Volunteer Management System (VMS)

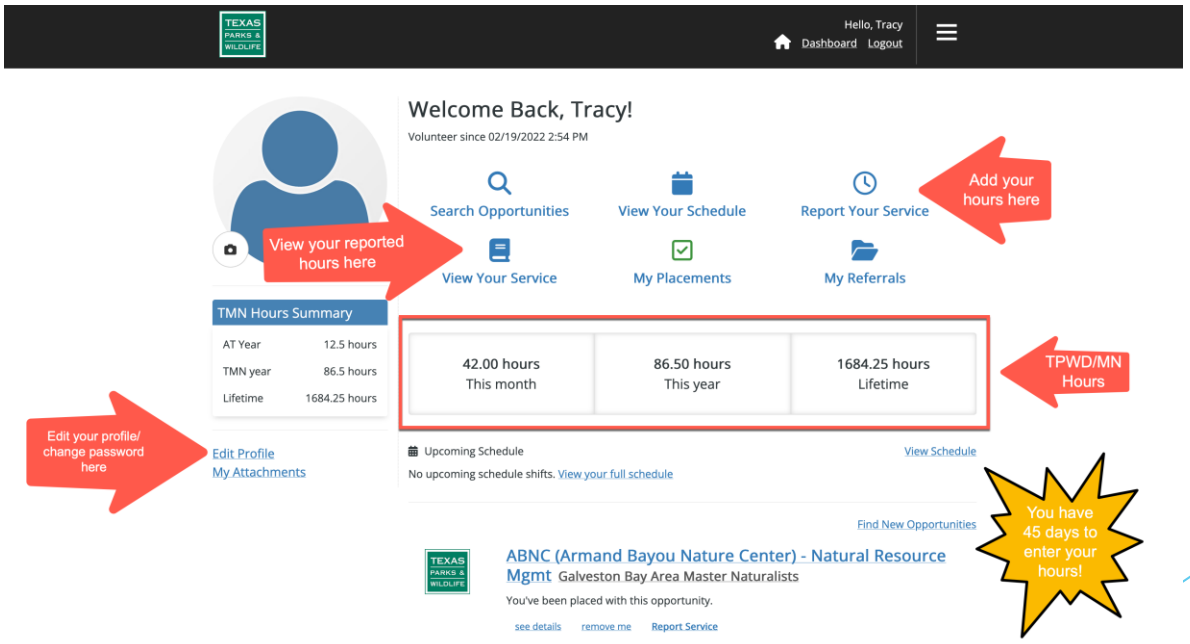
Galveston Bay Area Chapter Training

Spring 2026

Volunteer Management System (VMS)

VMS - The computer system that we use to report our volunteer hours.

VOLUNTEER DASHBOARD:



***Opportunities** – Category of Volunteer Service or Advanced training hours that have been approved for members to report hours.*

Native Plant Society of Texas
Clear Lake Chapter

Native Prairies Association of Texas

Hawkwatch

Bats

Advanced Training (AT) – Pre-approved training from our chapter or other organizations (NPSOT, ABNC, HNPAT). Contact **Robin Novak**, AT Director, for approval

Volunteer Service – Volunteering at a pre- approved location/organization. Contact **Sharon Tirpak**, volunteer service director, for approval

Armand Bayou Nature Center

Birding

Monofilament

GULF CENTER FOR SEA TURTLE RESEARCH

Initial Certification Requirements

- Complete the initial field/classroom instruction
  - **Initial Training** – most classes are 3 hours

- Complete an **additional** 40 hours of volunteer service and 8 hours of advanced training. You have one year from the last day of class to complete these requirements.
  - You can count/log hours starting from 2/19 (first day of class)

Certified Master Naturalist

Recognition

First Year Certification

Bronze
250 Service Hours

Silver
500 Service Hours

Gold
1000 Service Hours

Polished Silver
2500 Service Hours

Polished Gold with Diamond
5000 Service Hours

Polished Gold with Ruby
4000 Service Hours

Polished Gold with Emerald
10,000 Service Hours

Re-Certification

Every year there is a new re-certification pin

- Complete 40 hours of volunteer service and
  8 hours of advanced training Jan 1 to Dec 31st

Bobcat/2026

How to re-certify my first year?

As a trainee, how do I get the 2026 re-certification pin?

- Complete initial training, logging the required hours
- Become certified (log 40 hours of volunteer service, 8 hours of advanced training)

AND

- Log an **additional** 40 hours of volunteer service and 8 hours of advanced training – a total of 80 hours volunteer service and 16 hours of advanced training before Dec 31, 2026

Initial Opportunities Assigned

Commonly used opportunities

Opportunity Name	Description
Administrative Work	Board or committee work
AT: Chapter Meeting Special Topics	All Chapter meetings include 1 hour of AT (unless noted otherwise), **except** the December meeting
AT: GBAC Sponsored	Advanced training sponsored by our Chapter
AT:TMN Tuesdays	The monthly TMN Tuesday State presentations; watched live or recorded during the year they were presented
Chapter Meeting non-AT	Helping with set up and/or clean up at our meetings.
Initial Training	used ONLY for logging class hours. Each class is worth 3 hours, field trips are 4-5 hours, unless otherwise noted.

Who can answer my questions?

- **Robin Novak** for Advanced Training (AT)
  atdirector@gbactmn.org
- **Sharon Tirpak** for Volunteer Service
  volunteerservicedirector@gbactmn.org
- **Patty Trimingham, Cindy Liening** or **Tracy Walpole** for anything related to the VMS system
  membership@gbactmn.org

Important Reminders

- What if you have no idea what opportunity to select?
  - Ask a fellow volunteer or your mentor
  - Look at the list of opportunities on the website
  - Ask Robin Novak (for Advanced Training)
  - Ask Sharon Tirpak (for Volunteer Service)
- Enter your service hours weekly
- You have 45 days from the day of service to enter your hours
- Enter hours in .25 increments (1.25, .75, etc.)
- Advanced training – does not include travel time
- Volunteer Service – includes travel time
- If you are getting paid to be at an event, you can not claim volunteer service hours

QUESTIONS/DEMO

First Year Certification

STEP BY STEP…

Accessing the VMS System

From the State website

- https://txmn.tamu.edu/chapter-resources/tmn-vms-users/
- click on the VMS – Volunteer Login link

From our Chapter website

- https://txmn.org/gbmn/
- Report Your Hours Tab

Accessing the VMS System

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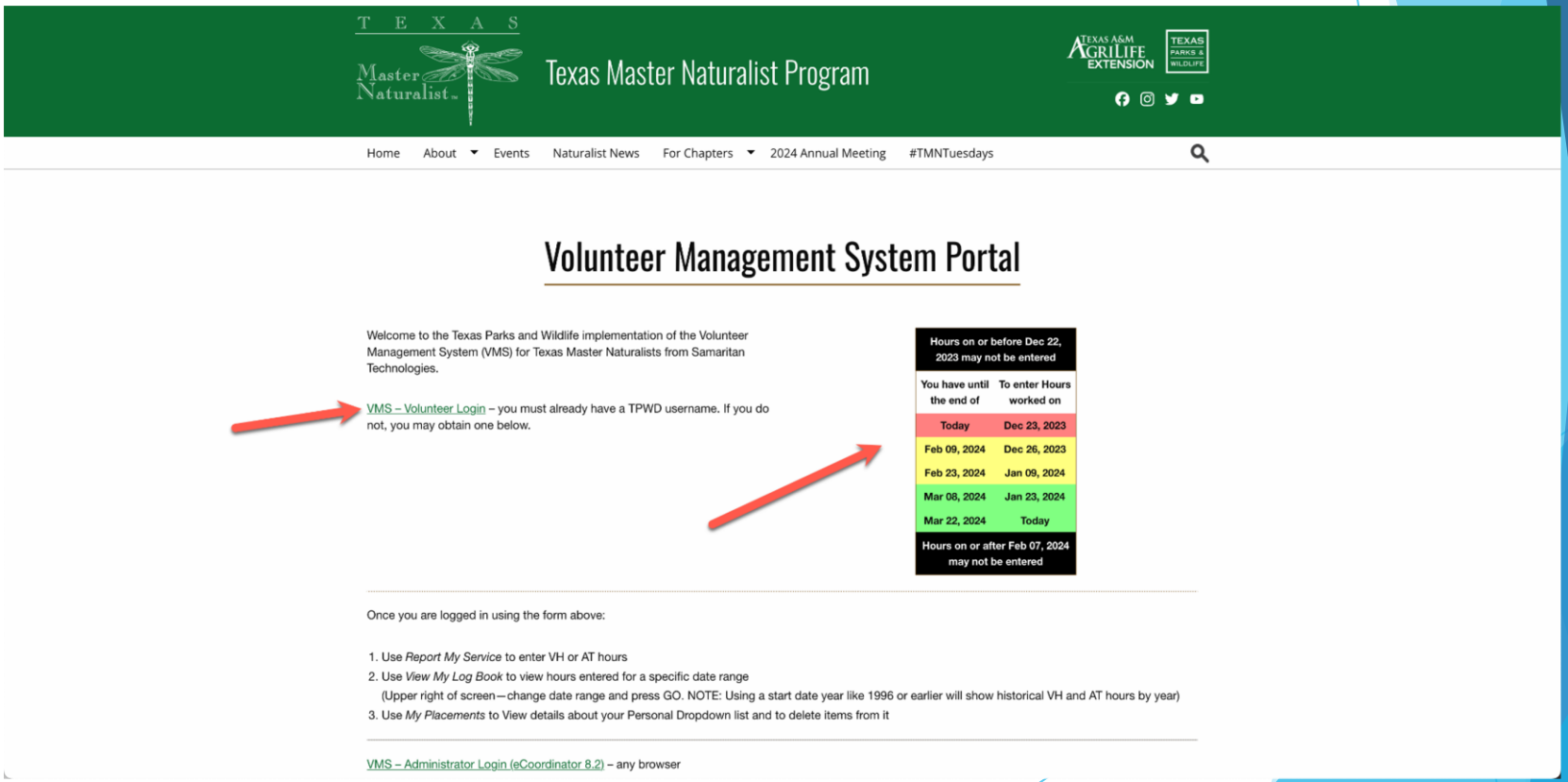
….Note the helpful calendar to calculate when hours expire….

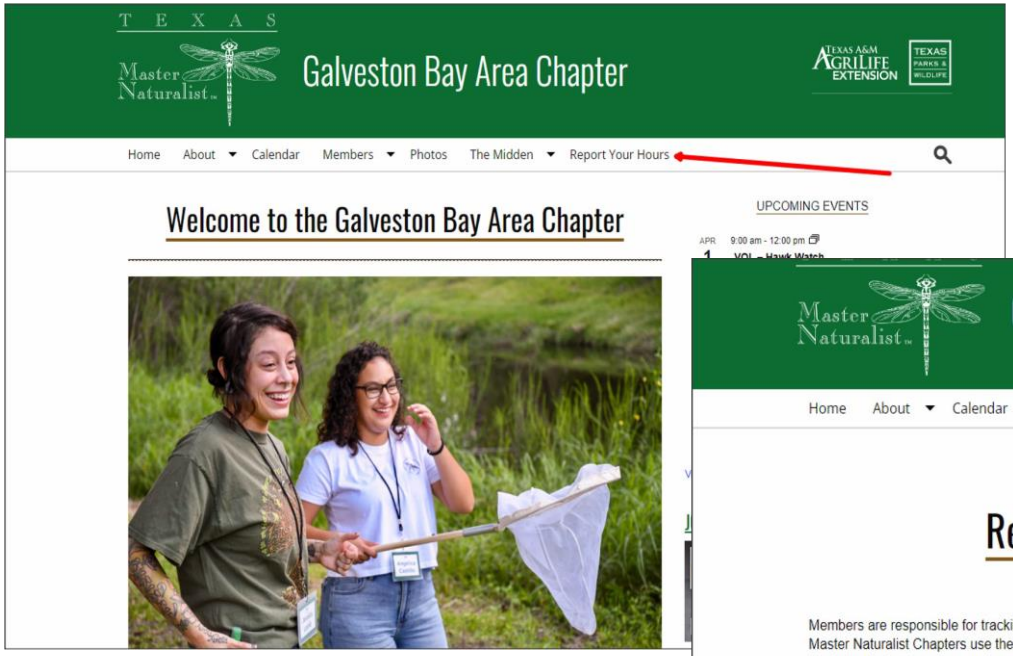


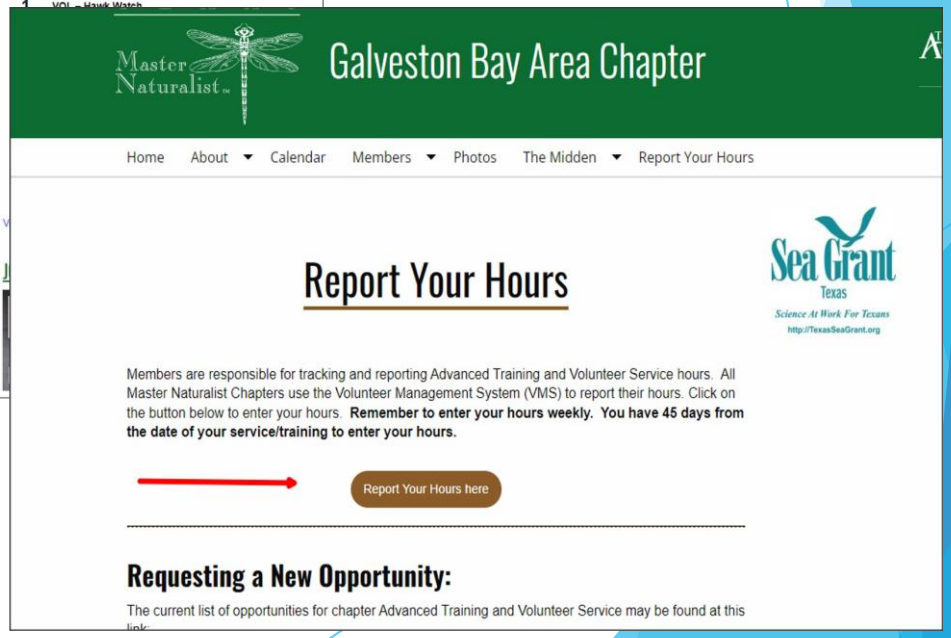
Accessing the VMS System

From our Chapter website, https://txmn.org/gbmn/

Click on the “Report Your Hours” tab, and then

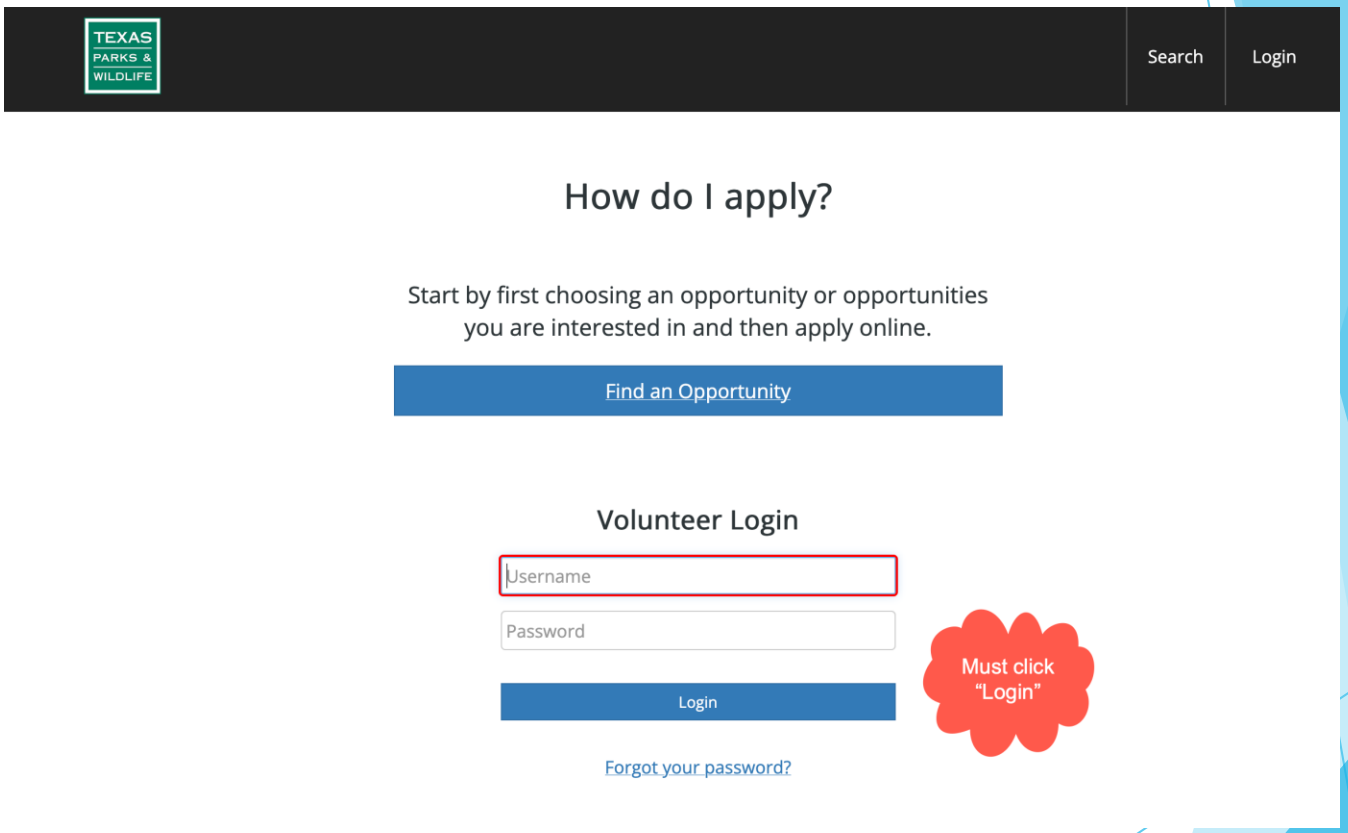
- Click on the “Report your Hours Button”



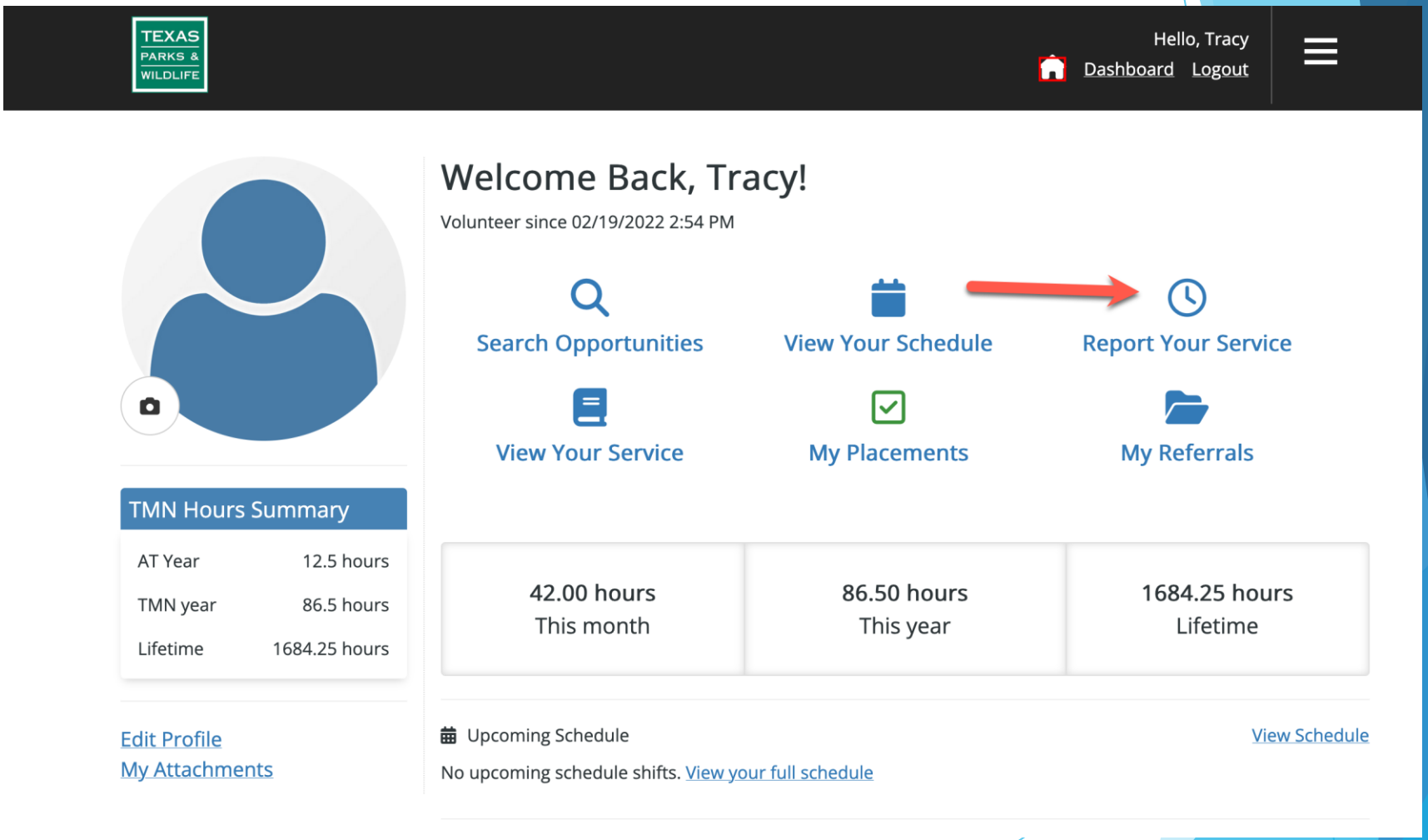


Login to VMS

Enter your User ID and Password



Reporting your Service or Training



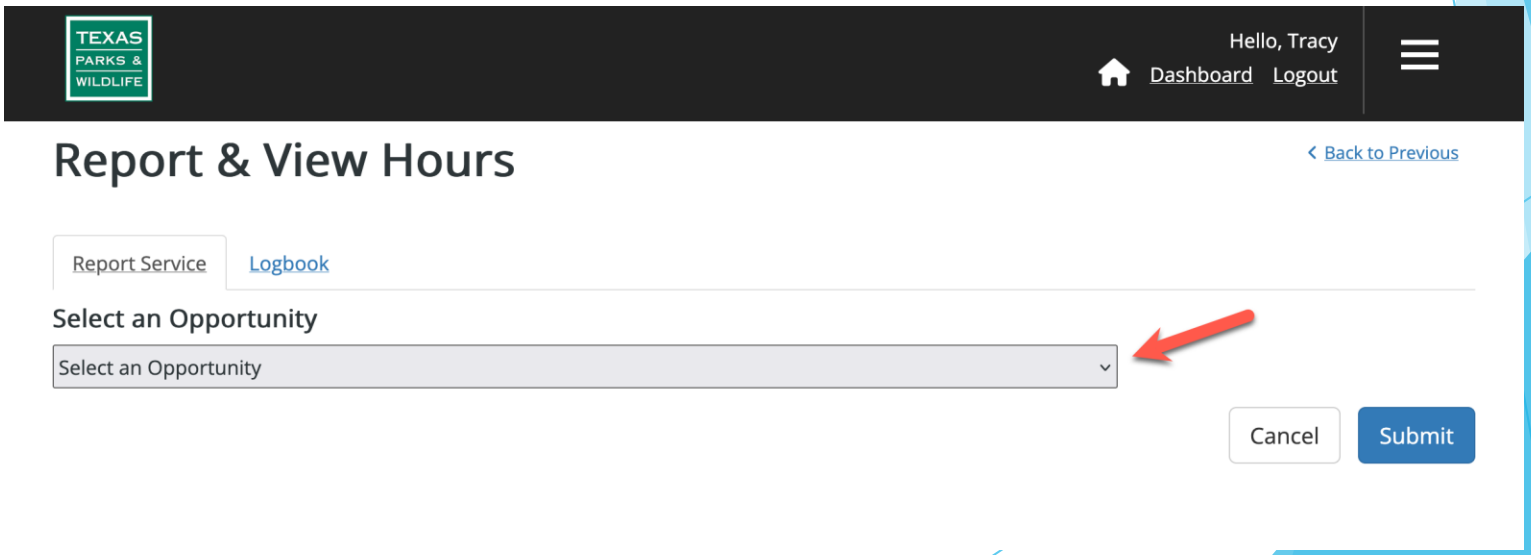
Report Your Service

It is recommended to enter your service weekly

You have 45 days to enter your service

Use **Initial Training** for reporting class hours

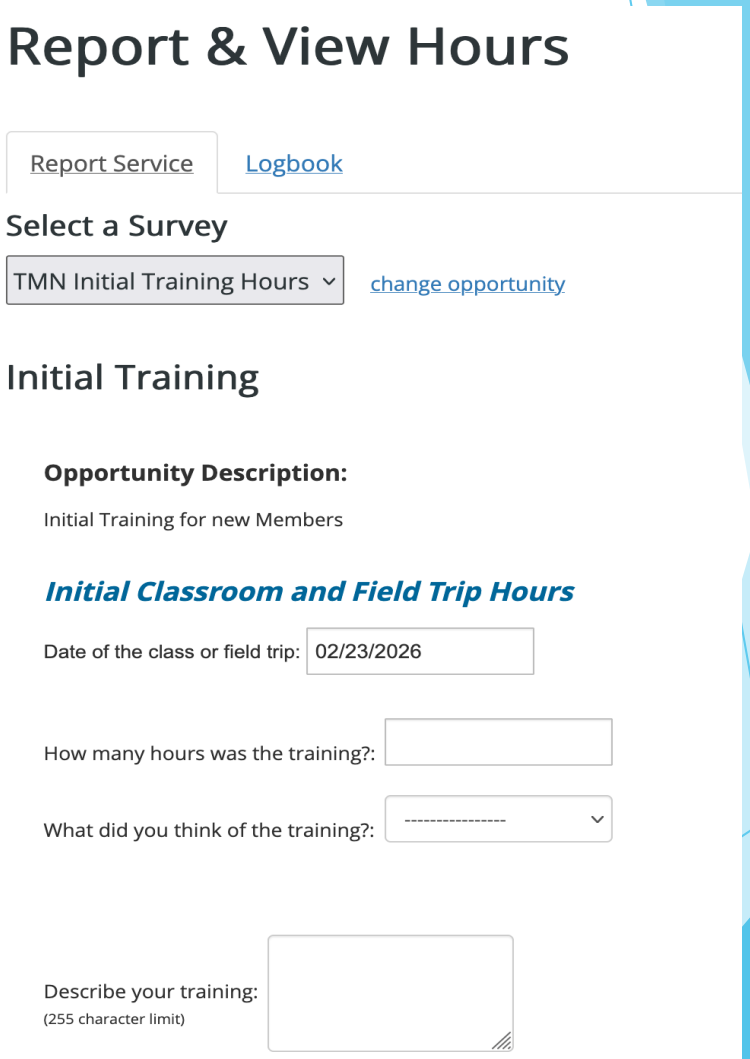
After clicking on the Report Your Service icon, you will be prompted to select an opportunity from the drop down list



Survey/Opportunity

After selecting an opportunity, the appropriate survey will appear

Note: The survey will differ slightly for Volunteer Service vs Advanced Training.



Opportunity Description

Pay attention to the Opportunity description. If it doesn't describe what you did, it could be the incorrect opportunity

Federal Category: Natural Resource Management

Opportunity Description:
Wetland restoration activities coordinated by the Environmental Institute of Houston at the University of Houston - Clear Lake.

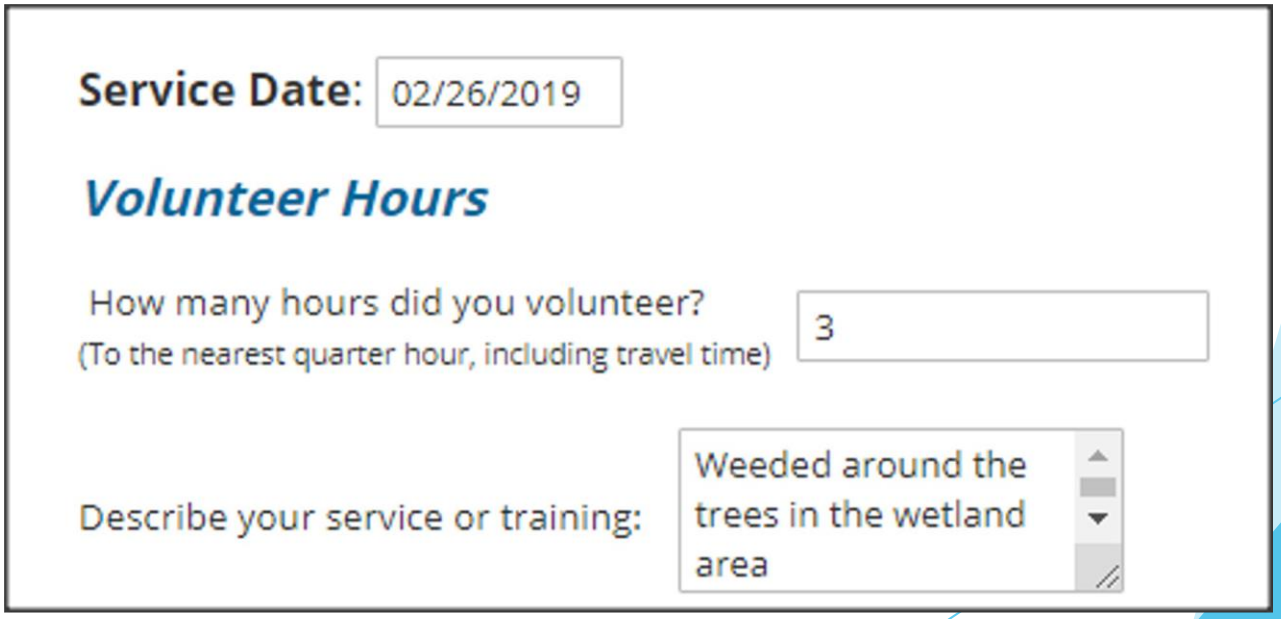
Volunteer Chapter: Galveston Bay Area Master Naturalists

Date, Hours, and Description

- Select the correct date of your service
- Enter the hours (includes travel time)

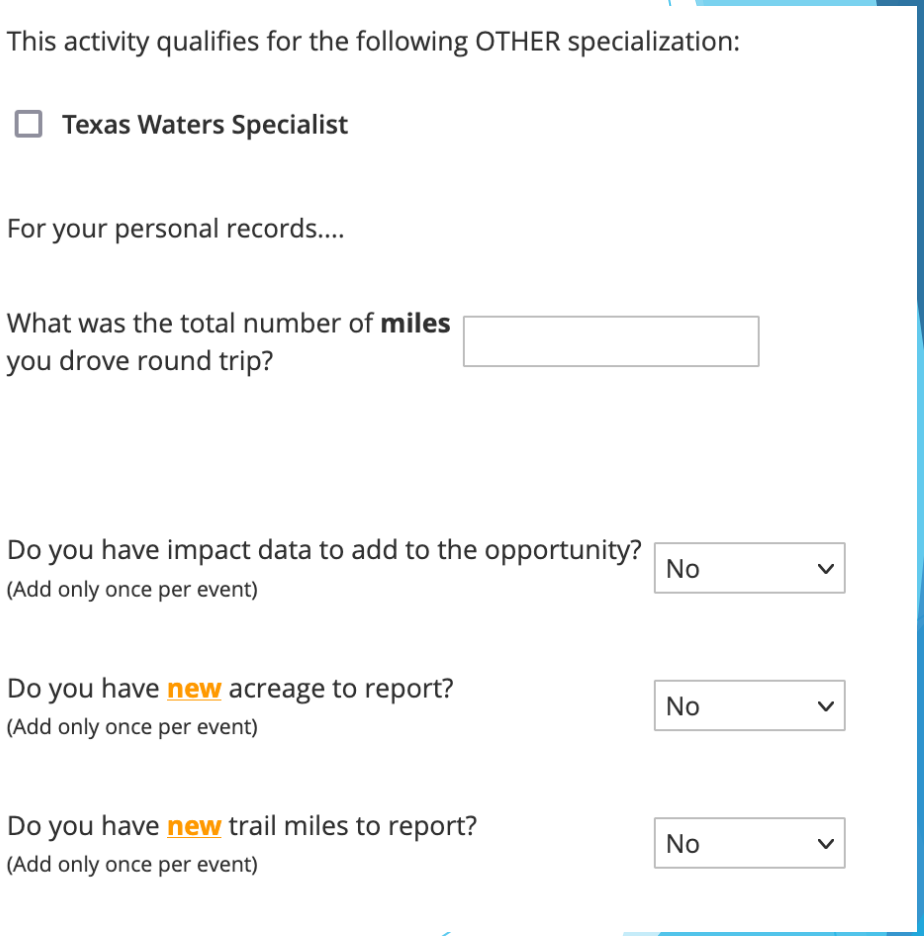
  AT training does not include travel time

- Briefly describe what you did – *reference the place you performed the service*



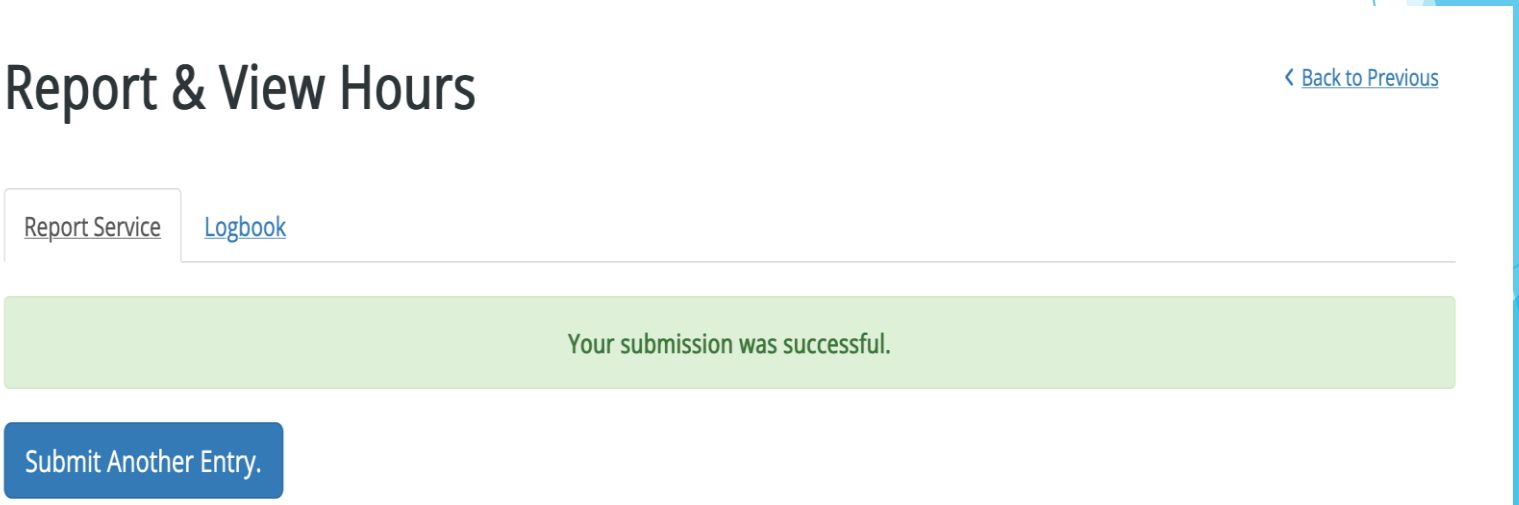
Additional Information

- Do not use Texas Waters Specialist unless you have been to training.
- Optional: Enter number of miles traveled
- Optional: Impact data
- Optional: Use acreage or trails when instructed to do so.
- **Press OK to save information**



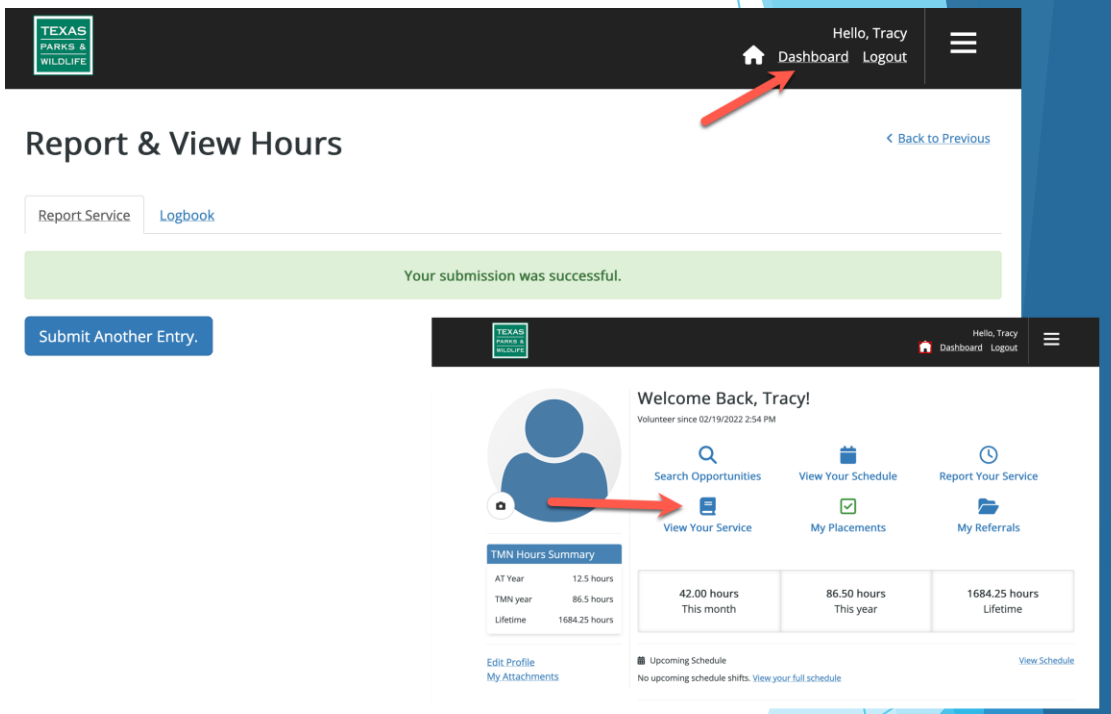
Success!

- If all worked well, you will receive a "Your Submission was successful.” message.
- If you have more to enter, click the “Submit Another Entry.” button.



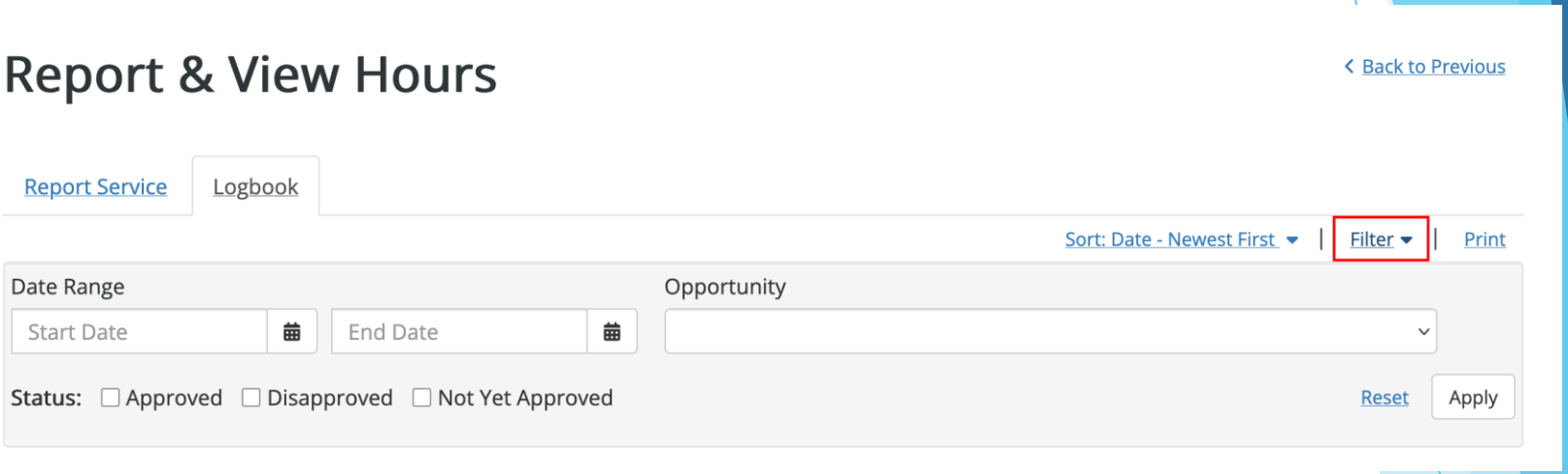
Double Check Your Entries

- After entering your hours, always check to make sure they are correct.
- Go back to the Volunteer Dashboard and
- View your Service (logbook)



Logbook Filtering

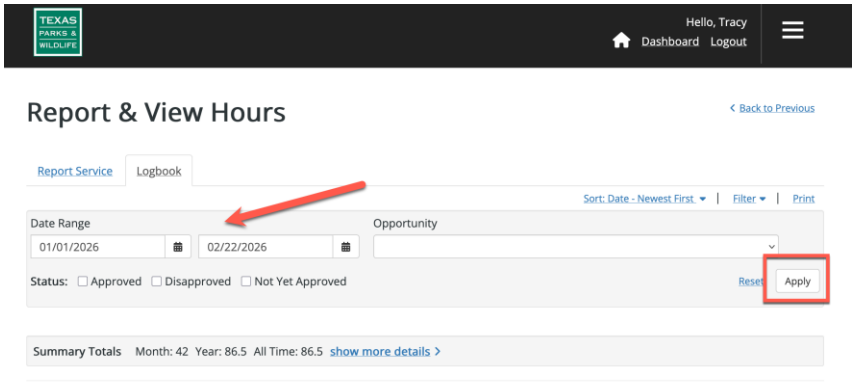
You can change the Date Range and View by…

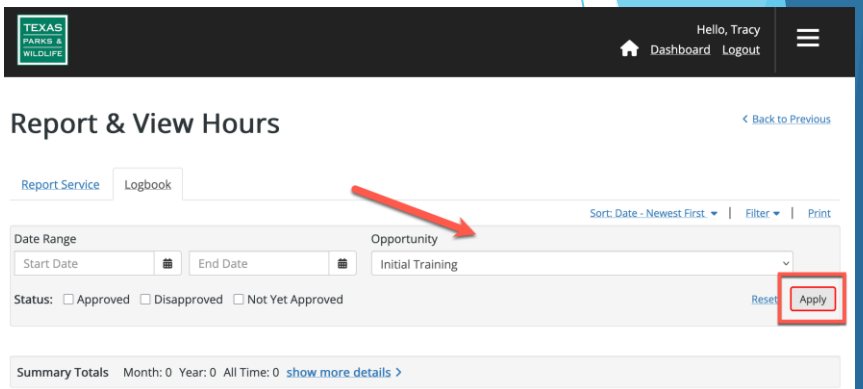


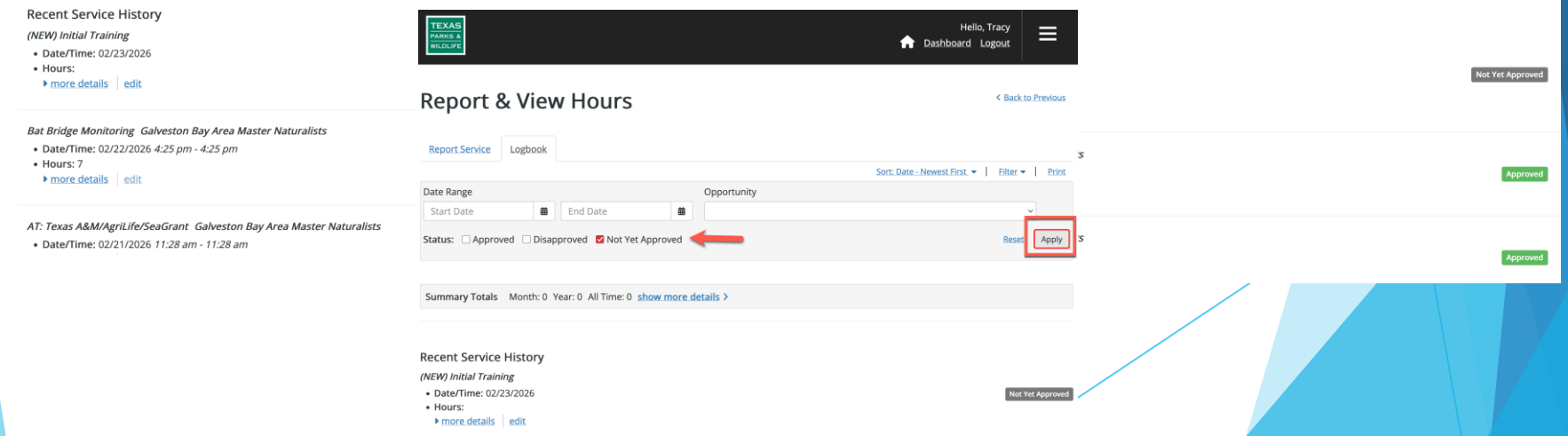
- Dates
- Opportunity
- Status

Logbook Filtering

Change the ”Date”, “Opportunity” or “Status” - this filters your logbook entries – Don’t forget to hit “APPLY”







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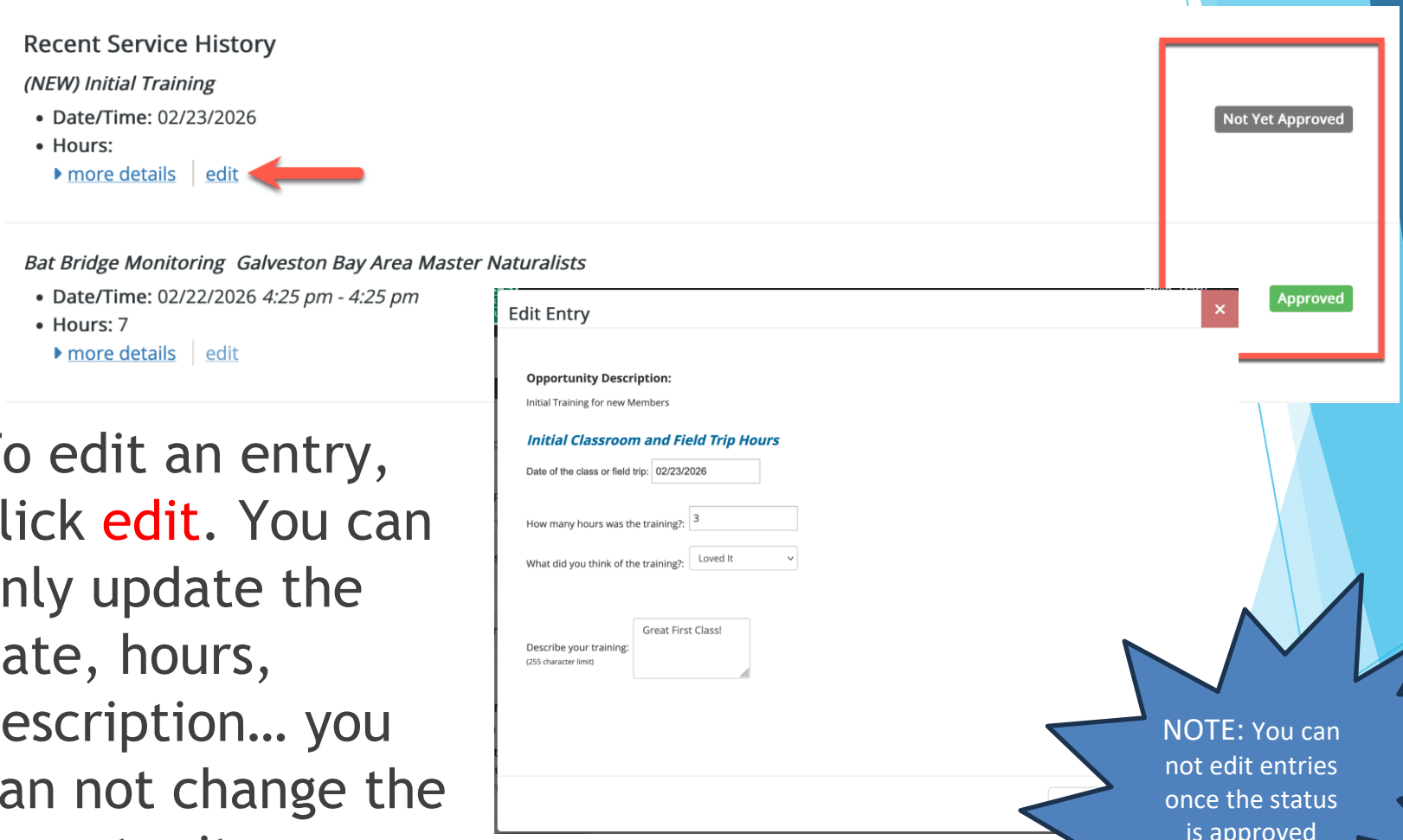
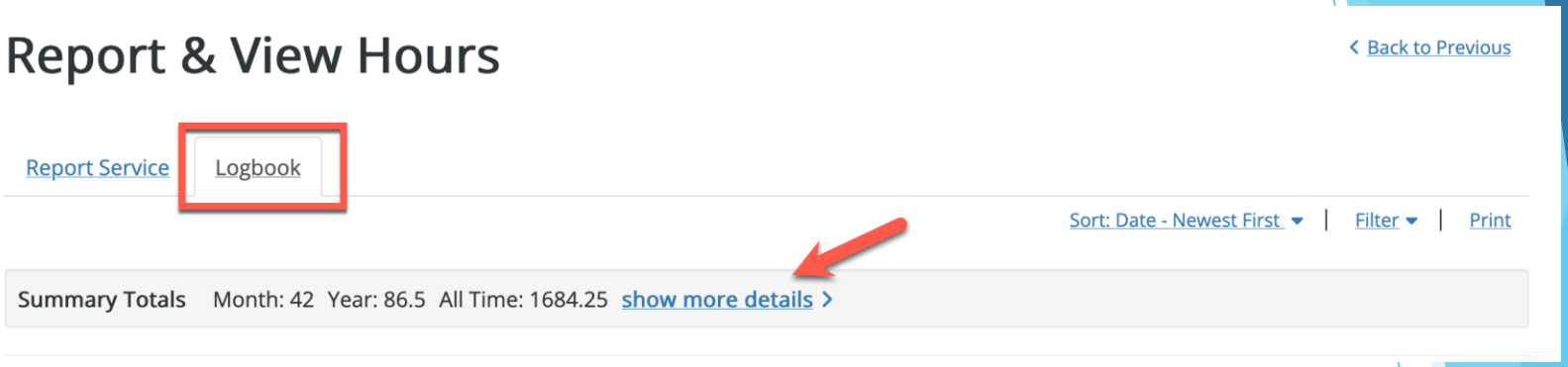
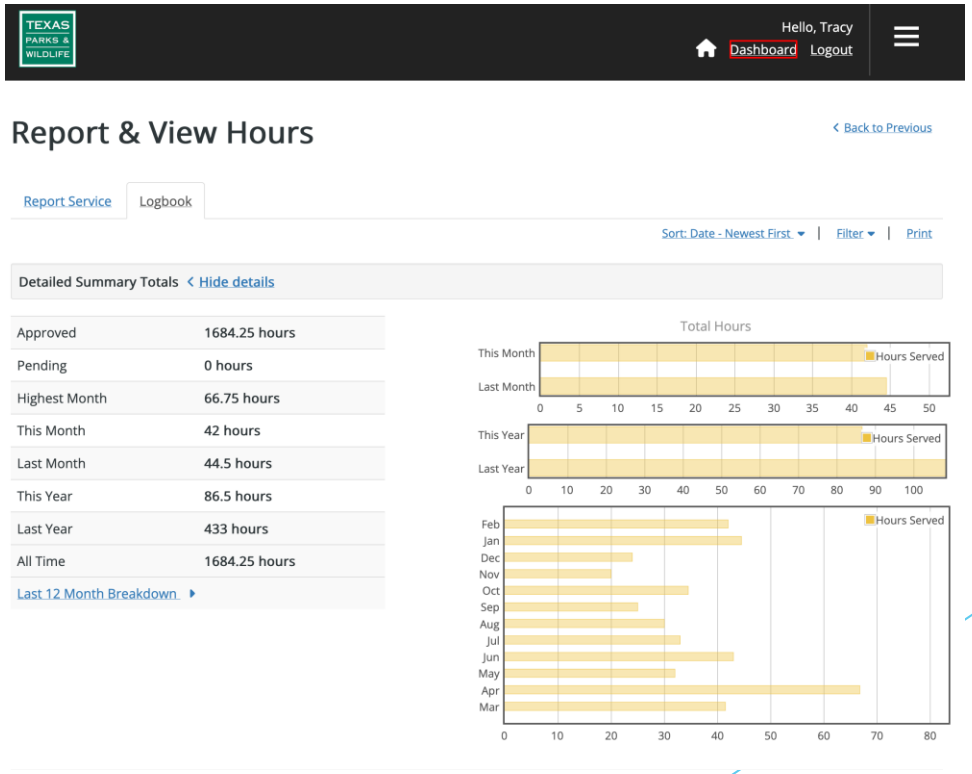


To edit an entry, click edit. You can only update the date, hours, description… you can not change the opportunity or delete the entry.

NOTE: You can not edit entries once the status is approved

Logbook Summary & Totals





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