

Contract Report 24-002

Celebrating H-E-B: An Evolving Partnership

The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment & H-E-B



**THE MEADOWS CENTER
FOR WATER AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

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Prepared by

The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment, Texas State University

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Contents

- Executive Summary 5**
- Educational Field Trips and Activity Days at Spring Lake 5
- Earth Day San Marcos Festival..... 6
- One Water Initiative..... 7



MEADOWS CENTER ENVIRONMENTAL INTERPRETER LEADS FIELD TRIP STUDENTS

Executive Summary

The Meadows Center's ongoing partnership with H-E-B allows our community to experience Spring Lake and water-focused education utilizing a direct, hands-on approach to learning. This relationship reflects a deep commitment not only to environmental education but also to ensuring that these opportunities are accessible to all, regardless of socioeconomic background. In addition to supporting our Earth Day celebration and environmental education programs, H-E-B provided seed funding for our One Water Initiative, a visionary approach to water management that could reshape how communities across Texas think about and use water.

Below is a glimpse into the impactful work we've been able to achieve through this partnership over the past year.

Educational Field Trips and Activity Days at Spring Lake

H-E-B's support enabled the Meadows Center to continue our initiative of providing free field trips to underserved students, ensuring that all children can discover and connect with nature at Spring Lake in San Marcos, Texas. The immersive field trips explore the interconnections between all living things and water, sparking curiosity and a deeper understanding of the natural world. We were also able to continue our activity days for groups and families to allow in-depth exploration of various topics, including water science and river ecology.



EXPLORING MACRO-INVERTEBRATE SPECIES
ALONG WETLANDS BOARDWALK



STUDENTS TOUR MEADOWS
CENTER'S WETLANDS BOARDWALK



STUDENTS TAKE A GLASS-BOTTOM BOAT TOUR
DURING FIELD TRIP AT SPRING LAKE



MAKING BIRD FEEDERS AT EARTH DAY SAN MARCOS



LIVE MUSIC AT EARTH DAY SAN MARCOS



COMMUNITY BOOTHS AT EARTH DAY SAN MARCOS

More than **23,000 students and individuals** have benefited from these educational programs in the past year alone. The partnership’s focus on inclusivity ensures that all students, regardless of background, can develop a lifelong appreciation for nature and sustainability.

Earth Day San Marcos Festival

With H-E-B as our presenting sponsor, the 11th Annual Earth Day San Marcos Festival was hugely successful. The event attracted over 1,800 visitors, making it one of the Meadows Center’s largest Earth Day gatherings yet. The festival provided a range of engaging, hands-on activities, workshops, and entertainment centered around environmental stewardship. A highlight of the day was the free glass-bottom boat rides, offering attendees a unique glimpse into the ecosystem of Spring Lake.

New to this year’s Earth Day Festival was the inclusion of the Texas State University Philosophy Department’s Dialogue Series on Engaged Ecology, which brought campus leaders together to discuss sustainability issues. Additionally, the Indigenous Cultures Institute opened the event with a blessing of the San Marcos Springs, emphasizing the

cultural and spiritual significance of water in our communities. H-E-B's role in this event underscores the partnership's commitment to fostering community involvement and environmental education.

One Water Initiative


Thanks to H-E-B, the Meadows Center launched its One Water Initiative to ensure Texans learn how to responsibly use water in our communities. One Water promotes the idea that all forms of water—whether drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, or greywater—should be managed as a single, interconnected resource. This holistic approach ensures that water is used as efficiently as possible, which is crucial in Texas, where water conservation is increasingly critical.

This year, the Meadows Center worked with the US Water Alliance and the National Wildlife Federation to develop a Statewide One Water collaborative. In addition, the Meadows Center presented on several One Water topics, including presentations on “One Water Solutions” at the Symposium on Balancing Growth, Preservation, and Conservation in Coastal Watersheds and “One Water: A Texas-sized Opportunity for Sustainable Water Management” at the Water Resources Specialty Group's One Water Webinar Series hosted by the American Association of Geographers.



The Water Resources Specialty Group of the AAG Presents:
Inaugural One Water Webinar Series:
“A Texas-Sized Opportunity for Sustainable Water Management”

REGISTRATION



<https://forms.office.com/r/QzkissrEjs>

Thursday,
May 23, 2024
11 AM PDT, 12 PM MDT,
1 PM CDT, 2 PM EDT

PROMOTION FOR AAG ONE WATER WEBINAR

Jenna Walker is the Director of Watershed Services at The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment at Texas State University. She oversees grant-funded research programs related to groundwater and surface water protection, environmental resilience, and community science. Jenna holds a master's in Applied Geography from Texas State University.



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