

Coming Soon! New Lotus Marsh Amphitheater

Haily Summerford, MBA, Executive Director, Friends of the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge



Conceptual drawing of the new Lotus Marsh Amphitheater.

The Friends of the Fort Worth Nature Center and Nature Center staff have been working to identify ways to expand educational opportunities that can take full advantage of the Refuge's 3,600 acres. Currently, only a single location, the Robert E. Hardwicke Interpretive Center, provides the necessary amenities required to meet the educational needs of schools and other groups, limiting the Nature Center's capacity to provide programming for the community.

In 1973, an amphitheater was built to complement the nearby Lotus Marsh Boardwalk. The amphitheater, a simple accumulation of wooden benches seating 30 visitors, is nestled amid a limestone outcrop, providing a picturesque location but one totally devoid of shade and comfort.

With support from the Sid Richardson Foundation and H-E-B, the Friends will be constructing a new, more functional amphitheater

in the same location, featuring a cover and improved seating. Coupled with the neighboring recently renovated Lotus Marsh Boardwalk, the Nature Center will be able to host groups of more than 100 students at both the Hardwicke Interpretive Center and the amphitheater/boardwalk area, effectively doubling the Nature Center's program capacity.

The new amphitheater will also help the Nature Center expand its educational outreach program due to the amphitheater's proximity to wetland habitat. Students will now be able to engage in programs featuring themes such as aquatic biodiversity, water conservation, and water quality, complementing the existing programming at Hardwicke that highlights prairie and forest habitats.