

## **Development of Community-Based Planning around the Whooping Crane**

The area surrounding Aransas National Wildlife Refuge serves the diverse needs of many individuals, communities and industries in coastal Texas as well as providing habitat for the endangered Whooping Crane. Meeting the needs of both humans and cranes has become increasingly difficult in the Aransas area and in other parts of the country. In response to these challenges, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is supporting the initiation of a Community-based Planning (CBP) program. The primary goal of the program is to discover ways that supporting recovery efforts for the Whooping Crane can enhance sustainable development of communities throughout the region.

The project is coordinated by Dr. Tarla Rai Peterson, Chara Ragland and Leigh Bernacchi. Although the Endangered Species Act has, in some cases, been used to direct community development, the process should enable community participants to generate recommendations for how to transform such barriers into opportunities. Information gained from this project will be used to provide participants an increased understanding of how to conduct an effective collaborative process associated with a CBP program, while providing information to the natural resource management agencies for the development of future CBP processes. The project team will gather information through interviews, focus groups, and public meetings with community members and other interested stakeholders. As the collaborative process moves forward, the hope is that this will become a means for more effective planning and policy based on open communication and shared visions among the community.

If you have any additional questions about the project, please contact:

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