



SIERRA CLUB

LONE STAR CHAPTER

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Bill Will Restore Texas Parks' Role in Protecting the State's Water, Fish, and Wildlife Resources

AUSTIN, Texas (April 27, 2021) — A [new bill](#) proposed in the Texas House of Representatives will restore to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department the key ability to participate in hearings that would directly affect the land, fish, and wildlife resources it manages on behalf of millions of Texans.

A single sentence buried in a legislative amendment in 2011 prohibited Parks & Wildlife from contesting permits that might adversely affect its properties and the fish and wildlife the agency manages. Proposed by Representative Tracy King, [HB 2716](#) will restore Parks and Wildlife's ability to participate in contested-case hearings for both water right permits and pollution discharge permits as necessary to protect the natural resources the agency manages.

The bill is currently in the House Calendars Committee prompting growing concern, with only five weeks left in the legislative session, over whether there will be enough time for it to reach and clear the Senate.

Ken Kramer, Water Resources Chair of the Sierra Club Lone Star Chapter said, "for over 25 years, the Parks and Wildlife Department had the authority to participate in contested-case hearings directly impacting the natural resources the agency manages for the people of Texas. When that authority was suddenly removed in 2011, Parks and Wildlife lost a key tool for protecting the land, fish, and wildlife placed under its care. We call on the Texas House of Representatives to swiftly approve this critical bill so that it can be sent to the Senate in time to pass during this legislative session."

"Our state parks are home to a remarkable array of beautiful landscapes, fish, and animal life," said Amanda Fuller, director of the National Wildlife Federation's Texas Coast and Water Program. "These natural resources belong to all Texans and drive critical components of the Texas economic engine including the travel, recreation, hunting, and angling industries. Parks & Wildlife participation in hearings on water rights and pollution discharge permits is an important avenue for the agency to provide its unique scientific expertise and stewardship perspective on decisions that directly impact the resources it manages. We call on lawmakers to pass this bill without further delay. The future of our increasingly threatened parks depends on it."

The bill is supported by a broad, and growing, range of hunting, angling, recreational, and environmental organizations including:

All Water Guides	Miso's Oysters
Audubon Texas	National Wildlife Federation
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers	Port Arthur Shrimpers Association
Bayou City Waterkeeper	Prestige Oysters
Clean Water Action	Public Citizen
Coastal Alliance to Protect Our Environment	Save Barton Creek Association
Coastal Conservation Alliance	Save Our Springs Alliance
Defenders of Wildlife	Sierra Club – Lone Star Chapter
Ducks Unlimited	Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society
Environment Texas	Texas Conservation Alliance
Environmental Defense Fund	Texas Foundation for Conservation
Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance	Texas Land Trust Council
Friends of San Saba	Texas Real Estate Advocacy & Defense Coalition
Friends of the Neches River	Texas Travel Alliance
Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance	Texas Travel Association
Hill Country Alliance	Texas Wildlife Association
King Ranch, Inc.	The Nature Conservancy
League of Independent Voters of Texas	
League of Women Voters of Texas	

Further information on the bill can be [found here](#).

The National Wildlife Federation is America's largest conservation organization uniting all Americans to ensure wildlife thrive in a rapidly-changing world. NWF has more than two decades of experience working on Texas water issues. Its Texas Coast and Water Program promotes integrated urban water management and nature-based flood mitigation solutions to improve climate resilience in the state. Read NWF's Texas Coast and Water Program's [2021 Legislative Priorities here](#).

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The Sierra Club is America's largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization, with more than 3 million members and supporters. In addition to helping people from all backgrounds explore nature and our outdoor heritage, the Sierra Club works to promote clean energy, safeguard the health of our communities, protect wildlife, and preserve our remaining wild places through grassroots activism, public education, lobbying, and legal action. For more information, visit www.sierraclub.org.