

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE June 5, 2019

TO Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT The Great Trinity Forest

At our meeting on May 22nd, the council voted unanimously to reaffirm our support for protection of the Great Trinity Forest and set policy for moving forward with flood risk management, ecosystem restoration, and recreational enhancements. While drafting the resolution on the Forest, it was brought to my attention that there was an opportunity to honor two of the early advocates for the Great Trinity Forest.

Edward C. "Ned" and Eugenia "Genie" Fritz actively promoted environmental initiatives for several decades and worked tirelessly to improve the natural environment through leading and participating in efforts to bring awareness to conservation and preservation of nature and wildlife. Together they founded the Texas Land Conservancy, Texas Conservation Alliance, the Texas Chapter of the Nature Conservancy and the Dallas Audubon Society.

Ned and Genie were instrumental in the protection of the Great Trinity Forest, including the creation and preservation of the Texas Buckeye Trail. The environmental community has requested that the Texas Buckeye Trail be named the Ned and Genie Fritz Texas Buckeye Trail. A resolution to that effect will be on the June 10th agenda of the Quality of Life, Arts & Culture Committee.

Please see the attached letters of support from noted environmental organizations. If you have any questions, please contact me at 214-670-4067.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandy Greyson".

Sandy Greyson, Councilwoman
Quality of Life, Arts & Culture Committee

Attachments: 5

c: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager
Chris Caso, City Attorney (Interim)
Mark Swann, City Auditor
Billerae Johnson, City Secretary
Preston Robinson, Administrative Judge
Kimberly Bizer Tolbert, Chief of Staff to the City Manager
Majed A. Al-Ghafry, Assistant City Manager
Jon Fortune, Assistant City Manager

Joey Zapata, Assistant City Manager
Nadia Chandler Hardy, Assistant City Manager and Chief Resilience Officer
Michael Mendoza, Chief of Economic Development and Neighborhood Services
M. Elizabeth Reich, Chief Financial Officer
Laila Aleqresh, Chief Innovation Officer
Directors and Assistant Directors



Serving Texas Conservation for More than 45 Years

November 17, 2018

To Honorable Chairman and Members
Dallas Park and Recreation Board
1500 Marilla St
Dallas, TX 75201

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Park Board,

Texas Conservation Alliance greatly appreciates your consideration of renaming the Buckeye Trail after its founders, Ned and Genie Fritz, and we strongly encourage you to take this step.

After discovering the Texas buckeyes and creating the trail, Ned and Genie for years led the Texas Buckeye Trail Walk each spring, mud or no mud, to call attention to an under-appreciated treasure. The Trinity River floodplain forest is a remarkable resource -- the largest urban forest in the country. Its potential as a recreational resource will be enhanced by this dedication and by the commitment of Groundwork Dallas and area conservation groups to maintain the trail.

Ned and Genie Fritz have long been champions of protecting the Trinity River floodplain, opposing projects that would destroy its natural character and promoting modern, non-structural methods of managing flood flows. Ned and Genie's protection of the Trinity River was just one of hundreds of conservation efforts they initiated, to conserve wildlife habitat and water resources across Texas and around the country.

Among Ned and Genie's most significant accomplishments are designation of five wilderness areas in Texas; establishment of the Big Thicket National Preserve; creation of numerous other public and private wildlife areas; ending clearcutting on national forests in Texas; and founding numerous groups, including The Nature Conservancy in Texas, the Texas Land Conservancy, and Texas Conservation Alliance. On a national scale, Ned helped draft provisions in the National Forest Management Act of 1976 that protect soils, watersheds, fish, wildlife, and other resources. He organized the first nationwide network of groups working on national forest issues and led the case against the U.S. Forest Service that established guidelines for forest management throughout the Southeastern United States.

Texas Conservation Alliance enthusiastically endorses the proposal to establish the Ned and Genie Fritz Buckeye Trail, and we know it will be an asset for the City of Dallas.

Sincerely,

Mack Turner
Chairman

Janice Bezanson
Executive Director

TEXAS  STATE
UNIVERSITY

The rising STAR of Texas

May 1, 2019

Becky Rader
Dallas Park and Recreation Board, District 9
9703 Champa Drive
Dallas, Texas 75218

Dear Ms. Rader:

I cannot tell you how excited I was to hear that the Dallas Park and Recreation Board is considering naming the Texas Buckeye Trail in the Great Trinity Forest for Ned and Genie Fritz.

I first met Ned Fritz more than fifty years ago while working as a young aide in the Department of the Interior on establishment of the Big Thicket National Biological Preserve and I will never forget the passion and determination he showed in the political struggle that lasted for many years and ultimately resulted in America's first preserve of its kind.

Later, as Executive Director of The Texas Nature Conservancy, which Ned had helped to create, we worked together on protection of the first tracts in what came to be known as The Great Trinity Forest.

In addition to our States office of the Nature Conservancy, Ned and Genie made possible the creation of other vital Texas Conservation organizations, including the Texas Conservation Alliance and The Texas Land Conservancy.

Few couples have contributed so much of their lives to conservation in Texas and permanent recognition of their lasting impact on our environment and quality of life is long overdue.

I could not be more supportive of renaming the Texas Buckeye Trail in their honor.

Yours very sincerely,



Andrew Sansom, PhD
Director of Environmental Strategy
Professor of Practice in Geography



THE MEADOWS CENTER
FOR WATER AND THE ENVIRONMENT

601 UNIVERSITY DRIVE | SAN MARCOS, TEXAS 78666-4684 | phone 512.245.9200 | fax 512.245.7371 | WWW.MEADOWSCENTER.TXSTATE.EDU

Texas State University was founded 1829.
MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM



Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Park Board,

Groundwork Dallas is writing to support naming of the Buckeye Trail after its founders, Ned and Genie Fritz.

Ned and Genie's best known accomplishments include the designation of five wilderness areas in Texas; establishing the Big Thicket National Preserve; ending clearcutting of national forests in Texas; and founding numerous conservation groups such as the Texas Land Conservancy, The Nature Conservancy in Texas, and Texas Conservation Alliance. Nationally, Ned helped draft the National Forest Management Act of 1976 to protect soils, watersheds, fish, wildlife, and other resources. Ned also organized a grassroots group to advocate for national forests and helped establish legal guidelines for forest management and logging in the Southeastern U.S.

We recently learned that Ned and Genie also discovered the Texas buckeyes, created a trail to access them, and led walks every spring to share this treasure with the people of Dallas. We greatly appreciate their efforts in bringing this trail to the attention of the public. From our own work on the Buckeye trail, we know that this unique part of the Trinity River floodplain is both beautiful, worth protecting, and enjoyed by public citizens.

The buckeye trail is part of the larger Great Trinity Forest (a name given by Ned Fritz) which is the largest urban forest in the country, a tremendous asset to the city of Dallas. Ned and Genie Fritz championed efforts to protect the Great Trinity Forest throughout their lives, supporting modern, non-structural methods of managing flood flows and protecting the natural character of the area. Dedicating the trail in Ned and Genie's name will increase the commitment and ability of groups like ours to maintain the trail alongside volunteers, and share its wonders with more Dallas residents. In turn, this will enhance the value of the Great Trinity Forest – one of Dallas's most valuable natural habitats.

We greatly appreciate your considering this matter, and hope you will proceed with honoring Ned and Genie Fritz in this way.

Sincerely,
Richard Buckley (on behalf of Groundwork Dallas Board and Staff)


Richard Buckley
Executive Director
Groundwork Dallas
(817) 726-9055
rick@groundworkdallas.org



TEXAS LAND CONSERVANCY

November 28, 2018

Becky Rader
Dallas Park & Recreation Board, District 9

Dear Ms. Rader,

I am pleased to write to you on behalf of Ned and Genie Fritz to have the Texas Buckeye Trail renamed to the Ned and Genie Fritz Trail in the Great Trinity Forest.

I first met Ned and Genie when I was hired as the Executive Director of the Texas Land Conservancy in 2007. Genie still served on the Board of Directors at that time and was secretary, until she stepped down in 2012. Genie was an invaluable resource for me and for TLC for many years. The legacy that she and Ned created with Texas Land Conservancy and other conservation organization is a real testament to their dedication to the environment of Texas.

I know as a result of Ned and Genie's efforts on our Board, TLC has expanded our influence and conservation mission, and I'm a better leader as a result. They personify the spirit of conservation in Texas.

We need more conservationists like Ned and Genie Fritz.

Sincerely,

Mark Steinbach, PhD
Executive Director
Texas Land Conservancy



T E X A S



NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER

November 21, 2018

Becky Rader

Dallas Park and Recreation Board, District 9
1500 Marilla Street, Suite 6FN
Dallas, TX 75201

Dear Becky:

The North Texas Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist Program has been informed that an application to name the Texas Buckeye Trail in the Great Trinity Forest in honor of Ned and Genie Fritz has been submitted. Our chapter is very familiar with the Texas Buckeye Trail. Our volunteers lead nature walks for the public in the spring particularly when the buckeyes are blooming, conduct field trips for our new class members, and work to maintain the trail.

We are fully supportive of naming the Trail after Ned and Genie. We knew Ned as an untiring environmentalist who used his skills as an attorney to help to protect parts of Texas that he loved including The Great Trinity Forest. Through his advocacy and example, he inspired innumerable people to become activists for nature.

Genie is also important to our chapter. Because of her environmental activism, we appointed her as an Honorary Texas Master Naturalist in 2016, an honor bestowed on only 5 others in our twenty-year history. She is a leader in several environmental organizations in Texas. In August, Genie was also honored at Women's Equality Day at Dallas City Hall by Mayor Mike Rawlings for all of the good that she has accomplished for Dallas County.

Naming the Texas Buckeye Trail for Genie and Ned would be a wonderful way to honor and recognize their leadership in environmental causes in Dallas and Texas.

If you need any other information from me about our support, please do not hesitate to contact me at 972-489-2771.

Thank you for your consideration,

Bruce Stewart

President

Texas Master Naturalist Program - North Texas Chapter