



# Get Outside in the Lone Star State

Support allocating the Sporting Goods Sales Tax in 2019 and beyond for its intended purpose

## Overview

- The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) has been chronically underfunded. A backlog of deferred maintenance costs is estimated to be \$751 million.
- Revenue from the Sporting Goods Sales Tax has generated \$2.5 billion, but only \$1 billion has been allocated for intended purposes.
- Allocate and constitutionally guarantee that the proceeds from the Sporting Goods Sales Tax will be allocated to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

## Funding

- Support Texas Parks and Wildlife base budget of \$723.2 million and exceptional item requests of \$200.6 million in the budget bills (SB 1 and HB 1).
- Specifically, support these recommendations for exceptional item requests: funding
  - Support at least \$30 million over the biennium in local park grants \$24.5 M over the biennium in the base request and \$4.4 M in the exceptional items request
  - \$12.5 million for development of Palo Pinto State Park.

## Bills

- **SB 26** (Kolkhorst) and **HB 1214** (Cyrier) provide statutory guarantees that the Sporting Goods Sales Tax flows to Texas Parks and Wildlife.
- **SJR 24** constitutionally requires that all of the revenue generated by the Sporting Goods Sales Tax be used for its intended purpose.

## Background

In 1993 the Texas Legislature passed the Sporting Goods Sales Tax with 94 percent of the revenue supporting the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the remaining six percent to support the Texas Historical Commission. Since passing, the tax the legislature has only allocated 40 percent of the revenue to its intended purpose.

Adequately funding the TPWD is important not only for the enjoyment of our parks, but also necessary for public safety. TPWD staff performed 10,000 water related rescues and sheltered more than 8,000 evacuees during Hurricane Harvey. State park Infrastructure damage from Harvey is estimated at \$32 million, and it is critical that this infrastructure be repaired in the event a time of need arises in the future.