

Katy Prairie Conservancy



ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 2019



CONSERVATION

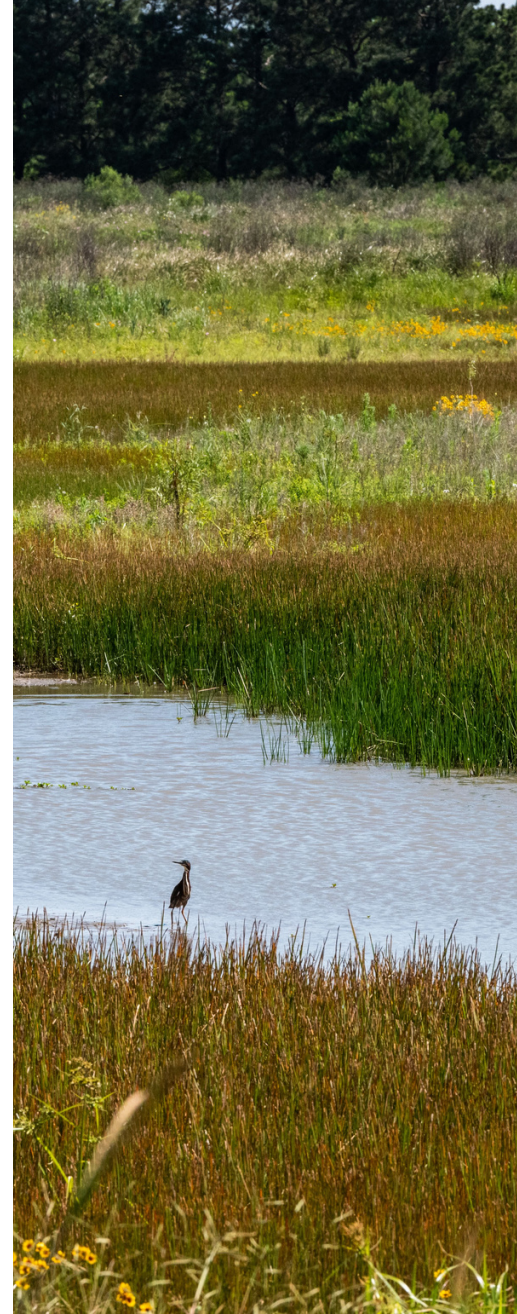
We are pleased to have completed the Katy Prairie Conservancy Strategic Conservation Priorities: Phase 1, a planning process that identifies priority areas for protection in the geographic area of the historic Katy Prairie in Harris, Fort Bend, and Waller Counties. The process included the identification and ranking of conservation resources by stakeholders, including scientists and experts from various fields and representatives from public and private agencies that participated in two stakeholder feedback sessions. The conservation resources identified included ecological quality, habitat importance for particular species of concern, flooding potential, location of wetlands, and ability to provide contiguous habitat. Data was collected over the study area and modeled to identify property parcels that were of the highest value, and delivered to KPC in a final report and electronic database in December 2019. This information will be very useful to KPC as it determines which properties to focus on for protection.

Also completed was the Katy Prairie Conservancy Strategic Conservation Priorities: Phase 2, which encompassed the Damon Prairie. This phase applied the methodology developed in Phase 1 to the Damon Prairie, so as to identify property parcels with the highest value the geographic area encompassing the Damon Prairie in Fort Bend and Brazoria Counties.

Data was collected over the Phase 2 study area and modeled to identify property parcels that were of the highest value, and delivered to KPC in a final report and electronic database in December 2019. This information will be very useful to KPC as it determines which properties to focus on for protection, particularly in regards to watersheds to the west and south of the Greater Houston Area.

Completed land protection projects in 2019 include:

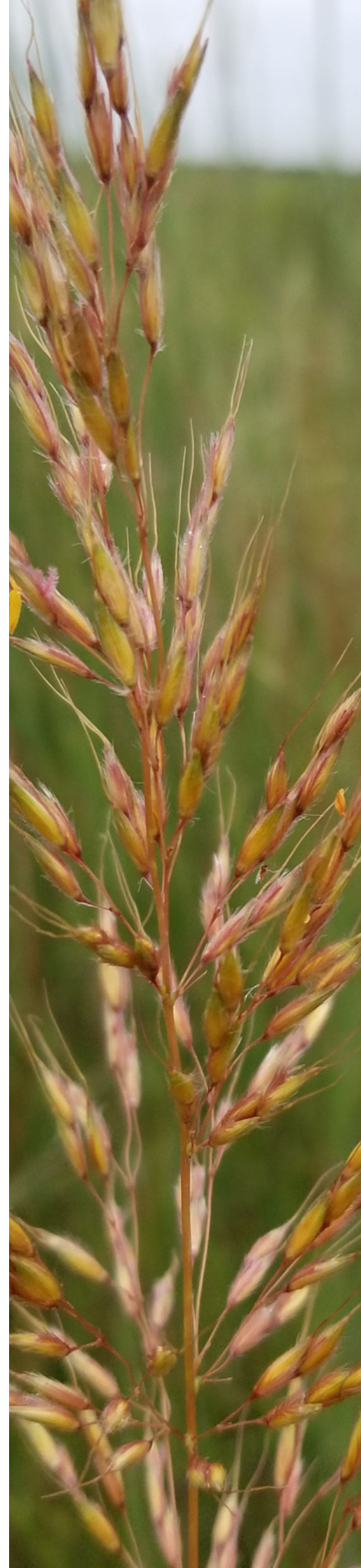
- Pattison Road – Acquired 636 acres that was previously under the threat of development at the center of the Katy Prairie Preserve.
- Flo Hannah Prairie – Worked with Galveston Bay Foundation on the protection of a 35-acre remnant prairie in Angleton, TX.
- Stopover Ranch – Became the easement holder for a 500-acre property in Jackson County that provides agricultural use and waterfowl habitat.
- Baldpate Farms – Became the easement holder for a 175-acre farm and ranch in Matagorda County that provides excellent wetlands habitat for waterfowl, wading birds and shorebirds.



RESTORATION

In 2019, KPC was hard at work enhancing and restoring the Katy Prairie Preserve to ensure that present and future generations have healthier land and healthier watersheds. Invasive species management remains a priority. In the past year, KPC successfully cleared 30 acres of willow baccharis with help from the Student Conservation Association and cleared substantial quantities of Brazilian vervain from the Indiangrass Preserve. We prepared fire breaks in anticipation of prescribed burns across the Katy Prairie Preserve, burned approximately 300 acres on the Warren Ranch, and completed follow-up treatments on newly restored parcels. And important restoration work continues on the Warren Ranch, including efforts to promote sustainable grazing practices and the development of a long-term plan with Texas A&M to ensure the ranch continues to be financially and ecologically sustainable.

The KPC Native Seed Nursery grew thousands of native plants in 2019 that were planted at KPC's Indiangrass Preserve and Shrike Prairie by hundreds of volunteers throughout the year. Over 100 volunteers spent just under 350 hours at eight different locations collecting native plant seeds to be used for KPC's great grow out program, KPC's prairie builder schools & parks program, and local prairie restoration projects for 14 conservation organizations. At least 27 different species of seeds were collected in 2019. Once collected, volunteers packed nearly four pounds of seed into seed packets, which will be distributed to KPC's great grow out program, KPC's prairie builder schools & parks program, KPC's prairie restoration at Indiangrass Preserve, and pocket prairies at local universities.



OUTREACH

KPC supported the use and distribution of Prairie Discovery Boxes, used by students throughout the Greater Houston Area. KPC continued the Virtually Wild Texas program with new field trips, including one filmed on the Katy Prairie, serving thousands of students across the state of Texas. KPC welcomed hundreds of guests to the prairie through structured programming, worked with Garden Oaks Montessori to create a new pocket prairie, and continued its partnership with Wildlife Habitat Federation to kick off the Katy High School pocket prairie project. KPC collaborated with the Houston Museum of Natural Science, the Garden Club of Houston, and Clark Condon to create a 9 Natives Showcase Garden. Our staff taught Texas Master Naturalist classes, presented conservation easement workshops, and engaged thousands of members of the community with presentations at local, regional, state, and international conferences about prairie protection and enhancement, trail maintenance and planting, flooding and green infrastructure, and more.



awards and recognition

KPC and its staff received the following awards, recognitions, and appointments in 2019:

Virtually Wild! Texas was awarded the Forestry Innovation Award. Awarded by the Texas Forestry Association. Virtually Wild! Texas is a partnership of the Katy Prairie Conservancy, The Nature Conservancy in Texas, the Region 4 Education Service Center and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The 9 Natives Showcase Garden was awarded the Proud Partner Award. Awarded by the Mayor's Proud Partners Program. The 9 Natives Showcase Garden is a partnership of the Katy Prairie Conservancy, Houston Museum of Natural Science, the Garden Club of Houston and Clark Condon.

RESILIENCY

Even before the three devastating rainstorms and hurricanes hit the Gulf Coast in 2016 and 2017, KPC was working to identify ways to increase the water-holding capacity of the wetlands and tallgrass prairie found on the Katy Prairie and to document how the Katy Prairie helps provide flood mitigation to the region.

KPC completed work with the Trust for Public Land to develop *The Economic Benefits of the Katy Prairie Conservancy Lands* and also engaged AES and Bedient Associates to provide a more in-depth study of the water-holding capacity of the prairie, *Ecosystem Services Valuation for the Katy Prairie Conservancy and Adjacent Lands* which has now been published.

KPC continues work with the Conservation Flood Mitigation Group, a working coalition of nonprofit organizations dedicated to protecting the region's natural resources. The group also continues to work closely with Judge Hidalgo and County Commissioners and the Harris County Flood Control District to identify natural infrastructure and nature-based solutions for inclusion in the project list for the August 2018 Bond Initiative and show how nature-based solutions can be more cost-effective than traditional engineering solutions - either independently of or in tandem with the latter.

This work encourages the County to restore and reclaim floodplains, especially in undeveloped and underdeveloped areas; preserve undeveloped prairies and forests; use and restore natural systems e.g., natural channels, wherever possible; and where buyouts are completed, preserve these lands for the benefit of the community, including the development of trails, provision of wildlife habitat, and recreation. This group recognizes the need for a regional plan that not only creates an effective and durable system for the protection and resilience of the Greater Houston Region, but also enhances the quality of life and desirability of our area.



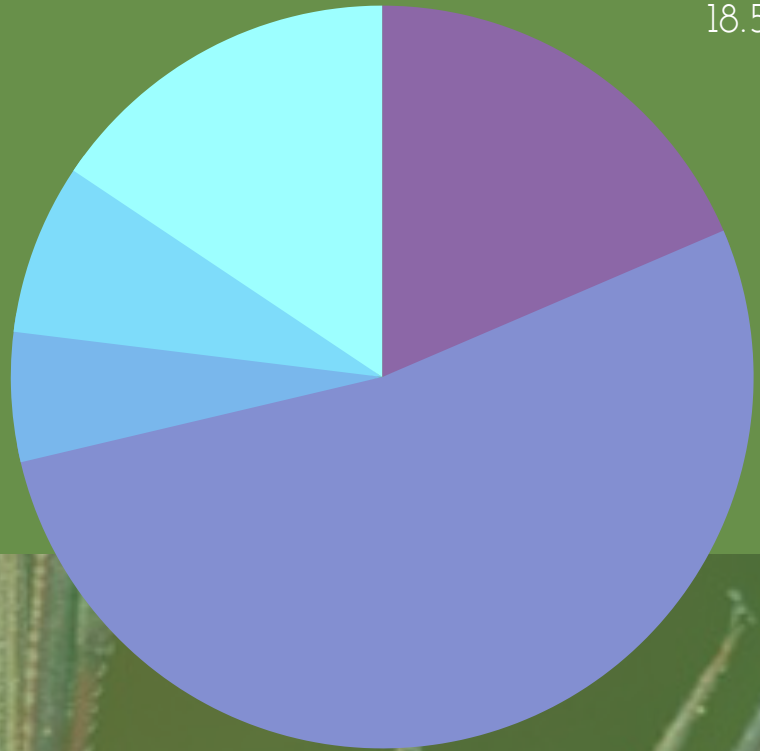
REVENUE

Lease and Other Income
15.6%

Contributions
18.5%

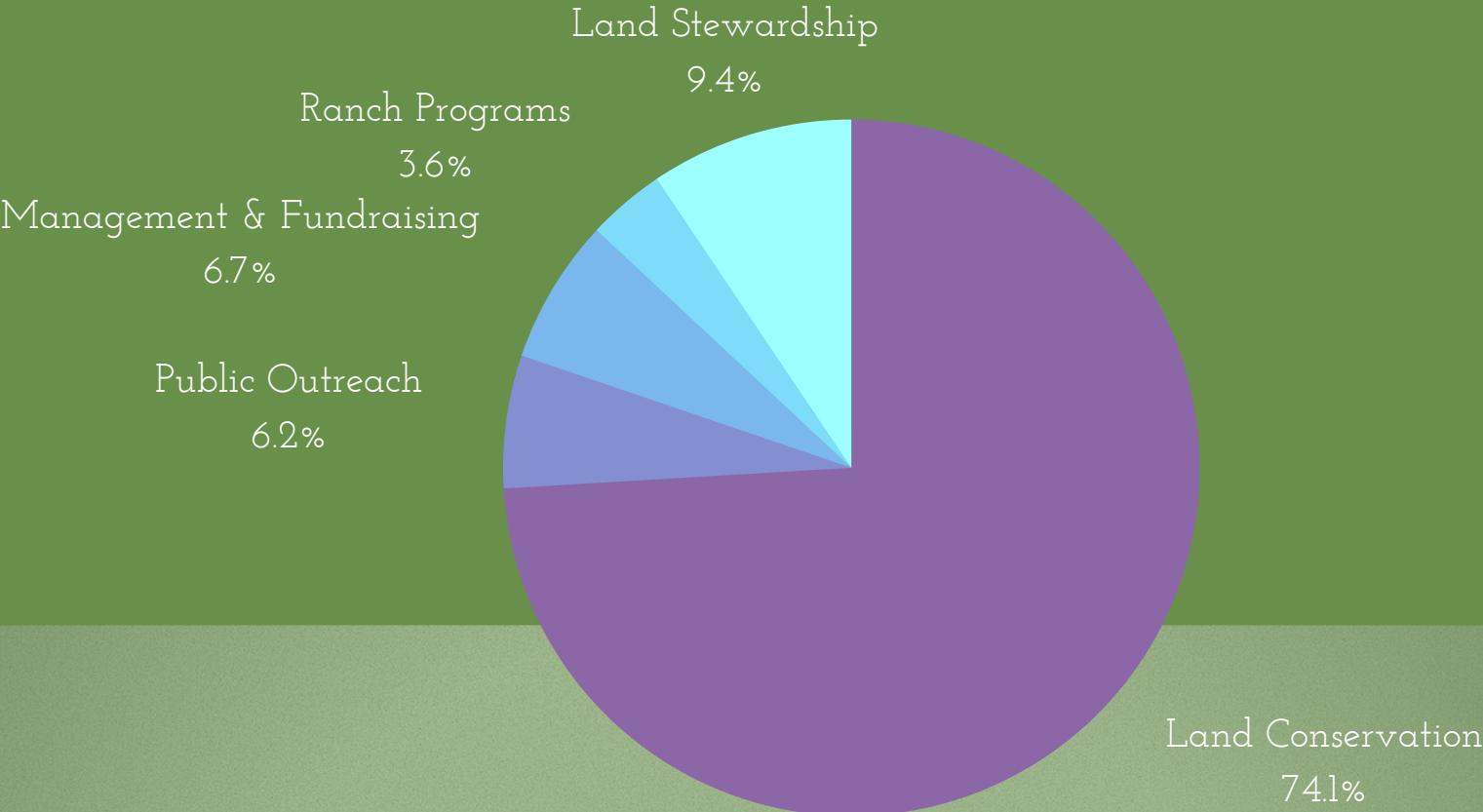
Cattle Sales and Other Ranch Income
7.4%

Special Events
5.6%



Conservation Easements
52.8%

EXPENSES



JOIN US

We need your help to accomplish our vision. Your generous financial gifts, your steadfast volunteer efforts, and your enthusiastic sharing of our story bring us success. Thank you.

VOLUNTEER. Come out to the Indiangrass Preserve to lend a hand and help us with the native seed nursery. Or join us for a stewardship workday the first Saturday of each month. More information on our website at katyprairie.org

GIVE A GIFT. Your generous contributions can help KPC protect and enhance land and provide outdoor programming for children and adults

HELP US TELL OUR STORY. Share your favorite prairie adventures. Find us on Facebook and YouTube, or use the hashtag [#katyprairie](https://twitter.com/katyprairie) on Twitter or Instagram [@katyprairie](https://www.instagram.com/katyprairie)

LEARN MORE. Visit katyprairie.org or contact a member of our team (713.523.6135) to learn about volunteer opportunities, upcoming events, and planned giving opportunities.



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