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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE **NEWS RELEASE**

SOLAR WATER WELL BENEFITS WINTERING WHOOPING CRANES

APRIL 26, 2023 [LAMAR, TEXAS] – Through Phillips 66’s philanthropic giving program, \$20,000 was donated to fund the installation of the new Lamar-Burton Sanctuary solar well, benefiting the winter home for the endangered Whooping Cranes.

This partnership with the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program (CBBEP) and the Aransas First Land Trust provides stable freshwater to the area that is extremely valuable for the endangered cranes as well as other critical birds and animals.

Whooping Cranes migrate to the Coastal Bend area from Canada to spend the winters here along the coastal wetlands. Their survival is dependent on coastal habitats and access to fresh water. Whooping Cranes, the tallest of North American birds, stand nearly five feet tall with wingspans between seven and eight feet. Males weigh 16 pounds and females weigh 14 pounds. Normally, two eggs are produced and only one survives, but this season US Fish and Wildlife Service reported multiple sets of twins hatched.

“The timing for this project was great because we’ve been in such a big drought,” said Jake Herring, Director of Land Conservation at CBBEP. “Being able to provide a freshwater source for our wildlife is already proving to be very beneficial for this area.”

The well, located on the 105 acres of wetlands making up the critical Lamar Peninsula, is property of Aransas First Land Trust and has a pumping capacity of 10-12 gallons per minute operating four to six hours a day. The Aransas First Land Trust has acquired and protected hundreds of acres of sensitive habitat since 2002.

“Alongside our friends from Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, we had a wonderful on-site opportunity to extend our gratitude to the folks from Phillips 66 who generously donated these funds,” said Janae Evans, a representative at AFLT. “We appreciate Phillips 66 and CBBEP for partnering with Aransas First to advance our mission to conserve and restore critical habitat.”

Phillips 66’s environmental stewardship goes beyond regulatory requirements and focuses on connecting conservation efforts to the business and managing natural capital in and around the communities where they work. Current company assets near Aransas County include pipelines, an ownership interest in South Texas Gateway Terminal, and the proposed Bluewater Texas Terminal.

“We are happy to collaborate with local environmental and conversation organizations to promote biodiversity and environmental stewardship,” said Rich Johnson, spokesperson for

Phillips 66. “By donating money and resources we support their efforts to conserve the ecosystems upon which endangered species like the Whooping Cranes depend in Aransas County.”

ABOUT COASTAL BEND BAYS & ESTUARIES PROGRAM

The Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program (CBBEP) is a local non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to researching, restoring and protecting the bays and estuaries of the Texas Coastal Bend. The Program area encompasses 75 miles of estuarine environment along the south-central Texas coastline and includes 12 counties of the region known as the Coastal Bend, extending from the land-cut in the Laguna Madre, through the Corpus Christi Bay system, and north to the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge.

ABOUT ARANSAS FIRST LAND TRUST

Aransas First is a 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to identify, acquire and protect sensitive Coastal Bend habitats essential to the nurture of birds, wildlife, and people; to increase public awareness of ecosystems unique to the area through education, access, and participation. Aransas First has been in the forefront of conservation, preservation, and acquisition efforts in Aransas County since its founding in 2002 by visionaries who recognized the unique ecosystem that our Coastal Bend environment offers.

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