# Consent Form

**A Study of Members Participation in Member-Based Nature Center Programs**

You are invited to participate in research of people who participate in member-based nature programs. My name is Jamie Nichole McNiel. I am a student at Texas State University in the Department of Sociology working on a new research study for my thesis. My contact information is: 512-245-3035, or jm1550@txstate.edu.

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a member of a nature center program. You either volunteered for the study because of the flyer I sent out in the November Newsletter, or someone you know referred you to me. You will be one of 20 people chosen to participate in this study. If you choose to participate, I will ask you questions about your nature center experiences, for example, how you got involved in the nature center, your best and worst experiences at the nature center, and your reasons for using the nature center. My goal with this study is to write a paper for my thesis. The information obtained from this study will not only enable Environmental Sociologists to gain insight into this aspect of the socio-ecological relationship, but will also provide the Center with valuable insight into its members.

If you decide to participate, you will take part in a one-on-one in-depth interview with me. The interview will be audio-tape-recorded and should take no more than one hour of your time. The possible risk to your participation is psychological harm from describing/re-living past events and interactions that may have been negative or damaging. Agencies that might be helpful to you include Waterloo Counseling Center (www.waterloocounseling.org, 1-512-444-9922), Conseling Services of Austin ([www.counselingservicesofaustin.com](http://www.counselingservicesofaustin.com), 1-512-351-4933), or SOL Community Counseling ([www.solcommunitycounseling.com](http://www.solcommunitycounseling.com), 1-512-366-0954). If you use the services of a counselor, fees will be your own. A possible benefit is discussing nature center experiences that you might not have described prior to participating in the study. Another possible benefit of this interview is that it will allow you to express your feelings, motivations, and experiences in your own words.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain **strictly confidential**. Audio files will be assigned a code number so your name will never be attached to the audio files. Only I, the interviewer, will hear your interview on the digital recorder, and I will keep the recorder locked file cabinet until the study is finished. At that time, I will erase the recordings of your interview. When I describe the information obtained an alias or false name will be used in place of your true name or identity and the name of your workplace. I will not transcribe any identifying information.

If you decide to take part in the interview, you are free to stop the interview at any time. You can withdraw from the study without prejudice or jeopardy to your standing with Texas State University. You don’t have to answer any question that makes you uncomfortable. If you have any questions, please ask me. I can send you a summary of the study if you like. This study has been approved by the Texas State University-San Marcos Institutional Review Board (# 2010J2842).

You will be offered a copy of this form to keep. If you have questions in the future, please contact me. With questions or concerns about your rights or this research, you may also contact the Institutional Review Board chairperson at Texas State, Dr. Jon Lasser (512-245-3413, lasser@txstate.edu) or the Office of Sponsored Projects administrator, Ms. Becky Northcut (512-245-2102). You may also contact my supervising professor, Dr. Chad Smith (clsmith@txstate.edu, 512-245-8453).

You are making a decision whether or not to participate in this study. Your signature means that you have read the information provided above and have decided to participate. You may withdraw at any time after signing this form should you choose to do so.

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Signature of Participant Date

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Signature of Investigator Date