



A Natural Investment

*Long, Fondren and CCA Chosen for Texas Conservation Hall of Fame Induction
September 16 Event Expected to Sell Out Early in Honor of Houston Conservationists*

Three of Texas' greatest champions of natural resource protection and management have been elected to the Texas Conservation Hall of Fame. Meredith Long, the late Walter Fondren III and the Coastal Conservation Association will be inducted at a gala dinner at the Houston Hyatt Regency on September 16, 2010.

Co-chaired by Laurie & Reed Morian, Windi & David Grimes and P.J. & Pat Murray, the event is hosted by the Texas Parks & Wildlife Foundation, the official non-profit partner of the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. Reed Morian is a TPW Commissioner, while Windi Grimes and Pat Murray are TPW Foundation Board members.

The three members of the Class of 2010 have been individually and collectively involved in a wide variety of Texas conservation movements, programs and projects. The result is that the species and habitats of Texas are better managed now than ever before. Long is a highly-respected member of the Houston, state and national art world. Fondren was the founding chairman of the Gulf Coastal Conservation Association. CCA, as the organization is now called, is the nation's largest marine resource conservation group, with more than 100,000 members nationwide and is headquartered in Houston.

Long opened his now-famous art gallery in Houston 53 years ago. However, it was not until he decided to offer "sporting art" did his business flourish. A hunting and fishing sportsman himself, Long combined his love with his art business to make a significant impact as a conservation philanthropist. Some of the proceeds from sporting artwork he sold went towards conservation. He discovered, supported and promoted several artists, who then became involved in conservation philanthropy, essentially serving as mentor to ensure a conservation legacy. He has also served in volunteer leadership roles for various conservation organizations, including CCA. He was a Ducks Unlimited National Trustee and Sponsor of the Year; member of the Roaring Fork Conservancy Executive Committee and a TPW Advisory Council member.

Fondren, who first gained recognition as a star football player for the University of Texas in the mid-1950s, became quarterback of the mid-1970s movement that resulted in the formation of the Gulf Coast Conservation Association. He was named Chairman in 1977 and, as they say, the rest is history. From its beginnings in Texas that rallied around redfish and speckled trout, CCA now has local chapters in cities across 17 states. In addition to his unprecedented history with CCA, Fondren also served many coastal

causes. He was a member and Chairman of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council and the Billfish Advisory Committee. Often honored, he was recipient of the Harvey Weil Sportsman/Conservationist Award, was inducted into the International Game Fish Association Hall of Fame and received the first CCA Lifetime Achievement Award.

CCA, although now a national organization, is native Texan. Its accomplishments are all important and many are landmark. Its financial investment has been monumental. But it is for the accomplishments in and for Texas that CCA is being honored.

Its first success was the prohibition of trawling for trout (1978). The 1980s brought the outlawing of single-strand monofilament nets and the protection of billfish from commercial harvest. Next came the outlawing of gill and trammel nets, the establishment of redfish and speckled trout as game fish and the completion of the John Wilson Hatchery. The 1990s was a busy time, resulting in a no-harvest regulation for tarpon, Sea Center – the nation's largest hatchery for redfish, the state's first comprehensive water plan, a limitation on commercial crab licenses, and the establishment of a limited-entry license management program for all finfish not under a management plan.

Since 2000, successes have included: by-catch reduction devices became mandatory on shrimp trawls, the launching of a crab trap removal effort, provision of night vision equipment and a remote floating cabin for Game Wardens, the construction of a state-of-the-art marine larviculture lab and the successful purchase and retirement of more than 1,500 commercial shrimp licenses.

The Hall of Fame, through the Texas Parks & Wildlife Foundation, provides the opportunity to publicly recognize the life-long accomplishments and singular landmark achievements by Texas' greatest conservationists. While not chosen from specific categories, eligible candidates include individuals, organizations, agencies, corporations, professionals, volunteers, artists, communicators, elected officials, educators and others.

The Foundation Board accepts nominations, keeps a fluid list, verifies biographical information and, after careful consideration and dialogue with those most knowledgeable of the nominees, ranks and makes selections. Past inductees include: philanthropist Perry R. Bass, pioneer wildlife biologist Dr. Jim Teer, corporate conservation champion Anheuser – Busch, sporting artist Jack Cowan, conservation organization the Texas Bighorn Society, Governor William P. Clements and the Meadows Foundation.

Sponsorships and tables are available. For information about reservations and supporting this event, visit www.tpwf.org