North Central Texas Council of Governments

SUMMARY

Sustainable Public Rights-of-Way Subcommittee
Tuesday, June 23, 2026
10 a.m. to 12 p.m. (CST)

Virtual Via Microsoft Teams
Microsoft Teams Link
Meeting ID: 294 310 851 791 750
Passcode: cJ9h99XT

Welcome and Introductions. NCTCOG will welcome everyone to the meeting.

Madisson Dunn (NCTCOG) welcomed attendees and reviewed housekeeping items.

PRESENTATION

1. **Beyond Mowing.** Marcie Delgado, President of the Native Plant Society of Texas North Central Chapter, will present on pollinator-friendly plantings in ROW projects, landscaping practices to reduce water and chemical usage, and sustainability issues associated with public works infrastructure.

   Marcie Delgado (Native Plant Society of Texas) presented on the opportunity for regionalization of right-of-way (ROW) maintenance to align fragmented municipal public works landscapes in North Texas. This opportunity focuses on changing the mindset from reactive maintenance for ROWs to a systems-based approach that optimizes ecological performance. She elaborated that implementing sustainable changes can improve water and stormwater quality/management, climate and air quality, habitat restoration, and promote cost savings in the long run. Marcie shared local examples of operational systems approaches, vegetation-based strategies, and hydrology-based strategies. More information can be found in the meeting presentation.

   Madisson Dunn (NCTCOG) asked about the public education component with implementing managed meadows and what strategy is the most impactful for addressing pest concerns. Marcie answered that residents cannot pick and choose what is in their habitat, for instance, without snakes, mice will be present. She explained that public animal education is part of habitat management, including explanations on how to cohabitate with wildlife. Tyler Leverenz-Soetaert (Flower Mound) added that other municipalities justify that all the critters were already there and now they're just living in these areas instead of resident's yards. Marcie shared that New York City Central Park is amazing, but it's not balanced ecologically as there are no snakes, foxes, coyotes or hawks in the city, allowing the rodents to be unchecked. Those predators have a net benefit on public health. Mary Abercrombie (McKinney) stated that sometimes municipal education on best environmental practices supersedes city-wide practices and citizens

often notice this conundrum. Mary asked for ideas or thoughts about when this occurred. Marcie answered that there is often conflicting messaging between what municipalities promote versus approve, especially around data center's water usage recently. She elaborated that given her experience in a small town, municipalities are most approached by developers who have lots of resources. Marcie encouraged municipal workers to invite environmental experts to speak to council so that they are not just hearing from developers. Mary also shared the City of McKinney's Native Texan Wildlife website. She often emphasizes that native wildlife needs the environment to live, not the couch or carpet. Mary also emphasizes that predators are necessary and shared a resource promoting coyotes: Celebrating America's Song Dog - Project Coyote. Marcie added that local governments can request Texas Master Naturalists to provide presentations and resources to councils. She also shared organizations, such as Texan By Nature and Texas Children in Nature, that can translate ecological impacts to economic benefits. Michelle Villafranca (Fort Worth) thanked Marcie and shared it was an excellent presentation. Ian Seamans (Environment Texas) shared a website to find local Texas Parks and Wildlife Urban Biologist: https://tpwd.texas.gov/wildlife/wildlife-diversity/urban-wildlife-program/. Christi Upton (NCTCOG) stated she found the monetary justifications very helpful and asked if that information was for a new installation or a retrofit. Marcie answered she would have to review her research because some examples included both during those studies.

DISCUSSION ITEM

2. **SPROW Subcommittee Future Direction.** NCTCOG will discuss the future direction of the subcommittee. (Madisson Dunn)

   Madisson Dunn (NCTCOG) shared what was discussed during the March SPROW meeting, including identifying target audiences, defining future goals, and creating improvement opportunities. Madisson asked the subcommittee for any other feedback to consider regarding the future direction of the subcommittee. No other feedback was offered.

INFORMATION ITEMS

3. **Meeting Summary.** The March 25, 2026, Meeting Summary is available online for your review.

   Madisson Dunn (NCTCOG) shared that the March 25, 2026, Meeting Summary is available online for review.

4. **FY2026 Public Works Program Update.** The SPROW Subcommittee will be updated on recent Public Works Program efforts. (Madisson Dunn)

   Madisson Dunn (NCTCOG) provided an update on the Regional Public Works Program, which funds the SPROW Subcommittee. Madisson also updated the subcommittee on the Public Works Roundup. This year's event will be August 20, 2026, at Hurst Conference Center. Registration is open, and there will be an afternoon SPROW track. For more information on the Public Works Roundup, please visit the event website.

5. **Other Program Updates.** The SPROW Subcommittee will be updated on other items of interest.

    - **integrated Stormwater Management (*i*SWM) Subcommittee.** NCTCOG will provide an update of iSWM program activities. (Christi Upton)

      Christi Upton (NCTCOG) provided an overview of the April 14, 2026, *i*SWM meeting and asked for stakeholders to take a survey to help prioritize *i*SWM Work Program tasks. She also explained that the department is considering moving *i*SWM from the Regional Public Works Program over to the Regional Stormwater Management Program. More information about the *i*SWM Subcommittee is available on their webpage.

    - **Regional Integration of Sustainability Efforts (RISE) Coalition.** NCTCOG will provide an update on RISE program activities. (Corinne Buckley)

      Madisson Dunn (NCTCOG) shared information on RISE's next meeting on July 29, 2026, at 1:30 p.m. RISE is hosting several upcoming events including an Energy Codes Webinar, Sustainable Procurement Webinar, and LEED Green Associate Exam Prep Course. Crysta Guzman (NCTCOG) added that event registration will be posted soon on the Environment and Development event webpage. More information about the RISE Coalition is available on their webpage.

      Madisson shared various upcoming events, conferences and other opportunities, all of which are available on the Public Works Training Calendar. Madisson also highlighted additional resources provided by Texas 811 to promote safe excavation in ROW areas.

OTHER BUSINESS AND ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

6. **Roundtable Discussion/Other Business.** SPROW members and NCTCOG may share additional items as time allows.

   Roundtable:

   Debbie Branch (Fort Worth) stated she works for Parks and Recreation and manages the ROW branch. She enjoyed the timely discussion.

   Caroline Seward (Corinth) appreciated the presentation.

   Jack Newton (Trinity River Authority) stated that he doesn't work directly with ROW but is trying to learn.

Mary Abercrombie (McKinney) shared she thinks this is such important work and that this is awesome for the whole region.

Jacob Reinig (Kimley-Horn) stated the presentation was awesome and thanked the group for putting it together.

7. **The Next SPROW Meeting**. The next Subcommittee meeting is scheduled for September 9, 2026, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Microsoft Teams.

8. **Adjournment**.

Madisson Dunn (NCTCOG) formally adjourned the meeting.

If you have any questions regarding the meeting or agenda items, please contact Madisson Dunn by phone at (817) 704-5611, or by email at mdunn@nctcog.org.