

April 12, 2026

THICKET OF DIVERSITY

Request for Proposals



As a committee of the Big Thicket Association (BTA), the Thicket of Diversity (ToD), an All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI)) is requesting proposals for

- 1) biological surveys and inventories of all taxonomic groups in southeast Texas and
- 2) research to inform sustainability and management of biological populations, particularly of those considered pollution indicator species or those with status as a threatened native species.

Although surveys and inventories are focused primarily on the National Park Service's Big Thicket National Preserve, surveys may include properties managed by The Nature Conservancy, State and National Forests, land trusts, and private land holdings as appropriate.

The ToD is requesting proposals to evaluate research priorities, assess funding needs, and coordinate inventory efforts of all extant (surviving) organisms on the lands across the Big Thicket region of Southeast Texas. The ToD seeks to facilitate research activities and data dissemination between individual researchers, the entities managing surveyed lands, and the general public. Although the ToD does not issue collecting permits; working as a partner with public and private interests, the ToD will strive to facilitate the process.

FUNDING SOURCE:

The ToD has acquired mitigation funds for Supplemental Environmental Projects (SEPs) from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for this purpose.

Grant requests for research projects submitted to the ToD should not exceed \$13,080 (See Table A) and fall within the allocated budget categories. Due to limited funding, the ToD cannot fund projects that require institutional overhead. Larger-scale or more in-depth proposals requesting more than the authorized amount will be considered if the ToD acquires additional funding.

FUNDS AVAILABILITY:

For one (1) year or less projects: the initial 70% of approved funding will be sent by the BTA/ToD after receipt of a check request and W9. The remaining 30% of the funds will be withheld until project completion, receipt of a final report, receipts, and verification that all ATBI data entry has been received in the required format.

For multi-year projects: the initial 70% of the first year's approved funding will be forwarded at the beginning of the project after submission of a check request and W9. The remaining 30% will be provided after an acceptable annual report for each subsequent year and all required documentation is received. This includes receipt of a final report, photos, maps, receipts, and verification that all ATBI data entry is received in the required format.

LODGING SUPPORT

Local temporary housing and modest laboratory facilities may be available through the National Park Service's Field Research Station located in Saratoga, Texas. Housing details and reservation inquiries can be made through the ToD website.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

Researchers receiving support from the Thicket of Diversity (ToD) are required to submit **Annual Reports on September 30th of each year**. Researchers must submit a completed Final Report, data for the ToD ATBI database, and a complete list of the taxa collected, associated collection data, expenditures, etc., no later than 1 year following the project's completion. All data collection and reporting must comply with the format and protocols established by the ToD and any organization(s) granting a collecting permit(s). Copies of any publications resulting from projects funded by the ToD are requested for BTA and NPS files. For additional information related to reporting requirements specific to the NPS and ToD, please visit the FAQ's and the Research Process Flow Chart pages on this website.

PROPOSAL FORMAT:

Proposals should be limited to four printed pages or less (not including required CV's), longer proposals will not be accepted. The following minimum content and format are required for proposals to be considered:

Introduction: Background information relative to the taxa involved and the status of knowledge for the region/state/preserve, etc.

Methodology: Proposed research plan to include research methodology, an estimate of expected results (anticipated number of specimens and taxa to be collected), and proposed properties where collections will be made.

Timeline: Provide a timeline to indicate project start and end date, anticipated field schedule, key milestones, data submission, and reporting. Indicate if the investigator(s) intend to present or publish the findings of the inventory.

Budget: If you anticipate seeking ToD funds, please include an itemized budget and a brief justification with the proposal.

Contact: Include complete contact information along with a recent two page CV including relevant experience and publications for each investigator/co-investigator. Students, or other collaborators, assisting investigators do not need to provide a CV.

Insurance: Unless prohibited by law, Performing Party shall require its contractors and suppliers to obtain and maintain adequate insurance coverages sufficient to protect the Performing Party from all claims and liability for injury to persons and for damage to property arising under the Agreement. If Performing Party is conducting work under this Agreement using its own employees and resources, then (unless Performing Party is a governmental entity or this requirement is waived by TCEQ) Performing Party shall obtain and maintain insurance coverages sufficient to protect the Performing Party from all claims and liability for injury to persons and for damage to property arising out of the Performing Party's performance of the work under this Agreement.

SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL

Proposals will be accepted at any time, and grants are competitive. Funds will be awarded based on scientific merit and species priority.

*Please note: All research activities and specimen collections must follow the protocol of the individual agency/ organization issuing the research permit.

Upon receipt of the proposal, the ToD Science Committee will review and make recommendations to BTA for funding allocation. Final approval and funding is formalized at the quarterly meetings of the ToD. These meetings are currently held in January, April, July, and October. The Awardee will receive a notification award letter by email. Completed proposals (ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION ONLY) should be sent to director@bigthicket.org or info@thicketofdiversity.org.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF GRANT

Performing Party shall acknowledge the financial support of the TCEQ SEP program in any publication involving use of SEP funds or whenever work funded in whole or in part by this Agreement is publicized or reported in the news media. All publications, news releases, and project signs shall contain the following notation:

**Performed with penalty monies from a Texas Commission
on Environmental Quality enforcement action.**

TABLE 1

Funding Limitations by Category for each Supplemental Environmental Category

Allowable Expenses for each Supplemental Environmental Project Area	Quantity	Price per item	Total per Item
Leader/Research Contractor(s) - collecting and inventorying specimens; analyzing and identifying species, conducting environmental studies	120 hours	\$50/hour	\$6,000
Undergraduate Student Contractor(s) - data entry and lab analyses	300 hours	\$12/hour	\$3,600
Vehicle or boat rental fee and fuel to access locations of specimen collection	18 days	\$160/day	\$2,880
Public notification of species collection event(s) in newspapers to recruit volunteers	3 newspaper advertisements	\$200/ad	\$600
Total Direct Cost			\$13,080

Please visit our website at www.thicketofdiversity.org.