

Comparing and Connecting Grassland Conservation Efforts:

Urban Prairies and Landscape-scale
Restoration

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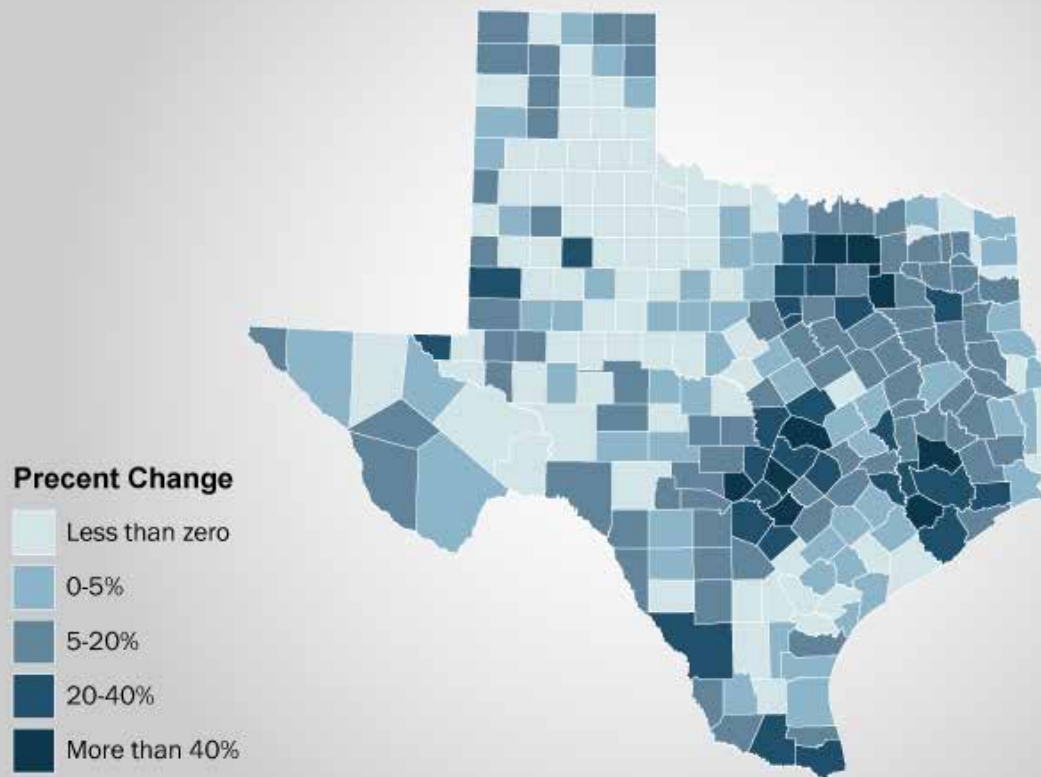
My background

- Urban Prairies: Fort Worth Nature Center
- Large-scale: American Prairie Reserve
- Ecotourism!
- But also... La Selva Biological Station, Costa Rica

Why bring it together now?

- **20.6%** gain 2000-2010 vs. U.S. 9.7%

TEXAS COUNTY POPULATION CHANGE: 2000-10



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

- Urban restoration of the future will no longer be strictly abandoned lots or remnants
- We are already seeing innovative projects



Photo: Jerry
McClure



Photo: M.
Carriedo

A Texas Prairie Update: Urban highlights

- Deer Park Prairie!
- BRIT's prairie = a new era for DFW restoration
- High-profile support: GWB Library, etc.
- Municipal departments

Sprawl and Leapfrogging Growth

- As urban centers grow, some are planning ahead and protecting and restoring grasslands for future generations.
- Plano, TX: Oak Point Park
- Austin, TX: Mueller development
- Revised Building codes

‘Green Roofs’

- Urban prairie restoration gets sophisticated!
- Well designed roofs are creating a positive public image for the feasibility of using natives



BRIT in
Ft.
Worth

Image: Chris
Cooper

Some losses: Ft Worth Prairie

North Texas continues to lose habitat

..The lasting impact of the 7 year FW Prairie Park effort



A recent challenge



Mike Fuentes: NY
Times

Urban Restoration: what we have learned so far

- Land management goals can be achieved regardless of size
- Goes hand in hand with water conservation
- Great educational opportunities for ALL ages
- Grasses + forbs
- Soil analysis, erosion control

Urban Streams

- A focus for restoration
- Prairie species often included in riparian projects



San Antonio CVB



Austintexas.gov

Urban prairies in TX are critical for population connectivity and migration



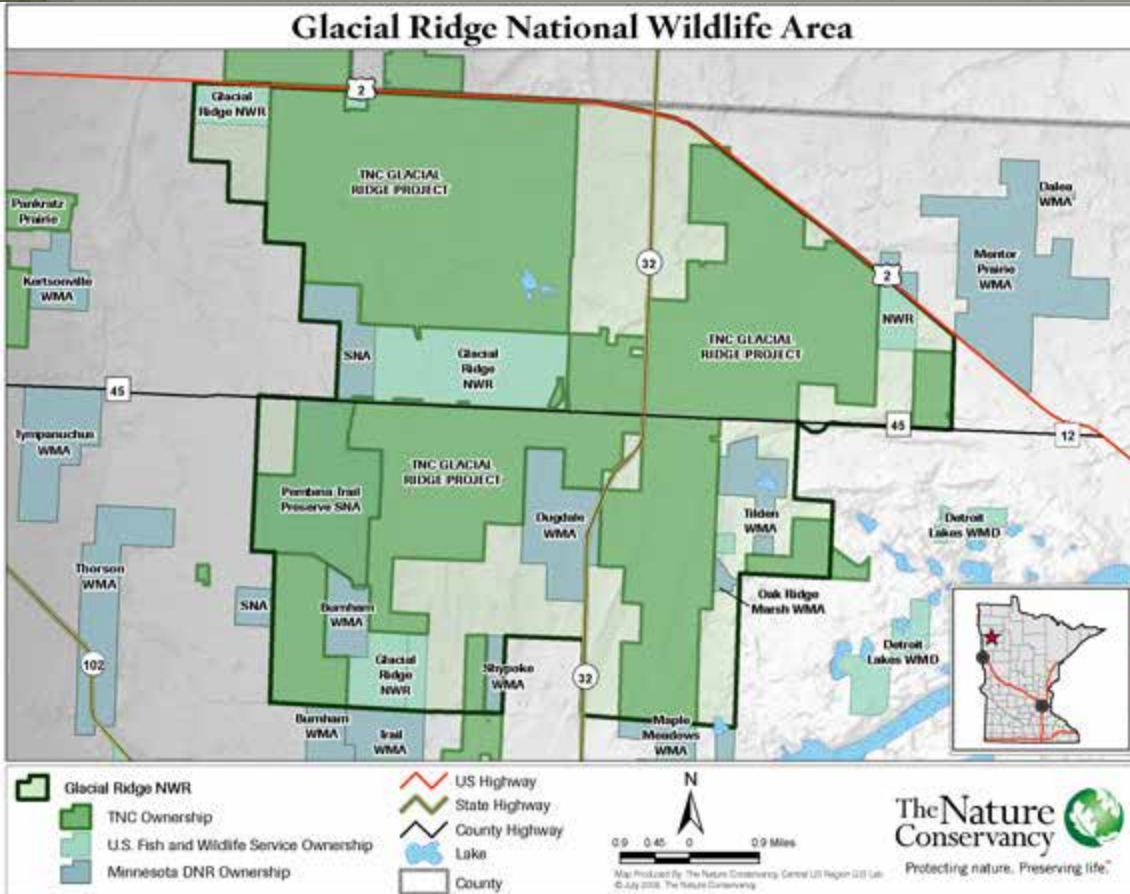
Brian Hutson: Fort Worth
Weekly

Large-scale Restoration

- Began with controversial proposals
- Healthy grassland ecosystems = large, intact
- megafauna and predators
- A new resource for research
- Public access

National Projects

- Glacial Ridge NWR, MN: reconstructing a prairie from scratch



American Prairie Reserve, MT: a privately funded initiative on a huge scale



Flint/Osage Hills: 2010- 1.1 million acres of FWS conservation easements authorized



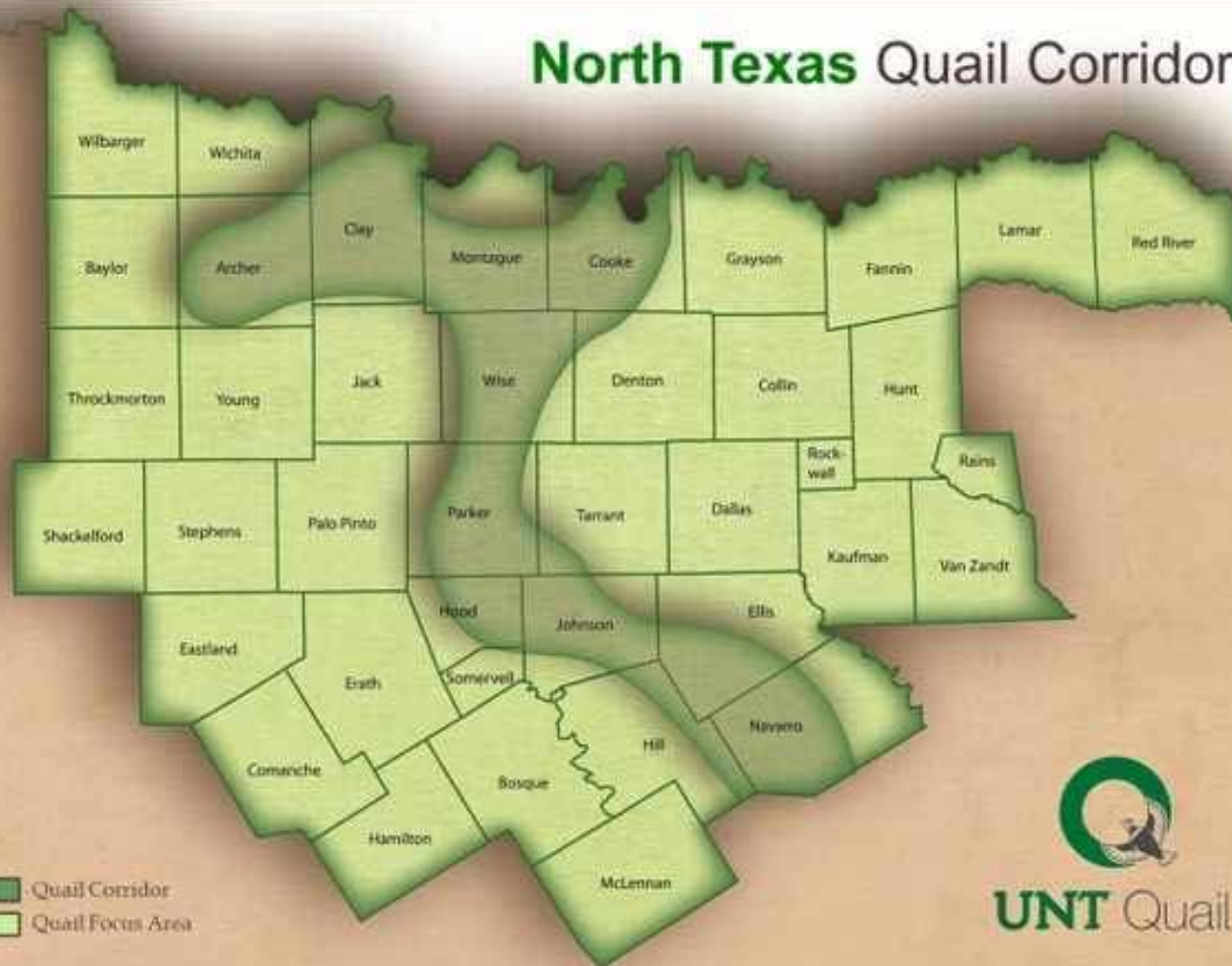
Texas Projects on a Large Scale

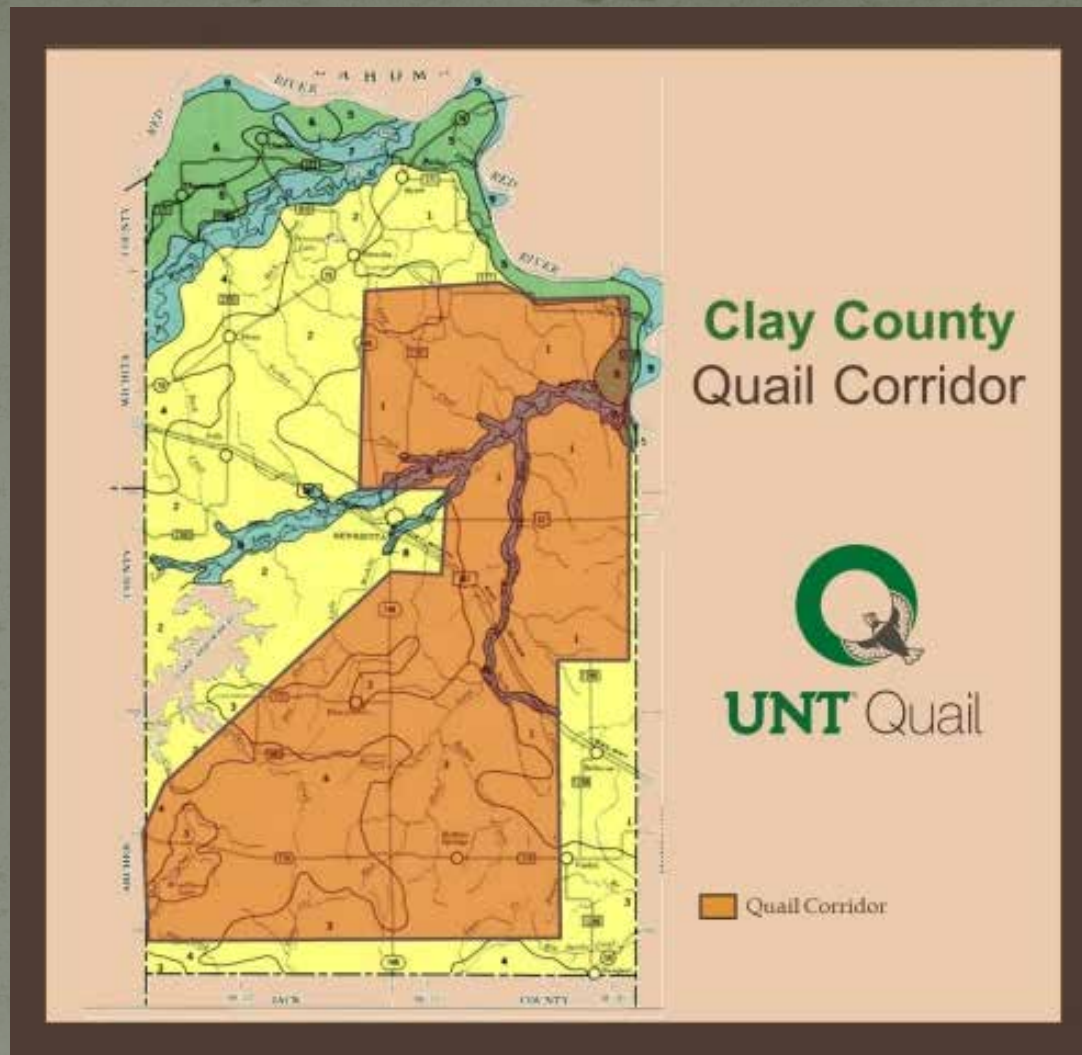
- State Bison Herd: CCSP
- Lesser Prairie Chicken

North Texas Quail Corridor

- 500,000 acres of landowner participation
- Emphasis on conservation-minded ranching

North Texas Quail Corridor





The corridor also protects rare Ft. Worth prairie

What can both ends of grassland conservation learn from recent projects?

- Understand limitations
- Accept that some disturbance will occur
- Several years to maturity
- Keystone species are important: ecosystem engineers
- Keep an eye on invasives!!!
- Ecotype consideration
- Effects of 'rewilding'

- Maintain positive relationships with neighbors
- Encourage visitation!
- Educate
- Provide economic opportunity



The Future of Texas Restoration

- Climate change
- Agriculture trends
- Energy development
- Even world events (economy, border security)

Thank you for supporting Texas
prairie restoration!