

East Texas Chapter Master Naturalist Chapter Operating Handbook

The East Texas Chapter Master Naturalist (ETCMN) **Chapter Operating Handbook (COH)** is based upon three documents from the Texas Master Naturalist State Program: (1) Chapter Operating Template, (2) Bylaw Template, and (3) Chapter Management Guidelines. This manual is intended to define and document Chapter policies, management guidelines, and operating procedures. This document 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 East Texas Chapter Master Naturalist Chapter Operating Handbook is organized in sections.

- **Section I** defines terms used throughout the Handbook.
- **Section II** addresses policies for operation of the Chapter.
- **Section III** delineates the responsibilities and operating procedures for Chapter Officers, committees, and committee managers.
- **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.

This Handbook is prepared to assist the membership in understanding the Chapter By-Laws and to facilitate the everyday management of activities pertaining to the ongoing business of the Chapter. The Chapter Operating Handbook will be reviewed annually by a three-member committee appointed by the President and approved by the Executive Committee. Any revisions will be made by a committee chaired by the Past President. Recommended revisions will be forwarded to the Executive Committee prior to the last Executive Committee meeting of the year.

The procedures of the Chapter will be stated and enacted in such a way as to enable the members to provide volunteer services in the arena of their choice but under the guidelines of the State TMN Program. Members will receive assistance in developing projects in their home communities and guidance of the numerous kinds of activities that are possible. Our members are volunteers, giving of their time and energy, and will receive encouragement to their willingness to serve the Program. The Handbook reviewers will consider what procedures can be adopted to make member rules and regulations as unencumbered and simple as possible.

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Section I - Definitions

Chapter Name

The name of this organization is the East Texas Chapter Master Naturalist. It may also be referred to in this document as the ETCMN.

Parent Organization

Texas Master Naturalist Program or “State Program”

State Program Sponsors

Texas Parks & Wildlife Department and Texas AgriLife Extension Service

Chapter Mission

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, 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, managers 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 mission of the Chapter. Committee managers are appointed by the President with the consent of the Executive Committee. Managers choose their own committee members. Current standing committees are:

- Curriculum
- Membership
- Volunteer Projects
- Public Relations/Outreach

Other Managers (also members of Executive Committee)

- Database
- Newsletter
- Website
- Chapter Archives (history)
- Host (See details under Vice President in Section III)

Ad hoc Committee

An ad hoc committee may be appointed by the President to perform a specific task. Once the task is completed, the committee is disbanded.

Membership

Member categories are Member-in-Training, Associate Member, Certified Member and Honorary Member. See details of each category at **Membership** in Section II.

Member in Good Standing

Member-in-Training, 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 (See Resources. These documents may also be found on the State Master Naturalist website <http://txmn.org> under chapter governance.) A member in good standing may vote and hold office.

Partner

A Chapter Partner provides partner resources to the East Texas 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. (See page 9 for a description of Partner Policies.)

Limited Partner

Limited Partners provide East Texas 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 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 East Texas 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 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 East Texas Chapter Master Naturalist 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 Resources.)

For purposes of the nonprofit corporation, the East Texas Chapter's official mailing address is P.O. Box 131184, Tyler, TX 75713-1184. . At the first Executive Committee meeting of the year it shall be determined who will have possession of and responsibility for the post office box keys.

The home base of the Chapter is the Tyler Nature Center, located at 11942 FM 848, Tyler, TX 75707. The Chapter area consists of ten counties: Smith and adjacent counties: Anderson, Cherokee, Gregg, Henderson, Rains, Rusk, Upshur, Van Zandt, and Wood. See Appendix I for a map of counties in the Chapter area.

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 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, age (must be 18 years of age or older), sex, religion, disability, or national origin.

New members come into the Chapter through the training program or by transfer from another Chapter. Applications for membership may be found on the Chapter's website.

Membership-in-Training

Individuals currently enrolled in the Texas Master Naturalist training may participate in activities of the Chapter, have voting privileges and may hold office. Members-in-training must participate in a minimum of 60 hours of basic training to become an Associate Member.

Associate Member

Individuals who have completed a minimum of 60 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.

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 (Advanced Training) each year. A member in good standing who does not recertify in a given year reverts to Associate Member status.

Returning (formally inactive) Member

Individuals who, for whatever reason, had to leave the Chapter and are now able to return fall into the Associate member/Membership-in-Training category. (See section above.)

Returning members must:

- complete any missed class training.
- earn 8 hours of continuing education (Advance Training).
- perform a minimum of 40 hours volunteer service.

Members may assume the same status regarding training or hours needed to reach certification or recertification status. Members will also need to be current on their dues.

Honorary Member

The Chapter may choose to honor a person for outstanding service to the Chapter by offering him or her 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, unless they themselves complete the training. 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 East Texas Chapter, that member may do so under the following conditions, given approval by the Executive Committee:

- The transferee brings a letter from his or her 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.
- The East Texas 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.
- The transferee must agree to adhere to all the rules and policies of the East Texas Chapter.
- It is strongly recommended that a transferee arrange with the Curriculum Committee to complete training that is specific to the East Texas area.

In compliance with State requirements, East Texas 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.
- Associate Members and Members-in-Training owe dues beginning in January of the year following their initial training. This rule includes inactive members who return under this category.
- All dues must be paid by the end of January. Failure to pay dues will result in a member being no longer in good standing. The Executive Committee may consider an exception to this rule in special circumstances.

Partnerships

Our sponsoring agencies, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and Texas AgriLife Extension Service, are the main focus of the chapter's activities. However, the chapter may want to establish other partnerships. The Board is the determining body to establish a partnership and to decide which organizations to approach. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) should be drafted to set forth the duties and responsibilities of both parties, including education, training, and volunteer activities. Volunteer Projects Committee should have overall coordination of partnerships. This committee has the responsibility to negotiate the MOU and secure the signatures of both parties. A Partnership is not required for all of the projects on which the chapter is working. It is possible for individual members to submit a Volunteer Project Request if they wish to volunteer with a particular organization or agency.

Financial Policies

Chapter Funds

All chapter funds shall be handled in a manner consistent with *Best Practices: Texas AgriLife Extension Service Financial Resource Management* (This document may be found at agrilifeas.tamu.edu.) Chapter funds will be maintained in one account authorized by the Executive Committee and managed by the Treasurer using Quicken accounting software. All cash and checks will be directed to the Treasurer. Checks will be made to "East Texas Chapter Master Naturalist" or "ETCMN". All Chapter checks will be signed by two of the four elected officers of the Chapter. Authorized signers may not sign checks payable to themselves or their spouses. Spouses may not co-sign checks. Because the chapter is a 501(c)(3) tax is not to be charged tax for any purchase..

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. All gifts and monetary donations will be acknowledged with a letter from the Chapter Treasurer.

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.

Scholarships

The purpose of the East Texas Chapter Master Naturalist scholarship program is to provide financial assistance and recognition to members who are interested in attending the annual State Master Naturalist meeting so that they may learn more about the State Program and other Master Naturalist chapters and may improve the ETCMN with knowledge gained at the meeting.

The goal of the ETCMN scholarship program is to subsidize the State scholarship program if funds are available. The scholarship will be paid to the selected member upon completion of all requirements.

Qualifications and requirements of the ETCMN Scholarship

- The applicant must be a member in good standing (either Certified or Associate Member) and must have paid dues, completed at least 60 hours of class work, and be taking an active current role in the chapter.
- The applicant must submit a completed application (Appendix II) by the deadline, which shall be one month after the State publishes the date for the current year State meeting.
- The recipient agrees to the following:
 1. The recipient must present to the Executive Committee an agenda of sessions, seminars, or roundtable discussions to be attended based on the State meeting schedule. The agenda must include a Friday evening seminar or roundtable discussion if the applicant is arriving at the meeting on Friday; two half-day sessions or one full-day session on Saturday, as well as an evening roundtable discussion; the presentation of the State guest speaker on Sunday, the presentation of awards and prizes, and any other sessions attended that day. This agenda will be approved by the Executive Committee and at least one advisor.
 2. Upon returning to East Texas, the scholarship recipient must prepare a presentation discussing his or her experiences at the State meeting and the information gained. This presentation should include an overview of each session attended. The report may be presented at a monthly chapter meeting and will be published in the ETCMN newsletter and on the chapter website.

Advanced Training hours apply for training sessions and roundtable discussions attended. The session leader/trainer for each session must initial the State agenda for that session.

Volunteer hours do not apply unless the recipient has signed up for volunteer work with the State Coordinator. Volunteer hours shall be determined based on the ETCMN Chapter Operating Handbook.

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. A Tax-exempt status form can be obtained from the Chapter Treasurer.

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. (See Resources for Financial Review Procedures.) Results of the financial review will be reported at the first general membership meeting.

Records

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

Marketing

The Texas Master Naturalist Marketing and Identity Guide and Trademark Guidelines (See Resources.) may be found on the State Master Naturalist website <http://txmn.org>. It is crucial that these guidelines be followed when generating documents that are to be distributed to the general public.

Meetings

Executive Committee meetings will be called and held at the discretion of the President. 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 fourth Thursday of each month, with the exception of Chapter Activity Days. All meeting dates will be listed on the master calendar located on the Chapter's website (<http://txmn.org/etwd/>).

Meetings may be rescheduled because of special circumstances. The last general membership meeting of the year shall be designated the annual meeting when elections for new officers will be held. 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.

Curriculum Class Training

State minimum training requirements include 40 hours of combined classroom and field experiences designed to introduce trainees to the ecosystems of the East Texas 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 East Texas area.

The East Texas Chapter offers approximately 60 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 **trainee** cannot become a Certified Texas Master Naturalist, but may earn volunteer service hours or advanced training hours towards future certification. **(As long as the course fee is paid in full, trainees/volunteers are considered members and are eligible to begin accruing hours.)*** The Executive Committee may consider an exception to this rule in special circumstances, such as medical problems.

Upon completion of the East Texas Master Naturalist curriculum class training, the trainee becomes an Associate Member. Upon completion of all the requirements within the first year, the member becomes certified, receives an ETCMN name badge, is awarded a state certificate, and receives a member shirt.

A trainee may also attend the same subject class of a neighboring chapter within the same eco-region, given prior permission from the neighboring chapter and his or her home chapter Curriculum Committee.

New Members come into the Chapter through the training program. Class size is limited by training location capacity. The Chapter reserves the right to cancel the curriculum

* Clarification to ETCMN COH adopted Feb 1, 2012.

class training for any year in which too few applications are received to make up a viable class.

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, transportation considerations, and liability.

Trainees are required to bring lunch/dinner or one may be provided, 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. A portion of initial training is field-oriented. Topics may include:

- Orientation to ETCMN 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 is a Naturalist?
- Observation Skills and Field Notes
- Geology and Ecology of Texas
- Indians Indigenous to the East Texas Area
- East Texas Ecology
- East Texas Mammals
- East Texas Birds
- East Texas Fish
- Native Plant Identification and Habitat Use

Volunteer Service Requirements and Guidelines

Parts of the following section are excerpted from the Chapter Management Guidelines of the Texas Master Naturalist Program and may not be changed.

In order to attain certification, a Texas Master Naturalist trainee must complete a minimum of 40 Volunteer Service Hours on pre-approved projects within one year of the initial training series. In order to retain the title of Certified Texas Master Naturalist, a volunteer must complete another 40 service hours on pre-approved projects in every subsequent year. Volunteer Service Hours are those direct contact hours spent on Texas Master Naturalist projects approved by the local chapter. (Thus, volunteer hours credited

for the TMN program may not be credited from or to another Master Volunteer or other volunteer program). Sometimes travel and prep time for specific projects may be counted as service time as determined by the local chapter. Service activities relating to the development and management of a local chapter, such as serving as a board member, should be credited with Volunteer Service Hours.

Volunteer service project opportunities may be presented by various different identities ranging from the state program sponsors, the chapter, local chapter partners, an individual volunteer, other agencies such as city, county, state and federal agencies and even nature centers and schools. Several chapters have even successfully instituted a “class project” where the current training class of the chapter finds/develops and mutually agrees to volunteer for the project as a group and receive their required Volunteer Service Hours at the same time.

Volunteer projects may be a series of short experiences, such as serving on a speaker’s bureau, or they may involve the long-term efforts of an entire volunteer team from just one or even several chapters. Either way, for a master volunteer, the opportunity to do meaningful and interesting work is the reward. Texas Master Naturalist volunteers will vary in their abilities and interests. Some will want volunteer opportunities to be presented to them by the local chapter and state program sponsors and partners, while others will see a need and want to design their own project. There are few constraints, except that volunteer service must meet the Program Mission by being dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities.

All volunteer service projects must be pre-approved, ideally, through a local committee process, as this can often be an arduous job that should not be left to just one person. The pre-approval of volunteer service projects and opportunities is important to:

- ensure that volunteers are covered by the program insurance available.
- provide a list of service projects for volunteers of the chapter.
- ensure that the goals of the organization and the partners are met.
- avoid assumptions.

Chapter leaders will be confronted with numerous service projects and opportunities to approve. Below are some points to consider as a Chapter Volunteer Service Committee pre-approving individual service projects.

- A. Is the proposed service project representative of the goals, practices and teachings of the Texas Master Naturalist Program?
- B. How does the project address a pressing naturalist, natural resource management, chapter and/or partner need for meaningful service or resources?
- C. What is the scope of the project in terms of when it would need to be conducted, where, estimated time needed to complete or maintain per month, how many volunteers would be needed, etc.?
- D. Is the project within the Chapter’s service area and ecological training?

- E. How does the project allow the chapter to focus and/or create visibility, identity and/or recruitment for the chapter?
- F. How can the project's impact on the community and our natural resources be measured?

Actual Volunteer Service Examples:

Bad/Unacceptable	Better	Best
Being "on call" as a wildlife rescuer for a non-partner organization	Actually performing a wildlife rescue event for a partnering organization of the local chapter	
Planting exotic plants at a local school	Planting native plants or a Wildscape at a local school	Leading 5 th graders and staff in implementing a native plant garden/Wildscape at a local school
Monarch monitoring in Colorado	Monarch monitoring in Texas	Monarch monitoring within your local chapter's area
Cleaning the elephant cage at a zoo	Caring for the Prairie Chicken area at a local zoo that is in partnership with the local chapter	Leading interpretive programs about Prairie Chickens at a local zoo that is in partnership with the local chapter
Maintenance at a private native plant nursery	Maintenance of a demonstration garden at a park/nature center or being part of a native plant propagation team for the city's botanical garden	Holding a workshop on how to install and maintain a wildscape or other similar type of native habitat.
Conducting wildlife management activities on your own land	Conducting wildlife management practices/activities on public land	Teaching/assisting landowners to develop their own wildlife management plans that the landowner would carry out
A teacher receiving service credit for natural resource education activities he/she conducts in their classroom	A teacher receiving service credit for natural resource education activities he/she conducts as an unpaid after school Environmental Club leader	A teacher /volunteer who organizes and conducts a natural resource education workshop for other Master Naturalists or the general public.

Stream clean-up by a volunteer who works for a local watershed protection program	Stream clean-up by volunteers who do not work for a local watershed protection program	Master Naturalist Volunteers conducting stream or watershed restoration practices. Or Master Naturalist volunteers coordinating a stream clean-up for the local community to participate in.
Receiving service credit for time spent serving as a Board or Committee member for another natural resource/environmental organization NOT in partnership with your local Texas Master Naturalist Chapter.	Receiving up to a set limit of service credit (e.g. 10 hours per year as set by your local chapter) for serving as a Board or Committee member for another natural resource/environmental organization that is ALSO a partner with your local chapter, providing the chapter with resources such as meeting space at little or no cost.	Receiving service credit for time spent serving as a Board or Committee member for a natural resource/environmental organization in partnership with your local chapter and because the organization invited you to serve and represent your local Master Naturalist Chapter in this capacity.
	Conducting endangered species surveys; developing nature trails or habitat brush piles at a local park/nature center which is in a partnership with your local chapter.	Maintaining a nature classroom/training area for that same partner who also allows the chapter to keep an office and/or hold chapter meetings in this same space.

A trained volunteer, no matter how little or how much volunteer service he or she provides the chapter within a given year, is always considered a Master Naturalist volunteer. Master Naturalist volunteers in any given year are either "Certified" or working towards certification for that given year.

ETCMN Volunteer Policies and Procedures:

Unanticipated situations, i.e. family illness, medical procedures, accidents, etc., that will prevent a member from attaining the required 40 hours of volunteer service can be addressed in an appropriate manner by the Chapter's Executive board.

- Volunteers who belong to Master Gardeners and Master Naturalist may not count the same work hours twice, getting credit from both organizations for that same project. Because of the way the hours are counted both agencies would not be able to claim credit for those same hours.

- 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.
- Volunteer work in approved East Texas Chapter fund-raising efforts may be counted.
- Paid work may not be counted for volunteer credit. Many Chapter members do very valuable work that meets the TMN mission statement criterion, but may not count the hours because the work is part of their job. Examples:
 - ~Reporters may not get credit for writing an environmental story for which they are paid.
 - ~Teachers may not get credit for working with students on a nature program they are required by their teaching contract to sponsor.
 - ~Paid nature-tour announcers may not get credit for hours spent on their tours.
 - ~Improvement of individual personal properties is not an approved volunteer activity.

All volunteer work must be approved before a Volunteer may receive credit for it.

- ~Specific projects published through the Chapter are already approved and may be found on the website.
- ~Volunteer efforts must be approved by the Volunteer Projects Committee. The Chapter President or Chapter Advisor may approve a project in the absence of the Volunteer Projects Committee Manager.
- ~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 may be found on the Chapter website at <http://txmn.org/etwd/>.

- All volunteer work must be reported using the appropriate form. If an activity has not already been approved, the member may complete the Member Volunteer Project Approval Form and submit it to the Volunteer Projects Committee (projects@woodduck.org) for consideration. Once volunteer work has been approved, the volunteer uses the Activity Report form to report volunteer hours to the Chapter's Database manager via email at hours@woodduck.org, postal mail, or in person at a chapter meeting. All forms are available on the Chapter website and in the Appendices (Activity Report Appendix III, Volunteer Approval Form Appendix IV, Advanced Training Request Appendix V). All pre-approved Volunteer Service Hours must be reported by the end of the month following the

month in which the hours were accrued.

Travel Hours

Travel time to participate in approved volunteer service projects may be reported as volunteer service hours subject to the following limitations:

A volunteer may report actual travel time up to the greater of:

- a. three hours, or
- b. the number of volunteer hours actually worked on the project.

Extended travel outside the chapter's core counties, when representing the chapter on official business, and approved by both an officer and a chapter advisor, may be reported as travel hours and are not subject to the limitations listed above.

Travel time to participate in volunteer service projects or activities (such as Chapter Activity Days) may be reported as volunteer service, as long as the time exceeds thirty minutes one way and does not exceed the amount of volunteer service time.

Volunteers in the East Texas Chapter are subject to volunteer background checks in accordance with State Program guidelines. See Appendix VI for procedures.

Advanced Training Requirements

Parts of the following section are excerpted from the Chapter Management Guidelines of the Texas Master Naturalist Program and may not be changed. 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. Also, advanced training on an annual basis promotes continued learning and development. Advanced training is a benefit in itself, providing the experienced Master Naturalist with tools to work in more advanced volunteer efforts. Although the State Texas Master Naturalist program may occasionally provide statewide or regional advanced training opportunities, it is generally the responsibility of the chapter to insure that there are sufficient advanced training opportunities offered so that members can attain their 8-hour minimum requirement. In addition, the local chapter should be a clearinghouse for notifying members of approved advanced training opportunities that exist outside the chapter boundaries.

Advanced training courses may be made available directly through Texas AgriLife, TPWD, or any number of short-courses provided by universities or nature centers. One way for a chapter's trainees to meet their advanced training requirements is by actually sponsoring the advanced training sessions. The chapter's Local Coordinating Committee, Advanced Training Committee or equivalent must pre-approve all advanced training opportunities before the volunteer attends. Educational television shows are not a form of advanced training and therefore should not be approved as such. Advanced training

hours are also counted one hour for each hour of advanced training; however travel time is not included for advanced training hours. Pre-approval must be obtained for an advanced training session that is outside the chapter boundaries.

Chapter Coordinators and/or the Chapter Advanced Training Committee should use the following criteria or ask the following questions of the opportunity when reviewing and approving Advanced Training Opportunities:

Does the Advanced Training opportunity:

- 1. Promote continued learning and development of naturalist skills?**
- 2. Provide Master Naturalists with knowledge and skills to work in volunteer efforts?**
3. Direct trained volunteers toward specific programs in need of their services?
4. Provide practical information and training for application in volunteer efforts?
5. Take advantage of local partnerships?
- 6. Provide Master Naturalists an opportunity to focus their interests in one or a few specific topics?**
- 7. Build on the core curriculum initially provided by the local chapter?**
- 8. Provide natural resource management issues and information applicable to Texas?**

Advanced Training opportunities must meet the following criteria: 1, 2, 6, 7, and 8. It is suggested that the remaining criteria also be a part of the opportunity.

If an opportunity for advanced training has not already been approved, a Chapter member may complete the Advance Training Approval form to provide detailed information about the proposed training to the Curriculum Committee and request approval. Chapter members report advanced training to the Database Manager using the Hours 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 IX.

Please note, advanced training opportunities need to be applicable to the management of natural resource issues relating to the East Texas Chapter's core county area (Smith and adjacent counties: Anderson, Cherokee, Gregg, Henderson, Rains, Rusk, Upshur, Van Zandt, Wood) or to other east Texas counties with similar ecosystems. Attending other TMN Chapter training sessions will be considered on a case by case basis.

All Advanced Training hours must be reported using the Activity Report form (available on the Chapter website or at Appendix IX) and submitted to the Database Chair via email at hours@woodduck.org, by postal mail, or in person at a chapter meeting. If a training opportunity has not already been approved, a member may complete an Advanced Training Request and submit it to the email address on the form. All pre-approved

Advanced Training hours must be reported by the end of the month following the month in which the hours were accrued.

Chapter Activity Days are designed to afford the membership an opportunity to earn Advanced Training and Volunteer Service Hours and to socialize with other Chapter members. Chapter Activity Days may be scheduled on a quarterly basis, on Saturdays, and consist of Advanced Training and work on the current year's Chapter Projects. Board and Committee meetings may also be scheduled, perhaps as working lunches.

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. (See <http://txmn.org/>)

Note: In the ETCMN, members who wish to receive their re-certification pins at the Awards Ceremony at the last meeting of the year must complete and turn in their Volunteer Service Hours by November first. If they take until December 31 to complete the required hours, they will receive their pins in January of the following year.

Awards Programs

The purpose of the Awards Programs is to provide recognition, above and beyond that given by the State Program, to members and non-members for their contributions to the chapter and to the State Master Naturalist Program. The President will use the newsletter

and website to ask the membership for suggestions regarding candidates for awards. The Executive Board will review the suggestions and make the awards.

Awards include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Board Member:** annual recognition for service on the Board of Directors
- **Non-member:** recognition for service and/or contributions to the benefit of the ETCMN
- **Memorials:** plaques honoring those who served ETCMN and who have passed away.
- **Partners:** recognition of other organizations that have assisted, supported, and contributed to the advancement of ETCMN
- **Sponsor Organizations:** recognition of chapter advisors and other individuals associated with TPWD and AgriLife who have contributed to ETCMN
- **U.S. Government Volunteer Service Awards:** awards based on service to non-profit organizations.

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 on January 1 of the following year.

If an elected officer resigns, a replacement shall be appointed by the President with the approval of 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. (See Resources.)

Discipline and/or Removal of Members

The East Texas 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 Managers

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 appointed by President with the approval of the Executive Committee to complete the remainder of the

term.

A standing committee manager may be removed by a simple majority vote of the Executive Committee.

Dissolution of the East Texas Chapter of the 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 principal 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 East Texas Chapter has failed to comply with State requirements and policies, it may rescind the Chapter charter. See Resources for State procedures.

Changes to the Chapter Operating Handbook

If 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 East Texas current COH. Any Chapter member may present a proposed change in writing to the Executive Committee by conventional mail, email, or other equivalent means at least 10 days before the next Executive Committee meeting.

Changes and amendments may be made by the Executive Committee at a regular board meeting with a two-thirds vote of the board members in attendance. The general membership must be notified in writing of the proposed changes or amendments ten days before the meeting and be given an opportunity at the board meeting to voice any concerns about the changes or amendments.

Section III – Officer and Committee Responsibilities

Operating Procedures

Officers

President

The President serves as the chief executive officer of the Chapter and 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 at least three days prior to the meeting date.
- Preside at all meetings of the Chapter.
- Serve as Manager of the Executive Committee.
- Appoint committee Managers, 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.
- Work with the Database Manager and standing committee managers 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 or appoint someone to attend the state meeting of Chapter Representatives.

Vice President

The Vice President assists the President and substitutes for him or her as necessary.

Responsibilities

- Act for the President in his or her absence.
- Establish locations and arrange for meeting presentations at the chapter meetings.
- Send thank you notes to monthly presenters.
- Establish and publish the calendar for the year on the Chapter website.
- Chair the ad hoc Host Committee, which coordinates social activities with training sessions and other events.

Secretary

The Secretary maintains all nonfinancial Chapter records and ensures that they are recorded and accessible to the Executive Committee and general membership.

Responsibilities

- 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 board meeting and monthly chapter meeting.
- Maintain a hard-copy file of all minutes and legally binding correspondence.
- Bring to each meeting the agenda, Executive Committee and general membership minutes for the preceding meeting, and a copy of the Chapter Operating Handbook.
- Pass accurate and complete records to successor.

Secretary Operating Procedures

- Minutes - Take minutes at Chapter meetings and Executive Committee meetings.
 - Send Executive Committee and chapter meeting minutes to the Executive Committee for approval or changes.
 - Send approved Executive Committee minutes to the Executive Committee.
 - Send approved chapter meeting minutes to the membership by electronic mail.
- Record-keeping

File copies of all official Chapter correspondence and documents in the ETCMN files at the Tyler Nature Center.

Treasurer

The Treasurer serves as Chief Financial Officer for the Chapter and records and maintains all Chapter financial transactions using accepted accounting methods.

Responsibilities

- Initiate collection of dues and insurance forms annually.
- Maintain records to allow for verification of financial transactions.
- Report current financial status 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 Chapter property.
- Participate in the development of an annual budget with the Executive Committee.
- Submit all financial records to the Financial Review Committee annual year-end audit.
- Coordinate acquisition of a Chapter bank account signature card.
- Be the point of contact with regard to IRS inquiries on Chapter 501(c)(3) status.
- File necessary paperwork with the IRS to maintain 501(c)(3) status.
- Pass all financial records to successor.
- Serve as purchasing agent for the chapter.

Operating Procedures

1. Receipts

- Receive dues and notify Membership Committee of dues receipt.
- Forward "Dues and Insurance" forms to the Membership Manager and file hardcopies in the ETCMN files at the Tyler Nature Center.
- Deposit all checks and cash in excess of \$10.00 in the Chapter bank account within five business days of receipt.
- Write receipts for all funds 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 or at the request of the Executive Committee or general membership, as supported by chapter meeting minutes.
- Advise members making a purchase of more than \$25.00 to provide the vendor with a completed copy of the tax exemption certificate form, which may be obtained from the Treasurer.
- 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 check register, reconciled monthly to the bank statement.
- File copies of all support documentation in the ETCMN files at the Tyler Nature Center.
- 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 managers.

6. Signature Cards

- Provide a supply of bank information forms at the December meeting. Each officer must complete a form and supply a copy of his or her driver's license to the Treasurer.
- Take forms to the bank along with a copy of the December meeting minutes showing the election of the new officers. File photocopies of the forms in the ETCMN files at the Tyler Nature Center.
- Repeat the process if there is a change of officers during the year.

Past President

The Past President provides continuity of Chapter knowledge and management.

- serves as liaison between the Chapter and Partners.
- supports the new President and the Executive Committee.
- chairs the committee to review the COH annually.
- takes responsibility for planning and implementing the Scholarship Program. (See page 8 above.)

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 Chapter meeting of the year.
- Meet with Chapter Partners and recommend to the Executive Committee methods for improving the working relationship.
- Serve as Financial Review Committee Manager and appoint other committee members.
- Serve as Nominating Committee Manager and appoint other committee members.
- Act as Chapter Representative to the State in the event this position is vacant or if appointed by the Chapter President with approval of the Executive Committee.

- Announce the availability of the ETCMN scholarship. Receive and process scholarship applications.
- Chair the review committee on scholarship applications.
- Recommend a recipient of the scholarship to the Executive Committee.

Chapter Advisor

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

The Chapter Advisor supports the East Texas 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 will be selected collaboratively by the Executive Committee and the chapter sponsors. 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 ETCMN 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 ETCMN.
- Serve as a member of the Executive Committee without voting privileges.
- 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 TMN State Coordinator of Chapter concerns.

Chapter Representative to State

The Chapter President serves as the Chapter Representative to State or appoints a member in good standing to serve. The Chapter Representative to State provides direct communication between the ETCMN and the State organization.

Responsibilities

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

Standing Committees & Responsibilities

Each year the President-elect will assemble a slate of Committee Managers to submit to the incoming Board prior to the January Chapter meeting. Appointment of Committee Managers by the President, with the approval of the Board, will occur at the January meeting. Outgoing Board members are encouraged to attend the January meeting.

If a vacancy on the Board occurs, the President will appoint, with Board approval, a replacement Officer or Manager as soon as possible, in order to ensure the continuity of chapter activities.

All standing committees are responsible for preparing an annual budget for expenses expected to be incurred in carrying out their responsibilities. This budget should be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval at a Board meeting in February.

Each committee manager is encouraged to pass along any ongoing committee activities to the incoming Executive Committee at the first meeting of the New Year. This report should include any suggested changes or improvements.

- Each committee manager is responsible for providing the Recording Secretary with a copy of any Chapter correspondence or other documents for the Chapter files.
- Committee managers are encouraged to share execution of responsibilities with committee members. Individual committee members may be appointed to specific tasks.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee conducts the business of the Chapter.

Responsibilities

- Approve an operating budget to include income, including annual dues, and expenses for the fiscal year.
- Authorize expenditure of Chapter funds.

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee is the primary interface between the Executive Committee and the membership. The Membership Committee supports current members in meeting the TMN mission within the ETCMN area.

Member-Support Responsibilities

- Maintain Chapter member contact information.
- Track member progress toward certification and milestones.
- Prepare member certification, recertification, and milestone pin awards based on records provided to the Executive Committee by the Database Manager.
- Encourage member participation in volunteer activities.
- Report status of membership activities to the incoming Executive Committee at the first meeting of the year, with any suggested changes or improvements.

Member-Support Procedures

1. Send an email reminder to members immediately after the first of the year to pay dues, sign for liability insurance, and update contact information, interests, and expertise.
2. At this time, remind last year's trainees who have not certified that they have until the end of the current initial training session to complete certification requirements. Members should earn and report their minimum of 40 Volunteer Service Hours and 8 hours of Advanced Training by the end of November if they wish to receive their certification pin at the December meeting.
3. Provide a membership roster to Chapter members at appropriate intervals.
4. Keep inventory of plaques, nametags, certificates, and award and recertification pins. Prepare awards and certificates and order these supplies as required.

Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee plans the curriculum class training for the chapter, building on the state curriculum but focusing on the East Texas ecoregion. The Committee is also responsible for approving Advanced Training requests and for developing sessions for Chapter Activity Days. The Curriculum Committee coordinates the necessary Public Relations information for classes and Chapter Activity Days. The Curriculum Committee will report the status of programs to the incoming Executive Committee at the first meeting of the year, with any suggested changes or improvements.

Responsibilities and Procedures

- **Recruiting:**
 1. Receive and acknowledge each application by mail or in person, noting the date received.
 2. Notify applicants of acceptance by mail or email.
 3. Keep Treasurer apprised of applicant's status throughout the process.
 4. Report class information to the Executive Committee.

- **Curriculum Class Training:** A detailed timeline for Curriculum Class Operating Procedures has been established and may be found at Appendix VII. Note: Appendix VIII outlines Duties for Volunteers at Orientation.
- **Advanced Training:**
 - Evaluate all member-identified Advanced Training requests. Approval of requests must be in accordance with the Chapter's Advanced Training Criteria.
 - Maintain a file of all requests for Advanced Training Approval, whether approved or disapproved. Keep electronic copies and file hard copies in the ETCMN file at the Tyler Nature Center.
 - Send copies of approved Advanced Training forms to the Database Manager.

Please note that advanced training opportunities need to be applicable to the management of natural resource issues relating to the East Texas Chapter's core county area (Smith and adjacent counties: Anderson, Cherokee, Gregg, Henderson, Rains, Rusk, Upshur, Van Zandt, Wood) or to other east Texas counties with similar ecosystems. Attending other TMN Chapter training sessions will be considered on a case by case basis.

- Plan and conduct Advanced Training programs.
- Evaluate the training programs.
- **Chapter Activity Days:**
 - Plan and conduct Chapter Activity Day training. Advanced Training on Chapter Activity Days is the responsibility of the Curriculum Committee.

Volunteer Projects Committee

The Volunteer Projects Committee reviews requests for Volunteer Projects Approval. This committee also coordinates volunteer work for Chapter Activity Days.

Responsibilities

- Approve requests for volunteer activities. Two signatures from committee members are required for approval.
- Notify Chapter membership regarding volunteer opportunities and projects via website, newsletter, and Membership Manager.
- Develop group volunteer projects for incoming classes.
- Solicit updates on ongoing volunteer projects and report them to the incoming Executive Committee at the first meeting of the year.

- Assist with planning and/or developing volunteer projects for the Chapter Activity Day events.

Volunteer Projects Committee Procedures

1. Receive, evaluate, and approve or disapprove project suggestions from the membership based on State Guidelines for Volunteer Work.
2. Maintain approval-form records for all volunteer service and send copies to the Database Manager. Keep electronic copies of approved projects and file hard copies in the ETCMN file at the Tyler Nature center.

Public Relations/Outreach Committee

The Public Relations/Outreach Committee publicizes the mission and activities of the Texas Master Naturalist program and the ETCMN.

Responsibilities

- Build and maintain a program that informs the public and the membership of the activities and benefits of the ETCMN.
- Report the yearly status of outreach activities to the incoming Executive Committee at the first meeting of the year, with any suggested changes or improvements.
- Support the recruiting of new members in cooperation with the Curriculum Committee.

Procedures

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

Database Manager

The Database Manager maintains all Chapter records pertaining to the database.

The Database Committee records or delegates the recording of all hours of Advanced Training and Volunteer Service Hours performed by members to gain or maintain their

Texas Master Naturalist certification using the State supplied database software. (Master Naturalist Information System)

Records will be retained for five years.

Responsibilities

- Record or delegate the recording of all hours of Advanced Training and Volunteer Service Hours performed by members to gain or maintain their Texas Master Naturalist certification.
- Report Volunteer Service Hours and Advanced Training hours to the Executive Committee each month.
- Maintain a record of members who have gone through a background check.

Background Check Procedures

- Current form may be obtained from AgriLife Extension Office Advisor.
- Completed forms from members must be given to the Chapter Advisor and delivered directly to the AgriLife Extension Office for processing, along with a check to cover cost.
- Forms are not to be duplicated in any way.
- Background check renewal needs to be verified at the beginning of each calendar year and reported to the Executive Board.

Database Operating Procedures

- 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.
- For each quarter per state requirements, report hours to both State and Executive Board.

At the end of the year, assist the President with the Annual Report.

Other Standing Committees

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

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 Past President and will include two members chosen by the chair and approved by the Executive Committee.

Nominating

The Nominating Committee will be formed in early October prior to the yearly election. It will consist of the Past President and two members who are appointed by the Nominating Committee Manager 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, either in the newsletter or on the website, at least 15 days prior to the election, so that the membership may vote on the candidates at the December business meeting.

Host Committee

The Host committee, chaired by the Vice President, coordinates social activities, such as potluck lunches, in conjunction with training sessions and other events.

Special Committees

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

LIST OF APPENDICES

- I Map of ten county area served by ETCMN
- II Scholarship Application
- III Activity Report
- IV Volunteer Approval Form
- V Advanced Training Request
- VI Background Check Approval Form
- VII Curriculum Class Operating Procedures
- VIII Duties for Volunteers at Orientation

RESOURCES

These documents may be found on the ETCMN website <http://txmn.org/etwd>.

Master Naturalist Code of Ethics

Master Naturalist Standards of Conduct

Exemption Requirements – Section 501 (c)(3) Organizations

Financial Review Procedures

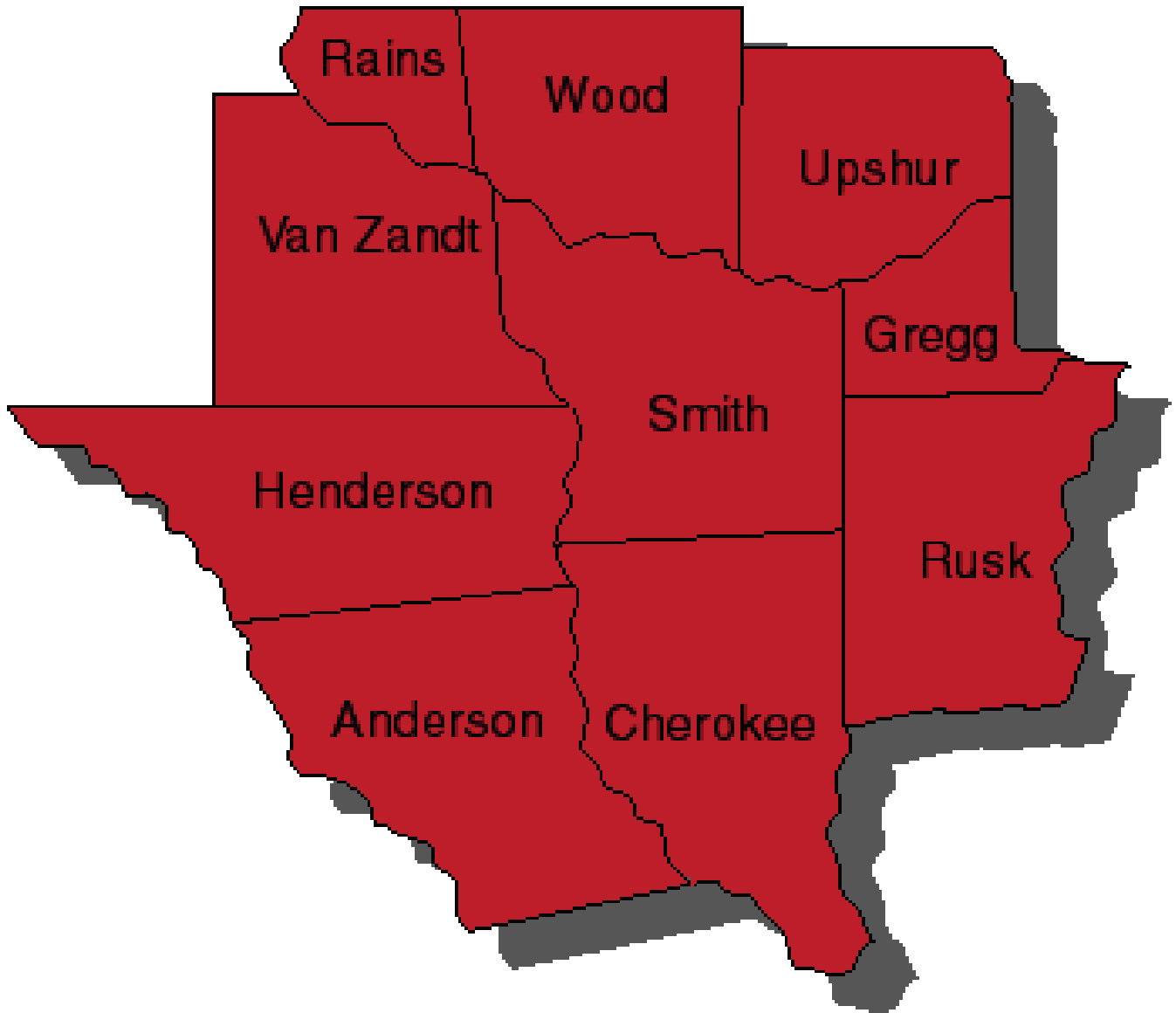
Texas Master Naturalist Marketing and Identity Guide

Texas Master Naturalist Trademark Guidelines

Master Naturalist Disciplinary Measures

State Rescission Procedures

MAP OF TEN COUNTY AREA SERVED BY ETCMN



**SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION
AND AGREEMENT**

Applicant's Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Address: _____

City/ST/Zip: _____

Describe your motivation for submitting the application for the scholarship and why you qualify:

I, _____, agree to the terms and requirements of the East Texas

Chapter Master Naturalist Scholarship Agreement as stated in the Chapter Operating Handbook.

_____ (initial). I have read and understand the terms as stated in the Chapter Operating Handbook.

Signed _____ Date _____

(Rev: 5/2011)

**TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST PROGRAM - EAST TEXAS CHAPTER
Activity Report**

- Please hand to, email or mail each month to Neva Rizley-Gates, hours@woodduck.org;
- East Texas Master Naturalist; P.O. Box 131184; Tyler, Texas 75713-1184; Attention Neva
- Electronic usage: Typing in columns automatically expands boxes to fit information.
- Please rename file in the form of name_log_sheet_date.doc. For example: John Doe Log Sheet Jan09.doc

Name	Reporting Month / Year
Signature _____ Date: _____	

Advanced Training Hours (*Travel time does not count for AT*)

Date	Chapter Approved AT Event	Instructor/Sponsor	Hours
Total			

Volunteer Hours

Date	Chapter Approved Service Activity	Hrs Worked + Travel Time	Direct Clients*	Indirect Clients*
Totals				

*Some volunteer work involves outreach and education. If applicable, please include in above form the number of people reached/served either directly or indirectly by event.

Direct Clients means: actual hands-on, instruction in the classroom, in the field, etc.

Indirect Clients means: informational, not instructional i.e. staffing booths, displays

Acreage Impacted applies to projects such as nature centers, parks and land management visits (report 1x/property/yr)

Breakdown of Clients Served (where possible)

Date	Adult M	Adult F	Youth M/F	Ethnicity	Comments	Trail Miles	Acreage Impacted

Updated 02_10_11

EAST TEXAS CHAPTER TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST
11942 FM 848 Tyler, Texas 75707 903-566-9394

Member Volunteer Project Approval Form

Volunteer service projects must meet the TMN mission by being related to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within the Chapter catchment area. All projects must be pre-approved.

[Email—projects@woodduck.org](mailto:projects@woodduck.org)

Member Name _____ Phone Number _____ Date _____

Project Title _____

Purpose of Project _____

Brief Description of Project _____

Project Leader _____ Project Location _____ County _____

Volunteer Duties Involved _____

Number of Volunteers Needed _____ Type of Physical Activity _____

_____ Indoor/Outdoor Work _____

Project duration (Circle One): One Time Project / Ongoing / Weekly / Monthly / As Needed

Starting Date _____ Ending Date _____

Before submitting a request, the project leader, and others if involved, should consider some of the items listed below and develop a plan for execution of the project. Please check the following items if they are related to the project and have been considered: ___ follow-up or maintenance required; ___ meetings or work schedule involved; ___ relation of leader to site manager/organization; ___ efforts to retain volunteer members; ___ public relation efforts needed and who is responsible for this. Is the project open to the general membership? ___ Should it be posted on website? ___

Approved by: _____ Date _____

Approved by: _____ Date _____

Created 2_10_11

Created 2/10/11

EAST TEXAS CHAPTER TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST

Email hours@woodduck.org

ADVANCED TRAINING REQUEST

Requests should be sent to gloriatmn@aol.com

I. TMN / Student Name _____ Request Date _____

Advanced Training Opportunity Title _____

II. Training Opportunity

Instructor _____ Organization / Agency _____

Training Location _____

Date of Training _____ Length of Training _____ (hrs.)

Skills to be learned: _____

Knowledge Gained: _____

Style: (check all that apply) Lecture _____ Outdoor Training _____ Video _____ Conference _____

Adv. Tr. By TMN _____ Web/Internet Site _____ Hands-on _____

Student's Evaluation of Training: _____

All Advanced Training must be pre-approved by two members of the Curriculum Committee:

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

Advanced Training opportunities must meet the following criteria: 1, 2, 6, 7, and 8. It is suggested that the remaining criteria also be a part of the opportunity.

1. Promote continued learning and development of naturalist skills?
2. Provide Master Naturalists with knowledge and skills to work in volunteer efforts?
3. Direct trained volunteers toward specific programs in need of their services?
4. Provide practical information and training for application in volunteer efforts?
5. Take advantage of local partnerships?
6. Provide Master Naturalists an opportunity to focus their interests in one or a few specific topics?
7. Build on the core curriculum initially provided by the local chapter?
8. Provide natural resource management issues and information applicable to Texas?



Volunteer Application Form

And consent for criminal background history check authorization/waiver

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

4-H volunteers must register online via 4-H CONNECT or by completing the 4-H Adult Volunteer Application (4-H 2-I.056)

Please print:

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

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? _____
- If you have been screened and passed a criminal background check through an Extension-approved entity, a letter/proof must be submitted.

Please sign at the bottom of the form.

12. I hereby authorize VERIFY and/or its Service Provider and the Texas AgriLife Extension Service to request and receive any and all background information about or concerning me, including, but not limited to, my Criminal History, 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 the Texas AgriLife Extension Service 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 the Texas AgriLife Extension Service.
- 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 Application 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 Food and Nutrition Education Program, Master Gardener, Master Naturalist, Master Wellness Volunteer).
**4-H volunteers should complete the Texas 4-H Adult Volunteer Application (4-H 2-1.056).*
11. Previously Screened – Texas AgriLife Extension Service 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 the Texas AgriLife Extension Service 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

Curriculum Class Operating Procedures

- Meet as a committee to evaluate new state requirements and current curriculum. Determine if changes are needed.
- Meet as a committee to review the application form to determine accuracy of information, including deadline and cost. Determine if changes are needed.
- Determine dates for upcoming class training and modify curriculum.
- Inform any trainees from the previous year's class that they may make up any sessions they missed during their own training, provided they coordinate the makeup sessions with the Curriculum Committee.
- Reserve training facilities for dates of training.
- Obtain Executive Committee approval of planned training.
- Develop and distribute Public Relations materials for upcoming class.
- Receive and process applications for classes on an ongoing basis.
- Assist applicants through the membership process.
- Schedule contact with presenters via email.
- Review confirmation letter, maps, etc.
- Review volunteer sign-up sheets and duties. Enlist volunteers to help with signing in, handing out course materials, and serving refreshments at orientation. Volunteers are also needed to at each class to provide the class roster and hand out evaluation forms and other materials as needed. (See Appendix XIV for volunteer duties.)
- Review volunteer opportunity statement for newsletter and website.
- Confirm dates of sessions with presenters. Make sure presenters have copies of the state curriculum, know the location of the training facility, and have directions.
- Follow up with each presenter three weeks before class and three days prior to presentation. Advise presenter of number of students.
- Arrange for publicity (newspaper, flyers, internet).
- Arrange for speaker gifts.
- Acquire and prepare class manuals and other materials.
- Contact caterer to select meals (buffet or individual).
- Acquire temporary name tags for students.
- Take photographs during the second week of training. Designate a volunteer to take digital photographs.
- Monitor class attendance and contact individuals who miss two consecutive classes without prior notification.
- Provide evaluation forms to members-in-training for each session.
- Forward attendance information and training hours accrued to the Database Manager, Membership Manager, and Chapter Advisor(s) after each session.

- Send thank you notes to presenters within one or two days of the presentation using TMN stationery (in ETCMN file at the Nature Center). The notes should be sent by the committee member who made the initial contact.
- Analyze results from the training, including costs, and determine what changes are needed. Recommend fee changes to the Executive Committee.

9/3/2011

Duties for Volunteer Hosts For East Texas Master Naturalists Classes

I. Set Up

- Be at the training location no later than 8:00 AM.
- Place the “sign-in” log on a table near the door and during the training make sure all students have signed the log.
- Set up coffee service, etc.
- Make sure that tables are set up properly for the class.
- Hook up the computer and overhead as required by the speaker/presenter.

II. Class Duties

- On the first day, provide TMN manuals, CD’s, and other materials to the students and advise everyone to bring the manual or the specific section related to each session. Other items that may be needed are sunscreen, repellent, water and appropriate clothing for field trips. Lunch **will not** be provided for field trips.
- Introduce Speakers (include bio if one is available)
- Hand out any materials provided by the presenter.
- Keep track of time and give speakers time cues.
- Help speakers with anything they need/request.
- Interact with and help students.
- Hand out evaluations – one evaluation per speaker (both AM & PM sessions)

III. Closing Up

- Clean up coffee area, loose papers, and sweep if needed.
- Put up equipment if needed (If you don’t know where it goes, put it on table next to door).
- Collect the sign in sheet and give it to Committee member
- Take trash to the dump (at The Nature the dumpster is up the hill from the class room.
- Make sure everyone gets away without any problems.

General Rules

- The Rest Rooms are outside facing the pond
- No smoking in the building, you may smoke outside, if you do, smoke away from the front door and place cigarette butts in the ash containers
- Turn off cell phones; in emergency situations put the phone on vibrate and sit where you can get up without disturbing others

- Park in the parking lot that is designated Nature Center Parking to the right as you come in the gate. There is a trail from parking lot to the education building. If you have things to drop off you may pull up to the front of the building and return to the designated parking lot. If a student has a handicap license or tag they may park in the lot near the building.

September, 2011

The Chapter Operating Handbook revisions were completed in September, 2011.