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**H-E-B Awards Environmental Education Grant
to the
SPI Birding Nature Center and Alligator Sanctuary**

South Padre Island, Texas: The South Padre Island Birding Nature Center and Alligator Sanctuary announces a new grant award of \$15,000 from H-E-B Environmental Affairs and Border Region Public Affairs. The grant will partially fund environmental education programs for school field trips.

The South Padre Island Birding Nature Center and Alligator Sanctuary serves more than 80,000 visitors annually and approximately 1,500 school students on field trips each academic year and summer. The number of students reached can expand with this funding and assist SPIBNC in partnering with schools to help students become informed citizen protectors and researchers.

The mission of the South Padre Island Birding Nature Center and Alligator Sanctuary is to educate the public about birds of South Padre Island and its environs: the flora, fauna and the natural environment of South Padre Island, the Laguna Madre Coastal area, with an emphasis on conservation and environmental awareness. The South Padre Island Birding Nature Center and Alligator Sanctuary is a nonprofit organization created by South Padre Island's Economic Development Corporation.

Texas Naturalist, Javier Gonzales shared the Center's philosophy, "As human beings, we tend to care for what we experience in the natural world. Only through positive experiences in nature do we protect nature and make necessary behavior changes."

Over 340 different species of coastal and migratory birds can be seen at the Center. It is the greatest variety of birds concentrated in one place in the United States.

“We are extremely grateful to HEB for our continued partnership and this grant award in particular. Our school field trips are TEKS aligned. We look forward to working closely with area schools,” said Cristin Howard-Enholm, Executive Director.

For over 115 years, H-E-B has contributed to worthy causes throughout Texas and Mexico, and we continue to support our community as strongly as ever. H-E-B is dedicated environmental education and sustainability projects that protect the treasure of biodiversity along the border. To help them maintain this tradition, the South Padre Island Birding Nature Center and Alligator Sanctuary board of directors and staff kindly ask you to visit your nearest H-E-B store.