



August 13, 2009

Please note our new #281-576-1634

Dear LLT Supporter,

We could cry “wolf” and tell you we’re in a crisis. Except (1) we don’t have any wolves around here so we’d maybe have to cry “bobcat” and (2) you already know that times are hard for everyone, including non-profits. But unlike crying wolf, this is truly an urgent and real plea in these tough times.

We are coming to you when we need your personal, immediate financial support more than we ever have. If we can’t increase our funding before the end of the summer, we will have to make some deep cuts. What may happen soon is that our fabulous environmental educational program, which puts the “field” back into field trips, will have to be abruptly curtailed. Our office may have to be moved to another, less-green location because the current economic climate has so far prevented our being able to sublease and cost share our still available extra space.

Now...our doors are not going to shut tomorrow or next month; we are an organization that has responsibly set aside funds to be able to continue our obligations we’ve made to both private and public landowners to permanently protect their lands. But if we don’t increase our local community funding, we won’t be able to continue our fast pace of initiating and completing our critical land conservation projects.

Here’s why we think we deserve your support during what we know are hard times for you, too. This summer we’ve completed more permanent land preservation projects bringing our total number of conservation easements to 31, with more than 8,000 acres protected.

- **Lake Creek Preserve – 64.09 acres – Montgomery County – June 2009**

This unique, diverse ecological area with 41 different native tree species and 15 acres of mosaic wetlands has been donated to Montgomery County for permanent protection with a conservation easement held by Legacy Land Trust.

Home for many old palmettos, the wetlands on this tract provide habitat for barred owls and eastern screech owls as well as hermit thrushes. Also found on our baseline inventory were both purple and yellow passionflower.

- **West Fork San Jacinto Preserve – 87.72 acres – Montgomery County June 2009**

Feeding into Lake Houston, this preserve has more than 90% of its acreage in the floodway and almost a quarter mile of frontage on the San Jacinto River, providing critical floodbuffer protection for nearby upstream and downstream residents.

In-the-works land projects, some to be closed by the end of the summer, include:

- **Giant Cypress Preserve – 185 acres – Montgomery County**

Our baseline advisory crew member from the Texas Forest Service has measured a bald cypress tree to be preserved on this site with a circumference of 245 inches (over 20 ft!) and a height of 82 ft.

We are having confirmed whether this tree will now be the Champion Bald Cypress for the county and, in the fall, we'll also have a dendrochronologist out to "age" the tree for us, which is currently estimated to be more than 400 years old – yes, that's not a typo – 400 years old! Many of the trees along this Spring Creek Greenway corridor area are easily 200 years old. But to be able to help a landowner preserve one four centuries old is truly awe-inspiring and an honor.

- **Other pending tracts in Northern Harris County (Tomball area), Brazoria County (Alvin) and yes, another Montgomery Co. tract**

Our Environmental Education Program this past school year has reached more than 800 area students and their teachers with fabulous nature experiences on our preserves with our "No Child Left Inside" education program. We have taught a number of teachers how to do their own watershed water quality testing – after bringing their students out in the field. Sixty area middle-school science teachers arriving next week will have waiting for them in their in-boxes the forms for them to book their fall trips to our LLT preserves.

Unfortunately, despite our successful education and land projects, funding from almost all of our recurring foundation donors is down, many foundations are not taking on any "new to them" groups and, of course, corporate funding is tighter than it's ever been. So YOU, who have always been important to us, are now being called upon to: (1) write your most generous check possible now, (2) tell your like-minded friends and families of our need for more private donors and (3) ask your place of work whether they have a giving program to match your donation for us.

In closing, I wanted to share the upshot of a recent call from one of LLT's supporters, who said: "There are a lot of groups out there, but Legacy Land Trust is one really doing the real land conservation – which is so desperately needed." We hope you'll agree. Together, we can forever preserve important parts of the Houston region – for hiking, biking, kayaking and for the animals. They deserve it and so do we.

Most sincerely,

Jennifer Lorenz
Executive Director