

# Information Release

April 5, 2006

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Lou Neff Point Restoration Underway on the Town Lake Trail**

**Popular overlook at Zilker Park confluence of Barton Creek and the Colorado River  
to receive much needed expansion, repair and restoration**

AUSTIN, Texas – April 5, 2006 – The Town Lake Trail Foundation is pleased to announce that restoration of Lou Neff Point has begun.

Named for Lou Neff, who served alongside Lady Bird Johnson as a member of the Town Lake Beautification Committee, this scenic overlook is one of the most popular and beautiful areas in the city. In addition to the Town Lake Beautification Committee, Lou Neff was former president of the Austin Junior League and a member of several other organizations like the Natural Science Center Guild and the Symphony League. She was named one of the Outstanding Women in Austin by the *Austin American Statesman* in 1971. Lou Neff died in 1974 at the age of 44.

Nancy Neff, her daughter, said this to say about her mother, "We remember fondly the thrill and feeling of satisfaction Mother derived from all her community involvement projects, and her efforts are a source of pride for her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren to this day."

Unfortunately, in recent years, the point named after Mrs. Neff has begun to deteriorate. The railroad-tie steps leading to the point and the retaining walls that sustain the point have begun to collapse. Additionally, as usage has increased, the steep and narrow bend in the trail has become a dangerous pinch-point that has been the site for frequent and unfortunate accidents between cyclists, baby-strollers and pedestrians.

Starting Tuesday, April 3, working in collaboration with the Austin Parks and Recreation Department, the Town Lake Trail Foundation began restoration of this point. Infrastructure and landscaping improvements include:

- Hillside stabilization with native Texas boulders and stone
- Drainage improvements
- Re-grading, widening and replacing sections of trail
- Installation of a new water fountain and pet fountain
- Installation of masonry and rock planting pockets and retaining walls
- Planting, irrigation and landscaping with Central Texas native and adapted plants for better drainage and erosion control
- Removing invasive trees and vines that threaten native species of trees



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Additionally, while the project is underway, the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department will be repairing and resurfacing the ½ mile section of trail that has been closed off.

Due to the large volume of trucks, supplies and heavy equipment that will be flowing in and out of the project area, it was necessary to put a lengthy detour in place in order to assure the safety of the park and trail users. The detour stretches from the volleyball courts in Zilker Park on the west and the Barton Creek pedestrian bridge on the east and trail users will be detoured through the northeast corner of Zilker Park along an alternate decomposed granite path that has been put in place.

The Town Lake Trail Foundation anticipates the project will be complete by June 15, 2006. The Trail Foundation asks trail users to please be patient with the detour and promises to make every effort to expedite the construction schedule.

The project is anticipated to cost the foundation almost \$142,000. Most of the funding was obtained through a Texas Parks and Wildlife National Recreational Trails Grant of \$96,976 that the Foundation applied for and won in 2004. It has been supplemented with generous grants from the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation and the friends of Nancy Kohler. The remainder came from Town Lake Trail Foundation members and supporters, primarily runners, hikers, bikers and walkers who use and enjoy the trail.

The restoration of Lou Neff Point is the third major park restoration project the Town Lake Trail Foundation has undertaken in 2006. Already the Foundation has restored the scenic Colorado River Overlook near the Austin High baseball fields just east of the Texas Rowing Center. That project, generously funded by the Betty and Jim Wilson family of Austin, was completed in March. Additionally, Luke's Point, a smaller lookout point located 100 yards west of the Texas Rowing Center near Austin High was stabilized, restored and replanted by the Foundation. That project was made possible by an anonymous donation and supplemented with funding from the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation.

For more information about this and other Town Lake Trail Foundation improvement projects and how to become a member, contact the Town Lake Trail Foundation at 302-0608 or [www.townlaketrail.org](http://www.townlaketrail.org). Questions can also be directed to the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department at 974-6700.

## **About The Town Lake Trail Foundation**

Runners, walkers, bikers and friends of the trail formed the Town Lake Trail Foundation (TLTF) as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization in 2003 with the intent to expand, improve, beautify and maintain the scenic network of hike and bike trails that shadow the lush Colorado River flowing through Austin, Texas. The Foundation takes contributions from individuals, organizations and corporations and puts them to work to assure the Town Lake Trail remains one of the most natural and well-maintained hike and bike paths in the United States.

TLTF raises funds for Town Lake Trail improvements including expansion, beautification, construction, infrastructure and facilities improvement, maintenance and clean-up.

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