

Foreword

The Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist, Inc. Policies and Procedures Manual serves as the Chapter Operating Handbook. It is based upon three documents from the TMN State program: (1) Chapter Operating Template, (2) Bylaws Template, and (3) Chapter Management Guidelines. This manual is intended to define and document Chapter policies, management guidelines, and operating procedures. The manual is designed to:

- Maintain a current and easily accessible guide to all Chapter policies and procedures
- Inform the membership of Chapter policies and procedures
- Facilitate continuity of Chapter operation regardless of changes in officers and committees
- Ensure the periodic review and updating of all Chapter policies and procedures

This Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist, Inc. Policies and Procedures Manual is organized in sections. Section I defines terms used throughout the manual. Section II addresses policies for operation of the Chapter. Section III delineates the responsibilities and operating procedures for Chapter officers, committees, and committee chairs. Appendices to this document consist of documents from which these policies and procedures are derived, current Chapter forms and templates, and State standards and processes.

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Section I—Definitions

Chapter Name

The name of this organization is the Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist, Inc. It may also be referred to in this document as the Mid-Coast Chapter, or the Chapter.

Parent Organization

Texas Master Naturalist Program™ or “State Program”

State Program Sponsors

Texas Parks & Wildlife Department and Texas AgriLife Extension Service

Chapter Mission

The Mid-Coast Chapter takes its mission from the State parent organization: "to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources within the Chapter area."

Chapter Activities

Chapter activities include meetings, field trips, volunteer projects, training, and other events that may be deemed appropriate to Chapter goals and the TMN mission.

Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of this organization runs from January 1 to December 31 of each year.

Elected Officers

The Officers of this organization are President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, and Treasurer. All officers must be members in good standing. Officers serve for a period of 12 months and are eligible for re-election.

Executive Committee

The elected officers, plus the immediate Past-President, chairmen of the standing committees, a representative from at least one of the sponsoring organizations as Chapter Advisor, and a representative from the most recent training class constitute the Executive Committee. For the purpose of this Policies and Procedures Manual and all Chapter Operating Procedures, the terms "Executive Committee," "Board of Directors," and "Board" mean the same and may be used interchangeably.

Standing Committees

Standing committees carry out the missions of the Chapter. Committee chairs are appointed by the President with the consent of the Executive Committee. Committee chairs choose their own committee members. Current standing committees are:

- Membership
- Education & Training
- Projects
- Outreach

Special Committees

A special committee may be appointed by the President to perform a specific task. Once the task is completed, the committee is disbanded. Special committees likely to be appointed include:

- Financial Review
- Nominating
- Policies and Procedures Review

Membership

Member categories are: member-in-training, associate member, certified member, and honorary member. See details of each category at [Membership in Section II](#).

Resident

A resident owns or rents property within the appropriate area.

Good Standing

Associate and Certified members are considered to be in good standing if current in dues payment and in compliance with Master Naturalist Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct. A member in good standing may vote and hold office.

Partner

A Chapter Partner provides partner resources (See definition) to the Mid-Coast Chapter in exchange for and support of volunteer service. Chapter partners may change depending on the project needs of the community and the resource needs of the Chapter. The partnership can be dissolved at any time by written request from either partner.

Limited Partner

Limited Partners provide Mid-Coast Chapter members with volunteer opportunities that meet the TMN mission, but provide no resources in support of the activity.

Partner Resources

Supplies, equipment, or other assets necessary to carry out a volunteer project. Partners may provide meeting space or other support for conducting Chapter business.

Donor

A business, organization, or person giving money or other resources to the Chapter with no compensation in return.

Parliamentary Authority

All Chapter meetings are conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

Section II—Chapter Policies

Commitment to State TMN Requirements

The Mid-Coast Chapter agrees to comply with State requirements and standards in return for the general supervision, guidance, supplies, resources, and cooperative helpfulness afforded by the Texas Master Naturalist Program. We agree to produce and submit an annual report conforming to the standards set forth by the State Advisory Committee.

Texas Master Naturalist Title

The title, Texas Master Naturalist™ or Master Naturalist (in Texas) is a trademark of the Master Naturalist program and is to be used only by individuals trained through recognized Master Naturalist Chapters. The Texas Master Naturalist title may not be used for advertising or other business, personal or professional purposes. The Texas Master Naturalist title may not be identified with any particular political viewpoint and may not be used by groups or individuals as they participate in political advocacy. The title is to be used only when doing unpaid volunteer work associated with and approved by the program. Violation of the policy concerning the use of the title of Texas Master Naturalist is grounds for disciplinary action or possible grounds for revoking the charter of the Chapter.

Chapter Description

The Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist, Inc. is incorporated as a Texas Non-profit Corporation and has been determined by the Internal Revenue Service to be a tax-exempt corporation as described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code as a non-profit, educational, and charitable association. See [Appendix B](#) for incorporation documents and IRS determination.

For purposes of the nonprofit corporation, the Mid-Coast Chapter's home address is defined as the address of the Chapter member responsible for communications with state and federal offices. The Chapter area currently consists of eight counties: Matagorda, Jackson, Victoria, Calhoun, Refugio, Goliad, Aransas, and San Patricio.

Chapter Management

The management authority of the Chapter is the will of the members in good standing. The will of the membership is expressed by attending membership meetings and making and voting on motions at those meetings. Chapter Bylaws ([Appendix A](#)) delegate day-to-day management of the Chapter affairs to the Executive Committee.

Membership

Membership in the Chapter is open to qualifying individuals regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, disability, or national origin.

New Members come into the Chapter through the training program. Applicants are accepted in this order:

- (1) Mid-Coast area applicants deferred from the previous year's training
- (2) Former members needing to retake training
- (3) Residents of the Mid-Coast Chapter area
- (4) Other applicants deferred from the previous year's training
- (5) Applicants from adjacent counties with no TMN chapter
- (6) Applicants from nearby counties that have a TMN chapter
- (7) Applicants from other areas of Texas

Members are expected to volunteer in our Mid-Coast area or on projects approved by the Projects Committee.

Mid-Coast Chapter Bylaws recognize three categories of membership: Member-in-Training, Associate Member, and Certified Member. The Chapter may also choose to confer honorary membership.

Member-in-Training

Individuals currently enrolled in the Texas Master Naturalist training course may participate in activities of the Chapter, but do not have voting privileges and may not hold office. Members-in-Training must participate in a minimum of 40 hours of basic training to become Associate Members.

Associate Member

Individuals who have completed a minimum of 40 hours of training, but who have not completed the requirements for certification or recertification as a "Texas Master Naturalist" are Associate Members and may participate in all activities of the Chapter, may vote, and may hold office. Associates must attain certification by completing a minimum of 8 hours of approved advanced training and a minimum of 40 hours of approved volunteer service within 12 months of the end of their initial training session. Failure to do so will result in suspension of membership. The Executive Committee may consider an exception to this rule in special circumstances.

Certified Member

Individuals who have completed the requirements and received certification as a "Texas Master Naturalist" are Certified Members and may participate in all activities of the Chapter, may vote, and may hold office. In order to retain the "Certified Member" status, members must perform a minimum of 40 hours of volunteer service and receive 8 hours of continuing education each year. A Certified member in good standing who does not maintain certification for any given year will be classified as an Associate Member until such time as recertification is attained.

Life Member

An Individual who performs 5,000 hours of volunteer service will be designated Life Member and be absolved from paying dues for life. A Life Member may participate in all activities of the Chapter, may vote, and may hold office. Life Members will continue to submit a signed insurance form each year.

Honorary Member

The Chapter may choose to honor a person for outstanding service to the Chapter by offering them honorary membership in the Chapter. Honorary members shall have all the rights and privileges of other members except that they do not pay dues and may not vote, hold office, or chair standing committees. An honorary member may be proposed to the Executive Committee by any member in good standing. If approved, the nominated person shall be elected by the majority vote of members present at any general membership meeting.

Member Transfer

When a Texas Master Naturalist member wishes to become active in the Mid-Coast Chapter, that member may do so under the following conditions, given approval by the Executive Committee:

1. The transferee brings a letter from their former chapter certifying that the transferee is a member in good standing. The letter should specify the transferee's accrued volunteer hours and training hours for the current and previous years.
2. The Mid-Coast Chapter will accept all volunteer service and advanced training hours certified in the transfer letter from the former chapter. The transferee will not owe dues for the year in which the transfer occurs.
3. The transferee must agree to adhere to all the rules and policies of the Mid-Coast Chapter.
4. It is strongly recommended that a transferee arrange with the Education & Training Committee to complete training that is specific to the Mid-Coast area.
5. In compliance with State requirements, Mid-Coast Chapter members may not carry membership in multiple chapters.

Dues

- The Executive Committee may propose a change in the amount of annual dues payable to the Chapter. All members must be notified 30 days prior to the meeting at which the dues change will be addressed. A majority vote of members present is required for passage.
- Currently annual (January-December) dues are \$15.00 for an individual or \$25.00 for a couple.
- Certified and previously certified members owe dues in January of each year. Members who have not yet certified and Members-in-Training owe dues beginning in January of the year following their initial training.
- All dues must be paid by the end of March. Failure to pay dues will result in suspension of membership. The Executive Committee may consider an exception to this rule in special circumstances.

Financial Policies

Chapter Funds

All Chapter funds shall be handled in a manner consistent with Texas AgriLife Extension Service's Financial Best Management Practices at [Appendix I](#). Chapter funds will be maintained in one or more bank accounts authorized by the Executive Committee and managed by the Treasurer using approved software. All cash and checks will be directed to the Treasurer. Checks will be made to "Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist." One officer's signature will be accepted on all Chapter checks for budgeted expenses that have been approved by the EC. Authorized signers may not sign checks payable to themselves or their spouses.

Gifts and Donations

The Chapter is authorized to accept and receive contributions and donations from any and all sources. However, the Chapter retains the right to refuse any gift which, in the judgment of the Executive Committee, would not be in the best interest of the Chapter.

Acceptance of any gift or donation—restricted or unrestricted—does not imply any form of endorsement by the Chapter. Nor does it imply any benefit—past, present, or future—to be granted by the Chapter.

Grants

The Chapter may apply for grants from any source. The decision to apply for a grant will be made by the Executive Committee and the grant application signed by the President. Granted funds will be accounted for separately from general Chapter funds.

Budgets

The Chapter will operate under an annual budget developed by the Executive Committee at the first Executive Committee meeting of the year and submitted to the Chapter for approval at the first general membership meeting of the year.

Purchasing

All purchases will be made as a part of an established budget or as otherwise authorized by the Executive Committee. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, the Chapter has tax-exempt status. When possible, purchases will be made from sources that recognize the Chapter's tax-exempt status.

Contracts

Issuance or acceptance of a contract does not imply any endorsement or benefit beyond the deliverable products and services expressly contained in the contract.

Financial Review

A Financial Review Committee will conduct an annual examination of the financial records of the Chapter after the close of the fiscal year and prior to the first general membership meeting. This review will be conducted in accordance with the procedures at [Appendix D](#). Results of the financial review will be reported at the first general membership meeting.

Records

Financial records will be retained for a minimum of 5 years. Electronic records will be duplicated and stored in another location.

Meetings

Executive Committee meetings will be held on the second Saturday of the first month of each quarter, beginning in January. Meetings may be rescheduled due to special circumstances. Additional Executive Committee meetings may be called by the President. All Executive Committee meetings are open to the membership. A simple majority of the membership of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum.

General membership meetings will be held on the second Saturday of the second month of each quarter, beginning in February. Meetings may be rescheduled due to special circumstances. The last general membership meeting of the year shall be designated the annual meeting. Those members-in-good-standing present at each duly called and convened meeting shall constitute a quorum. Other membership meetings may be called by the Executive Committee.

Voting

Actions Requiring Votes

Routine matters of business—simple majority of members in good standing present at a meeting

Election of Officers—according to procedures at [Election of Officers](#).

Dues Changes—simple majority according to procedures at Dues

Policies and Procedures changes—simple majority; according to procedures at [P&P Amendment](#)

Bylaw changes—member notification at least 15 days prior to the meeting at which the vote will be called; simple majority of entire membership in good standing; vote by email, U.S. mail, or show of hands at the meeting.

Removal of Officer—simple majority vote of entire membership in good standing according to procedures at [Replacement of Officers...](#)

Chapter Dissolution—The Chapter may be dissolved according to procedures at [Dissolution of Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist, Inc.](#)

Voting Procedures

Voting at a Meeting

Members present at the meeting may vote by voice vote, a show of hands, or paper ballot. The Secretary will certify that members voting are in good standing.

Absentee Voting

Members in good standing may vote absentee via email, mail, by paper ballot

Members will be notified at least 10 days prior to the meeting at which the issue will be voted upon, except in the case of special meeting called by the Executive Committee as stated in [Article V, section 2 of the Bylaws](#).

Voting by U.S. Mail

Members in good standing may request a ballot upon receiving notification of the vote and return it to the Secretary by U.S. mail by the date of the vote. Votes received after the date of the meeting will not be counted.

Voting by Email

The Executive Committee will create an email ballot message and the Secretary will send it to members in good standing at least 10 days prior to the meeting. The email ballot will contain these instructions:

~~~~~  
To vote using this email ballot, click \*Reply\*. Make sure the ballot still shows at the bottom of the message reply that opens. Read the items to be voted on and place an X beside "For" or "Against" for each item. Be sure to vote on all issues on the ballot. When you finish, click \*Send\*

Note: Because some issues cannot be settled without the approval of a majority of the entire membership in good standing, failure to return a ballot must be counted as a "No" vote on each item.

Absentee ballots must be received by the date of the meeting. I will send you a "received" email so that you'll know your vote has been counted. If you don't get a response within 24 hours, please contact me.  
~~~~~

<Ballot content including change and rationale>

For ____ Against ____

~~~~~

**Proxy Voting**

Members may not vote as proxy for another member. A signed paper ballot in a sealed envelope may be hand-carried to a meeting by another member.

**Initial Training**

State minimum training requirements include 40 hours of combined classroom and field experiences designed to introduce trainees to the ecosystems of the Mid-Coast Chapter area. The intent of the training is to provide trainees with the information, tools, and skills they need in order to teach this information to others. The State curriculum is used

as resource material to augment Chapter materials developed by experts in the ecosystems of the Mid-Coast area.

The Mid-Coast Chapter offers approximately 52 hours of initial training toward Texas Master Naturalist certification. If a trainee cannot complete the minimum 40 hours of initial training, the Chapter allows the hours to be made up at that specific session during the initial training the following year, or special arrangements must be made on a case-by-case basis. Until these classes are made up, a volunteer cannot become a Certified Texas Master Naturalist, but may earn volunteer service hours or advanced training hours towards certification. The Executive Committee may consider an exception to this rule in special circumstances, such as medical problems.

Upon completion of initial Mid-Coast Texas Master Naturalist training, the trainee becomes an Associate member and receives a Mid-Coast Chapter name badge. Upon completion of all the requirements within the first year, the member becomes Certified and is awarded a state certificate.

A trainee may also attend the same subject class of a neighboring chapter within the same ecoregion, given prior permission from the neighboring chapter.

New Members come into the Chapter through the training program. Class size is limited to 15 per class. The Chapter reserves the right to cancel the initial training session for any year in which too few applications are received to make up a viable class.

Initial Training is typically held once a year beginning the second Saturday in February and continuing every other Saturday through May.

Members in Training may not bring guests. Sessions are paid for only in part by their registration fees, and guests cannot be accommodated because of expense, class-size limits, and transportation considerations.

Trainees are required to bring lunches both because many sessions are at great distances from restaurants and because eating together may foster additional idea exchange and learning.

The dates for each session are subject to change, based on the needs of the subject-matter experts who provide the training. At least half of initial training is field-oriented.

Topics may include:

- Orientation to Texas Master Naturalist program
- ~ Information about State & Chapter organization
- ~ Training agenda and what to bring to each session
- ~ Chapter communication by email: trainees without it will need to make arrangements to get information
- ~ Volunteering
- ~ Advanced Training
- ~ Reporting Procedures
- ~ What makes a Naturalist
- Observation Skills and Field Notes
- Geology and Ecology of Texas
- Indians Indigenous to the Mid-Coast Area

- Interpreting Nature
- Mid-Coast Texas Ecology
- Upland Ecology
- Bay Ecology
- Barrier Island Ecology
- Coastal Prairie and Wetland Ecology
- Riparian Ecology
- Native Plant Identification and Habitat Use

## **Volunteer Service**

To become and remain a certified Texas Master Naturalist with the Mid-Coast Chapter, a member must complete a minimum of 40 hours of approved volunteer service per year. The pre-approval of volunteer service projects and opportunities is important to:

- Ensure that volunteers are covered by the personal liability insurance provided through Texas Parks and Wildlife
- Provide an up-to-date list of service projects for volunteers of the Chapter
- Ensure the goals of the organization and the partners are met

To be approved, volunteer service must meet the following guidelines:

1. Volunteer work must be of a type that furthers our TMN mission statement: "To provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within our communities." Example: Volunteers may plant, label, and maintain a native plant garden at a non-profit or public-owned facility, but a rose garden - even at such a facility - does not further our mission. This mission includes educating the public on natural resources, but it also includes managing, maintaining, and improving the environment for the benefit of wildlife and the public.
2. Volunteer work must be performed to support the Mid-Coast Chapter mission rather than to benefit another organization. Example: A member of both the Aransas Bird and Nature Club and TMN can get volunteer credit by presenting a TMN program to the bird club, but a TMN member who is also the secretary of the bird club cannot get TMN credit for hours doing that secretarial job, because it directly benefits that club and does not further the TMN mission.
3. It is expected that all volunteer service will be performed in the eight-county Mid-Coast Chapter area, or in surrounding areas with approval by the Projects Committee.
4. Volunteers who belong to two organizations that both require volunteer service as part of membership may not count the same work hours twice, getting credit from both organizations. Example: an individual who is both a Master Gardener and a Master Naturalist may not report the same hours to both organizations.
5. Volunteer work that results in a profit to another organization cannot be approved:

- ~ Volunteers may not count volunteer work for a for-profit organization.
  - ~ Volunteers may not count work for a nonprofit organization that results in the organization earning money for its own programs. Example: growing native plants for a Master Gardener plant sale would not be allowed, but helping them grow native plants for free distribution to promote native-plant use would be acceptable.
6. Volunteer work for the Mid-Coast Chapter can be counted:
- ~ Approved fund-raising efforts
  - ~ Hours spent by officers and committee chairs preparing for, executing, and reporting official Chapter functions
7. Paid work cannot be counted for Volunteer credit. Many Chapter members do very valuable work that meets the TMN mission statement criterion, but cannot count the hours because it is part of their job. Examples:
- ~ Reporters cannot get credit for writing an environmental story for which they are paid
  - ~ Teachers cannot get credit for working with students on a nature program they are required by their teaching contract to sponsor
  - ~ Paid nature-tour announcers cannot get credit for hours spent on their tours
8. All volunteer work must be approved before a Volunteer can get credit for it.
- ~ Specific projects published through the Chapter are already approved.
  - ~ Volunteer efforts must be approved by the Projects Committee. The Chapter President or Chapter Advisor may approve a project in the absence of the Projects Committee Chair.
  - ~ Volunteer efforts for any of our Partners are approved if they provide educational or environmental benefits toward meeting the TMN mission. A list of current partners is on the Chapter website at <http://midcoast.tamu.edu/PartnerOps.htm>.
9. All volunteer work is to be reported using one of the forms provided. If an effort has not already been approved, the member can complete the Request for Approval form and submit it to the Projects Committee for consideration. For an effort requiring more than one member and/or funding, the Chapter Project Plan form must be completed. Once volunteer work has been approved, the Volunteer uses the Monthly Activity Report form to quickly and briefly report volunteer work to the Chapter's Recording Secretary or delegate. All forms are available at [Appendix C](#).
- ~ Request for Approval of an Individual Volunteer Activity
  - ~ Chapter Project Plan Approval Form
  - ~ Monthly Activity Report Form
10. Volunteer hour credit is earned for time spent preparing for a volunteer activity or presentation as well as for the actual activity or presentation. Travel time to and from any volunteer activity earns volunteer credit.

| Volunteer Service Examples    |                                |      |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|------|
| Unacceptable                  | Better                         | Best |
| Being "on call" as a wildlife | Actually performing a wildlife |      |

| Volunteer Service Examples                                                      |                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Unacceptable                                                                    | Better                                                                                 | Best                                                                                                                                                     |
| rescuer for a non-partner organization                                          | rescue event for a Mid-Coast partner                                                   |                                                                                                                                                          |
| Planting exotic plants at a local school                                        | Planting native plants or a Wildscape at a local school                                | Leading students and staff in implementing a native plant garden/Wildscape at a school                                                                   |
| Cleaning the elephant cage at a zoo                                             | Caring for the Prairie Chicken area at a local zoo                                     | Leading interpretive programs about Prairie Chickens at a local zoo                                                                                      |
| Performing maintenance at a for-profit native plant nursery                     | Maintaining a native plant demonstration garden at a park/nature center                | Holding a workshop on how to install and maintain a wildscape or other native habitat.                                                                   |
| Conducting wildlife management activities on your own land                      | Conducting wildlife management practices or activities on public land                  | Teaching or assisting landowners to develop & implement their own wildlife management plans                                                              |
| Stream clean-up by a volunteer employed by a local watershed protection program | Stream clean-up by volunteers who do not work for a local watershed protection program | Volunteers conducting stream or watershed restoration practices. Or Master Naturalist volunteers coordinating a stream clean-up for the local community. |

11. Volunteers who work with children are subject to volunteer background checks in accordance with State Program guidelines. See [Appendix J](#) for procedures.

### Advanced Training

To become and remain a certified Texas Master Naturalist with the Mid-Coast Chapter, a member must complete a minimum of 8 hours of approved advanced training per year.

The purpose of advanced training is to provide Texas Master Naturalists an opportunity to focus their interests on one—or a few—specific topics that interest them. Advanced training promotes continued learning and development and provides the experienced Master Naturalist with tools to work in more advanced volunteer efforts.

To be approved as advanced training, an activity must meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Provides natural resource information applicable to Mid-Coast Texas
2. Builds on the Mid-Coast Chapter core curriculum
3. Promotes continued learning and development of naturalist skills
4. Teaches knowledge and skills required to work in an approved volunteer effort
5. Provides information required for the development of new volunteer efforts

If an opportunity for advanced training has not already been approved, a Chapter member can complete the Training Approval form to provide detailed information about the proposed training to the Education & Training Committee and request approval. Chapter members report advanced training to the Recording Secretary using the Monthly Activity Report form. Travel time to and from the training does not contribute to the learning experience and may not be counted as part of the training hours earned. All forms are available at [Appendix C](#).

## **Certification**

A volunteer shall be presented with a Texas Master Naturalist certificate and a color dragonfly pin when that volunteer has completed all of the required 40 hours of Texas Master Naturalist training; the minimum 40 hours of service; and the minimum 8 hours of advanced training. Mid-Coast Chapter trainees have 15 months from the first day of their first class to complete their requirements for certification. Members-in-training may begin their volunteer service during their initial training.

### *Certification and Milestone Pins*

The Master Naturalist program offers a series of pins commemorating milestone achievements within the program. The milestone pins honor those members who have volunteered:

- 250 hours (bronze dragonfly pin)
- 500 hours (brushed silver dragonfly pin)
- 1,000 hours (brushed gold dragonfly pin)
- 2,500 hours (polished silver dragonfly)
- 5,000 hours of service (polished gold dragonfly with diamond)

These milestones are cumulative. A volunteer may reach these milestones within one year or over the course of several years. Volunteers should only receive one of each of these pins during their involvement in the program.

The Master Naturalist program has a specially designed pin for each calendar year a certified volunteer maintains his or her certification. A new pin is designed for each year and this pin is only available during that calendar year. Members may receive the annual pin for the year they complete their initial certification provided they complete an additional 40 hours of volunteer service and 8 hours of advanced training within the same calendar year as they receive their initial certification. Each volunteer will receive only one annual pin during a given year.

## **Election of Officers**

Officers are elected by a simple majority of the votes cast by paper ballot at the annual meeting. Members who cannot attend the meeting may vote absentee by requesting a copy of the ballot from the Nominating Committee and returning it prior to the election. Newly elected officers will assume their duties at the first Executive Committee meeting of the following year.

If an elected officer resigns, a replacement shall be appointed by the Executive Committee to complete the remainder of the term.

## **Compliance and Disciplinary Actions**

All members of the Chapter will adhere to the Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct as established by the Texas Master Naturalist Program, [Appendix G](#). Violation of either is a serious matter that reflects unfavorably on the entire Chapter. The Texas Master

Naturalist Program has established a formal process to investigate a charge of misconduct and to take disciplinary action. This process is at [Appendix H](#).

### ***Discipline and/or Removal of Members***

The Mid-Coast Chapter will follow State-established processes for discipline or removal of members not compliant with the Code of Ethics or Standards of Conduct.

### ***Replacement of Officers or Committee Chairs***

An elected officer may be removed from office by a simple majority vote of all members in good standing. If an elected officer is removed, a replacement shall be elected by a simple majority vote of the members present at a general membership meeting.

A standing committee chair may be removed by a simple majority vote of the Executive Committee. The president may appoint an interim committee chair to complete the term.

### ***Dissolution of Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist, Inc.***

The Chapter can be dissolved by a two-thirds vote of members in good standing present and voting at a general membership or special meeting. The general membership must be notified via conventional mail, email, or other equivalent means of the proposed dissolution 10 days before the meeting. A letter will be submitted to the State Committee stating results of the vote and why the Chapter chooses to dissolve.

Upon dissolution of the corporation, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or shall be distributed to the Federal Government, or to a state or local government, for public purposes. Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by a court of competent jurisdiction of the county in which the principle office is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to local organizations, as said court shall determine, which are organized and operated for such purposes.

### ***Rescission of Charter***

If the State organization determines that the Mid-Coast Chapter has failed to comply with State requirements and policies, it may rescind the Chapter charter. See [Appendix H](#) for State procedures.

## **Policies and Procedures Manual**

### ***Purpose***

The Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist, Inc. Policies and Procedures Manual serves as the Chapter Operating Handbook. This manual is intended to define and document Chapter policies, management guidelines, and operating procedures. The manual is designed to:

- Maintain a current and easily accessible guide to all Chapter policies and procedures
- Notify the membership of Chapter policies and procedures
- Facilitate continuity of Chapter operation regardless of changes in officers and committees



- Ensure the periodic review and updating of all Chapter policies and procedures

### ***Adoption***

The initial version of the Policies and Procedures Manual was submitted to the Executive Committee for section-by-section discussion and approval. The version of the manual approved by the Executive-Committee was sent to all members via email more than 10 days before the general membership meeting February 16, 2008. At that meeting, the members present voted to adopt the manual.

### ***Amendment***

When a situation arises that requires a formal process for which no policy or procedure exists, appropriate guidelines will be developed and amended to the current Mid-Coast Chapter Policies and Procedures Manual. Any Chapter member may present a proposed change in writing to the Executive Committee. The proposed change must be presented via conventional mail, email, or other equivalent means at least 10 days before the next quarterly Executive Committee meeting.

Changes or amendments the Policies and Procedures manual may be approved by the Executive Committee at their regular quarterly meeting by a simple majority (>50%) vote of Executive Committee members in attendance. Changes or amendments approved by the Executive Committee will be sent to the Chapter membership via conventional mail, email, or other equivalent means at least 10 days before the next regular Chapter meeting and presented at that meeting for approval by Chapter membership. Changes and amendments must be approved by a simple majority of members present.

### ***Review***

This Policies and Procedures Manual will be reviewed annually by a three-member committee appointed by the President and approved by the Executive Committee. Recommended revisions will be forwarded to the Executive Committee prior to the last Executive Committee meeting of the year.

## **Section III—Responsibilities and Operating Procedures**

### **Officers**

#### ***President***

##### **Mission**

Serve as the chief executive officer of the Chapter

##### **Policy**

The president is responsible for overseeing the business of the Chapter. It is the duty of the President to propose goals for the year and to serve as liaison among committees, the Executive Committee, and membership.

##### **Responsibilities**

- Establish and publish the agenda for all meetings
- Preside at all meetings of the Chapter
- Serve as Chair of the Executive Committee
- Appoint committee chairs, subject to the Executive Committee's approval
- Be an ex-officio member of all committees
- Sign all approved documents that may be legally binding on the Chapter
- Notify members of their suspension from the Chapter for nonpayment of dues
- Work with the Secretary and standing committee chairs to prepare and submit the Chapter's annual report to the state office.
- Present all certifications and awards
- Vote when necessary to break a tie
- Serve as Chapter Representative to State meetings

#### ***Vice President***

##### **Mission**

Assist the President

##### **Policy**

The Vice-President substitutes for the president as necessary.

##### **Responsibilities**

- Act for the President in his absence
- Establish locations for general meetings
- Work with Projects and Education & Training Chairs to provide training or volunteer opportunities in conjunction with general membership meetings
- Serve as Financial Review Committee Chair

## ***Recording Secretary***

### **Mission**

Maintain all nonfinancial Chapter records

### **Policy**

The Recording Secretary ensures that all nonfinancial activities of the Chapter are recorded, maintained, and accessible to the Executive Committee and general membership. Records will be retained for 5 years.

### **Responsibilities:**

- Record or delegate the recording of all hours of advanced training and volunteer work performed by members to gain or maintain their Texas Master Naturalist certification
- Report volunteer and advanced training hours to the Executive Committee each month
- Record, publish and preserve the minutes of all meetings of the Executive Committee, General Membership meetings, and special meetings
- Keep a record of attendance at each meeting and whether a quorum is present
- Maintain a hard-copy file of all minutes and legally binding correspondence
- Maintain a record of members who are approved to work with youth and date of approval.
- Bring to each meeting the agenda, Executive Committee and general membership minutes for the preceding two years, a copy of the Bylaws, Policies and Procedures Manual, and a copy of the parliamentary authority adopted by the Chapter
- Notify the membership of all scheduled meetings
- Support all committee functions by providing information from chapter records as required
- Pass accurate and complete records to successor

### **Recording Secretary Operating Procedures**

#### **1. Hours Recording**

- ~ At the end of each month, remind members to turn in hours and enter them into the database.
- ~ Acknowledge receipt of members' reports and keep them informed of progress toward certification, recertification, and milestones.
- ~ By the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month, report hours to the Executive Committee.
- ~ At the end of the year, assist the president with the annual report.

#### **2. Minutes**

- ~ Take minutes at Chapter meetings and Executive Committee meetings. Use the template at [Appendix C](#) to type up minutes and save the file using a name that

shows whether it was an Executive or Chapter meeting and the date (e.g., exec\_7-8-07.doc).

- ~ Send Executive Committee minutes to the president for approval or changes.
- ~ Send finalized Executive Committee minutes to all members of the Executive Committee.
- ~ Send general membership meeting minutes to the president for approval or changes.
- ~ Send approved minutes to the webmaster for posting on the website.

### 3. Record-keeping

- ~ File copies of all minutes.
- ~ File copies of approved forms for volunteer activity, projects, and advanced training.
- ~ File copies of all official Chapter correspondence and documents.

## ***Treasurer***

### **Mission**

Serve as Chief Financial Officer for the Chapter

### **Policy**

The Treasurer records and maintains all Chapter financial transactions using approved software.

### **Responsibilities:**

- Maintain sufficiently detailed records to allow for verification of financial transactions
- Report current financial status, organized into appropriate categories, to the Executive Committee and general membership at their respective meetings
- Keep an up-to-date list of all donated or purchased inventory, equipment or other property that has a useful life of more than two years.
- Participate in the development of an annual budget with the Executive Committee
- Submit all financial records to the Financial Review Committee
- Coordinate acquisition of a Chapter bank account signature card
- Pass all financial records to successor

### **Treasurer Operating Procedures**

#### 1. Receipts

- ~ Receive dues and notify Membership Committee of dues receipt
- ~ Forward "Dues and Insurance" forms to the Secretary for the record files.
- ~ Deposit all checks, and cash in excess of \$10.00 in the Chapter bank account within five business days of receipt.
- ~ Photocopy all checks before deposit and retain the copy for Chapter records

- ~ Discourage payments in cash.
- ~ Write receipts for all cash received and retain the original copy for Chapter records.

## 2. Disbursements

- ~ Maintain possession of all blank checks.
- ~ Make each disbursement in response to a payment request form supported by a vendor invoice or store receipt.
- ~ Advise members making a purchase to provide the vendor with a completed copy of the tax exemption certificate form.
- ~ Obtain necessary signatures on checks.

## 3. Inventory Procedures

- ~ Maintain a computerized register of each item of equipment, including brand name, model number/name, serial number (if applicable), cost, where purchased, and current location.
- ~ File a paper copy with other Chapter records and provide a copy to the Secretary.

## 4. Record-Keeping

- ~ Maintain the Quicken™ check register, reconciled monthly to the bank statement.
- ~ File copies of all support documentation.
- ~ Pass all current and prior year financial records to the incoming Treasurer.
- ~ Inventory unused checks, pass them to the incoming Treasurer, and obtain a signed receipt.

## 5. Budgeting—Compile a fiscal-year budget based on input from the officers and committee chairs.

## 6. Signature Cards

- ~ Provide a supply of bank information forms at the November meeting. All officers must complete a form and supply a copy of their driver's license to the Treasurer.
- ~ Take forms and photocopies to the bank along with a copy of the November meeting minutes which shows the election of the new officers.
- ~ Repeat the process if there is a change of officers during the year.

## ***Past President***

### **Missions**

- Provide continuity of Chapter knowledge
- Serve as liaison between the Chapter and Partners
- Support the new President and the Executive Committee

### **Policy**

The Past President provides Chapter management continuity.

## **Responsibilities**

- Continue to serve on the Executive Committee upon completion of term as President
- Prepare and submit the annual report to the State for the previous year
- Present the annual report at the first general meeting of the Chapter
- Meet with Chapter Partners and recommend to the Executive Committee methods for improving the working relationship
- Serve as Nominating Committee Chair

## ***Chapter Advisor***

### **Mission**

- Assist the Mid-Coast Chapter in maintaining the original goals, mission, vision, and operational framework set forth by its organizers.
- Assist the Chapter in developing additional goals that are within the parameters of the statewide Texas Master Naturalist program.

### **Policy**

The Chapter Advisor supports the Mid-Coast Chapter and is available to advise, recommend, inform, and notify the Chapter and its members of the Texas Master Naturalist State policies and guidelines and other agency or organization guidelines that establish expectations for volunteer requirements, behavior, and activities.

When a vacancy arises in the Chapter Advisor position, the replacement is selected collaboratively by the TMN state coordinator, the exiting advisor, and the Chapter president with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee. It is strongly recommended that any advisor take the training as a Texas Master Naturalist, whether or not he or she performs volunteer service as a Master Naturalist.

### **Responsibilities**

- Ensure that the Mid-Coast Chapter and its officers know State policies and guidelines and the consequences for choosing to operate outside their parameters
- Be familiar with the goals, activities and mission of the Mid-Coast Chapter
- Serve as a member of the Executive Committee
- Meet with the officers of the Chapter to discuss expectations for roles and responsibilities
- Participate in event planning and attend events when possible
- Be aware of the Chapter's financial status via review of financial statements
- Notify the State Program Advisory Committee of Chapter concerns

## ***Chapter Representative to State***

### **Mission**

Provide direct communications between the Mid-Coast Chapter and the State organization

### **Policy**

The Chapter President serves as the Chapter Representative to State.

### **Responsibilities**

- Represent the Chapter in state-level matters of the Texas Master Naturalist program
- Attend the semi-annual State Volunteer Representatives Council meetings

## ***Class Representative***

### **Mission**

- Serve as a member of the Executive Committee to act as liaison between the Executive Committee and the represented class.
- Serve as a member of the Education & Training committee to provide class perspective on initial training.

### **Policy**

The Class Representative is elected by the members of each training class near the end of training and serves for one year, beginning at graduation of that class and continuing until graduation of the following year's class.

### **Responsibilities**

- Represent the class in Executive Committee meetings
- Provide direct communication between the Executive Committee and the class
- Bring class input on initial training to the Education & Training committee
- Encourage class members to work toward certification and to actively participate in Chapter activities
- Present a final report on the year's activities as Class Representative at the next EC meeting following graduation

## **Standing Committees & Responsibilities**

All standing committees are responsible for preparing an annual budget for expenses expected to be incurred in carrying out their responsibilities. This budget must be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval.

Each committee chair is responsible for presenting a report of the prior year's activities to the incoming Executive Committee at the first meeting of the new year. This report should include successes, failures, and suggested improvements.

Each committee chair is responsible for providing the Recording Secretary with a copy of any Chapter correspondence—including all emails—or other documents for the Chapter files.

The term of each standing committee chair runs until appointment of the subsequent chair at the first EC meeting of the chapter year.

Each committee chair is responsible for turning over all committee records and materials to the incoming chair.

Committee chairs are expected and encouraged to share execution of responsibilities with committee members. Individual committee members may be appointed to specific tasks.

### ***Executive Committee***

#### **Mission**

Conduct the business of the Chapter

#### **Policy**

The Executive Committee will create and execute a plan of action for the year, establishing goals, approving budgets, and monitoring progress toward those goals.

#### **Responsibilities**

- Establish and publish the calendar for the year
- Approve an operating budget that establishes expected income and expense for the fiscal year
- Authorize expenditure of Chapter funds
- Review recommendations from the Policies & Procedures Review Committee and approve or disapprove
- Appoint a Nominating Committee at least 45 days prior to the yearly election
- Review and approve or disapprove proposed partnerships

#### **Operating Procedures**

- Executive Committee business may be carried out by email, teleconference, or Internet conference as well as in a regular or special meeting.
- Any Executive Committee member may request a special meeting.
- All Executive Committee votes shall be by simple majority of all EC members. If Executive Committee positions are vacant, they are not included in the total upon which a simple majority is based.
- At the first Executive Committee meeting of the year, establish the calendar, deviating from the second-Saturday standard only when conflicts occur for a simple majority of the Executive Committee.



## **Partnership Operating Procedures**

- Any member may propose a partnership using the Partnership Request form.
- Member proposing a partnership shall serve as liaison with the proposed partner to provide the partner with our definitions of partnership and work out details of the partnership.
- The Executive Committee will approve all partnerships.
- Volunteer efforts for the partner must meet the TMN mission and guidelines to be approved.

## **Membership Committee**

### **Mission**

The Membership Committee is the primary interface between the Executive Committee and the membership

### **Policy**

The Membership Committee supports current members in meeting the TMN mission within the Mid-Coast Chapter area and recruits new members.

### **Member-Support Responsibilities**

- Maintain Chapter member contact information
- Prepare member certification, recertification, and milestone pin awards based on records provided to the Executive Committee by the Recording Secretary
- Monitor and encourage member participation in volunteer activities
- Report status of membership activities to the incoming Executive Committee at the first meeting of the year, including successes, failures, and suggested improvements

### **Member-Support Procedures**

1. Remind members by email to pay dues, sign for liability insurance, and update contact information, interests, and expertise immediately after the first of the year.
2. Notify President of members to be suspended for nonpayment of dues after third reminder and prior to March 31.
3. Remind last year's trainees who have not certified that they have until end of the current initial training session to complete certification requirements. Members should be reminded in January what they lack for certification.
4. Distribute a membership roster to Chapter members electronically, including contact information, interests, and specific expertise of members.
5. Forward updates of member contact information to the membership.
6. Keep inventory of plaques, certificates, and award and recertification pins. Order these supplies as required.

7. Order name badges for the current class in April. See Suppliers at [Appendix F](#). Track member progress toward recertification and milestones.
8. Prepare certificates and awards.
9. Contact inactive members to encourage participation.
10. Coordinate social activities, such as potluck lunches in conjunction with training sessions or other events.

### **Recruiting Responsibilities**

- Support recruiting of new members
- Process applications
- Assist applicants throughout the recruiting process

### **Recruiting Procedures**

1. Educate the membership concerning their responsibility for recruiting new members.
2. Coordinate with Outreach Committee to advertise for potential new members.
3. If required, schedule and hold orientation meetings by county.

### *Application-Processing Procedures*

1. Receive and acknowledge each application by email with request for acknowledgement.
2. Note on each application the date received.
3. By September 1, after Executive Committee sets the cost for training, notify applicants by email and request payment directly to the Treasurer by October 1<sup>st</sup>.
4. Close recruiting at any time 15 paid applications from Mid-Coast-area and the preferred waiting list have been received. Notify applicants by email with request for acknowledgement. The EC can change the class size any July when the fees are set.
5. Not later than January 10, determine the preliminary makeup of the new training class using applications received to-date and based on date, class-size limits, and [membership selection criteria](#). Notify applicants by email with request for acknowledgement. Provide the Education & Training Committee with a class list and copies of all applications.
6. Accept additional applications until five days before the first class or until a total of 15 paid applications have been received. Notify applicants by email and provide E&T with revised class list and copies of additional applications.
7. Notify the Treasurer to refund the fees of applicants who were not selected and offer to place them on the waiting list for the following year's training.
8. Keep Treasurer and Education & Training Chair apprised of applicant status throughout the process.

10. Report class information to the Executive Committee.

11. Document selection process by retaining copies of all emails sent to applicants and providing copies to the Secretary:

| Letter Type/Filename                        | Content                                                  | When Sent                                      |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 1-Acknowledge Application-fee not set.doc   | Basic information; fee not set                           | 1st letter—until current year fee set          |
| 2-acknowledge Application-fee set.doc       | fee already set; request payment                         | 1st letter—upon receipt of application         |
| 3-Request Payment-Application on file.doc   | to recipients of # 1; Request payment by Oct 1           | 2nd letter—not later than Sep 1                |
| 4-Check not received.doc                    | past due; notify of removal from list                    | After Oct 1 when notified by Treasurer         |
| 5-Acknowledge Application-fee included.doc  | wait-listed; thank you                                   | 1st letter—forward check to Treasurer          |
| 6-Class Set-not accepted.doc                | Applicant not accepted; offer placement on priority list | Not earlier than Dec 15; not later than Jan 10 |
| 7-Class Set-accepted.doc                    | Application accepted; info about first session           | Not earlier than Dec 15; not later than Jan 10 |
| 8-Failure to Participate.doc                | Fail to attend 1st class; Requesting intentions          | After 1st class mid Feb                        |
| 9-Letter to applicant from last year's list | Applicant accepted; Request payment by Oct 1             | No later than Sep 1                            |

**Education & Training Committee**

**Mission**

Provide an enlightening, appropriate, and interesting educational experience for new members-in-training and continuing educational opportunities for all Chapter members

**Policy**

The Education & Training Committee ensures the availability of initial and continuing classroom and field training on the many ecologies in the Mid-Coast area in order to provide a self-sustaining corps of volunteers to meet the TMN mission.

**Responsibilities**

- Develop a training budget
- Plan and conduct the Initial Training Program
- Establish advanced training goals for the year
- Maintain approval-form records of all advanced training
- Notify Recording Secretary when training is approved
- Execute initial and advanced training programs
- Evaluate the training programs
- Report the status of the education and training program to the incoming Executive Committee at the first meeting of the year, including successes, failures, and suggested improvements

**Initial Training Operating Procedures**

1. Plan annual initial training in accordance with State and Chapter requirements.

2. Produce tentative training schedule for the following year no later than December 15.
3. Obtain Executive Committee approval of planned training.
4. Schedule guest speakers/teachers and locations/facilities.
5. Support guest teachers with any material and information they require.
6. Inform last year's trainees the dates of training sessions they missed and must make up as soon as initial training is set each year. Remind them to coordinate with the Education and Training committee to attend the missed session.
7. Schedule an "ambassador" from among the Chapter membership to attend each training class. Provide ambassadors with a list of their responsibilities, class roster, evaluation forms, and other necessary materials. See Ambassador duties at [Appendix E](#).
8. Procure or produce class materials including textbooks, reading materials, loose-leaf binders, and training agenda for each session.
9. Provide members-in-training with all pertinent information about the training, training procedures, recommended supplies and equipment, and other information as required.
10. Use Chapter members at Orientation to help with signing in, handing out books, and getting coffee; providing trainees an opportunity to meet other Chapter members.
11. Tell trainees at Orientation what to bring to each session:
  - ~ The TMN binder given at first session
  - ~ Equipment for taking notes
  - ~ Lunch
  - ~ Sufficient water and sodas or juice to stay hydrated all day
  - ~ Sunscreen and mosquito repellent
  - ~ Hat, long-sleeved shirt, long pants, sturdy walking shoes
  - ~ Field notebook provided at Orientation
12. Check back with guest presenters shortly before each session to remind them of the session and address any questions or needs they may have.
13. Remind trainees and the session ambassador throughout training of the time and place of each upcoming session and include information on any special supplies or equipment needed.
14. Near the end of training, lead class members in electing a class representative to be on the Executive Committee. The class representative serves from graduation until the next class representative takes over at the following year's graduation.
15. After each session, send a letter of appreciation to the presenter within two weeks. Send a copy to the secretary for the files.
16. Administer a pre-training knowledge assessment survey the first day of training.
17. Monitor class attendance and contact individuals who miss two consecutive classes without prior notification.

18. Forward attendance and training hours accrued to the Secretary, Membership Chair, and Chapter Advisor following each session.
19. Evaluate classes using trainee input from each session.
20. Administer a post-training knowledge assessment survey the last day of training.
21. Analyze results from the year's training and determine changes needed.
22. Analyze initial training class costs and recommend needed fee changes to the Executive Committee at the July EC meeting.

### **Advanced Training Procedures**

1. Analyze current curriculum to determine areas for which refresher courses are needed.
2. Plan advanced training sessions throughout the year to ensure that Chapter members have opportunities to enhance their ability to volunteer as Texas Master Naturalists.
3. Support upcoming Chapter projects by arranging needed training.
4. Schedule instructors and facilities as necessary.
5. Approve member-identified advanced training in accordance with the Chapter's [Advanced Training Criteria](#).
6. Notify members of approved advanced training opportunities offered outside the Chapter.
7. Maintain a file of Request for Approval of Advanced Training forms—approved or disapproved—and send copies to the Secretary.

### **Projects Committee**

#### **Mission**

Ensure volunteer opportunities are available that provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within our communities

#### **Policy**

The Projects Committee serves as an interface between the Mid-Coast Chapter and local community organizations that may desire support for their own environmental projects.

#### **Responsibilities**

- Approve and coordinate volunteer activities
- Solicit opportunities from Texas Master Naturalist partners and other sources for volunteer activities
- Develop group volunteer projects
- Evaluate the volunteer activities annually

- Report the status of volunteer projects to the incoming Executive Committee at the first meeting of the year, including successes, failures, and suggested improvements

### **Projects Committee Procedures**

1. Receive, evaluate, and approve or disapprove project suggestions from the membership based on [Chapter Guidelines for Volunteer Work](#).
2. Notify Chapter membership regarding volunteer opportunities and projects.
3. Build and maintain a repository of information on completed projects.
4. Maintain approval-form records for all volunteer service and send copies to the Secretary.

### **Operating Procedures for a Specific Project**

A Project Leader will:

1. Submit a Request for Project Approval form to the Project Committee.
2. Identify training needed and coordinate with the Education and Training Chair.
3. Manage the budget for the project.
4. Oversee project execution.
5. Prepare and submit to the Projects Chair an after-action report on the project describing:
  - ~ Objectives
  - ~ Methodology
  - ~ Results
  - ~ Suggestions for improving or adding activities
6. Provide residual materials with the report; for use in future projects.

### ***Outreach Committee***

#### **Mission**

Publicize the mission and activities of the Texas Master Naturalist program and the Mid-Coast Chapter

#### **Policy**

The Outreach Committee serves as interface between the Mid-Coast Chapter and the public.

#### **Responsibilities**

- Build and maintain a program that informs the public and the membership of the activities and benefits of the Mid-Coast Chapter
- Support the Membership Committee's recruiting efforts

- Report the year's status of outreach activities to the incoming Executive Committee at the first meeting of the year, including successes, failures, and suggested improvements

### **Outreach Procedures**

1. Develop and maintain contact with area news media.
2. Issue and follow up on all Chapter press releases or advertisements.
3. Solicit members to write articles for local newspapers.
4. Recruit members to speak before local civic clubs concerning the programs of TMN and our Chapter.
5. Coordinate staffing of outreach booths.
6. Create and maintain a Chapter brochure.
7. Acquire and maintain a Chapter display board.
8. Build and maintain a Chapter website.

### ***Other Standing Committees***

Other standing committees may be named and their duties defined and approved by a two-thirds majority of the Executive Committee.

### **Special Committees**

Committees may be formed ad hoc and tasked for specific purposes by the president with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee. Such ad hoc committees may include:

#### ***Financial Review***

The Financial Review Committee is responsible for conducting the annual review of the financial records of the Chapter. The committee will be chaired by the Vice-President and will include two members chosen by the chair and approved by the Executive Committee.

#### ***Nominating***

The Nominating Committee will be formed at least 45 days prior to the yearly election. It will be chaired by the Past President with two additional members selected by the chair and approved by the Executive Committee. The committee will interview prospective nominees for President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, and Treasurer and submit a selection of eligible candidates to the membership at least 15 days prior to the election.

#### ***Policies & Procedures Review***

The Policies and Procedures Manual will be reviewed annually by a three-member committee appointed by the President and approved by the Executive Committee. Recommended revisions will be forwarded to the Executive Committee prior to the last Executive Committee meeting of the year.



### ***Other Special Committees***

Other ad hoc committees may be formed by the Executive Committee as needed to address specific tasks or purposes.

## **Appendix A— Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist, Inc. Bylaws**

[Article I. Name](#)

[Article II. Objective](#)

[Article III Membership and Dues](#)

[Article IV. Activities and Funds](#)

[Article V. Meetings](#)

[Article VI. Fiscal Year](#)

[Article VII. Elected Officers](#)

[Article VIII. Duties of Elected Officers](#)

[Article IX. Appointed Officials](#)

[Article X. Changes, Resignations, and Removals](#)

### ***Article I. Name***

This organization shall be the Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist, Inc.

### ***Article II. Objective***

This organization shall be a non-profit, educational, and charitable association of the Texas Master Naturalist Program under the sponsorship of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Its mission shall be to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources within the state of Texas.

### ***Article III Membership and Dues***

Section 1. Membership in this organization shall be as follows:

#### **A. Members-in-Training**

Individuals currently enrolled in a Texas Master Naturalist training course may participate in activities of the Chapter, but do not have voting privileges and may not hold office. Members-in-Training must participate in a minimum of 40 hours of basic training to become Associate Members.

#### **B. Associate Members**

Individuals who have completed a minimum of 40 hours of training, but who have not completed the requirements for certification as a “Texas Master Naturalist” are Associate Members and may participate in all activities of the Chapter, may vote, and may hold office. Associates must attain certification by completing a minimum of 8 hours of approved advanced training and a minimum of 40 hours of approved volunteer service within 12 months of the end of their initial training session. Failure to do so will result in suspension of membership. The Executive Committee may consider an exception to this rule in special circumstances.

### **C. Certified Members**

Individuals who have completed the requirements and received certification as a “Texas Master Naturalist” are Certified Members and may participate in all activities of the Chapter, may vote, and may hold office.

### **D. Life Members**

An Individual who performs 5,000 hours of volunteer service will be designated Life Member and be absolved from paying dues for life. A Life Member may participate in all activities of the Chapter, may vote, and may hold office.

### **E. Honorary Members**

The Chapter may choose to offer honorary membership to an individual. Honorary members shall have all the rights and privileges of other members except that they do not pay dues and may not vote, hold office, or chair standing committees.

Section 2. Annual (January-December) dues are set by a majority vote of members present at a General Membership meeting based on recommendation from the Executive Committee.

Section 3. Members maintain certification as a Texas Master Naturalist by annually performing a minimum of 40 hours of volunteer service, receiving 8 hours of continuing education, and paying dues.

Section 4. Non-discriminatory Membership. Membership in the Chapter is open to qualifying individuals regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, disability, or national origin.

### **Article IV. Activities and Funds**

Section 1. Activities shall consist of meetings, field trips, and other projects that may be deemed appropriate.

Section 2. Funds belonging to the Chapter shall be kept in a Chapter bank account. The Treasurer shall maintain an accounting of all Chapter funds. Expenditures from this account will be by approval of the Executive Committee. The Chapter may accept donations and grants.

### **Article V. Meetings**

Section 1. Meetings will be held as determined by the membership but at least once each year.

Section 2. Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the executive committee. Such special meetings shall be announced to members by phone or e-mail at least 3 days before the meeting date.

### **Article VI. Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of this organization shall run from January 1 to December 31 of each year.

## ***Article VII. Elected Officers***

Section 1. Officers of this organization shall be President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, and Treasurer. The officers, plus the immediate past President, chairmen of the standing committees, a representative from one of the sponsoring organizations, and a representative from the most recent training class shall constitute the Executive Committee.

Section 2. The Executive Committee shall appoint a Nominating Committee at least 45 days prior to the yearly election. The nominating committee will interview prospective nominees and submit a selection of eligible candidates to the membership at least 15 days prior to the election. Additional nominations may be made at the time of the election.

Section 3. Officers shall be elected by a simple majority of the votes cast by paper ballot at the November meeting. Members who cannot attend the meeting may vote absentee by requesting a copy of the ballot from the Nominating Committee and returning it prior to the election. Newly elected officers will assume their duties on January 1 of the following year.

Section 4. All officers must be active members in good standing.

Section 5. Officers shall serve for a period of 12 months.

## ***Article VIII. Duties of Elected Officers***

### **Section 1. The President shall:**

- A. Preside at all meetings of the organization
- B. Appoint the chairman of each standing committee and any special committees with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee
- C. Be an ex-officio member of all committees
- D. Work with the treasurer on the budget

### **Section 2. The Vice President shall:**

- A. Stand in for the president as necessary
- B. Perform the duties of program coordinator

### **Section 3. The Recording Secretary shall:**

- A. Record the minutes of each meeting
- B. Publish the minutes of the meeting
- C. Keep a record of attendance at meetings
- D. Record or delegate the recording of all hours of advanced training and volunteer work performed by members to gain or maintain their Texas Master Naturalist certification
- E. Notify the Executive Committee of member certification status

**Section 4. The Treasurer shall:**

- A. Receive, deposit, and keep an exact account of all dues, membership training fees, and other income
- B. Record and maintain an exact account of all Chapter expenditures
- C. Report financial status to the Executive Committee and the membership
- D. Notify the Executive Committee of membership standing as to dues and payment of fees

***Article IX. Appointed Officials***

Coordinators of an activity, committee chairmen, delegates to the State or National Master Naturalist will be elected by the members, or appointed or replaced if need be by the Executive Committee.

***Article X. Changes, Resignations, and Removals***

Section 1. These Bylaws may be amended or replaced at any time by a simple majority vote of the current membership.

Section 2. If an elected officer resigns or is removed, a replacement shall be elected by the members or appointed by the Executive Committee.

Section 3. An elected officer may be removed from office by a majority vote of all current members.

Section 4. Members may be removed under the rules and regulations of the Texas Master Naturalist

*Revised 08/16/03*

# Appendix B—State and Federal 501(c)(3) Paperwork

## Texas Certificate of Incorporation

Corporations Section  
P.O.Box 13697  
Austin, Texas 78711-3697



Gwyn Shea  
Secretary of State

### Office of the Secretary of State

#### CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION OF

Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist, Inc  
Filing Number: 800166311

The undersigned, as Secretary of State of Texas, hereby certifies that Articles of Incorporation for the above named corporation have been received in this office and have been found to conform to law.

Accordingly, the undersigned, as Secretary of State, and by virtue of the authority vested in the Secretary by law, hereby issues this Certificate of Incorporation.

Issuance of this Certificate of Incorporation does not authorize the use of a name in this state in violation of the rights of another under the federal Trademark Act of 1946, the Texas trademark law, the Assumed Business or Professional Name Act, or the common law.

Dated: 01/27/2003

Effective: 01/27/2003



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gwyn Shea".

Gwyn Shea  
Secretary of State

PHONE(512) 463-5555  
Prepared by: Ross Rueden

Come visit us on the internet at <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/>  
FAX(512) 463-5709

TTY7-1-1

# Texas Articles of Incorporation

Form 202  
(revised 9/00)

Return in Duplicate to:  
Secretary of State  
P.O. Box 13697  
Austin, TX 78711-3697  
FAX: 512/463-5709

Filing Fee: \$25



## Articles of Incorporation Pursuant to Article 3.02 Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act

Filed in the Office of the  
Secretary of State of Texas  
Filing #: 800166311 01/27/2003  
Document #: 25184480002  
Image Generated Electronically  
for Web Filing

| Article 1 - Corporate Name                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |              |                                                                    |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| The corporation formed is a non-profit corporation. The name of the corporation is as set forth below:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |              |                                                                    |          |
| Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist, Inc                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |              |                                                                    |          |
| The name must not be the same as, deceptively similar to that of an existing corporate, limited liability company, or limited partnership name on file with the secretary of state. A preliminary check for the "name availability" is recommended.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |              |                                                                    |          |
| Article 2 - Registered Agent and Registered Office (Select and complete either A or B and complete C)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |              |                                                                    |          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A. The initial registered agent is a corporation (cannot be corporation named above) by the name of:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |              |                                                                    |          |
| OR                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |              |                                                                    |          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B. The initial registered agent is an individual resident of the state whose name is set forth below:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |              |                                                                    |          |
| First Name                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | M.I.         | Last Name                                                          | Suffix   |
| Raymond                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | D            | Kirkwood                                                           |          |
| C. The business address of the registered agent and the registered office address is:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |              |                                                                    |          |
| Street Address                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | City         | State                                                              | Zip Code |
| 1402 S. Saunders St.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Aransas Pass | TX                                                                 | 78336    |
| Article 3 - Management (Complete items A or B)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |              |                                                                    |          |
| A. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Management of the affairs of the corporation is to be vested in the members of the corporation:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |              |                                                                    |          |
| OR                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |              |                                                                    |          |
| B. <input type="checkbox"/> Management of the affairs of the corporation is to be vested in its board of directors. The number of directors, which must be a minimum of three, that constitutes the initial board of directors and the names and addresses of the persons who are to serve as directors until the first annual meeting or until their successors are elected and qualified are set forth below:                                                                                 |              |                                                                    |          |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | M.I.         | Last Name                                                          | Suffix   |
| Street Address                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | City         | State                                                              | Zip Code |
| Article 4 - Organization Structure                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |              |                                                                    |          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A: The corporation will have members.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |              | <input type="checkbox"/> B: The corporation will not have members. |          |
| Article 5 - Duration                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |              |                                                                    |          |
| The period of duration is perpetual.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |              |                                                                    |          |
| Article 6 - Purpose                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |              |                                                                    |          |
| The corporation is organized for the following purpose or purposes:<br>The corporation is organized for the following purpose or purposes: Providing education, outreach, and volunteer services dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources within the State of Texas and all nature related activities including but not limited to borrowing money, applying for and receiving grants, buildings, and land, operating a nature club for scientific and educational purposes. |              |                                                                    |          |
| Supplemental Provisions / Information                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |              |                                                                    |          |

No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributed to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payment and distribution in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article 6. No substantial part of the activity of the corporation shall be to carry on propaganda or otherwise attempt to influence legislation and the corporation shall not participate or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of or opposed to any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, this corporation shall not engage in any activity or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the above purposes of this corporation. Upon dissolution of the corporation, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501 (c) 3 of the Internal Revenue Code, or shall be distributed to the Federal Government, or to a state or local government, for public purposes. Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by a court of competent jurisdiction of the county in which the principle office is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to local organizations, as said court shall determine, which are organized and operated for such purposes.

[The attached addendum is incorporated herein by reference.]

**Effective Date of Filing**

A. This document will become effective when the document is filed by the secretary of state.

OR

B. This document will become effective at a later date, which is not more than ninety (90) days from the date of its filing by the secretary of state. The delayed effective date is:

Name Reservation Document Number

Incorporator

The name and address of the incorporator is set forth below.

Raymond D Kirkwood 1402 S. Saunders St. Aransas Pass, TX 78336

**EXECUTION**

The undersigned incorporator of these articles of incorporation subject to the penalties imposed by law for the submission of a false or fraudulent document.

Raymond D Kirkwood

Signature of incorporator.

FILING OFFICE COPY



## IRS Determination

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE  
P. O. BOX 2508  
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date: **JUL 02 2003**

MID-COAST CHAPTER TEXAS MASTER  
NATURALIST INC  
C/O RAYMOND KIRKWOOD  
1402 S SAUNDERS ST  
ARANSAS PASS, TX 78336

Employer Identification Number:  
06-1674101  
DLN:  
17053154020013  
Contact Person: DEL TRIMBLE ID# 31309  
Contact Telephone Number:  
(877) 829-5500  
Accounting Period Ending:  
December 31  
Foundation Status Classification:  
509(a)(2)  
Advance Ruling Period Begins:  
January 27, 2003  
Advance Ruling Period Ends:  
December 31, 2007  
Addendum Applies:  
No

Dear Applicant:

Based on information you supplied, and assuming your operations will be as stated in your application for recognition of exemption, we have determined you are exempt from federal income tax under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization described in section 501(c)(3).

Because you are a newly created organization, we are not now making a final determination of your foundation status under section 509(a) of the Code. However, we have determined that you can reasonably expect to be a publicly supported organization described in section 509(a)(2).

Accordingly, during an advance ruling period you will be treated as a publicly supported organization, and not as a private foundation. This advance ruling period begins and ends on the dates shown above.

Within 90 days after the end of your advance ruling period, you must send us the information needed to determine whether you have met the requirements of the applicable support test during the advance ruling period. If you establish that you have been a publicly supported organization, we will classify you as a section 509(a)(1) or 509(a)(2) organization as long as you continue to meet the requirements of the applicable support test. If you do not meet the public support requirements during the advance ruling period, we will classify you as a private foundation for future periods. Also, if we classify you as a private foundation, we will treat you as a private foundation from your beginning date for purposes of section 507(d) and 4940.

Grantors and contributors may rely on our determination that you are not a private foundation until 90 days after the end of your advance ruling period. If you send us the required information within the 90 days, grantors and

Letter 1045 (DO/CG)

## **Appendix C—Chapter Forms & Templates**

### **Forms**

Application

Dues and Liability Insurance

Individual Volunteer Activity Approval

Project Approval

Advanced Training Approval

Monthly Activity Report

Payment Request\*

Tax Exemption Certificate

Signature Card Change\*

\*Available from the Treasurer. All other forms are available on the Chapter website.

### **Form Letters**

Membership Application Response

Suspension-Dues

Suspension-Certification

### **Templates**

Executive Committee Agenda

Executive Committee Minutes

Chapter Meeting Agenda

Chapter Meeting Minutes

Absentee Ballot

Ballot

Sign-In Sheet<sup>†</sup>

Certificate Template<sup>†</sup>

Business Card<sup>†</sup>

<sup>†</sup>Available as separate files from the Chapter Secretary

# Application for Membership Form



## Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist, Inc Membership Application



To join us, please **print and complete** this application and return it with your check payable to Mid-Coast Chapter for \$150 to: Membership Chairman TJ Fox at P.O. Box 1134 Fulton, TX 78358 to ensure your place on the waiting list. See [Who can join](#). For more information, check out [Who Are We?](#), [FAQ](#), or one of the website links at the bottom of the page. For more information, contact TJ at 361-729-2992 or [tj.fox@charter.net](mailto:tj.fox@charter.net).

**TMN members are expected to complete 40 hours of initial training on local ecologies & resource management. They are expected to complete 40 hours of volunteer work & 8 hours of advanced training each year to become & remain Certified Texas Master Naturalists. They are expected to abide by and uphold TMN Standards of Conduct and Code of Ethics.**

### Contact Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_ County of Residence \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ St \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Employer \_\_\_\_\_

### Experience & Interests

Applicants join Texas Master Naturalist to learn about the natural world, but you may already have knowledge that can benefit the Chapter. Please note experience or education you have on native plants or wildlife, ecology, natural history, or related fields. List skills such as photography, graphic arts, & public speaking. List organizations of which you are a member and other volunteer work you do. Then describe what you'd like to learn from TMN and why you want to join us. Continue on the back.

|                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Skills/Special Knowledge:                                                           |
| Hobbies & Interests:                                                                |
| Relevant Training/Education:                                                        |
| Membership in other Organizations; Volunteerism:                                    |
| Skills/Special Knowledge I'd like to gain from the Texas Master Naturalist Program: |
| Why I am interested in joining the Texas Master Naturalist Program:                 |

### Chapter Roster Information

Name as it should appear in Chapter records and on TMN badge: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check any information you **DO NOT** want included in a roster distributed only among Chapter members.

- Home Contact Information     
  Skills     
  Volunteerism  
 Business Contact Information     
  Organizations     
  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: Annual dues are \$15 per person and \$25 per couple after the first year's dues, which are included in the application fee. Fees are reevaluated yearly and increased only when necessary to cover increased training costs.**

**Membership in the Chapter is open to qualifying individuals regardless of race, age (must be 18 years of age or older), sex, religion, disability, or national origin.**

# Dues Payment and Liability Insurance Coverage Form

## Texas Master Naturalist Dues & Insurance

TMN volunteers are covered by \$1 million personal liability insurance through Texas Parks and Wildlife **only** if the Chapter has current, signed release forms on file. Please print, sign, date, and return this form with your check for dues—\$15 per year or \$25 per couple—payable to "Mid-Coast Chapter, TMN" to:

Frankie Fox  
Treasurer, MCTMN  
P.O. Box 1134  
Fulton, TX 78358

### Liability Agreement

In consideration of being accepted as a participant in the Texas Master Naturalist volunteer program (Mid-Coast Chapter) I hereby release, discharge, and agree to hold harmless the program and its sponsoring state agencies, their agents, employees, officers, and successors from and against the program and sponsoring state agencies, their successors, employees, or officers for all personal injuries (including death), known and unknown, or damage to property caused by or arising out of activities performed under the Texas Master Naturalist Program.

|                                 |       |      |       |
|---------------------------------|-------|------|-------|
| Member<br>Signature             | _____ | Date | _____ |
| Member Name<br>(Please Print)   | _____ |      |       |
| 2nd Member<br>(Spouse)Signature | _____ | Date | _____ |
| Member Name<br>(Please Print)   | _____ |      |       |

### Change of Contact Information

Please complete this section if any information has changed in the last year.

|                |       |                |       |
|----------------|-------|----------------|-------|
| Name           | _____ |                |       |
| Address        | _____ |                |       |
| Primary Phone  | _____ | 2nd/3rd Phones | _____ |
| E-Mail Address | _____ |                |       |

### Interests and Expertise

Please complete this section to contribute to a new and improved roster.

|              |       |
|--------------|-------|
| Interests    | _____ |
| Capabilities | _____ |

### Suggested Training or Projects

Please complete this section to suggest new Chapter projects or training.

|                                   |       |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| Training                          | _____ |
| Projects<br>(Group or individual) | _____ |

# Volunteer Activity Approval Form

## Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist™, Inc Request for Individual Volunteer Activity Approval

→ To fill out the form electronically, use the tab key to move from blank to blank. Use the mouse to click checkboxes ←

**Complete this form for a new volunteer activity.** Submit the completed form to the Projects Committee by e-mail to [wkorth@gbra.org](mailto:wkorth@gbra.org) or by mail to Wilfred Korth, 365 Coleto Plk Rd Victoria, TX 77905. To find out whether a volunteer activity has already been approved, check with the Projects chair at 361-375-2824 or by e-mail. **Note:** Any activity requiring Chapter funding or participation by other members cannot be approved using this form. Use the Project Approval form.

Member Requesting Volunteer Activity Approval \_\_\_\_\_

### Volunteer Activity Information

|                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Activity Name/Description _____             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Activity Location _____                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Type of Activity:<br>(Check all that apply) | <input type="checkbox"/> Lecture <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation/Demonstration <input type="checkbox"/> Habitat Restoration<br><input type="checkbox"/> Construction <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter Business <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| Project Leader _____                        | Sponsoring Agency _____                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Begin Date _____                            | End Date _____                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Anticipated Hrs _____                       | Continuing Activity <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Audience                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> General Public <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Organization _____                                                                                                                                |

### TMN Mission

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> The activity meets our TMN mission statement: <i>To provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within our communities.</i> |
| Describe how this activity meets our <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Outreach <input type="checkbox"/> Service mission:<br><br>_____                                                                |

### Volunteer Activity Guidelines

See the complete guidelines at <http://midcoast.tamu.edu/Guidelines.htm>

|                                                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work will be performed as a Texas Master Naturalist rather than as a member of another organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work will not profit another organization                                                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I will not report these hours to any other organization for credit                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I will not be paid for the work                                                                     |
| Explain any unchecked box above:<br><br>_____                                                                                |

|                                                                                      |                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Chapter Records—Please do not write below this line (for Project Committee use only) |                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Approved                                                    | _____               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disapproved                                                 | _____               |
| (Name of Approving Authority)                                                        | (Date Pre-Approved) |

# Chapter Project Approval Form

## Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist™, Inc Request for Chapter Project Approval

→ To fill out the form electronically, use the tab key to move from blank to blank. Use the mouse to click checkboxes. ←

Complete this form for a new project that requires participation by more than one member. Submit the completed form to the Projects Committee by e-mail to [wkorth@gbra.org](mailto:wkorth@gbra.org) or by mail to Wilfred Korth, 365 Coletto Pk Rd Victoria, TX 77905. To find out whether a volunteer activity has already been approved, check with the Projects chair at 361-375-2824 or by e-mail. **Note:** The EC must approve projects requiring funding or commitment by multiple members.

Member Requesting Project Approval \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Project Name/Description: (Include explanation of the project, needs to be addressed, whether the project is time-critical, and expected benefits)

Project Location(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Membership participation required?  
/Description \_\_\_\_\_  Yes Est. # \_\_\_\_\_  No

Activity Type:  Presentation/Demonstration  Habitat Restoration  Construction  
(Check all that apply)  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Funding required?  Yes Est. Amt \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Source \_\_\_\_\_  No

Explain funding needs and attach a proposed budget:

Begin Date \_\_\_\_\_ End Date \_\_\_\_\_ Anticipated Hrs \_\_\_\_\_ Continuing Activity

Skills Required: \_\_\_\_\_

Tools/Equipment Required: \_\_\_\_\_

Permits Required (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Level of Physical Effort Required:  Effortless  Active but not Strenuous  Strenuous

Proposed Leader \_\_\_\_\_ Sponsoring Agency \_\_\_\_\_

Name participating Organizations, Partners, or Funders and explain the specific role of each:

Audience \_\_\_\_\_ Estimated Number \_\_\_\_\_  General Public  Specific Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Explain how the activity meets our TMN mission statement: To provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within our communities.

Grant Funding required (if yes, attach a copy of the grant application requirements):

Yes  No

Chapter Records—Please do not write below this line (for Project Committee use only)

Approved  
 Disapproved  
 Forwarded

(Name of Approving Authority)

(Date)

# Advanced Training Approval Form

## Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist™, Inc Request for Advanced Training Approval

→ To fill out the form electronically, use the tab key to move from blank to blank. Use the mouse to click checkboxes ←

Complete this form to request approval of an advanced training session that meets our TMN mission and criteria and has not already been approved. Submit the completed form to Education & Training Committee by e-mail to [rsmudy@gmail.com](mailto:rsmudy@gmail.com) or by mail to Ron Smudy, 1968 FM 1781 Rockport, TX 78382. To find out if a training has already been approved, see the Chapter website at <http://midcoast.tamu.edu/TrainingOps.htm> or check with the Training chair by e-mail or at 210-508-2397.

Member Requesting Advanced Training Approval \_\_\_\_\_

### Advanced Training Information

Activity Name &

Description \_\_\_\_\_

Activity Location \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Estimated Hrs \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Activity:  Lecture  Presentation/Demonstration  Hands-On  
(Check all that apply)  Other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

Session Leader \_\_\_\_\_ Sponsoring Agency \_\_\_\_\_

### TMN Mission

The training will contribute to fulfilling our TMN mission: To provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within our communities.

Describe how this training will contribute to fulfilling our mission:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Training Criteria

See the complete training criteria at <http://midcoast.tamu.edu/TrainingCriteria.htm>

The Training will: (check all that apply)

- Promote continued learning and development of naturalist skills
- Provide knowledge, skills, and practical training to work in volunteer efforts
- Build on the core curriculum initially provided by the Mid-Coast chapter
- Provide natural resource management issues and information applicable to Mid-Coast Texas

The training will be used to support new or existing Chapter projects.

List:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Chapter Records—Please do not write below this line (for Education & Training Committee use only)

- Approved
- Disapproved

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Approving Authority)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date Approved)

# Volunteer & Advanced Training Report Form

## Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist™, Inc

### Monthly Activity Report

→Use tab key to move through form. To change month & year, click the down arrow after tabbing to them. ←

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Month: \_\_\_\_\_ Yr: 2011  
 Electronically signed by \_\_\_\_\_ Email address \_\_\_\_\_ Date signed \_\_\_\_\_

**Report approved volunteer work and advanced training. Include preparation & travel time for volunteer work. Do not report travel time for advanced training. Estimate number of people you imparted information to if you did not count them. Do not count co-workers unless you were teaching them.** Email to kris\_kirkwood@wildblue.net or mail to PO Box 1194 Rockport, TX 78381.

| Date<br>Mo / Day | Code - Program, Event, or Activity<br>Example: ANWR - van tour | Vol Hrs<br>0.00 | # of People Educated |        |       | Adv<br>Training |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|--------|-------|-----------------|
|                  |                                                                |                 | Total                | Adults | Youth |                 |
|                  | (code) – (event/activity)                                      |                 |                      |        |       |                 |
|                  | (code) – (event/activity)                                      |                 |                      |        |       |                 |
|                  | (code) – (event/activity)                                      |                 |                      |        |       |                 |
|                  | (code) – (event/activity)                                      |                 |                      |        |       |                 |
|                  | (code) - (event/activity)                                      |                 |                      |        |       |                 |
|                  | (code) - (event/activity)                                      |                 |                      |        |       |                 |
|                  | (code) - (event/activity)                                      |                 |                      |        |       |                 |
|                  | (code) - (event/activity)                                      |                 |                      |        |       |                 |
|                  | (code) - (event/activity)                                      |                 |                      |        |       |                 |
|                  | (code) - (event/activity)                                      |                 |                      |        |       |                 |
|                  | (code) - (event/activity)                                      |                 |                      |        |       |                 |

**Comments or Explanations concerning volunteer activities, or Recommendations concerning training:**

---

Chapter Records—Please do not write below this line (for official use only)

# Hrs Recorded \_\_\_\_\_ Recorded by \_\_\_\_\_ Date Recorded \_\_\_\_\_



# Request for Payment Form

## Mid-Coast Chapter Reimbursement/Payment Request

To submit a request for payment of an **approved** Mid-Coast Chapter expense, use the tab key to move from blank to blank and complete the required information. **Attach the invoice/receipt** and mail to Treasurer Frankie Fox at P.O. Box 1134, Fulton, TX 78358. If you have questions, contact Frankie at 361-729-2992 or [frankie.fox@charter.net](mailto:frankie.fox@charter.net).

### *Expenditure Approval*

Approved by \_\_\_\_\_

(Name of Approving Authority)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date Pre-Approved)

### *Payee Information*

Payee Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Total \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

### *Chapter Member Requesting Payment*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

### *Description*

Provide a detailed description of the **item(s) or service** for which payment or reimbursement is being requested. If more than one item, explain separately.

| Item | Description | Amount |
|------|-------------|--------|
|      |             |        |
|      |             |        |
|      |             |        |
|      |             |        |

Chapter Records—Please do not write below this line (for Treasurer's use only)

Amount Paid \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Signatures \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Tax Exemption Certificate

Available online at <http://www.cpa.state.tx.us/taxinfo/taxforms/01-339.pdf> (page 2)

## TEXAS SALES AND USE TAX EXEMPTION CERTIFICATION

|                                                     |                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Name of purchaser, firm or agency                   |                              |
| Address (Street & number, P.O. Box or Route number) | Phone (Area code and number) |
| City, State, ZIP code                               |                              |

I, the purchaser named above, claim an exemption from payment of sales and use taxes (for the purchase of taxable items described below or on the attached order or invoice) from:

Seller: \_\_\_\_\_

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, ZIP code: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of items to be purchased or on the attached order or invoice:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Purchaser claims this exemption for the following reason:


\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I understand that I will be liable for payment of all state and local sales or use taxes which may become due for failure to comply with the provisions of the Tax Code and/or all applicable law.

*I understand that it is a criminal offense to give an exemption certificate to the seller for taxable items that I know, at the time of purchase, will be used in a manner other than that expressed in this certificate, and depending on the amount of tax evaded, the offense may range from a Class C misdemeanor to a felony of the second degree.*

|                                                                                               |       |      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|------|
|  Purchaser | Title | Date |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|------|

NOTE: This certificate cannot be issued for the purchase, lease, or rental of a motor vehicle.  
**THIS CERTIFICATE DOES NOT REQUIRE A NUMBER TO BE VALID.**  
 Sales and Use Tax "Exemption Numbers" or "Tax Exempt" Numbers do not exist.

This certificate should be furnished to the supplier. Do not send the completed certificate to the Comptroller of Public Accounts.



# Membership Application Letter 1

Filename: 1-Acknowledge Application-fee not set.doc

<Date>

<applicant name>

<applicant address>

<applicant city, st, zip>

Dear <applicant name>

We have received your application for membership in Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist, Inc. and your name has been placed on our waiting list. The fee for the next class has not yet been established. We will notify you as soon as the fee is set—no later than September 1—and ask you to submit payment.

We limit class size to 18 to ensure the highest quality training per class. Final makeup of the class will be determined based on application date and residence. Applicants are accepted in this order:

- (1) Applicants deferred from the previous year's training
- (2) Residents of the Mid-Coast Chapter area
- (3) Residents of adjacent counties with no TMN chapter
- (4) Part-time residents of the Mid-Coast Chapter area, priority given to Texas citizens
- (5) Residents of nearby counties that have a TMN chapter
- (6) Residents of other areas of Texas

Classes typically begin the second Saturday in February and continue every other Saturday through May or the first weekend in June at various locations throughout the mid-coast region. Sessions usually run from 9:00 to 4:00 and include a half-day each of classroom and field work.

We are looking forward to having you join us. However, if for some reason you cannot participate, please let us know so we can give the place to someone else. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to call, email, or write.

Sincerely,

<name>, Membership Chair

Phone

email address

address1

address2

## Membership Application Letter 2

Filename: 2-acknowledge Application-fee set.doc

<Date>

<applicant name>

<applicant address>

<applicant city, st, zip>

Dear <applicant name>,

We have received your application for membership in Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist, Inc. and your name has been placed on our waiting list. The application fee is \$xx for individuals and \$xx for couples. To ensure your place on the list, please send payment to our Treasurer as soon as possible. Please make checks payable to Mid-Coast Chapter, TMN and mail to: Frankie Fox, Treasurer  
P.O. Box 1134  
Fulton, Texas 78358

We limit class size to 18 to ensure the highest quality training per class. Final makeup of the class will be determined based on application date and residence. Applicants are accepted in this order:

- (1) Applicants deferred from the previous year's training
- (2) Residents of the Mid-Coast Chapter area
- (3) Residents of adjacent counties with no TMN chapter
- (4) Part-time residents of the Mid-Coast Chapter area, priority given to Texas citizens
- (5) Residents of nearby counties that have a TMN chapter
- (6) Residents of other areas of Texas

Classes typically begin the second Saturday in February and continue every other Saturday through May at various locations throughout the mid-coast region. Sessions usually run from 9:00 to 4:00 and include a half-day each of classroom and field work.

We are looking forward to having you join us. However, if you decide you cannot participate, please let us know so we can give the place to someone else. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to call, email, or write.

Sincerely,

<name>, Membership Chair  
Phone, email address  
address1  
address2

## Membership Application Letter 3

Filename: 3-Request Payment-Application on file.doc

<Date>

<applicant name>

<applicant address>

<applicant city, st, zip>

Dear <applicant name>,

We previously received your application for membership in the Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist. The application fee of \$xx for individuals and \$xx for couples has now been established.

To ensure your place on the class selection list, please send payment to our Treasurer by October 1. Please make checks payable to Mid-Coast Chapter, TMN and mail to:

Frankie Fox, Treasurer

P.O. Box 1134

Fulton, Texas 78358

As stated in our earlier letter, residence location and date of application will determine the final makeup of the class of 18. Depending on the number of applications received, this event may take place as early as November 1 but no later than January 10

If you decide at any time that you cannot participate, please let us know so we can give the place to someone else. If you decide you cannot attend after you have sent your check, we will refund the full fee if you notify us prior to December 31.

Thank you for your interest, and we are looking forward to having you join us.

Sincerely,

<name>, Membership Chair

Phone

email address

address1

address2

## Membership Application Letter 4

Filename: 4-Check not received.doc

<Date>

<applicant name>

<applicant address>

<applicant city, st, zip>

Dear <applicant name>,

You previously submitted your application to become a member of the Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist. You were notified by mail of the application fee for the next class and requested to submit payment.

Since the Treasurer has not received your payment, we have removed your name from the class selection list. If there is some error and you are still interested in the training, please call or email me immediately so we can address the problem.

Sincerely,

<name>, Membership Chair

Phone

email address

address1

address2

## Membership Application Letter 5

Filename: 5-Acknowledge Application-fee included.doc

<Date>

<applicant name>

<applicant address>

<applicant city, st, zip>

Dear <applicant name>,

We have received your application to attend the initial training of the Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist. Thank you for including the application fee. Your name has been added to our class selection list.

We limit class size to 18 to ensure the highest quality training per class. Final makeup of the class will be determined based on application date and residence. Applicants are accepted in this order:

- (1) Applicants deferred from the previous year's training
- (2) Residents of the Mid-Coast Chapter area
- (3) Residents of adjacent counties with no TMN chapter
- (4) Part-time residents of the Mid-Coast Chapter area, priority given to Texas citizens
- (5) Residents of nearby counties that have a TMN chapter
- (6) Residents of other areas of Texas

Depending on the number of applications received, class selection may take place as early as November 1 but no later than January 10

If you decide you cannot participate, please let us know so we can give the place to someone else. If you notify us prior to December 31, we will refund the full fee.

Classes typically begin the second Saturday in February and continue every other Saturday through May or the first weekend in June at various locations throughout the mid-coast region. Sessions usually run from 9:00 to 4:00 and include a half-day each of classroom and field work.

Thank you for your interest, and we are looking forward to having you join us. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to call, email, or write.

Sincerely,

<name>, Membership Chair

Phone

email address

address1

address2



## Membership Application Letter 6

Filename: 6-Class Set-not accepted.doc

<Date>

<applicant name>

<applicant address>

<applicant city, st, zip>

Dear <applicant name>,

We regret to inform you that we cannot include you in the <200X> Initial Training Class of the Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist.

As we informed you in an earlier letter, we limit class size to 18 to provide the best training experience and accept applicants in this order:

- (1) Applicants deferred from the previous year's training
- (2) Residents of the Mid-Coast Chapter area
- (3) Residents of adjacent counties with no TMN chapter
- (4) Part-time residents of the Mid-Coast Chapter area, priority given to Texas citizens
- (5) Residents of nearby counties that have a TMN chapter
- (6) Residents of other areas of Texas

Based upon these requirements, the class has been filled. We will place your name on the priority list for next year's class and refund your application fee for this year.

Thank you for your interest in the Texas Master Naturalist program. We hope this delay will not discourage you from joining us next year.

Sincerely,

<name>, Membership Chair

Phone

email address

address1

address2

## Membership Application Letter 7

Filename: 7-Class Set-accepted.doc

<Date>

<applicant name>

<applicant address>

<applicant city, st, zip>

Dear <applicant name>,

Congratulations and welcome! You have been selected as a member of the 200x Initial Training Class of the Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist.

The first class meets <time and place>. Attached is a copy of the tentative class schedule. All sessions are subject to change based on weather and the needs of the subject-matter experts leading the training.

If for some reason, you cannot become a class member this year, please contact me immediately, so that the committee can give your place to someone on the waiting list.

We look forward to your joining us. We know you will be an asset to our Chapter and to the Texas Master Naturalist organization.

Sincerely,

<name>, Membership Chair

Phone

email address

address1

address2

## Membership Application Letter 8

Filename: 8-Failure to Participate.doc—to be sent after attempt to contact by phone

<Date>

<applicant name>

<applicant address>

<applicant city, st, zip>

Dear <applicant name>,

On <January XX>, you were notified of your selection to participate in this year's Initial Training Class of the Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist.

Classes have begun and you did not attend the first session. Please call and let us know if you intend to participate in this year's training.

Unless we receive an immediate reply, we must regretfully drop you from the class

Sincerely,

<name>, Membership Chair

Phone

email address

address1

address2

## Membership Application Letter 9

Filename: 9-Letter to applicant from last year's list

<Date>

<applicant name>

<applicant address>

<applicant city, st, zip>

Dear <applicant name>,

We notified you earlier that your name had been placed on a priority waiting list for inclusion in the training class of 20XX. Your application for membership is still on file. The application fee is \$xx for individuals and \$xx for couples.

To ensure your place in the class, please send payment to our Treasurer by October 1.

Please make checks payable to Mid-Coast Chapter, TMN and mail to:

Frankie Fox, Treasurer

P.O. Box 1134

Fulton, Texas 78358

If you decide at any time that you cannot participate, please let us know so we can give the place to someone else. If you decide you cannot attend after you have sent your check, we will refund the full fee if you notify us prior to December 31.

Thank you for your interest, and we are looking forward to having you join us.

Sincerely,

<name>, Membership Chair

Phone

email address

address1

address2

## Suspension for Nonpayment of Dues Letter

<date>

<address>

<address>

«Title» «fname» «Lname»

«Address»

«City», «St» «Zip»

Dear «Title» «Lname»,

According to our records, you have not paid your Mid-Coast Chapter dues for the year.

Article III Membership and Dues Section 2 of the bylaws states: “Annual (January-December) dues are \$15.00 for an individual or \$25.00 for a couple. Associate members and Members-in-Training owe dues beginning in January of the year following their initial training. All dues must be paid by the end of March. Failure to pay dues will result in suspension of membership.”

If our records are inaccurate, please help us correct them. If they are accurate, but you wish to remain an active member of TMN and the Mid-Coast Chapter, please contact me so that we can work out a plan for payment of dues.

If you take no action by the end of the current month, we will assume you are no longer interested in being a member of our organization, and the Executive Committee will—regretfully—suspend your membership.

If at some future time you wish to rejoin our Chapter and the Texas Master Naturalist organization, we will be glad to welcome you back with the stipulation that you meet all membership requirements of the bylaws in effect at that time.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_, President

Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist, Inc.

<phone>

<email>

address1

address2

## Suspension for Noncertification Letter

<date>

<address>

<address>

«Title» «fname» «Lname»

«Address»

«City», «St» «Zip»

Dear «Title» «Lname»,

Texas Master Naturalist policies state:

- “To become a Certified Texas Master Naturalist, a trainee must complete the following:
- The state committee approved curriculum with a *minimum* of 40 hours of combined field and classroom instruction.
  - Obtain a *minimum* of 8 contact hours of approved advanced training.
  - Complete a *minimum* of 40 hours of approved volunteer service.

Volunteers have a maximum of 15 months in their first year to complete the above requirements to receive their first Certification as a Master Naturalist.”

Our Chapter bylaws require that you move from Member-in-Training or Associate to Certified Texas Master Naturalist within 12 months of the end of your initial training session.

Our records show that you lack «lack». If the records are inaccurate, please help us correct them. If the records are accurate, but you wish to remain an active member of TMN and the Mid-Coast Chapter, please contact me so that we can work on a plan for completion of the requirements. If you take no action by the end of the current month, we will assume that you are no longer interested in TMN and the Executive Committee will, regrestfully, suspend your membership.

We recognize that other priorities in your life affect the time you can devote to TMN. If in future you wish to renew your association with our organization, you will be welcomed with the stipulation that you complete your certification under the bylaws in effect at that time.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_, President  
Mid-Coast Chapter,  
Texas Master Naturalist, Inc.  
<phone>  
<email>  
address1  
address2

# **Executive Committee Meeting Agenda Template**

## **Mid-Coast Executive Committee Agenda, <insert date>**

*Insert date above; remove the word "Template" and this note.*

The meeting will be held <insert time> at <insert place>.

### **Reports**

*Secretary read minutes of last EC meeting*

*Treasurer*

*Membership*

*Education & Training*

*Projects*

*Outreach*

### **Old Business**

*<insert, broken out by topic if more than one>*

### **New Business**

*<insert, broken out by topic if more than one>*

# Chapter Meeting Agenda Template

## Mid-Coast Chapter Meeting Agenda <insert date>

Insert date above; remove the word "Template" and this note.

The meeting will be held <insert time> at <insert place>.

### **Program**

<insert if any. Program may be at beginning or end>

### **Business Meeting**

#### ***Reports***

**President's Remarks**

**Secretary**

**Treasurer**

**Membership**

**Education & Training**

**Projects**

**Outreach**

***Old Business***

<insert>

***New Business***

<insert>

***Awards***

***Adjourn***



# Meeting Minutes Template

May be used for Executive Committee or General Membership meetings. Remove "Template" and this note.

**Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist™, Inc.**  
<replace with meeting name and date>

## Call to Order

The Texas Master Naturalist, Mid-Coast Chapter meeting was called to order <insert date and time> at <insert place>.

## Attendance

<Insert number> Members were present:

|                       |  |  |  |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|
| <list in alpha order> |  |  |  |
|                       |  |  |  |
|                       |  |  |  |
|                       |  |  |  |

## Program

<Insert details if there is a program; move this section if necessary; remove if none.>

## Business Meeting

### Reports

### President's Remarks

<insert >

### Secretary

<Insert something like: *Minutes of the Aug 16, 2003 meeting were approved as posted on the website. Motion made by Bob Cox, second by T.J. Fox.*>

### Treasurer

<insert>

### Membership

<insert>

### Education & Training

<insert>

### Projects

<insert, broken out by topic if more than one>

**Outreach**

<insert, broken out by topic if more than one>

***Old Business***

<insert, broken out by topic if more than one>

***New Business***

<insert, broken out by topic if more than one>

***Awards***

<insert, broken out by award, including those due awards but not present>

**Business Meeting Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn by <insert name>, second by <insert name>, approved. The meeting was adjourned at <insert time>

Respectfully Submitted,

Mid-Coast Chapter Secretary

## Mid-Coast Chapter Absentee Ballot Template

Choose Tools - Unprotect from the menu to unprotect the document, fill in the blanks, remove any lines not needed, and remove this note. Then choose Tools - Protect to reprotect the form so voters can use it.

Use the Tab key to move through the form if you wish to fill it out and return it to the Nominating Committee by e-mail to \_\_\_\_\_. Either click the box beside a candidate, or vote for a write-in candidate by tabbing to and replacing the blank line with his or her name and then clicking the box beside it.

The ballot may be printed, filled out by hand, and returned to the Nominating Committee to arrive no later than November \_\_, 200\_:

\_\_\_\_\_, Chairman

<address 1>

<address 2>

### ***President***

<name>

<name>

\_\_\_\_\_

### ***Vice-President***

<name>

<name>

\_\_\_\_\_

### ***Recording Secretary***

<name>

<name>

\_\_\_\_\_

### ***Treasurer***

<name>

<name>

\_\_\_\_\_

## Mid-Coast Chapter Ballot Template

Remove or add lines, insert names, & remove this note. Print & cut for voting at the meeting.

Mid-Coast Chapter Ballot 201\_

|                                                       |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <i>President</i>                                      |  |
| <Name> <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| _____ <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>  |  |
| <i>Vice-President</i>                                 |  |
| <Name> <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| _____ <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>  |  |
| <i>Recording Secretary</i>                            |  |
| <Name> <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| _____ <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>  |  |
| <i>Treasurer</i>                                      |  |
| <Name> <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| _____ <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>  |  |

TMN Mid-Coast Chapter Ballot 201\_

|                                                       |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <i>President</i>                                      |  |
| <Name> <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| _____ <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>  |  |
| <i>Vice-President</i>                                 |  |
| <Name> <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| _____ <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>  |  |
| <i>Recording Secretary</i>                            |  |
| <Name> <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| _____ <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>  |  |
| <i>Treasurer</i>                                      |  |
| <Name> <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| _____ <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>  |  |

TMN Mid-Coast Chapter Ballot 201\_

|                                                       |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <i>President</i>                                      |  |
| <Name> <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| _____ <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>  |  |
| <i>Vice-President</i>                                 |  |
| <Name> <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| _____ <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>  |  |
| <i>Recording Secretary</i>                            |  |
| <Name> <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| _____ <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>  |  |
| <i>Treasurer</i>                                      |  |
| <Name> <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| _____ <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>  |  |

TMN Mid-Coast Chapter Ballot 201\_

|                                                       |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <i>President</i>                                      |  |
| <Name> <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| _____ <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>  |  |
| <i>Vice-President</i>                                 |  |
| <Name> <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| _____ <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>  |  |
| <i>Recording Secretary</i>                            |  |
| <Name> <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| _____ <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>  |  |
| <i>Treasurer</i>                                      |  |
| <Name> <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| _____ <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>  |  |

## **Appendix D—Financial Review Procedures**

The purpose of the review is to determine if the Treasurer's activities during the preceding (review) year conformed to chapter bookkeeping requirements. The review is not to be construed as meeting any governmental or legal requirements.

The Treasurer will make all records available for review. The prior-year Treasurer and all members of the Financial Review Committee (FRC) must be present.

### **General**

#### ***Prior to the review***

The Treasurer should create and print a report detailing all financial activity for the review-year. The FRC will use this financial activity report as the basis for the review.

#### ***Financial Statements***

A "Profit/Loss" Statement reflecting the financial position of the chapter on a year-to-date basis must be prepared for each chapter meeting and at the end of the year. Hard copies of each must be kept as part of the permanent financial records.

#### ***Financial Review Report***

At the completion of the review, the FRC will prepare and present to the EC a report of the finding of the financial review. If deficiencies are found they will be described in the report with attachments detailing each. The report will explain the reason for the deficiencies and suggest actions to correct in the future.

#### ***Prior Year Records and Unused Checks***

Determine that records from prior years are in good order.

Verify that all unused checks were delivered and signed for by the incoming Treasurer

#### ***General Condition of Review-Year Records***

Determine that the records for the review-year are in good order.

### **Specific Review**

#### ***Computerized Records***

The financial records (beginning with 2008) are to be maintained on Quicken. The Treasurer uses a copy of Quicken™ owned by the Chapter. It is unnecessary to maintain a "manual" checkbook; however, the Treasurer may do so if desired.

#### ***Bank Reconciliations***

Determine that the Chapter checkbook has been reconciled monthly to the statement received from the Chapter's bank.

#### ***Income***

Compare the income portion of the Financial Activity Report to supporting documentation for each deposit. Determine that documentation includes a copy of the Deposit Ticket (created by the Treasurer), Transaction Receipt (created by the bank)

and copies of all checks included in the transaction. Review the entries in Quicken™ for a representative sample of deposits to determine that they are classified correctly.

***Disbursements***

Compare the expense portion of the Financial Activity Report to supporting documentation for each expenditure. Determine that documentation includes a completed "Payment/Reimbursement Request" with appropriate supporting documentation. If payment to a vendor, the original vendor's invoice is required. If reimbursement to a Chapter member, a copy of the cash register receipt or invoice detailing the items purchased is required. Review the entries in Quicken™ for a representative sample of disbursements to determine that they are classified correctly.

## **Appendix E—Training Session Ambassador Duties**

### **Ambassadors bring to the session:**

- The class sign-in sheet and agenda
- Any handouts you were given
- An emergency container of water in case a trainee forgets to bring beverages to guard against dehydration
- Sunscreen, mosquito repellent

### **Before the session:**

Be prepared to field questions by phone or by e-mail

### **At the session:**

- Introduce yourself at the beginning; ask if they have any questions
- Have all trainees and members attending sign in
- Be ready to help trainees get answers to questions throughout the day
- Be ready to assist the presenter if required
- During the lunch break, provide information on current chapter volunteer projects and advanced training opportunities
- Have the trainees fill out evaluation forms at the end of the session and collect them
- Be prepared to answer questions about the next session

### **After the session, get information to the Education & Training Chairman:**

- Number of hours training lasted (include lunch—interaction then enhances learning)
- Sign-in sheets
- Evaluation forms

## Appendix F—Suppliers

### **Name Tags**

Crackajack Engravers  
401 E Broadway  
Big Sandy, TX 75755  
903-636-4466 Fax 903-636-4706

### **Certificate Plaques**

Ordering Information—<http://www.presentaplaque.com/presenta.htm>

### **Stationery and Paper Supplies**

Texas AgriLife Extension Bookstore—  
[https://agrilifebookstore.org/publications\\_browse2.cfm?keywordid=164](https://agrilifebookstore.org/publications_browse2.cfm?keywordid=164)

### **Milestone Pins & Dragonflies**

Sonny Arnold  
Assistant State Coordinator  
111 Nagle Hall  
The Texas A&M University System  
College Station, Texas 77843-2258  
979-458-1099  
sarnold@ag.tamu.edu



## **Appendix G—Texas Master Naturalist™ Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct**

### **Code of Ethics**

Each member, in striving to meet the mission, goals, and objectives of the Master Naturalist program, pledges to:

1. Subscribe to the highest standards of integrity and conduct
2. Promote and support the statewide and local Master Naturalist program
3. Respect the state sponsors of Texas Parks & Wildlife and Texas AgriLife Extension and their roles and expectations
4. Disseminate information to promote understanding of, and appreciation for, the values of our natural resources
5. Strive to increase knowledge and skills to advance as a Master Naturalist volunteer
6. Promote competence as a Master Naturalist volunteer by supporting high standards of education, service, and performance
7. Encourage the use of sound biological information in education and outreach and in management decisions
8. Support fair and uniform standards of service and treatment of those engaged in the Master Naturalist program
9. Know and follow established program guidelines and policies
10. Abide by chapter bylaws
11. Avoid use of the Master Naturalist title, logos and trademarks for personal endeavors and/or profit
12. Act as trustworthy and ethical stewards of the environment
13. Never inappropriately disturb or harass wildlife, never inappropriately remove anything from its natural state or area

### **Standards of Conduct**

Master Naturalist program volunteers shall at all times:

1. Uphold the Commitment made to the program and the required volunteer and advanced training hours required by the program.
2. Uphold the dignity and integrity of the Master Naturalist program. They shall endeavor to avoid even the suspicion of dishonesty, fraud, deceit, misrepresentation, or unprofessional demeanor.
3. Conduct themselves appropriately to context and setting at all times.
4. Be considerate and respect other's points of view.

5. Keep accurate records of volunteer service, training and research, and regularly notify your local chapter of these records.
6. Avoid performing service when such service is judged to be contrary to the Code of Ethics or detrimental to the well-being of the program and its sponsors.
7. Provide maximum possible effort in the best interest of each client and/or volunteer project regardless of the degree of remuneration.
8. Be mindful of their responsibility to society and the program.
9. Studiously avoid discrimination in any form, or the abuse of program authority, certification, or membership for personal satisfaction. Avoid advocacy, lobbying or promoting political issues.
10. Cooperate fully with professionals and other Master Naturalist volunteers in the best interest of our natural resources.
11. Refrain from advertising in a self-laudatory manner, beyond statements intended to inform prospective clients or members of qualifications, or in a manner detrimental to the Master Naturalist program and its volunteers.
12. Avoid all use of alcohol and controlled substances while on duty as a Master Naturalist volunteer. Reporting for service while under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance will result in termination from volunteer service.
13. Accept responsibility for decisions made and actions taken based on these decisions.

## Appendix H—TMN State Program Disciplinary Processes

### Individual Disciplinary Procedures

1. General Policy. As a policy, in all efforts, the Texas Master Naturalist Program remains fair, objective, accurate and comprehensive. When it becomes obvious that an individual or group of individuals participating in any capacity of the program is misrepresenting the program and its written objectives, then that individual or group of individuals may be asked to step down from positions of leadership and/or participation in the program. Such a case could result in the revoking of a Texas Master Naturalist participation, Certification and/or Chapter Charter.
2. Background. It is important to review the founding principles of the Texas Master Naturalist Program before addressing inappropriate behavior. The mission statement and the Texas Master Naturalist Chapter Management Guidelines contain the primary tenets of the program.
  - a. Mission. To develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities for the State of Texas.
  - b. Key Elements of the Chapter Management Guidelines (Review Management Guidelines for further detail)

Maintain the program as an unbiased public service.

Recognize ones responsibilities as a Texas Master Naturalist.

Recognize the autonomy of the various partners when coordinating or implementing projects and other chapter events.

Keep accurate records.

Present a positive public image that speaks well of the Texas Master Naturalist Program.

Actively participates as a team member with other individuals of the Texas Master Naturalist Program.

Local Chapters should be instrumental in making members aware of these key elements and their own bylaws, policies and procedures. Chapters shall be vigilant and responsible for ensuring members and affiliates are following policy.

3. Applicability. All Volunteers, Coordinating Committee Members, Advisory Committee Members, Local Chapter Executive Board Members, Chapter Committee Chairpersons, and State Advisory Committee Members are subject to the same level of conduct.
4. Procedures for disciplining and/or dismissal. The subsequent procedures are to be followed on the occasion of disciplining and/or dismissing an applicable member of the Texas Master Naturalist Program.
  - a. Informal Initial Step. When any member of the Texas Master Naturalist Program and/or public thinks an infraction of the tenets, policies, written rules or guidelines

of the State or Chapter has occurred, that person should confront the offending party and state what violation they think has occurred and why. This simple act will resolve or preclude most problems an organization will encounter. Not all members are fully aware of the regulations of the program and may be just acting out of ignorance and not malice. It is important for individuals and officers/boards/committees to know that their actions are being noted with regard to the other tenets of the program. If the informal approach is unsuccessful in resolving the problem then proceed to the formalized procedure.

b. Formal Process

- (1) In order to demonstrate grounds for this action, the case must be presented in writing. If the case involves a volunteer, committee member, or committee, then the written case must be submitted to the Chapter Executive Board. If the infraction involves a Chapter Officer, Executive Board member, or a member of the Chapter Advisory/Coordinating Committee, then the written case must be submitted to the Chapter Advisory/Coordinating Committee. If the case involves the Chapter Advisory/Coordinating Committee as a group, then the written case must be submitted to the Program Coordinator. Chapter Advisory/ Coordinating Committee membership consists of TPWD, TCE or other previously acknowledged state-level leaders and points of primary contact.
- (2) A case may be brought to the attention of the local Chapter by:
  - General public, non-affiliates of the Texas Master Naturalist program
  - Partnering organizations of the chapter or state program
  - Member(s) of the Chapter
  - Member(s) of the Chapter Executive board
  - Member(s) of the Chapter Coordinating/Advisory board
  - Member(s) of the State Advisory Board
- (3) The offending individual(s) shall be notified of the allegations within 7 days after the written case has been submitted. The individual(s) shall have 30 days to respond in writing to the case details before suggestions toward disciplinary action are made.
- (4) The Chapter Advisory/Coordinating Committee and/or the Chapter Executive Board shall review the documented case and make recommendations toward disciplinary action and submit this information in writing to the State Program Coordinator. The submitted documentation must include a statement(s) from the offending person(s) and the original written case submitted to the committee(s). The Program Coordinator may contact all involved parties regarding the case prior to taking the case to the Statewide Advisory Committee. The Program Coordinator will notify (in writing) to the petitioners with the acceptance or non-acceptance of the outlined grounds and recommendations on the further process of disciplinary action.

- (5) The person(s) affected by the documented allegations and disciplinary action shall also be notified by the Program Coordinator of the case and the final disciplinary action.
- c. Appeal Process. The individual(s) have 30 days to respond or appeal to the Chapter Advisory/Coordinating Committee. No response indicates an acceptance of the case recommendation and disciplinary action unless otherwise stated within the disciplinary course of action. In the case of an appeal the Chapter Advisory/Coordinating Committee shall make a recommendation and resubmit the case to the Program Coordinator for final resolution. Circumstances that may warrant reconsideration requests may include substantive error or omission of information that was submitted to the Program Coordinator.

### **Rescission of a Chapter**

There are several scenarios under which a chapter can be dissolved or revoked. Possible scenarios include (1) A chapter may, for untold reasons, lose the interest of its members. (2) None or only a few members are meeting the annual requirements. This type of chapter is not meeting the goals and objectives of the Texas Master Naturalist program. At the other end of the spectrum is a chapter that does not comply with State Committee policies or overtly contravenes the guidelines and policies. For the overall health and welfare of the program these issues must be addressed and resolved.

- A. A chapter can be dissolved or revoked under the following conditions.
  1. A chapter may self-dissolve by a 2/3 vote of its legitimate active members present and voting at a regular chapter meeting or special meeting where all members have been appropriately notified. A letter must be submitted to the State Committee stating the results of the vote and why the chapter chooses to dissolve.
  2. If a chapter fails to comply with guidelines and policies as set forth by the State Committee, then a letter of warning will be issued. The chapter will have six months from the date of the warning letter to amend its actions and begin complying with guidelines and policies. If the chapter does not conform at the end of the six-month probation period then its charter shall be revoked.
  3. If a chapter overtly contravenes the program's guidelines and policies, then it should immediately have its charter revoked.
- B. When a chapter is dissolved, its records should be transferred to the State Committee. Any funds remaining should be given to local non-profit charity(s) as recommended by the chapter members and agreed on by the State Committee. The members should also submit their recommendations to the State Committee as to the disposal of any other chapter items or property.

## **Appendix I—Texas AgriLife Extension Service Financial Best Management Practices**

### **Record Keeping:**

Detailed records should be kept on all funds collected and/or spent.

The use of a computer software package with adequate built-in controls is recommended any time a bank account is involved. Accounting software similar to “Quicken™” is suggested.

Record multiple copied pre-numbered cash receipts immediately upon receipt. Depositing funds on a daily basis is desirable, however, it is suggested all funds be deposited within three working days or when the funds exceed \$200.

Prepare a list of all remittances received and make comparisons of this list with subsequent bank deposits.

Where county support staff collects and receipts funds, there should always be a signed transmittal in duplicate for the collected funds from the support group representative upon transfer of funds.

Adequate physical facilities should be provided for safeguarding funds in the possession of individuals authorized to handle funds. (safe, locked cabinet, etc.)

Make all payments by serially numbered checks. All receipts, checks, money orders, etc., should have a pre-numbered sequence for accounting purposes. Maintain duplicate copies of receipts given to individuals who receive transmittal of funds.

Checks should not be made payable to “cash”.

All supporting payment documentation should be stamped or adequately marked to prevent their reuse.

Check request should be used to authorize payment.

Issue checks to vendors only for payment of approved original invoices which have been re-added and verified. Verify with receiving documentation or other evidence that the goods or services are complete.

Reimbursement claims should be supported by cash register tapes or paid invoices. In incidences where supporting documentation is not available, the Affidavit of Expenditure form should be used.

If a vendor requires prepayment, an initialed statement can be used as support until the item is purchased. The subsequent invoice can be attached later.

Bank statements should be reconciled monthly and any adjustments recorded in the records or reported to the bank immediately by the support group treasurer. Texas AgriLife Extension employees cannot perform these reconciliations. We can facilitate the process by allowing the use of the county computer, but no files or fiscal records should be maintained on the hard-drive of the office computer.

Inventory of equipment or other property should be listed and the list assigned to a custodian identified by the group. Title to any equipment purchased should be

determined and should be indicated on the inventory from date of purchase. The custodian should make an accurate accounting initially and report this to the group officers. Any changes in inventory should be updated monthly. Periodic physical counts should be made by another group member to guard against shrinkage by loss of theft. If title to inventorial property (over \$5,000) is conveyed to Texas AgriLife Extension or to a respective county Extension program, the appropriate gift form (AG103 for Texas AgriLife Extension) and appropriate inventory procedures should be followed.

Support Group financial computer records should be kept secure with a backup system in place and handled the same as hard copies.

All checks returned by the bank for insufficient funds should be dealt with immediately by the designee of the group, and a follow-up record maintained. Where possible, the bank charges should be paid by the offender.

### **Separation of Duties:**

The person who collects funds and the person who writes checks should not be the same. For example, a county support staff can collect entry fees and then give the money to the treasurer of the organization for deposit. Preparing a list of all remittances received in the mail and transmittals, then comparing this list with subsequent bank deposits should be a routine function of officers and/or the financial review committee.

The person who writes the checks should not be the one who reconciles the bank statement. Bank statements should be delivered unopened directly to the reconciler.

Notify the bank immediately with a signed letter from officers when signature authority and online accessibility changes.

### **Documentation for Support Groups:**

All external support groups must have a set of by-laws that include provisions for receiving and disbursing funds and the disposition of external support group assets if the group disbands.

Each support group should prepare an annual budget and submit it to the appropriate committee or task force.

Support groups should conduct a financial review of funds and submit a financial review report to the County Extension Office or Associate Department Head annually.

Officers or the Financial Review Committee reviews club, organization, and task force reports, arranges for the financial review of their support accounts and assets, and provides an accounting report to the entire committee.

Written policy is suggested for marking inventory control and the disposition of all tangible items (established by dollar value) after the useful life of such items expire.

Support groups review and approve an annual report accounting for the finances and resources used to support the Extension program. It is recommended that support groups retain copies of the review for no less than three years. Agents place a copy on file and submit a copy to the District Extension Administrator. Specialists place a copy in the department files and submit a copy to the Associate Department Head.

# Appendix J—Texas AgriLife Extension Service Volunteer Background Check Procedures



**CONFIDENTIAL**

E-446  
4-07

*Improving Lives. Improving Texas.*

## Volunteer Background Check Form

Consent for criminal background history check authorization/waiver

To be completed by Extension program volunteers (ENP, BLT, etc.) and Master Volunteers.

Please print:

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. APPLICANT'S FULL, LEGAL NAME _____<br><br>3. ADDRESS _____<br><br>5. FIRST 5 DIGITS OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER _____<br><br>7. DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER (optional) _____<br><br>9. Are you of Hispanic ethnicity? Yes / No<br>RACE (circle one) White / Black / Asian / American Indian<br>Alaskan Native / Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander | 2. COUNTY _____<br><br>4. CITY _____ ZIP _____<br>_____ / _____ / _____<br>6. DATE OF BIRTH _____<br><br>8. GENDER (circle one) Male / Female _____<br><br>10. VOLUNTEER PROGRAM AREA _____ |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**Previously Screened**

11. I verify that I have been previously screened including a criminal background check and PASSED.  Yes  No

If yes, by who? \_\_\_\_\_ When (Year): \_\_\_\_\_

For what purpose? \_\_\_\_\_

Did you pass? If not, what restrictions were imposed? \_\_\_\_\_

**Please sign at the bottom of the form.**

12. I hereby authorize VERIFY and/or its Service Provider and Texas Cooperative Extension to request and receive any and all background information about or concerning me, including, but not limited to, my Criminal History, Credit History including a consumer report under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, 15 U.S.C. 1681, Driving Record, Employment History, Military Background, Civil Listings, Educational Background, Professional License from any Individual, Corporation, Partnership, Law Enforcement Agency, and other entities including my Present and Past Employers. I authorize Texas Cooperative Extension or any of its components to make reference checks relating to my volunteer service. I understand that this information will be used to determine my eligibility as a volunteer/employee with Texas Cooperative Extension. This request is for criminal history only. No credit report will be requested or obtained.

The criminal history, as received from the reporting agencies, may include arrest and conviction data, as well as plea bargains and deferred adjudications and delinquent conduct committed as a juvenile. I understand that this information will be used, in part, to determine my eligibility for an employment/volunteer position with this organization. I also understand that as long as I remain an employee or volunteer here, the criminal history check may be repeated at any time. I understand that I will have an opportunity to review the criminal history as received by client/agency and a procedure is available for clarification, if I dispute the record as received. I also understand that the criminal history could contain information presumed to be expunged.

I further release and discharge VERIFY and their Service Provider and all of their Subsidiaries, Affiliates, Officers, Employees, Contract Personnel, or Associates, from any and all claims and liability arising out of any request for information or records pursuant to this authorization and/or procurement of an investigative consumer report and understand that it may contain information about my character, general reputation, personal characteristics, and mode of living, whichever are applicable.

I understand that I have the right to make written request within a reasonable period of time to VERIFY for additional information concerning the nature and scope of the investigation. I acknowledge that I have voluntarily provided the above information for employment/volunteer purposes, and I have carefully read and understand this authorization.

13. Date \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_



## Volunteer Background Check Form Instructions

1. Applicant's Printed Name – Complete with first name, middle name and last name.
2. County – Complete with the county name in which you are applying to be a volunteer.
- 3/4. Address – Complete with your current mailing address, city and zip code.
5. Social Security Number – Complete with at least the **first five** digits of the social security number. The social security number is an individual descriptor that enables the system to complete a national criminal search of 47 jurisdictions.
6. Date of Birth – Complete with the month, day and year of birth.
7. Driver's License Number – Complete with current driver's license number and state. Although optional, this helps affirm your identity during a background check.
8. Gender – Complete by circling one of the options.
9. Race – Complete the race and ethnicity section by circling the answers that apply. This field is optional; however, it is very important in confirming accurate identity.
10. Volunteer Program Area – Complete with the program area you are volunteering for (e.g., Better Living for Texans, Expanded Nutrition Program, Master Gardener, Master Naturalist, Master Sewing Volunteer, 4-H and Youth).
11. Previously Screened – Texas Cooperative Extension will accept prior screenings conducted within the past three years from other entities. The approved list of prior screenings either as an employee or volunteer include: school districts, churches, youth groups/associations (Little League, sports associations, etc.), youth agencies/organizations (Big Brother/Big Sister, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, after school/extended care programs), law enforcement (county, state or federal/prison system), Texas Youth Commission, Department of Defense – Child and Youth Services, Department of Defense – Family Programs, concealed handgun license; and/or licensed childcare workers.  
*\* The minimum requirement is a criminal background check conducted through DPS or a National Criminal Search entity.\**  
*\*\* Other sources may be considered based on documentation provided with screening criteria and specifics.\*\**  
*\*\*\* Documentation is required for screenings from other entities. This could include a letter of acceptance from the employer or volunteer group, or a letter written from the screening entity to Texas Cooperative Extension stating you have been screened and tested.*
12. Authorization Statement – State agencies screening volunteers are required by legislation to use the Volunteer Center of North Texas. The Volunteer Center contracts with VeriFYI. VeriFYI is a background verification software system that accesses multi-jurisdiction checks utilizing one of the largest private-sector criminal history databases in the nation (180 million records). All information received is held in confidence and not shared at the county level. Criminal record results are shredded when a volunteer's status is determined.
13. Date Completed
14. Applicant's Signature