

THE SCHOB PRESERVE: FOR THE LOVE OF THE FUTURE

Professional Paper

By

Justin Haug

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of

Texas A&M University

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Spring 2016

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Approved by:

Chair of Committee, Dr. Scott Shafer
Committee Members, Dr. David Scott
 Dr. James Mjelde
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ABSTRACT

The Schob Preserve: For the Love of the Future. (March 2016)

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Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. Scott Shafer

In 2007, Dr. David E. Schob, a beloved history professor at Texas A&M University (TAMU) passed away from complications related to the Alzheimer's disease. He left behind a rather large estate (the Schob Trust) which included 7.43 acres of land, a three-bedroom, three-bathroom house, and \$2,127,893. On June 17, 2010, the Schob Trust was officially gifted to Texas A&M University. At which time, the departments of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning (LAUP) and Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences (RPTS) assumed shared responsibility of the Trust. Under their supervision, the land has been converted to a nature preserve (The David E. Schob Nature Preserve) and the Schob residence now provides housing to a student veteran (the Schob Scholar). An official dedication ceremony for the David E. Schob Nature Preserve took place on October 24, 2014. The preserve remains in its initial phase of development and will soon begin to transition into the next phase of development. Thus, prior to beginning the next phase of development, it is critical to reflect on the original intent and mission of the Schob Trust which is highlighted in three essential documents: The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and Schob Preserve: An educational asset. Furthermore, TAMU (RPTS & LAUP) must strive to meet the needs of its various interest groups to ensure future success of the David E. Schob Nature Preserve.

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First and foremost, I want to thank my advisor, Dr. Scott Shafer, for his continue support. His down to earth demeanor as well as his respect for his students has been a blessing. He is a true inspiration to all and I am honored to have such an incredible mentor. I would also like to express my gratitude to the rest of my committee: Dr. David Scott and Dr. James Mjelde for their guidance, support, and understanding throughout this process.

I would like to thank my loving fiancé for being my best friend, my biggest supporter and most of all the love of my life. She has sacrificed so much to support my education and my dream of one day becoming the National Park Service superintendent. I can never thank her enough. She is my voice of reason when I have succumbed to frustration and she is without a doubt the love that reignites my passion to achieve my dreams. I love you Lauren Michelle Gazikas.

I would also like to thank my nan and pap for always supporting me. Without them I have no idea where I would be today. I am grateful that I had the opportunity to spend my childhood with two of the most incredible people I know. Without their love and support none of my achievements would have been possible. Nan you showed me the meaning of unconditional love and the value of dedication. Pap you always challenged me to push past my own limits and not a day goes by that I do not think about how blessed I am to have both of you in my life.

Furthermore, I would like to thank my family and friends who have supported me and enjoyed this amazing journey called life with me thus far. I love each and every one of you and look forward to the road ahead.

Lastly, I would like to thank the United States Navy, the National Park Service, and Dr. David Schob for the role they have and will continue to play in my incredible journey.

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Introduction

The Dr. David E. Schob Nature Preserve is located two miles away from Texas A&M University in a peaceful residential neighborhood in the Eastgate subdivision of College Station, Texas. The preserve which now belongs to Texas A&M University (TAMU) was gifted to the university from Mr. Roger Sheridan who became the executor of estate after Dr. Schob's passing in 2007. According to the Memorandum of Agreement, Judge J.D. Langley made an agreed final judgement (AFJ) regarding the David E. Schob Trust (the Trust) on June 17, 2010. At which point, it was decided that the trustee of the Trust, Mr. Sheridan, would officially transfer all real property as well as surface and mineral rights over to The Texas A&M University System (TAMUS). This was a rather generous gift considering that it included 7.43 acres of land and all of Dr. Schob's financial assets totaling \$2,127,892.71 (the Schob Fund).

Texas A&M University hosted a formal dedication ceremony for the David E. Schob Preserve on October 24, 2014, which was organized by the departments of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning (LAUP) and Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences (RPTS) who have a shared responsibility for overseeing and managing the preserve. The Preserve itself features several walking trails, a rain garden, two pergolas, two picnic tables and 5 park benches. In addition to the preserve, the property also includes a Three-bedroom, three-bathroom home known as the Schob Residence, located at 906 Ashburn Ave. in College Station.

According to an article found on the Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning (LAUP) website titled "Schob Nature Preserve Rain Gardens Installation" there are currently three student projects taking place at the preserve.

- 1) Bruce Dvorak, an associate professor of landscape architecture, will work with his students to develop and create the Schob prairie with hopes of increasing the preserve's current area of perennial and annual grasses. The prairie is set to include over forty native species of native plants which Mr. Dvorak and his students hope will resemble the previous conditions that once dominated the College Station landscape. In addition, Mr. Dvorak hopes that his students will be able to collaborate with students in various disciplines (i.e. parks and recreation and natural sciences) to analyze the areas of the Schob prairie containing the new grasses to conduct biodiversity counts and water runoff quantifications.
- 2) Associate professor and holder of the Youngblood Endowed Professorship in Land Development, Geoffrey Booth, along with the help of his students, plan to assess the value of the preserve's social/cultural, economic, environmental, and sensory values using a Quadruple Net Value analysis.
- 3) Students, with the help of assistant professor of urban planning, Galen Newman, will work to place environmental monitoring equipment throughout the preserve, produce a digital inventory mapping the preserve's current site conditions and develop an interactive website which highlights the preserve's amenities. Furthermore, Mr. Newman and his students plan to develop and implement an interactive application which will display the preserve's environmental data to be used for educational and public use.

The article also mentioned that the funding for these projects will come from the Schob scholar's mini-grant program (Schob Trust). The preserve appears to be serving as a valuable learning environment for Texas A&M students. In fact, students and professors alike

affectionately refer to the preserve as a “living” classroom. However, in order to fully appreciate the preserve one must first learn to appreciate Dr. Schob himself.

Dr. David Schob was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1941. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Arts and Sciences, Master of Arts, and Doctor of Philosophy degree all from the University of Illinois. After successful completion of his Ph. D, he went on to enjoy a rewarding career in academia at Texas A&M University where he devoted 26 years of his life to teaching history. According to Mr. Sheridan, Dr. Schob loved to teach history and his classes were always large. Student in his class felt as if they were “living the history”. Dr. Schob was a truly remarkable historian who made learning history exciting and fun. In fact, he received numerous honors and awards as a result of his teaching.

In 1991, the association of former students of Texas A&M presented him with the faculty distinguished achievement award in teaching. An award that is given to professors at Texas A&M to recognize and appreciate their ability, personality, and methods which result in the inspiration of their students. However, there was one award that Dr. Schob was particularly fond of and that was the “Best professor for teaching American history award” which is given to professors to whom students best relate in terms of learning experience.

Dr. Schob was a wealth of knowledge and had a passion for teaching. Starting in 1971, he chose to spend his summers teaching on the Texas Clipper TAMU in Galveston. During his last seven years sailing on board the Clipper he served as the Director of the Summer School Sea Program. During an interview with Mr. Sheridan, it was mentioned that some of Dr. Schob’s fondest teaching memories were made during the summers he spent aboard the Texas Clipper.

Unfortunately, in 1996, he decided to retire early in order to devote his time to the care of his beloved mother. A few years later his mother passed away and shortly thereafter he was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. On February 12, 2007, Dr. David Schob passed away from health complications relating to the Alzheimer's disease.

According to Mr. Sheridan, Dr. Schob was a dear and valued friend. In fact, Mr. Sheridan recalls how the two would spending countless hours discussing Dr. Schob's life which often included his love for his home and land. When asked how Dr. Schob would feel about the current status of the home and land he left behind, Mr. Sheridan responded, "he would be so very proud and pleased that his home is now a place a Veteran can call home and his land will remain "park-like" as a nature preserve for so many to enjoy just as he had. As an added bonus, it will serve as a teaching tool for students forever".

Purpose

The David E. Schob Nature Preserve is currently in its initial phase of development. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is determine the most effective way to move into the next phase of development. Thus, the guiding principles by which the David E. Schob Nature Preserve was established along with the opinions of the various interest groups must be considered. The following research objectives will help achieve this purpose:

- 1) Review existing documents detailing the original intent of the Schob Trust.
- 2) Examine the potential educational opportunities the preserve has to offer.
- 3) Interact with the preserve's various interest groups to gain a firm understanding of their current perceptions as well as their expectations moving into the future
- 4) Offer recommendations on how to enhance the overall quality of the preserve while trying to meet the needs of the various interest groups.

Intent/ mission of Schob Trust

Currently, there is very little literature pertaining to the Schob Nature Preserve as the preserve is still in its infancy. There are several short (2-3 pg.) articles which can be found on the Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning website. However, this is the first paper of its kind, thereby producing the most comprehensive and informative paper written on the David E. Schob Nature Preserve to date.

With a limited amount of literature, this section relies heavily on original court documents as well as university documents established by LAUP and RPTS after receiving the Schob Trust. There are three documents in particular which best describe the original intent of the Schob Trust: the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and the Schob Preserve: An educational asset. Furthermore, these documents offer valuable insight on the mission of Schob preserve. Thus, providing a solid foundation which can be used to determine the most effective way to move into the next phase of development.

Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)

The Memorandum of Agreement, highlights the legal terms Texas A&M University (RPTS & LAUP) agreed to upon accepting the Schob Trust. In order to receive the Schob Trust, Texas A&M University was required to agree to a set of legal terms and conditions. If the university did not to agree to the terms and conditions set forth by the trustee, Mr. Roger Sheridan, the land and all financial assets would have remained in the trustee's possession until an agreement was reached. According to the Memorandum of Agreement, an official agreement was reached on June 17, 2010. Judge J.D. Langley entered an agreed final judgement (AFJ) regarding the Schob Trust with the following terms in place:

- 1) Texas A&M University (TAMU) shall hold the real property of the Trust in

perpetuity as public parkland under the supervision of LAUP and RPTS , or their successor Departments

- 2) The planning and development of the public park shall begin no later than Spring Semester 2011, and the actual construction/development of this public parkland shall begin no later than Spring Semester 2012.
- 3) The Schob Fund is to be held and administered by Texas A&M University System pursuant to the common law of Texas and the Texas Trust Code and in a separately identified account. Distributions will be made from the account only for the purpose of creating, maintaining, preserving and managing all of the 7.3 acres, with a limited exception relating to the residence.
- 4) The residence and half acre surrounding the residence (the Expected Property) shall be surrounded by privacy fence separating it from the remaining public parkland.
- 5) TAMU, through its Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and its Veterans Programs Office, shall develop and oversee a program which utilizes the Expected Property as a residence for currently students with preference given as follows:
 - A. Currently enrolled students who have honorably served in the United States Armed Forces
 - B. Currently enrolled students who have honorably served them all our protection service.
- 6) Funds from the Schob Fund shall be used to construct the privacy fence around the Expected Property and for maintaining annual insurance coverage on the Expected Property only. No funds may be used for creating the residence program for maintaining the Expected Property.

- 7) If it is determined later that use of the Expected Property as directed by the AFJ is no longer feasible, it shall revert to public parkland and maintained as described above.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

This document was co-authored by Gary Ellis, Head, Department of RPTS and Forster Ndubisi, Head, Department of LAUP to establish guidelines describing how the two departments will collectively manage the David E. Schob Nature Preserve. This document also describes the intent of the Schob Scholars program.

Considering that The David E. Schob Nature Preserve is university owned and operated, the mission of the preserve should align with the mission of the Texas A&M University System. Furthermore, the preserve is to be managed in a manner that maximizes education while providing research and community outreach opportunities. The preserve itself should provide a public space where members of the local community can enjoy a natural environment within a city setting. LAUP and RPTS will determine the budget annually which will be completely dependent on the funds accruing through the Schob Fund. Once the annual budget has been determined, the funds will be used to provide educational opportunities, support research, community outreach programs, property maintenance, and capital improvements.

According to the MOU, the Schob Fund will be used to finance and support three major activities: Senior Schob Scholars, the Schob Scholars Mini-Grant Program, and Operations, Maintenance, and Capital Improvements.

- 1) A Senior Schob Scholar will be selected to represent each department (LAUP & RPTS). The Senior Schob Scholars programs will provide financial support to the Senior Schob Scholars in equal amounts. It is estimated that 65% of the annual

budget will be used to fund research and education programs. Hence, the Senior Schob Scholars primary responsibility is to provide educational opportunities, support research and facilitate outreach programs benefiting the Schob preserve, Texas A&M students and the local community.

- 2) Collaborative efforts are a primary function of university operations. The benefits of collaborative works in an academic environment are immense. In fact, many university require their students be involved in such works in order to fulfil their degree requirements. Thus, the Schob Scholars Mini-Grant Program will fund collaborative works within Texas A&M University, Texas A&M Agrilife Research, and Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service. The Mini-Grant program will be used to fund education, research, and outreach goals thereby supporting both the mission of the preserve and Texas A&M University. It is estimated that 7% of the annual budget will be used to support the Schob Scholars Mini-Grant Program.
- 3) The expenses involved with managing a three-bedroom, three-bathroom home and 7.43 acres of land can rather substantial. In fact, it is one of the primary expenditures with an estimated 23% of the budget being allocated to operations, maintenance, and capital improvements annually.
- 4) It is critical to have a contingency plan. Which is why 5% of the budget will be set aside annually to help with unforeseen circumstances.

The percentages provided for each of the three major activities are estimates. If necessary, the funds can be adjusted annually to accommodate current demands. The Deans of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the College of Architecture will ensure that Schob Endowment expenditures are in compliance with university policies. Furthermore, a set of guidelines will be

established in compliance with university procedures and policies describing how the disbursement and/ or reinvestment of Schob Endowment funds should be handled.

Lastly, the addendum (appendix) describes the roles and responsibilities of the Senior Schob Scholars and the Schob Preserve Advisory Board.

Schob Preserve: An educational asset for TAMU

The Schob Trust was gifted to Texas A&M University on behalf of Dr. David E. Schob with the expressed purpose of being managed as a public parkland. Texas A&M is a land grant university, meaning that it is responsible for teaching, research and outreach programs. Thus, LAUP and RPTS will work with students and seek partnerships with other disciplines within Texas A&M University. The various disciplines will rely on their expertise to facilitate development within the preserve and determine ways in which the preserve can serve the public at large. Together these disciplines will work to promote education, research, outreach programs, and interdisciplinary partnerships thereby satisfying the university's mission and supporting the original intent of the preserve as a public parkland in the following ways.

1) Creation of the Nature Preserve

- Students will have the opportunity to create and potentially implement site designs under the supervision of professors from both departments (LAUP & RPTS).
- Students will have the ability to investigate and propose various user activities to be offered throughout the preserve.
- Students will experience the benefits of interdisciplinary partnership while working with various disciplines
- The processes taking place at the preserve are dynamic. Therefore, there will be an opportunity for on-going research between the natural environment and human

behaviors within the preserve. The results will allow LAUP and RPTS to determine a strategy which fulfills the mission of the preserve while meeting the needs of its users.

2) Maintaining the Nature Preserve

- Students will have the opportunity to get hands-on experience with the maintenance and daily operations involved with maintaining a nature preserve.
- Student will learn about sustainable practices (e.g. planting native vegetation)
- Students will discuss the benefits associated with sustainable practices such as benefits to wildlife, reduced water usage, and requires less effort to maintain. They will then provide suggestions on how such practices could be implemented at the preserve.
- Students will experience the challenges and / or issues associated with managing a preserve. Thus, they will learn to work through these issues with the support of their peers and the guidance of their professors.
- Research can be performed on the manipulation of the landscape as well as the maintenance procedures to determine the perceived visual, safety, environmental and monetary effects of these manipulations.

3) Protecting the Naturalness of the Nature Preserve

- Students will learn a variety of techniques/practices involved with protecting and preserving the naturalness of the preserve
- Students will have the opportunity to apply the techniques/ practices they learned to help protect the natural processes taking place throughout the preserve

- Students will reflect on their education as well as their experiences at the preserve to help determine the best way to protect the preserve while allowing the visitors to enjoy the preserve in a variety of ways.
- Research is necessary to determine the effects of human impacts on the preserve. Once the data collected and analyzed, LAUP and RPTS can determine how to avoid or mitigate such impacts while still allowing users to have an enjoyable experience.

4) Managing the Nature Preserve

- Students will acquire a firm understanding of the fundamentals involved with natural resource management
- Students will have the opportunity to witness human interactions in a natural environment.
- Students will be able to interact with users and discuss the current and/ or future expectations of the preserve
- The research possibilities associated with the management of the preserve are endless. There are a variety of phenomenon to be studied which could contribute to the overall quality of the park and/ or provide valuable insight for future management

LAUP and RPTS have created a document which contains a list of potential course at TAMU which could benefit from using the preserve as an educational resource (appendix). Furthermore, this document also includes additional teaching and research opportunities offered by the preserve.

Methods

For the purpose of this paper, the five primary interest groups as determined by the Schob Scholar have be included in this study as their feedback will help determine the most effective

way to move into the next phase of development. The five interest groups include, the executor of the estate, Texas A&M University, Senior Schob Scholars, the local residents, and the Schob Scholar. Each of these interest groups play a vital role in ensuring that both the intent and mission of the preserve are being met. Therefore, their feedback and support is critical when establishing a foundation which will be used to guide the preserve into the next phase of development.

Executor of Estate (Mr. Roger Sheridan)

Mr. Sheridan and Dr. Schob had been friends for several decades. They discussed everything with one another and naturally they argued with one another. Laughingly, Mr. Sheridan recalled that at some point during their friendship the two had argued in every room of the Schob residence. Such arguments were usually a result of political debates. However, there is no doubt that the two men cared very deeply for one another. After Dr. Schob was diagnosed with the Alzheimer's disease, Mr. Sheridan and his wife cared for Dr. Schob until his passing in 2007. During which time, Dr. Schob told Mr. Sheridan how he wanted his home, land, and financial estate to be used after he passed. Thus, after Dr. Schob's passed away, Mr. Roger Sheridan, was named executor of the estate. In order to obtain Mr. Sheridan's perspective on the Schob Trust, the Schob scholar created an executor of the estate questionnaire (appendix) and conducted a personal interview at the Schob residence.

Senior Schob Scholars (Dr. Scott Shafer & Dr. Ming-Han Li)

The senior Schob scholars were selected because they represent Texas A&M University. They also represent the two departments (RPTS & LAUP) responsible for overseeing and managing the Schob Estate. Needless to say, they play a vital role in the future of the preserve. They

contributed greatly to the creation of the David E. Schob Nature Preserve. Their efforts have also helped provide a veteran with the opportunity to live in the Schob residence while getting a graduate degree in one of their departments. Keep in mind that they are also responsible for determining the annual Schob Fund budget and deciding how it will be allocated. Hence, their visions and recommendations should be considered prior to beginning the next phase of development. The Schob scholar recorded their feedback during personal interviews where they were asked to answer questions on the senior Schob scholar questionnaire (appendix).

Texas A&M Students

Students have gained valuable hands-on experience, conducted research, and been involved with outreach programs stemming from the learning environment created by the David E. Schob Nature Preserve. As highlighted in the Schob Preserve: An educational asset for TAMU document; students are a primary component of both the university's and preserve's mission. They have and will continue to be the "heart-beat" of the preserve. Due to a lack of time and resources the Schob scholar did not have the opportunity to conduct personal interviews with students. Therefore, a student questionnaire (appendix) was created by the Schob scholar and sent via e-mail to three professors who had previously or are currently working with students at the preserve. The professors then sent an e-mail to their students requesting that they complete and return the student questionnaire to the Schob scholar. In addition, the Schob scholar asked Mr. Dvorak, associate professor of landscape architecture, to complete the portions of the student questionnaire that he deemed applicable as he has worked with students on several of the preserve's projects. Thus providing a professor's perspective on how the experiential learning taking place at the preserve may impact students.

Local Residents

The residents that took part in this study all live on Ashburn Ave. which happens to be the same street the preserve is located on. Due to their close proximity to the preserve any changes made to the preserve could have a direct impact (positive/ negative) on them. Therefore, they have a vested interest in what takes place on and around the preserve. Several topics such as potential development, visitor activities, and student research/ projects taking place within the preserve may be of particular interest to many of the surrounding residents. Thus, the Schob scholar created the local residence questionnaire (appendix). Due to a lack of time, five residents were strategically selected in a way that was believed to best represent the local residents. The Schob scholar then conducted personal interviews with each of the five residence and recorded their feedback for the purpose of this paper.

Schob Scholar (Graduate Student/ Veteran)

The Schob scholar has the unique opportunity of living in the Schob residence while pursuing a graduate degree within the departments of RPTS or LAUP. During which time, he or she is charged with overseeing the preserve. This position offers a unique opportunity to communicate with the senior Schob scholars, students, and local residents on a regular basis. Furthermore, the Schob scholar is aware of maintenance issues, safety concerns, research/ projects, and visitor activities taking place throughout the preserve. Making their feedback highly valuable. Thus, for the purpose of the study, the Schob scholar, Justin Haug, created and completed the Schob scholar questionnaire (appendix).

Observations

Executor of Estate

Mr. Roger Sheridan – Appointed trustee of Dr. Schob's estate

The original intent, was for the property to be a parkland and nothing more. Dr. Schob wanted to make it a parkland for veterans, a veteran's parkland. His vision was that his land would be used as a public parkland to honor veterans and that his home would be used to house a student veteran attending Texas A&M University. Mr. Schob did not want his land to be developed. The one exception was that a portion of the land could be used to develop more housing, specifically for student veterans.

The process leading up to the Schob Preserve proved to be an extremely slow and frustrating one. Dr. Schob passed away in 2007 and Mr. Sheridan did not go to court to deal with the Schob Trust until 2010. According to Mr. Sheridan, the Attorney General's Office gave him a great deal of grief throughout the entire process. In fact, the closest thing that the Attorney General's Office would agree to is The David E. Schob Nature Preserve.

The Schob Trust was initially intended to be given to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). But, TPWD did not feel that the land was large enough. As result, they did believe that they would be able to make good use of it. Therefore, they were willing to accept the financial endowment, but would sell the property. However, if the accepting party, in this case TPWD did not agree to the terms and conditions set forth in the Schob Trust they would be disqualified. Meaning the accepting party could not sell the property, the property was to be maintained and used as parkland, and no development was allowed to occur on the property. After several discussions the two parties were unable to reach an agreement. As a result, TPWD was disqualified and Mr. Sheridan was forced to move on.

Mr. Sheridan then decided to reach out to the local Boy Scouts of America. Much like TPWD the Boy Scouts were interested in the financial endowment, but could not guarantee that they would not sell the property. As a result, they were also disqualified because they could not

guarantee that they would keep it in perpetuity. The City of College Station however, expressed interested in both the financial endowment and the property. Unfortunately, although they said that they would not sell the property they technically could not guarantee that it would never happen. Mr. Sheridan knew if the Schob estate became city property the voters could vote to have it sold and he was not willing to take that risk.

In a last ditch effort, Mr. Sheridan decided to reach out to Texas A&M University and was put in touch with General Weber, Vice President of Texas A&M Student Affairs, who referred him to Jay Kembrose. Jay Kembrose eventually recommended that he speak with the Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning (LAUP) department. After several months of back and forth discussions an agreement was made and the Schob Trust was officially turned over to Texas A&M University on June 17, 2010. At that time, the Department of Student Affairs was responsible for the house and the LAUP department was responsible for the land. Once the house was turned over to the university the current residents (a veteran and his family) who were placed into the house until a final decision was made so that the house would not sit empty were ask to vacate. A decision which was strictly enforced by the Attorney General's Office. The house would sit vacant for the next 2 ½ years. During which time, the university completely left the house go. No maintenance was completed on either the house or the property leaving it in what Mr. Sheridan believes was rather poor condition. The university eventually acquired the funds and was able to get the house and the property back in good working order. The first Schob scholar (Justin Haug) would be the first person to live in the Schob residence after the 2 ½ year vacancy.

In hindsight, Mr. Sheridan said that he would have done things differently during the initial planning process because he was not aware that Dr. Michael Murphy (LAUP's lead

representative) would be retiring the following year. If he had known that Dr. Murphy was retiring he would not have turned the Schob Trust over to the LAUP department so quickly. He would have preferred that the LAUP representative was someone who was going remain with the department for a few years to help ensure both a smooth and successful transition.

The initial plan was that the preserve would be developed in stages, but Mr. Sheridan believes that there was a fundamental breakdown that occurred due to Dr. Murphy retiring. As a result, he feels as though things may have been rushed and therefore left uncompleted. In addition, he believes some of the initial concepts and ideas may have been lost in transition which may explain why nearly 6 years later (2016) the preserve is still in its initial phase. Furthermore, Dr. Murphy wanted the Schob residence to be completely fenced off for privacy reasons. A proposal that Mr. Sheridan did not agree with. In fact, he refers to it as the fortress and believes that it was over kill.

There are three things that Mr. Sheridan is adamant about and does not want to see changed.

- 1) Housing and education expenses should be covered for the veteran (Schob resident)
- 2) Schob Trust should only to be used for student projects, maintenance, and upkeep of the property
- 3) The preserve should remain natural and undeveloped

However, Mr. Sheridan welcomes any change that will enhance the learning of students. He would like to see the preserve treated and used as a quality learning environment for Texas A&M students. Moreover, he feels that there should be as much student involvement as possible during the various stages of development as he believes that is exactly what Dr. Schob would have wanted. Mr. Sheridan is confident that Dr. Schob would be extremely pleased with the current state of the preserve.

According to Mr. Sheridan, the two departments (LAUP and RPTS) are currently doing a great job. Although, he would just like to see them begin to move into the next phase of development. As for recommendations, he believes the university needs to keep the funds going and continue to stick to the “game plan”.

Lastly, Mr. Sheridan is glad to see me, the current Schob scholar in this position. He hopes the two departments are extremely selective with who they put in the Schob residence after the Schob scholar graduates, but he is hopeful because they did such a great job selecting the current one.

Senior Schob Scholars

Dr. Scott Shafer – Associate Department Head (RPTS)

Upon hearing that RPTS and LAUP would be responsible for managing the Schob preserve, Dr. Shafer thought that it was a good idea. The two departments have a lot in common and should work well together. It is an excellent opportunity to get students involved with various projects at the preserve. Although, at the time the full implications of what managing the preserve would truly entail had not yet dawned on him. However, he always thought the opportunity was an extremely positive one.

The preserve has the right goals in place. In terms of getting students involved with on-site projects, research opportunities, and community outreach programs. When it comes to community outreach, all of the goals are there. However, some of those goals are being met better than others. His hope is that the Schob preserve gives Texas A&M the chance to be a positive entity within the community. In many senses, it provides the university with the opportunity to be a good neighbor and create positive interactions.

As for the Schob Funds, RTPS views them as another way to fund assistantships. They believed it would promote the kind of education that Dr. Schob would have wanted to promote. Which is why they believed the funds would be best spent on funding education for people who want to protect and care for parks throughout the world. Overall, Dr. Shafer believes that the two departments are doing a good job of meeting all of the objectives. They are just being met in different ways.

Dr. Shafer, is not entirely sure how the origins of the preserve came to be. Although he believes that it is a wonderful opportunity, he has no idea how RPTS and LAUP got involved. Everything happened very quickly. In hindsight, there should have been more meetings with the local residents to get their opinions on the preserve. Furthermore, there should have been more collaborative discussions with university housing as they are the ones responsible for managing the Schob residence. In the beginning it would have been nice to have thought of the house as a part of the preserve rather than separate from the preserve, particularly when it comes to the privacy fenced place around the residence. Dr. Shafer believes that it may have led to better solutions in terms of the way the two entities are currently interacting with one another. Personally, Dr. Shafer does not agree with the addition of the privacy fence between the house and the preserve. The house and the preserve are not considered separate entities. Therefore, that kind of separation is unnecessary.

The two departments (RPTS & LAUP) have established a collaborative and successful partnership. In fact, the department heads as well as the senior Schob scholars are all very friendly with one another which makes for a great working relationship between the two departments. It appears as though both departments have similar ideas on how the preserve should be used and managed. There are currently no conflicts or incongruent goals. More

importantly, the two department have done a great job communicating with one another and keeping each other informed on matters pertaining to the preserve. Furthermore, Dr. Shafer believes that the Schob scholar has been a great asset and has helped create a foundation between the two departments.

The two departments recently discussed the idea of a new advisory board. At this point the two departments are trying to decide who to put on it. As of now, it appears that the Schob scholar as well as the senior Schob scholars will be on the advisory board. Dr. Shafer also feel that at least one or two community members should be on the advisory board as well. However, one of the major considerations is how far to go with some of the goals (i.e. community outreach goal). Perhaps it would be beneficial to have events at the preserve which include the community. Thus, there are a number of options that should be discussed to help achieve some of the goals.

One of Dr. Shafer's primary concerns heading into the future is how many projects can be built on the preserve. The projects that have been done so far are appropriate and are relatively unobtrusive. It would be nice to keep that vision in mind prior to creating more projects on site that may be more permanent. Thus, significantly changing the character of the preserve. All projects should be completed in a ways that meets the goals and objectives of the preserve. A vetting process would be a great way to get community feedback, but would also be a valuable learning experience for students as well. However, this is where the advisory board would be useful as they would determine what is best for the preserve and the various interest groups.

Unfortunately, there has not been much interaction between the two departments and the community. This is a relationship that Dr. Shafer would personally like to see evolve. However, he feels that the community thinks positively of the preserve and the two departments. It would

be nice to get the neighborhood together. Perhaps invite them to an annual community event at the preserve. From a university standpoint it is important to be conscious that we are in that community. Therefore, it is important to inform the neighbors so they know what is going on throughout the preserve whether it be student projects, research, special events, or potential development. It is critical for the success of the preserve that we continue to build positive relationships with the local residents, primarily those adjacent to the preserve. Thus, it would be extremely beneficial to engage the community and get their feedback on issues related to the preserve.

An advisory group would be one of the best ways to facilitate a positive environment for all involved (university, community, students, and graduate student resident). Ideally the advisory group would be at least once or twice a year. This would allow everyone to touch base and stay informed about the topics and/ or issues related to the preserve. It would also be a good idea to have events that helps facilitate positive connections between the various interest groups as well as the Schob preserve. It would just be nice to be on site to have some fun and celebrate.

Dr. Shafer would like to see the back half of the preserve remain untouched. This is a wooded area and for an urban environment it is relatively wild. This area of the preserve offers unique learning opportunities to learn about natural processes without outside manipulation. However, it may be nice to place a natural looking trail through the forested area along the creek. This would provide more access to that particular section of the preserve. However, Dr. Shafer does not think that any other development should be considered as he believes that it should remain as natural as possible.

The biggest concern moving forward which most likely felt by everyone involved including Service Solutions Corporation (SSC) in is the basic maintenance required to keep the

preserve operational. SSC is contracted through the university to complete the maintenance at the preserve. However, Dr. Shafer fears that SSC may have an out of site out of mind philosophy associated with the preserve. As of right now the basic maintenance is fine, primarily mowing. Unfortunately, the trail needs a little better maintenance and most of the flower beds which have been plant are now severely overgrown. In the future it would be nice to work with SSC to gain a firm understanding of the best way to maintain the preserve. Once a positive relationship is established, specific details related to maintenance could be discussed versus coming in and just mowing.

In closing, Dr. Shafer would like to be better about sitting down and looking at the budget. He would like to have a better understanding of the finding that is available based on the endowment. From there, an informed decision could then be made on the best way to apply that funding. Admittedly, that is an individual decision primarily made by the senior Schob scholars and/ or the departments. It would be nice to financially support at least one student at a time who is focused on parks and preservation. Hopefully, those students will take their education at Texas A&M University as well as the ideals of Dr. Schob's into the world and make a difference as that would solidify the positive impact of Dr. Schob's legacy.

Dr. Ming-Han Li – Associate Department Head (LAUP)

Dr. Ming-Han Li was not surprised when he first found out that RPTS and LAUP would be responsible for managing the preserve. It was great news for the two departments. The initial intent was that the two departments would co-manage the preserve. Dr. Michael Murphy (LAUP) took the lead and developed the proposal to receive the Schob Trust from Mr. Sheridan.

It is Dr. Li's understanding that Dr. Schob wanted his trust, primarily the land, to be used for education and research purposes. Thus, the Schob Fund should be allocated in a way that

respects those wishes. All of the projects, research and development that takes place at the preserve should not hinder future use of the preserve. For example, the preserve is currently being tested for its urban architectural concepts, but its current uses should always allow for future exploration. There should not be any permanent, massive, or damaging structures placed on site that would prevent future research or detract from the preserve's original intent. Furthermore, all projects should be adaptive, easy to manipulate, and provide opportunities to test concepts related to neighborhood parks. Moreover, one project should not eliminate the option for a project in the future.

As a member of the oversight board, Dr. Li's wishes that he would have taken a leadership role. He also wished that the oversight board would have been a little more forward thinking during the initial planning process. The members of the oversight board were constantly learning throughout the entire process. No one was entirely sure which direction the preserve was heading. Thus, it would have been nice to have established a clear set of goals and objectives as this would have made the entire process much easier. No one was truly prepared for how quickly everything happened.

The relationship between RPTS and LAUP is very healthy. The trust between the two departments is certainly there. As the relationship continues to grow, Dr. Li is excited to explore more opportunities for joint assignments between the two departments. The preserve may simply serve as a pilot program which could be used to facilitate a higher level of learning achievements between the two departments. Through understanding comes appreciation and more importantly the possibility of collaboration. In turn this creates a learning environment which will hopefully allow students from the two departments to utilize the education and skills learned in their perspective departments to design and implement projects with one another.

As LAUP's senior Schob scholar, Dr. Li is extremely satisfied with his relationship with Dr. Scott Shafer, who happens to be RPTS's senior Schob Scholar. However, there need to be a set of requirements set in place in order to continue the positive relationship between the two departments after the current senior Schob Scholars terms are up.

- 1) Must have a passion for the preserve and its mission
- 2) Should have a basic understanding of the naturalness of the preserve, the surrounding neighborhood, and how the preserve is used by the various user groups
- 3) Should understand the original intent of preserve as dictated by Dr. Schob
- 4) Must be an advocate of interdisciplinary collaborations (evidence should be required)
- 5) Must have publications and preformed work in relevant fields
- 6) Current scholars should not end their terms at the same time (staggered removal)
- 7) The remaining scholar should be involved in the other departments selection process

Dr. Li believes that this selection process will allow for deeper and broader connections to be made between the two departments. He also believes this will result in a more collaborative and positive relationship which will benefit all involved.

The senior Schob scholars will most likely be the leaders among the preserve's primary interest groups as they will reflect the mission of Texas A&M mission. Although, it is important that the local residents be represented and their opinions should be heard. In fact, this should be true of all the interest groups. However, Dr. Li feels as though the senior Schob scholars will act as a foundation and help to create a positive environment for all involved. The Schob scholar (student) on the other hand has the ability to act as a front line ambassador and actively communicate with the various interest groups on a regular basis. In this case, the Schob scholar would be able to promptly report any issues and/ or concerns to the senior Schob scholars so that

they can be addressed in a timely manner. In many ways it will take active participation from each of the preserve's various interest groups to ensure future success.

As long as the intent of the preserve is being met and Dr. Schob's original wishes are being respected the preserve should be able to be manipulated in a way that allows students to enhance the quality of their education. In fact, Dr. Li encourages change as this means that the preserve is being used for high impact learning as well as interdisciplinary collaborations. Although, he admits that it will be interesting to understand and learn how the neighbors react to such changes. He is optimistic that the community will embrace many of the changes and may even want to contribute to several of the projects taking place throughout the preserve.

Dr. Li is also interested in concept of sustainability. Thus, he would like to use the Schob residence as a framework to create a potential model of how homes a crossed America could become more sustainable. His vision is that the Schob residence would focus on the following sustainable practices: solar power, reclaim water use, rain water harvesting, and native landscape planting.

For all intents and purposes, the Schob residence is an average American home. Therefore, if these practices are successful with the Schob residence, theoretically they should be successful with most of the homes throughout the country. Dr. Li hopes that utilizing sustainable practices will result in the output of resources being greater than consumption of those resources. Meaning through solar power the home should be able to produces more energy than it consumes. Furthermore, instead of using potable water to irrigate the land, reclaimed water (grey water) or harvested rain water would be used to irrigate land. There are a number of benefits associated with sustainable practices and Texas A&M has the opportunity to be at the forefront of that research.

According to Dr. Li the preserve will always be a work in progress. After all, it is a living classroom and laboratory. The manipulations that occur will not always be perfect, but the beauty is there will always be opportunities to make it better or worse. That is what makes Dr. David E. Schob Nature Preserve so special. Dr. Li is excited to explore the many opportunities the preserve and the residence has to offer. Overall, he believes that the preserve and its uses must always embody the Texas A&M mission, respect Dr. Schob's wishes, and continue with high impact learning and research.

Bruce Dvorak – Associate Professor (LAUP)

Mr. Dvorak has worked with LAND 318 students in the fall of 2015 and LAND 614 students in the spring of 2016 to install the Schob prairie. One of the things that he enjoys the most about working with students at the Schob Preserve is watching students work and learn about why preparation is so vital to the installation process. Furthermore, he enjoys seeing the success of his student's hard work. The annual rye grass that the students put down last fall has emerged and has suppressed the weeds. This means that the prairie seed put down last fall and this spring have a good chance of emerging this summer.

According to Mr. Dvorak, the Schob preserve has contributed greatly to the overall quality of his student's education. He believes that both the BLA and the MLA students have learned a great deal as a result of their Schob experiences. Although some of the work was not easy, the students always kept up with the schedule and completed their goals. Many students were surprised to learn about the variety of seed size and form of prairie seeds, as some prairie seed was as small as a grain of salt and other seed was large and fluffy, about a half inch in length.

He is hopeful that students who are able to return the Schob preserve over the next year or two will be able to see how their work has created a habitat for native vegetation and organisms to thrive. He and his students have already seen grasshoppers and crickets as spring frogs could be heard in the distance. He believes if students become interested with ecological restoration, then their experiences working with the preserve will serve as a foundational experience. More importantly, he hopes that his students learned that restoration and creation of habitat is a process that takes time and oversight.

Mr. Dvorak's only recommendation was that the front portion of the preserve (the open lawn area) near the road remain open. He believes that there is a need of the open space for the public and the university to use for periodic gatherings.

Students

Zhihan Tao – Graduate Student (LAUP)

Zhihan has completed course work and helped with various projects at the Schob Preserve during the fall of 2015 and the spring of 2016. She says that one of the things she enjoys most about completing coursework at the preserve is being surrounded by the beauty of nature and learning about ecological restoration.

Zhihan's experiences with the Schob preserve have enhanced the overall quality of her education at Texas A&M. Through applied learning at the Schob preserve, she believes that she was able to obtain valuable knowledge and experience that cannot be acquired in a traditional classroom setting. She is confident that her experience at the Schob preserve will benefit her in her career as she is now familiar with a variety of plant seed as well as the equipment used throughout the seeding and weeding process. Overall, she feels that her experience at the Schob preserve will make her more marketable for potential internships and job opportunities.

Zhihan indicated that she would like to see the trees in the preserve left untouched because she believes they create a perfect natural boundary for the preserve. However, she thinks the edge of the trails could use some attention; they are becoming overgrown and appear messy. She would also like to see an improvement in plant quality surrounding the drainage boxes. Zhihan provided two recommendations that she feels would enhance the overall quality of the preserve.

- 1) More seating for visitors to rest and simply enjoy the preserve
- 2) Create an exhibit which features photographs of the Schob Preserve during different seasons to encourage visitors to visit the preserve at different times of the year.

Bingjie Zhao – Graduate Student (LAUP)

Bingjie took her first construction class (LAND614) in the fall of 2015. During which time, she spent several class periods at the Schob Preserve learning how to interpret contours and apply them to her own design plans. In the spring of 2016 she enrolled in LAND 612 and once again she found herself back at the Schob Preserve learning about various plant species, the proper way to plant trees, and how and when to administer a water supplement.

As a result of her coursework at the Schob Preserve, Bingjie feels empowered. She believes that her education can be used to positively influence nature. Furthermore, she firmly believes that her efforts can and will make a difference. She take great pride in knowing that her work may help attract more visitors to the Schob Preserve.

Bingjie feels that her experiences at the Schob Preserve have greatly enhanced the overall quality of her education at Texas A&M. According to Bingjie, books are a crucial component of one's education, but there are just some things that cannot be learned from books alone. Having

the opportunity to manipulate and experiment in an outdoor classroom such as the Schob Preserve is invaluable.

Bingjie has no doubt that her experiences at the Schob Preserve are going to benefit her in her future career. While most college students spend all of their time learning in a traditional classroom environment Bingjie was able to gain valuable hands on experience at the Schob Preserve. She believes that she had a greater chance of obtaining a potential internship or future employment as her perspective employers will most likely look favorably upon her Schob experiences. Through her education at the Schob Preserve she has learned about the various forms of ecological restoration as well as the specific steps to achieve them. She feels that she is better prepared to deal with different scenarios that may not have otherwise been considered in a classroom setting.

Currently, there is nothing that she would like to see changed or added to the preserve. However, in order to increase the efficiency of killing weeds and sowing seeds, Bingjie believes it would be beneficial to use various mechanical methods such as machines and hand tools. In closing, she hopes that the LAUP and RPTS departments continue to provide students with opportunities to participate in Schob projects allowing Texas A&M students to gain valuable experience.

Local Residents

Larry Frisk – Resident of Ashburn Ave.

Mr. Frisk's family has lived in their home since 1939. However, he and his wife have only lived there for the past four years (2012). He and his family are very aware of the preserve. In fact, he and his family enjoy visiting the preserve. Mr. Frisk was aware of the Dr. Schob's property before it became a preserve. There were no trails on the property then, but he would still

find himself wondering to the back of the property to relax and enjoy nature. Prior to becoming a preserve the Schob property was a raw piece of land, it was just natural.

Now that the property belongs to Texas A&M University and has since been converted to a preserve Mr. Frisk is exceptionally happy with the outcome. He is ecstatic that the preserves is being used as an outdoor classroom as he believes that students will benefit greatly from their experiences working with the preserve. It is great to see that several trails have been added to the preserve. The preserve meets the needs of a variety of users and always has good vibes. While visiting, he never feels vulnerable. As far as he can tell, the other visitors always seem to be well manor and treat the preserve with respect.

Mr. Frisk tries to visits the preserve at least twice a week. However, when his grandchildren are visiting he visit the preserve daily. He and his grandchildren enjoy exploring the preserve together. His grandchildren enjoy climbing around, collecting fossils/leaves, and looking for signs of wildlife. During their visit, Mr. Frisk enjoys teaching his grandchildren a very valuable lesson, good park stewardship. A lesson which he hopes will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

The fact that the preserve is in close proximity to his residence is extremely convenient. It is an easy walk down the street and he is able to enjoy it twelve months out of the year. It is quite evident that he has a personal connection to the preserve. According to Mr. Frisk, the preserve is a very special place and he hopes that others come to appreciate the naturalness of the preserve just as he has. Whenever he is walking through the preserve he checks to make sure that other users are using the preserve properly. He takes it upon himself to pick up trash and remove downed tree limbs from the trails. He even walks through the back area of the preserve around

the creek to make sure that people are not dumping trash or motor oil into the creek as he does not want to see the ecosystem negatively impacted by such carelessness.

The back area of the preserve, what many refer to as the wilderness portion of the preserve should remain untouched. He does not want the ecosystem to be disturbed. Although, he believes if done properly a trail with two natural looking bridges allowing visitors to make a little loop around the creek in the back portion (wilderness area) of the preserve would be a nice addition. The preserve offers a good blend of controlled open space and access to more wild spaces within the preserve.

More information should be provided throughout the preserve. For example, there should be a showcase featuring interpretive information describing the wildlife, trees, and wildflowers found within the preserve. It would also be a great idea to install a bulletin board used to post upcoming events, current or future projects/ research, or any other pertinent information which the local community and various users groups may find useful. Furthermore, a website created specifically for those interested in the preserve is not only practical, but necessary.

As the preserve moves into the next phase of development Mr. Frisk would like to see more student involvement. Due to its close proximity, there is an opportunity to get the local elementary school as well as local boys and girls scouts involved with the preserve. This would allow children to connect with nature. He would also like to hear about the various projects and/ or research taking place throughout the preserve. More importantly, he would like the opportunity to speak with the professors and students involved and find out if he can contribute in any way.

In addition to the recommendations Mr. Frisk has already provided, he wanted to share a few others which he hopes will enhance the overall quality of the preserve while helping to improve university and community relations.

- 1) Problems and issues concerning the preserve should be dealt with by those who are interested or care about the preserve.
- 2) Install a garden which includes a variety of native flora
- 3) Make it more educational for children and the community
- 4) The university should create an informational sign which includes the preserve mission as well as the goals and objectives of the preserve.

The David E. Schob Nature Preserve is off to a great start. When speaking with the neighbors about the preserve the conversations are always positive. During community meetings people often mention how much they enjoy having the Schob Preserve around. The preserve turned out perfectly; it has a great balance between development and naturalness. In fact, he believes that the preserve has and will continue to do much more for him than he will ever be able to do for it.

Ruth Whiteley – Resident of Ashburn Ave.

Mrs. Whiteley grew up in her home and has lived there for over 50 years. She and her family knew Dr. Schob very well. She and her family have a vivid memory of Dr. Schob's property prior to it becoming a preserve. According to Mrs. Whiteley the area used to be teeming with wildflowers. In fact, she liked the property the way it was prior to becoming a preserve because she believes that it was more natural. However, now that it is a preserve she enjoys knowing that no one will ever be able to develop the property.

Overall, she believes that the preserve is fairly well maintained. While visiting the preserve she enjoys walking the trails and enjoying the beauty of nature. However, she believes

that the preserve could benefit from a wildflower garden. Not only for aesthetic purposes, but she believes that the local bee population may benefit from it as well.

One of her biggest concerns is the parking. The street (Ashburn Ave.) which provides access to the Schob Preserve is rather narrow. Therefore, when there are large event taking place at the preserve, vehicles tend to park on both sides of the street which can make it difficult for through traffic to get by. During larger events Mrs. Whitley finds that it is difficult for her to get in and out of her driveway. More importantly, she fears that in the event of an emergency it would be extremely difficult for emergency personal to arrive on scene. As a result, she believes that certain sections of the street should be designated as no parking zones.

When it comes to major changes to the preserve she hopes that the university will seek out community input. Students and professors alike must consider how their projects and/ or research will affect the local residents. As a result, she has provided five recommendations she believes the university should consider as they move into the next phase of development:

- 1) Be cautious with the amount of development. It has been designated as a preserve and therefore should be treated as such.
- 2) Back path should consist of brick or concrete rather than crushed cider. Crushed cider can easily find its way into shoes and brick or concrete would be much easier for parents with strollers
- 3) Incorporate a wildflower garden into the preserve
- 4) Install a drinking fountain
- 5) Make sure the preserve continues to be well maintained

In closing, Mrs. Whiteley enjoys knowing that the preserve is in close proximity to her home. She just wants the preserve to remain natural and as close to its original state as possible.

Brandon Spears – Resident of Ashburn Ave.

Mr. Spears has lived in his home for the past six years. Due to his extremely close proximity to the preserve, it would be hard for him not to be aware of the preserve as his land borders the Schob property. At one point, he attempted to buy Dr. Schob's land to expand his own property, but Dr. Schob was not interested in selling. Interestingly, Mr. Spears owns a landscaping company which happens to be the same company that Texas A&M University hired to install the landscape and irrigation for the Schob Preserve.

Admittedly, he preferred the Schob property more prior to it becoming a preserve because he feels that it was much more native. The terrain and physical characteristics of the property were natural and required little to no attention to maintain its natural appearance. There also used to be a lot more wildlife.

The preserve has not been maintained the way it should have been. As a result, the preserve is now beginning to revert back to its original state. Moreover, the university decided to plant too many non-natives and overly aggressive weeds are now beginning to take over. Therefore, the only solution is to kill all the vegetation and start from scratch.

Mr. Spears walks through the preserve about every 3 months just to see how things are going. He also enjoys walking in the wilderness portion of the preserve as he finds it quite relaxing. One of the benefits of living so close to the preserve is the "green space" buffer between his property and the preserve. However, the biggest benefit of all is being able to look out and enjoy green space while sitting in his backyard. Knowing that the preserve will not be overly developed is an added bonus.

In his opinion, the preserve lacks a cohesive plan. There appears to be no clear vision describing how the preserve is to be used and maintained. At this point, the preserve "just is".

Firm goals and objectives must be set in place in order to effectively move into the next stages of development. In addition, the preserve should have an information area informing visitors about the various projects and/ or research that is taking place throughout the preserve. The orange flags all over the back area of the preserve are a prime example. According to Mr. Spears, not only are they a real eye sore, but the casual user really does not know what is going on back there. Lastly, in order to keep visitor usage at a manageable level no additional parking should be added.

Mr. Spears offered several other suggestions that he believes the university should consider as they move into the next phase of development.

- 1) Do not add any additional structures to the preserve
- 2) Grasses and wildflowers should all be native
- 3) Ensure that the native area flower bed that were installed are maintained properly
- 4) Add a trash can

Mr. Spears expects nothing more from the university than what they are doing right now. In his opinion, the university lacks the knowledge, funds, and time to do anything more than they are currently doing. Sure, there are things that could be done to make the preserve a little more inviting, but the preserve is viable as is. Overall, it appears to be a pretty good use of the space.

Susan Allen – Resident of Ashburn Ave.

Mrs. Allen has lived in her home for roughly 37 years. She is very well aware of the preserve as her property directly borders the preserve. She remembers the days long before the Schob property became a preserve. It was fantastic, there used to be a lot more trees. In fact, there were so many that when she would looked out a crossed the front area of the Schob

property she could not see Dr. Schob's home. There appeared to be much more wildlife especially birds prior to it becoming a preserve.

Nonetheless, she is extremely pleased with the outcome of the preserve. It brings her great joy knowing that her home is in such close proximity to the preserve. In fact, she tries to visit the preserve at least once a week. During which time she enjoys walking the trails or sitting on the benches while simply being immersed in the naturalness of the preserve. As a result of her love of wildlife, particularly birds she feels a personal connection with the preserve as she is able to observe them in their natural habit. A habitat which is made possible by the preserve.

As the university prepares to move into the next phase of development Mrs. Allen has provided several recommendations that she believes should be considered.

- 1) Continue to maintain the preserves natural appearance
- 2) Place a natural barrier her property and the preserve (i.e. tall grasses/ trees)
- 3) Plant vegetation that would attract humming birds and butterflies
- 4) Add a little color (i.e. blossoming trees/ wildflower garden)
- 5) Install a water feature (i.e. lily pond/ running water under the bridge by picnic tables)
- 6) Keep parking as it is (i.e. do not add additional parking)

The preserve, is in many ways perfect. Mrs. Allen's hopes that the preserve continues to provide a relaxing environment for visitors to enjoy nature. Overall, she is extremely pleased with the current state of the preserve and encourages the university to keep up the good work.

In closing she hopes that the next Schob scholar is friendly and ambitious. According to her, the current Schob scholar was a true joy and a pleasure to have around. If the next Schob scholar is as good as the current one the university is in business.

Barbra Husky – Resident of Ashburn Ave.

Mrs. Husky has been in her home for the past 16 years (since 2000). She was aware of the property prior to it becoming a preserve and is still aware of the property now that it has been converted to a preserve. Prior to being converted to a preserve the property was lovely. It had a very natural appearance and during different times of the year it produced some of the most beautiful wildflowers.

However, now that the property has been converted to a preserve, Mrs. Husky believes that it enhances the neighborhood greatly. It is very well maintained and is a beautiful natural area for all to enjoy. In fact, she enjoys showing it off to friends and family when they come to visit. It is something to be proud of. After all not everyone has a nature preserve in their neighborhood.

Mrs. Husky enjoys visiting the preserve. On average she believes she visits the preserve about half a dozen times a year. However, her number of visits are both visitor and weather dependent. When she does visit the preserve, she enjoys walking the trails, looking at plants, and looking for birds. In fact, her son is an avid bird watcher. Therefore, she and her son enjoy spending quality time with one another while bird watching in the preserve.

Mrs. Husky, takes great pride in knowing that the preserve is in such close proximity to her home. Furthermore, she feels a personal connection to the preserve because of her relationship with Dr. Schob. According to her, the preserve is a great way to honor such a wonderful man. She believes that Dr. Schob would be pleased with the way his land is being used.

The preserve is perfect the way it is. It is hard to imagine it any other way. Mrs. Husky does not feel as though any changes or additions need to be made to the preserve. Overall, Mrs. Husky is extremely pleased with the way the preserve turned out. The preserve is a gift to be enjoyed by the local community and is perfect as is.

Schob Scholar

Justin Haug – Schob Scholar

Having the opportunity to be the first Schob scholar has been a remarkable experience and certainly one that I will never forget. Living in such a beautiful home (the Schob residence) rent free while pursuing a master's degree at such a prestigious university has truly been a blessing. As a result of my experience as a Schob scholar and my education at Texas A&M, I believe that I am prepared to begin a successful career in the National Park Service. I have been exposed to management techniques, park policies, park history, ecosystem functions, and economic concerns that I would have not otherwise been exposed to if I had not been given this incredible opportunity. Furthermore, as a nature enthusiast, I feel an amazing sense of pride knowing that I am a part of something as special as the David E. Nature Preserve.

When reflecting on the relationship between the two departments (LAUP & RPTS), I believe that they are well on their way to establishing what many would consider an ideal partnership. The senior Schob scholars have a great working relationship with one another. As a result, their communication is highly effective and they acknowledge that together the two departments can greatly enhance the overall quality of the preserve. However, they do not meet as often as they should. In my opinion, they should make it a point to have a meeting at least once a semester. The meeting should include the department heads, the senior Schob scholars, and the Schob scholar (student).

During my two years in this program I have not had the opportunity to actively participate in any of the collaborative discussions regarding the preserve. There is no doubt that the two departments are the backbone of the preserve. Which is why I believe they could benefit from including the Schob scholar (student) in their discussion as he or she will most likely be the one interacting with the local residents as well as the various users on a regular basis. Thus, the

Schob scholar can strengthen the relationship between the two departments as well as the relationship between the university and the various interest groups. At this point, it feels as though each of the departments has their own agenda, but fails to discuss how these agendas will eventually align with one another. In order to ensure future success, a clear set of goals and objectives must be established to determine the best way to move forward with the preserve.

There is currently a disconnect between the various interest groups (university, community, students, and graduate student resident). Therefore, in order to help facilitate a positive relationship among these groups more meetings must take place. The meetings should be held semi-annually with the option for more frequent meetings if deemed necessary by one or more of the interest groups. The meetings should be seen as an avenue to discuss the current state of the preserve, revisit the goals and objectives, bring up and issues or concerns, and provide suggestions for moving forward.

There is a good balance between naturalness and development within the preserve. Both provide a number of learning opportunities while contributing to the overall character of the preserve. I would like to see this balance remain unchanged as it provides a unique wilderness experience in an urban setting. My hope is that the back section (wilderness area) of the preserve is kept wild with the exception of a natural looking loop trail. The trail would provide access to visitors who would not otherwise wonder through that section of the preserve.

As far as expectations, I hope that the preserve continues to provide a welcoming environment for everyone. Based on the wishes of Dr. Schob, I expect that a veteran will always have priority when it comes to the Schob scholar position (assuming that they are qualified). The Schob preserve is unique in so many ways. There are so many directions that the university can take moving forward. Thus, while considering the endless possibilities the preserve provides, it is

important to understand how each possibility could potentially impact each of the interest groups. Therefore, it is imperative that each of the interest groups keep an open mind as they explore the countless benefits provided by this amazing gift.

There are few recommendations that I would like the university as well as the various interest groups to consider prior to moving into the next phase of development.

- 1) More connectivity between the residence and the preserve (perhaps remove part of the fence in the backyard)
- 2) Develop interpretive programs for the local elementary school
- 3) Design and implement a butterfly garden
- 4) Provide trash cans and dog waste bags on site

In closing, I hope that Dr. Schob's wishes are at the core of every decision and that the preserve continues to thrive as a living classroom.

Recommendations

Although a number of issue and/ or recommendations were mentioned throughout this paper, this section is meant to highlight the issues and/ or recommendations that are believed to be the most relevant or were frequently cited among the various interest groups. Therefore, these particular issue and/ or concerns are being emphasized as they deserve the most attention prior to moving into the next phase of development.

Outreach programs

Community

Several of the residents that were interview suggested that they would like to be more informed about the preserve. In fact, they feel that there is a slight disconnect between the university and the local residents. Therefore, the university may want to consider hosting an event

open to the public at least once a semester to build positive relationships with the local community. This event could serve as a way to celebrate the preserve while honoring Dr. Schob's legacy. The event would also be a great time to introduce the local residents to the Schob scholar (student) as well. The Schob scholar should then act as an ambassador. At that point, the Schob scholar should suggest that if they ever have any questions, comments, or concerns pertaining to the preserve they are always welcome to stop by the Schob residence to voice their opinions. Based on the feedback received throughout the interviews the Schob Scholar (student) may have the best opportunity to create positive relationships with the local residents.

Local elementary school

Due to its close proximity to the preserve there is an excellent opportunity to get the local elementary school (College Hills Elementary School) involved with the preserve. It would be an excellent way to expose children to nature while teaching them about the natural environment. In recent years there has been an emphasis placed on re-connecting children with nature. In fact, last year President Barrack Obama created a program called every kid in a park. This program was designed to help expose 4th grade children and their families to the natural world while providing an educational experience. The David E. Schob Nature Preserve provides an excellent opportunity to achieve that objective. The university has been gifted a very powerful learning tool and it should be utilized to its fullest extent. Furthermore, LAUP has been involved with several projects that have taken place at the preserve whereas RPTS has not had nearly as many opportunities to get involved with the preserve. Thus, the preserve could serve as an interpretive site where Texas A&M students enrolled in the RPTS 307 – methods of environmental interpretation course provided interpretive programs to the College Hills Elementary School students. This is an incredible opportunity to foster positive relationships with College Hills

Elementary School. Moreover, it would provide a valuable learning experience for Texas A&M students as well as the elementary students.

Information

A number of respondents stated that the university has not provided enough information regarding the preserve and its mission. As a result, both departments must continue to work with one another to establish a clear set of goals and objectives. It may also be appropriate to develop a mission statement for the preserve at this time. Once both departments are in agreeance, they should ensure that all interest groups are aware of the mission, as well as the goals and objectives so that they can hold themselves as well as the other interest groups accountable.

The university should also consider using a website, bulletin boards, and interpretive signs to disseminate information to the preserve's various interest groups. A website for the preserve has already been created, but is still in its infancy and lacks relevant information. Furthermore, most people are not aware that a website for the preserve even exists. Thus, once the Schob preserve website is established, a URL directing visitors to the website should be placed on interpretive signs encouraging visitors to learn more about the preserve.

The orange flags scattered throughout the Schob prairie area is a prime example of how the university has failed to keep the various interest groups informed is clear. Sure, they in the middle of a project that will yield a number of benefits, but scattering orange flags and posting a 9x12 inch sign saying "wildflower and prairie planting research in progress – Please keep off" is not the best way to foster positive relationships. This is when bulletin boards may be useful as they could be used to post upcoming events, current or future projects/ research, opportunities for community involvement or any other pertinent information which the local community and various users groups may find useful. Furthermore, interpretive signs are a great way to educate

the public about the natural processes taking place throughout the preserve. Therefore, the university should consider using the Schob fund to create and install interpretive signs to educate visitors about the trees, wildflower, wildlife, and natural processes occurring in the preserve.

Minimize Development

Every interest group stated that they wanted to minimize development as they appreciate the naturalness of the preserve. In fact, all of the local residents indicated that they were pleased when they found out that the land would be managed and used as a preserve. One of their biggest concerns after Dr. Schob passed away was that the property would be sold and developed. A number of participants including Mr. Frisk (local resident), Dr. Shafer (senior Schob scholar) and Justin Haug (student) were very fond of the back portion of the preserve (the wilderness area). Therefore, that area of the preserve should remain untouched as it provide an opportunity to enjoy a natural environment within an urban setting. However, a trail which provides visitors with access to that area of the preserve and blends in with the natural environment is the one exception.

Most participants believe that the preserve has a good balance of naturalness and development. They believe the preserve is perfect as is. Thus, no additional structures are necessary. However, if structures are added to the preserve they should not be permanent as they could hinder future uses as well as educational opportunities. Furthermore, additional parking should not be added to the site as this will help to keep visitors to a manageable level while reducing the amount of traffic and noise in the area.

Wildflower Garden

The idea of a wildflower garden was brought to surface on several occasions during the interviews. Several participants believed that a wildflower garden would be aesthetically

pleasing. Meanwhile other participants such as Mrs. Whitely thought a wildflower garden would benefit the local bee population which has been in decline for several years. Furthermore, the Schob scholar and Mrs. Allen thought that a wildflower garden would be a great way to support the monarch butterfly population as their numbers have also plummeted during the last decade. The monarch butterflies fly through College Station, TX every spring and fall. In addition, several birds may be attracted to the wildflower garden as well. Therefore, a wildflower garden may help support a variety of wildlife while serving as an educational asset. Thus, helping to satisfying the mission of both the university and the preserve.

However, it is important to mention that professor Dvorak and his students are in the process of installing the Schob prairie. According to the World Wide Fund for Nature, the Blackland Prairie which they are installing provides habitat to over 500 native faunal taxa including 327 bird species. The Schob prairie is set to include 40 native plant species as well as a butterfly garden. Therefore, once the Schob prairie is installed and fully functional it should satisfy a number of the local residents desires as it will include a butterfly garden, likely contribute to an increase in wildlife, and provide aesthetically pleasing views.

Amenities

The preserve is still in its initial phase of development and has already seen an increase in the number of users. Thus, as the preserve begins to transition into the next phase of develop there are a several amenities such as a water fountain, trash cans, and dog waste bags that should be considered being placed in the preserve. A number of users enjoying walking their dogs through the preserve. At some point during the walk the dog will typically have a bowel movement. Therefore, in an attempt to reduce the amount of dog feces found throughout the preserve there should be at least one dog waste bag station located at the preserve's official

entrance.

Whether they are walking their dogs, playing frisbee, or practicing yoga, a large percentage of the preserve's users are engaged in physical activities. Not to mention, Texas can quite hot during the summer months. Picnickers may also enjoy knowing that there is a water fountain nearby. Therefore, a public water fountain should be in the picnic area of the preserve. Furthermore, trash resulting from the various user groups should be a serious concern. This trash could end up scattered throughout the preserve or on the property of local residents which could be extremely problematic. If the number of users continues to rise as expected then there is a high probability that the amount of trash produced by these users could rise as well. Although, it may be difficult to manage a university trash can several miles away from main campus there should be at least two trash cans located in the preserve. The main entrance to the preserve and the picnic area appear to be the two most convenient locations and will most likely yield the greatest use.

Privacy Fence

The privacy fence has created a disconnect between the residence and the preserve. Mr. Roger Sheridan (executor of estate), Dr. Scott Shafer (senior Schob scholar), and Justin Haug (Schob scholar/ resident) have all expressed unfavorable opinions towards the privacy fence as it has hindered connectivity. The residence and the preserve should be seen as one unit, not as separate entities.

During several informal contacts, it was brought to the Schob scholar's attention that a number of visitors were not aware that the two were even associated with one another. In most cases, the visitors thought that the preserve was owned by the university and that the home was a private residence. Due to the height of the fence the Schob scholar does not have the opportunity to

interact with the visitors who are enjoying the preserve. This is extremely counterproductive as it hinders the Schob scholar's ability to create positive relationships with the visitors. With the privacy of the resident (Schob scholar) in mind, the back portion of the privacy fence should be reduced in height or converted into a large swinging gate (20 ft./ 10 ft. per side) which could be opened to increase connectivity or closed to ensure privacy.

Limitations and Future Research

Due to a lack of time and resources, personal interviews with the students themselves were not able to be conducted. As a result, the student questionnaire was sent to three professors who had previously or are currently working with students at the Schob preserve. Upon request, the professors sent an email asking their students to complete and return the survey. Two graduate responses were received whereas not a single undergraduate response was received. As one of the five primary interest groups this is troubling. Students are a fundamental component of both the university's and the preserve's mission, meaning the students were under represented. If a future study takes place it is imperative that more student feedback is collected and analyzed.

As mentioned previously, during an interview with Mr. Frisk it was brought to light that there should in fact be a sixth interest group, the general users. It is hard to believe that this interest group was overlooked. The fact that general users were not originally considered as one of the primary interest groups is in many way troubling. It is hard to imagine them as anything other than one of the primary interest groups as they play an extremely important role in the overall success of the preserve. General users are particularly important because they represent a variety of user groups that visit the preserve on a regular basis including, but not limited to nature enthusiast, outdoor recreationalist, dog walkers, bird watchers, book readers, and picnickers. Therefore, there is an extremely large segment of people who have a vested interest

in the preserve and did not have the opportunity to offer their feedback. As soon as the opportunity to conduct another study of this kind presents itself, it is imperative that their feedback is recorded.

References

Appendix

Executor of the Schob Estate Questionnaire

- 1) What was Mr. Schob's vision/ intent of the preserve?
- 2) In hindsight is there anything you think should have been done differently during the planning process?
- 3) Is there anything you do not want to see changed (left untouched) in the preserve?
- 4) Is there anything you would like to see changed or added to the preserve?
- 5) Do you feel as though Mr. Schob would be pleased with the current state of the preserve?
Why or why not?
- 6) What is your vision/ expectations of the preserve moving forward?
- 7) Do you have any suggestions or recommendations that you feel would enhance the overall quality and/ or experience of the park?
- 8) In closing is there anything else that you would like to add to this interview that you believe is worth mentioning?

Senior Schob Scholars Questionnaire

- 1) What was your initial reaction when you heard that RPTS and LAUP would be responsible for the Schob property?
- 2) From a university standpoint how do you think the preserve should be used?
- 3) In hindsight is there anything you would have done differently during the planning process?
- 4) How would you describe an ideal partnership between the two departments (RPTS & LAUP)
- 5) How do you currently feel about the RPTS and LAUP relationship as it pertains to the Schob Preserve
- 6) How would you describe an ideal partnership between the two departments and the community?
- 7) How do you currently feel about the community/ university relationship as it pertains to the Schob Preserve
- 8) What do you believe is the best way to facilitate a positive environment for all involved (university, community, students, and graduate student resident)?
- 9) Is there anything you do not want to see changed (left untouched) in the preserve?

- 10) Is there anything you would like to see changed or added to the preserve?
- 11) What is your vision/ expectations of the preserve moving forward?
- 12) Do you have any suggestions or recommendations that you feel would enhance the overall quality and/ or experience of the park?
- 13) In closing is there anything else that you would like to add to this interview that you believe is worth mentioning?

Students Questionnaire

- 1) What do you enjoy about being able complete course work at the Schob Preserve?
- 2) Do you believe your experience with the Schob Preserve has enhanced the overall quality of your education at Texas A&M? (Please explain)
- 3) In your opinion what do you believe the benefits of applied/ hands on learning are?
- 4) How do you believe your experiences at the Schob Preserve are going to benefit you in your future career?
- 5) Has your experience at the Schob Preserve helped you secure and internship or job opportunity?
 - If so, what skills or experience do you believe you gained through your experiences at the preserve that made you marketable for these positions?
 - If not, do you believe the skills and experience gained through your experience with the Schob Preserve will make you more marketable as you search for internships/ potential jobs? (Please explain)
- 6) Is there anything you do not want to see changed (left untouched) in the preserve?
- 7) Is there anything you would like to see changed or added to the preserve?

- 8) Do you have any suggestions or recommendations that you feel would enhance the overall quality and/ or experience of the park?
- 9) In closing is there anything else that you would like to add to this interview that you believe is worth mentioning?

Local Residents Questionnaire

- 1) How long have you lived in the area?
- 2) Are you aware of the Schob Preserve?
- 3) Where you aware of the Property before it became a preserve?
- 4) If so, what were your thoughts or perceptions of the Schob property prior to it becoming a preserve?
- 5) What are your current thoughts or perceptions of the property now that it has been converted to a preserve?
- 6) Do you or have you ever used the preserve?
- 7) How often would you say you use the preserve?
- 8) What is your primary reason(s) for visiting the preserve?
- 9) Do you enjoy knowing that the preserve is in close proximity to your residence?
- 10) Do you have a personal interest or even a personal connection with the preserve?
- 11) Is there anything you do not want to see changed (left untouched) in the preserve?
- 12) Is there anything you would like to see changed or added to the preserve?
- 13) Is there anything that would entice you to come to the preserve more often or stay longer?
- 14) What is your vision/ expectations of the preserve moving forward?

- 15) Suggestions/ recommendations that you feel would enhance the overall quality and/ or experience of the park?
- 16) In closing is there anything else that you would like to add to this interview that you believe is worth mentioning?

Schob Scholar Questionnaire

- 1) What is life like as a Schob resident?
- 2) How would you describe an ideal partnership between the Schob resident and the two departments (RPTS & LAUP)?
- 3) How would you describe an ideal partnership between the Schob resident and the community?
- 4) What do you believe is the best way to facilitate a positive environment for all involved (university, community, students, and graduate student resident)?
- 5) Is there anything you do not want to see changed (left untouched) in the preserve?
- 6) Is there anything you would like to see changed or added to the preserve?
- 7) What is your vision/ expectations of the preserve moving forward?
- 8) Do you have any suggestions or recommendations that you feel would enhance the overall quality and/ or experience of the park?
- 9) In closing is there anything else that you would like to add to this interview that you believe is worth mentioning?

**ADDENDUM
OPERATIONAL POLICIES**

1. **Senior Schob Scholars** will be appointed consistent with the policies of their respective departments and colleges as follows:
 - a) The Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences Department Head will distribute an invitation to all tenured Texas A&M University RPTS faculty, all Texas A&M Agrilife Research RPTS faculty, and all Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service RPTS faculty to apply for the **Senior Schob Scholar** Appointment. Application materials required will include a curriculum vitae and a proposal of no more than three pages. The proposal will summarize the applicant's vision and goals for the appointment, and will also include a specific action plan for accomplishment of the goals. At least two weeks will pass between distribution of the invitation and the closing date. All applications will be reviewed by the Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences Executive Committee, who will present its recommendation to the Department Head. The Executive Committee role will be advisory, with the final decision authority residing with the Department Head. Appointments will be for a period of five years. The Department Head will retain the right to remove the faculty member from the **Senior Schob Scholar** appointment prior to the end of the five year period for cause, following due process and review and advisory input from the Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences Executive Committee.
 - b) The Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning will distribute an announcement to all tenured Texas A&M University LAUP faculty to apply for the **Senior Schob Scholar** Appointment. The announcement will specify the expectations of a **Senior Schob Scholar**. All applications will be reviewed by the LAUP Coordinators Council, who will present its recommendation to the Department Head, who in turn will make his or her recommendations to the Dean, College of Architecture. The final approval authority rests with the Dean consistent with the College of Architecture policy. Appointments will be for a period of three-year term that may be renewed for an additional term. Removal from the **Senior Schob Scholar** appointment prior to the end of the three year term for cause will be made following the College of Architecture policy.
2. **Senior Schob Scholars** will be responsible for pursuing education, research and outreach activities and initiatives in support of the Preserve. They will report to the Department Heads of LAUP and RPTS in regard to their responsibilities as Senior Schob Scholars. The Senior Schob Scholar position in each department will have budget authority for using the annual Senior Schob Scholar budget allocation to support education, research, and outreach initiatives. They shall be required to submit an annual report on the use of the funds to respective department heads and for review by the Schob Preserve Advisory Board.
3. The Senior Schob Scholar funds will be held in accounts within the respective departments. Senior Schob Scholars of LAUP and RPTS will coordinate their education, research, and outreach initiatives to avoid conflict and ensure efficiency. At their discretion, Schob Scholars may use funds allocated to their respective programs to fund small research projects proposed by faculty and students.
4. The account management to support maintenance, capital improvements, and contingencies of the Schob Preserve will be provided by the College of Architecture.
5. A Schob Preserve Advisory Board will be created within 90 days of the dissolution of the current (September 2013) Board to advise LAUP and RPTS on programmatic issues in support of education, research, and research goals related to the development and management of the preserve.

Schob Preserve - Potential Courses

- Landscape Design Studios (LAND 318, LAND 319, LAND 320, LAND 321, LAND 601, LAND 602, LAND 620 and LAND 621)
- Landscape Construction Studios (LAND 329, LAND 330, LAND 331, LAND 612 and LAND 614)
- Design for Active Living (LAND 632 and PLAN 632)
- Health Design and Research (ARCH 675)
- Design and Development Economy (LDEV 667)
- Economic Development (URSC 440, PLAN 627)
- GIS (URSC 325, URSC 326, PLAN 625, PLAN 626)
- Park Planning and Design (RPTS 402)
- Methods of Environmental Interpretation (RPTS 307)
- Park and Tourism Operations (RPTS 209)
- Recreation and Tourism Programs (RPTS 311)
- Nature, Values and Protected Areas (RPTS 460)

Additional research and teaching possibilities:

- Health issues (e.g., activity levels related to physical and social characteristics of the setting)
- Safety issues (e.g., visual access and feelings of safety) (Parents' perception on safety for their children playing in a nature reserve park)
- Behavioral setting (e.g., examine theoretical underpinnings of design like prospect - refuge theory and attention restoration theory)
- Document preferred activities (Demonstrate how to use the post-occupancy-evaluation (POE) method to document preferred activities)
- Examine recreational conflict and carrying capacity related to physical characteristics and behavior
- Examine the mitigating effects of undeveloped riparian buffers in a neighborhood park on stormwater management
- Longitudinally track maintenance and examine methods for implementing new strategies
- Examine the perceived (quality of life) and real (economic) value of the park pre and post development and/or pre and post modification of park features such as walkways, planting, etc.
- Post development monitoring of attitudes and behavior of the community related to the site

- Longitudinal studies of park uses based on ideas outlined above with the intent of developing best practices guidelines to help inform park planning, design and management policy in College Station, the state and the nation.
- Multi-functional landscape performance measures
- Property value influenced by a neighborhood nature reserve park
- Impact on residents' perception of the site in multiple dimensions