

HISTORIC TEXAS LANDS PLAQUE

Recognition for Private Landowners Who Preserve Texas History and Prehistory

The state of Texas likely contains more than two million archeological sites, left behind by at least 13,000 years of human occupation. Understanding a story that spans so many millennia requires that the physical remains—the archeological sites—be preserved and studied. These sites represent the physical record of Texas' past as well as a vast outdoor laboratory in which we will continue to discover and understand that past.

The study of archeology and the protection of archeological sites is in the interest of all people who call themselves *Texans*, a name that is derived from the prehistoric past and from one of our state's great native peoples, the Caddo.

For decades, Texas landowners have worked with the Texas Historical Commission (THC) to preserve important sites all over the state. Because of these efforts, historic places from frontier forts to Ice Age hunting camps have been studied and preserved. The landowners who helped to preserve these places know the value of Texas history and prehistory. These landowners preserve sites not because they *have to*, but because they *want to*.



Panhandle rancher and oilman Harold Courson and his wife Joyce saved the famous Buried City archeological site on their property through a conservation easement with the THC. This working ranch now doubles as an archeological preserve for future research.

Thanks to the vision and support of the Robert E. and Evelyn McKee Foundation of El Paso, the THC is able to present these landowners with a special form of recognition—the Historic Texas Lands Plaque.

Cast in aluminum and a foot in diameter, these plaques are displayed with pride by participating Historic Texas Lands landowners on ranch gates or other visible places on their property.

THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF BECOMING A HISTORIC TEXAS LANDS LANDOWNER

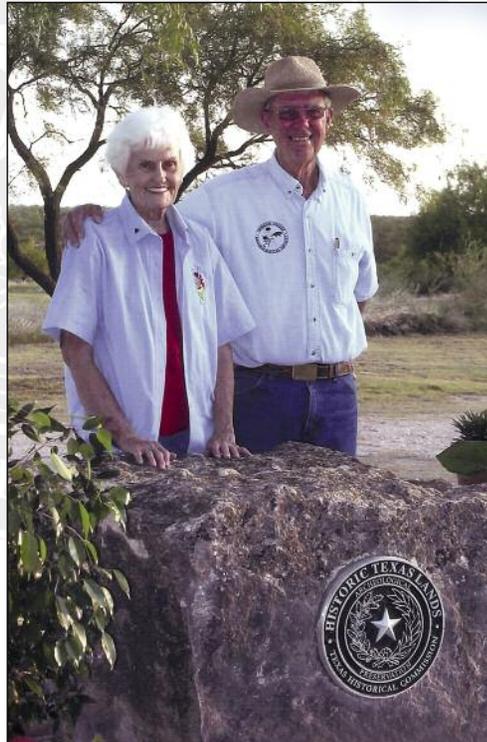
A landowner who has *completed* at least one of the following requirements can be acknowledged as a Historic Texas Lands landowner.

- 1 Transferred ownership (via donation or sale) of an archeological site to the THC, another state agency, or a suitable nonprofit organization such as a land trust. The transfer must have been for the purpose of permanent preservation of a site.
or
- 2 Sold or donated a permanent conservation easement (i.e., not a term easement) to the THC, another state agency, or a nonprofit land trust. This easement must provide for permanent conservation of one or more significant archeological sites.
or
- 3 Designated one or more State Archeological Landmarks by completing the following steps: nomination, receiving the designation, and filing it with the appropriate county office.
or
- 4 Allowed substantial and significant archeological research on his or her property. "Substantial and significant archeological research" means survey, testing, or major excavation by responsible professional or avocational archeologists. The research must contribute significantly to our knowledge of Texas archeology or directly lead to permanent preservation of one or more significant sites. The results of that research must be published, OR all materials resulting from that research—including all artifacts, notes, records, etc.—must be curated at an approved state repository.



When Frank Sprague of Hamilton County called on the THC to investigate a site on his property, it turned out to be an important one, recording thousands of years of human occupation in the Leon River Valley. After the initial work was done, Sprague requested that the THC designate archeological site 41HM43 as a State Archeological Landmark. Today, the Frank and Evelyn Sprague site is protected by law—and by the Sprague family.

Kay and Fred Campbell received a Historic Texas Lands Plaque in 2004 for their support of archeological research on their property at Paint Rock, Concho County, Texas. Archeologists from the Concho Valley Archeological Society conducted testing at the famous Paint Rock Site and published a report on their work. Landowners who allow this type of important research on their property may be eligible to receive one of these plaques, which are provided by the THC free of charge.



Would you like to be a Historic Texas Lands landowner or recommend someone else for the honor? Please complete the following:

Landowner's Name _____

Number/Street/P.O. Box _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Phone Number (_____) _____

Email Address _____

Person referring landowner to the THC (if different from above):

Name _____

Phone Number (_____) _____

Email Address _____

Please discuss how you or the person you are recommending qualifies for a Historic Texas Lands Plaque. Attach additional pages as needed.

To be signed by landowner:

If I receive a Historic Texas Lands Plaque, I pledge to display it on a ranch gate or other visible place on my property.

 Landowner's signature _____ Date _____

If you would like to discuss this information with a THC archeologist, please call 512.463.6096, or email archeology@thc.state.tx.us. Mailing address: Archeology Division, Texas Historical Commission, P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711-2276.



TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
real places telling real stories

www.thc.state.tx.us