



Vice Chancellor's Awards in Excellence Program
Nomination Form
2013

NOMINEE INFORMATION

NAME OF INDIVIDUAL NOMINEE OR TEAM:
(If team nomination – complete pages 3-4)

Rich Gray

(Dr./Mr./Mrs./Ms.)

(First Name, Middle Initial, Last Name)

CURRENT TITLE/POSITION:

Task Force Coordinator II

DEPARTMENT, CENTER, UNIT, DISTRICT, OR AGENCY:

Texas A&M Forest Service - Incident Response

MAILING ADDRESS:

200 Technology Way, Ste. 1164
College Station, TX 77845

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

rgray@tfs.tamu.edu

WORK PHONE NUMBER:

979-458-6600

CELL PHONE NUMBER:

OF YEARS EMPLOYED WITH TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE:

15 years

AWARD CATEGORIES

AWARD CATEGORIES *(Check only one)*

Teaching Awards

- Teaching
- Graduate Student Teaching

Research Awards

- Research
- Graduate Student Research

Extension Education Awards

- County Agent
- Extension Specialist/Program Specialist
Serving State or Region

Service Awards

- Public Service in Forestry (TFS)
- Diagnostic Services (TVMDL)

Staff Awards

- Business and Operational Staff
- Office and Administrative Staff
- Technical and Programmatic Staff
- AgriLife Services Staff

Diversity Award

- Diversity

International Involvement Award

- International Involvement

Administration

- Administration

Collaboration

- Partnership
- Team

NOMINATOR'S INFORMATION

NOMINATOR'S NAME: Steven Moore

NOMINATOR'S MAILING ADDRESS: 200 Technology Way, Ste. 1164
College Station, TX 77845

NOMINATOR'S PHONE #: 979-458-6507

E-MAIL: smoore@tfs.tamu.edu

NOMINATOR'S DEPT, CENTER, UNIT, DISTRICT, OR AGENCY NAME: Texas A&M Forest Service-Incident Resp.

ENSURE YOUR NOMINATION PACKET IS IN THE CORRECT ORDER AND INCLUDES ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

SUBMIT ONE (1) ELECTRONIC .PDF FILE TO AgriLifeAwards@agnet.tamu.edu no later than 12:00 noon on Friday, October 4, 2013

(NOTE: Late nomination packets or changes in nomination packets after the deadline are not permitted)

To whom it may concern,

Rich Gray is not only is he an exceptional leader and mentor, but a man who loves fire. Rich has gone above and beyond in the roles of State Fuels Coordinator and now Task Force Coordinator. Over the past three years he has constantly sought out projects and grants to fund the Lost Pines Fuels Crew that was functioning on soft money. These projects have the Texas A & M Forest Service employees to work with fire departments across the state to help protect their communities. He has devolved relationships with Texas Parks and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife and U.S. National Guard. These relationships are great a benefit to the agency and the citizens of Texas.

Rich has helped firefighters across the state develop their knowledge of fire by teaching numerous NWCG classes. Rich has also provided training opportunities for TFS and TPWD employees through the training exchanges. Rich and Jeff Sparks of Texas Parks and Wildlife developed the program to help provide firefighters from both agencies an opportunity to work on task books and train in an active fire environment. He operated as a Type 3 IC as well as a Type 2 ops chief on many fires such as the Rock House Fire, 101 Ranch Fire and the Bastrop Complex just to name a few.

Rich provided for the citizens of Texas by completing numerous Firewise projects in communities across the state. From Hunt to Conroe and Abilene to San Antonio he has lead his task force on projects that have helped protect numerous communities as well as help them achieve Firewise status. Rich also functions as the State Prescribe Burn Coordinator. Rich and his crew complete many control burns across the state in numerous fuel modules. Rich and the Lost Pines Task Force completed several prescribe burns on National Guard bases across the state every year. These burns help allow the guard to manage their lands while providing for a safe training environment for the troops.

In conclusion, Rich Gray excels in every aspect of his job from State Prescribe Burn Coordinator to running a saw on fuels projects. He has a love for his job and is invested in his employees. There is no better person in the Texas A & M Forest Service to receive this award.

Steven Moore

Resource Specialist I

Lost Pines Task force

(979) 587-9781

Richard C. Gray
P O Box 1991
Bastrop, TX 78602
Cell 979.218.2406

Employment

Texas A&M Forest Service	1997 – present
Colorado State Forest Service	1994-1997
Arkansas Forestry Commission	1989-1994
Colorado State Forest Service	1984-1989

Work Experience

Texas A&M Forest Service, 1997 to present

- Served as -
 - Regional Fire Coordinator
 - State Urban Wildland Interface Coordinator
- Currently State Fuels Program Coordinator
 - Primary responsibility in fire planning, suppression and fuel management.
- Lead instructor for NWCG classes.
- Serve as Operation Section Chief on State Incident Management Team
- Qualified as RxB II
 - Conduct an average of 15 burns/year

Colorado State Forest Service, 1984-89 and 1994-1997

- 1984-1989 - Firefighter on Golden District.
- 1994-1997 – District Fire Management Officer for Boulder District.

Arkansas Forestry Commission, 1989-1994

- County Forester for Izard and Fulton Counties

Education

Colorado State University , BS, Range Forest Management, minor in Wildlife

To whom it may concern,

My name is Eric Krueger and I work for the United States Fish and Wildlife Service as a Fire Operations Specialist at the Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge located 10 miles NW of Austin, TX. I am writing you this letter to recommend Rich Gray for your agency award that recognizes an individual in a support position who demonstrates exceptional accomplishments in support of agency objectives.

I have worked with Rich and his Lost Pines Fire Crew on numerous hazardous fuels reduction projects, defensible space clearing, and prescribed fires. Although there was already a functioning relationship between the Texas A&M Forest Service and the USFWS, Rich has been instrumental in continuing and strengthening this working relationship through his coordination, planning and committing a workforce for the implementation of these projects. Rich has been very accommodating by offering help from the Texas A&M Forest Service's Lost Pines Fuels Crew to complete hazardous fuels reduction projects on refuge lands and with defensible space clearing within the North Shore area of Lake Travis. These defensible space clearing projects helped ignite a Firewise recognition movement within the cities of Lago Vista, Jonestown and Point Venture. As of August 2012, both Lago Vista and Jonestown have been officially recognized as Firewise communities with Point Venture soon to follow. If it wasn't for Rich Gray and the TFS Fuels Crew he supervises none of these accomplishments would have been possible.

Throughout the four years I have known and worked with Rich I have yet to see him act negative or display a poor attitude. He is always positive and in a good mood and always looking to help somebody else out. Even at the height of the Bastrop Fire when he was losing homes in the subdivision he was responsible for Rich called me on the radio to see how I was doing in my subdivision and offered his assistance with whatever I needed. This is what makes Rich such an excellent candidate for this award. He puts others including the Texas A&M Forest Service first before himself. He is constantly going above and beyond what is asked of him, and he doesn't complain. He sets a fine example for the Lost Pines Fuels Crew and the other employees he supervises with his exceptional work ethic and unrelenting loyalty to the Texas A&M Forest service and the ideals they stand for.

Rich is well liked and respected within the fire community throughout the state of Texas. It would be difficult to find someone who hasn't run into Rich on a fire and doesn't have something nice to say about him. I have had the pleasure of attending a few presentations Rich has given within the central Texas area. In these talks, Rich was able to share his infinite amount of knowledge about the hazardous fuels within the state of Texas and how those fuels drive fire behavior. It is very apparent that he knows a lot about fuels and fire behavior, especially here in Texas.

I cannot think of anyone more deserving of receiving this award and I highly recommend that you consider Rich Gray for this agency award.

Sincerely, Eric J. Krueger

Eric Krueger
Fire Operations Specialist
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Balcones Canyonlands NWR
(512) 339-9432 ext 42
cell (512) 694-2388
fax (512) 267-6530
eric_krueger@fws.gov



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August 29, 2012

Texas Forest Service
200 Technology Way
College Station, TX 77845

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To whom it may concern:

I would like to take the opportunity to recognize Rich Gray for his leadership and partnership development in wildland fire management and ecological restoration in Texas. I have personally worked with Rich for more than 10 years where we have partnered on numerous conservation projects across the state.

The first partnership that brought Rich and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) together was in 2001, as TPWD-State Parks and TFS partnered to develop a prescribed fire program at Bastrop State Park. Over the next 10 years, with the support of Rich and TFS, we conducted prescribed fires totaling more than 5,000 acres on Bastrop State Park. The goals for these treatments included ecological and fuel reduction goals and ultimately, these treatments significantly lessened the impact of the Bastrop Complex Fire on the park and permitted the protection of the National recognized Historic Structures within the park of the park.

In 2005, TPWD-State Parks began to transition to national (NWCG) wildland firefighting standards, Rich partnered with TPWD-State Parks to develop a State Parks Wildland Fire Operating Procedures, which has been recognized as a benchmark other states and conservation organizations. Without Rich's mentoring, leadership and commitment to partnering this transition would not have been as smooth and successful as it was.

Rich's leadership and willingness to partner on conservation projects throughout the state has reached every ecoregion within Texas treating more than 25,000 acres on more than 20 different State Parks. Rich has been the keystone to fostering a great long-term relationship between the Texas Forest Service and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

If you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jeff Sparks
State Parks Wildland Fire Program Manager
12016 FM 848, Tyler, TX 75707
903-566-5698