

## Chronology

### Bobcat Woods Trail Repair and Extension

\$160,000 grant awarded from the Texas Recreational Trail Fund

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), Recreation Grants Branch

January 15, 2015. Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges (FOBWR) submits grant application

June 15, 2015. Notice of award from Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission. Funds pending execution of agreement following assessments by the Texas Historical Commission and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Habitat Assessment staff and approval by the Texas Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration.

October 9, 2015. FOBWR holds *A Taste for Nature* fundraiser to generate our \$40,000 required match of the \$160,000 Texas Recreational Trails grant. The event nets over \$54,000.

October 14, 2015. Trail site toured by Colleen Roco, Coastal Ecologist, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 1502 FM 517 East, Dickinson, TX 77539. Attended by Curtis Jones, Manager, San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge and Marty Cornell, Grant Administrator, FOBWR.

November 16, 2015. Email sent by Marty Cornell to Trey Cooksey, Recreational Trails Program & Boating Access Program Manager, TPWD, checking on the progress of processing our grant. No answer was received to this inquiry.

February 22, 2016. Marty Cornell emails Trey Cooksey requesting a time for a phone discussion of the processing of our grant.

~March, 2016. Phone call from Marty Cornell to Trey Cooksey discussed the bottleneck to be within the bureaucracy of TDOT, who is giving low priority to trail projects, favoring road and bridge projects. TDOT, per Cooksey, has not been cooperating with TPWD, has not been including them in the flow of communications.

May 15, 2016. From the minutes of the Board of the FOBWR: "Our \$160,000 grant to repair and extend the **Bobcat Woods Trail**, funded from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission National Recreational Trails funds, still has not been released. Since notification of this award on June 15, 2015, processing of this grant has been buried in the bureaucracy of the Texas Department of Transportation (TDOT). Per Trey Cooksey of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department on 26Apr16, TDOT insertion into the grant process is an artifact of a pilot program between TDOT and the U.S. Federal Highway Administration to move the administration of highway funds and environmental impact reviews from federal to state oversight. In this process, the ~\$3.89million of trail funding got lost in the orders of magnitude larger funding of Texas road and bridge projects. While progress is being made, Cooksey noted that he has been unsuccessful in getting the financial folks at TDOT to attend to trail grants. Marty suggested that he could approach Denis Bonnen, our local State congressional representative, to intercede with TDOT, but Cooksey asked for another few weeks to deal with TDOT before exercising this option. Mid-June, the anniversary of the grant award, is targeted to pursue other options to get the grant funds released."

June 15, 2016. Email from Marty Cornell to Trey Cooksey: "I note that today, June 15, 2016, marks the one-year anniversary of your notification that the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission has awarded us a \$160,000 grant from the National Recreational Trails funds for the repair and extension of the Bobcat Woods Trail on the San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge. Unfortunately, we have yet to receive a project agreement from you so that we might start this project.

Per our conversations in the interim period, it appears that the problem lies within the Texas Department of Transportation who are not attending to the approval of this grant. I should thus like to chat with you about next steps to remove this obstacle."

July 5, 2016. Marty Cornell leaves a message on Trey Cooksey's answering machine requesting a discussion of the status of our grant.

July 6, 2016. No call back having been received, Marty Cornell leaves another message with Trey Cooksey requesting a discussion on the grant.

July 7, 2016, 10:26, Marty Cornell speaks with Shera Eichler of Representative Bonnen's Austin office, concluding that he will forward background data to her to review for next steps.

July 7, 2016, 11:27 am. Trey Cooksey returned the phone calls. He had been on vacation. He reported that TDOT has targeted July 22<sup>nd</sup> as the date to finish their review of the 2015 Recreational Trail grants and to send their report to the Federal Highway Administration for FHA approval. Trey expects the FHA to complete their task by early August. He confirmed that none of the 17 grants awarded in 2015 have been processed through the system.

Another stamp of approval is required by the "tribal council" (historical impact). This is normally perfunctory, but can take up to six weeks.

Part of the approval process requires Trey to visit the site. Trey said that this step would not inhibit the execution of the grant agreement. He will visit the site at some point.

For background, Trey reviewed the situation at TDOT where they are under a pilot program to assume environmental and historical review responsibility of grants from the FHA; such grants were previously conducted by the FHA (and still are for 47 states). Road and bridge grants constitute the preponderance of such grants; trail grants, such as those of the Texas Recreational Trail program, were processed by other state agencies directly with no involvement by state departments of transportation.

A condition of the memorandum of understanding of this pilot program is that TDOT will be audited every six months by the FHA. There have been problems with each of the audits conducted thus far, causing TDOT to focus on correction of these transgressions of protocol at the detriment of attending to the prosecution of things like trail grants.

I inquired on the status of the environmental and historical reviews of our project. Trey noted that environmental reports are rated on a scale from one to four, with one being no concern and four noting serious issues that need resolution. Our rating, based on a visit by Ms. Roco of Coastal Fisheries, was rated a two based on her thought that the US Corps of Engineers might need to be engaged as the Bobcat Wood trail is located in a wetland. I asked for a copy of her report, which Trey would provide, but thought that the issue would be moot if sanction is granted by the FHA.

I informed Trey of my contact with the office of State Representative Bonnen earlier this morning and told him that he would likely be getting a call from Shera Eichler of Bonnen's Austin office.

**From:** Shera Eichler [<mailto:Shera.Eichler@house.texas.gov>]

**Sent:** Thursday, July 07, 2016 12:09 PM

**To:** Harold Stone <[Harold.Stone@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Harold.Stone@tpwd.texas.gov)>

**Subject:** FW: Trail Grant; inaction by TDOT and TPWD

Hello, Harold –

I was hoping you could look into this one for me in the hopes that we can get this grant money released to the Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges ASAP. If you'll take a look at the attached chronology sheet, it references multiple attempts at contacting TPWD staff for a response. It appears that the reason for the delay may actually be a hold-up within TxDOT. If it would be helpful for our office to contact TxDOT for a formal response, as well, I'm happy to do so.

Please let me know if there's any additional information I can provide from our end.

Best,

Shera Eichler

Chief of Staff/Scheduler  
Office of State Rep. Dennis Bonnen  
512.463.0564 / State Capitol 1W.6  
[shera.eichler@house.texas.gov](mailto:shera.eichler@house.texas.gov)

**From:** Harold Stone

**Sent:** Thursday, July 07, 2016 12:45 PM

**To:** Trey Cooksey <[Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov)>

**Cc:** Tim Hogsett <[Tim.Hogsett@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Tim.Hogsett@tpwd.texas.gov)>; Shera Eichler <[Shera.Eichler@house.texas.gov](mailto:Shera.Eichler@house.texas.gov)>

**Subject:** FW: Trail Grant; inaction by TDOT and TPWD

Trey,

Can you check into this and see what the holdup is. If it is TxDot issue, would an inquiry from Chairman Bonnen expedite the process?

Thanks,

HWS

**Harold W. Stone, Jr.**  
**Director of Intergovernmental Affairs**  
**Texas Parks and Wildlife Department**  
**4200 Smith School Road**

Austin, TX 78744  
Office: 512-389-4530

[www.tpwd.state.tx.us](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us)



**From:** Trey Cooksey [<mailto:Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 07, 2016 2:53 PM  
**To:** Harold Stone  
**Cc:** Tim Hogsett; Shera Eichler; Trey Cooksey  
**Subject:** RE: Trail Grant; inaction by TDOT and TPWD

Commented [MC1]: I was not copied on this.

Harold et al.,

This process is far more complex than it used to be when TPWD worked directly with FHWA on the Recreational Trail Program. In 2014, TXDOT and FHWA signed an MOU delegating all Environmental Clearance authority and documentation from FHWA to TXDOT for all highway, road and bridge projects which included the Recreational Trail Program projects. No consultation was given to TPWD regarding this or the implications of it on the . Frankly, I do not believe that there was a plan in place between FHWA and TXDOT for this transition until after the MOU was in effect.

This delegation of authority from FHWA to TXDOT environmental staff has led to a series of processes to get the RTP projects approved over the past two years. In August 2015 FHWA audited TXDOT's processes for and found them lacking consistency. This led to a complete stop on all work that TXDOT was doing for the RTP projects while they made changes to their review processes. TXDOT would not accept the 2015 projects from me until January 2016 after they instituted a series of process changes that shifted much of the work from TXDOT ENV to TPWD staff. I voiced my concerns about this to my contacts at FHWA about this process and changes. Soon thereafter TXDOT ENV staff notified me that they would be taking back most of the responsibilities back and began the review process. TXDOT's scheduled date to have the reviews completed in July 22, 2016. At which time TXDOT ENV staff should notify FHWA that the projects are environmentally cleared and I can process project authorizations to obligate funding. When I receive the authorizations back from FHWA, I can write local grant agreements. I would expect this to happen in the month of August 2016.

I spoke with Marty this morning about this issue and timeline. He was understanding and told me that he had contacted Ms. Eichler. No one is more frustrated by this process than I am and I apologized to Marty for the length of time that this has taken. I think that we are making process at this time and the TXDOT ENV staff have been helpful in most cases, so I do not know if inquiry Chairman Bonnen would be needed at this time.

Thank you,

Trey Cooksey

Recreational Trails Program / Boating Access Program Manager  
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department  
4200 Smith School Road  
Austin, TX 78744  
Office:(512) 389-8743

**From:** Shera Eichler  
**Sent:** Friday, July 08, 2016 10:43 AM  
**To:** 'Trey Cooksey'; Harold Stone  
**Cc:** Tim Hogsett  
**Subject:** RE: Trail Grant; inaction by TDOT and TPWD

Thank you for the update, Trey. I know Mr. Cornell appreciated the conversation with you and it brought him greater understanding regarding the delay. If at any time you feel our office can be of assistance, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Best,

Shera Eichler  
Chief of Staff/Scheduler  
Office of State Rep. Dennis Bonnen  
512.463.0564 / State Capitol 1W.6  
[shera.eichler@house.texas.gov](mailto:shera.eichler@house.texas.gov)

**From:** Shera Eichler [mailto:Shera.Eichler@house.texas.gov]  
**Sent:** Friday, July 8, 2016 10:45 AM  
**To:** marty-carole@comcast.net  
**Cc:** 'Ravi Singhania' <rsinghania@comcast.net>; Barrios, Ed (ed77566@comcast.net) <ed77566@comcast.net>  
**Subject:** FW: Trail Grant; inaction by TDOT and TPWD

Mr. Cornell -- I received the response from TPWD below that echoes the summary of your conversation with Mr. Cooksey. It appears that the process is finally moving forward but if it hits any more delays, please reach out to me. I have encouraged TPWD to do the same. Our office is happy to further intervene as necessary.

Thank you,

Shera Eichler  
Chief of Staff/Scheduler  
Office of State Rep. Dennis Bonnen  
512.463.0564 / State Capitol 1W.6  
[shera.eichler@house.texas.gov](mailto:shera.eichler@house.texas.gov)

**From:** Marty Cornell [mailto:marty-carole@comcast.net]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 9, 2016 11:12 AM  
**To:** 'Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov' <Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov>;  
'Shera.Eichler@house.texas.gov' <Shera.Eichler@house.texas.gov>  
**Cc:** 'Sanchez, Jennifer' <jennifer\_sanchez@fws.gov>; 'Curtis\_Jones@fws.gov' <Curtis\_Jones@fws.gov>;  
'Ed' <ed77566@comcast.net>  
**Subject:** RE: Trail Grant; inaction by TDOT and TPWD

Trey, I note from your July 7<sup>th</sup> projected progression of things that this time has passed with apparently no progress being made. Per below:

- TXDOT's scheduled date to have the reviews completed in July 22, 2016.
- At which time TXDOT ENV staff should notify FHWA that the projects are environmentally cleared and I can process project authorizations to obligate funding.
- When I receive the authorizations back from FHWA, I can write local grant agreements.
- I would expect this to happen in the month of August 2016.

Please let me know at your earliest convenience where things stand and when we might receive our grant agreement.

Best regards

Marty Cornell

Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges

**From:** Trey Cooksey [mailto:Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov]  
**Sent:** Monday, September 12, 2016 2:36 PM  
**To:** Marty Cornell; Shera Eichler  
**Cc:** 'Sanchez, Jennifer'; [Curtis\\_Jones@fws.gov](mailto:Curtis_Jones@fws.gov); 'Ed'; Trey Cooksey; Harold Stone; Tim Hogsett  
**Subject:** RE: Trail Grant; inaction by TDOT and TPWD

Marty,

I have included a screenshot of the ECOS system that TXDOT operates to document environmental compliance for you to see. While all the pertinent areas have been cleared by TXDOT, I am still waiting on them to hit the Overall Environmental Clearance button. This step is required before prior to me being able to successfully ask for a grant from FHWA. Unfortunately, this is not in my direct control. I made a request on two different occasions in the past three weeks for this to be done by TXDOT ENV staff. I will make another attempt to reach TXDOT ENV staff this week regarding this issue. Unfortunately, I cannot give you an accurate timeline as it is out of my control currently.

I appreciate your patience and perseverance regarding this issue and apologize for the length of time that this is taking. Have a good day.

The screenshot displays the ECOS Project Summary for project RT15011 - Bobcat Woods Trail Extension. The page includes a navigation menu with options like Project Summary, Tasks, Forms, Coordination, EPICs, Documents, and Journal. The main content area is titled 'Project Summary' and provides details on the project name, anticipated environmental document type, and clearance status for various categories. The clearance status is color-coded: yellow for 'Pending' and green for 'NEPA Cleared'.

Category	Status	Effective Date
Overall Environmental Clearance	Pending	09/12/2016
Air	Pending	02/22/2016
Biology	NEPA Cleared	07/11/2016
Environmental Justice and Community Impacts	Pending	02/22/2016
Historical Studies	NEPA Cleared	05/17/2016
Noise	Pending	02/22/2016
Water	Pending	02/22/2016
Project Group	Pending	02/22/2016
Archeology	NEPA Cleared	08/04/2016
Cumulative Summary	Pending	02/22/2016
Hazmat	Pending	02/22/2016
Indirect Impacts	Pending	02/22/2016
Public Involvement	Pending	02/22/2016

Thank you,  
Trey Cooksey

Recreational Trails Program / Boating Access Program Manager  
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department  
4200 Smith School Road  
Austin, TX 78744  
Office:(512) 389-8743

**From:** Shera Eichler [<mailto:Shera.Eichler@house.texas.gov>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 13, 2016 9:23 AM  
**To:** Trey Cooksey <[Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov)>; Marty Cornell <[marty-carole@comcast.net](mailto:marty-carole@comcast.net)>  
**Cc:** 'Sanchez, Jennifer' <[jennifer\\_sanchez@fws.gov](mailto:jennifer_sanchez@fws.gov)>; Curtis Jones@fws.gov; 'Ed' <[ed77566@comcast.net](mailto:ed77566@comcast.net)>; Harold Stone <[Harold.Stone@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Harold.Stone@tpwd.texas.gov)>; Tim Hogsett

[<Tim.Hogsett@tpwd.texas.gov>](mailto:Tim.Hogsett@tpwd.texas.gov)

**Subject:** RE: Trail Grant; inaction by TDOT and TPWD

Good morning, Trey –

I'd like to reach out to TxDOT and echo Rep. Bonnen's frustration for the delay, if you think it would be helpful coming from our office. In keeping with standard protocol, I would contact Government Affairs at TxDOT with this information. Please let me know your thoughts.

Thank you!

**Shera Eichler**

Chief of Staff/Scheduler

Office of State Rep. Dennis Bonnen

512.463.0564 / State Capitol 1W.6

[shera.eichler@house.texas.gov](mailto:shera.eichler@house.texas.gov)

**From:** Trey Cooksey [mailto:[Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov)]

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 13, 2016 10:29 AM

**To:** Shera Eichler <[Shera.Eichler@house.texas.gov](mailto:Shera.Eichler@house.texas.gov)>; Marty Cornell <[marty-carole@comcast.net](mailto:marty-carole@comcast.net)>

**Cc:** 'Sanchez, Jennifer' <[jennifer\\_sanchez@fws.gov](mailto:jennifer_sanchez@fws.gov)>; Curtis\_Jones@fws.gov; 'Ed' <[ed77566@comcast.net](mailto:ed77566@comcast.net)>; Harold Stone <[Harold.Stone@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Harold.Stone@tpwd.texas.gov)>; Tim Hogsett <[Tim.Hogsett@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Tim.Hogsett@tpwd.texas.gov)>; Trey Cooksey <[Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov)>

**Subject:** RE: Trail Grant; inaction by TDOT and TPWD

Shera,

I have received out of office reply emails from both of my TXDOT contacts (one is on vacation and the other is on extended leave), so contacting them may not have an immediate impact. Today I have made contact with other folks in their work group to try to get resolution to this issue. If you think that it would be beneficial to make contact with TXDOT on behalf of your office I would be supportive, I just do not want to damage any of the relationships that I have fostered over the last two years with the TXDOT ENV folks. Thank you for your willingness to help with this matter.

Thank you,

Trey Cooksey

Recreational Trails Program / Boating Access Program Manager

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

4200 Smith School Road

Austin, TX 78744

Office:(512) 389-8743



**From:** Trey Cooksey [<mailto:Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov>]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 16, 2016 4:37 PM  
**To:** Shera Eichler  
**Cc:** Harold Stone; [marty-carole@comcast.net](mailto:marty-carole@comcast.net); Trey Cooksey; Tim Hogsett; Steve Thompson; Chris Sheffield; Erick Hetzel  
**Subject:** RE: Trail Grant; inaction by TDOT and TPWD

Shera,

I was able to contact both FHWA and TXDOT representatives over the last two days. I am setting up a meeting between all three agencies to discuss the process and length of time it is taking including the fact that legislature members are taking interest in this issue. I hope to have this meeting within the next week. In the meantime we will be continuing to work with TXDOT ENV staff to get the 2015 projects approved.

I believe that there is a good understanding of the gravity of the situation by all involved.

Thank you

Trey Cooksey

Recreational Trail and  
Boating Access Program Manager

**From:** Shera Eichler [<mailto:Shera.Eichler@house.texas.gov>]  
**Sent:** Monday, September 19, 2016 11:16 AM  
**To:** Trey Cooksey <[Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov)>  
**Cc:** Harold Stone <[Harold.Stone@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Harold.Stone@tpwd.texas.gov)>; [marty-carole@comcast.net](mailto:marty-carole@comcast.net); Tim Hogsett <[Tim.Hogsett@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Tim.Hogsett@tpwd.texas.gov)>; Steve Thompson <[Steve.Thompson@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Steve.Thompson@tpwd.texas.gov)>; Chris Sheffield <[Chris.Sheffield@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Chris.Sheffield@tpwd.texas.gov)>; Erick Hetzel <[Erick.Hetzel@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Erick.Hetzel@tpwd.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Trail Grant; inaction by TDOT and TPWD

Thanks so much for the update. Please let me know how the meeting goes and if our office can assist in any way.

Best,

Shera Eichler

Chief of Staff/Scheduler  
Office of State Rep. Dennis Bonnen  
512.463.0564 / State Capitol 1W.6  
[shera.eichler@house.texas.gov](mailto:shera.eichler@house.texas.gov)

**From:** Trey Cooksey [<mailto:Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 21, 2016 12:16 PM  
**To:** Shera Eichler  
**Cc:** Harold Stone; [marty-carole@comcast.net](mailto:marty-carole@comcast.net); Tim Hogsett; Steve Thompson; Chris Sheffield; Erick

Hetzel; Trey Cooksey; Tiffany Hernandez  
**Subject:** RE: Trail Grant; inaction by TDOT and TPWD

Shera,

Just to update you:

I have a meeting set up for tomorrow morning with TPWD, TXDOT and FHWA representatives to discuss the TXDOT ENV review process and the length of time that it is taking to get grant applications cleared. The meeting is at our offices at 10AM on 09/22/2016.

Thank you,

Trey Cooksey

Recreational Trails Program / Boating Access Program Manager  
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department  
4200 Smith School Road  
Austin, TX 78744  
Office:(512) 389-8743

**From:** Shera Eichler [<mailto:Shera.Eichler@house.texas.gov>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, September 21, 2016 12:23 PM

**To:** Trey Cooksey <[Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov)>

**Subject:** RE: Trail Grant; inaction by TDOT and TPWD

Thanks, Trey! Appreciate you keeping us in the loop!

**From:** Trey Cooksey [<mailto:Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov>]

**Sent:** Monday, September 26, 2016 3:01 PM

**To:** Shera Eichler

**Cc:** Harold Stone; Trey Cooksey; Erick Hetzel; Tim Hogsett; Chris Sheffield; Steve Thompson; Tiffany Hernandez

**Subject:** RE: Trail Grant; inaction by TDOT and TPWD

Shera,

I was able to meet with FHWA and TXDOT representatives on last Thursday here at TPWD offices. We discussed several outstanding issues related to the environmental clearance process and the length of time that it is taking to get projects approved. Specific items to be addressed were identified and this project was one of those. It was a good and productive meeting and we will be scheduling quarterly face to face meetings in the future.

Thank you,

Trey Cooksey

Recreational Trails Program / Boating Access Program Manager  
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department  
4200 Smith School Road

**Commented [MC2]:** Interesting that I was not copied by Trey.

Austin, TX 78744  
Office:(512) 389-8743

**From:** Shera Eichler [<mailto:Shera.Eichler@house.texas.gov>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 27, 2016 11:03 AM

**To:** [marty-carole@comcast.net](mailto:marty-carole@comcast.net)

**Subject:** FW: Trail Grant; inaction by TDOT and TPWD

Good morning, Mr. Cornell –

I am elevating this issue to my contact at TxDOT (email below), as I feel we have given TPWD more than a fair amount of time to resolve it internally. I'll let you know what I hear!

Best,

**Shera Eichler**

Chief of Staff/Scheduler  
Office of State Rep. Dennis Bonnen  
512.463.0564 / State Capitol 1W.6  
[shera.eichler@house.texas.gov](mailto:shera.eichler@house.texas.gov)

**From:** Shera Eichler

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 27, 2016 11:02 AM

**To:** 'Trent Thomas'

**Subject:** FW: Trail Grant; inaction by TDOT and TPWD

Good morning, Trent –

I hope all is well. My apologies for the length of this email but, as you can see, we've been working with TPWD on behalf of a constituent since early July on this issue, so there's been a lot of dialogue. Specifically, Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges was awarded a \$160,000 grant in June 2015 under the Texas Recreational Trails Program. Over a year later, these funds have not yet been processed and released. Per review of the email conversations below, there is a TxDOT component involving environmental clearance that appears to be delaying the process. Thus far, I have deferred to our TPWD contact to work with TxDOT representatives to get this issue moving forward but, based on this most recent email below, our office still has not been provided with a definitive answer on when the funds will be released.

Would you mind looking into this one on your end to see if we can get an approximate date of when TxDOT ENV will complete its review and clear this project?

Thanks so much for your help!

Best,

**Shera Eichler**

Chief of Staff/Scheduler  
Office of State Rep. Dennis Bonnen

512.463.0564 / State Capitol 1W.6  
[shera.eichler@house.texas.gov](mailto:shera.eichler@house.texas.gov)

**From:** Marty Cornell [mailto:marty-carole@comcast.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 27, 2016 11:44 AM  
**To:** 'Shera Eichler' <Shera.Eichler@house.texas.gov>  
**Cc:** jennifer\_sanchez@fws.gov; 'ed77566@comcast.net' <ed77566@comcast.net>  
**Subject:** RE: Trail Grant; inaction by TDOT and TPWD

Thanks again Shera. It is disturbing that Trey's response mentions "quarterly face to face meetings". We, of course expect action and resolution on this project in a timely manner from this point forward. Especially egregious is the fact that the holdup is environmental clearance on a project involving the repair and extension of an **existing trail** in the middle of a national wildlife refuge.

We look forward to Mr. Thomas' explanation of the holdup by TDOT and of their steps to get this process moving.

Best Regards,

Marty Cornell

**From:** Shera Eichler [mailto:Shera.Eichler@house.texas.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 27, 2016 11:47 AM  
**To:** Marty Cornell <marty-carole@comcast.net>  
**Cc:** jennifer\_sanchez@fws.gov; ed77566@comcast.net  
**Subject:** RE: Trail Grant; inaction by TDOT and TPWD

I fully agree – that comment is what spurred me to reach out to TxDOT. I'll keep you posted.

Best,

Shera

**From:** Juan Valera-Lema [<mailto:Juan.ValeraLema@txdot.gov>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 12:07 PM  
**To:** Trey Cooksey  
**Cc:** Dennis Palafox; Patrick Lee; Jodi Bechtel; Erick Hetzel ([Erick.Hetzel@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Erick.Hetzel@tpwd.texas.gov)); Laura Kolstad; Shera Eichler  
**Subject:** Bobcat Woods Trail Extension Rcreational Trail Clearance. RT15011 CSJ 2222-16-011 Brazoria County. HOU

Hello Trey.

This is a notification that the subject project has been environmentally NEPA cleared. A CE determination form has been uploaded to ECOS.

Regards,

Juan

**From:** Shera Eichler [<mailto:Shera.Eichler@house.texas.gov>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 12:21 PM  
**To:** Trey Cooksey <[Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov)>  
**Cc:** Harold Stone <[Harold.Stone@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Harold.Stone@tpwd.texas.gov)>; [marty-carole@comcast.net](mailto:marty-carole@comcast.net)  
**Subject:** FW: Bobcat Woods Trail Extension Rcreational Trail Clearance. RT15011 CSJ 2222-16-011 Brazoria County. HOU

Hi, Trey –

I'm pleased to see that TxDOT has cleared this project. Please advise us regarding the next step of the process and anticipated timeline of the release of these grant funds.

Thank you,

Shera Eichler  
Chief of Staff/Scheduler  
Office of State Rep. Dennis Bonnen  
512.463.0564 / State Capitol 1W.6  
[shera.eichler@house.texas.gov](mailto:shera.eichler@house.texas.gov)

**From:** Trey Cooksey [<mailto:Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 2:17 PM  
**To:** Shera Eichler <[Shera.Eichler@house.texas.gov](mailto:Shera.Eichler@house.texas.gov)>  
**Cc:** Harold Stone <[Harold.Stone@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Harold.Stone@tpwd.texas.gov)>; [marty-carole@comcast.net](mailto:marty-carole@comcast.net); Trey Cooksey <[Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov)>; Tim Hogsett <[Tim.Hogsett@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Tim.Hogsett@tpwd.texas.gov)>; Erick Hetzel <[Erick.Hetzel@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Erick.Hetzel@tpwd.texas.gov)>; Chris Sheffield <[Chris.Sheffield@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Chris.Sheffield@tpwd.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Bobcat Woods Trail Extension Rcreational Trail Clearance. RT15011 CSJ 2222-16-011 Brazoria County. HOU

Shera,

The next step is for me to submit an Federal Project Authorization Agreement (FPAA) form to FHWA which will obligate funding to the project. When that is approved by FHWA and sent back to me, I can write the local grant agreement and send to Marty. Unfortunately, this is FHWA's end of fiscal year and I have been informed that their financial system is going to be down until early October (next week). So, I will send the FPAA over to them today and request it be input ASAP, but it may be sometime next week before I get it back. Due to my out of state travel I expect that I can get the local grant agreement to Marty by the third week of October. Thank you for your help in getting this process back on track.

Thank you,

Trey Cooksey

Recreational Trails Program / Boating Access Program Manager  
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department  
4200 Smith School Road

Austin, TX 78744  
Office:(512) 389-8743

**From:** Marty Cornell [mailto:marty-carole@comcast.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 29, 2016 9:27 PM  
**To:** 'Trey Cooksey' <Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov>; 'Shera Eichler' <Shera.Eichler@house.texas.gov>  
**Cc:** jennifer\_sanchez@fws.gov; 'Curtis\_Jones@fws.gov' <Curtis\_Jones@fws.gov>; 'Ed' <ed77566@comcast.net>  
**Subject:** RE: Bobcat Woods Trail Extension Rcreational Trail Clearance. RT15011 CSJ 2222-16-011 Brazoria County. HOU

Thank you Trey and Shera for staying on this. I would hope that this exercise will lead to TDOT more efficiently processing future recreational trail grants. We will now gear up to order materials and plan work days to get this trail project moving at our end. I understand that we should not spend and funds until the grant agreement is signed, and that competitive bidding will be required for some elements of our project.

I especially look forward to the opening ceremonies of the enhanced Bobcat Woods Trail and you two and Representative Bonnen can be assured of an invitation to the celebration.

Best personal regards,

Marty Cornell

Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges.

**From:** Marty Cornell [mailto:marty-carole@comcast.net]  
**Sent:** Friday, **October 28**, 2016 2:14 PM  
**To:** 'Trey Cooksey' <Albert.Cooksey@tpwd.texas.gov>; 'Shera Eichler' <Shera.Eichler@house.texas.gov>  
**Cc:** 'Harold Stone' <Harold.Stone@tpwd.texas.gov>; 'Tim Hogsett' <Tim.Hogsett@tpwd.texas.gov>; 'Erick Hetzel' <Erick.Hetzel@tpwd.texas.gov>; 'Chris Sheffield' <Chris.Sheffield@tpwd.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Bobcat Woods Trail Extension Rcreational Trail Clearance. RT15011 CSJ 2222-16-011 Brazoria County. HOU

Hello Trey, I note that the third week in October has passed, so I am inquiring to the progress of the FPAA form through the FHWA and our local grant agreement. This dry weather would be perfect for working on our Bobcat Woods Trail.

Best regards,

Marty Cornell

Grant Administrator

Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges.

