



# ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2021



## 2020-2021

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David Crow  
Vice-Chairman  
Corpus Christi

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Fort Worth

Russell Marshall  
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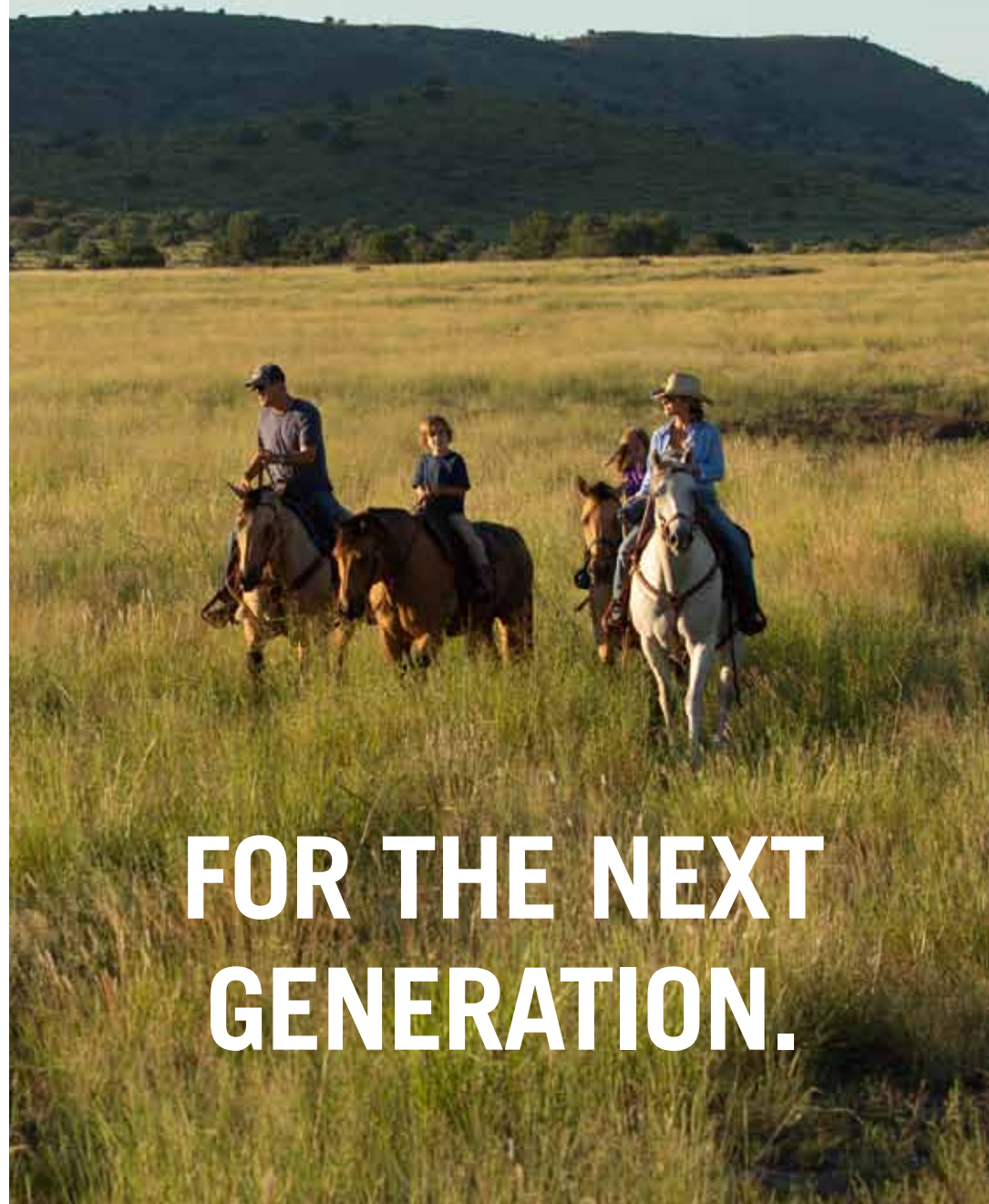
Clark Willingham  
Dallas

Jesse Womack III  
Austin



Our mission is to conserve the Texas heritage of agricultural lands, wildlife habitats, and natural resources.

Since 2007, we've gained the trust of landowners across Texas to help conserve working lands for future generations. Our work is guided by the steadfast leadership of our Board of Directors and a dedicated staff of professionals. We are committed to our common goal of preserving the heritage of agricultural land.



# FOR THE NEXT GENERATION.



## LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

### For the next generation.

From the very first conservation easements we closed in 2007, preserving the heritage of land that supports wildlife, agriculture, and Texan families has been our number one goal.

Legendary West Texas ranchers Claytie and Modesta Williams were intrigued with the concept of a land trust created by landowners for landowners. As they pondered their estate planning and how to pass their life's work down to the next generation, they wanted to be sure the land they fiercely loved would be protected forever.

That's how Happy Cove Ranch and High Lonesome Ranch became the first two easements closed by the new land trust on the Texas range, the Texas Agricultural Land Trust (TALT). Those first two easements protected more than 70,000 acres of working lands, and immediately put TALT on the map as the largest state-based land trust in Texas.

Claytie and Modesta's reputation also helped dispel some of the misperceptions about conservation easements, opening the door for other Texas landowners to consider whether a conservation easement could be a tool that would work for them.

We've come a long way since 2007, when TALT was formed by the leadership of the Texas Wildlife Association, Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association and the Texas Farm Bureau. Since then, we've worked with landowners across the state and have partnered with over 30 families, forever protecting more than 236,000 acres.

Today we are exploring new tools that will support the next generation of stewards who will inherit these incredible family legacies. These tools aim to meet the needs of the next generation of land stewards like Jeff Williams and Chim Wellborn who are stepping up to care for their parents' beloved Happy Cove and High Lonesome ranches.

Thank you to our generous donors, exceptional board, dedicated staff, and landowner partners who believe in our work. We are honored to serve the next generation of land stewards, and remain committed to keeping Texas big, wide and open.

We appreciate your support.

*Charles Davidson and Chad Ellis*



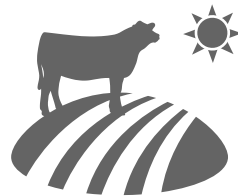


# TALT STRATEGIC PLAN

Keeping Texas big, wide and open is the end game of the work we do every day. In 2021, TALT engaged its Board of Directors and Advisory Board to develop a new strategic plan to guide our work going forward. Four key guideposts emerged as our organization's focus.

## 1 PROTECTING WORKING LANDS

Providing flexible tools to protect working lands and being a trusted source of information is the foundation of our efforts. In addition to conservation easements, we are helping to connect landowners to new innovations such as ecosystem services markets that will help landowners capitalize on the carbon, water and biodiversity resources that are part of their land heritage.



## 3 ADVOCATING FOR LANDOWNERS

We are a voice for Texas landowners in Austin and in DC. We played an instrumental role in urging the creation and funding of the Texas Farm and Ranch Lands Conservation Program and championing Farm Bill programs like the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program. Today we continue our advocacy to bolster these voluntary programs that benefit private landowners and our open spaces.

## 2 BUILDING COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships built on mutual respect are critical to our success. From forging relationships with the state and federal conservation programs that support landowners, to the non-governmental organizations that advance private land conservation, to financial and estate planning industries, we build partnerships that ensure working lands stay working.



## 4 DRIVING ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS

Minding the business of our organization is key to our success. That's why we are working toward establishing an endowment that will fund our organization for years to come. We also are committed to diverse board and staff leadership that ensures our relevancy as the demographics of our state and of Texas landowners change.

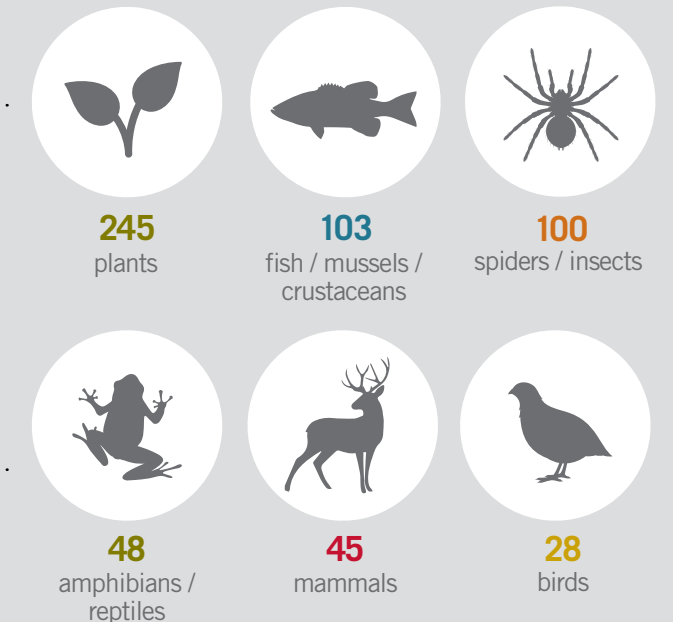
# PROTECTING TEXAS WORKING LANDS PROTECTS TEXAS WILDLIFE

According to the American Farmland Trust, Texas' agricultural working land is the most threatened in the nation, having lost 1.3 million acres between 2001 and 2016. This development and fragmentation destroy critical habitat for many plants and animals. Fortunately, TALT has more than 236,000 acres of conserved working lands that protect a diverse range of habitats that support hundreds of plant and animal species.



TALT holds easements on **8** of the **10** ecoregions of Texas

As many as **569** species in need of conservation across the state of Texas can find a home on habitat protected by TALT:



Thank you to the Texas A&M Natural Resource Institute for their analysis of TALT's data. To learn more about these numbers and how these impacts were calculated, visit [txaglandtrust.org/habitatdata](http://txaglandtrust.org/habitatdata)

Within habitat types found on TALT easements, potential supported species include:



Data derived from county-level analysis of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Species of Greatest Conservation Need list.



# Passing on a Family Land Legacy to the Next Generation

**Jeff Williams** and **Chim Wellborn** grew up roaming the wide-open spaces of the West Texas ranches their father and mother cherished. Their parents, Claytie and Modesta Williams, purchased Happy Cove Ranch in the early 1970s, followed by the High Lonesome Ranch soon after. The two ranches encompass more than 70,000 acres of ruggedly beautiful Trans-Pecos terrain in Jeff Davis and Brewster counties.

**“For me, Happy Cove is a slice of heaven and it has raised our families,” said Chim Wellborn, Claytie and Modesta’s youngest daughter. “I could not imagine ever splitting it up.”**

Fortunately, for Chim and Jeff and the extended Williams family, the land will always remain whole. As part of their estate planning, Claytie and Modesta placed a conservation easement on portions of both ranches in 2007, forever protecting their family legacy.

Jeff will be the next generation of the Williams family to steward the High Lonesome Ranch, and Chim will be keeping a watchful eye over Happy Cove. Jeff and Chim take their role as next generation land stewards very seriously.

“There’s something in the land out here that just gets inside you and it’s impossible to get out,” said Jeff. “Keeping it whole and in its natural state is really important to me.”

“Mom and Dad put so much work into these ranches, and it was absolutely a passion for them,” agreed Chim. “They had incredible foresight to explore a conservation easement. Now it is our responsibility to take care of this land for the rest of our lives.”



“There’s something in the land out here that just gets inside you and it’s impossible to get out.”

– Jeff Williams



## ★ Conservation Easements Closed in FYE 2021



Former Texas Speaker of the House **Gib Lewis** donated an easement on his 1,000-acre SO3 Ranch in Burnet County. The easement protects a tributary of the Brazos River and includes native prairie and open space which provides habitat for myriad species of wildlife.



**Perry Donop Jr.** donated an easement on the Donop Llano River Ranch in Mason County, forever protecting 423 acres, including river frontage. It provides habitat for a variety of species from white-tailed deer to songbirds, waterfowl and upland game birds.



**Myrna and David K. Langford and their family** donated an easement on Laurels Ranch in Kendall County, one of the fastest growing areas in the country. The easement protects 298 acres and is home to numerous wildlife species and a creek and springs that feed the Guadalupe River.



Thanks to funding from the Texas Farm and Ranchland Conservation Program, the Jacob and Terese Hershey Foundation and the Texas Land Trust Council, **Sky Lewey** closed on an easement on her family’s Open V Ranch. The ranch sits on more than 200 acres along the Nueces River and Bird Springs Creek in Uvalde County and is part of the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone.



**Teresa Ohlrich Johnson and her husband Rob Johnson** donated an easement on 123 acres of their JO Ranch in Comal County, forever protecting the land. Were the JO Ranch to be sold and developed, more than 600 homes could be accommodated. Now, because of the easement, that will never happen.



## TEXAS AG LAND TRUST FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING MARCH 31, 2021

### Statement of Financial Position

#### ASSETS

	2021	2020
Cash and Investments	1,364,761	980,350
Receivables and other Assets	1,524,301	1,909,862
Investments Restricted for Endowment	5,145,210	3,445,862
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 8,034,272</b>	<b>\$ 6,336,074</b>

#### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Accounts Payable and other Liabilities	68,613	44,292
Net Assets (with and without Donor Restrictions):		
Operations	1,953,859	2,005,174
Operating Reserve	497,607	455,093
Easement Defense	169,484	131,794
Mitigation Long-term Management Fund	816,942	610,880
Stewardship Endowment	1,493,395	956,240
Forever Texas Fund® Endowment	3,034,372	2,132,601
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 8,034,272</b>	<b>\$ 6,336,074</b>

### Statement of Activities

#### REVENUE AND SUPPORT

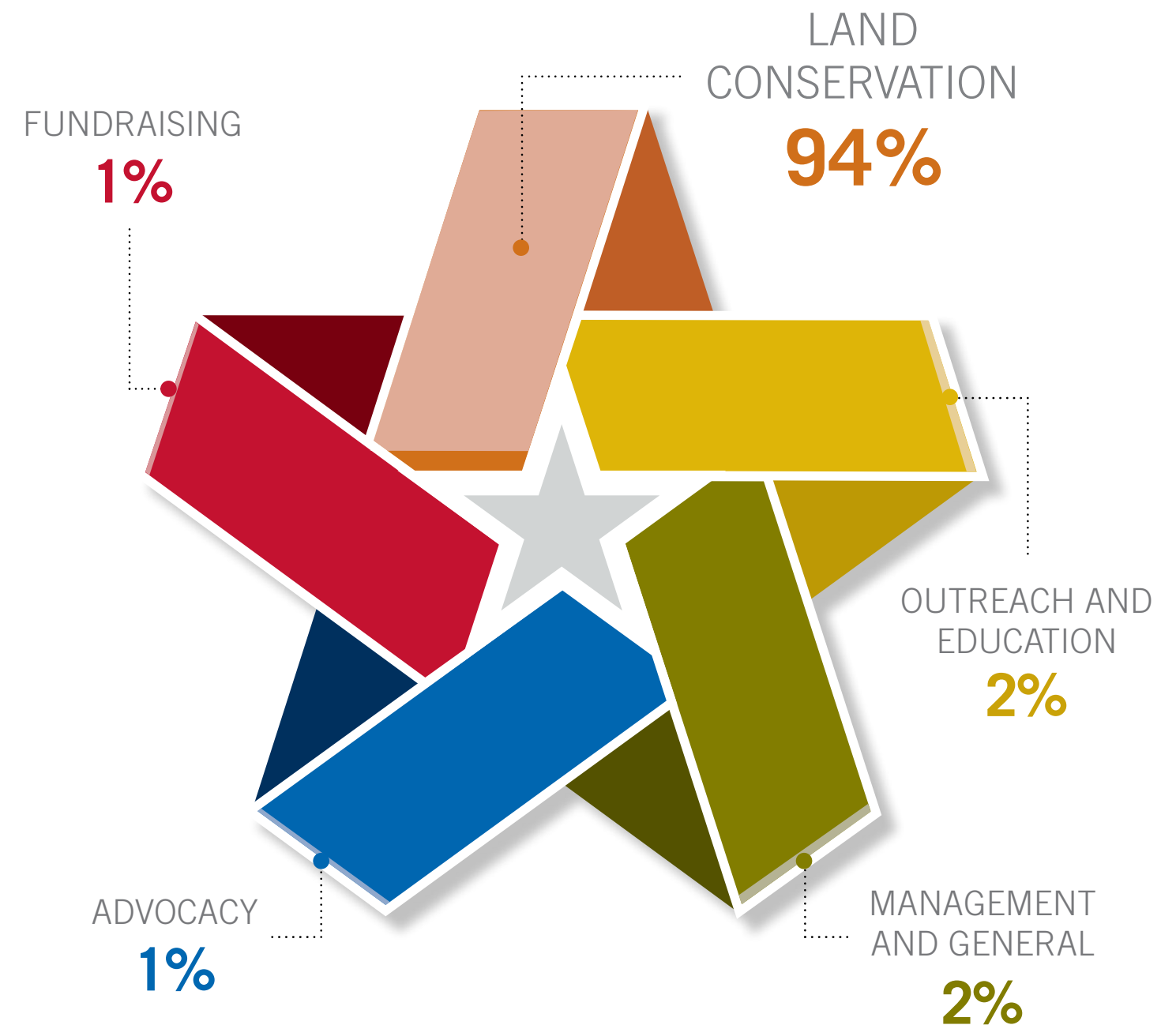
Contributions:		
Foundation and Government Grants	727,500	2,488,849
Individuals and Corporations	605,470	813,613
Donated Conservation Easements	12,444,500	8,214,500
Fees for Service and Events	94,765	64,719
Income Investment/Other	1,595,483	(392,918)
<b>TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT</b>	<b>\$15,467,718</b>	<b>\$ 11,188,763</b>

#### EXPENSES

Program	675,757	749,889
Conservation Easements	12,799,000	8,927,000
Management and General	206,439	274,633
Fundraising	112,645	128,396
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$13,793,841</b>	<b>\$ 10,079,918</b>
Change in Net Assets	1,673,877	1,108,845
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	6,291,782	5,182,937
<b>NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 7,965,659</b>	<b>\$ 6,291,782</b>

## PROGRAM AND OPERATING EXPENSES

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING MARCH 31, 2021



The Texas Agricultural Land Trust Foundation (TALTF) is a supporting foundation of the Texas Agricultural Land Trust, and houses its endowments and stewardship funds. These financial highlights include activity from both TALT and TALTF.

Audited financial statements and copies of IRS Form 990 are available upon request.

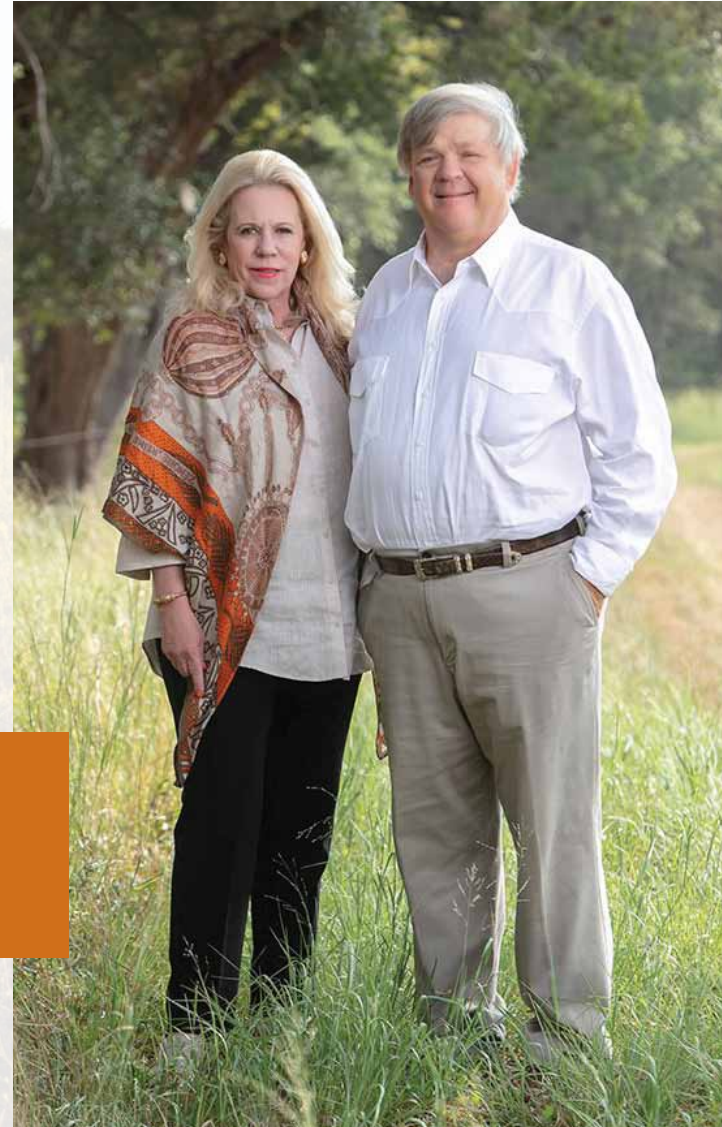


# Steve and Susan Lewis Give Back to Texas ☆

Carrying on a legacy is a Lewis family tradition. Steve C. Lewis' family has been at the helm of Jefferson Bank in San Antonio for nearly 75 years. The family has a similar legacy in land stewardship, operating ranches in Kendall, Medina and Schleicher counties.

About 15 years ago, a family friend approached him to help get a new agricultural land trust off the ground. Blair Fitzsimons convinced Steve to sign on, and he became TALT's founding board chair.

"The notion that my great-grandchildren will be able to see a wide-open Texas is important to me," said Steve, who also owns a ranch real estate company. "As a ranch broker, I've seen many tracts of land broken up. Landowners have the right to sell, and no one can blame them. But I decided I wanted to volunteer for the folks who want to keep as much of it whole as possible."



**“ It means so much to us that the wide-open spaces of Texas will be conserved for future generations. ”**

– Susan Lewis

A few years ago, TALT created an endowment, called the Forever Texas Fund, to ensure that TALT's work will continue in perpetuity. Steve and his wife Susan updated their wills to leave a planned gift to support the endowment after they are gone.

"It was an easy decision for Susan and I to include a gift to the Forever Texas Fund in our last will and testament," said Steve. "We hope other Texas landowners will follow suit."

"It means so much to us that the wide-open spaces of Texas will be conserved for future generations," agreed Susan. "Not just for our grandchildren and great-grandchildren, but for all Texans."

## FOR WIDE-OPEN SPACES. FOR TEXAS. FOREVER.



Just as TALT's conservation easements will endure in perpetuity, so must TALT. The Forever Texas Fund, an endowment held by the Texas Agricultural Land Trust Foundation, supports TALT's operations and programs. The Forever Texas campaign, chaired by Steve C. Lewis and Joseph Fitzsimons, has a \$10 million goal to support the endowment. As of March 31, 2021, just over \$3 million has been raised. Please help us protect Texas – forever – with a gift to the Forever Texas Fund.®

# TEXAS AG LAND TRUST ANNUAL DONORS

April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021

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Perry R. Bass II Foundation  
Gary Farmer  
Joseph & Blair Fitzsimons  
Mrs. George C. "Tim" Hixon  
Johnny & Ruthie Russell

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Perry T. Donop Jr.  
Teresa & Rob Johnson  
The Myrna & David K. Langford Family  
Gib Lewis  
Open V Ranch

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*\*Members of the Founders' Council are Annual Fund donors who contribute \$1,000 or more.*

*Please accept our sincere apologies for any unintentional mistakes or names that have been omitted. We have listed donations that were received by 3/31/2021.*



TALT appreciates the support of the many generous donors who make our work possible.



Please join us in keeping Texas big, wide, and open  
by giving to the FOREVER TEXAS FUND.®

FOREVER  
TEXAS  
FUND®

