

Project Grant Application

Applicant Name: Sue Harding, phone: 712-253-8222, email: svrharding@gmail.com

Project #/Name: 1010 Charro Ranch Park

Describe the activities and key purpose of the project as it is today:

The key purpose of the Master Naturalist's involvement in Charro Ranch Park is to help restore, educate and promote a natural Hill Country experience for people of Dripping Springs and Hays County. To that end, one of the activities we do on our monthly workday is to help maintain and occasionally add to a native plant demonstration garden. The demo garden is located in the critical entry area of the park where people pass through to access running and walking trails, visit the bird blind, or access picnic areas.

Other activities covered in our monthly workdays are weeding and mulching trails, keeping invasive species in check, regularly thinning juniper thickets, filling the bird feeders and maintaining the water guzzler for the birds, participating in bird counts and bio blitzes, using brush to prevent cut-through paths throughout the park, and general trail upkeep.

How many volunteer hours were credited to the project in last 12 months? 284.50 hours, Jan-Nov

On average, how many MN volunteers work on your project in a given year? 21 volunteers this year

On average, how many non-MN volunteers work on your project in a given year? 7 volunteers (3 yr. avg.)

Describe how you would use a Grant to enhance/expand your Project:

Since educating the general public is part of our mission, we feel the native plant demo garden needs a significant upgrade in the following ways:

- 1) expand the number of species from the current 18 to 32 (adding 14 new species)
- 2) place plant ID tags at all 32 species
- 3) create a new brochure, placed in the information kiosk, that will give a short summary of the plants in the demonstration garden, and will highlight:
 - a. Plants that are beneficial to pollinators (hummingbirds, butterflies, bees)
 - b. That all species are native to the Hill Country or well adapted and thrive with low water
 - c. Not only the wildlife value but also the ornamental value for homeowners

The new design of the demo garden (see attached) would consolidate areas of native plants within clearly designated rock lined areas thereby making it easier for contract landscaping crews to mow around the native plants.

Amount requested: \$1500.00 (see Line-Item Budget Summary and Plant Schedule with Costs from 2 wholesale nurseries)

Timeline for Completion: MN workdays February, 2022 through May, 2022