Rocking B Ranch: Resource Stewardship & Acquisition Packet

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For additional information, potential adjacent property availability, site visits, or coordination with agency or academic teams, please contact:

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www.TXRiverRanch.com

Executive Overview: A Conservation-Grade River Ranch in Gonzales County, Texas

The Rocking B Ranch is a 525± acre conservation-grade property in Gonzales County, Texas, just outside Luling. The ranch offers approximately 2.40± miles of deeded live-water frontage on the spring-fed San Marcos River and includes a **230 acre-feet adjudicated irrigation water permit.**

Paved road access leads all the way to the ranch entrance, providing year-round, all-weather access for staff, students, and visitors. This overview sets the stage for a property whose water security, habitat diversity, and access infrastructure combine to make it a rare opportunity for conservation-minded institutions and agencies.

Approximately 90% of the time, the San Marcos River at the Rocking B runs clear, with widths ranging from 20 to 60 feet and depths in excess of 10 feet. In recorded history, the San Marcos River has never gone dry. Four ponds, Smith Creek, and multiple draws add to the hydrologic complexity and habitat diversity on the ranch. These hydrologic assets underpin both wildlife carrying capacity and research potential, forming a resilient freshwater corridor that is highly valuable within the central Texas landscape.

The ranch’s provenance as a working property is complemented by conservation-caliber features that are increasingly scarce in the region: long, contiguous river frontage, surface-water permit suitable for irrigating improved pastures, and intact riparian woodlands that interface seamlessly with upland grasslands and hardwood savannas. For prospective stewards, this means a turnkey platform where protection, research, and carefully managed public interface can be planned from day one.

Key Hydrologic Highlights

- 2.40± miles deeded live-water frontage on the spring-fed San Marcos River, with the property boundary defined by the river’s low bank.
- 230 acre-feet adjudicated irrigation water permit supporting improved pastures
- Four additional ponds plus Smith Creek and multiple draws enhancing habitat mosaics
- River generally clear ~90% of the time; widths 20–60 ft with depths in excess of 10 ft deep
- San Marcos River has never gone dry in recorded history, underscoring reliability

Paved access directly to the ranch entrance affords dependable ingress for agency staff, university cohorts, and visiting partners. Combined with on-site housing and workspaces, the property can host multi-day courses, seasonal research, and conservation operations without requiring extensive new development. This alignment of access and amenities reduces friction for initiating projects and accelerates the timeline for mission-driven outcomes.

Ecological, Biological, and Cultural Value

- **Century-old native pecan groves** supporting wildlife mast cycles and offering research opportunities in dendrochronology, climate resilience, and floodplain ecology.
- **Riparian and upland hardwood communities** that provide complex habitat structure and long-term ecological stability.
- **Unique Anacua stands**, representing a rare northward distribution, suitable for climate-adaptation, pollinator, and plant-community research.
- **150+ acres of improved and native grasslands**, including 75 acres of Tifton-85 supporting forage, grazing trials, and soil-water interaction studies.
- **High wildlife diversity** across terrestrial and aquatic systems, enabling multidisciplinary research and monitoring.
- **Historic 1800s cemetery**, supporting integrated cultural and ecological stewardship and educational programming.

Ecologically, the property supports a mosaic of riparian woodland, old-growth hardwoods, **multiple groves of native pecan trees—many over 100 years old**, native and improved grasslands, and edge habitat. These mature pecan stands represent a defining Central Texas bottomland hardwood community and function as both high-quality wildlife habitat and long-term ecological datasets. Their age and spatial distribution make them excellent candidates for **dendrochronology**, **floodplain dynamics research**, **mast-production and wildlife-cycle studies**, and **climate-growth analysis**—features rarely found in a single, intact river corridor.

There are over 150 acres of improved pastures, including 75 acres of Tifton-85, supported by the irrigation rights. From the highest point on the property, there are approximately 15-mile unobstructed views, including a clear line of sight to the Luling “Watermelon Water Tower.” These vantage points illustrate the ranch’s landscape position across the river corridor and upland interface, a key feature for landscape-scale monitoring and management.

Documented wildlife includes deer, turkey, hogs, bobcats, raccoons, foxes, coyotes, abundant songbirds and raptors, and a variety of aquatic species such as bass, perch, and catfish. The ranch also contains established **Anacua (Ehretia anacua)** — commonly known as the Sandpaper Tree — a subtropical evergreen species rarely found this far north in Texas. Their presence indicates a unique micro-habitat and offers a valuable opportunity for research into **range expansion**, **pollinator support**, and **riparian plant community dynamics**. The Anacua population could anchor student projects and long-term **phenology tracking**, contributing to regional datasets on climate adaptation and species movement.

Culturally, the property includes a non-registered historic cemetery with graves dating back to the 1800s, adding a heritage-preservation dimension to any long-term stewardship plan. Integrating cultural resource management with habitat and water stewardship invites interdisciplinary programming that can engage historians, archaeologists, ecologists, and community partners in a unified field venue.

Habitats and Research Potential

- Riparian woodland and old-growth hardwood communities well-suited to avian studies
- Over 150 Acres of improved pastures including 75 acres of Tifton-85 pastures for grazing research and irrigation efficiency trials
- Native grasslands and edge habitat supporting pollinators and ground-nesting birds
- Aquatic systems across river, ponds, and creek that support fisheries studies
- Documented wildlife includes deer, turkey, hogs, bobcats, racoons, foxes, abundant songbirds, and various raptors.
- Anacua stands offering a living laboratory for climate adaptation and botany
- Large groves of Native Pecan trees, many over 100 years old

The convergence of intact riparian zones, improved forage, and perennial water creates a scholarly and management environment where both experimental and observational study designs are feasible. Faculty can couple hydrology monitoring with wildlife telemetry, while practitioners can model rotational grazing and invasive-species controls without sacrificing ecological integrity.

Structures, Access, and Operational Capacity

Existing ranch roads and trails provide access throughout the property for monitoring, recreation, or research. Structural improvements include a 2,900± sq ft main residence, a 40'×120' hay and equipment barn, a 30'×55' shop with office and storage, and a cabin overlooking the river, providing immediate operational and housing capacity for field programs. These facilities support near-term occupancy, gear staging, and classroom-style instruction without the need for significant retrofits.

Paved road access from the public road system directly to the main gate and interior improvements make the property highly functional for agency operations, university field courses, and multi-day research campaigns in all seasons. The ability to schedule trainings and data-collection windows independent of weather constraints greatly increases program reliability and student safety, while also lowering logistics costs.

Infrastructure Highlights

- 2,900± sq ft main residence suitable for staff housing or visiting researchers
- 40'×120' hay and equipment barn enabling rangeland and ag research support
- 30'×55' shop with office and storage for instrumentation and vehicle maintenance
- Cabin overlooking the river for immersive riparian field courses
- Internal road and trail network for comprehensive site access and monitoring

When paired with the ranch’s water assets, this infrastructure positions Rocking B as a ready venue for demonstration projects—such as irrigation modernization in Tifton-85 pastures, riparian buffer restoration, and fisheries monitoring. The operational backbone permits real-time adaptive management, where findings can be rapidly integrated into stewardship practices and shared with partners.

Alignment with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

For Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the Rocking B Ranch aligns strongly with river corridor conservation, watershed protection, wildlife management, and low-impact public recreation. The combination of long, contiguous river frontage, senior water rights, high-quality habitat, and cultural resources make the property suitable for consideration as a future Wildlife Management Area, State Natural Area, or other conservation holding that could offer both habitat protection and carefully managed public access.

The San Marcos River's reliability and clarity create an ideal platform for public-facing education on aquatic ecology, invasive species prevention, and citizen-science monitoring. With careful planning, the ranch could host guided day-use programs that protect sensitive habitats while expanding public understanding of riparian systems and groundwater-surface water interactions.

Conservation Outcomes and Public Interface

- Protect a perennial, spring-fed river reach with exceptional clarity and habitat
- Safeguard riparian woodlands, old-growth hardwoods, and diverse grasslands
- Integrate cultural resource stewardship, including a historic cemetery area
- Facilitate low-impact, reservation-based public access consistent with TPWD standards
- Provide a living classroom for fisheries, birding, and habitat restoration workshops

In sum, the property's ecological integrity, coupled with functional access and existing structures, supports a conservation vision that balances habitat protection with carefully managed recreation and interpretation. This balance is central to TPWD's mission and is increasingly important in rapidly growing regions of Texas.

Alignment with Texas Public University Systems

For university systems such as the University of Texas, Texas A&M, Texas State, and Texas Tech, the Rocking B Ranch offers a ready-made platform for long-term field research and outdoor education. Potential uses include river-ecology and hydrology stations, wildlife and rangeland management studies, botany and climate-adaptation research focused on species such as Anacua, geology and soils research along the river corridor, and multi-disciplinary programs integrating ecology, agriculture, and cultural resource management.

The ranch's combination of perennial water, diverse vegetation communities, and improved pastures enables experimental designs that are often difficult to assemble at a single field site. Researchers can correlate hydrologic variability with vegetation productivity, track fish assemblages across pond and river habitats, and evaluate pollinator dynamics in relation to riparian plant phenology and Anacua flowering patterns.

Academic Use Cases and Program Design

- Establish cross-institution hydrology stations along the river and Smith Creek
- Implement rotational grazing trials in Tifton-85 pastures to study soil moisture and forage
- Monitor raptor and songbird communities across edge and woodland habitats
- Conduct botany and climate-adaptation research on Anacua range dynamics
- Integrate cultural resource surveys and ethics modules at the historic cemetery

With existing lodging and workspaces, cohorts can run intensive field courses and research campaigns without extensive off-site travel. The site's accessibility means more contact hours in the field and a better return on research investment. This, combined with strong conservation attributes, suggests a strategic opportunity for consortia-driven, grant-funded programs that yield high-impact publications and workforce development.

Transaction Framework and Seller Intent

The sellers are conservation-minded and intend to prioritize state agencies and public universities whose missions align with long-term stewardship, while maintaining a fair and competitive market process. They are open to exploring traditional fee-simple purchase, phased acquisition, or other conservation-driven structures that comply with agency and institutional requirements. This flexibility enables buyers to match acquisition approaches with funding cycles, grant timelines, and governance protocols.

I**nteractive topographic information and additional materials are available at www.TXRiverRanch.com. Full due-diligence materials, including maps, surveys, and title information, can be made available under a confidentiality agreement. The sellers' openness to cooperation during diligence underscores a shared commitment to transparency and effective conservation planning.**

Structuring Options

- Fee-simple acquisition
- Phased acquisition to align with appropriations or grant schedules
- Managed public-interface guidelines that support education and research while ensuring long-term resource protection

By aligning transaction structure with stewardship goals, the Rocking B Ranch can transition seamlessly into a conservation holding that immediately supports agency mandates and academic missions. The combination of senior water rights, intact habitats, and cultural resources positions the property as a long-horizon asset for Texas.

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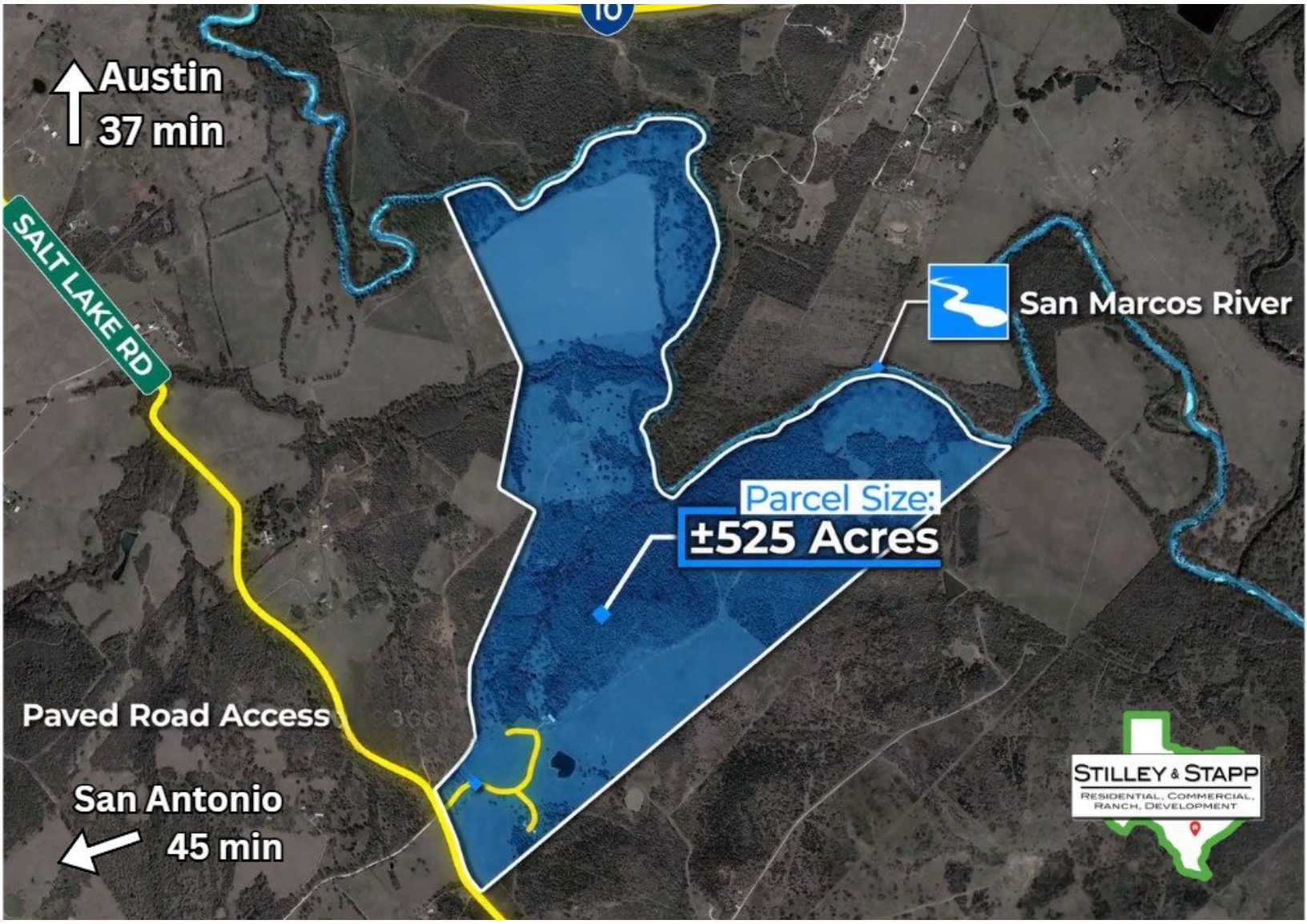
10
Austin
37 min
SALT LAKE RD
San Marcos River
Parcel Size:
±525 Acres
Paved Road Access
San Antonio
45 min
STILLEY & STAPP
RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL,
RANCH, DEVELOPMENT

Water Features

River:

San Marcos River -
Approximately 2.4 miles river front ranging from 20 to 60 feet wide and in excess of 10 feet deep. Approximately 90% of the year, the San Marcos is clear. In recorded history, the San Marcos River has never run dry (as recorded by Author Jim Kimmel, author of "San Marcos River/ A River's Story"). The San Marcos Springs is the lowest point of in the Edwards Aquifer

Creek: Smith Creek runs through the property and there are two major draws which support numerous tropical plants and fossils.

Recreation: Canoeing, Fishing, swimming, Camping, Hunting, Kayaking, Hiking, Horse Back Riding, Rock Hunting, Bird Watching, Etc.

Tanks/Ponds:

Tank/Pond near the main house is approximately 1 acre stocked with Bass, Perch and Catfish

- West Side for Cattle and Wildlife
- East Side for Cattle and Wildlife
- Small pond near barn area.

Elevation: 300 to 460 feet above Sea Level (see topo map)

Structures and Infrastructure

Out Buildings

- 40'x120' Hay and Equipment Shed
- 30'x55' two bay Shop with Office and Storage
- 1 Cabin above the River

Main House

Approximately 2,900 sqft, 3 Bedroom, 3 ½ baths, 2 story with Master bedroom featuring Walk in closet, separate bath and shower, **Safe Room/ Storm Room**, living , kitchen, living, kitchen, family room laundry and ½ bath all on the main floor. 900 sqft detached 2 car garage and detached well house as well as a large patio area for entertaining.

Gated entrance with approximately 1+/- acre fenced main house area with ample Post Oak and Elm trees.

Pens and Pastures: Cattle pens with extensive galvanized (inside and outside), working pens, chute, bull panel pipe holding pens.

All pastures have water available (River, troughs, and 4 tanks/ponds), good perimeter fencing plus cross fencing.

Wells: One well at main house and one at the barn and working pen area. Water is piped to four separate pastures.

Environmental and Natural Features

Grasses: Bahia, Native Bermuda, Coastal Bermuda, Bluestem, Wild Rye, Kleingrass, Winter Grass, Mesquite grass, Bermuda hay field and approximately 75 acres of Tifton 85. Perimeter fenced and cross fenced

Trees: Over 250 Native Pecan trees with one recently reclaimed Pecan was over 21ft in circumference. Many are 200+ years old. Additionally there are Post Oak, Bur Oak, Live Oak, Blackjack Oak, Mesquite, Hackberry, Willow, Texas Persimmon, Anacua, Cypress, Cottonwood, Hickoey, Mulberry, Red Buckeye, Wild Plum, etc. Additionally there are many producing Chili Pequin and wild berry bushes.

Irrigation: The ranch has an adjudicated 230 Acre Feet annual water permit with TCEQ stipulations.

Minerals: Owner can convey ½ minerals owned with executive rights.

Rocks and Fossils: There are large areas of rock and fossil deposits throughout the property. Perfect for Rock Hunting and Fossil discovery.

Wildlife: Deer, Turkey, Raptors, Fox, Coyote, Hogs, and many other various wild animals and birds.