



Bois d’Arc Lake Mitigation Area to Serve as Regional Site for Texas Native Seeds Program Research

***North Texas Municipal Water District Approves Site Use;
RES LLC Provides Funding for Three-year Restoration Research Project***

September 9, 2019 – Austin and Riverby, TX – The Texas Native Seeds Program is filling a crucial gap in its statewide coverage by adding the Bois d’Arc Lake Mitigation Area in Fannin County as a research site for comparative testing of native grass varieties. The three-year study will identify the best locally-adapted grasses and forbs to use for native plant restoration projects in the area, and will immediately benefit the mitigation site itself.

The Texas Native Seeds (TNS) Program, a research program of the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute (CKWRI) at Texas A&M University-Kingsville, is a statewide collaborative initiative aimed at increasing seed sources of native plants for use in restoration projects. Over the last 20 years, the model has proven successful in South, Central, and West Texas. A priority for the East Texas Natives Project, part of the overall state program that began in 2018, has been finding a suitable site and research sponsor for the oak woods and prairies ecoregion in northeast Texas.

“We’re very excited to have such a well-located site, with a bonus of being able to leverage RES’ onsite operations and practical experience to help with the research,” says Forrest Smith, the Dan L Duncan Endowed Director of TNS. “Our native seed research has helped establish seed supplies and planting practices across the state. The research at Riverby Ranch will help us guide future successful plantings along highway and pipeline rights of way in northeast Texas, as well as on private land, where land use is shifting towards goals of provision of wildlife habitat and hunting opportunities - which are supported by native plants. We’re grateful for the new partnership with RES and the water district.”

The North Texas Municipal Water District, which owns the mitigation site in Riverby, Texas, as part of the Bois d’Arc Lake reservoir project, and RES LLC, the ecological restoration contractor, are fully supporting the use of the grassland tracts of the 17,000-acre site for the seeds study. RES is donating \$300,000 to help cover costs of the project, including supplies, researcher expenses, and supporting a graduate student at CKWRI. RES will partner with TNS researchers to test seed mixes, seed varieties, planting methodologies and plant performance. The research team broke ground at Riverby Ranch on September 6 with site preparation for the first test plantings.

“We’re delighted to support this important effort that will provide ecological benefits to the entire region as well as our mitigation project,” says Steve Long, Bois d’Arc Lake Project Manager for the North Texas Municipal Water District.

“This is an ideal partnership opportunity for our restoration work at Riverby Ranch,” says Elliott Bouillion, RES President and CEO. “We’re thrilled to be supporting and learning from the TNS team and to join the coalition of partners who are funding this research and need this knowledge to be great ecological stewards of the land. As a bonus, the conservation areas we manage, including Riverby Ranch, will benefit directly from access to seed supplies and best practice knowledge.”

About the Texas Native Seed Program

The East Texas Natives Project and Texas Native Seed Program are research efforts operated as part of the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute at Texas A&M University-Kingsville. Other current financial supporters of East Texas Natives include the Texas Department of Transportation, Mrs. Ellen Temple, USDA NRCS, U.S. Forest Service, The Piney Woods Foundation, Rufus and Joan Duncan, and Trans Canada Pipeline Company. For more information, visit <https://www.ckwri.tamuk.edu/research-programs/texas-native-seeds-programs-tns>.

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About North Texas Municipal Water District

The North Texas Municipal Water District is the regional wholesale provider of water, wastewater, and solid waste services for approximately 1.7 million residents across ten counties in North Texas – one of the fastest-growing regions in the U.S. For more information, visit www.NTMWD.com.

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About RES

RES is the nation’s largest environmental services operating company providing ecological restoration and water resource solutions to the public and private sector. RES delivers turnkey, land-based projects that build natural resilience into ecosystems, enabling them to thrive in step with economic growth. For more information, visit www.res.us.

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