

Charro Ranch Park Propagation Area Proposal

This document will summarize the objectives of the propagation area intended to be built within Charro Ranch Park. It will go over the overview and goals of the project, as well as specifics such as location, funding, construction, watering, design, construction/ installation, how volunteers will be involved, and a potential removal plan if the propagation area is no longer being used.

Overview and Goals:

The objective of this project is to create a high-fenced area to propagate seeds of plants gathered from local ecotypes in order to bolster native populations and increase species diversity within Charro Ranch Park. The reason that the propagation area needs to be high-fenced is due to the relentless browsing of deer in this area. In order to propagate plants and grow them to a reasonable size for transplanting within the park, this must be done in a protected area. Once plants reach a reasonable size or stage of growth, we can plant them in certain protected areas such as underneath an Ashe Juniper or within Agarita bushes, so they have the best chance of reaching maturity despite browsing. Having a designated area near the front of the park also lends itself to easier water access, increased volunteer accessibility, and allows the area to serve as another key feature to Charro Ranch Park. For more detailed information on the larger goals and objectives of the propagation area, as well as the rationale the benefits of the propagation method this area allows for, see the “Restoration within the Dripping Springs Park System” Student Leadership Grant PDF.

Location:

The location of the propagation area will be near the front entrance of the park, in close proximity to the parking lot gate, behind the pavilion and rainwater collection system. There are two potential locations where the 10x12 propagation area may be placed, outlined in red on the reference map below. Either location would work, with the one closer to the birdwatching area providing more shade.



Funding:

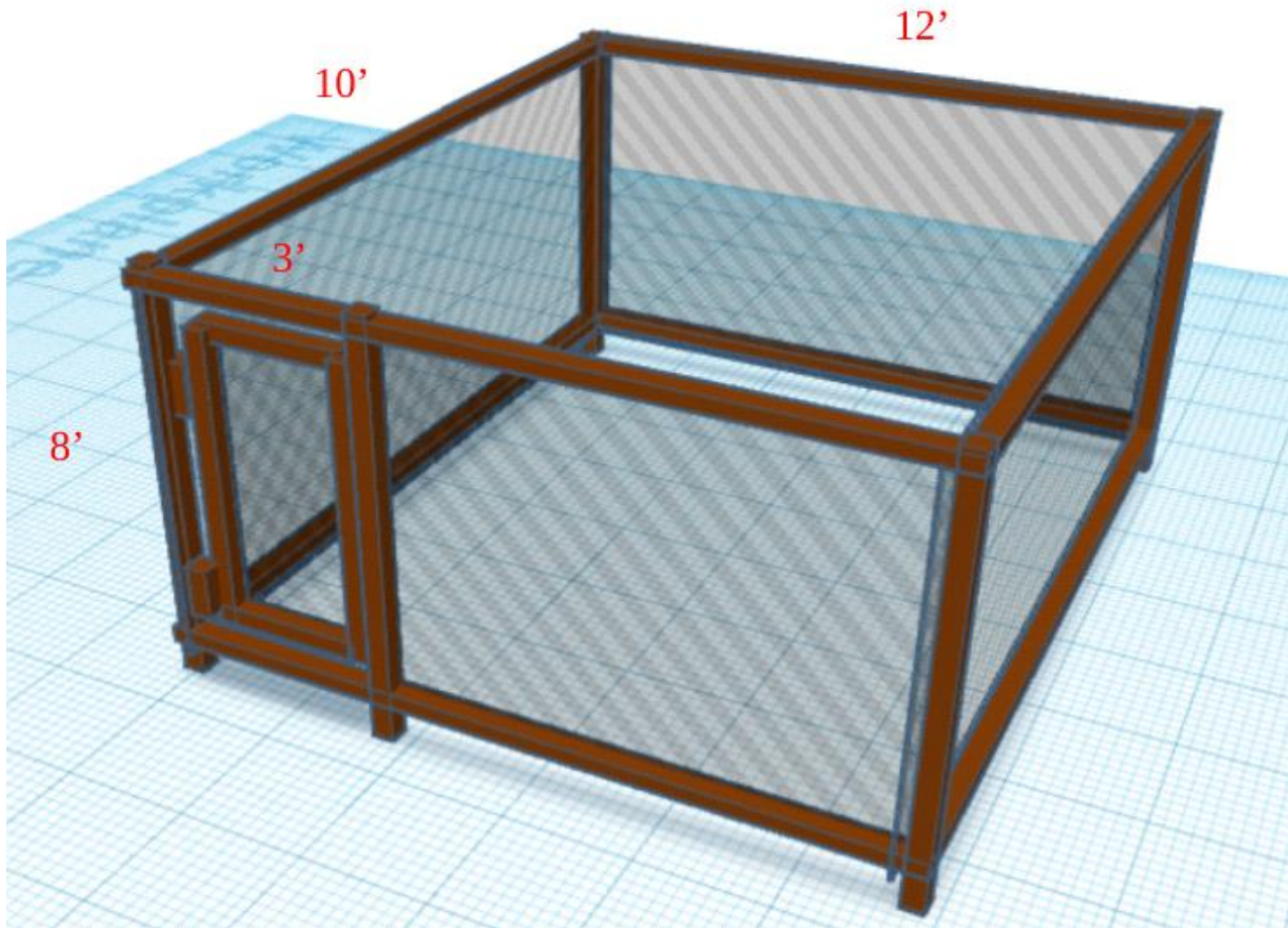
The funding for this project will be donated by the Dripping Springs Education Foundation, through a Student Leadership Grant for \$1000. Here is a link to a vendor list and budget, which tells where and how the funds will be used:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Nj3Y6a3JgxWxL-yXauN2rCUkdBRkHtEerk9T_jDyqUw/edit#gid=0. As of now, \$965 has been allocated to the

initial construction of the propagation area, and the purchasing of necessary equipment. Price estimates took into account tax, supply chain issues, and other unexpected scenarios, such as needing an extra unit of some material, so there is a good chance that more than \$35 will be left. Leftover funds will be set aside to use for future maintenance directly related to the propagation area, future purchases, or projects to add onto the propagation area, such as a misting system.

Design:

The propagation area will be constructed out of a frame square tubing, using cattle panels as a barrier to fill the edges of the frame. There will also be a small gate for entrance into the propagation area, and, if there are leftover or scrap materials, a small table will be built out of square tubing and cattle panel in a corner of the frame that will serve as a potting area. The basic frame of the propagation area is shown in the rendering below:

**Construction/Installation:**

The construction of this project will be done off site, with the help of Cory Kirk (my father) who welds metal and has experience creating metal frames similar to the one being constructed. After the frame is constructed off site, it will be moved by trailer, (that he will provide), to Charro Ranch Park. The frame will simply be set onto the ground at its designated location, without using concrete to set in any posts. Instead, soil and rocks may be arranged at the site to ensure that the propagation area is level.

Watering/Water Source:

The water for the propagation area will come from the rainwater collection tank on site, and be transported via hose and/or watering cans.

Volunteers/Maintenance:

The propagation area will be operated and maintained by volunteers. Currently, Charro Ranch Park has a surplus of volunteers, some of whom may be interested in helping with the

propagation area. I will create and share a google document or sheet with the scheduling shifts for watering, along with specific instructions for watering and care of the plants. At first, I will be heavily involved and do all of the watering, which is not a problem as I live closeby. In the future, I hope to bring in volunteers from the high school who are interested in Texas Native Plants or are in classes such as Environmental Science. I want this propagation area to serve as a tool for learners and naturalists in the community as well.

Removal Plan (if necessary):

If the propagation area is not being used for a long period of time, (i.e. not due to seasonal seed collecting), it can be removed from the site to another park or alternate location, used for another purpose, or it can be disassembled to create another project. Ideally, it stays in its location, and is used as storage in this case, as someone may revive it in the future. One key component is that it will not be set into the ground with concrete, so it will be easy to remove.