



# Central Texas Floodplain Reforestation Project 2023 Validation Report

**Document Prepared by City Forest Credits**

**August 30, 2023**

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <i>Project Name</i>                         | Central Texas Floodplain Reforestation Project 2023                  |
| <i>Project Registry Number</i>              | 041  |
| <i>Project Type</i>                         | Afforestation/Reforestation  |
| <i>City Forest Credits Protocol Version</i> | Version 11, February 24, 2023  |
| <i>Project Start Date</i>                   | February 14, 2023  |
| <i>Project Location</i>                     | Central Texas (Blanco, Travis, Hays, Caldwell, and Bastrop counties) |
| <i>Project Operator</i>                     | TreeFolks  |

## SUMMARY

*State what stage of crediting this Validation Report applies to (i.e. after planting, Year 4, 6, 14, or 26). Provide a few sentences about the overall project. Include the Planting Design and Quantification Method.*

In partnership with private landowners, the City of Austin, the City of Wimberly, and Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust, TreeFolks planted 59,423 trees on 60.22 acres in Central Texas, between February 4<sup>th</sup> and February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The trees were planted to restore riparian buffers on ten public and privately owned properties located in floodplains throughout Blanco, Travis, Hays, Caldwell, and Bastrop counties. The planting design and quantification method used was Area Reforestation, with trees planted less than 10 feet apart on center. This validation report applies to the initial crediting stage.

## ELIGIBILITY

### **Project Operator Identity (Section 1.1)**

#### *Criteria*

A Project requires at least one Project Operator (“PO”), an entity organized and licensed under the laws of its jurisdiction, or a governmental body, which undertakes a Project, registers it with the registry of City Forest Credits (the “Registry”), and is ultimately responsible for all aspects of the project and its reporting.

#### *Issue Validated*

Treefolks provided documentation, including articles of incorporation, bylaws, and 501c3 IRS exemption letter, to City Forest Credits to demonstrate that it is an entity organized and licensed under the laws of its jurisdiction.

### **Project Submittal Dates (Section 2)**

#### *Criteria*

Project must submit applications to the Registry within six months of the date of the planting of the last tree that is part of the planting project. Project with plantings prior to May 1, 2017 are not eligible.

*Issue Validated*

Project Operator submitted the project application on March 31, 2023, which was within six months of the date of planting of the last project tree (February 14, 2023). A revised version of the application, updating the number of trees and acres planted, was later submitted on April 26, 2023. Both versions were approved by the Registry.

**Permanence – Project Duration and Reversals (Section 1.3, 2, 8)**

**A. Project Duration – Project Implementation Agreement (Section 1.3 and 2)**

*Criteria*

Project Operator must sign a Project Implementation Agreement with the Registry setting forth the Project Operator’s obligation to comply with the protocol. Project Operator must monitor and report for 26 years.

*Issue Validated*

The Project Operator Treefolks and City Forest Credits signed a Project Implementation Agreement on April 19, 2023 for the Central Texas Floodplain Reforestation Project 2023 (Project Registry Number 041). The project has a 26-year duration under City Forest Credits Afforestation and Reforestation Protocol Version 11.

**B. Reversals (Section 8)**

*Criteria*

A “Reversal” is loss of stored carbon such that the remaining stored carbon within the Project Area is less than the amount of stored carbon for which Registry credits have been issued. The Registry will retain in a Reversal Pool account 5% of all credits issued to planting projects. This Reversal Pool account shall be used to compensate for Unavoidable Reversals.

*Issue Validated*

The Project Design Document and request for credits based on GHG mitigation includes a 5% deduction for the Reversal Pool account of credits. 301 credits were contributed from this Project to the Registry Reversal Pool. The carbon quantification and Reversal Pool deduction were verified by the Validation and Verification Body, Dan Hintz.

**Project Location (Section 1.4)**

*Criteria*

Project Area must be located in parcels within or along the boundary of at least one of the urban area criteria. The Project Operator must specify the Project Area and provide an electronic map of the Project area.

*Issue Validated*

The Project is located in Blanco, Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, and Travis counties, all of which lie within the boundaries of CAPCOG (Capital Area Council of Governments), a regional planning agency formed pursuant to the Regional Planning Act of 1965. This meets protocol criteria Section 1.4D. The Project Operator has provided maps as supporting evidence, including regional-scale and project area maps.

**Project Area (Section 1.5)**

*Criteria*

The Project Operator may include more than one planting site in a project. The initial planting of trees for all properties in a project must occur within a 36-month period or less.

*Issue Validated*

The Project includes ten planting sites over a two-week period. The trees were planted between February 4 – 14, 2023.

**Ownership or Eligibility to Receive Potential Credits (Section 1.7)**

*Criteria*

Project Operator must demonstrate ownership of potential credits or eligibility to receive potential credits.

*Issue Validated*

The project included ten landowners, each of which signed an Agreement to Transfer Credits with Treefolks, meeting protocol criteria Section 1.7. The Project Operator provided copies of the signed and recorded agreements as supporting documentation. The agreements protect the trees from removal, harvest, and intentional damage by the landowner; should the landowner choose to remove the trees, they would be responsible for compensating the loss of trees in the amount of \$3,144/acre.

| Site | Landowner (legal owner ID)                     | Landowner type | Parcels             | Acres        |
|------|--|----------------|---------------------|--------------|
| 1    | Owner ID 132762                                | Private        | 18673, 18674        | 2.72         |
| 2    | Owner ID 00054876                              | Private        | R120992             | 0.75         |
| 3    | Owner ID 00105113                              | Private        | R11113              | 3.70         |
| 4    | Owner ID 00133346                              | Private        | 181529              | 2.03         |
| 5    | Owner ID 00004495                              | Private        | R105462             | 0.19         |
| 6    | City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department | Public         | 214123              | 8.05         |
| 7    | Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust                   | Non-profit     | 61214               | 34.90        |
| 8    | Owner ID 792876                                | Private        | 11666               | 0.28         |
| 9    | Owner ID 706298                                | Private        | R36848              | 0.13         |
| 10   | Owner ID 775521                                | Private        | 86733, 88045, 87222 | 7.47         |
|      |  |                | <b>Total</b>        | <b>60.22</b> |

## **Additionality (Section 4)**

### *Criteria*

The City Forest Credits Standard and Afforestation and Reforestation Protocol ensure additionality for every carbon project. A project activity is additional if it can be demonstrated that the activity results in emission reductions or removals that are in excess of what would be achieved under a “business as usual” scenario and the activity would not have occurred in the absence of the incentive period provided by the carbon markets.

Projects must demonstrate the following:

- A Legal Requirements Test that declares city trees planted due to an enacted law or ordinance not eligible (Section 1.8);
- Either 1) a project-specific baseline or 2) the current version of the Registry’s performance standard baseline developed in adherence with the WRI GHG Protocol (CFC Standard);
- Project Operators must sign and comply with a Project Implementation Agreement with the Registry that requires a 26-year Project Duration.

### *Issue Validated*

Project Operator has met the Legal Requirements Test that the trees were not planted due to an enacted ordinance or law. Project Operator used the Registry’s performance standard baseline in adherence with the WRI GHG Protocol, which is attached to the Project Design Document. Project Operator signed a Project Implementation Agreement with the Registry for a 26-year Project Duration.

Project Operator has signed an Attestation of Additionality on June 15, 2023 that confirms the above, as well as stating that the 26-year Project Duration is in addition to and longer than any commitment the Project Operator makes to non-carbon project tree plantings and that trees were not planted on sites that were forested and then cleared of trees within the prior 10 years.

## **No Double Counting and No Net Harm (Section 5)**

### *Criteria*

The City Forest Credits Standard describes prevention of double-counting in Section 5.1 and safeguards and the “No Net Harm” Principle in Section 5.2.

Project activities shall not cause net harm to the environment or urban communities. Project Operator must sign an Attestation of No Double Counting of Credits and No Net Harm. Per Section 5.2 of the Afforestation and Reforestation Protocol, the Project Operator must submit documentation showing no overlap of Project Trees with any other registered urban forest afforestation and reforestation project. As part of Validation, the Registry shall use the appropriate geospatial tool to independently investigate whether there is any overlap between the Project Trees and other registered urban forest carbon projects.

### *Issue Validated*

Project Operator has submitted a signed Attestation of No Double Counting of Credits and No Net Harm, and the Registry sees no evidence of net harm from this project. The Project Operator provided a

workbook demonstrating that the parcel IDs for properties planted as part of this project have not already been planted in any other urban forest carbon planting project. The Registry has also analyzed geospatial data of the Project Area against that of all other registered urban forest carbon afforestation and reforestation projects to confirm that the Project Area for this project has not already received credits under the CFC Standard. Analysis of the geospatial data to confirm no double counting was also conducted independently by the Verifier during verification.

**Carbon Quantification (Section 10 and Appendix A)**

*Criteria*

Project Operator must follow the quantification methods outlined in Appendix A of the Protocol.

*Issue Validated*

Project Operator used the Area Reforestation planting design and quantification method, per Protocol criteria in Appendix A. The CO2 index (tCO2/acre) value used by the Project Operator was determined by Dr. Greg McPherson based on local plot data and data from ecosystem tables developed by the US Forest Service.

Project Operator signed the Attestation of Planting, including attachments of invoices of trees purchased and planting photos. Project Operator provided three Attestation of Planting Affirmations signed by the organizations involved in the plantings, including the City of Austin Watershed Protection Department, Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust, and Superior Forestry Service, Inc. The Project Operator provided a reasonable explanation in the PDD for why the number of trees planted in the attestations differed from the number in the Planting Attestation.

The Carbon Quantification Summary is as follows:

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Total number of trees planted  | 59,423       |
| Project area (acres), if applicable                                  | 60.22        |
| Total number of trees per acre, if applicable                        | 987          |
| Baseline tree canopy   | 6.2%         |
| Credits attributed to the project (tCO2e)                            | 6,030        |
| Credits after mortality deduction (N/A because Area Reforestation)   | N/A          |
| Contribution to Registry Reversal Pool Account (5%) (tCO2e)          | 301          |
| <b>Total credits to be issued to the Project Operator (tCO2e)</b>    | <b>5,728</b> |
| <b>Total credits requested to be issued in Year 1 (10% of above)</b> | <b>573</b>   |

GHG Assertion: Project Operator asserts that the Project results in GHG emissions mitigation of 573 tons CO2e after initial tree planting.

**Additional Info**

The Registry reviewed the tree planting list to ensure that all trees included in the quantification grow large enough at maturity (25 years) to merit inclusion in the carbon project. Small shrubs planted by Treefolks at the Project Area sites were excluded from the carbon project.

The Project Operator assessed the baseline level of canopy at each Project Area site using i-Tree Canopy. About 6.2% of the Project Area was determined to have existing canopy; these areas of pre-existing

canopy could not be excluded from the Project Area due to proximity around and within the planting sites. The carbon quantification was adjusted down to account for the existing canopy, and achievement of canopy milestones at Years 4, 6, 14, and 26 will be calculated in relation to the baseline values.

The Project Operator also submitted 1,149 geocoded photos of each planting site to aid in assessment of on-the-ground pre-existing canopy in future sampling years.

**Co-Benefits Quantification (Section 10 and Appendix A)**

*Criteria*

Project Operator must follow the co-benefit quantification methods for rainfall interception, air quality, and energy savings.

*Issue Validated*

Project Operator has followed the co-benefits quantification method using the templates provided by City Forest Credits. The following table documents the quantified ecosystem services in resource units and avoided costs per year when Project Trees reach 25 years old.

| <b>Ecosystem Services</b>               | <b>Resource Units</b> | <b>Value</b>       |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Rainfall Interception (m3/yr)           | 7,047.3               | \$18,432.78        |
| Air Quality (t/yr)                      | 1.5623                | \$3,772.08         |
| Energy: Cooling – Electricity (kWh/yr)  | 72,460                | \$5,499.73         |
| Energy: Heating – Natural Gas (kBtu/yr) | 37,974                | \$394.56           |
| <b>Grand Total (\$/yr)</b>              |                       | <b>\$28,099.15</b> |

**Monitoring and Reporting (Section 7)**

*Criteria*

Project Operator must report on tree conditions across the Project Area for the Project Duration. Reports must be submitted annually on the anniversary of the date of the first Verification Report. At Years 4, 6, 14, and 26, sampling, measurement of trees or canopy coverage, and/or quantification of CO2e will be submitted for request of credit issuance in lieu of a monitoring report that year.

*Issue Validated*

Project Operator has agreed to submit written annual monitoring reports using the template provided by City Forest Credits. Monitoring plans have been described in the Project Design Document.

**Social Impacts (Section 11)**

*Criteria*

Project Operator shall use the Carbon Project Social Impact template to evaluate the SDGs to determine how a Project provides social impacts that contribute towards achievement of the global goals, as described in Section 11.

*Issue Validated*

Project Operator has submitted a completed Carbon Project Social Impact document. The project meets protocol criteria Section 11.

## VERIFICATION REPORT

CFC reviewed the Verification Report dated August 9, 2023 by Dan Hintz to ensure it accurately reflects the documentation contained in the Project Design Document and supporting documents.



## VALIDATION CONCLUSION

I attest that all the information provided in this validation report is free of material misstatement, to the best of my knowledge. The project complies with the validation criteria outlined in the City Forest Credits Standard and Afforestation and Reforestation Protocol Version 11.

Approved by City Forest Credits on August 30 in 2023.