



Texas Master Naturalist

## Volunteer Management System (VMS)



Galveston Bay Area Chapter  
Training

2019



## Texas Master Naturalist

- What is the VMS?
- Who uses it?
- Why do we use it?
- Definitions
- Accessing the VMS system/Reporting hours
- VMS Support Team
- Important things to remember
- Other Resources

You will receive a packet that has 4 pages:

- 1) A page that contains your userid, password and current opportunities
- 2) How to authorize your background check and change profile information
- 3) How to enter Master Naturalist hours
- 4) Listing of all opportunities



## Texas Master Naturalist

- What is the VMS?
  - It is a computer system that works as a central repository for volunteer hours.
- Who uses it?
  - All volunteer groups sponsored by TPWD
- Why do we use it?
  - It is used for management of member lists and their activity
  - It helps TPWD improve Master Naturalist federal grant reporting
  - Recognition of members achievements (hours)

(VMS) system in use by all volunteer groups sponsored by TPWD. The VMS software helps TPWD improve Master Naturalist federal grant reporting, and it assists chapters with state reporting, recognition, and management of member and activity lists.



## Texas Master Naturalist

### Definitions

- **Opportunities** – Service or Advanced training hours that have been approved for members to report hours.
- **Survey** – The format used to enter volunteer hours and opportunity information.
- **Log book** – The record of volunteer hours that each member has entered in the VMS.
- **Username** – Begins with GBAC- Do not change it. It is not case sensitive.
- **Password** - 8 character minimum length consisting of lower and upper case letter, numbers and some special characters. Case sensitive, please change it!

**Opportunities:** You will be given a handful of opportunities to begin with. As you work on new opportunities ask your VMS team to add those opportunities to your profile.

**Survey:** You will become familiar with the surveys; there are basically two formats. For AT, no mileage is allowed – the survey will not present a place for you to enter hours.

For volunteer service, there will be a place for you to enter mileage – if you want to. It is not required and we do not do anything with it. You can also enter Impact information

Log book



## Accessing the VMS System

- From our Chapter website, txmn.org/gbm/
- Click on the “Report Your Hours” tab





➤ Click on the “Report Your Hours” link

The screenshot shows the website for the Galveston Bay Area Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist program. The header includes the chapter name and a navigation menu with links: Home, Calendar, Membership, Photos, The Midden, Directions, FAQ, and Report Your Hours. The main content area is titled 'Report Your Hours' and contains the following text:

**Reporting Your Hours:**

Report your volunteer service and advance training in the Volunteer Management System by clicking on this link:

[Report Your Hours](#)

**Requesting a New Opportunity:**

On the right side of the page, there is a 'CHAPTER NEWS!!' section with a list of recent events and a 'OUR BLOG ARCHIVES' section with a 'Select Month' dropdown menu.

Click on “Report Your Hours” link



### Welcome New Volunteers

As a TPWD volunteer, use your time and talents to protect Texas' wild things and places. Texas needs you more than ever! To become a volunteer, complete the following steps:

1. Find an opportunity
2. Sign up
3. Join our community



### Returning Volunteers...

Log in here:

Username :

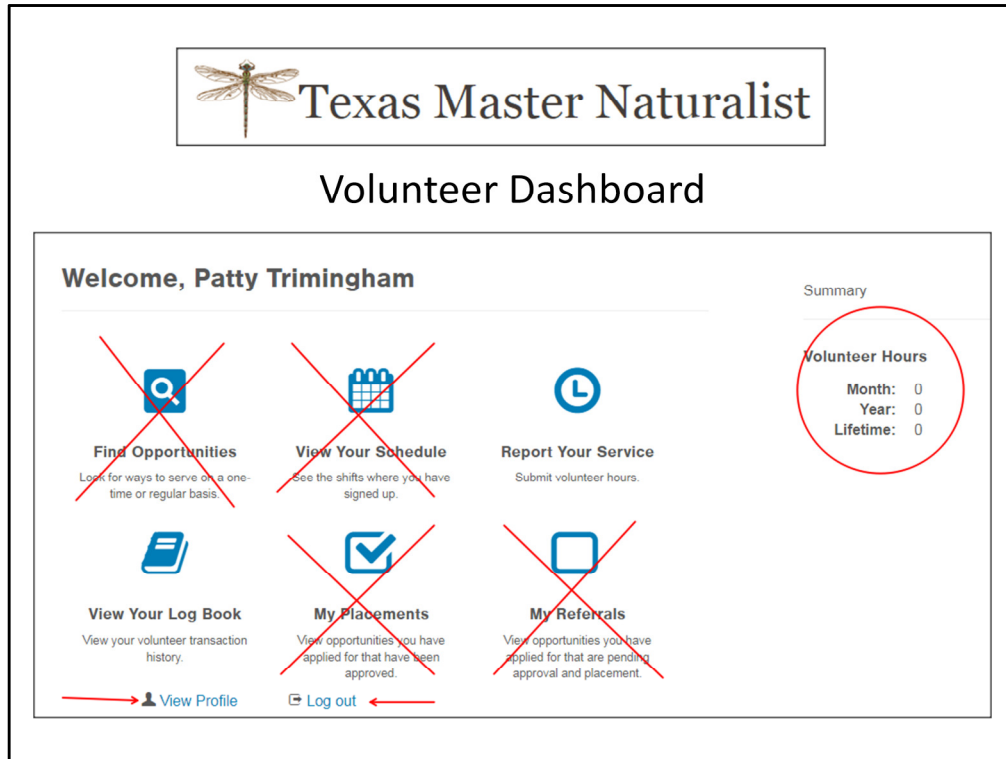
Password :

[Forgot your password?](#)

[Login](#)

If you are a Texas Master Naturalist volunteer [login here](#).

Enter your Username, Password and press the blue “Login” button



On your Dashboard, your volunteer hours may be displayed. This is a fairly new feature and I have noticed that sometimes the hours appear, and sometimes they do not. I have no explanation for the disappearing numbers.

You do not need to be concerned with the items marked with red 'X's – we do not use them. The only items you will use are 'Report Your Service' and 'View Your Log Book' and at the bottom of the page, the View Profile and Log Out links.

Always use the Log out links, not the 'x' in your browser.

Volunteer Hours are sometimes displayed. I haven't figured out when they display so I can't explain it.





## Texas Master Naturalist

### View Profile

- First time logging in
  - a) Authorize your background check
  - b) Change your password
  - c) Update your birth date
  - d) Verify your personal information
- Remember to SAVE and Accept and Finish
- Refer to document on website for help

You only have to do this once.

Do not change your userid/username or Chapter name!

If you change your address, phone or email, be sure and let the Membership director know so the directory can be updated.



These are the two icons you will use the most.

View Your Log Book – Here you can see what hours you entered. If the hours have not been approved, you can change or delete them.

Report Your Service – This is where you will enter your Advanced Training or Service Hours.



## Report Your Service

- ✓ It is recommended to enter your service weekly
- ✓ You have 45 days to enter your service

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

### Report Service

Please select from the following survey(s):

Wetland Restoration-EIH (Environmental Institute of Hous ▾)

### Volunteers

[Volunteer Dashboard](#)  
[Search Opportunities](#)  
[FAQ](#)  
[Log out](#)

Members keep track of their service on calendars, personal spreadsheets and some even remember what they did!

We suggest weekly so that you don't forget how to use the system 😊



➤ After selecting an opportunity, the appropriate survey will appear

**Report Service**

Please select from the following survey(s):  

Wetland Restoration-EIH (Environmental Institute of Hous ▾)

**Federal Category:** Natural Resource Management

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

**Service Date:**

02/27/2019

**Volunteer Hours**  
How many hours did you volunteer?  
(To the nearest quarter hour, including travel time)

You must put in service hours

Describe your service or training:

This activity qualifies for the following specialization:

We will break this page down and go over the different areas.  
Note there is a federal category and an opportunity description on the page. This is a new feature.



## Texas Master Naturalist

- 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.

On the Report Your Hours webpage, there are two documents that contain lists of opportunities.

Current Opportunities and Current Opportunities with description. This is a good place to look if you think you might need a new opportunity added to your profile.



- Select the correct date of your service
- Enter the hours (include travel time)
- Briefly describe what you did

**Service Date:**

***Volunteer Hours***

How many hours did you volunteer?  
(To the nearest quarter hour, including travel time)

Describe your service or training:


Click in the Service Date box and a calendar will appear for you to select the correct date.  
Enter the number of hours you volunteered. Hours are entered by the quarter; .25, .50, .75

For volunteer service you can add in the amount of travel it took you to get to and from the service.

For example I volunteered for 2 hours, however, it took me 30 minutes to drive to and 30 minutes to drive home.

So my total hours are 3.

Make sure you add a short description. This helps the approvers determine if you selected the correct opportunity.



## Texas Master Naturalist

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

This activity qualifies for the following specialization:

☐ Texas Waters Specialist

For your personal records....

What was the total number of **miles** you drove round trip?

Do you have impact data to add to the opportunity?  
(Add only once per event)

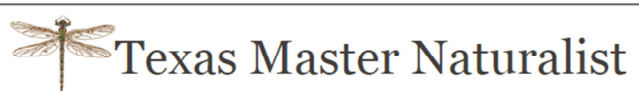
Do you have **new** acreage to report?  
(Add only once per event)

Do you have **new** trail miles to report?  
(Add only once per event)

In this section you will mostly enter mileage and possibly Impact data, both are optional. Some people enter mileage – if they report it for taxes.

We will go over Impact data in a few slides.

Press OK to save and submit the survey.



- If all worked well, you will receive a Thank You!
- If you have more to enter, be sure and change the opportunity before clicking the “Make another entry “ button.

### Report Service

Please select from the following survey(s):

Wetland Restoration-EIH (Environmental Institute of Hous ▼

Thank You!

Make another entry

You can now log out if you are finished, or you can go back to your Volunteer Dashboard, or you can make another entry.





Example of  
Advanced Training  
survey.

Note: There is no  
mileage or impact  
data

**Report Service**

Please select from the following survey(s):

**Opportunity Description:**  
Advanced training opportunities presented by the chapter's AT Committee

**Service Date:**

**Advanced Training**

How many hours was the training?:

You must put in AT hours

Describe your service or training:

Note the AT survey looks different from the Volunteer Service survey. There is no mileage, water specialist or Impact data. AT is strictly training.



## Texas Master Naturalist

### **Impact Data**

- Refer to the April 2018 Midden for a detailed article, page 11
- Impact or contact data is what Master Naturalists collect when we present information to a group of people
- Our sponsors use this information for funding and for presenting to the State Legislature.

All Middens are on the GBAC website, look for “The Midden” tab.



## Texas Master Naturalist

- At the bottom of most surveys if you answer 'Yes' to the impact data question, another section will open up for you to enter impact data.
- If you are with other Master Naturalists, be sure and ask them who is entering impact data. We do not want duplicate data!

Do you have impact data to add to the opportunity?  
(Add only once per event)

Yes



Data is collected for each teaching group/subject. If there are three of you volunteering at an event, all talking about the same thing, then only one of you reports the information.

However, if there are three of you volunteering, but speaking about different topics, all three of you would enter impact data.

Always ask in advance who is collecting the information – it's very important to enter this data.



## Texas Master Naturalist

Adult + Youth  
must equal  
Male + Female

Ethnicity total  
must equal  
Adult + Youth

### *Opportunity Impact*

Please complete the following for the number of attendees:

Adult:	<input type="text" value="5"/>
Youth:	<input type="text" value="4"/>
-----	
Male:	<input type="text" value="1"/>
Female:	<input type="text" value="8"/>
-----	
White:	<input type="text" value="5"/>
Black:	<input type="text" value="1"/>
Hispanic:	<input type="text" value="3"/>
Asian:	<input type="text"/>
American Indian:	<input type="text"/>

Example of the Impact data that is collected. Remember, it doesn't have to be perfect. It is just your best estimation.



## Texas Master Naturalist

### VMS Support Team

Name	Assignment	Email	Cell	Supporting Role
Patty Trimmingham	Membership Director, VMS Lead	ptrimbo@gmail.com	409-770-3113	Add opportunities, hours approval, membership directory, website
Dorothy Hogg	Hours approver	dmhmailme@gmail.com	409-766-0612	Add opportunities, hours approval
Jim Duron	VMS Consultant	wishkad@yahoo.com	832-228-7036	Hours consulting
Chuck Synder	VMS Consultant	crsnydertx@gmail.com	281-658-3000	Hours consulting
Ellen Gerloff	Advanced Training Director	egerloff@sbcglobal.net	281-830-9535	Approval for AT
Jo Monday	Volunteer Service Director	djmonday6172@att.net	713-254-6171	Approval for VS

Patty and Dorothy are the go to people for VMS. Jim and Chuck are back ups. Ellen is our AT Director. If you want to attend a training and are not sure if it is an approved training, contact Ellen.

Jo is our Volunteer Service Director. If you want to work on a project that you're not sure about, contact Jo.



## Texas Master Naturalist

### **Important things to remember**

- What are the 4 things you should do/update the first time you log on?
  - ✓ Authorize the back ground check
  - ✓ Change your password
  - ✓ Update your birth date
  - ✓ Verify personal information



## Texas Master Naturalist

### **Important things to remember**

- How often should you enter your service hours?
  - ✓ Recommended weekly



## Texas Master Naturalist

### **Important things to remember**

- How many days do you have to enter your hours?
  - ✓ For those of you who forget to enter weekly...  
45 days!





## Texas Master Naturalist

### **Important things to remember**

- How do you log off the system?
  - ✓ Always use the Log off link – not the 'x'



## Texas Master Naturalist

### **Important things to remember**

- What if you have no idea what opportunity to select?
  - ✓ Ask a fellow volunteer
  - ✓ Ask a member of the VMS team
  - ✓ Ask Ellen Gerloff (for Advanced Training)
  - ✓ Ask Jo Monday (for Volunteer Service)



## Texas Master Naturalist

### Homework

- View the video that is on the GBAC website
  - ✓ Report Your Hours tab – 2015 VMS Training video
- Log onto the system
  - ✓ Authorize background check
  - ✓ Change password
  - ✓ Change birthdate
  - ✓ Verify personal information



Texas Master Naturalist

### **Other Resources**

➤ GBAC website (<http://txmn.org/gbm/>)

- ✓ Report Your Hours tab
- ✓ Membership tab
- ✓ Volunteer Service (under Membership tab)
- ✓ Advanced Training (under Membership tab)

- QUESTIONS?