

Introduction to VMS

For TMN-COT

Volunteer Management System (VMS)

- Why we track Volunteer and Advanced Training hours.
- Guideline for creating a VMS USERID
- How to create an VMS Account and Profile
- How to Login to VMS to enter time
- The VMS Dashboard (home page)
- Viewing your time history (Logbook)
- Time entry examples

	WHY HOURS ARE TRACKED
1. Chapter management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Info for COT and state TMN about where members are volunteering and total volunteer hours - Info about who the active members are and who is eligible for certification or award levels
2. Training documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Documents initial training hours and topics
3. Initial certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tracks who has met requirements of 40 hrs VT and 8 hrs AT for initial certification as a Texas Master Naturalist
4. Re-certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yearly tracks who has met annual requirements of 40 hrs VT and 8 hrs AT and is eligible for annual re-certification with pin and may continue to use the Certified TMN title.
5. Awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tracks who has met lifetime VT hours milestones of 250, 400, 1000, 2500, 4000, 5000, 10,000, 15,000, or 20,000 and is eligible for recognition and special dragonfly pins
6. State TMN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides data for annual reports and recoup of federal dollars from in-kind matching grants

Guideline for Creating a USERID and PASSWORD

When you create your account, you will be prompted to enter a new **USERID** and **PASSWORD**. You may choose any password you wish, but TPWD wants your USERID to be of a special form. You create your USERID as follows.

1. The first characters will be “**Cradle-**”. This identifies you as a member of our chapter.
2. The next character will be the **first letter of your first name, capitalized**. Let’s assume your first name is John or Jane. Add this to the above and we have “**Cradle-J**”.
3. The remainder of your USERID must be your **last name with its first letter capitalized**. If this happens to be Doe, then your completed USERID is “**Cradle-JDoe**”.

Creating Your Account and Profile

Go to or click on:

<https://tpwd.samaritan.com/recruiter/index.php?recruiterID=1450&class=VolunteerRegistration#>

- The first page is the agreements and waivers. You must answer “Yes” to the Background Check, Confidentiality Agreement, and Alternative Workforce Agreement. Answer as you wish for the **Media Waiver**.
- After you sign the document electronically and select “continue”, you will begin creating your VMS account and your TMN VMS profile. Be sure to complete everything to the best of your ability.
- Please keep your profile up to date with any changes of you information. You will see how to do this as you learn to enter you volunteer time.

For questions as you do this, contact our VMS Administrator, Dave Brandes, at djbrandes@comcast.net, 979-265-3813

Opportunity Codes (categories) for entering time

- Most often used codes:
 - **AT:** I received Training
 - **CB:** Chapter Business
 - **FR:** Field Research/Citizen Science
 - **IT:** Initial Training (used by interns only)
 - **NPA:** Parks/Other
 - **NPA:** USFWS
 - **PO:** Public Outreach
 - **RM:** Managing Natural Resources
 - **TR:** I Trained Others
- **NOTE:** Other codes may be added for special projects.

**You have 45
days to get
hours entered
into VMS.**

**Log 'em or
Lose 'em!**

Log Into VMS

- From COT home page txmn.org/tmncot and select “VMS Login.”
- Then select “VMS – Volunteer Login.”

Volunteer Management System Portal

Welcome to the Texas Parks and Wildlife implementation of the Volunteer Management System (VMS) for Texas Master Naturalists from Samaritan Technologies.

[VMS – Volunteer Login](#) – you must already have a TPWD username; if you do not, you may obtain one below.

Hours on or before Jul 11, 2022 may not be entered	
You have until the end of	To enter Hours worked on
Today	Jul 12, 2022
Aug 29, 2022	Jul 15, 2022
Sep 12, 2022	Jul 29, 2022
Sep 26, 2022	Aug 12, 2022
Oct 10, 2022	Today
Hours on or after Aug 27, 2022 may not be entered	

VMS Dashboard

Welcome, David Brandes

Summary



Find Opportunities

Look for ways to serve on a one-time or regular basis.



View My Schedule

See the shifts where I have signed up.



Report my Service

Submit volunteer hours.



View My Log Book

View my volunteer transaction history.



My Placements

View opportunities I have applied for that have been approved.



My Referrals

View opportunities I have applied for that are pending approval and placement.

Approved Hours

TMN Life: 6060.35
TMN Year: 86.25
AT Year: 16.75

Viewing My Logbook

[Back to dashboard](#)

Log Book for: David Brandes

If you see a gray box next to an entry it means it has not yet been approved. You may check it if you want to edit or delete it. Scroll down to the bottom of the list to select those options.

Start Date: Jan 1 2022

End Date: Aug 26 2022

Rows to display All of 103

View by

Opportunity Summary

Ordinary log book entries

AT: I Received Training (Ad)	AT Hours	Service Performed		
Cradle of Texas Master Natu				
12 Jan 2022	1.5	Light Pollution and		
18 Jan 2022	1	TPWD: Karst, The Rol		
21 Jan 2022	0.75	TPWD: Wizzie Brown,		
02 Feb 2022	1.25	Webinar, Seaside Cha		
09 Feb 2022	1.75	chapter meeting AT,		

Viewing My Logbook (continued)

Edit Selected Record

Delete Selected Record(s)

Log Book Summary	
AT Hours	16.75
Service Performed	N/A
Admin Activity	Hours Management: 26
	Chapter Meeting: 3
	Board/Committee Work: 3
	Training Classes: 2
TMN Hours	91.75
Mileage round trip	0
Specialization	
Trail Miles	0
Adult Sub Total	0
Youth Sub total	0
Adult Male Total	0
Adult Female Total	0
Adult White	0
Adult Black	0
Adult Hispanic	0
Adult Asian	0
Adult Amer Ind / Alaskan	0
Hours	172.75
Approved Hours	167.5

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Report Your Service or Training Hours – AT: I Received Training

Report my Service

Select “AT: I Received Training (Advanced Training):TMN AT Report Hours”

- Enter Service Date or select from Calendar Icon
- How many hours was the training?: e.g. 1.75
- Describe your service or training: e.g. COT meeting: Monarch presentation
- Select OK to accept entry
- *Note – travel hours to and from the training site MAY NOT be included in the total hours*
- *Note – if you attend a multi-day series of workshops, each day must be entered separately. However, if there are multiple classes or workshops on the same day you may report total time spent during the day. Optionally, you may enter each workshop within a day separately.*
- *Note – in the description field, provide name of organization providing the training and the topic, and the location if non-COT events.*



Report Your Service or Training Hours – AT: I Received Training

Report my Service

■ TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE

Report Service

Please select from the following survey(s):

AT: I Received Training (Advanced Training):TMN AT Rep ▾

<== Activity Reporting Code

Volunteers

[Volunteer Dashboard](#) <== Click here to
[Search Opportunities](#) go back to main
[FAQ](#)
[Log out](#)

Service Date: <== When it occurred

Advanced Training

How many hours was the training?: <== How long was the class?
Remember, don't count travel

Describe your service or training: <== Sponsor: Location, What was class about?

Hit OK when you're done



Report Your Service or Training Hours – IT: Initial Training

Select Initial Training: “TMN Initial Training Hours”

- Enter Service Date or select from Calendar Icon
- How many hours was the training?: e.g. 2.0
- (opt.)What did you think of the training? Choose response from drop-down list.
- Describe your training: e.g. “Entomology presentation, AgriLife” ; e.g. “Gulf/Dunes Field Trip, Quintana”
- Note - A separate entry must be made for the a.m. presentation and the p.m. field trip.
- Note - The training director will announce/email the hours that are allowed for training sessions. **Travel may not be included in initial training hours.**
- Note - Once Initial Training is completed, this opportunity will be removed from the intern’s opportunity options.



Report Your Service or Training Hours – IT: Initial Training

Report my Service

TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE

Report Service

Please select from the following survey(s):

Initial Training:TMN Initial Training Hours ▼

Initial Classroom and Field Trip Hours

Date of the class or field trip:

How many hours was the training?:

What did you think of the training?:

Describe your training:

Entomology: AgriLife, Mr. Bug Guy.

Volunteers

[Volunteer Dashboard](#)

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< == Total hours spent in class or on field learning trip

< == Topic, Instructor, location
You must use a separate entry for class time vs. field trip



Report Your Service or Training Hours – CB: Chapter Meetings and Admin

Select Initial Training: “CB: Chapter Meetings and Admin (Chapter Admin) TMN Admin”

- Enter Service Date or select from Calendar Icon
- How many hours did you volunteer?: e.g. 1.5
- Select type of Chapter Administration from drop-down box, e.g. Chapter Meeting that most closely matches what you did
- Describe your training: e.g. “Monthly Business Meeting, AgriLife
- (opt.) What was the total number of miles you drove round trip?
- Select OK to submit entry

Note – **travel hours** to and from the Chapter meeting site or other chapter Admin site may be added to the volunteer hours but travel hours **CANNOT EXCEED** the volunteer hours, e.g. 0.75 hours volunteering for chapter business and 1.25 hours travel time may only be reported as 2.0 hours of total volunteer effort.

Note – description field is somewhat redundant to the Chapter Admin drop-down box, but is required to allow the opportunity for data reporting.



Report Your Service or Training Hours – CB: Chapter Meetings and Admin

TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE

Report Service

Please select from the following survey(s):
 <== Activity code

Service Date: == When did this occur?

Volunteer Hours

How many hours did you volunteer?
 (To the nearest quarter hour, including travel time) <== Meeting time plus Travel to/from

Chapter Administration

Chapter Administration: == Choose from Drop-Down Menu

Describe your service or training:
 <== Sponsor: Description of event

For your personal records....

What was the total number of miles you drove round trip? <== Miles Driven to/from

<== Hit OK when you're done

Volunteers

[Volunteer Dashboard](#) <== Main Menu

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[FAQ](#)

[Log out](#)



Report Your Service or Training Hours – FR: Field Research

Select Initial Training: “FR: Field Research”

- Note – this is the only opportunity type that allows accumulated hours for a date range to be entered. We suggest that entries are grouped for no more than one week at a time.
- Enter Service Start Date or select from Calendar Icon
- Enter Service End Date or select from Calendar Icon
- How many hours did you volunteer?: e.g. 8.5
- Describe your research: e.g. “Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC)” Freeport
- (opt.) What was the total number of miles you drove round trip?
- Select OK to submit entry

NOTE: THE 45-DAY RULE STILL APPLIES TO THE START DATE.



Report Your Service or Training Hours – FR: Field Research

TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE

Report Service

Please select from the following survey(s):

FR: Field Research/Citizen Science (Service Project):TMI
<== Activity Code

Field Research Volunteer Hours

Start Date for volunteer service:

End Date for volunteer service:

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

Describe your research: CBC at SBNWR, SCT, Mad Island, & Freeport. Four events, including travel and meal times.

<== Special Situation;
Field Research is often conducted intermittently over longer periods of time.
Hours may be compiled over an extended time, usually about a week.

<== there are often abbreviations for frequently referenced sponsors or events i.e:
CBC for Christmas Bird Count
TST for Texas Stream Team
SCT for Sea Center Texas
etc.

For your personal records....
What was the total number of miles
you drove round trip?

Total miles for week

Volunteers

[Volunteer Dashboard](#)

[Search Opportunities](#)

[FAQ](#)

[Log out](#)



Report Your Service or Training Hours – FR: Field Research

Note – for field research conducted in the field, the actual hours in the field plus travel time may be reported. Travel hours to and from the field research site may be added to the volunteer hours but travel hours CANNOT EXCEED the volunteer hours, e.g. 0.75 hrs volunteering on a field research project and 1.0 hrs travel time may only be reported as 1.5 hrs of total volunteer effort.

*Note – for Citizen Science projects to count, there is a requirement that the research/observations **MUST BE** reported to the sponsoring organization (such as Audubon) and the data or photos published.*

Note - For projects that involve reporting with species photographs and demographic data to organizations such as wildflower.org, field time is generally not counted as it often occurs at the same time as a volunteer activity or a personal photo outing. A maximum of 15 min./reported photo may be reported in VMS. An exception is made when the field collection of specimens is part of, for example, a defined USFWS project. In which case the field time is also counted.

Note – field research projects not listed on the COT VMS Opportunity Code sheet must be pre-approved by the VT Director before hours can be reported.

Note – for home/backyard citizen science projects such as the Cornell Backyard Bird Count, a maximum of 2 hours/week may be reported.