



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Special Week Long Education Events at Travis County Parks with the Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers to Help Preserve and Protect Natural Resources for Generations to Come

Leave No Trace Selected Travis County Parks as an Endangered 'Hot Spot' and are Hosting Events to Help Raise Awareness about Natural Areas Around the Country Facing the Threat of Irreversible Environmental Damage

March 23, 2015 (Travis County, TX) The Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics and its Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers team are partnering with Travis County Parks to host community events and educational activities March 23-30th, 2015. The scenic and popular Travis County Parks have experienced visitor-created impacts in recent years including excessive trash, damage to vegetation, trees and trail erosion. Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers will focus on Hamilton Pool and Reimers' Ranch, which are managed as sister parks due to their proximity to each other.

The Hot Spot Program, a key component of the Leave No Trace in Every Park initiative, raises community awareness and brings solutions to popular natural areas facing heavy recreational use and consequently, the threat of harm to trails, parks and open space areas. The Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers travel throughout the country providing public education about how to reduce impacts in the outdoors.

"The cumulative impact of so many people enjoying a great county park system such as Travis County Parks can negatively affect that place," according to Courtney Bierschbach, Leave No Trace Traveling Trainer. "In most cases, the land impact isn't due to a malicious intent to harm nature and wildlife. Instead, it's simply lack of Leave No Trace education and practices."

"We are excited to work with the Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers to help educate our community and raise awareness for the future enjoyment and preservation of our beautiful landscape," said Dan Perry Parks District Manager at Travis County Parks.

During the week, Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers will provide private training sessions with County Park Staff and specific non-profit groups. On the weekend there will be a service project performed by the Texas State University Botany Club at Hamilton Pool.

The following is a list of events happening in the Austin Area and in Travis County Parks with the Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers that are free and open to the public:

Tuesday, March 24th: REI Austin Downtown: 6:30-8pm and Thursday, March 26th: REI Gateway Austin: 6:30-8pm:

Join the Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers at REI for this fun, informative and interactive community building presentation. This session will include slideshows, games, giveaways and information on the best methods to cook, clean, camp, interact with visitors and wildlife, and take care of the places you like to spend time outside. Participants also will be provided with information on how to easily and effectively integrate Leave No Trace into their daily lives. Travis County staff will be onsite to discuss

different outdoor recreation opportunities.

Saturday, March 28th: Hamilton Pool:

Join the Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers at the trail head down to the pool. They will present ways to enjoy nature incorporating Leave No Trace's seven principles. (Entrance fees apply)

About Leave No Trace

The Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics is a national nonprofit organization that protects the outdoors by teaching people how to enjoy it responsibly. Their Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers are mobile teams of educators that visit 48 states every year delivering Leave No Trace programs such as Hot Spots to over 15 million people. For more information, visit: www.LNT.org.

About Travis County Parks

The county park system was established in 1939, and has grown to comprise over 33 parks and numerous preserve tracts. Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers will focus on Hamilton Pool and Reimers' Ranch.

In 1989, Hamilton Pool was designated a preserve. One of the park's attributes is a 45 foot waterfall that plunges into the pool at the head of a steep box canyon. The waterfall never completely dries up, but in dry times it does slow to a trickle. As a well known natural wonder, the park was visited by 126,669 people in 2014. Next door, Reimers' Ranch Park is known as a national destination, offering world class rock climbing with 65,000 annual visitors. The active local mountain biking community likewise enjoys Reimers' Ranch's 18 miles of trails that sweep through the classic Central Texas landscape. Also, local anglers have come to Reimers' Ranch for generations to fish for white bass in the Pedernales River. For more information, visit: <https://parks.traviscountytexas.gov/>

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