

TMN/VMS Newsletter

T E X A S



FOR TEXAS MASTER NATURALISTS VMS ADMINISTRATORS

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2016 Annual Report

We are still working through the fine print, but the annual report numbers are in and they are great!

We recorded 428,168 in Service Hours in 2016 valued at \$9.847 Million. There were 53,529 hours of Advanced Training obtained across the state. Another 24,604.40 Hours were recorded to Initial Training.

We interacted with over 426,000 people through our outreach and training programs and 4,887 Acres were added to the amount of land that we manage and 105 new trail miles were added for the public to enjoy. We learned work needs to be done on the impact data areas so be sure to read the adjacent article on how to count those numbers going forward.

2016 Milestones Awarded

250 HR Milestones awarded:	256
500 HR Milestones awarded:	186
1000 HR Milestones awarded:	105
2500 HR Milestones awarded:	35
4000 HR Milestones awarded:	17
5000 HR Milestones awarded:	12
10,000 HR Milestones awarded:	2
15,000 HR Milestones awarded:	5

While we were going through the numbers we used the Class Year field, please be sure to add that data to your volunteer profiles if it's not already there.

Also be sure that all of your initial training hours are recorded in the system. Although those hours are not part of the Federal Grant program, they are important for our in-house reports.

Special points of interest:

- ◆ 2016 ANNUAL REPORT RESULTS
- ◆ 2017 VMS REVIEW
- ◆ VOLUNTEER COMMUNICATIONS
- ◆ FIELD IN FOCUS: IMPACT DATA
- ◆ THANK YOU FOR REPORTING HOURS

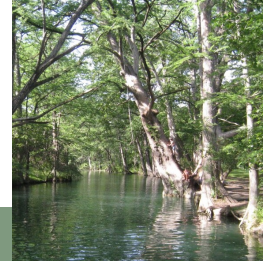
How Do You Communicate With Your Volunteers?

For one way communication, Mail Chimp offers a free version (mailchimp.com). It will allow your volunteers to opt-out of communications and provide feedback about bounced and delivered emails, but does require administrative maintenance.

Yahoo Groups offers a listserv option with a digest of conversations that anyone can submit emails to. It is pretty easy to manage, but just not very pretty.

eCoordinator in VMS offers simple email capability from the system, but there is no way to opt-out or feedback regarding bounced and delivered emails. Additionally, the email formatting is awkward at best.

What does your chapter use?



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2017 VMS Data Reviews

We are currently working on the Gulf Coast region next.

We will be looking at officers, CBC data, milestones, some new reporting ratios and follow-ups from the last review.

Field in Focus: Impact Data

Impact data is used to determine our impact on our community and environment.

The people impact data should count those people that come to an event and we should avoid double counting them. For instance: if your chapter has volunteers working at the welcome booth at an event, and you have some others leading walks and demonstrations, you should count the total number that attended the event.... And only one person needs to record that data. You can usually get that estimate from the sponsor of the event. If you only have someone at a single demo table, then you can count just the people who came to your table. Decide ahead of time which volunteer will record the impact data. If you have volunteers at more than one table, record the total number of people at the event—because there is no way to determine how many people visited both tables.

Unfortunately, the system can't do any math on the survey to automatically total the data. We have added the Grand Total and Adult/Youth subtotals to the Not Yet Approved Grid so you can check it as you approve the hours.

It also is worth noting that these numbers are the least precise data points that we gather. They are estimates. Don't stress out too much in making them perfect.

The Acreage and Trail Miles are for new numbers only. For instance: If you added a new trail to a park, count it. If you were working on existing trails in an area that is a new project for your chapter, count it.

We All Benefit From Recording Our Hours

Our volunteer hours are used to match federal, state and local grants. Additionally, hours recorded in VMS are easily accessible for a variety of other reports requested throughout the year. From insurance reports to affiliated group reports, our information is just a few keystrokes away.

Thank you for putting your data in!

Need Help? Find it here: txmn.org/help

Quick Login for hours: txmn.org/hours -or- tpwd.samaritan.com