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**GROWING NUMBER OF DIVERSE GROUPS UNIFY TO BACK THE ARANSAS PROJECT;
MUNICIPALITIES, REPUBLICANS, DEMOCRATS, CONSERVATIONISTS, BUSINESS OWNERS JOIN
TOGETHER TO SUPPORT TAP**

(Rockport, Texas) The Aransas Project (TAP), an alliance of citizens, organizations, businesses, and municipalities working to ensure freshwater flows to the bays and estuaries that protect the winter habitat of the endangered whooping crane, has been gaining momentum since its launch in December 2009, adding more than 20 new member organizations.

In the past week alone, the American Bird Conservancy, one of the nation's most significant bird protection organizations, and Austin-based environmental group Environment Texas decided to join TAP as members. Environment Texas Director Luke Metzger comments on the importance of joining, "We need to take good care of and protect one of Texas' most precious resources, our coast."

TAP's focus has brought together a diverse range of groups, unifying an unlikely mix of both conservative and liberal support around this critical issue. Elected officials and business leaders from Aransas County have joined TAP in an effort to protect the local economy and jobs that ultimately depend on the freshwater inflows to the bay. Captain Tommy Moore of Rockport Birding and Kayak Adventures says, "I'm a conservative, but this is a project that has so many ramifications for the whole ecosystem, that it's extremely important to support it."

Dr. Ron Outen, Regional Director of TAP explains, "We're seeing exponential growth in the supporters of TAP from a broad range of organizations. TAP has gained the support of all four governmental entities in Aransas County, as well as both major political parties in Aransas County." Outen notes that most of the votes to join and support TAP are unanimous.

Betty Stiles, Chair of the Aransas County Republican Party states, "I feel The Aransas Project is extremely important to get freshwater into our bay systems so that we can survive." Stiles continues, "I think that without the tourists without the ability to fish we would just shrivel up and die. Anybody that's working to keep that from happening has my vote, and I will tell anybody and everybody who will listen to me to support it."

Since filing a Notice of Intent to Sue in December 2009, TAP's membership has grown to include over 250 individual members and the following member organizations:

Municipalities:

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- Aransas County
 - Aransas County Navigation District
 - Town of Fulton (Texas)
 - City of Rockport (Texas)

Political Organizations:

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- Aransas County Republican Party
 - Aransas County Democratic Club

National/International Organizations:

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- International Crane Foundation
 - American Bird Conservancy



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whooping Crane Conservation 	Association
Texas Organizations:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texas Conservation Alliance • Environment Texas • Matagorda Bay Foundation • Galveston Bay Conservation and Preservation Association (GBCPA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coastal Bend Audubon Society • Aransas Bird and Nature Club • Houston Audubon Society • Travis Audubon
Aransas County Businesses:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rockport Birding and Kayak Adventures • Coastal Bend Guides Association • Casterline Fishing Company • The Crane House • Anthony's By The Sea • Durham & Associates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hamilton A/C, Electric, and Plumbing, Inc. • Key Allegro Properties, LLC • Pelican Rentals • MasterPlan Design • James Fox Guide Service

ABOUT THE ARANSAS PROJECT

www.thearansasproject.org

The Aransas Project (TAP) is an alliance of citizens, organizations, businesses, and municipalities who want responsible water management of the Guadalupe River Basin to ensure freshwater flows from the Hill Country all the way to the bays—ecosystems that support area fishing, tourism, and the winter habitat of the endangered Whooping Cranes. In December 2009, The Aransas Project filed a Notice of Intent to Sue against several officials of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) in their official capacities for illegal harm and harassment of Whooping Cranes at and adjacent to Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in violation of the Endangered Species Act. Member organizations include Aransas County, International Crane Foundation, American Bird Conservancy, Environment Texas, and more.