (72 hours total).
- 40 hours minimum of volunteer service on approved projects within a year.
- 8 hours minimum of advanced training in approved classes within a year.
- Pass a State mandated background check

To maintain active status, Texas Master Naturalists must complete the following annually:

- Minimum of 40 hours of volunteer service on approved projects.
- Minimum of 8 hours of advanced training in approved classes.

Training classes will be held from 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. each Thursday starting February 15th, 2017 and continue through May 25th, 2017. Classes will be held at Texas a&M AgriLife Extension Service, Ascarate Annex- 301 Manny Martinez, 2nd Floor 79905. The fee for the program is \$125.00. Each participant will be provided the Trans-Pecos Master Naturalist handbook (a comprehensive text) as well as various handouts on topics covered in each class.

A maximum of twenty (20) applicants will be selected to attend the class. Selection criteria include: Interest in the program, availability for volunteer service, and commitment to stewardship of our natural resources.

Please return the completed application to Matthew Santillan at the address or fax listed above. The application deadline is February 6th, 2017. **You must mail the \$125.00 fee with your application. Please make checks payable to: TMN-Trans Pecos Chapter**

Thank you for your interest in the Texas Master Naturalist Program. We look forward to your participation in this educational and beneficial volunteer program. You will be contacted no later than February 10th, 2017 about the class enrollment.

Sincerely,

Raymond Bader
County Extension Director
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

Enclosures

Application Form
Texas Master Naturalist Volunteer Policy & Pledge
Volunteer Background Check Form

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The application deadline is February 6th, 2017. Please type or print clearly and return your application to the address listed above.

NAME: _____
(As you wish it to appear on your certificate)

Name: _____
(As you wish it to appear on your *nametag*--if different from above)

SEX: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Please Check (Optional): ☐ Anglo ☐ African American ☐ Hispanic
☐ Asian or Pacific Islander ☐ American Indian or Alaskan ☐ Other

MAILING ADDRESS:

Street _____

City _____ County _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone: Day () _____ Night () _____

Email ADDRESS _____

Occupation, if employed: _____

If retired, what was your former occupation? _____

- 1) Describe why you are interested in the Texas Master Naturalist volunteer program.

- 2) Please indicate any organizations of which you are a member, or have volunteered time during the last two years. Indicate the average number of hours you have volunteered for each organization on a monthly basis.

- 3) Please note your profession and/or skills or interests that would be helpful to the Texas Master Naturalist Program. (Skills may include computer, photography, typing, graphic arts, public speaking, teaching, specific knowledge, etc. If you are retired or work part-time, please include relevant training or education you have received relative to natural resources.)

YOUR AREAS OF INTEREST:

Please rate each area as **(H)HIGH, (M)MEDIUM, OR (L)LOW.**

Education/Public Information

Speakers Bureau - (presentations)

Guide or Docent (special projects)

Children's Activities

Other _____

Field Research/Surveys

Forest Ecosystems

Prairie Ecosystems

Wetland Ecosystems

Plant & Wildlife Census (bird, insect, amphibian, etc.)

Habitat Restoration Projects

Native Plant/Seed Collection

Other _____

Administration

Fund Raising

Computer Work

Newsletter

Other _____

Other

Photography

- _____ YES, I will be available for the 17 weeks of classes. I understand that I am required to attend the classes and 6 field trips scheduled, complete a minimum of 40 hours volunteer service within 12 months after program inception, and complete 8 hours of approved advanced training in order to become a Certified Texas Master Naturalist.
- _____ NO, I am not available for the Spring 2017 classes, but I want to be considered in the first group of applicants for the next class. Please send me a copy of the class schedule when it becomes available.
- _____ NO, I am not interested in the Texas Master Naturalist Program. Please delete my name from your mailing list.

**TRANS-PECOS CHAPTER OF THE TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST PROGRAM
VOLUNTEER PLEDGE:**

I understand that in exchange for the training made possible through the Trans-Pecos Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist program, I will volunteer at least 40 hours of my time toward approved projects and complete 8 hours of advanced training within one year. I understand that I will become a Certified Texas Master Naturalist when I complete both the training and volunteer work. I also understand that to maintain an active status, I must complete 8 hours of advanced training and a minimum of 40 hours volunteer service each year thereafter.

Signature

Date

Print Name

This program is intended to serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex religion, disability or national origin. We seek to provide reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Please advise us as soon as possible of auxiliary aid or service that you require.



E-446
3-08

CONFIDENTIAL

Volunteer Application Form

And consent for criminal background history check authorization/waiver

To be completed by Extension program volunteers (ENP, BLT, etc.) and Master Volunteers only.

Please print:

1. APPLICANT'S FULL, LEGAL NAME

2. COUNTY

3. ADDRESS

4. CITY

ZIP

5. FIRST 5 DIGITS OF SOCIAL SECURITY #

6. DATE OF BIRTH

7. DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER (optional)

8. GENDER (*circle one*) Male / Female

9. Are you of Hispanic ethnicity? Yes / No

Texas Master Naturalists
10. VOLUNTEER PROGRAM AREA

RACE (*circle one*) White / Black / Asian / American Indian Alaskan Native / Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander

Previously Screened

11. I verify that I have been previously screened including a criminal background check and PASSED.

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, by who? _____

When (Year): _____

For what purpose? _____

Did you pass? If not, what restrictions were imposed? _____

Please sign at the bottom of the form.

12. I hereby authorize veriFYI and/or its Service Provider and the Texas AgriLife Extension Service to request and receive any and all background information about or concerning me, including, but not limited to, my Criminal History, Credit History including a consumer report under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, 15 U.S.C 1681, Driving Record, Employment History, Military Background, Civil Listings, Educational Background, Professional License from any Individual, Corporation, Partnership, Law Enforcement Agency, and other entities including my Present and Past Employers. I authorize the Texas AgriLife Extension Service or any of its components to make reference checks relating to my volunteer service. I understand that this information will be used to determine my eligibility as a volunteer/employee with the Texas AgriLife Extension Service. This request is for criminal history only. No credit report will be requested or obtained.

The criminal history, as received from the reporting agencies, may include arrest and conviction data, as well as plea bargains and deferred adjudications and delinquent conduct committed as a juvenile. I understand that this information will be used, in part, to determine my eligibility for an employment/volunteer position with this organization. I also understand that as long as I remain an employee or volunteer here, the criminal history check may be repeated at any time. I understand that I will have an opportunity to review the criminal history as received by client/agency and a procedure is available for clarification, if I dispute the record as received. I also understand that the criminal history could contain information presumed to be expunged.

I further release and discharge veriFYI and their Service Provider and all of their Subsidiaries, Affiliates, Officers, Employees, Contract Personnel, or Associates, from any and all claims and liability arising out of any request for information or records pursuant to this authorization and/or procurement of an investigative consumer report and understand that it may contain information about my character, general reputation, personal characteristics, and mode of living, whichever are applicable.

I understand that I have the right to make written request within a reasonable period of time to veriFYI for additional information concerning the nature and scope of the investigation. I acknowledge that I have voluntarily provided the above information for employment/volunteer purposes, and I have carefully read and understand this authorization.

Volunteer Application Form Instructions

1. Applicant's Printed Name – Complete with first name, middle name and last name.
2. County – Complete with the county name in which you are applying to be a volunteer.
- 3/4. Address – Complete with your current mailing address, city and zip code.
5. Social Security Number – Complete with at least the **first five** digits of the social security number. The social security number is an individual descriptor that enables the system to complete a national criminal search of 47 jurisdictions.
6. Date of Birth – Complete with the month, day and year of birth.
7. Driver's License Number – Complete with current driver's license number and state. Although optional, this helps affirm your identity during a background check.
8. Gender – Complete by circling one of the options.
9. Race – Complete the race and ethnicity section by circling the answers that apply. This field is optional; however, it is very important in confirming accurate identity.
10. Volunteer Program Area – Complete with the program area you are volunteering for (e.g., Better Living for Texans, Expanded Nutrition Program, Master Gardener, Master Naturalist, Master Wellness Volunteer). **4-H volunteers should complete the Texas 4-H Adult Volunteer Application (4-H 2-1.056)*
11. Previously Screened – Texas AgriLife Extension Service will accept prior screenings conducted within the past three years from other entities. The approved list of prior screenings either as an employee or volunteer include: school districts, churches, youth groups/associations (Little League, sports associations, etc.), youth agencies/organizations (Big Brother/Big Sister, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, after school/extended care programs), law enforcement (county, state or federal/prison system), Texas Youth Commission, Department of Defense – Child and Youth Services, Department of Defense – Family Programs, concealed handgun license; and/or licensed childcare workers.
** The minimum requirement is a criminal background check conducted through DPS or a National Criminal Search entity.**
*** Other sources may be considered based on documentation provided with screening criteria and specifics.***
**** Documentation is required for screenings from other entities. This could include a letter of acceptance from the employer or volunteer group, or a letter written from the screening entity to the Texas AgriLife Extension Service stating you have been screened and tested.*
12. Authorization Statement – State agencies screening volunteers are required by legislation to use the Volunteer Center of North Texas. The Volunteer Center contracts with VeriFYI. VeriFYI is a background verification software system that accesses multi-jurisdiction checks utilizing one of the largest private-sector criminal history databases in the nation (180 million records). All information received is held in confidence and not shared at the county level. Criminal record results are shredded when a volunteer's status is determined.