

# Concerned Public to the Rescue of Texas State Parks

## Register for April 7<sup>th</sup> Texas State Parks Funding Forum

On Friday, April 7, 2006, the Houston Regional Group/Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club and the Texas Coalition for Conservation in cooperation with the University of Houston-Downtown are co-hosting a forum on the issue of chronic underfunding of the Texas state parks and possible long-term funding options. Its purpose is to give people the information they need to be effective advocates for our state park system.

In addition to explaining the current financial and political situation facing the Texas state parks, the forum will go beyond the Texas experience. The state park systems of Arkansas and Florida went through tough times, just as in Texas. Speakers from Arkansas and Florida will tell us how they solved their funding problems and how they gained the support of their state officials and voters to implement long-term funding solutions.

The forum begins at 8:45 AM at the Wilhemina Cullen Robertson Auditorium and ends at 3:45 PM. Registration check-in will begin at 8:00 AM. The cost of the forum is \$28 and includes continental breakfast, lunch, and snack and an information book. People can continue the conversation at a reception after the forum.

Our confirmed speakers and topics include:

**Joe Turner, Director, Houston Parks & Recreation Department**

*Welcome & Opening Remarks:*

*Why a City Parks Director Cares About State Park Funding*

**Dr. John Crompton, Distinguished Professor of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences, Texas A & M University**

*Economic Contributions of State Parks*

**Walter D. Dabney, State Parks Director, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department**

*The State of the Texas State Parks*

**Todd Kercheval, Chief of Staff, House Committee on Culture, Recreation, & Tourism, State Representative Harvey Hilderbran (Chairman)**

*What the Texas Legislature Can Do*

**Richard Davies, Executive Director of the Arkansas Department of Parks & Tourism**

*The Arkansas Turnaround*

**Steve Dana, Budget Manager, Division of Recreation & Parks, Florida Department of Environmental Protection**

*The Forever Florida Solution*

**George Bristol, President, Texas Coalition for Conservation**

*State Funding of Parks*

**Ken Kramer, Director of the Lone Star Chapter Sierra Club**

*Panelist*

There will be two panel discussions:

*The Pros & Cons of the Arkansas & Florida Solutions in Texas and*

*Telling the Parks Funding Story to the People & the Legislature*

If you care about the Texas state parks, you should be at this forum. Send your \$28 registration to: Houston Sierra Club, P.O. Box 3021; Houston, TX 77253-3021. Registration should be received no later than March 31, 2006. Confirmation and directions will be sent by e-mail. Please contact Evelyn Merz at 713-644-8228 or at [elmerz@hal-pc.org](mailto:elmerz@hal-pc.org) if you have questions.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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