

# Improved Gateway to Greer Island

Sharon McKone, Marketing / Communications Consultant

*Fini, fertig, terminado, finished.* In whatever language you want to say it, the improvements at Greer Island are done! Construction crews were able to take advantage of the Nature Center's closure to complete the project ahead of schedule.

What will you see that's new when you head to Greer Island? An expanded and improved parking lot at the Greer Island trailhead, new restroom facilities, and an upgraded trail leading to Greer Island.

The heavily used parking lot at the trailhead has been enlarged to 50 spaces, greatly increasing the number of cars that can park there. In addition, rather than concrete, the lot has been resurfaced with a pervious material that helps control and filter stormwater runoff and allows plant roots to have more access to air and water. For those with physical disabilities, the improved parking lot now features new handicapped spots.

In an enhancement that has long been requested, a new self-contained vault toilet has been installed at the trailhead, something that has been lacking at this end of the Refuge. Both the parking lot

and restroom facilities are ADA accessible.

Finally, the trail to Greer Island has been cleared and resurfaced, and the banks along the trail have been stabilized with riprap, a natural material — in this case, rocks — that protects shoreline structures against erosion. The trail itself had experienced significant plant overgrowth and the banks substantial erosion over the years.

The project was funded by a \$200,000 Recreational Trails



*In these before and after photos, the severely degraded bank and overgrown trail leading to Greer Island are now greatly improved. Before & After FONC Staff Photos.*

Grant from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and more than \$150,000 from a fundraising effort led by the Friends. Engineering firm Weaver Consultants Group provided support with design and permitting.

Now that the Nature Center has reopened, be sure to check out the new improvements the next time you are at Greer Island.



*When you gotta go, you gotta go. A new toilet at the Greer Island trailhead has been on everyone's wishlist as restroom facilities have been absent at this end of the Refuge. FONC Staff Photo.*



*New handicapped spaces have been added to the enlarged and resurfaced parking lot at the Greer Island trailhead. FONC Staff Photo.*