

**COMPARISON OF PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS AND DUTIES BETWEEN STATE  
PARK PEACE OFFICERS AND GAME WARDENS FOR TEXAS PARKS AND  
WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT**

by

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## **DEDICATION**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The paper discusses how the conservation officer deals with culture and today's society's duties—learning the behavioral characteristics that distinguish between a state park police officer and game warden for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). A literature review reveals data on game wardens and protection of wildlife and looking more into the data collected from qualitative formats and keeping an eye on identifying emergent themes related to criteria components. Each of these themes will be discussed in greater detail with descriptive, quantitative statistics. To better understand each peace officer experience, interviews for the State Park Police Officers (SPPO) leaders and the Game Wardens (GW) for Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. The survey's relationship to determine respondents' collections of questions will focus on the information and the decisions they made. This survey will focus on five areas: 1. Green criminology theory, 2. Protecting the Environment (Agency Mission), 3. Peace Officer Roles (Scope of Power and Specialized Training), 4. Volunteer engagement, and 5. Educational background and requirements. Additionally, former interviews of two game wardens and the Law Enforcement Structure of TPWD are investigated to learn how there is a pay variance and how the park police deal more with the human side of how people deal with nature versus the mission to protect the wild places for the future. As the two law enforcement figures move forward, the predominant figure is the tone set by being a game warden.

1. INTRODUCTION:

The research will explore the differences between the job descriptions of game wardens and park police. It will describe how each handles the protection of our natural resources and how each works with the policing authorities of the State of Texas and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). The compensation discrepancies between both fields will also be addressed.

The TPWD regulates both the game wardens and the park police. The mission statement of the TPWD is "to manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas and provide hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations." The Texas game warden's vision states, "we proudly honor and respect our heritage while embracing the future. We continue to take progressive steps to improve our culture and practices to serve better and protect the natural resources and people of Texas" (TPWD 2020). The findings will demonstrate both similar and different duties from the benefits and prestige of being a fish and wildlife police officer engaged in a scope of work that supports the protection of our wildlife along with the general law enforcement role for both jobs. The study will reveal the duties of game wardens and the park police and how they both appear to be transitioning their roles into the same type of law enforcement officer, and both perform their duties to the highest caliber (Eliason, 2016; Patten, Crow, and Shelly 2015).

The research effort will demonstrate a more precise understanding of game wardens' occupational identities and park police. The research explores in further detail

that the job duties between these two occupations are comparable and the positions are worthy counterparts (Benoit, 1973; Blevins and Lanham, 2013; Crow et al., 2013; Eliason 2016; Falcone, 2004; Shelley and Crow, 2009; Sherblom, Keranen, and Withers, 2002).

The most frequently voiced concern regarding the duties of these agencies is that they perform typical law enforcement responsibilities, which may compromise and lead to a decreased priority on conservation, less environmental safeguards, and places species in danger (Eliason 2016). This spreading of professional responsibilities may indeed be the new ongoing workload of conservation officers and can now be moved to other Park Rangers who have a college education in geographic science and social endeavors that can help both the game warden and park police. The details and significance of this transition are sought out in the scope of this study.

## 2. BACKGROUND:

The purpose of law enforcement in conservation and natural wildlife settings is to perform specified duties beyond those performed by other regular jurisdictions of traditional law enforcement agencies. Only a small number of scholars have investigated the natural resource and conservation police roles, which extends to the nature of the position, the specific decisions made, and the determinations that go with the game wardens' approaches as found within the literature (Blevins and Lanham, 2013; Crow, Shelley, and Stretesky, 2013; Eliason, 2007, 2011, 2016, 2017; Falcone, 2004; Forsyth, 1993, 1994; Forsyth and Forsyth, 2012; Patten, 2012; Patton, Crow, and Shelly 2015; Shelley and Crow, 2009). The State faces two organizational predicaments in natural

resources when enforcing state laws and regulations regarding hunting, fishing, water safety, and other resources used for the formats of both commercial and recreational endeavors. One predicament is the population increase of consumers and recreational uses of natural resources. The other issues are the current political and socio-economic accountability of fiscal rigorouslyness in state government stages. The agency justifies budget allocations for its personnel through performance assessments. The needed answers in cooperation with these administrative dilemmas encompass the duty of predicting the required personnel needed. "Texas is a leading state nationally in outdoor recreational use of natural resources" (Thomas Adams and Wang, 1999).

TPWD is responsible for consistency with people's safety and natural resources and accomplishes this by using highly trained personnel. They are responsible for protecting the natural systems of the environment, habitat, and biodiversity of all lands (private and public), maintaining the recreation of hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, mountain biking, and wildlife watching. In the world we live in today, the presence of science and the need for the conservation of our natural resources is imperative.

### 3. LITERATURE REVIEW:

#### ***Green Crimes***

"Green Criminology" is the subcategory of the study of crime dealing with the destruction or removal of species and habitat. Criminological studies can integrate the conservation and social sciences in the enforcement of wildlife laws facilitating theoretical and methodological propositions and practices (Moreto 2017). Researchers

reflect not only on damages to the environment but also, the relations among green crimes and typical methods of crime. When including organized crime and other non-environmental crime into green criminology, the spectrum broadens to include the unlawful trade in flora and fauna, domestic animal mistreatment, domestic violence, and other severe criminal activities that include serial killing. Given the likelihood of environmental damages to spread far beyond the influences that an individual victim deems as normal or typical crimes of social violence and property offenses, green crimes must be given equal standing within justice systems. Global ecological crimes like the unlawful trade of wildlife, crimes of pollution, and environmental destructions are significant because they impact both present-day communities and those of the future. They are also multi-scalar, extending into many nations, states, counties, cities, and neighborhoods. By allowing for these concerns, green criminology studies many matters in criminal investigations that spread beyond the confines of personal crimes, which normally dominate criminological dialogues and are the chief emphasis of criminal justice (Nurse, 2014). Scholars have emphasized that there is a lack of mutual understanding between the producers of abstract knowledge in the geographical, natural, and social sciences, and those involved in the operational side. Because of this, the 'tragedy of (un)common knowledge' may delay interdisciplinary scholarship inside conservation and environmental sciences. While some have documented the intellectual and educational challenges associated with green criminology, there has been less discussion of the methodologies to use (Moreto 2017).

## *Protecting the Environment*

The historical interactions of natural resource and conservation enforcement for wildlife regulations dates as far back as England (Hay, 1975; Hanawalt, 1988; Eliason, 2017, Patten, Crow, and Shelly 2015) and grew during the late 1800s in the United States (Falcone, 2004; Sherblom et al., 2002). During the past 25 years, research has increased on the topic of environmental law enforcement (Carter, 2004; Eliason, 2011, 2016, 2017; Forsyth, 1993, 2008a; Forsyth and Forsyth, 2009; Patton, Crow, and Shelly 2015), adaptations in the policing profession (Forsyth 1994), caution (Carter, 2006; Forsyth and Forsyth, 2012), the practice of power (Patten, 2012; Patten and Caudill, 2013), job burden (Oliver and Meier, 2006), and occupational satisfaction (Eliason, 2006; 2016, 2017; Patten, Crow, and Shelly 2015). Many studies have examined poaching and other crimes against nature and animals (Crow et al., 2013; Eliason, 2008bm 2012, 2013, 2016, 2017; Forsyth, 2008a, 2008b; Forsyth and Forsyth, 2010, 2012; Forsyth, Gramling, and Wooddell, 1998; Moreto and Lemieux, 2015; Palmer and Bryant, 1985). There is limited scholarship regarding the motivations for choosing wildlife law enforcement as a professional path, however (Eliason 2017). Some scholars have examined the connections between conservation wardens and the use of force in enforcement. Most frequently, force is used when coming into physical confrontations with suspects engaged in non-fishing or hunting activities (Elison 2016; Patten and Caudill, 2013). Force has been most often used against suspects who were inebriated from alcohol or drugs (Patten, 2012). Since the late 1800s, 40% of the deaths of conservation officers have been killed during the non-fishing and hunting-related situations (Eliason 2016, 2017). Texas, for

example, has reported that nineteen game wardens have been killed in the line of duty to date (TPWD 2020).

Peace officers have come to investigate crimes involving drugs and alcohol, and they can be instructed to serve warrants, and even participate in search and rescue operations. Thus, they experience both environmental and anthropogenic threats while on duty. The dangers game wardens must endure can range from accidental drowning to intentional murder. Understandably, it is recommended to traditional police officers that they wait for five minutes after calling for backup before pursuit or engagement with crime scenes or criminals. Game wardens, by contrast, are alone during their rounds in remote and isolated locations, hours from backup support, which can lead to dangerous situations (Carter, 2006; Eliason 2006; 2011; Forsyth, 1993; Patten, Caudill, and Messer 2014). Falcone (2004) and Benoit (1973) maintain that an expansion of the responsibilities for natural resource and conservation officer role has occurred. Policing agencies under state-level jurisdiction have begun to share responsibilities to the degree that the conservation law enforcement officer's image has changed, and its realm of responsibilities has become vague. These organizations are institutions having multiple procedures, policies, and programs that are accepted, even though the activities and actions are not well described (Mastrofski and Uchida, 1996, p. 213).

### ***Peace Officer Roles***

Peace officers are no longer identified as "fish and wildlife officers," or a "game wardens" any longer. They are often called "conservation officers" and their duties constantly change and extend beyond conservation and management of recreational use of wildlife resources. They are considered both police and rangers and are becoming

more like traditional law enforcement officers who must principally focus on the management of people. There have been studies of the changes to conservation and natural resource policing (Blevins and Lanham, 2013; Eliason, 2007, 2016, 2017; Patten, Crow, and Shelly 2015; Shelley and Crow, 2009). Wu and Wen (2019) found no difference in the amount of stress experienced by urban officers and rural conservation officers, the only differences seemed to be in the salary of the two types of jobs. The basis of stress seems to be the expanding roles of peace officers due to the absence of social workers and social support systems in rural places, remote and rural police officers frequently must perform the duties beyond conservation law enforcement, extending into social work and mediation (Weisheit et al., 2005; Wu and Wen, 2019). Park police and game warden must often switch between these job functions and perform extra labor that is not police work. Doing more duties with fewer resources (financial and otherwise) add stress to the lives of rural peace officers (Duxbury and Higgins, 2012; Wu and Wen, 2019).

The (TPWD 2020) reports for instance:

"On Feb. 8, 2020, Llano County game wardens responded to shots fired call with deputies. Multiple callers stated an individual in a subdivision was shooting an automatic rifle at a buoy in the lake near houses and towards boats in the water. A rental house was located with eight people where the shooter was identified. The shooter admitted to hiding the rifle inside the residence. Consent was given to search the house, which yielded the rifle, bags of marijuana, unprescribed Adderall, and psilocybin mushrooms. A total of five people were arrested for charges ranging from possession of marijuana, deadly conduct- 3rd-degree felony and possession of controlled substance 1>4 grams — a 2nd-degree felony."

And on Feb. 15, 2020, a game warden from Sabine County witnessed,

"a truck traveling on State Highway 87 near Milam, Texas with inoperable taillights and license plate lights. The warden initiated a traffic stop on the truck and upon contacting the driver and passenger, the warden located a white-tailed buck deer in the bed of the truck. After a brief interview, the warden was able to obtain a confession from

the individuals. The deer was shot from the road with the aid of artificial light. Both subjects were arrested for hunting white-tailed deer at night and hunting with the aid of artificial light. Cases pending."

Studies across the nation conducted by the Florida Fish and Wildlife agency (reported in Shelley and Crow (2009)) have calculated that 27% of police force activities by peace officers are focused on protecting fish and wildlife, more than 57% of enforcement deals with boating violations, and more than 15% of policing is focused on traditional law enforcement issues. Alcohol violations were the most common offense in the ordinary course of the line of duty while investigating fish and wildlife violations on water bodies and in parks. Motor vehicle violations and drug-related crimes were the second and third most frequent illegal activities (Eliason 2017). This is consistent with other evidence that traditional crimes are in common in recreational settings (Pendleton, 1996, 1998, 2000).

### ***Volunteer engagement***

The use of volunteers in the Texas Parks and Wildlife agency has a broader context. Volunteers positively impact the organizational mission of the agency and enable cooperation from communities. Bringing in volunteers for services can improve engagement opportunities through collaboration and transparency. Throughout the United States, police agencies rely on the help of trained volunteers who serve by observing, performing administrative duties, directing the public, and by working with search and rescue teams. Trusted volunteers are occasionally given police powers and gain prestige by strengthening their skills, developing personal or professional networks, and accessing employment opportunities (Ross and Bryer 2020).

### ***Educational Requirements***

The last variable of interest examined the educational requirements of the two different roles, and these requirements may or may not suggest essential aspects of occupational identity. Typically, park police and game wardens are required to have a college education due to the knowledge requirements in managing people and enforcing wildlife crimes—the diversity in educational requirements for this law enforcement population. The minimum educational requirements for this study were coded as a diploma or general equivalency diploma (GED), an associate’s degree, or a bachelor’s degree (arts or science) (TPWD 2020).

### ***Former Game Warden Interviews Texas Parks and Wildlife***

David Todd from the Conservation History Association of Texas provided interviews to two former game wardens who worked for TPWD. The interviews were for former Texas game wardens Billy Platt, Sr. and Col. Jim Stinebaugh.

On March 1, 2008, David interviewed Mr. Platt. Included is the summary of this interview, and the paper will associate the different subject matter of the full transcript:

“Billy Platt, Sr. was a Texas game warden in the early 1960s. Mr. Platt served as a game warden for Texas Parks and Wildlife in east Texas. Especially during his early years, game law enforcement was an unpopular and dangerous effort, as stock laws, bag limits, hunting seasons, and restrictions on hunting with dogs were still new to the area. Mr. Platt worked on numerous cases, ranging from fishing violations, such as gill nets, wire nets, trammels, hoop nets, and shocking, to night-hunting, poaching rings, meat hunting, trespass, and other illegal practices. Following his service as a warden, Mr. Platt worked as a pasture rider, overseeing hunting clubs within more than 500,000 acres of privately-owned East Texas timberlands” (Legacy 2021).

Billy Platt, Sr. was hired based on his years of experience with hunting. During his days of hunting, there were no laws. Soon enough, he thought of himself as an outlaw and decided to join TPWD. He has numerous stories about how he began his hunting at

age 19, around 1945. It was difficult because all the ammunition was used in World War II. You could hunt all over the country without crossing a fence. Landowners were the key allowing the stock to roam, use dipping vats to remove insects. Everything changed in the 1950s with the stock law.

Deer were scarce in the 1960s. Trappers came and captured all the black bears. The turkey population was decimated, cougar, jaguar, and wolf. The stock law started as people were getting killed because folks' cattle were always in the road, so fences had to be used to keep them within their area. Nothing really about saving wildlife. Fishing was easy, by telephone. The electric current would shock the fish, and folks would scoop them all up in a net. Soon fines were used to regulate illegal netting of fish. Dogs hunted deer, which got outlawed because they would cut through fences from private property and wound up having violations as the game warden would do their job, yet they would always get off, never convicted. The outlaw hunters formed hunting clubs and were in with the politics and commissioners. Not every county had the same regulations, so most often, some would be fined and others would not. "The hunting clubs, had very little game. But when your land was leased, and you had your hunting clubs with people paying money for it" (Texas Legacy 2021).

"When you'd catch somebody, say, well, you're trespassing, yeah, but my—my daddy and granddaddy hunted here all their lives, and I'm going to hunt here, you know, regardless. So, you know, you got a battle on your hands right there, and if you—if you've got good prosecution and good judges, you can enforce the law. But if you have bad prosecution, bad judges, your outlaws know this, and they will try you, and they know that the case will be dismissed. Your younger generation now, they're a different breed than what they were, you know, several years ago. They papa used to go kill deer, but papa was wrong, you know, he's—he was taking the game away, and we're going to change that, and it's done a lot of that, education"

"You got a lot of game wardens now. They come out of college; they've really never—they went from high school to college. They haven't had a lot of e—experience in the

woods. And back in my outlaw days on a, maybe a cold drizzly night, we'd say hey, boy, this is a good night to shoot a deer, let's go tonight. We'd go, we'd kill a deer. So, when I got to be a game warden, I knew all this. I mean, I had been an outlaw hunter, and I knew how they operated (Texas Legacy 2021).

Furthermore, on April 11, 2002, David Todd interviewed Col. Jim Stinebaugh. Next is the summary of the interview with further comparison in the discussion from the full transcript:

“Col. Stinebaugh served as Director of Law Enforcement at Texas Parks and Wildlife from 2001 through 2005. From 1967 to 1971, he was a Texas Game Warden in south Texas, and later, from 1973 through 2000, he served as a Special Agent with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service on various assignments throughout Texas and the Southwest. In enforcing laws protecting game and wildlife, he has worked cases involving defendants poaching deer, smuggling parrots, killing threatened or endangered species (pronghorn antelope, whooping cranes, golden and bald eagles), killing protected migratory birds (such as those lost in uncovered oil pits), using illegal hunting methods (helicopters and automobiles) and other offenses” (Texas Legacy 2021).

David Todd asked, “did you have a network of people who would tell you about game warden needed information— Jim Stinebaugh responded, “it was difficult in Duval because it was a strong political county, and most of the law enforcement people in that area of the county, people wouldn't work with you” (Texas Legacy 2021). The radios did not operate properly, and talking to local county officials like DPS (Department of Public Safety). Most often, Jim Stinebaugh was alone. The radios would contact other Game Wardens that were further than 60 miles away. A very antique radio versus the system of today.

The bird of the nation has been protected since 1940 for bald Eagles and in the 1960s for Golden Eagles. Wildlife destruction was happening in the Texas Hill Country using helicopters for hunting these birds of prey. The sentiment was bizarre because across the country, people were behind Jim Stinebaugh's investigation, and now that he was with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, but in that area was treated as a social outcast since he was trying to ruin a way of life by protecting Eagles. Jim said that he

would look in each direction coming out of any room or when stopped the car at night, being attuned to the ears of noises.

“The helicopter logbook they had something like 175 Eagles that they had killed and that was what he knew about. And as you probably know the—the bald and golden Eagles that come into our part of the country are migrating through and can’t take the kind of pressure that’s being put on them by that type of hunting and they would literally get out into the canyon country out there, just pursue them out of that helicopter and shoot them down with shotguns. So, we tried them. We filed charges and—in San Antonio in the western district of Texas” (Texas Legacy 2021).

David Todd asked Jim Stinebaugh what he thought the largest challenge would be in the future of conservation.

Jim responded, “The biggest challenge right now for—for wildlife, of course, in Texas more than anywhere else probably is fragmentation of the land—cutting up of the land. There’s generations of people gone in Texas—it’s privately owned and as landholdings get smaller it’s harder to—to keep—to control habitat” (Texas Legacy 2021).

While you continue to protect land for nonconsumptive users, like Texas Master Naturalists, they want to get out and see things. Game Wardens will get out, and they are liable to be talking to someone with a pair of binoculars looking at golden-cheeked warbler one day, and that night they are going to stop somebody that maybe hauling heroin or marijuana—quite a challenging job in that you meet a lot of friendly people and a few bad ones. Looking back over the years, one starts to feel sorry for everybody that has not got to be a Game Warden for 35 years like Jim Stinebaugh. The future of young Game Wardens will see different things, but the challenges will always be there to try to protect habitat against encroaching humans, enforcing regulations. As the legislature makes all of the laws make sense, yet a game warden will be the one making sure folks are following the law, working with numerous conservation groups, the public, and a position with diversity written all across.

A final quote from the interview with David Todd and Jim Stinebaugh, “the hunting industry more than—than the general public that was really—wanted these

people strongly prosecuted. I feel like that—that’s been good in the hunting industry because the peer pressure to have people continue to abide by game laws and do everything, they can to help people do what they know is right to—is—does a lot more good for wildlife preservation than Game Wardens with badges do. I always try to promote peer pressure. Go out and do the right thing and try to convince your people to do the right thing and not because I may be hiding behind a tree over there watching you. And I think that a large segment of people that hunt feel that way. They want to be able to do that and have their children go out and see a tom turkey come to a call and—and see a good deer sometime from a sand or wherever. And the people that care about getting out and—and having those experiences, they know that the only way they’re going to be able to continue to do that is to protect wildlife and—and that comes right down to regulations that we’d all like to live maybe back some day like the mountain Indian” (Texas Legacy 2021).

### ***Agency Review of Law Enforcement Structure***

The executive director created a team with representation from the Executive Office, State Parks Division, and Law Enforcement Division in a formed collaboration to review the programs, and analyze the current formation of the TPWD agency’s two law enforcement teams and deliberate the benefits and influences of combining the two units under one management umbrella. The Law Enforcement Division (game wardens) and the State Parks Division (state park police officers) are the two peace officer divisions. The programs have distinctly different areas of responsibility and focus. Game wardens are conservation officers assigned to one or more counties to enforce fish, game, and water safety laws and provide resource protection and emergency response. State park police officers are assigned to one or multiple parks or natural areas to enforce Parks and Wildlife Code and other applicable state laws. With areas smaller geospatially but have heavy concentrations of public use.

Conservation law enforcement, with emergency management and public safety efforts, require mission-focused approaches. The structure of command, standards of performance, orders/policies, budgets, staffing, purchasing, training, and equipment

needs are exclusive and specialized in the law enforcement and emergency management programs.

The distinction to the Law Enforcement Division, the state park police, is organizationally positioned in an occupationally distinct division with an extensive range of mission-related professional disciplines. “Before 2014, state park police officers performed multiple tasks and functions important to managing state parks, in addition to the enforcement of the law or public safety. The high density of people using parks today, along with the evolution of the law enforcement profession, the wide range of issues facing the officers, and enhanced training standards, has resulted in the Department shifting away from a park police officer role with multiple functions to the current model where officers are focused on enforcement duties. This has resulted in better trained, equipped, and skilled officers” (TPWD LE 2021).

Game wardens and state park police officers now receive their basic training and instruction, together, in the highly acclaimed game warden training academy in Hamilton, Texas, for thirty-three weeks. The state park police program was reconfigured to establish a diverse career path and career ladder structure aligned with that of the Law Enforcement Division.

As of November 2019, entry-level state park police officers with up to 4 years of service are compensated equal to game wardens. After four years of service, the disparity in base compensation increases to 15 percent between game wardens and state park police officers within the regular officer ranks. Ranking officers (sergeants, lieutenants, captains, majors, and chief) have a 6 to 22 percent disparity in base compensation than ranked game wardens. The disparity for both regular and ranked state park police officers

increase with years of service, as four-year career ladder increases end for state park police after 12 years of service, but continue for game wardens up to 20 years of service (TPWD LE 2021). Appendices D includes further reference to the TPWD LE Structure.

The TPWD is now reflecting upon additional structural and packaged changes to unify further, support, and mutually associate the law enforcement agendas that endure these two divisions.

### ***Project Management***

Project Management and following the Project Management Institute (2017) project body of knowledge, a project is a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result. Unique means the product, service, or result differs from other products, services, or produced results, even if just slightly. It is a temporary endeavor with a beginning and an end that creates a unique product, service, or result. Project Management entails applying knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet the project requirements. Identify stakeholders that could impact or be impacted by a decision, activity, or outcome of the project and analyze and document relevant information regarding their interests, involvement, interdependencies, influence, and potential impact on the project's success. A stakeholder is an individual, group, or organization who may affect, be affected by, or perceive itself as affected by a project's decision, activity, or outcome. Planning Stakeholder Management phase in the tools and techniques the knowledge finds that, 1. Expert Judgment, 2. Meetings, 3. Analytical Techniques Engagement Level. The current engagement level needs to be compared to the planned levels.

The stakeholders' engagement level can be classified as unaware of the project

and potential impacts, resistant to change and aware of the project, neutral by being neither supportive nor resistant, supportive of change, and aware of the project.

Leading by actively engaging in ensuring the project is a success, the peace officers in the survey are considered the project stakeholders who help determine project constraints and deliverables by providing knowledge. That knowledge was found in open-ended comments and provided the lessons learned. The officers' anonymity allows for providing direct unaltered information. Some folks will provide essential and valuable information. Others took out aggressive acts due to questionable understanding or misguided reference and should still perform the duties performed. Note that the tendency to ask if any of the described duties reflect the organization's purpose, protecting future generations' resources. The leaders of both sections of law enforcement are the best in that category. The survey generates the knowledge found from the literature review, and the analyses can show a tendency towards specific areas.

### ***Conclusion***

Resource protection and conservation of our natural resources, especially from losing wildlife to illegal theft, is a common problem on a global scale (Eliason, 2013, Blevins and Edwards, 2009; Crow et al., 2013; Filteau, 2012; Green, 2011; Moreto and Lemieux, 2015; Patten, Crow, and Shelly, 2015). Thus, the necessity for an improved standard for protecting environmental flora and fauna through legislation has been accepted, yet the overall criminal justice system frequently fails to prioritize actual enforcement of wildlife regulation. Instead, the responsibility towards this rulemaking goes to the agencies and non-governmental offices NGOs. The execution level is heavily

reliant on the NGOs' sociopolitical concerns and readiness of their resources (Nurse, 2014). Dybing (2012) discusses environmental regulation and classifies public consciousness's essential arousing around damaging environmental actions. Public engagement is one of the most significant ways they create compliance through the swaying of attitudes, even with the state having so many enforcement implementations for the environment. Deprived of this engagement, environmental damage through social destruction will continue, mainly when corporate profit purposes boost the activity, and weak regulation permits the continued criminal business of environmental degradation. Having game warden and park police understand and conceptualize environmental science, park and recreation, wildlife ecology, biology, and geography while finding focus on human social relations with the environment is the training formula for conservation officers. This study will focus on communication questions using structured analytical surveys administered to both game wardens and park police who work for TPWD. Interviews can help gain further insight into both TPWD game wardens and park police conservation officers that should reveal more questions concerning the unknown.

#### 4. METHODOLOGY:

The data for this study comes from a content analysis of two interviews from the leaders of state park police officers and the leader for game wardens at Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the TPWD state agency during the Fall of 2020, and each leader will distribute a survey to their constituents, state park police officers (SPPO) and game wardens (GW). The Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the proposal after working on the proposal during Spring 2020 along with getting the Advisor reestablished

after his partial move from Executive Officer of the Meadows center to only being a Professor and close to retirement, then working on CITI Certification for behavioral human research training. Completing the Kuali Protocol took an effort that was also filled with volunteering and making time coordinating with Texas State University IRB staff, advisor communication, and learning the needed processes over the summer of 2020, along with being careful with the pandemic of Covid-19. The lack of knowledge on Qualtrics and the policy on transferring documents between Texas State University and outside entities caused further delays. A rework of the Informed Consent and Recruitment letter as the project leader found that if employed or working for Texas State University, then the authority to deliver the components to external sources and the IRB's approval would have come sooner. The IRB confirmed the final Kuali on September 11th, 2020, and the advisor approved the following day, which resulted in interview questions and survey questions to be distributed to State Park Police Officers (SPPO) and Game Wardens (GW) as the setup communication was then authorized through Advisor, Dr. Andrew Sansom. The directed research advisor is a former employee and was the executive director of TPWD under four Texas Governors, having contacts that lead to the number of game wardens and park police. During the data collection process, questions about game warden culture, training regimen, green crime theory, the scope of environmental protection, the potential role of duties and expectations, and volunteer engagement will be assessed along with the educational requirements. The questions were formulated based on the literature review. Some data was unknown until the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 semester and were added to the literature review. An analysis of the variables of interest in the content analysis was obtained for age, gender, race,

ethnicity, home town, rural or urban residential status and outdoor comfort, education, and any specialized requirements for the role. Data collected from qualitative formats and keeping an eye on identifying emergent themes related to the previously described criteria components. Each of these themes will be discussed in greater detail, and the descriptive statistics will be gathered. To better understand each peace officer experience, the survey's relationship to determine respondents' collections of questions will focus on the information and the decisions they made.

This survey will focus on five areas:

1. Green criminology theory
2. Protecting the Environment (Agency Mission)
3. Peace Officer Roles (Scope of Power and Specialized Training)
4. Volunteer engagement
5. Educational background and requirements.

### ***Green Criminology Theory***

When coding the responses for each surveyed or interviewed role at TPWD, distinct groups might emerge between state park police officers or game warden positions. The public's safety and natural resources and environment are surrounding park use and people's interaction with fish and game, or fish and wildlife. These terms "game" and "wildlife" are variables between the position. The purpose of these questions is to identify if knowledge from education concerning the training measures exists.

1. What are the differences in how a peace officer reacts to wildlife crimes vs. the reaction to common traditional crimes?

2. Is there an awareness of global ecological crimes like the unlawful trade of wildlife, crimes of pollution, and environmental destruction?
3. How often is there an investigation on the illegal trade in flora and fauna, domestic animal mistreatment, and are any domestic violence found prevalent during police rounds?

### ***Protecting the Environment (Agency Mission)***

The guiding principle of the agency's mission statements, there were several vital mission variances. TPWD mission corresponding with state park police officers, "manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas and to provide hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations," and the Texas game warden's vision states, "we proudly honor and respect our heritage while embracing the future. We continue to take progressive steps to improve our culture and practices to serve better and protect the natural resources and people of Texas" (TPWD 2020). Protecting natural and cultural resources. Respecting heritage and embracing the future is the game warden's vision.

1. What created the decision to attend training for law enforcement, and what was intriguing about protecting the natural environment?
2. Is there a different feel concerning the mission of conserving natural and cultural resources versus respecting the heritage of resources, or do both the mission statement and vision have identical meaning?
3. When conserving resources, does this mean providing information to people about using less? Is it more about enforcing the limits already prescribed by the laws?

4. Can the duties be performed within Texas State Park areas' boundaries, or does the duty cross the entire area of every assigned county or region?
5. Was the hometown when growing up located in a rural or urban residential neighborhood? Is the same residence style the same type of area? Did the natural environment influence the decision to become a game warden or state park police officer?

Each law enforcement officer will have a coded section when answering the questions, and a view of patterns may help determine if training in conservation helps the overall foundation between the two.

***Peace Officer Roles (Scope of Power) (Specialized Training)***

It is imperative to comprehend the scope of power possessed by sworn employees of TPWD, as each officer may indicate an expansion of law enforcement to identify and shift priorities. General arrest powers provide conservation officers the ability to enforce the entire state criminal code (i.e., speeding infractions, domestic violence, drugs, and sexual assault laws), not just fish and wildlife violations. To acquire the general arrest powers, conservation/natural resource law enforcement officers have to attend and complete their state's general law enforcement academy. To support their specialized focus, the training requirement for law enforcement officers to attend the specific fish and wildlife academy. The TPWD academy is for a game warden, and state park police officer training in a rigorous "training session<sup>1</sup>" or "training academy." This specific academy has specialized training and is also distinctly different than field training.

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<sup>1</sup> TPWD has "training sessions" for their game warden and park police cadet officers that are in the same facilities for law enforcement, lasting 33 weeks for the peace officer academy.

Requiring such training may be suggestive of an agency that is committed to more of a specialized focus involving conservation/natural resources.

1. Are there any pay variances between the game warden and state park police officers? Are the two competitive?
2. How much of this job is protecting nature and wildlife versus enforcement of traditional infractions? Are more infractions about the game, boating violations, or more non-environmental infringements?
3. Can the duties and cultural activities be shared?
4. Is there any specialized training with protecting plants (flora) and animals (fauna)? Having a background in wildlife science, biology, geography, or cultural resources help this position?

### ***Volunteer Engagement***

A job title can speak volumes about what a person does and also indicates their priorities in life. In municipal, county, or state patrol levels, there is a variety in the title of peace personnel: officers, deputies, troopers, and game warden all suggest a law enforcement purpose and identity. Volunteers want to be a part of this identity and positively impact the agency's organizational mission and enable cooperation from communities. Volunteers for services can improve engagement opportunities through collaboration and transparency.

1. Do public partnerships like volunteerism help the law enforcement team in protecting resources?
2. Do volunteers help the law enforcement position through their observing duties, directing the public, and by helping with search and rescue teams?

### ***Educational Requirements***

The last variable of interest examined the educational requirements of the two different roles, and these requirements may or may not suggest essential aspects of occupational identity. Usually, park police and game wardens are required to have a college education due to the knowledge requirements in managing people and enforcing wildlife crimes—the diversity in educational requirements for this law enforcement population. This study’s minimum educational requirements need a diploma or general equivalency diploma (GED), an associate’s degree, or a bachelor’s degree (arts or science).

1. Can a description of education be provided?
2. Does working as a game warden or state park police officer need an educational background in sciences like wildlife management, biology, anthropology, geography, any type of science degree?
3. Do the experience in natural disasters (hurricane or floods) or training in that field as well as any medical treatment (snake bites or pandemics) such as safety and injury mitigation that occurs often in rural and remote areas?

The Survey Questions are listed in Tables 1 through 6. Table one has demographics: age range, income range, race/ethnicity, gender, education, and service years. The first table includes the demographic questions provided in the survey to game wardens and state park police officers and is found next, Table 1, Survey Questions. A total of 131 state park police officers and 551 game wardens have distributed the survey.

**Table 1. Survey Question distributed to 131 State Park Police Officers and 551 Game Wardens**

<p><b>What is your age range?</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> 18 - 24</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 25 - 34</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 35 - 44</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 45 - 54</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 55 - 64</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 65 - 74</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 75 - 84</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 85 or older</p>	<p><b>Race/Ethnicity</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Hispanic/Latino</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Asian</p> <p><input type="radio"/> American Indian or Alaska Native</p> <p><input type="radio"/> White</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Black/African American</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other</p>	<p><b>Gender</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Male</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Female</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Others</p>
<p><b>Education</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> High School/GED</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Some college</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Associates</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Bachelors</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Masters/Professional equivalent</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Ph.D.</p> <p>How many years of experience do you have in this Job</p> <input type="text"/>	<p><b>Kindly choose the best income range from the following.</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Less than \$10,000</p> <p><input type="radio"/> \$10,000 - \$19,999</p> <p><input type="radio"/> \$20,000 - \$29,999</p> <p><input type="radio"/> \$30,000 - \$39,999</p> <p><input type="radio"/> \$40,000 - \$49,999</p> <p><input type="radio"/> \$50,000 - \$59,999</p> <p><input type="radio"/> \$60,000 - \$69,999</p> <p><input type="radio"/> \$70,000 - \$79,999</p> <p><input type="radio"/> \$80,000 - \$89,999</p> <p><input type="radio"/> \$90,000 - \$99,999</p> <p><input type="radio"/> \$100,000 - \$149,999</p> <p><input type="radio"/> More than \$150,000</p>	

Table 2 has survey questions about Green Criminology as referenced from the literature.

The finding out concerning peace officer reaction times between the types of crimes.

Do the officers see ecological crimes of illegal transportation of wildlife? Is there a difference in how the officers find the unlawful trade of plants and animals? When running investigations, is domestic violence also endured in connection with the illegal trade of wildlife?

**Table 2. Survey Question Green Criminology Theory**

To what degree do you agree to the following STATEMENTS?	Green Criminology Theory				
	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
The differences in the way a peace officer reacts to wildlife crimes vs. the reaction to common traditional crimes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am very aware of global ecological crimes like the unlawful trade of wildlife, crimes of pollution, and environmental destruction when interacting with suspects.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
During my investigation, I found unlawful treatment of fauna and flora (animal and plant).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Domestic violence is prevalent during the unlawful trade of wildlife.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Table 3 displays the survey questions concerning the Agency Mission and protecting the environment. Learning if working as a peace officer had to help protect the planet and educate people with proper actions and providing education.

<b>Table 3. Survey Question Protecting the Environment (Agency Mission)</b>					
<b>To what extent do you agree to the following STATEMENTS?</b>	<b>Protecting the Environment (Agency Mission)</b>				
	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Somewhat agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
Protecting the natural environment is part of my decision to work for law enforcement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The mission statement and vision have identical meaning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When conserving resources, it means enforcing the existing prescribed laws.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Based on the previous question, providing additional information about using less than normal use of resources would help this goal.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Table 4 includes job location survey questions and where the officers grew up. Either in a rural or urban environment. The speculation is that the officers grew up in rural environments more often and were part of nature.

Table 5 surveyed the Peace Officer Roles and Scope of Power. Pay variance questioned if their duties created a pay variance. Does the officer feel their role in protecting the environment? The questions want to learn if any of the duties are often nonenvironmental criminal activities such as not having a proper license for the marine vessels, speeding, drinking, and illegal drug violations. Do the attitudes of peace officers' culture affect their daily duties?

<b>Table 4. Survey Questions Protecting the Environment (Agency Mission)</b>		
Please choose True or False in response to these STATEMENTS.	<b>Protecting the Environment (Agency Mission)</b>	
	True	False
My job duty spread across the entire area of the county or region I work under.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My duties are only performed within the boundaries of Texas State Park areas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The town I grew up was located in a rural residential neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The town I grew up was located in a urban residential neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<b>Table 5. Survey Question Peace Officer Roles (Scope of Power) (Specialized Training)</b>					
To what extent do you agree to these statements on Peace Officer Roles (Scope of Power) (Specialize Training)?	<b>Peace Officer Roles (Scope of Power) (Specialize Training)</b>				
	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
There are pay variances between the game warden and state park police officers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My job is more about protecting nature and wildlife enforcement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are there more traditional infractions such as boating violations (more non-environmental infringements)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Daily duties are based upon cultural activities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Table 6. Survey Question Volunteer Engagement					
To what extent do you agree to the following STATEMENTS?	Volunteer Engagement				
	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Public partnerships like volunteerism help the law enforcement team in protecting resources.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volunteers help the law enforcement position through their observing duties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volunteers help the law enforcement position through their directing the public.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volunteers help the law enforcement position through their helping with search and rescue teams.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Table 6 is the survey questions about volunteers. The literature for other law enforcement entities in other states, along with partnering organizations, does use the help of volunteers and checking if the State of Texas also uses the assistance of people who want to help and protect the environment. Volunteers can be trained and want to help. They only ask for acknowledgment and receive a sense of duty for helping, especially on search and rescue teams. Working at River Ranch County Park and a fellow Park Maintenance Tech performs volunteer work for search and rescue. Being able to help a prestigious entity such as the game wardens would be an event worth speaking about.

Table 7 from the survey questions dealt with the educational requirements. The requirements used only need a high school education and hiring officers who know how to catch the criminals to higher education in sciences or criminal justice. Medical training

and experience in natural disasters were surveyed to determine if having this previous experience would only help the professionalism. Having lived through and having the leadership necessary can only help in emergencies. The remaining survey questions

<b>Table 7. Survey Question Educational Requirements</b>					
<b>To what degree do you agree to these STATEMENTS on Educational Background?</b>	<b>Educational Requirements</b>				
	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Somewhat agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
Working as a game warden or state park police officer need an educational background in sciences like wildlife management, biology, anthropology, geography, any type of science degree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
College requirements for working as a game warden or state park police officer need an educational background in criminal justice.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having experience in natural disasters (hurricane or floods) or training help in safety and injury mitigation, which happens most often in rural and remote areas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having experience or training in addition to any medical treatment experiences such as (snake bites or pandemics) help in safety and injury mitigation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Finally, kindly provide other comments that could help the study based on your experience.</b>					
<input type="text"/>					
We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.					
Your response has been recorded.					

continued as the interview questions for the five criteria factors. A pandemic ensued during 2020, and further research guidelines for human behavior outcomes will follow with precautionary measures.

**\*\*\*COVID -19 Amendment.**

**Richard G. Powe**

**COVID-19 Research Guidance**

**Kuali Protocol**

M. A. Geography Resource and Environmental Studies  
Directed Research 18 Feb 2020 – 16 April 2021 (estimate)

Research Title: IRB: #7120 Comparison of Professional Positions and Duties Between State Park Peace Officers and Game Wardens for Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

The concerns about COVID-19 (“Coronavirus”) as it continues to spread, the Texas State Institutional Review Board (IRB) risk review assessment intends for the protection of human participants in the research is of the utmost importance. The amount of additional risk to each participant across this research project can be mitigated through the use of additional questions and will be administered using remote visual technology. Zoom, a web interface that with coordinated efforts can be of the same caliber and quality as a live in-person interview. Precautionary steps will be added to the research procedures to minimize risks.

The participants can always reschedule or cancel the interview time if they feel sick or have any symptoms consistent with COVID-19 during the proposed in-person interview interaction. Research can be conducted remotely via Zoom once the IRB is approved. The remote data collection procedure will minimize risks associated with COVID-19. A risk assessment of participants will be completed before an interview visit asking the questions:

1. Has travel commenced within the last 14 days to a location designated by the CDC to be an at-risk area for novel Coronavirus, COVID-19?
2. Has there been any association with the exposure of a diagnosed person with COVID-19 or been asked to self-quarantine due to the potential of the novel Coronavirus, COVID-19?

- All staff and participants will be reminded of social distancing, covering of face with a filtered mask optional for respiratory interaction as personal protective equipment as needed the prevent the diffusion of COVID-19, washing hands throughout the day in twenty-second sessions.
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer will be available for each interview participant.
- Wipes for disinfecting the interview area before and after each participant arrives and departs will be available.
- The age of the one interview participant is considered at a higher risk, a retired game warden, an older adult. The action to minimize risk is taken.
- Review [CDC recommendations](#) on how to prepare and take action for COVID-19. An amendment is uploaded to Kuali and an email to ORSP IRB <[orsp-irb@txstate.edu](mailto:orsp-irb@txstate.edu)>. Additional submission will be made throughout the study to the IRB through Kuali as protocol changes occur, which minimizes risks.

The Proposal for Directed Research approved September 11, 2020. The research assignment continued in the Fall 2020 with interviews and survey questionnaire.

## 5. DATA:

### **Analytic Approach**

To investigate these issues, a content analysis of the agency state-level law enforcement website investigates the number of TPWD officers who are game wardens and park police and focuses on understanding how their cultures and duties are the same and which duties are different. Scope of the mission statements to be similar, and the power of sworn officers have for each of their duties (special purpose powers of the whole project-based law enforcement), and the focus upon the educational and training requirements that tie together the support of their agency mission statements. Reviewed literature focuses on interviews and surveys to question each officer's knowledge concerning green crime theory, protecting the environment, peace officer roles, and volunteer engagement. These are the data points under investigation using survey questions and interviews for each law enforcement conservation officer. Qualitative data collected from one interview with a state park police officer and another with a game warden.

A review of qualitative information will be conducted for each of the variables of interest related to occupational identity (i.e., job title, mission, training purpose, enforcement power, and educational requirements). This is followed by examining survey and interview questions selected, which helps formulate other research on Federal and different state regions for how their fish and wildlife enforcement operates and functions. The research plan's extent will consider all two-hundred-fifty-four counties and the eighty-nine state parks for the state agency, Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD). Doing so will grasp the information from the people in charge of the criteria laid out by

investigating occupational identities for game wardens and park police officers. A proper count will serve as the descriptive statistics for the potential trends of law enforcement duty variability.

The expectation of findings for the research explores: (1) the occupational, cultural identity of a game warden and state park police officers for TPWD and (2) considers the emerging concern that the duties between the two peace officers are similar in duties even after a widening of work priorities to include more traditional law enforcement. To investigate these issues, a content analysis of state-level law enforcement agency website for TPWD with a focus used to understand better how each peace officer identifies themselves, how they feel about green criminology, their mission statements, the scope of power sworn officers have (limited to a particular purpose or inclusive of general law enforcement powers). The educational and training requirements to support their stated agency missions. The findings should demonstrate that fish and wildlife police agencies are engaged in a work scope that supports a general law enforcement role with degreed college requirements. The study demonstrates many of the fish, wildlife police agencies, and officers appear to be transitioning roles into more generalized law enforcement officers, but this change is not universal and may not fulfill the set goals. Project management knowledge of stakeholders conveys that each officer who provides information upon the survey can determine constraints and deliverables of duties.

## 6. INTERVIEW AND SURVEY RESULTS with DISCUSSION:

The interviews were planned to happen about a week apart at the end of October 2020 and the beginning of November 2020 with a practice session the previous day to ensure the technology worked as Covid-19 has caused drastic changes to people's normality. Zoom, a software package, was used to take them in-person encounters to the next best level.

**Chief Wes Masur (WS)** interview was completed on October 29th, 2020. 9:04 AM. The recording was supposed to be via Zoom recording. The internet was down, so Richard G. Powe traveled to the top of Balcones Ridgeway and the crossroad Chaney's Crossing, where construction was going on for a new member of Whitewater Springs Community. Fortunately, a digital recorder was used to record via cell phone the conversation between Chief Wes Masur and Richard G. Powe having the Interview questions found in the Methodology of the paper "*Comparison of Professional Positions and Duties Between State Park Peace Officers and Game Wardens for Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.*" Chief Masur was phone called during the interview time on top of the hill where cell services are prominent when the internet is out of service and is the place to get service while surrounded by Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge. Richard G. Powe will label the questions as Rgp, Wes Masur will be WM.

**Colonel Chad Jones (CJ)** interview was completed on November 2nd, 2020, at 10:00 AM using Zoom Recording of Col. Chad Jones, Game Warden Leader Office of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). Ended, 11:23 AM. Chad Jones will be labeled CJ.

The first questions consisted of looking at the literature review and the questions formulated based on these components. During the interview, some additional questions came up, and each Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Leader had no problem communicating their passion. The entire transcript is included in Appendices E. Please reference that section when looking for the complete set of interview criteria. The highlights will be what ensues with Chief Wes Masur, the State Park Police Officers leader, and Colonel Chad Jones, the Game Wardens leader. (The questions are based on the literature review found in the research for the differences between duties and culture.

There were many sources, yet few specifics towards the actual duties, more behavior situations that foretold the differences in duties and culture. These types of questions, the best option would be how each SPPO team and GW team provide this in the comments at the end of the survey).

### ***Interview Results Green Criminology Theory***

#### *1. Differences in reaction of a traditional crime or a wildlife crime.*

WM: A crime is a crime, so as trained law enforcement officers, number one, we have to figure out the elements of a crime, that a crime did take place, so every crime, whether it is a wildlife crime or a crime against a person. Determine that there was a crime that took place, probable cause, the elements of the offense. The initial call for a crime when we respond to it, the first thing an officer does when they get there is they introduce themselves and try to figure out what's going on, make sure that they have those elements of the crime. Make a determination if it's an actor or a crime against a person, or a crime against a wildlife resource. It all depends on the investigation. For instance, if you're investigating a crime against property, a lot of times, if you're investigating a vehicle burglary. You've got a non-living thing where there has not been basically like a life taken against like a wildlife crime. Wildlife is not going to be able to talk to you.

Rgp: Yeah, that's very understandable, sometimes the wildlife might have been injured or deceased, or you're going back and finding remains. Is that something you guys do?

WM: Sure.

*Change to Col. Chad Jones:*

Rgp: Texas Parks and Wildlife's different roles and there are distinct groups between state park police and game wardens, and the public safety and natural resources and the environment and the surrounding park. People's interaction within fish and game. I wondered if you could tell me the differences in how a peace officer might react to wildlife crimes vs. the reaction to typical, traditional crimes are? Like maybe, speeding or not having the registration or anything like that, or are they all considered equally?

CJ: That's a very good question. I know you put some thought into these. I would address differences in how a Texas game warden would react to a wildlife crime versus a traditional crime. The reason that is multifaceted as most of our wildlife crimes that we refer to are a criminal act or flagged as misdemeanors, in Texas, a citation like a speeding ticket. Because of that, a lot of the interactions that we have as game wardens are with persons who are engaging almost in a hobby or a cultural way of life. I want to be careful how I word some of this. But an adversarial or a high-tension situation. We meet for the

first time. Many times, it's on private property. It's on at someone's camp or even their house at times, and it's usually a visit of mutuality. The fact that people understand why you're there and most everything we do, ah, involves almost an investigation each time.

Something as simple as checking a hunting license which seems pretty simple. Requires between five to twenty minutes of conversation questioning before you can determine if someone was actually in the act of hunting or not. The people we interact with that aren't actively committing a crime whenever we make that initial contact. Whereas on a traditional crime, it's a probable cause or reasonable suspicious stop, and the infractions already occurred at which initiated that contact in the first place. So, I think that's a big difference sometimes between wildlife crimes because it's not always an active crime.

*2. The awareness of global ecological crimes by the officers. Examples are: unlawful trade of wildlife, pollution, and environmental destruction.*

WM: As conservation law enforcement officers, state park police, game wardens, we're all partners within the agency within the state of Texas, and then we also have federal and state partners across the United States that we have a network. We all try to network together talking about crimes related to wildlife, pollution, or environmental destruction because you may have a specific need or a certain type of environment taken away in one part of the United States. The people that are committing those types of crimes or crimes that are hurting the environment. If you have a crime against a specific type of wildlife resource. For example, a plant where people are going out stealing a native plant in California. We have the same type of native plant here in Texas. Those types of crimes, because the need is going to migrate into these types of areas what I think is important, is we network all across the United States, which we do. We usually do that by meetings, by emails, by updates. We call them intelligent updates, and we send stuff out that says we are having problems with this in the State of Texas, and then I have those in open discussions about the different types of crimes that are out there. Pollution is a huge part. I know Col. Jones will be able to answer that one a whole lot better because there are specific officers in the game wardens that do investigations on pollution and environmental crimes across the State of Texas, and of course, they network all across the United States as well with that team.

*Change to Col. Chad Jones:*

Rgp: You wouldn't catch people doing the wildlife crime during the act. It's; actually, you're saying most of the offenses happens in the past?

CJ: Yeah, the ones that you do catch during the act. Hunting deer at night. Game animals at night from a public roadway. That's a common issue that Texas game wardens deal with, and, you know, that's an **in-act** offense. Some of the differences in that interaction to common traditional crimes are also the nuances of that contact. And what I mean by that is, a high percentage of the time, Texas Game Wardens are very well aware that there are firearms in a vehicle and, or someone had recently discharged a firearm from a vehicle. The initial contact, unlike a lot of traditional police contacts. You go into it,

understanding that there can be ill intoxication is a high factor involved in those types of incidents. Well, you know, not all of 'em. But a large percentage of 'em. So, a lot of times are dealing with intoxicated individuals with firearms that we know that they have.

Rgp: 8:17. That's some bad news right there.

CJ: And it is, and the interesting part, and I think we're delving into, ya know, the nuances and the differences is what you're after in the fields of police work.

CJ: Game wardens are highly trained in verbal communication skills and de-escalation skills. Um, in, you know, when you talk to traditional police officers, they're sheriff deputies or DPS troopers, a lot of them will say that they wouldn't want to be employed Texas Game Warden because everyone. Because of the high percentage of intoxication and firearms. And a Texas Game Warden will tell you, most of the time, that we don't mind that so much because we go into that situation knowing what we're facing. And at the high level of training that we receive at the academy setting prepares you for those types of interactions.

Rgp: OK. Is it kind of like a given?

CJ: The mere fact that you're a Texas Game Warden, and sometimes the nature of that contact sets the tone differently. So, if you're dealing with a bank robber, it's a little bit different than dealing with someone who just created a wildlife crime. Even though both are felonies, I think that the person you are dealing with and the cultures they come from sometimes are vastly different. So, the interaction aren't as volatile. But they can be, don't get me wrong. Game Wardens are trained to identify what that breaking point is like all police officers are.

CJ: Texas Game Wardens are trained to look out for those types of crimes. So, we actually have specialized team members like crimes of pollution. In our special operations division, we have sergeants who work as environmental crimes sergeants. They work like at the ship channels, in Houston, in Corpus Christi, they work with federal agencies and local agencies to test sites regarding illegal dumping of chemicals and illegal dumping of solids. We have an entire special operations unit that deals with how the Texas game warden work and comes into a situation. I'll give you a, for instance, like a real-life situation. As a game warden in Brazos county, I got a call at one time from some police officers who were on a foot pursuit and wound up on a creek in a wooded area behind a shopping complex. And it shows how everything is tied together. After the arrest, they noticed a large quantity of small dead fish and frogs in this creek. I am called. I understand. This isn't normal. We're having a fish kill in this one little section of the creek as was feeding into the Navasota River, and this could be a large thing. This is where special operations and environmental crimes units would come in and give the expertise and testing to see what the water quality is to track down the illegal spill or permitted spill originated. Clean-up could begin and things that that to protect those waterways.

When I think about environmental destruction, I kind of think of things we deal with a great deal, which would be, ah, river issues in Texas. So, like the Frio River, the Nueces River. Some of our rivers that have low rates of flow, ah, where landowners, ah, go in and may dig up sand, gravel, and shale, or try to dig out swimming holes and things like that environmentally is hazardous because it affects an ecosystem.

Rgp: Right. Correct.

CJ: When we have permits for things like that in which we see. We make helicopter flights over those rivers to ensure that people aren't, ah, taking advantage of that resource and changing the river's flow and how that impacts everything.

Rgp: The thing is that many people don't understand that, or they don't realize that, and they need to be educated. I mean, I already know that kind of stuff before I started this degree, but I did not know as much detail. They think that they can dig a hole and make a new swimming hole.

3. *Do you find the unlawful trade of flora and fauna, domestic animal mistreatment, and any domestic violence during police rounds? (Research says often when there are previous crimes, domestic violence in prominent).*

Rgp: I think going forward, once you integrate, you would be able to do that police work wherever you are at. Is that correct?

WM: Absolutely. And you know that is one thing, you know, about an integration, together, and we aren't gonna do a thing but make our agency stronger. Which is going to be able to not only support all the resources of Texas out there but it's gonna expand our partnerships and expand our ability to do or to be more thorough. It is going to be positive, and we're already migrating that way. It just doesn't look like that on paper at this point.

WM: I'll start and talk a little bit about flora and fauna. Traditionally, my team of officer's deals with this in specific state areas, like state parks. For instance, specific wild resources and natural habitat, the okiya type cactus, are very common out at Big Bend and very often very sought out types of plants that people like to put in their landscape for your yards. We deal with groups of people trying to come out there and take those specific wildlife resources, not only from that site but other sites. And I'm just giving the specifics for us, but it can fall to a particular plant, tree. We are constantly vigilant about that. Networking and partnering with people that you know that there is a shortage in the United States for a particular type of plant, and you always have a criminal element that's willing to go out there and take the chance and take them off of protected resources. We do a bunch of backcountry patrols. You don't just ride around in your vehicle. You gotta get out and walk and ensure that these resources are not taken or damaged out in the field. The number of investigations we have on flora and fauna depends on every year. Last

year, we had eighteen investigations, and we were able to make some cases on some specific type of plant removed from our state parks.

Domestic animal mistreatment. Everybody wants to go to their park. Everybody travels to parks as families and brings their pets with them. When they go to a park, the responsibility is to take their pets with them because they make sure they take care of their animals. At times do we animals that are mistreated? Yes, we do. It's not intentional. An example, when park visitors don't understand that you are doing hikes and it's a hundred and ten degrees, and you're going through rocks, and your dog's paws may burn—our job to educate and make sure that there is no crime being committed, to harm animals. Visitors care about their animals, and they put them into an environment where they are not used to, which can lead to improper treatment of the animal. The lack of knowledge by our visitors. Animal conflicts. One group of people that bring their dog and it's the nicest dog in the world and their walking on a trail, and there's the other group of visitors that have their dog that is the greatest dog in the world until they meet up with one another on the trail. Animal fights by putting animals, domestic animals in an environment they are not used to and then having conflicts with other domestic animals.

Domestic violence is found prevalent in our police rounds. We have about ten million visitors that visit our state parks every year. A lot of times, when there are problems at home related to the family, they bring those problems to the park. We do deal with a lot of domestic violence. We deal with a lot of protective orders during our police rounds, and when you involve alcohol and other drugs or things that can alter the mind of people from making good decisions when they are out recreating, then yes, we have the same thing happen for city police officers.

WM: So, yes, we have those people that we've caught doing domestic violence, mistreatment of animals, or stealing flora and fauna. A lot of times, there is a criminal background on these people. This instance is usually not their first time committing a crime, and when you have a criminal out there, that is doing these types of things. They usually had a background in crime. A complete investigation is always needed. An example is taking a cactus from one of our state parks. Often, you're going to find that these people have committed other robberies, theft.

Once your gonna have a criminal can bring those elements into the park, and there is usually a criminal background that goes with them.

Rgp: Well, I wanted to comment on that situation, I know that people go out, people want to go outside, but over 95% of Texas land is privately owned. The only time they can go to these places, county parks, city parks, state parks, and see this terrain, and they want to take some of that home with them. Sometimes, in their mind, it is like they think that the parks for them, and they can do whatever they want. That could be a reason why they are doing it. Maybe they just don't know, and that could be the issue.

WM: Absolutely! You always wanna think that we, as officers, always want to do our best to educate people to be good stewards of the land and the resources we have there.

But, not all the time does that. Did they bring that excellent thought process to our sites? We try to educate people on how to be good stewards of the land. When that doesn't work, we have to take enforcement action to make sure that they understand. We require penalties. Sometimes people just come in with the intent or the disrespect of the natural environment, for instance, the land and the animals. That's why our job as conservation officers is to protect all those resources and specific order. We protect the people, first, because that's our most viable resources, number two, we protect the wildlife and the land, and those things just can't be replaced.

Rgp: That's true, very true. I know that from my personal experience as well, I have some land, and there is (more development) right now. I am parked right in front of a place where they build a home up here on the hill. I know what the lands look like before they were here, and now it's going to be changed and developed, and it can never go back to being the way it was.

WM: Yep.

*Change to Col. Chad Jones:*

Rgp: But that's the way lands—landscapes are. We want to preserve them, but it is tough to do, even in golden-cheeked warbler territory surrounding the wildlife refuge here to protect the yellow bird's habitat.

CJ: Flora and fauna. I think that was actually in there, and with West Texas. It's a growing trend, and they passed that legislation years ago on the illegal targeting of succulents or cactus. We have made cases on the illegal extraction of cactus from private land for sale in the plant world, the nursery businesses.

CJ: So, what they'll do is come in and dig up all the cactus in the middle of the night, and load it on an eighteen-wheeler at night, and drive it into Houston and sell it. Ah, which of course, when you take all the cactus, they're all ecological and environmental concerns again because there's an effect on everything.

CJ: Yeah, so we talked about flora and fauna. Domestic animal mistreatment is not something that we get involved in that much. If we run into things like that, we usually contact the local Sheriff's Office or animal boards that take care of that. That's one of those things that we probably run into just by the mere fact of where we're at, but that is something that we would lean on, the more local authorities for or the county or municipal level to take care of. We've seen not an increase, but I think with social media, video feeds are available. We've had some issues where some district attorneys' taken up the mistreatment of wild animals. It used to be just domestic animals, but now we've had some instances without going into great detail, were like wild rabbits, were inhumanely killed, let's say, I'll just be blunt, using videos. That's something that Texas Game Wardens do take seriously, and we work with the local District Attorney and County Attorney to make sure those types of incidents no longer occur.

***Protecting the Environment (Agency Mission) Interview Results:***

Rgp: Next, we will go the question "*protecting the environment, the agency mission,*" and I know there are like two kinds of statements or mission statements by the game wardens and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, so I imagine they are very similar. I know you guys coordinate together, and that is such a good thing.

WM: Right.

Rgp: When respecting heritage and embracing the future is one of the game wardens' vision, I think that's the same as the park police.

WM: Absolutely. Yes, sir. Our mission is to provide safe recreational opportunities within state parks and provide all that for future and present and future generations. So, yes, our missions are tied together.

Rgp: Yeah, Let's go to that first question. What made you attend training for law enforcement, and what was intriguing as protecting the natural environment?

WM: Well, specifically, what created this vision and this, and I might expand on that. You're talking about the joint academies that we do at the game warden academy that we started in 2014, or are you talking about just in general?

Rgp: In general, or maybe what your personal decision of why you decided to go into law enforcement, and what do you find more intriguing about protecting wildlife and the environment versus being a regular police officer?

WM: I'll tell ya a quick rundown of my history. I grew up in a Texas State Park. My dad was the park manager and park police officer at Lockhart State Park.

Rgp: Wow. Ok.

WM: I lived in a park from when I was two until I was eighteen years old.

Rgp: Sweet!

WM: And then I went to college. I saw my dad's job as a law enforcement officer. Keeping the people safe and protecting all the natural and cultural resources in that park was a very well-rounded law enforcement officer. Seeing all these things to protect that was natural.

So, what led me into this career was growing up in an environment where I loved being outside and being a part of the outdoors. I wanted to see people recreate in a safe place where everybody felt comfortable enough to go where there was a law enforcement presence. After I graduated college, I spent a little time in the sheriff's department's law

enforcement field and over at Texas State on a drug and alcohol task force there before I came to parks and wildlife.

What is so intriguing to me is being able to do both jobs well. That is protecting people and protecting natural resources for the future people to come out and enjoy. I want people to recreate safely. I don't want people to bring their problems to the parks. I want our parks to stay as natural as they can be, so our generations in the future can come out and see them in their natural setting.

*Change to Col. Chad Jones:*

CJ: Yeah, I think that answer. I'm interested to see what that answer is across, you know, the spectrum of Texas game wardens and state park police, for me, to attend the law enforcement happened from an early age. I knew I wanted to go into law enforcement. I kind of thought that natural urge and made up my mind while I was in college, the decision that created that. It's a long story, but I'll make it brief. I was introduced to a police chief in a small town where my mother was getting her driver's license renewed from a very early young age. The police chief took time to take in a scared little kid into his office and talk to him about what law enforcement does for the public, which is the protection of citizens and service, and changed my viewpoint at six or seven years old about what police organizations do. And because of that, it set me on a path toward that endeavor of becoming law enforcement. So, that's one thing we talk about, with me talking about law enforcement layers being very involved in their communities.

Rgp: Right.

CJ: Most of them understand that they met game wardens when they were young, and they understand the impact you can have on youth. So, I am an example of the impact of education and outreach and showing compassion and empathy. So, a young kid that completely changed the route of their life.

Rgp: That's something that I would try to do myself is be out there and try to be part of the education and outreach. I decided I wanted to be a park ranger.

CJ: Mm-hm.

Rgp: When I got let go from Dell, Inc. in 2016, and I've gone to the City of Austin and interviewed with them and applying to Texas Parks and Wildlife, and one of these days, I'll get there, but maybe not. I'm trying to learn all the stuff about geography and the natural world and the environment so I can go out and teach others about it and—and it's awesome. I don't think I could ever be a police officer because I'm so frightened of getting shot.

CJ: Yeah, that's something you can't think about. You know, I don't know how we got into this study, but we had this psychiatrist come into the academy when I went through it in '04. They gave us a questionnaire and never saw the results, and that is a question that

they all have been trying to solve over time is like you just said. There is nothing wrong, either way, but the question was why because some people run into gunfire and others away from the gunfire. You know, and I can't even answer that because most of every game warden that you talk to probably at some point in time has run into something that they should be running away from. It's not a natural human tendency to run towards danger and fire. I just think that just like you said, that overall drive to help people overrides that self-help mentality.

Rgp: Right. You need to stop what's happening, I guess. Maybe that's the reason why you would run towards it because you want to prevent that from hurting somebody else.

CJ: Yeah. Yeah, I would say so. That overriding, ah, urge to be of service outweighs that. So. Often, when the events are over, like you said, you're looking and wondering why did we do that? (laughing from Col. Jones).

Rgp: Right. I agree with that 100%. Ok, let's go on to the next question, *"Is there a different feel concerning the mission of conserving natural and cultural resources versus respecting the heritage of resources, or do both the mission statements and vision have identical meaning?"*

WM: Well, to me, they are very identical. When you have a mission, that is the responsibility that we take very seriously as far as concerning those cultural and natural resources, but conserving that for future generations to go out, and I think our mission statement tells us that is our task. That is our job, what we're doing. I think you find myself and all of the other officers already had outstanding respect for these lands and wildlife that we're managing with all the state parks. We care about 'em. A lot of the reason is why our law enforcement officers are here is because we have a love for the natural environment, and we want to protect that. I do think that they have a similar meaning. Responsibility passed to the agency, and the other is an internal responsibility that our officers have and love for respecting these resources and respecting and feeling good about our jobs.

*Change to Col. Chad Jones:*

Rgp: (Laughter from Richard) Well, I think you answered this before, like, uh, the next question, if there is a feel or a concern in the mission of the natural, cultural resources versus. Oh, no, respecting the heritage of resources. Both these mission statements are pretty similar, or do they have identical meanings or are they different? Do they mean something different to park police or game warden?

CJ: To clarify, I've been the Colonel for three months now.

Rgp: Oh, my. Congratulations!

CJ: What I've done in a short time was that vision statement for law enforcement doesn't exist anymore.

We took it out of our—we took it off of our website in stuff because we need to match our mission statement with the agency. That's what we did, so.

I realigned the law enforcement's vision statement, and you know what? It's just easier to do away with a sentence and separate vision statement because—our MISSION statement is our CORE of what we do.

Rgp: That's good. That's good the hear.

Rgp: Bringing you guys, ah, both together as one unit.

CJ: Yeah, Yeah, that's the intention. Yes, sir.

*Rgp: "When conserving resources, does this mean providing information to people about using less? Is it more about enforcing the limits already prescribed by the laws?"*

WM: Well, I think it does mean using the resources less. We always have to evaluate our resources to make sure there are not overly loved. The visitors to our state parks usually love and respect the resources we have, and it's got to be loved to death. You've got to manage the number of people using all those resources.

Rgp: Right.

WM: To make sure the resources are not destroyed. As an agency, we have to look at enforcing public limits in certain areas, as prescribed by law. The studies our agency does and then recommend the amount of usage that a specific area can take. We want the people to come out and use our facilities. We want to make sure that they stay in the most pristine and natural habitat as before. Sometimes that does mean that you have to limit the number of people using them. We have to understand that and respect that, and then the most significant thing is that we have to convey that message to our users to understand. Again, it's about them respecting our resources and understanding, so we try to do the very best and educate the public on why we have to limit uses in certain areas.

Rgp: Right. Yeah, I understand that because like last year, I was the Leave No Trace intern for The City of San Marcos, and I had this tent, and I'd work it, and they changed a lot of the rules because of situations like wouldn't allow coal burning or wood for barbecue. You had to use natural gas because kids would walk over the hot coal on the ground. The City of San Marcos used to allow people to drink alcoholic beverages on the land, right there in the park, and they can't do that anymore. They can only use the river, and people needed to understand that. A young boy drowned at the San Marcos River, and the Park Rangers could not get to him in time to save him because of the tables and so many folks at the access point. The rules have to change after a tragedy. I had to go explain all these things to people, and it was fun to do, but also most would understand afterward. They used to let the grass grow out, but then so many people would trample over it, and now the critical plant structures are surrounding trees at the river edge

enclosed by fence structures. That is how they keep it mowed for the people to see where they walk, friendly and tidy.

WM: Yeah, absolutely!

*Change to Col. Chad Jones:*

Rgp: So, when you're conserving resources, does this mean providing information to the people about using less, or is it more about enforcing the limits prescribed by laws?

CJ: Yeah, that's like a kind of a dual question, I feel. Um, you know, it's like the education portion of things and ah, the mission focus behind what we do. So, let me hit both of 'em.

Rgp: OK.

CJ: When conserving resources, does this mean providing information to people about using less? Conservation for future generations is to make sure that the generations behind us have the resources for enjoyment. That's not just hunting and fishing, but that's also enjoyment. So, it's to make sure that we maintain 'em.

I've learned over my lifespan as a Texas game warden and even my interactions with other countries like Africa where there is a preservation model rather than a conservation model. In Texas, in the United States, and the North American model, it's a conservation grid model, where everybody takes part of it. The hunters, the fishers, the outdoors enthusiasts. They all have buy-in on that, so the education portion of it, which is that to educate people on why we have to get the next one. Why we have the limits are important. Why we have seasons about the habits and the life cycles that are behind it? I think that's where parks and wildlife hit a home run is because all of our divisions work together.

We're all turning towards the mission. That's why we did away with that vision statement. And then I have biologists, fisheries biologists, wildlife biologists, paddle trail enthusiasts, everybody pulling the same direction to make sure that game wardens aren't the only ones that have to try and figure out why it's important. You know what I mean?

I think that's the beauty in what we do.

Rgp: I agree that preservation is more important than conservation. I know there is a distinction between the two.

CJ: Mm-hm.

Rgp: Like conservation is to use the resources for later, where preservation is limiting the resources so others, I think can use that later and still be beautiful and show the same aesthetics as it once did, and if have to limit people going into parks, and I like how

that's, you know, ya have to get on the internet and getcha a ticket/permit, or you can become a Texas Master Naturalist, like myself, and go there and volunteer and get to go places other public don't get the opportunity to enjoy some of the same preserved places when you have the time to do it. Most folks work and don't get the time to play. So, how do we get to that limit for folks getting out and enjoying these places? We have to make it available to over seven and half billion people to use that resource. Not just the three hundred thirty-one million people in the United States.

CJ: Yeah. As the population increases, those constraints always increase and how we get there. In Texas, we're fortunate because they recently passed a constitutional right to hunt and fish. It's not a question anymore of whether that's an alienable right or not. It's a fact now. And, will that change twenty years from now? I don't know, but I hope we're educating Texans in such a way that they understand how a healthy environment correlates to healthy humans.

There is a national training that I've intended to coach. A person from Harvard had been doing a study on the correlation between health and the outdoors. Her testimony is this. She had been paralyzed from the neck down due to a disease. They told her she would never walk. But her husband would get her up every day and just take her out in the back yard, and she'd see the birds on the walk and the trees and feel the wind. Well, low and behold over two years, she's walking on her own again during the study for Harvard. How can the environment be used for physical rehabilitation? How do a healthy mindset and a healthy world bring that—that equilibrium to us? I think that's an important question. People believe in science now, and they believe what they see on social media. If you can get that message out on different— and I hope Texans, and I believe most do, and that's— that's part of my choice for Texas game wardens as well, is to spread that message of how important these wild things and wild places as our director often uses is, to the overall health of us as individuals.

And you know, what's our piece to the message as Texas game wardens, how do we make that happen? How do I get that message out to a Master Naturalist such as yourself that if not for our daily patrols, that you may not see a red bird or a mocking bird? Because just the mere fact that someone's out there to enforce those migratory birds, those bird treaties that passed.

Rgp: Right.

CJ: You know, so many years ago, that if not for that effort.

Rgp: It was 1906.

CJ: People would, 1906?

Rgp: Yep, that's when they made that international bird treaty, in was 1906.

CJ: Mm-hm. So, you know, since 1895, Texas game wardens have been here, and you know, we—we build off that foundation of—of community orientation and education.

Rgp: I just know that because I just read about it and did some reading last week. A refresher for a few years back when I first learned about the 1906 International Migratory Bird Act, and it was fresh in my mind.

CJ: Right! Good. I'm terrible with dates, so I'm glad you remembered.

Rgp: Well, I had to know this for several exams over the years and the embedding into the brain, but once you have to know something for a semester, and then more stuff comes in, and all that goes bye, bye, and you're like, oh no! But you get the overall impression, right?

CJ: Yep.

Rgp: Next, *"Can the duties be performed within the boundaries of Texas State Park areas, or does the duty cross the entire area of every assigned county or region?"* I guess for park police, it is only around the park boundaries, but then for game wardens, it extends or is integrated between them both?

WM: Any state park police officer's primary duty is to protect the people and the resources within a state park. Our state park police officers have commissioned officers with full jurisdiction authority in the whole State of Texas. Once you find that, you find a population of people who visit our state parks. They're usually there for a very short time. A lot of times, our duties lead us just outside of the park. Our primary patrol area and area of responsibility is that state park. But when it comes to doing investigations. Working with other law enforcement partners, which are the game wardens and DPS, your county, and local law enforcement officers, just about general law enforcement crimes, we work outside the park. As a state-licensed officer, we perform traffic stops, if you're in your patrol vehicle and traveling from a park, and you're on the outside boundaries of the park, and somebody passes you. You see somebody not operating a vehicle safely, and then our duty is to stop them and do a law enforcement action on them, whether it is just a warning anywhere to a citation.

Rgp: Ok. Yeah, so that's pretty neat. The next question, Rural, and urban residential neighborhoods. Where you grew up? The hometown, where you grew up, and you already talked about how you grew up pretty much in a state park, and your father worked for 'em. So, you are the State Park.

WM: Yes, sir.

Rgp: And you are the natural resources, and I imagine that I'm sure that influenced your decision to become a state park police officer.

WM: Absolutely, and the only thing that I will expand on that part too is just after most people complete their education part of their life, you kind of figure out what you want to do. It turned into a love for wanting to do law enforcement to make people safe, having them provide a safe opportunity for people to do whatever it was outdoor, and caring so much for the resources that I saw that needed to be preserved and protected for future generations, led me to this career at parks and wildlife. It's been a great career, and I'm very happy with it.

*Change to Col. Chad Jones:*

Rgp: So, this next question was about the duties, and Chief Masur covered this—the boundaries of Texas State Parks area, but you guys, game wardens are throughout the entire state of Texas. Is that correct?

CJ: Um-hm. Yes, Yeah, Texas peace officers are peace officers throughout the state. Texas game wardens are game wardens throughout the state. We used to joke, which may be a little orange. If a young game warden says, well, this isn't my county, it's not my issue. An older game warden would go, well, I thought our patch said the State of Texas on it!

Rgp: Right!

CJ: (laughing) That responsibility doesn't cease just because of the county line. As a matter of fact, not only county lines but Texas game wardens. Game wardens work with other conservation enforcement agencies. Colorado, Wyoming, Florida, South Carolina, California. There, I can't even begin to tell ya how many cases have been made assisting other state conservation agencies with violations that occurred in their state. Under federal law, they're reexamining the Lacy Act right now. The Lacy Act allows. It does allow ya to create wildlife, a wildlife crime in California, and it's also a crime in Texas once you cross those federal/state lines. Not only do we cross counties, but we cross state boundaries as well and international boundaries when it comes to this, so creating that mindset that what you do here today can impact someone two thousand miles away.

Rgp: Right.

CJ: Ya just kind of dive into that. We have that international wildlife crime organization. They share information, and they are looking at trying to create a repository for information. To where someone in California, a game warden can type in a name that they dealt with in Texas, and it'll pop-up.

Rgp: So, it gives them a whole history of what this person has done, which is good. That's pretty good. That's good news. I'm wondering, you said that this natural environment helped you come to do that? That interaction growing up actually helped you become a game warden, or was it what the officer did for you when you were young?

CJ: Um-hm. It's a mixture of both. Here's the story. Whenever I was young, Game Wardens would come in and speak to our classes when we were young, and they would talk about wildlife crime. They would talk about, you know, the right way to hunt, they would ask questions, and things like that it's kind of odd when you grow up in a rural environment, ah, I meant, and I'm not gonna say that I was poor by any means, but we weren't well off. And, ah, you know there is always, every person at some point in time regardless of your social, economic status or what size town you lived in, have some kind of personal issues that they deal with.

Rgp: Yep.

CJ: And one thing I always remember is being from a small town and those game wardens. I looked up to them because when you saw 'em, they were professional. They always had their stuff together, and you were like, man, ya know, that person understands. They're together. They understand. So, one thing I've noticed from—from my raising, however, is not everybody's liked the game warden in the small town I was in, but they respected the game warden. But I knew what he or she stood for at the end of the day, and they knew that behind those convictions, they maintained that solid foundation. You didn't have someone that was on one side of the fence and one side of the other. They always had their—their mission was dead on focused. And people understood that they were part of the community. That's what I think somebody asked me that question the other day if you took ten game wardens and lined them up, you're gonna find probably seventy to eighty percent are involved in their communities somehow via parent/teacher organizations, via the school board, being a coach for little league, ah, ya know via, donate in time at a food bank. These game wardens, our there, are part of their communities. They are not aside from the communities. So, a young guy like me coming up to have that person and be able to model that was important.

Rgp: That's pretty neat. I like that. Having models that you can look up to when you're young can have a detrimental effect and become a great, huge factor in what you do the rest of your life—and being able to see somebody that you can model your life after. That's pretty neat to have. Somebody, like a Texas game warden, come talk to you when you're young.

CJ: Yeah. I'm sure not everybody has that story. We talk about how I grew up in a rural environment—surrounded by national forests. Texas is not a huge public landscape, and I was fortunate to grow up in the middle of public lands.

Rgp: Right.

CJ: As a kid, when you're seven years old, I hate to say this out loud on video recording. But just to jump your fence and go walking for, you know, twenty-four hours.

Rgp: Well, some people do that. I had a friend I met hiking at Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge. He died recently of cancer. He was nineteen years older than me. We used to go hiking at Doeskin ranch. I would always stay on the trail, and he

would talk about going off the trail and exploring more. He convinced me to go off it. He would say, we're not gonna hurt nothin. We're just walking.

CJ: Yeah, right.

Rgp: I would tell him, well, we're not supposed to be doing this. There is a sign that tells folks to stay out of that area. We did it, and he explained how a few times he was caught by Lonnie Castillo, the police for US FWS, and claimed he would not do it anymore.

CJ: Yeah, I grew up hunting and fishing, and I always understood that and always enjoyed the outdoors more than just the activity rather than just hunting and fishing. Here is one thing I always tried to embed into my children and to the game wardens I talked to.

So, my youngest son came down to visit with me the other day, and he. It was just he and I, so, you know, father and son time, my youngest one, and we went to Lake Pflugerville, which is right here in Pflugerville.

Rgp: Right.

CJ: I mean, a subdivision surrounds it, ya know, there's traffic.

Rgp: Those are some of my old stomping grounds. North Austin, Decker Lake.

CJ: Yeah! We had a great time. He got to interact with ducks. He got to understand the difference between a coot and a grebe. He got to see fish, you know, he got to interact with other people. I guess my point is, I try to take. They live right now where I grew up. So, they have the opportunity I had. What I'm trying to instill with them is and in Texas game wardens is, when, me, like a pearl at Texas Parks and Wildlife, law enforcement, can go out and enjoy a public space like Lake Pflugerville, and understand that the difference between someone growing up in a rural environment and an urban environment can mirror each other. It's just you have to understand that there's a three-hundred-foot circle with trees and bushes in it and birds, that is the outdoors to that urban environment. And they can enjoy that and love it just as much and passionately as someone who grows up on a thousand acres.

Rgp: Right. That's true. Very true.

CJ: And that's the thing. People identify with what is outdoors differently. So, people look at it as ten thousand acres on the side of the mountain. Some people look at it as a bike trail in downtown Austin. It's all about perception.

***Peace Officer Roles (Scope of Power (Specialized Training) Interview Results:***

Rgp: The next section for the "Peace Officer Roles (Scope of Power) (Specialized Training)," and I've already seen that there are pay differences between game wardens

and state park police officers. It looks like, the first four years that you guys get paid a little bit more and if you multiply that, you know, the four years times twelve, times four years, it winds up being 28K+ more, but then I looked, and they make that up, if they work, year five and six, and almost to year seven they make it all back up with the difference in pay.

WM: Yes, sir.

Rgp. But then they expand on that more. I just wanted to know, are two positions competitive? I mean, don't you guys learn the same things when you are going to the academy?

WM: Yeah, absolutely. First game wardens and state park police officers attend the same training academy, and they learn the same thing from every required basic peace officer training that involves specific fish and wildlife to the game to protecting natural and cultural resources. All our officers who began in 2014 have the same training from that point on. It is really important to make sure that every officer we have accomplishes the agency's mission, whether it's law enforcement or conservation law enforcement. There are two different things that both groups do there, and we integrate and partner very well when it comes to this. I know one of the questions right there, are we competitive? Yeah, internally, we are competitive, but we are also respectful because we are partners.

Yes, there is a pay difference like the documents I provided you. A state park police officer and game warden cadet pretty much make similar salaries through graduation through their first four years, and then there is separation because game wardens are on salary schedule C, and we're on a B schedule salary the state auditor's office does. State park police officers have not been put on schedule C like game wardens, DPS, and other groups, and the other state law enforcement officers in the State of Texas right now. Thus, where you see the separation in salary is basically from that four-year mark to the end of their careers. At this time, the pay difference is, a game warden, after four years, will make anywhere between seven and fifteen percent more than a state park police officer over their career.

Now, when you talk about advancement up the ladder-type, our leadership positions, which I'm talking for game wardens and state park police, you have lieutenants, captains, majors, and then a chief position. Those positions are traditionally about fifteen percent lower than the game wardens of that type. That is simply because state parks police officers have not put up on schedule C yet. Furthermore, if some are an agency, we are looking to make sure we have salary equity. Ah, but it does take legislative enactment to make state park police officers be put on the pay schedule C, and that is something we are looking at for the future. We think there has been a problem in the past as we have had some police officers' transition to become game wardens, and they have to transfer because they have had the same basic training.

Rgp: Yeah. I read you. Thank you!

WM: We believe that once we have the salaries where they are equal out there. It will be where either the game warden or the state police officer doesn't have to look at the dollar figure side. They can make sure they're in the right position for themselves, their families, and their goal, whether it is to be more game warden-type work or state park police work.

Rgp: Ok. That's awesome. This report hopefully will help. The next question is about ah, how much of the job is protecting nature and wildlife versus the enforcement of traditional infractions like boating violations or traditional environmental infringements?

WM: 100% of our job is protecting people, nature, and wildlife. So, when we're all on patrol out there, you know, our goal is protecting all of those elements.

Rgp: So, it's everything? Yeah, ok, understood.

WM: The people and those elements, yeah. So, that is our goal the whole time. So as far as infractions and Texas State Parks. More than anything, we find that we probably spend between sixty and eighty percent of our time enforcing traditional crimes related to the penal code, the traffic code stuff. And when I'm talking about that, I'm talking about speeding violations, anywhere from speeding violations, seatbelt tickets, vehicle registration, DWI, the use of drugs, that kind of stuff. We spend more time in a park on a specific patrol doing that stuff rather than boating violations and environmental-type crimes related to the agency's mission for protecting wildlife and resources. So, probably about 30% of the time, are we doing actual investigations related to environmental crimes. We spend a lot more of our time doing traditional law enforcement work. I think when you hear Col. Jones, their time is gonna be a little bit different. They are going to probably spend more time doing wildlife and nature enforcement conservation work. We do a little more time doing that than we do because we got the full gamut of everything when you're in a state park. We are your first responder, we're your law enforcement officer, and we're your conservation law enforcement officer. We wear or have a lot more happening there. It's how I look at every state park because we're like your officer within that own little city. We deal with a variety of things.

Rgp: It sounds like you guys might do or have more duties than the game warden might.

WM: It does—it does at times. But I think what it is because traditionally, a game warden is patrolling a county most of the time. They're explicitly working as partners with other law enforcement agencies. Of course, when they're on patrol, they see those crimes that every law enforcement officer has to look for, but they're in the areas looking for wildlife, and fish, and conservation officer type of crimes. We have to look at every crime that could be committed.

Rgp: Yeah, yeah, the next question was so you could talk about the duties.

WM: The penal code, traffic code, stuff like that, or what the game wardens do?

Rgp: Yeah, the next question I had was about sharing some of the duties, but you answered that in the last question, or you kind of combined that, which is good. So, maybe we can skip that. I want to make sure we have to give you time because we're already looking like I've already talked to you for forty-two minutes. (One of my goals was to keep the interview at a time that does not interfere with Chief Masur or his duties).

WM: Well, all right.

Rgp: So, anyway, is there any specialized training for protecting plants, the flora, animals, and fauna? Do you have the background, or do you require a background in wildlife science, biology, geography, or cultural resources? Does having this background help in this position? Or do most people have just criminal law?

WM: It's a balance of both. When we hire new cadets to come in, having a background in understanding and knowing the different types of flora/fauna, animals, wildlife, having a background in cultural resources, so all of that is extremely beneficial. I think it makes the employee who wants to come work for us, they have that knowledge and care about it. That's why they probably want to come work for us. Having that knowledge is really important, and it's beneficial. We do have specialized training within our academy class. We have specific training in identifying every plant, every animal, every fish, every species. Then to understand can the animal be hunted and the hunting seasons, and locations. A background sure does help, but we do retrain that in our academy environment.

Rgp: Ok. Oh, cool. And that lasts at least 30 weeks, or is it longer?

WM: 33 weeks

*Change to Col. Chad Jones*

Rgp: OK, that's pretty neat. I like that. Well, now we're going to move into the next section, um, for peace officer roles and specialized training. I know both the park police and game wardens go to the training academy in Hamilton, Texas. They spend thirty-three weeks there. Is that correct?

CJ: Yes, sir.

Rgp: OK. I found at first, when I was doing this research, that Dr. Sansom thought that there might be some pay variances between the game wardens and park police. I found the pay scale for each. I was not sure how they were. Well, the first four years, the park police made a little more, and the salaries were pretty similar across the board, but then, game wardens make more, later on in their years of service for their career. It stops increasing after twenty years, but you need to be recognized as an officer to make more versus just the years of service. If you were doing well and promoted as park police, you could make more is what I thought. Chief Masur showed me another excel template that there is a pay discrepancy, and it has slimmed down from what it was, yet it is still there,

and I wanted to know what you think about that. Is there a pay variance between park police and, if there is, are the two positions competitive?

CJ: OK. Yeah, there is a pay variance at the moment between park police and game wardens. Going into history, I don't have it all in front of me, so I want to be careful how I introduce that. Historically, as you said, there is a difference in the jobs and the job description from what park police officers did even between then and today. So, park peace officers of the past were, required to do what we called non-commissioned or civilian-type jobs.

Rgp: Yes. It is starting to come together.

CJ: Which they would upkeep, ya know, they would upkeep buildings, they would mow yards, they would take the trash.

Rgp: They were like the Superintendents of this Texas Parks and Wildlife—wildlife, for all state parks. I did not realize that until I spoke with Chief Masur on Thursday, October 29th, 2020. I did not realize that the Superintendents were former police officers.

CJ: Yeah, with that being said, there has been a shift on the state park side requiring a four-year college education. We are going away from the dual role of being park superintendent and a peace officer. Some of the park's superintendents have maintained that authority, but most of them went to the civilian side. I think what's happening now is you're shifting into more of a role that models what Texas game wardens do. And when I say models that, I'm saying the education requirement, the role that they play there. Interaction and the law enforcement world. Inside and outside of the park whenever they are called upon. State park peace officers, now, unlike when I first started when we have, and I think we get into that later. You know, natural disasters, hurricanes, and fires. When we're together, we are better than we ever have, as far as reaching out to our state park police officer partners and working out of the same emergency plan. With that being said, Wes had done a good job in trying to bring park police officers up to a paid ferry, but it's a legislative issue. Texas game wardens are on a schedule C pay plan, and Texas state park police officers are on a different pay scale. Only one or two things could happen.

Rgp: They're on a B pay scale in the hopes of moving to C. I guess is that the only solution?

CJ: Yes, they desire to move from schedule B to schedule C, like most Texas peace officers. As state employees, they are on schedule C. So, those conversations are in the works, but I guess the most important part I would point out is, there has been a dialog started. I don't know if Wes covered that or not.

Rgp: Yeah, he did a little bit.

CJ: State park police officers in Texas game wardens are on a linear chain of command, where it's one law enforcement division and not two.

Rgp: Yeah, right.

CJ: You have different roles, but it would be under the same umbrella.

Rgp: I think that could be really good because you both go to the same academy and have identical training since 2014 and learn the same things. Wes says he is getting short on peace officers as some are moving over to become game wardens and can have the same training to do that. So, that's pretty neat.

CJ: Um-hm.

Rgp: OK, so, I guess this job is mainly about protecting nature and wildlife versus traditional infractions. Like boating violations or speeding tickets. You get called out for people hunting when they are not supposed to be, and people who don't have their fishing license?

CJ: Um-hm. Yeah. So, how much of the job is protecting nature and wildlife versus enforcement of traditional infractions?

They intertwine so much, depending upon where you're at. In some counties, our primary goal and focus is conservation law enforcement first. Because of the nature of the environment, we operate in, we run into so many different things. One thing, drugs, illegal narcotics, are a massive part of what Texas game wardens do, and when I say that, it's not like, well, yes, there's been times when we had to deal with cartel type loads. We're talking about, you know, on the U. S./Mexico Border, where game wardens are out there working people who are illegally netting our resources but then we get into a chase with a cartel boat that has, ya know, a thousand pounds of marijuana on it, or, cocaine at the bottom of the boat. They're bringing their narcotics across our rivers and our lakes to get there. We're in tune with that as well on the border. Inland, a lot of it is personal use narcotics. You get a lot of methamphetamine out in the woods because of the clan descent nature of the manufacture of it. The traditional type of thing that we really have taken an enormous part in is protecting children, which DPS started in the Governor's Office.

With the training that Texas game wardens are taking, we've realized that we can identify children who are being trafficked and/or held against their will. So, we've found missing children, we've found children who are being sexually assaulted, who are part of the sex trade. Illicit trade and the reason that being is often state park peace officers are highly involved in that because a lot of the times, these predators take these children to parks so people won't see them. They can't find them. It looks like it's your kid when you're in the park from the outside looking in.

Rgp: Right.

CJ: But you're trained to see cues. You pick them up, and we're highly involved now, game wardens and park police officers trained with DPS, side by side so that we can identify those types of things. It's interesting. I always say the same things happening in the river, and the woods can get very interesting (starts to laugh as a release mechanism).

Rgp: Yeah, they can.

CJ: We're highly trained in that. Our primary focus is conservation law enforcement. The friends of all Texas laws, game wardens deal with every day.

Rgp: Yeah, I like that. That's good. Thanks for giving that information.

CJ: Um-hm.

Rgp: Um, I guess you've kind of talked about the duties and cultural activities already?

CJ: Um-hm.

Rgp: We can skip that question if you like.

CJ: Yeah.

Rgp: Is there or do you have any specialized training for protecting plants and animals? You got that training when you went to the academy for 33 weeks?

CJ: Yeah, most of that happens, and we have an FTO program, now, that's doing an outstanding job of field training officers, so a lot of the game wardens will learn what's important in their areas. Texas is an area that is so varied in ecosystems.

Rgp: Right.

CJ: Like the North Texas plains and the mountains of West Texas to the East Texas woods and forests to the deserts.

Rgp: So many ecoregions.

CJ: Ya know, I don't know, I would have to look.

Rgp: There are so many different ecoregions. I mean, I've learned these and know of them. (An Ecoregions of Texas Map is included in Appendices C. This reference can help visualize where Col. Jones referenced. Look to West Texas and the Chihuahuan desert, follow to the East or Northeast. There are 12 categories of Texas Ecoregions and fifty-six subcategories).

CJ: I've never really looked at how many we actually have. I'll give you a for instance, I was working in West Texas as a field game warden for mule deer, and we entered a ranch

on the plains. I mean, it was grass plains, with pronghorn antelope standing out there. We went through the ranch gates, checked some hunters. We went through an actual mountain range, which was mule deer, and all that sheep, and when we came out the other side, we were in the Chihuahuan desert. So, on one property owner's land, was three different ecosystems, basically, environments.

Rgp: Right.

CJ: Rolling plains. Well, flat plains with grasslands, mountains, and dessert. I just don't know how many states other than California where you find that in.

Rgp: Not many.

CJ: Yeah, we used to require a wildlife science, biology degree. Now we require a four-year degree, but it doesn't have to be specialized anymore.

Rgp: OK. Do more people do more of the criminal investigation in criminology?

CJ: Yeah, I think it's a healthy mix. Like me, I'm a criminal justice major from Sam Houston. That's what I chose to do.

Rgp: That's where my sister went, Sam Houston.

CJ: Oh! Bearcat.

Rgp: Yeah, I'm a Bobcat.

CJ: We have a high percentage of people from Texas A&M. We have a high percentage of people from Sam Houston. I think when you look at some of those environments, in the rural counties around those colleges, a lot of them, what you learn in the academy. What you find out is that you'll learn patterns and trends on how wildlife operates, usually through your relationships with landowners and game wardens. Yeah, that's what I tell people. I'm not what you would sometimes say a traditional game warden, because people say that they sometimes think of people who understand when food plots out, what the moon phase is, and when the deer are moving. Where I grew up, I'd say we were on public land, so you didn't, we didn't plant food plots. We didn't have tree stands. We didn't have box blinds.

Rgp: Right.

CJ: We didn't have a lot of traditional things that you see in Texas. So, it was more of what you would say was a natural hunting model (laughing).

Rgp: Not everybody understands those things that you learn, you know, growing up in the vast country, what you were just saying like, about planting and explaining those

different things to bait and everything. I mean, you get that training on the job and being associated with other people, friends, and those who do that professionally.

CJ: Yeah, and that's correct. It was also put into the mindset of Texas game wardens and through that FTO program, that (Field Training Officer) Program that not everybody knows that and it's up to us to teach the community we live in. Now, when I say the community, we live in. I mean other game wardens, but it's OK that a game warden doesn't understand. Let's just be honest about this. That it's OK if when you come to the academy that you don't know what a red drum is, from the coast, because you grew up inland. We'll teach you that, and if you wind up on the coast, we pick people who show innate abilities and the traits to learn that kind of information.

Rgp: OK.

CJ: They're willing to learn. So, like for me, I've been in East Texas, Central Texas, South Texas, South Texas Coast. You just have to have the capacity to understand how things work and look at it from a different view.

Rgp: Sure.

CJ: That, you know, when that red snapper come in, and you know when it's essential to be out there working, you know? You don't necessarily need to know the biology behind it, but you just know that snapper there. You know? (laughing)

Rgp: (Also laughing) Sure. OK, there had been some confusion about it. I thought that sometimes, a lot of the game wardens had wildlife management or wildlife science or knew about wildlife ecology. I thought I might want to start doing that type of study, but then, with various injuries, I most likely won't pass the physical.

CJ: Mm-hm. Yeah, so, in some states throughout the United States, they do that. They're dual. They're biologists and wildlife law enforcement, you know, we moved away from, ya know, I don't know if we were ever in that bottle. The first game wardens didn't have guns but, that's a whole different reason behind that because of peace officer status, and that's what changed. We shifted away in 1975, 1978, somewhere in there, to peace officer status, and that's what changed how the law enforcement division does its job today. That's why I told you about the importance of the relationships with our other divisions like biologists. That is where we learn a lot of this from. I can sit down with the director of the Inland Fisheries Office, and he can explain to me why this is so vitally important, and it's my job as the Colonel to take that information and present it to the field in such a way that they understand the importance behind the biology factors of it.

### *Volunteer Engagement Interview Results*

Rgp: Ok, thanks, Chief Masur. I'm gonna go to the next part about volunteer engagement, and it's something that I've been doing is volunteering. I've been volunteering my whole life, but then I started making sure people know about it since I got let go from Dell, Inc.

back in 2016, and I became a Texas Master Naturalist and became a certified interpretive guide. I volunteer at all of these places. I've been doing this for parks and—and U.S. Fish and Wildlife because it's fun to do.

WM: Sure.

Rgp: So, do public partnerships like volunteerism help the law enforcement team in protecting the resources?

WM: 45:18. Absolutely! I will tell you that it is one of the best partnerships that we have out there because we find a group of volunteers interested in protecting all the parks' resources. Those people are your educators to the visitors that come out there to visit the site. They are also your eyes and ears when they see somebody abusing something or misusing something, and they can notify law enforcement officers to make those contacts and handle it either from an educational standpoint or in a law enforcement type context. But volunteers are people who care about our resources. People that come out there and have respect for everything that we provide out there. Um, and provide that educational stuff for park visitors out there. It's irreplaceable. That's one of our best. It's one of our best tools that we have as an agency out there—people who volunteer and care about those sites. Number one, they lead by example. They're out there taking care of the resources other people that don't understand the resources see how they are performing and what they are doing out there, and so they copy that. So that is a huge thing, and then, of course, these volunteers teach them how to respect and utilize the resources correctly. Of course, our agency, ah, employees do the same thing. But, it's pretty hard when you have, like I said, just under ten million visitors a year. You can't touch everybody.

Rgp: Right.

WM: Not all the time do people when they come to parks do they read all the rules and regulations nor understand how they should be respecting those things. The more people we have that communicate that strong message out there, the better off we are.

Rgp: Yeah, I agree. I also believe that I already know the answer to this, how the volunteers help law enforcement positions through their observing duties, help direct the public, and help in the search and rescue teams. I guess that's something that. I mean, it takes some special training to be able to do that, right?

WM: Oh, Absolutely. And we have, you know, some very well-trained search and rescue teams and officers out at the parks. But it can't all just be done with officers. It has to be done with volunteers that are knowledgeable of our sites. They are knowledgeable of all the resources we have there. We have lost people or have had folks who have been injured out there. So, it takes a full gamut of volunteers and takes partners from fire departments, local EMSs, other local law enforcement agencies to come out there and help make sure those missions that we're doing are successful because we want everybody to come out and enjoy the park safely. We don't want them to get injured. It does take a wide variety of people to come out and assist with those duties. When dealing

with the public, especially when on search and rescue. Those people have always been our eyes and ears, just like our employees are. If we notice things or volunteers notice things, they can communicate that to our law enforcement officers, and they can go out there and handle the incident accordingly.

WM: Then, of course, we encourage you to reach out to a park manager there about being a volunteer and learning that site, and if there is something you want to travel around the state and do, we want you to go through our agency volunteer representative. That way, number one, we've had all of our volunteers. We want to make sure that they understand our mission, and we want them to educate and teach people correctly. We vet all of our volunteers to make sure they are the type of people that give parks and wildlife a good name.

*Interview Change to Col. Chad Jones:*

Rgp: I've always wanted to possibly use that volunteerism to get employed one of these days because working for free doesn't pay the bills any of the time. Do public partnerships like volunteerism help the law enforcement team in protecting resources?

CJ: You know, ah, that's a tricky one for me cause I don't do the volunteer portion of it.

Rgp: Do you work with volunteers? Do volunteers work with game wardens?

CJ: Yeah, so, I guess that's the thing. We used to do ride-along programs, and the face of that has changed. The day in and the day out of, say, engaging in, and or actually taking part in law enforcement activities as a volunteer doesn't exist. So, I wrote it down here. This is a key factor that I'm working on as I sit in this chair. How do we pay the volunteerism and better explain to the Texas game wardens how that works? Because it does, so, Master Naturalists, such as yourself, have a desire and ability and love for the environment and what they do, and to have a Texas game warden be able to have that conversation with you like we are today.

I appreciate this conversation. I learn from you more than you learn from me most of the time.

Rgp: That's awesome!

CJ: But I hate to say, I don't think that as Texas game wardens, we have done as great of a job as we could to engage our volunteer systems out there. Most of ours have been non-governmental organizations, such as Ducks Unlimited and National Wild Turkey Federation. They've been geared towards hunting and fishing.

Rgp: OK. So more?

CJ: So, the Rosetta stone for me is how do I get the Texas game wardens, and you connected to understand that it doesn't have to just be about hunting and fishing. I will

say this, National conservation law enforcement agencies across the nation are trying to figure this out at the moment because it's my benefit of the Texas game wardens to you.

Rgp: I shot a dove when I was like fifteen years old, with a 30 aught, and then there were all these mosquitos all over the place, and as my friend and I went to go get it, we left it there because we didn't want to get eaten by mosquitos in Clute, Texas in 1987.

Ever since then, I decided I don't want to hunt anymore. It wasn't for me. I like eating beef, chicken, fish, deer, turkey, and stuff like that. Still, I just don't feel the need to kill the animals, and I try to treat wildlife like they are just special like I do every domesticated animal that I have, and, but that's just me. Many people do like to hunt, and they need hunters out there because I understand the need to keep populations of deer and overgrazing. (So, they don't starve due to megafauna being eliminated ever since humans arrived on the planet).

CJ: Um-hm, yeah, OK. So, conservation relies on hunting as our North American model, as you know. I appreciate your viewpoint on that because what I would say is you know about a lot, and there is a growing number of people, I think, who has been introduced to the hunting industry or the hunting aspect here lately because of people getting away from processed type foods. With wild game, you know what's in there. There are no antibiotics and nothing else. There's this pure movement going there. For me, for instance, as you said, this is personal information, but I got tested over a year ago, and I'm allergic to a lot of things. So, I've been a vegetarian for over a year. So, some people look at a Texas game warden and then start looking at them kind of sideways when I say I'm a vegetarian.

Rgp: Well, fruits and vegetables are more important.

CJ: That's the thing for me. Me too, and I'll be very clear, like for me, other than occasionally going duck hunting or dove hunting, like you said, I probably, I don't actively hunt that much anymore, just because of the nature of my job. So, when I was a kid, I enjoyed it, and as I grew up and got older, I got into this game warden world. Some game wardens love it. As for me, I'm out there working every day in the woods with hunters, deer, doves, turkey.

Rgp: It's like you're hunting anyway, right?

CJ: Yeah. That's what I'm saying. It's like, for me, I didn't want to go re-engage in that on my time off. I tend to spend time with my family.

Rgp: 1:03:28. Right.

CJ: 1:03:29. I go, OK, this is what we're gonna do today. So, it's kind of like boating, but when I was a Texas game warden in the field, I spent, you know, eighty to ninety hours a month in a boat. So, that's the last thing I want to do: come home and get back in a boat, ya know?

Rgp: Right.

CJ: A lot of game wardens love it, and their family loves it. I guess that's what I'm saying. To get back to what we were talking about, I'm trying to bring together, like you said, to engage Texas game wardens as persons and understand that it's not just hunting and fishing. It's those outdoor opportunities, and the importance to the environment overall is a goal. I think they understand it, but how we connect your organization and my organization? I had a theory. My theory has always been until we have master naturalists become Texas game wardens and Texas game wardens become master naturalists. We're not going to crack the code. So, it's about inclusion really and truly.

Rgp: I didn't know that Texas game wardens were not master naturalists. I mean, I don't know all of them, only a few from my chapter and a couple from other chapters.

CJ: Well, I'll tell you, like the organization itself. I don't have the numbers. I know Mike Mitchell. He used to work here. He was part of the master naturalist program and highly involved in that, so he understood and could get that message across. I'm not saying that there are not or couldn't be. What I'm saying is, until we can identify the term of a non-consumptive user—people who enjoy the environment but don't take wildlife.

Rgp: Right.

CJ: How can we bring that mindset. I'm kind of struggling a little bit with how we bring, how do we connect those two worlds, and understand that Texas game wardens aren't just hunting and fishing. It's not just coming and getting with the program. It's, we're on the same mission.

Rgp: Yeah. I agree. I always thought a Texas game warden was on the same type of mission, and I never really understood why. I never really saw or hear about game wardens, I guess, now that you talk about it. I never really see them in the master naturalists. I've found people who work as park rangers for education and outreach, do maintenance for parks or work for TCEQ, or are retired environmental scientists. That's the part I was trying to get into, the education outreach or work maintenance for a park. Yeah, it would be good. I mean, we could go on trips or interact somehow and be involved. You said that stopped. You don't have to go hunting to enjoy the outdoors and want to protect, you know, the world. Some naturalists hunt. I've overheard a few folks.

CJ: Yeah, I agree. We're both on the same mission. We just do it differently.

Rgp: (Both laughing). Right.

CJ: You know what I mean?

Rgp: Yeah. So, since you don't work with volunteers very often, having them help with observation duties or helping to direct the public, or I don't know if they ever help you in search and rescues. They are qualified and know their stuff.

CJ: Yeah, what volunteers do? We have such a good working relationship with our landowners throughout Texas. But that's vitally important to what we do. Without our landowners and their assistance and understanding and having that education, we couldn't do our jobs; I mean, you might have one game warden in a county of a hundred thousand people. So, the public's eyes and ears are valuable to us and how we do our job. We couldn't do it without them.

CJ: You know, we don't have an official volunteer program like some states like California have a volunteer program where people come in and repair vehicles, and ride with game wardens, and pick up animals that need rescue. We don't have a volunteer program in Texas like that, but other states do. Observing duties and directing the public. At times during a disaster, some civilians come in with boats to help. Most of the time, they work with county governments, but we work alongside what they call the Cajun Navy and such entities to assist. If people need rescuing at the end of the day, people need rescuing and don't go through all those organizational boundaries. If not, we're just gonna leave them at their house because we don't have to go there.

### *Educational Requirements Interview Results*

Rgp: So, anyway, ah, so talking about the degree requirements, I guess it's a bachelor's degree is now required to be a police officer?

WM: That's correct. Our agency for state park police officers and game wardens has had the degree requirement since I believe it began in 2008. What that requirement does is we feel like we could a more well-rounded applicant if they have a strong educational background. Uh, because they have had to put in the extra effort to make sure they've got that bachelor's degree. Um, they're more experienced and have ah, more education in the wide variety of educational classes you get with a bachelor's degree. Since, you know, you can't just take one thing, you have to diverse group there. So, we feel like they can learn the ah different, unique type of law enforcement job we have since it's not a wholly traditional law enforcement work but it's also conservation law enforcement work and all of the different backgrounds that you have in wildlife management, biology, conservation resources, they all play into every law enforcement job we have. Having that full range of education has been very beneficial since we have enacted that mandatory, ah, bachelor's degree.

Rgp: But on top of that, wouldn't each peace officer have to do the Tcole (Texas Commission on Law Enforcement), is that correct?

WM: That's correct. So, part of our 33-week academy is the "b-pop" training. That is the 'basic' police officer requirements for the State of Texas. It is about eight hundred, no, excuse me, seven hundred to seven hundred fifty hours that gives you the correct classes just to do law enforcement duties. So, we have that aspect of it, and then we have the conservation and wildlife aspect that you learn in our academy. So, you learn two different things.

Rgp: Oh, cool. Yeah, I've been learning about that, the conservation-type parts and stuff since 2017, and I like it. I'm still doing it. I was thinking about, well, I never wanted to get shot. (I have read that since 1919, nineteen game wardens have been killed in the State of Texas, five by drowning). So, I didn't want to do the other part.

WM: Yeah, none of us want to do that. (laughter for us both).

Rgp: Right—right.

WM: None of want to get shot sort kind of thing, but unfortunately, but I will say this, the jobs for both a game warden and state park police officers are inherently dangerous. Often, traditional law enforcement jobs, let's say you're working in the City of Austin, at least you have a lot of other law enforcement resources. Many other officers on patrol can assist you. A lot of times, we are the only officer out there, and you're back up, usually is not four or five minutes away. Often, they can be anywhere from on average from twenty to thirty minutes out, or you can be at a state park like Big Bend and, it's two hours away.

So, you've gotta have great knowledge of law enforcement and know, ah, you know, and have a number one, how to protect yourself in be a smart law enforcement officer.

Rgp: I also know that your surroundings, like know wildlife management. I don't know if that's like the following question about it's better to know sciences like wildlife management, biology, anthropology, geography, or another type of science degree if that helps.

WM: Oh, we think a combination of, well, it's always up to the unique individual. Yes, having that background is a crucial part of the law enforcement and conservation officer job that we do out there. But you also got to know that you are a police officer too. Whether you are a game warden or a state park police officer, you are a police officer. You have to deal with the same things they have to deal with that other law enforcement officers deal with. You don't do it as consistently and as repeatedly as they may, which sometimes can be more challenging. Ah, because you usually get better at it when dealing with something a lot more dangerous or ordinary. So, we have to focus our training to ensure our officers perform their job safely. State Park Police Officers are very well educated on every aspect of traditional law enforcement and conservation law enforcement.

Rgp: That's awesome! Well, what do you think about the preservation of law enforcement? Making sure to limit people's access to make sure that things stay beautiful.

WM: Yeah.

Rgp: I mean, is that part of it, or is that combined?

WM: Absolutely! We utilize the other subject matter experts at our agency when it comes to biologists when it comes to people who do studies on the land in stuff. To

communicate to us the amount of usage and things that you need to preserve. That way, we can educate people and protect those areas. So, our agency works as a team when it comes to making those decisions.

Rgp: Awesome. Well, so, now that we have global heating and climate change is happening, and I don't know if you think that is attributed to people's overuse of resources or not. But it's happening. Possibly there could be more natural disasters, hurricanes, floods, and training in that field. Also, being trained in medical treatment like snake bites and pandemics or training in treating injury could help while in the rural and remote areas, correct? You have that training in that injury mitigation, which helps a lot because you sent me that report, and you guys aren't even on the same schedule. Schedule C, where the other forces for the city police have back up only minutes away. You're out there on your own sometimes and could be. Yeah, it could be two, three, four hours before somebody gets out there for support.

WM: Absolutely, it all depends on your location in the State of Texas. Natural disasters, we all have training as we're part of the SOC, the State Operating Center activated by the governor you have natural disasters or emergencies. As you can imagine, our agency, state park police officers, and game wardens. We're trained to be out in rural areas. We're also trained in boat operations, whether it's a swift water operation or routine operations. When you have a hurricane or flood, we're the primary response agency.

That has the resources to perform life-saving measures. State park police officers and game wardens are traditionally sent to disaster areas to support the local law enforcement and first responders in those areas. We have the big boats too.

WM: We do have specific training in swift water rescue, boat operations during adverse conditions. Not everybody has that. Medical treatment, like you, were saying too when you're that officer in the Big Bend area or out in places where you're the first responder who has training and is a paramedic. We serve as triage for people. Whether it's snake bites or injuries out there, we take care of emergencies because we're the first people on the scene. We have excellent training in stabilizing patients regarding injuries, not only in the parks but also outside the parks. Because we're the first responder, and we want to provide first aid until we can get the person to the hospital or those emergency paramedics can get to them.

Rgp: Oh, Cool. Is that training part of the 33 weeks? Or is that something?

WM: Yes, sir. That's part of it. It is part of the academy training, and then usually every two to four years, we have recertification on first aid, basic first aid, CPR training.

A lot of our officers carry the AED since we're around water. We carry little kits that are for drowning resuscitation. Things to help or assist with when you run into an emergency.

Rgp: Is there anything else you would like to add, Chief Masur?

WM: I also think it's essential for everybody who gets to look at your project to understand the vital role our conservation law enforcement officers play in protecting the natural and cultural resources here in Texas. Like you said earlier, Texas is about 95 percent private, so the 5 percent or so of Texas that is public want people to come out and be good stewards of our land. We want them to enjoy and recreate safely. I'm hoping that your project will reach some people who will enjoy those resources. And do it safely. That way, ah, the future generations can see them in their natural, pristine environment.

Rgp: I also hope that it might help get you guys paid equally.

WM: Absolutely. We've got many people working on that, but yes, I appreciate that, and I'm glad it's recognized by your team too, and you understand the value of both being equal, especially since we're partners within this agency.

Rgp: Yeah, I'm just wondering why there was a separation between the two in the first place. But that's a different story.

WM: Yeah, yes, sir, I do think all that is gonna come together to make us a better agency and more efficient.

*Change to Interview with Col. Chad Jones:*

Rgp: Right. Well, I guess we'll go to the last section, which is education requirements. I guess we already talked about and went over the education description. Years ago, all you needed was a GED or high school education. Do you know what year they required a diploma for four years?

CJ: You know, the numbers are coming down every day to where it's a bachelor's degree requirement.

Rgp: Do you think having a degree in wildlife management or biology or anthropology or geography or a science degree would help somebody who would be a game warden? Does that matter?

CJ: I think the Harriet that may come to play as we said, if you, just to be blunt. If you didn't grow up in an environment that the natural state of the world was part of what you did every day, and I don't know if that's too broad of a term. But if you grew up in an area where you had wildlife roaming freely with your cattle and your horses and your chickens and your ducks. The natural world where you grew up hunting and fishing, and you know what every species of fish is. Then I guess biology or a geography degree may not benefit you as much then it would take someone who has had all of those experiences.

Say you decided you wanted to be a Texas game warden, and you haven't had those fishing experiences and the hunting experiences. You didn't grow up in the natural forest or on two hundred acres of land. Is that impairment to being a game warden?

No, we can teach you that, but showing up with a biology degree, might help. Yes, it might help because you understand the natural world and how it's working. Depending upon what' cha get, you know. Look, we have a lot of wildlife management. I don't know the percentage. We have a wide variety of people who have had wildlife management degrees. It seems to be a common thread. If it's not criminal justice, it's wildlife management.

Rgp: Yeah.

CJ: Business degrees, surprisingly, are here, but I'm not so sure that's not a generational thing. I don't know if it helps to be a game warden. I'm just wondering if it's more of a culture and generational thing that group of citizens that came up. When business was what you wanted to do, you're supposed to be an entrepreneur and independent. Ya wind up being a Texas game warden.

Rgp: That's good stuff. I'm writing down notes of what you're saying. It's like I'm in class and learning, and you're my instructor. Oh, well, let's go to the next section, and I know we are getting close to an hour of talking. So, I like to volunteer myself, being a Texas Master Naturalist.

CJ: Mm-hm. Yes, sir.

So, that helps. The biggest portion of ours is working with our landowners and with our constituents and people throughout Texas and getting them to understand that common, mutual goal of conservation for future generations. Allowing them, and having that open dialog that when they see things that aren't, um, that aren't against the law and/or out of policy, they can address that through operation game fees. They can call our hotline. They can call our dispatcher. They know they're local game warden. They just call them up on the phone. Hey, this is what I saw today.

Rgp: But then, you might get overwhelmed with phone calls.

CJ: Oh, we do. Those people with game wardens in San Antonio and Austin, and some of our urban areas, sometimes struggle with how we provide that service with the number of game wardens. There is a little bit of shift going on. It's kind of strange that we're trying to increase our numbers in our urban environment because of population, but at the same time, we have a lot of people who live in urban environments that go out to the rural communities.

CJ: Well, the weekends and stuff like that, so you've got this weird shift to where the rural communities' populations double on the weekend and then go back to normal on the weekdays. Then you have that population coming into the rural communities, and back home, in the urban environments don't understand what game wardens do.

Rgp: It goes back and forth like that. I also know that there are people that live in urban communities, and they are for the outdoors, and they like to go fishing, and then they go down a river and know where all the good spots are for fish where nobody else is at. The landowners say, hey, this is my land, and you can't be on it. They try to respect that, but maybe some landowners don't realize that the waterway is for everybody.

CJ: That's correct, here comes that education part, again.

Rgp: But then something the river can shift; it meanders and changes course all the time. When it runs dry, when you touch the land, you are in violation and trespassing.

CJ: That's correct. It's an interesting thing, especially when people know their first time on the river is new landowners.

Rgp: Twenty years ago, I decided to become an accountant because I was good with numbers. I worked for Dell, Inc. After close to seventeen years. They released me. I decided I wanted to work in the outdoors instead of in an office.

CJ: Mm-hm. Here you are.

Rgp: I don't know if I chose something different twenty years ago, would I be a game warden? I was like, just helping people understand and working in education and outreach is what I'm looking to get into.

CJ: When I started college with an animal science degree because when I started you had to have a specific degree, and then also grow up in a rural community and I don't do it anymore but, when I was younger, I rodeoed for a living, and I would go to college on a rodeo team. I sometimes get into this mindset that hey, I have to be an ag science major because this is my life story. I think you get some people, such as myself, you get introduced to a new way of thinking. Hey, I don't have to live in this little box. I can be whatever I want to be. You know what I mean? Then you get the courage from all the relationships to say. I'm gonna change my path. I guess now. We're talking philosophy.

Rgp: We have one more question, and you kind of talked about it a bit. The natural disasters, hurricanes, floods, or knowing about medical treatment for snake bites or now we have a pandemic. Um, such as safety and mitigating injuries that can happen in rural and remote areas. I put a question mark there but wanted to discuss it. It's not a question, but what are your comments about that? Like having somebody experienced in natural disasters and things like that, I guess that would help.

CJ: Would that help?

Rgp: Yeah. I'm sure that helps game warden or park police to know about that kind, to treat a person with an injury, previous medical training. Well, I know that you guys are out in remote areas. It takes so long for backup to get to you, so knowing how to treat

somebody would probably be beneficial if there is a medical emergency. (The question would be for a person who wants to be game warden or park police officer).

CJ: At the academy, we train in basic first aid, tourniquets, wound care, medical, some kind of medical emergency type training. And then hurricanes and floods. We had swift water training where you went down the Comal River and the river and went through the tube chutes. So, you could learn how to swim in swift water, but now we have an entire swift water rescue team that learns how to operate boats in swift water conditions. They learn the proper way to do things, and they get recertified. Trauma care comes back to our military personnel that comes back from overseas, and they've had that training and understand the importance of bringing it into our division.

Rgp: OK, cool.

CJ: Everybody is first aid certified. Everyone is trauma care certified. Tourniquet certified. Everybody goes through water survival.

Rgp: And you have to get recertified after several years?

CJ: After a set time, I can't remember the actual certification. Our swift water folks get recertified yearly, just so they will be on the safe side, but we started the officer water survival training, a very in-depth course on how to survive once you hit the water. We do that at swimming pools across the state. We are almost all certified now. We only have one class left. In the nineteen nineties, when you hired on, you didn't have to know how to swim. Ya just became a game warden, but drowning was one of our number one causes of death in the line of duty.

Ya know, we've realized, over time, that it's finally important enough to operate safely in and around the water. So, we have implemented that program now.

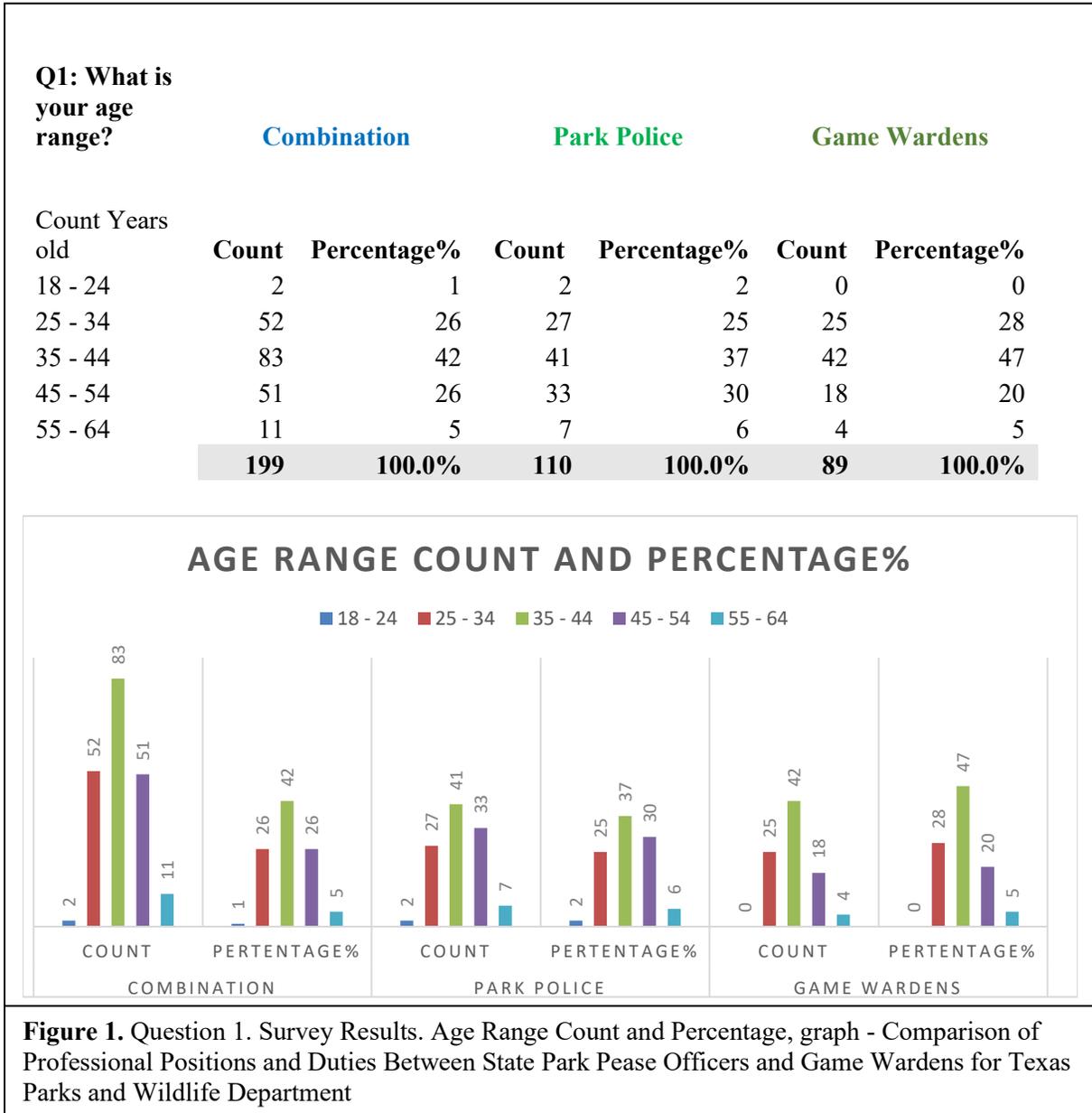
Rgp: The whole thing that you guys are talking about, coming together, to be one unit. That's awesome. Instead of having two separate units, one is being paid by the fishing licenses, and the other is the sales and use tax.

CJ: That's our biggest issue, not so much coming together. It's this behind the scenes on how those budgets work. Because it's federal law, and it's against the law for me to take the money that state parks are working off of and then co-mingle that with law enforcement money because of the way it's set up in the funding streams. So, the fact that Texas game wardens and state park peace officers care about each other and what each other does and can understand how that works together, I think, is the easy part.

The hard part is for me if I'm a lieutenant colonel, and Wes is supposed to figure out how you pay for it.

Looking back at the literature review, interview answers are comparable to most of all of the stages in the theories along with the two game warden interviews by David Todd. Our

two peace officers have the same knowledge and as we continue the survey think that the

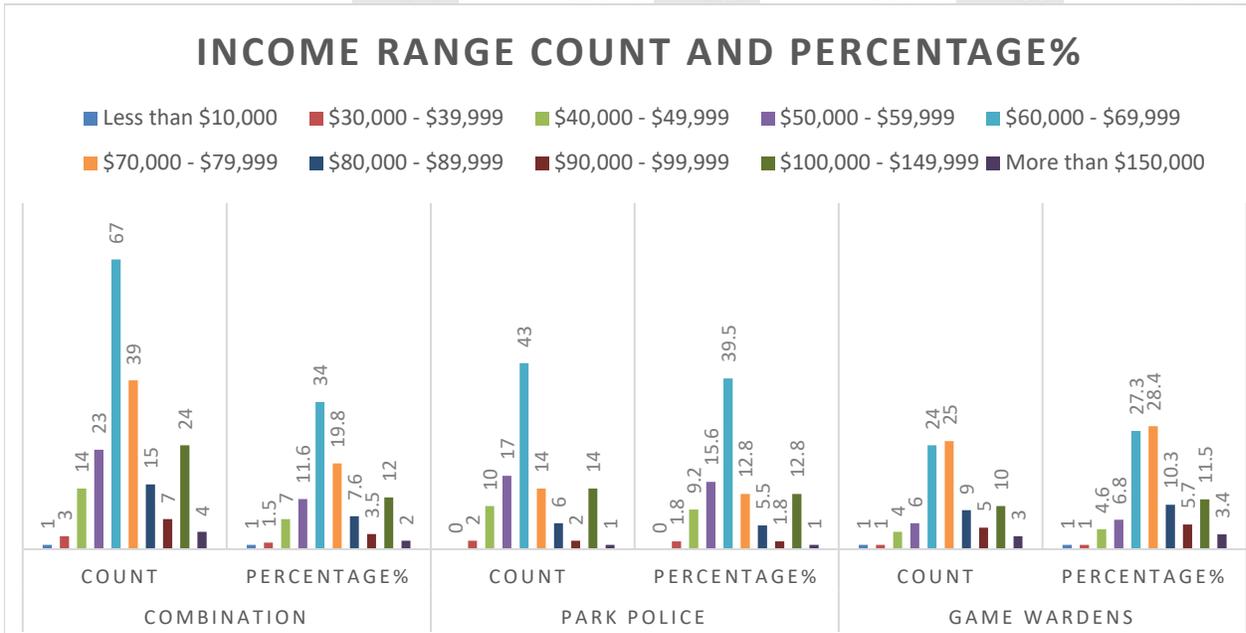


duties are now analogous to one another ever since combining the law enforcement training in 2014. Survey question results are provided in Figures 1 through 6, with commentary on the predominant figures. Figure 1 includes Age Ranges. The results say that of the 199 combined respondents, overall an 83 count or 42 percent of the workforce is between 35 and 44 years of age. SPPO is one percentage point below the combined

figure, and the game warden category is 5 percent higher. Figure 2 reveals the survey

**Q2: Kindly choose the best income range from the following.**

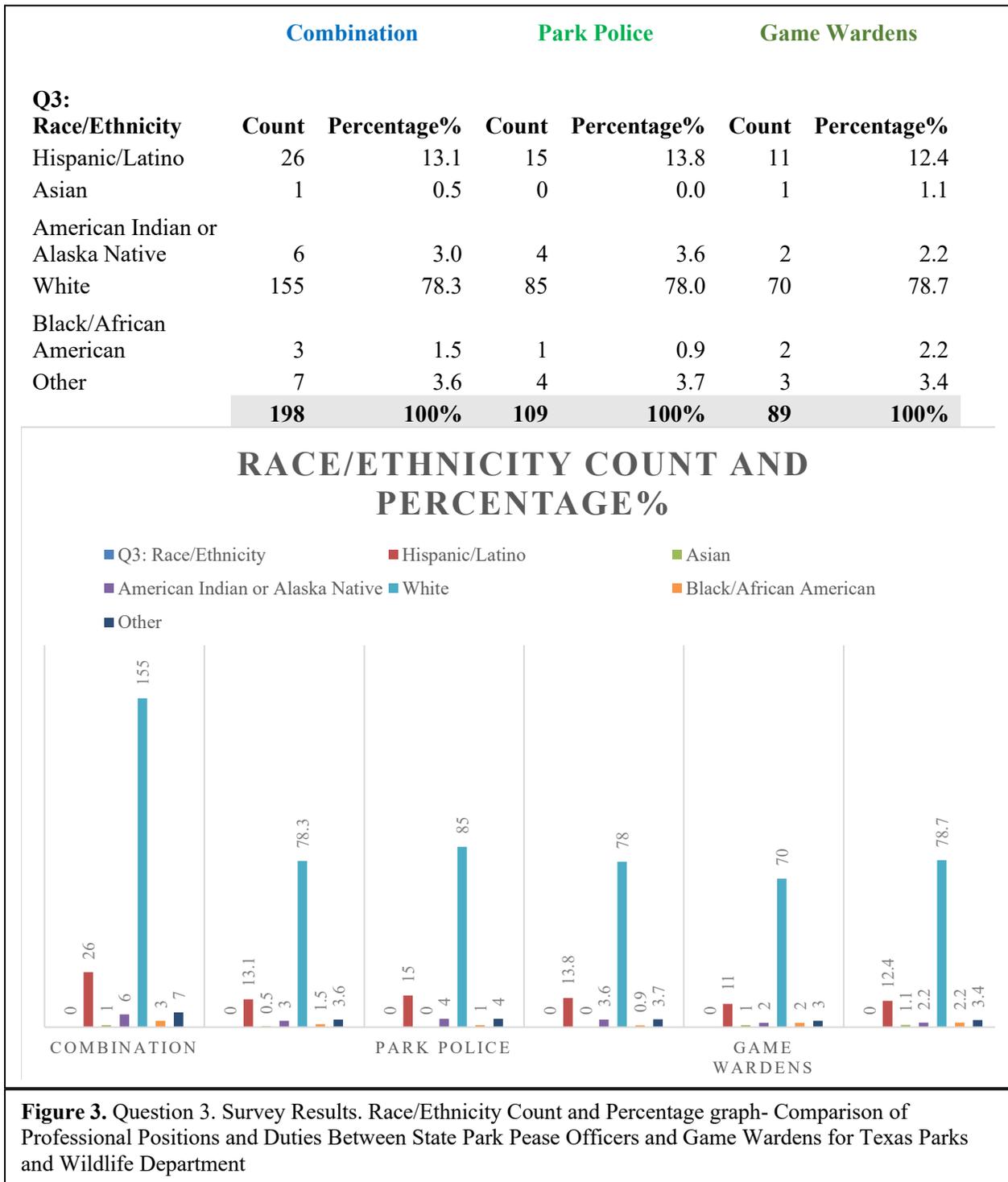
	Combination		Park Police		Game Wardens	
	Count	Percentage%	Count	Percentage%	Count	Percentage%
Less than \$10,000	1	1.0	0	0	1	1
\$30,000 - \$39,999	3	1.5	2	1.8	1	1
\$40,000 - \$49,999	14	7.0	10	9.2	4	4.6
\$50,000 - \$59,999	23	11.6	17	15.6	6	6.8
\$60,000 - \$69,999	67	34.0	43	39.5	24	27.3
\$70,000 - \$79,999	39	19.8	14	12.8	25	28.4
\$80,000 - \$89,999	15	7.6	6	5.5	9	10.3
\$90,000 - \$99,999	7	3.5	2	1.8	5	5.7
\$100,000 - \$149,999	24	12.0	14	12.8	10	11.5
More than \$150,000	4	2.0	1	1	3	3.4
	<b>197</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 2.** Question 2. Survey Results. Income Range and Count and Percentage graph - Comparison of Professional Positions and Duties Between State Park Peace Officers and Game Wardens for Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

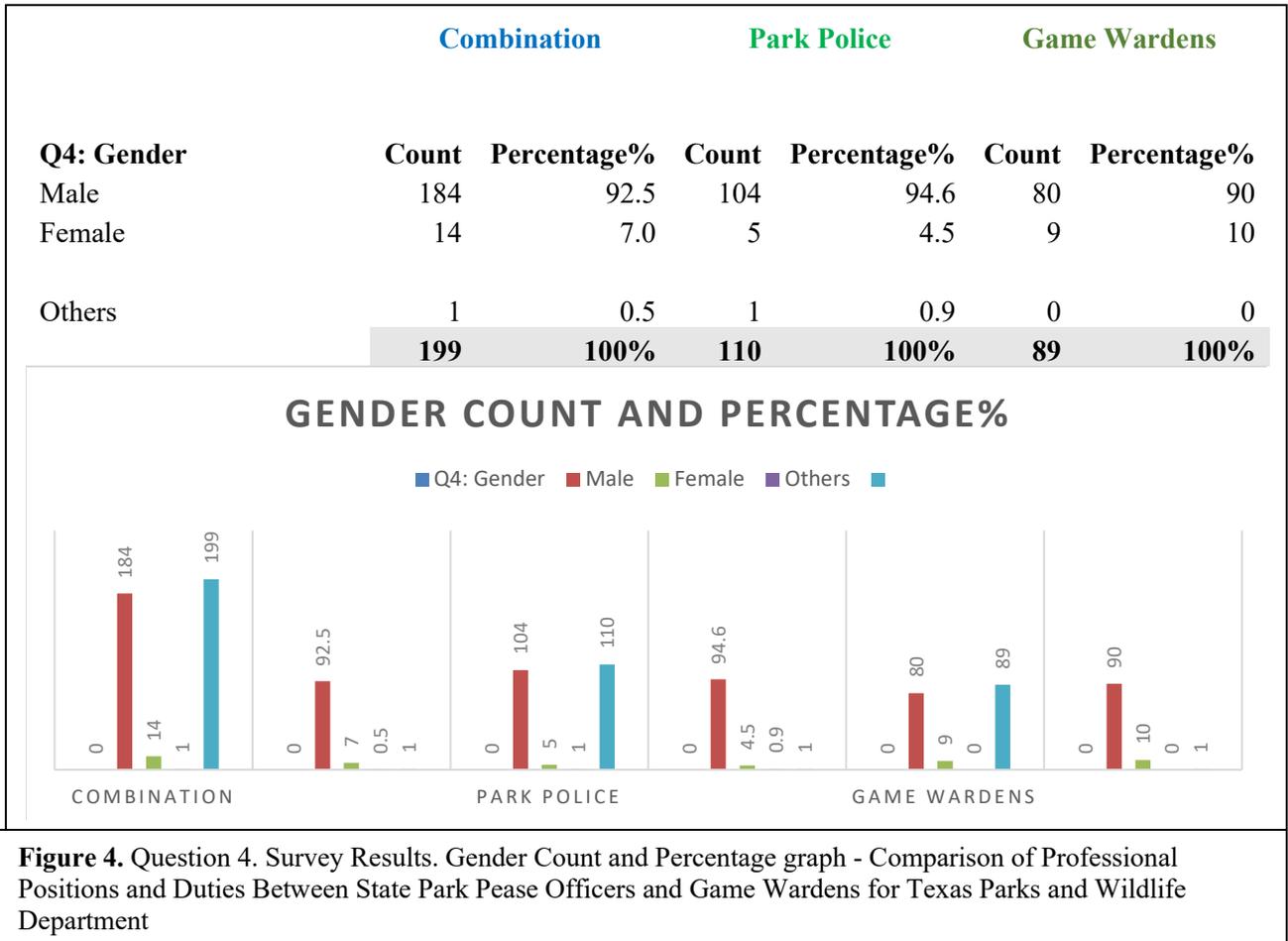
results for the income ranges between SPPO and GW.

The highest-paid folks in bulk receive over \$60 K while a more significant number of



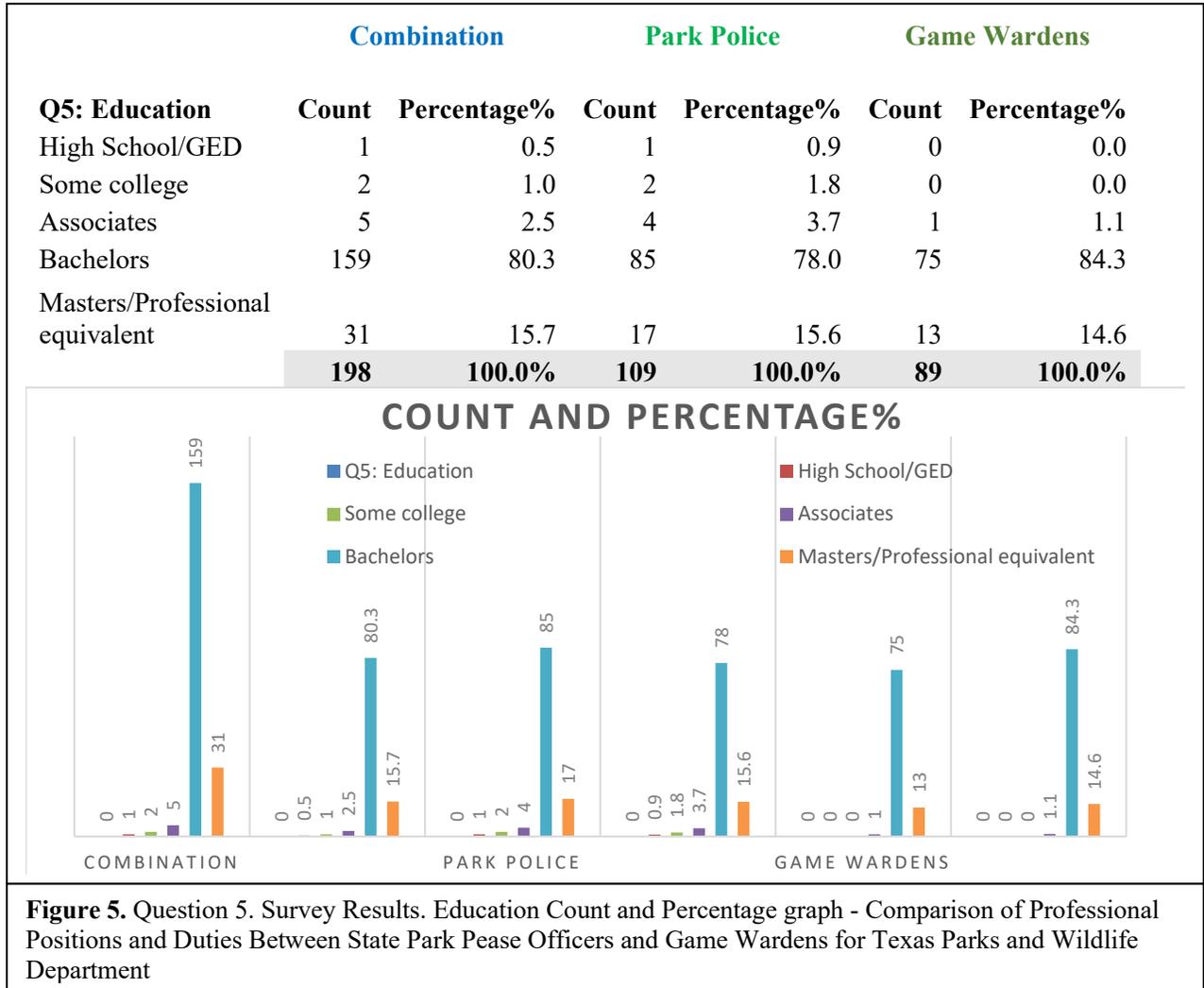
GW receive over \$70 K. Overall, the SPPO count and percentage make a lower amount of money. Race and Ethnicity if found in Survey results Figure 3. Split evenly between

SPPO and GW, 78 percent of people who work for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Peace



Officer program are White. This is a trend comprised of years of historical significance from the time Texas was founded. The demographic of gender is found in figure 4. Over 92% of Peace Officers are Male. Reviewing the reporting trends, we see the significance between age group, length of service, rural vs. urban trends vs. some other variables found. Areas to consider on demographics and observe about the trend of most of the folks have been with TPWD 46% of the workforce: 8 to 15 years and the people who make the most salary are educated 11 and 12 years, make between 60 and 80K, 42% are between 35 and 44 years old, 26% are between 25 and 34 years old, and 26% are between 45 and 54 years old. 78% white, 13% Hispanic/Latino, 80% have bachelor's degrees, with 16% having a master's degree. As shown in figure 5, education demographic, combined,

80% or 159 respondents have a bachelor's degree, and close to 16% or 31 folks have a masters. Park police follow within a few percentage points and are similar in the number split, 78% bachelors, with an 85 count, and 16% masters with a count of 17. Game

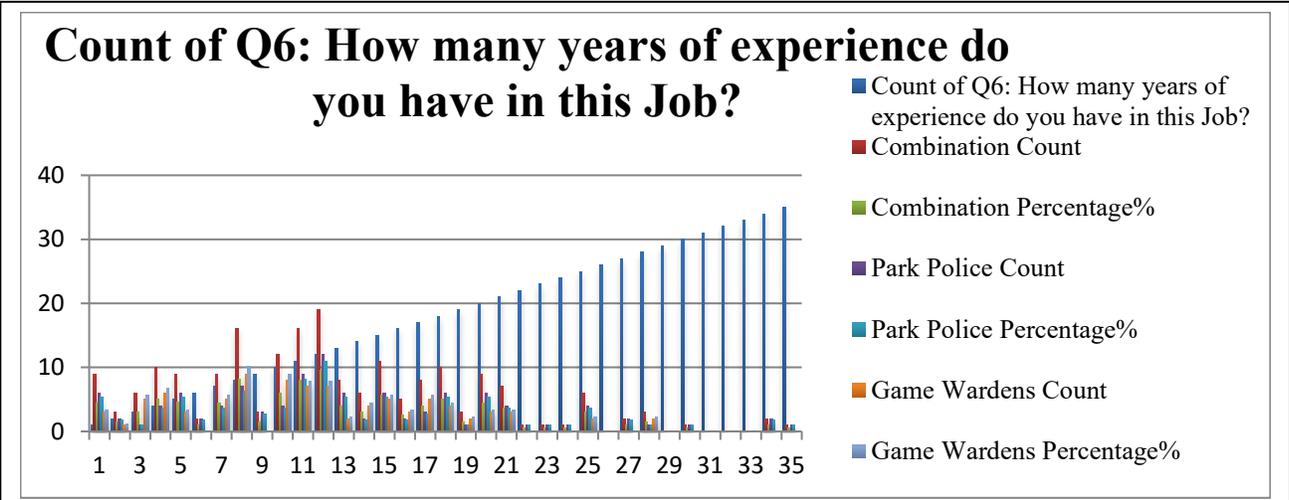


wardens have 84%, or 75 count bachelor's degrees, and 15% or 13 count masters/professional degree in education. Table 8 has a breakdown of the years of experience broken out into the combination, state park police, and game wardens. The numbers are very similar or equivalent. Most folks have been employed for twelve years or eight years. The split is also found in Figure 6. Most of the park police are getting into the younger generation with the older workforce transitioning out through retirement.

**Count of Q6:  
How many  
years of  
experience do  
you have in this  
Job?**

**Table 8.** Survey Question 6. **Years of Experience**

	Combination		Park Police		Game Wardens	
	Count	Percentage%	Count	Percentage%	Count	Percentage%
1	9	4.5	6	5.4	3	3.4
2	3	1.5	2	1.8	1	1.1
3	6	3	1	1	5	5.6
4	10	5	4	3.6	6	6.7
5	9	4.6	6	5.4	3	3.3
6	2	1	2	1.8	0	0
7	9	4.5	4	3.6	5	5.6
8	16	8.1	7	6.3	9	10.1
9	3	1.5	3	2.7	0	0
10	12	6	4	3.6	8	9
11	16	8	9	8.2	7	7.9
12	19	9.6	12	10.9	7	7.9
13	8	4	6	5.4	2	2.2
14	6	3	2	1.8	4	4.5
15	11	5.6	6	5.4	5	5.6
16	5	2.5	2	1.8	3	3.4
17	8	4	3	2.7	5	5.6
18	10	5	6	5.4	4	4.5
19	3	1.5	1	1	2	2.2
20	9	4.5	6	5.4	3	3.4
21	7	3.6	4	3.6	3	3.4
22	1	0.5	1	1	0	0
23	1	0.5	1	1	0	0
24	1	0.5	1	1	0	0
25	6	3	4	3.6	2	2.3
26	0	0	0	0	0	0
27	2	1	2	1.8	0	0
28	3	1.5	1	1	2	2.3
29	0	0	0	0	0	0
30	1	0.5	1	1	0	0
31	0	0	0	0	0	0
32	0	0	0	0	0	0
33	0	0	0	0	0	0
34	2	1	2	1.8	0	0
35	1	0.5	1	1	0	0
	<b>199</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 6.** Question 6. Survey Results. Year of Experience Graph Count and Percentage - Comparison of Professional Positions and Duties Between State Park Peace Officers and Game Wardens for Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

The two programs have distinct and separately dedicated funding sources. The Law Enforcement Division is mainly funded through hunting and fishing license sales (Fund 9), while the state park police program is primarily funded by dedicated state sporting goods sales tax proceeds and earned revenue from state park fees (Fund 64). Maintaining separate budgets for each program and accounting for these dedicated accounts' expenses are very important (TPWD LE 2021). Out of the entire surveyed peace officers, 110 were SPPO out of 131 respondents or 84%. Furthermore, only 89 GW out of 551 respondents took the survey, or 16%. The disparity looks towards consequences as the hope of a joint pay scale.

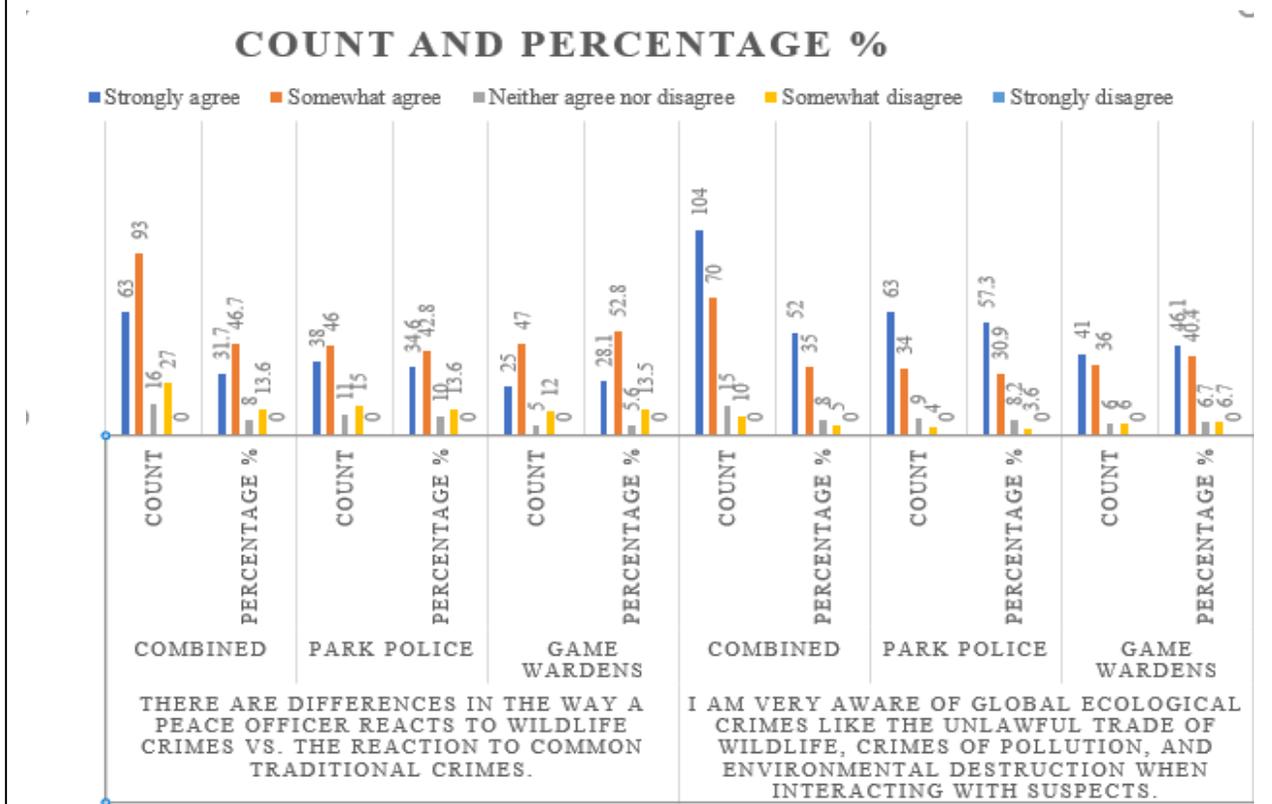
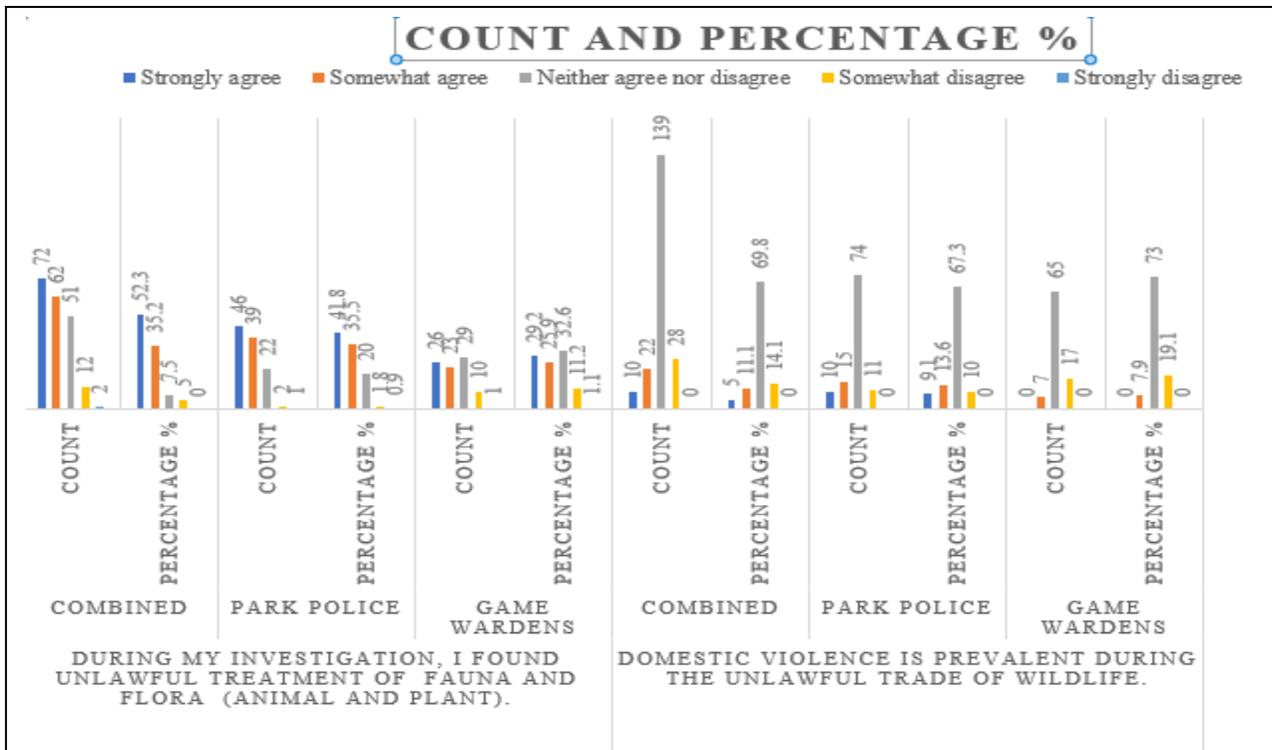
Looking at the survey questions in Table 9, page 76, and Figure 7 on page 77, about green crimes, SPPO and GW differ by < 4 percent, 77% to 81% agreement respectively of having different reactions between traditional crimes and those of wildlife. They are both aware of ecological crimes. SPPO favorable at 88% (57% strongly agree, 31% somewhat agree), and GW ecological awareness is at 87% (46% strongly agree, 41% somewhat agree). Interesting that SPPO found more crimes

concerning flora and fauna. SPPO at 77% versus GW had a somewhat agree and agree to a rating of 55%. Being a dual traditional and conservation officer and after learning that only 30% of SPPO have to capacity to handle conservation investigations by Chief Masur, with all the other duties involved in resource protection and dealing with people. All the traditional codes, for instance (Health Safety Code, Penal Code, Traffic Code, TABC code relating to minors), the SPPO have a 22% favorable in this category, which means that the job of a conservation officer to protect the resources, plants, and animals, and the team with less pay protected twenty-two percent more via the survey. The SPPO and GW differed on the domestic violence question go against what the literature tells the researcher. Research says that domestic violence in association or analogous with illegal crimes has to do with wildlife, a combination of criminal acts. The survey results reveal that SPPO strongly agrees 9% vs. GW 0%, SPPO 14% somewhat agree vs. GW 8%, SPPO 67% neither agree nor disagree vs. GW 73%, and SPPO somewhat disagrees 10% vs. GW 19%.

Looking over table 10, page 78, and figure 8, page 79 on the next section of protecting the environment and agency mission. Park Police have a higher response favorable by 97% and GW at 91%. The mission statement is now the same for law enforcement divisions ever since Col. Jones was placed as the leader three months ago. This question can be thrown out. Both divisions were positive concerning the laws that state the conservation level at 87%. Park Police that were surveyed, thought comprehensive education helped in protecting resources. Maintaining isolated chains of authority and officer support structures can result in avoidable repetition of roles and, in some cases, less efficiency.

**Table 9.** Survey Question 7. Green Criminology

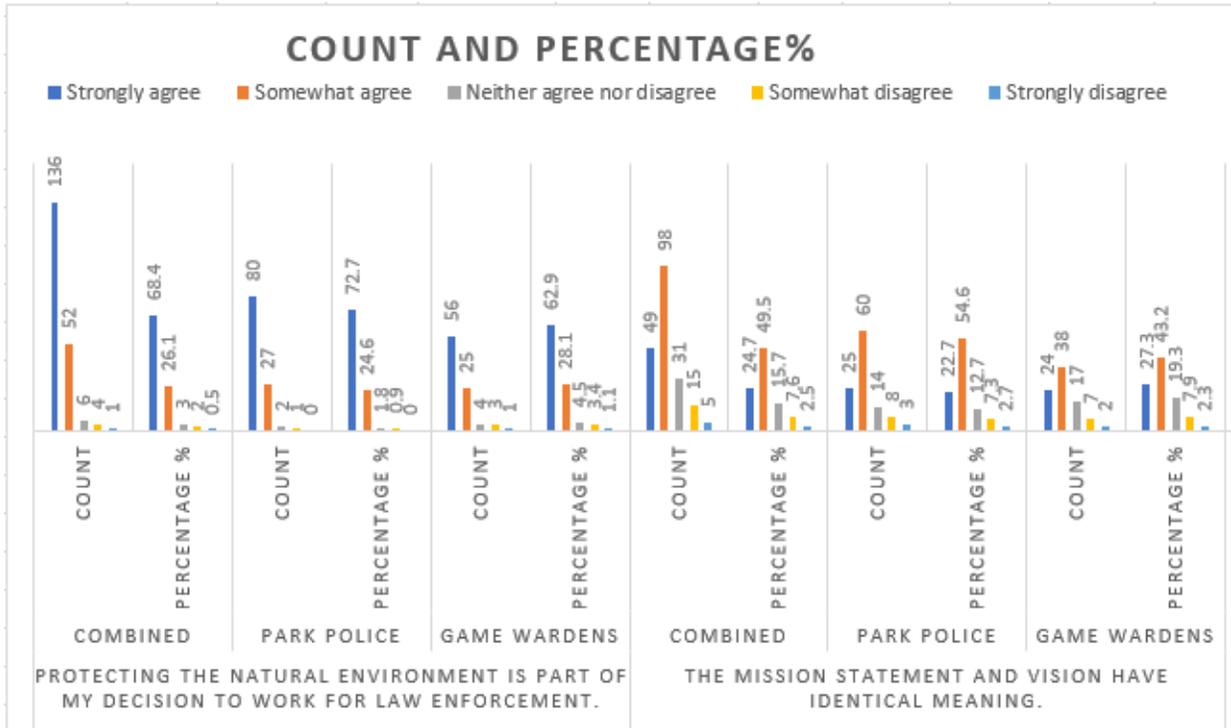
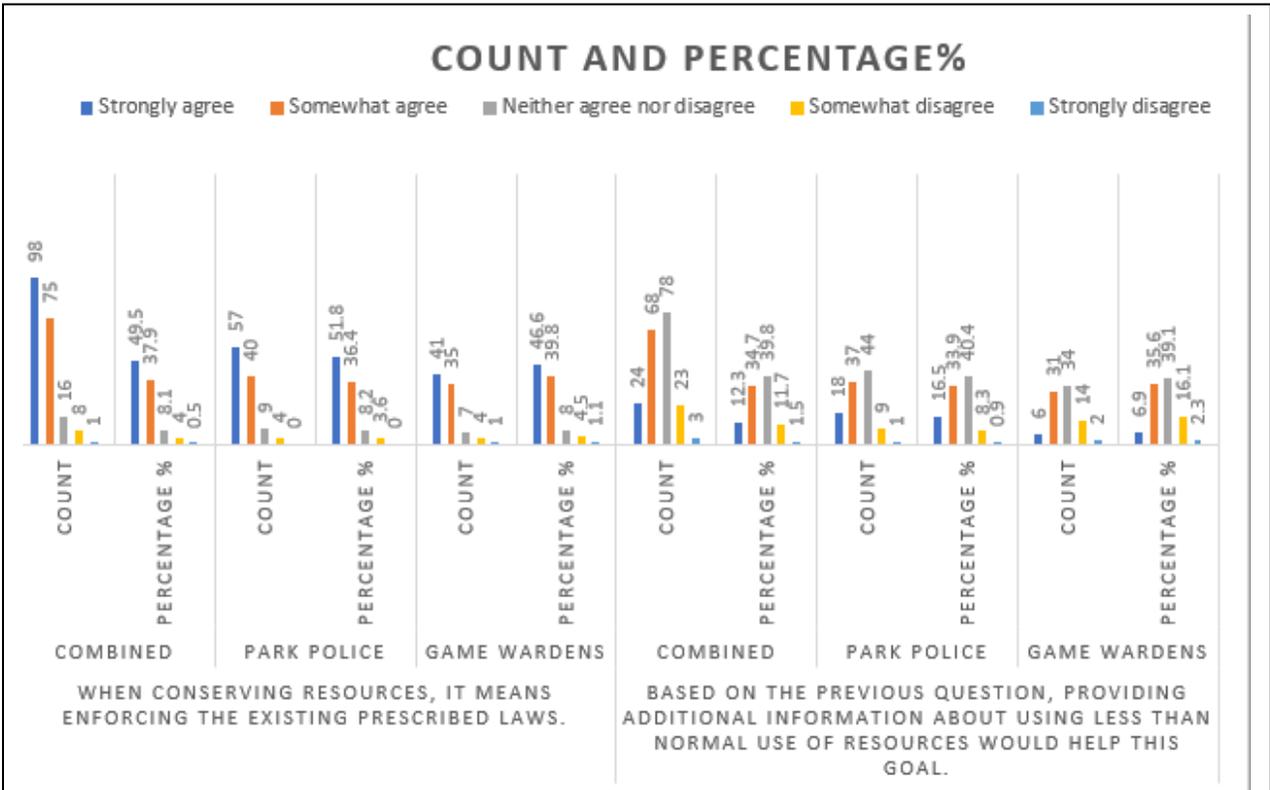
Survey Item	There are differences in the way a peace officer reacts to wildlife crimes vs. the reaction to common traditional crimes.				I am very aware of global ecological crimes like the unlawful trade of wildlife, crimes of pollution, and environmental destruction when interacting with suspects.							
	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens		Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens					
	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %				
Strongly agree	63	31.70	38	34.60	25	28.10	104	52.00	63	57.30	41	46.10
Somewhat agree	93	46.70	46	42.80	47	52.80	70	35.00	34	30.90	36	40.40
Neither agree nor disagree	16	8.00	11	10.00	5	5.60	15	8.00	9	8.20	6	6.70
Somewhat disagree	27	13.60	15	13.60	12	13.50	10	5.00	4	3.60	6	6.70
Strongly disagree	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
	<b>199</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens		Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens					
	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %				
Strongly agree	72	52.30	46	41.80	26	29.200	10	5.00	10	9.10	0	0.00
Somewhat agree	62	35.20	39	35.50	23	25.900	22	11.10	15	13.60	7	7.90
Neither agree nor disagree	51	7.50	22	20.00	29	32.600	139	69.80	74	67.30	65	73.00
Somewhat disagree	12	5.00	2	1.80	10	11.200	28	14.10	11	10.00	17	19.10
Strongly disagree	2	0.00	1	0.90	1	1.100	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
	<b>199</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



**Figure 7.** Survey Question 7 Green Criminology Graph

**Table 10. Survey Question 8. Protecting the Environment (Agency Mission)**

Survey Item 8	Protecting the natural environment is part of my decision to work for law enforcement.				The mission statement and vision have identical meaning.							
	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens			
	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %		
Strongly agree	136	68.40	80	72.70	56	62.90	49	24.70	25	22.70	24	27.30
Somewhat agree	52	26.10	27	24.60	25	28.10	98	49.50	60	54.60	38	43.20
Neither agree nor disagree	6	3.00	2	1.80	4	4.50	31	15.70	14	12.70	17	19.30
Somewhat disagree	4	2.00	1	0.90	3	3.40	15	7.60	8	7.30	7	7.90
Strongly disagree	1	0.50	0	0.00	1	1.10	5	2.50	3	2.70	2	2.30
	<b>199</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
	Based on the previous question, providing additional information about using less than normal use of resources would help this goal.											
	When conserving resources, it means enforcing the existing prescribed laws.											
	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens
	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %
Strongly agree	98	49.50	57	51.80	41	46.60	24	12.30	18	16.50	6	6.90
Somewhat agree	75	37.90	40	36.40	35	39.80	68	34.70	37	33.90	31	35.60
Neither agree nor disagree	16	8.10	9	8.20	7	8.00	78	39.80	44	40.40	34	39.10
Somewhat disagree	8	4.00	4	3.60	4	4.50	23	11.70	9	8.30	14	16.10
Strongly disagree	1	0.50	0	0.00	1	1.10	3	1.50	1	0.90	2	2.30
	<b>198</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

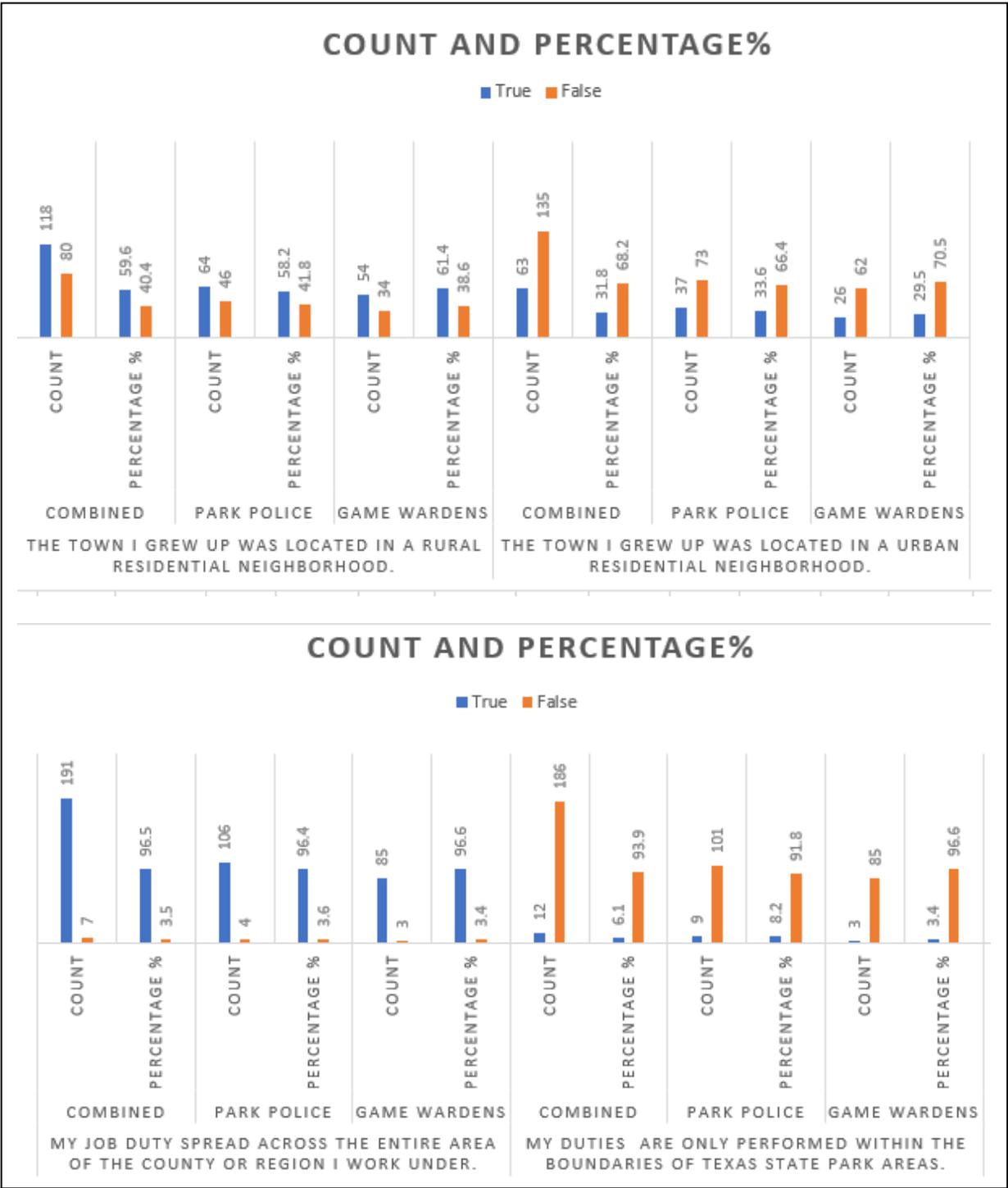


**Figure 8.** Survey Question 8. [Protecting Environment \(Agency Mission\)](#), graph.

**Table 11. Survey Question 9. Location. Protecting the Environment (Agency Mission)**

Survey Item 9	My job duty spread across the entire area of the county or region I work under.				My duties are only performed within the boundaries of Texas State Park areas.							
	Combined		Game Wardens		Combined		Game Wardens					
	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %				
True	191	96.5	106	96.4	85	96.6	12	6.1	9	8.2	3	3.4
False	7	3.5	4	3.6	3	3.4	186	93.9	101	91.8	85	96.6
	<b>198</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100</b>
	The town I grew up was located in a rural residential neighborhood.											
	Combined		Game Wardens		Combined		Game Wardens					
	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %				
True	118	59.6	64	58.2	54	61.4	63	31.8	37	33.6	26	29.5
False	80	40.4	46	41.8	34	38.6	135	68.2	73	66.4	62	70.5
	<b>198</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100</b>

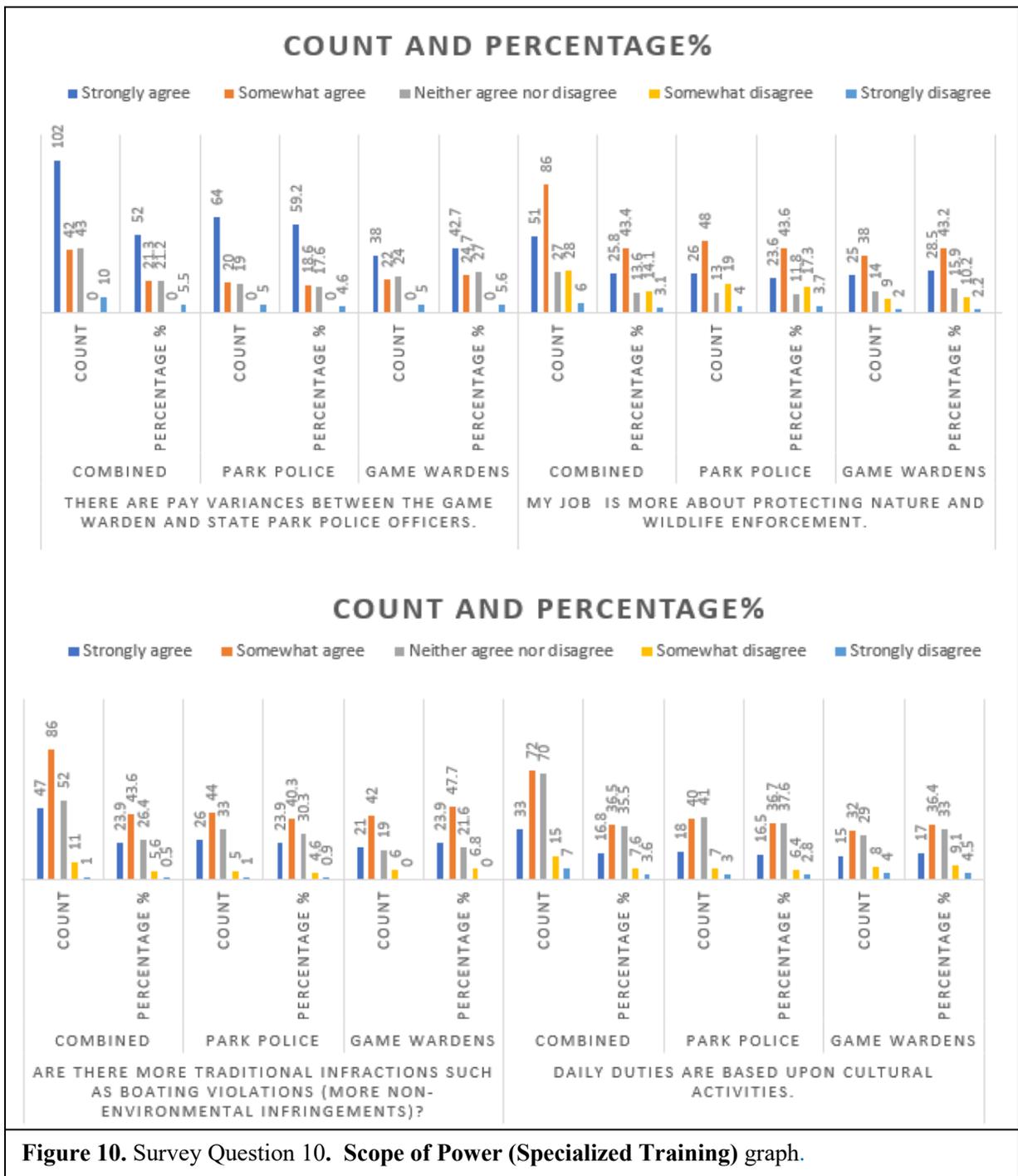
Table 11, on page 80 and figure 9, on page 81, surveyed the agency location and responsibilities for State Parks and duties that cover Texas's entire landscape. An overwhelming figure informs that the duties are spread across the entire region, and not just confined to State Parks over 96%. Sixty percent of the peace officers grew up in a rural setting, and thirty percent grew up in an urban area. This question was used to show that a higher percentage of the time, folks who work in nature and protect wildlife, have that knowledge instilled in them as they grow up as an adolescent. Game Wardens only have < 30% of the staff who grew up in an urban neighborhood.



**Figure 9.** Survey Question 9. Location. [Protecting Environment \(Agency Mission\), graph.](#)

**Table 12. Survey Question 10 Scope of Power (Specialized Training)**

Survey Item 10	There are pay variances between the game warden and state park police officers.				My job is more about protecting nature and wildlife enforcement.							
	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens			
	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %		
Strongly agree	102	52	64	59.2	38	42.7	51	25.8	26	23.6	25	28.5
Somewhat agree	42	21.3	20	18.6	22	24.7	86	43.4	48	43.6	38	43.2
Neither agree nor disagree	43	21.2	19	17.6	24	27	27	13.6	13	11.8	14	15.9
Somewhat disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0	28	14.1	19	17.3	9	10.2
Strongly disagree	10	5.5	5	4.6	5	5.6	6	3.1	4	3.7	2	2.2
	<b>197</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100%</b>
<p><b>Are there more traditional infractions such as boating violations (more non-environmental infringements)?</b></p> <p><b>Daily duties are based upon cultural activities.</b></p>												
	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens
	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %
Strongly agree	47	23.9	26	23.9	21	23.9	33	16.8	18	16.5	15	17
Somewhat agree	86	43.6	44	40.3	42	47.7	72	36.5	40	36.7	32	36.4
Neither agree nor disagree	52	26.4	33	30.3	19	21.6	70	35.5	41	37.6	29	33
Somewhat disagree	11	5.6	5	4.6	6	6.8	15	7.6	7	6.4	8	9.1
Strongly disagree	1	0.5	1	0.9	0	0	7	3.6	3	2.8	4	4.5
	<b>197</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100%</b>

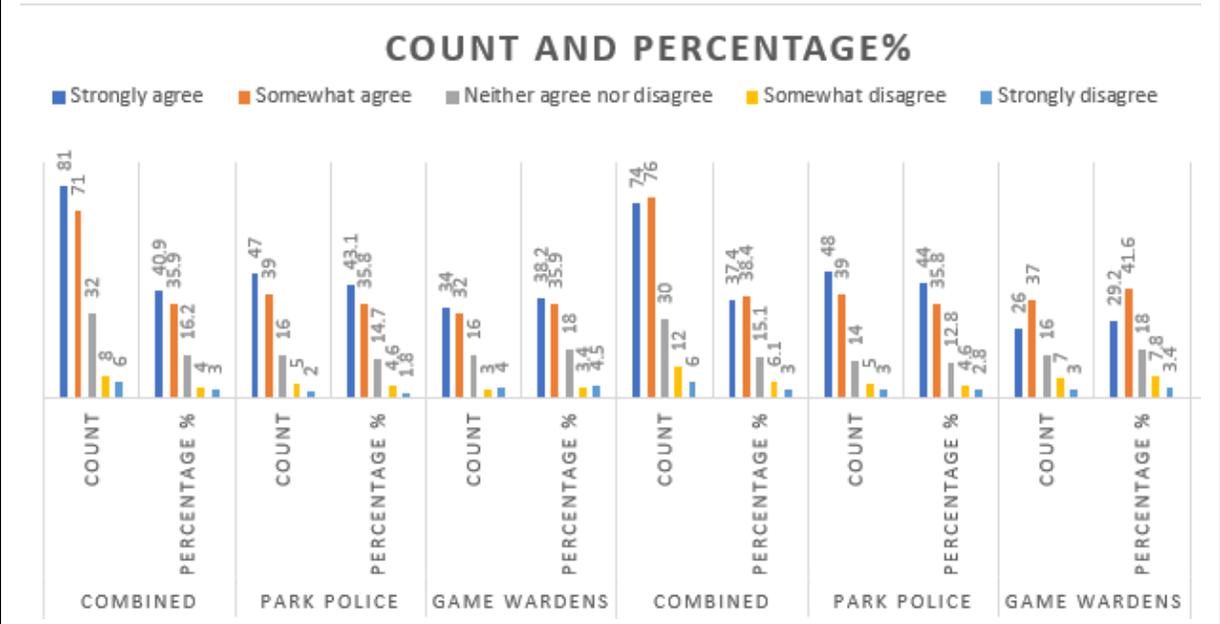
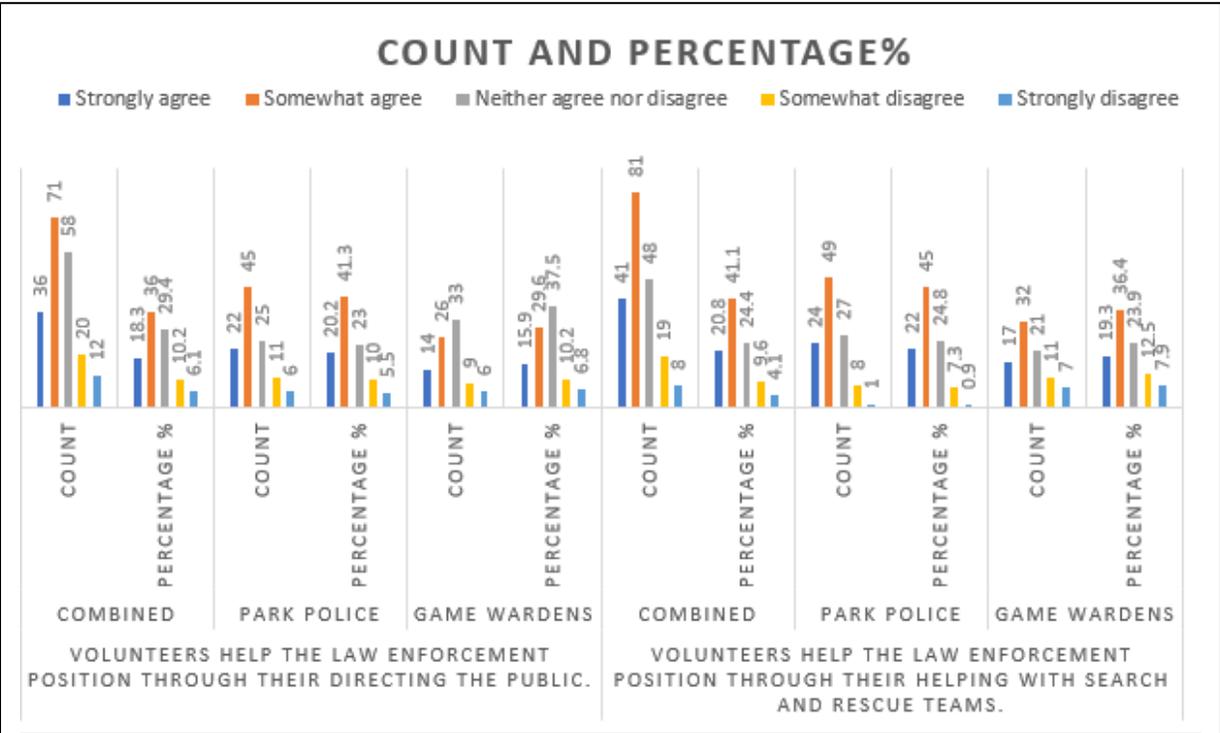


**Figure 10. Survey Question 10. Scope of Power (Specialized Training) graph.**

Table 12, on page 82 and Figure 10 are survey results about the scope of power and specialized training. Seventy-eight percent of park police believe there is a pay variance. Sixty-seven percent of game wardens believe this for the same question. Sixty-nine percent of both LE divisions

**Table 13.** Survey Question 11. **Volunteer Engagement.**

Survey Item 11	Public partnerships like volunteerism help the law enforcement team in protecting resources.				Volunteers help the law enforcement position through their observing duties							
	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens			
	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %		
Strongly agree	81	40.9	47	43.1	34	38.2	74	37.4	48	44	26	29.2
Somewhat agree	71	35.9	39	35.8	32	35.9	76	38.4	39	35.8	37	41.6
Neither agree nor disagree	32	16.2	16	14.7	16	18	30	15.1	14	12.8	16	18
Somewhat disagree	8	4	5	4.6	3	3.4	12	6.1	5	4.6	7	7.8
Strongly disagree	6	3	2	1.8	4	4.5	6	3	3	2.8	3	3.4
	<b>198</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>100%</b>
	<p><b>Volunteers help the law enforcement position through their directing the public.</b></p>											
	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens
	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %
Strongly agree	36	18.3	22	20.2	14	15.9	41	20.8	24	22	17	19.3
Somewhat agree	71	36	45	41.3	26	29.6	81	41.1	49	45	32	36.4
Neither agree nor disagree	58	29.4	25	23	33	37.5	48	24.4	27	24.8	21	23.9
Somewhat disagree	20	10.2	11	10	9	10.2	19	9.6	8	7.3	11	12.5
Strongly disagree	12	6.1	6	5.5	6	6.8	8	4.1	1	0.9	7	7.9
	<b>197</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 11.** Survey Question 11. **Volunteer Engagement**, graph.

believe the job is about protecting nature. Overall, 68% of the peace officers believe boating infractions and other traditional crimes are committed. Both SPPO and GW equally believe 53% of the time that cultural activities help determine the daily duties. Compare these figures to the

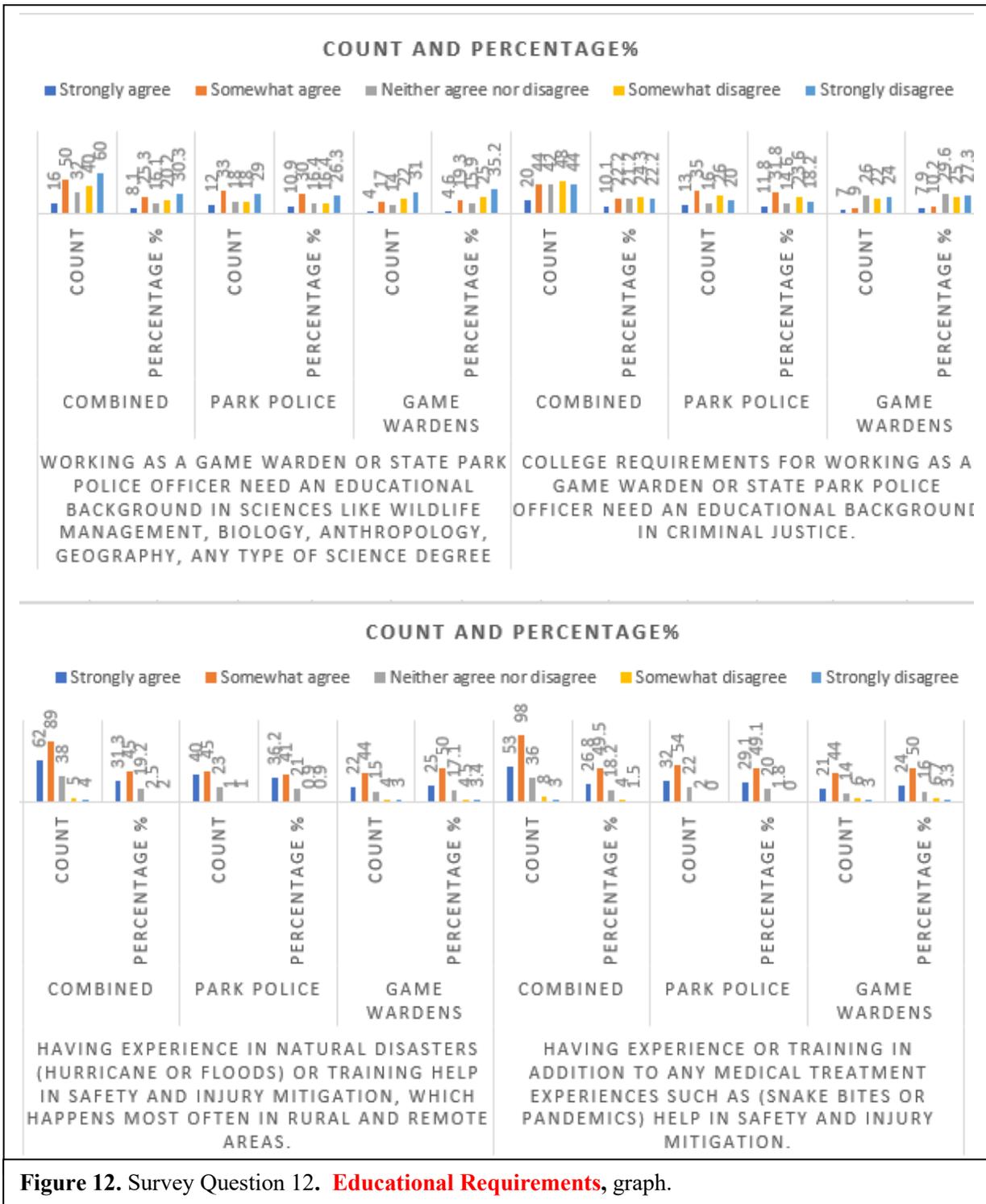
literature, and the interview information gained. We can see when the culture of folks goes outdoor might sway how the peace officer duties are established. Learning about culture, the tendencies of hunters, nature lovers, boat enthusiasts, hikers, and people who need to get outdoors.

Table 13 Volunteer Engagement ties with Figure 11, and the survey results show that most of the peace officers believe volunteers are good. Seventy-nine percent of park police and seventy-four percent of game wardens. Learning that game wardens do not generally associate or have volunteer interaction by Col. Jones, a high percentage agrees they are needed. A less favorable continued as the questions asked about assisting in search and rescue teams and directing the public. While reviewing each survey result, the researcher noticed that peace officers who have been with the organization for a while know that volunteers help. Younger officers might not know or known about how much a volunteer can help law enforcement.

Educational requirements were the next section of the survey. Table 14, on the next page, followed by Figure 12 graph, showed what was initially believed by the researcher for the needed characteristics before the study. The park police unfavorable results of 43% in somewhat disagree and disagree along with game wardens at a 60% unfavorable result for needing a science degree. The same result for needing a criminal justice degree, park police were unfavorable combined at 42% with game wardens unfavorable at 52%. Both peace officers agreed that having experience in natural disasters and knowing medical treatment would help them in their careers. Park police had a seventy-seven percent strongly agree and somewhat agree in the natural disaster category with game wardens at seventy-five percent. The medical experience was park police rated at 78%, and game wardens combined strongly agreed and somewhat agreed 74% of the time in injury mitigation techniques.

**Table 14.** Survey Question 12. **Educational Requirements.**

Survey Item 12	Working as a game warden or state park police officer need an educational background in sciences like wildlife management, biology, anthropology, geography, any type of science degree				College requirements for working as a game warden or state park police officer need an educational background in criminal justice.							
	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens			
	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %		
Strongly agree	16	8.1	12	10.9	4	4.6	20	10.1	13	11.8	7	7.9
Somewhat agree	50	25.3	33	30	17	19.3	44	22.2	35	31.8	9	10.2
Neither agree nor disagree	32	16.1	18	16.4	14	15.9	42	21.2	16	14.6	26	29.6
Somewhat disagree	40	20.2	18	16.4	22	25	48	24.3	26	23.6	22	25
Strongly disagree	60	30.3	29	26.3	31	35.2	44	22.2	20	18.2	24	27.3
	<b>198</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100%</b>
	<p>Having experience in natural disasters (hurricane or floods) or training help in safety and injury mitigation, which happens most often in rural and remote areas.</p> <p>Having experience or training in addition to any medical treatment experiences such as (snake bites or pandemics) help in safety and injury mitigation.</p>											
	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens	Combined	Park Police	Game Wardens
	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage %
Strongly agree	62	31.3	40	36.2	22	25	53	26.8	32	29.1	21	24
Somewhat agree	89	45	45	41	44	50	98	49.5	54	49.1	44	50
Neither agree nor disagree	38	19.2	23	21	15	17.1	36	18.2	22	20	14	16
Somewhat disagree	5	2.5	1	0.9	4	4.5	8	4	2	1.8	6	6.7
Strongly disagree	4	2	1	0.9	3	3.4	3	1.5	0	0	3	3.3
	<b>198</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 12.** Survey Question 12. **Educational Requirements**, graph.

The intended question would allow anonymity. The results are in Table 15 for Question 13. The sole purpose of this question was to obtain the actual comments based upon the previous survey questions. This allowed the researcher to believe the surveyors' original thoughts would allow non-biased answers for the questions and find out about the peace officers and learn if any of the answers created a difference between the two. Finding that some of the answers neither agreed nor disagreed might have believed their anonymity would not be secure. The data are from both state park police officers and game wardens. No answers are revealed of which peace officer responded, so anonymity is in force. The answers provide great information. Answers are sorted, with favorable responses for the study talking about the duties, differences, and procedures. The later outcomes were found to result in not understanding the survey and some confusion about distinguishing between the two roles. The end revealed disturbance with modified behavior that could be another part of the job, ridiculing an accused person or group knowing that no negatives would be attributed to the ambiguity. The very end only has responses of none or n/a.

<b>Table 15. Survey Question 13.</b>
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Q13: Finally, kindly provide other comments that could help the study based on your experience.
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A Texas Game Warden wears many different hats from conservation officer to investigator. Game Wardens also play a big part in educating communities in rural counties with the outdoors.

A career as a Texas Game Warden is not simply a job, it's a way of life that requires a tremendous amount of dedication, passion, integrity and accountability.

College Degrees - We have a broad spectrum of college degrees within the Park Police Officer ranks, from Park Management to Criminal Justice to El Ed/Secondary Ed degrees.  
 Disaster/medical response: I don't believe you must respond to one of these issues to get a better understanding of health and safety of the public. In the environment we work, we see plenty of emergency situations which give us adequate experience and understanding of the public needs. I have an emergency medical background, but with our first aid training, I believe all of us can act until more specialized assistance arrives. Volunteers: As a PPO, we do work with many volunteer groups; however, no of them are focused on the LE aspect as a result, I selected mid of the road answers since I have no experience in working with groups that volunteer to assist the

**Table 15. Survey Question 13. (Continued)**

Q13: Finally, kindly provide other comments that could help the study based on your experience.

LE aspect. Pay: Game Wardens are on Salary Schedule C, PPOs are on Salary Schedule B. Strides have been made in the last 2 years to close the salary disparity gap, however, PPOs still remain a whole pay step behind. The real difference between Game Warden's and PPOs is not necessarily the job function, but more the job duties. As a Game Warden, they mainly focus on the conservation side of law enforcement such as hunting violations, water safety violations, fishing violations, environmental crimes and other crimes related to wildlife. They do enforce all of the laws of Texas, but their focus is conservation offenses. The PPO on the other hand, primarily focuses on the traditional state laws: Health Safety Code, Penal Code, Traffic Code, TABC code relating to minors, etc. The PPO also enforces Parks & Wildlife Code relating to Park's regulations, hunting/fishing and water safety violations. However, PPOs are generally constantly interacting with the general public in activities outside of hunting, fishing and boating; therefore, the majority of the laws enforced lean towards the other codes rather than Parks & Wildlife Code. Both Game Wardens and PPOs regularly assist our brother agencies (State, County, Local LE). PPOs generally are in a better position at assist the other agencies due to the focus of our responsibilities. PPOs do more patrol in the parks, around the parks and in the communities near the state parks. Whereas the GW are mainly patrolling the areas of hunting, fishing, and water activities. Like most GWs, PPOs usually do have experience outside of TPWD. Many of the PPOs were Police Officer's in other agencies bringing valuable experience with them. I hope this all helps in your study. Thank you for focusing on our Agency for your research. Good Luck.

Game Wardens and Park Police Officers perform their duties differently. Park officers enforce more traditional laws related to public safety and quality of life crimes.

Game Wardens enforce both game warden laws and public safety laws with equal interest and time

I hope GW's actually get the results of this study!!!

I try to prioritize my roles as the main priority being the protection of natural and cultural resources as well as the public while enjoying outdoor recreation. While focusing on these efforts it is important for us to assist the communities, we live in with enforcement of other state laws around the area and assisting other agencies as needed.

Regional culture correlates directly to the type of enforcement Game Wardens engage in on a daily basis and also dictate how GW's enforce the law. Also, educational standards for Game Warden positions should never be lowered.

State Park Police officers are not treated equally or paid equally for completing the same job as Game Wardens. State Park Police Officers are not confined to only enforcing laws in state parks. State Park Police officers encounter more violent offenders, make more traditional traffic stops, and play more of a "community policing" traditional role. These officers attend the same academy as the wardens and are trained as game wardens, not cops. It's a travesty to see these officers complete this academy to get out and be compensated less for the same profession, then lose interest because of it.

**Table 15. Survey Question 13. (Continued)**

Q13: Finally, kindly provide other comments that could help the study based on your experience.

State Parks are like a small town with a transient population that changes every 7-10 days. Not only protecting natural and cultural resources in the parks but also the well-being of the public's safety. So basically, a State Park Police Officer is conservation law enforcement but also does the same duties as a city police officer.

State park police program is going in a good direction; however, still need to include the state park police program in that pot of resources given to game wardens

TPWD is committed to protecting our State's natural resources, providing public safety and educating the public utilizing game wardens and state park police.

The ability to think critically is extremely important in applying your previous experiences and education.

The job of a game warden varies day to day. How we plan our day out can change abruptly due to phone ringing or something we observe. While our focus is wildlife enforcement, we don't shy away from calls for help or violations we observe. First and foremost, we are state police officers, then game wardens.

The role of Game Warden and State Park Police Officer both carry a predominately conservation-based work load. The addition of all State law makes these jobs one of the most diverse and challenging law enforcement positions in the state of Texas.

There are similarities in the role of State Park Police Officers and Game wardens; however, there are a lot of differences as well. The game wardens focus is primarily enforcing fish and game regulations and water safety. State Park Police Officers are tasked with that along with enforcing everything else a normal city officer or county deputy would. A state park police officer has to be prepared to deal with a huge variety of offenses and situations. A state park officer can go from dealing with a fish violation to investigating an unattended death/suicide, to responding to a domestic violence call. Some areas we patrol by boat, ATV, bike and even horseback in some areas.

To be a law enforcement officer you must have the right personality / mindset. The laws regarding Protecting our cultural and natural resources are learned through training as can criminal justice. Experience in dealing with all kinds of people is the most important aspect of this job.

Working as a Park Police Officer has been a rewarding experience. There is still much growth and continued recognition needed of the services provided by PPOs. This recognition includes pay equality among peers.

Working in state parks should require more of a generalist mindset. Being able to conduct LE activities, but also fight fire, provide emergency medical services, search and rescue training, training on interpreting resources, and an emphasis on being in the field out of the vehicle. It is very important that in the park setting you are physically fit because often support resources are not available. This is true for LE, medical, fire, and SAR activities.

<b>Table 15. Survey Question 13. (Continued)</b>
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Q13: Finally, kindly provide other comments that could help the study based on your experience.
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The questions are worded a little bit confusing. The role of PPO vs GW is very different in operation duties and responsibilities. Even though both are in the same department and are both state certified peace officers, they are very different jobs. PPOs are assigned to patrolling specific parks and properties, whereas GW patrol everything else not related to that. I think you'd benefit from separate PPO & GW surveys in particular on the volunteer questions.

Protection is key, with the new generation, we are losing the battle.

More training should be provided for officers in regards to firearms training, active shooter and medical training.

I have no direct experience with volunteers so I could not speak to the benefit of volunteers in conservation LE.

As an LE Division we have shifted more to public safety than resource conservation.

Currently my position requires more administrative work than field work.

Adios.

Better pay.

Game Wardens love to eat.

Where are questions about resource protection that we are engaged in daily? Where are questions based on environmental activities we are engaged in daily? Where are questions that show the connection between resource protection and other law enforcement such as BWI, DWI, Illegal Drug Use, Illegal Drug Sales, Dumping, Robbery and Theft?

I wasn't quite sure how the survey played into defining differences or similarities between the resource policing jobs. Good luck none the less.

Park Police and Texas Game Wardens are very different jobs. By lumping them in to this survey you will skew your results.

The wording of some of the prompts and questions were a bit confusing.

I'm confused what its purpose is.

Please proofread before sending out.; ex. spelling and question phrasing.

Questions that are clearer. Some responses appeared to have 2 questions that should have been broken up. Ask more precise questions rather than general or vague questions related to role specific duties.

Just based on the questions of this study I'm not sure what information you were trying to gain.

**Table 15. Survey Question 13. (Continued)**

Q13: Finally, kindly provide other comments that could help the study based on your experience.

For a more accurate response, you should change the wording of many of your questions as they do not make sense.

A Game Warden is a Game Warden!!!! State Park Police are State Park Police which they belong in the State Park Promoting out Parks!!! When they venture out of their lanes (out of Park) they destroy years' worth of public trust that Game Wardens have built!!!

One way to help the study would be to formulate more clearly worded questions.

This is the most poorly designed study that I've ever been a participant in. I don't even think that you asked whether I was a Game Warden or PPO. Many of the questions didn't have proper grammar so they were extremely hard to understand. I don't even know where to start on this one.

Your questions were poorly worded - this left me feeling that my participation was a waste of time and made me question your knowledge of our job duties.

None at this time. Thank you.

Na.

No.

N/A

None

n/a

Looking at the results, and reviewing literature review components concerning the project management tendencies, most of the survey participants were very helpful and wanted to help the study while providing specific information for the research paper. A small percent supplied the duties and gave opinions without knowing the full knowledge of the project. One problem occurred where the researcher missed placing in the survey, which officer provided the answer if they were an SPPO or a GW. The timing of when each of the studies was sent out to each of the participants helped distinguish along with having the pay structure which allowed to recreate the difference between both entities and communication with the leaders. Interviews and survey results are intuitive.

## 7. CONCLUSION

The study enhanced how a conservation law enforcement officer and various duties continue with so many ongoing investigations. It appears that nature and wildlife must contend with the increased population of humans who want to interact inside their habitat. The behavioral characteristics and patterns help locate and identify folks who position and conduct illegal activities against nature (flora and fauna). Two interviews were provided for the scholarship from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department State Park Police Officers, Chief Wes Masur, and the Game Warden Lieutenant Colonel, Chad Jones. Reviewing green criminology theory, we can see when the culture of folks goes outdoor might sway how the peace officer duties are established—learning about values, the tendencies of hunters, nature lovers, boat enthusiasts, hikers, and people who need to get outdoors. Chief Masur informs that we decide if it's an actor or a crime against a person or a crime against a wildlife resource, and wildlife will not talk to the person. As conservation law enforcement officers, state park police, game wardens, we're all partners within the agency within the state of Texas, and then we also have federal and state partners across the United States that we have a network.

Confirmation of domestic violence, mistreatment of animals, and theft of flora and fauna happen, and there is often a criminal background. Col. Jones explains it is multifaced. Wildlife crimes are criminal acts, yet folks are engaging within a hobby or cultural lifestyle, and we are all partners in enforcement across Texas and the United States while networking against crimes related to wildlife,

pollution, or environmental destruction. They were catching people hunting in-act offenses on the public roadway using spotlights and targeting succulent cactus. The mere fact that you're a Texas Game Warden, and sometimes the nature of that contact, sets the tone differently. Protecting the Environment (Agency Mission) both grew up in rural areas. Wes grew up in Lockhart State Park, learning the importance of nature while protecting the community, and Col. Jones was taught at age six the importance of what the patch of the State of Texas had on it. The mission statement is the code for game wardens and park police at Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the protection of nature with the perception every person has on green space. The Peace Officer Roles (Scope of Power and Specialized Training) explains more about the duties. Wes informs that yes, there is a pay difference.

Nevertheless, 100% of our job is protecting people, nature, and wildlife. About 30% of the time, are we doing actual investigations related to environmental crimes. Seventy-eight percent of park police believe there is a pay variance, while sixty-seven percent of game wardens believe this for the same question. Col. Jones reminds us that when they are together, they work better than ever to reach out to state park police officer are partners and work out of the same emergency plan, finding missing children who have been assaulted. Sixty-nine percent of both LE divisions believe the job is about protecting nature. Volunteer engagement foretold by Chief Masur informs that the educators to the visitors, the eyes and ears of abuse or misuse. Volunteers care about the resources and respect everything preserved along with education—an irreplaceable tool by the agency TPWD. Even though Col. Jones

admits his game warden team does not use volunteers, a high percentage of them know and understand a volunteer's purpose.

The educational background and requirement and looking back at the literature review, interview answers are comparable to most of the stages in the theories and the two-game warden interviews by David Todd. Our two peace officers have the same knowledge, and as we continue the survey think that the duties are now analogous to one another ever since combining the law enforcement training in 2014. Future generations can see these resources in their natural, pristine environment.

The interviews explained so much detail and the lessons that can be learned. The survey resulted in 84% park police versus a 16% response rate for game wardens. Creating a combined pay scale package should be the next agenda moving forward or changing the entire peace officer program. The State Park Police Officers attend the same academy as the Game Wardens, have the same knowledge, train together, only to see them advance over time to a higher benefit. The appendices include additional reports of interest. One is the pay scales for each officer, the Law Enforcement report having data and recommendations that have continued to prove the duties are similar and can be done by both parties. There are a select few that disagree and are entitled to that opinion. Game wardens used to not get along with the community and were outlaw hunters. Peace officers wish to help preserve the resources for the future of all citizens. The study on conservation law enforcement should continue investigating volunteer and community engagement techniques to work with game wardens.

8. APPENDICES

**Appendix A: Salary Tables**

**Table 16: Salary Ranges for Texas game wardens TPWD**

<https://tpwd.texas.gov/warden/recruiting-careers/career>

<b>Pay and Advancement (as of 9/1/2019)</b>			
All career ladder advancements are based on a combination of longevity, job knowledge, job performance and adherence to agency and division work rules. All salaries are subject to change without notice:			
<b>The salary ranges for Texas game wardens are as follows:</b>			
	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Month</b>	<b>Year</b>
Game Warden Cadet \$3,362.50 per month	1	\$ 3,362.50	\$ 40,350.00
Game Warden I (Probationary) \$3,673.50 per month	1	\$ 3,673.50	\$ 44,082.00
Game Warden I (1 year) \$4,436.83 per month	1	\$ 4,436.83	\$ 53,241.96
Game Warden II (4 years) \$5,409.92 per month	2	\$ 5,409.92	\$ 64,919.04
Game Warden III (8 years) \$5,795.08 per month	3	\$ 5,795.08	\$ 69,540.96
Game Warden IV (12 years) \$6,051.08 per month	4	\$ 6,051.08	\$ 72,612.96
Game Warden V (16 years) \$6,330.67 per month	5	\$ 6,330.67	\$ 75,968.04
Game Warden VI (20 years) \$6,487.17 per month	6	\$ 6,487.17	\$ 77,846.04
Stipend for education or certification: \$50 - \$150 per month			
Stipend for second language: \$50 per month			
Additional promotional opportunities within the Law Enforcement Division include Investigative Sergeant, Lieutenant, Captain, Assistant Commander, Major, Chief, Lieutenant Colonel, and Colonel.			

**Table 17: Salary ranges for TPWD State Park Police Officers SPPO**

<https://tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/jobs/ppo/ppo-salaries>

State Park Police Salaries (Effective Oct. 1, 2015)									
Park Police	Grade	Month	Month	Month	Month	Year	Year	Year	Year
Position / Title (Law Enforcement Track)		< 4 yrs	= 4 yrs	= 8 yrs	= 12 yrs	< 4 yrs	= 4 yrs	= 8 yrs	= 12 yrs
Cadet State Park Police Officer (SPPO) Trainee	R	\$3,500				\$42,000			
Probationary SPPO (upon graduation)	R	\$3,750				\$45,000			
SPPO I (complete Field Training Program / 1 year)	1	\$4,250				\$51,000			
SPPO I - VI	2	\$4,250	\$4,500	\$4,750	\$5,000	\$51,000	\$54,000	\$57,000	\$60,000
Corporal SPPO	3	\$4,600	\$4,800	\$5,000	\$5,200	\$55,200	\$57,600	\$60,000	\$62,400
Sergeant SPPO									
Min Qual: 4-yrs. commis law enfrcmnt svc min. 1-yr. TPWD commis (concurrent) and an Intermediate License or higher.	4	\$5,300	\$5,500	\$5,700	\$5,900	\$63,600	\$66,000	\$68,400	\$70,800
Lieutenant SPPO									
Min Qual: 5-yrs. commis law enfrcmnt svc min. of 2-yrs. TPWD commis(concurrent), and an Intermediate License or higher.	5	\$5,700	\$5,900	\$6,100	\$6,300	\$68,400	\$70,800	\$73,200	\$75,600
Captain SPPO									
Min Qual: 6-yrs. commis law enfrcmnt srvc min. 2-yrs. TPWD commis (concurrent), and an Advanced License or higher.	6	\$6,200	\$6,400	\$6,600	\$6,800	\$74,400	\$76,800	\$79,200	\$81,600
Major SPPO									
Min Qual: 8-yrs. commis law enfrcmnt srvc min. 4-yrs. TPWD commis (concurrent), and an Advanced License or higher	7	NA	\$6,900	\$7,100	\$7,300		\$82,800	\$85,200	\$87,600
Chief SPPO		NA	\$8,100	\$8,100	\$8,100		\$97,200	\$97,200	\$97,200

Table 17.1	GW and SPPO	
GW 1st 4 years	SPPO monthly sal	1st 4 years park police
\$ 3,362.00	3500	\$ 138.00
\$ 3,673.00	3750	\$ 77.00
\$ 4,250.00	4437	\$ 187.00
\$ 4,250.00	4436.83	\$ 186.83
		<hr/>
		\$ 588.83
	12 months	<hr/>
		\$ 7,065.96
	4 years	<hr/>
		28,263.84

Pay variances between the Texas Game Wardens and State Park Police Officers during the first four years of service. After this gain of \$28,263.84, The Texas game warden's salary increases significantly over years of service as seen in Table 18.

**Table 18: Salary Ranges Provided by SPPO Chief Wes Masur October 2020.**

<https://tpwd.texas.gov/warden/>

<b>GW vs. SPPO</b>	<b>GW Annual Salary</b>	<b>GW Monthly Salary</b>	<b>SPPO Annual Salary</b>	<b>SPPO Monthly Salary</b>	<b>Monthly \$ Difference</b>	<b>% Difference</b>
<b>Position Title</b>	<b>&lt; 4 Years of Service</b>					
GW (C1) / SPPO Cadet	\$40,350	\$3,362.50	\$42,000	\$3,500	(\$138)	-4%
GW (C2) / SPPO Upon Graduation	\$44,082	\$3,673.50	\$45,000	\$3,750	(\$77)	-2%
GW (C3) / SPPO After 1 year Service	\$53,242	\$4,250.00	\$53,242	\$4,437	(\$187)	-4%
GW (C3) / SPPO	\$53,242	\$4,250.00	\$53,242	\$4,437	(\$187)	-4%
GW (C4) / SPPO Sergeant	\$0	\$0.00	\$63,600	\$5,300	\$0	
GW (C5) / SPPO Lieutenant	\$0	\$0.00	\$68,400	\$5,700	\$0	
GW (C6) / SPPO Captain	\$0	\$0.00	\$74,400	\$6,200	\$0	
GW (C8) / SPPO Major	\$0	\$0.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	
GW (Assistant Chief) / SPPO Chief	\$0	\$0.00		\$0	\$0	
<b>Position Title</b>	<b>&gt; 4 Years of Service</b>					
GW (C3) / SPPO	\$64,919	\$5,409.92	\$54,000	\$4,936.00	\$474	9%
GW (C4) / SPPO Sergeant	\$72,711	\$6,059.25	\$66,000	\$5,739.00	\$320	5%
GW (C5) / SPPO Lieutenant	\$80,582	\$6,715.17	\$70,800	\$6,332.00	\$383	6%
GW (C6) / SPPO Captain	\$98,903	\$8,241.92	\$76,800	\$6,960.00	\$1,282	16%
GW (C8) / SPPO Major	\$116,352	\$9,696.00	\$82,000	\$7,724.00	\$1,972	20%
GW (Assistant Chief) / SPPO Chief	\$123,100	\$10,258.00	\$97,200	\$8,250.00	\$2,008	20%

**Table 18 Continued: Salary Ranges Provided by SPPO Chief Wes Masur October 2020.**

<b>GW vs. SPPO</b>	<b>GW Annual Salary</b>	<b>GW Monthly Salary</b>	<b>SPPO Annual Salary</b>	<b>SPPO Monthly Salary</b>	<b>Monthly \$ Difference</b>	<b>% Difference</b>
<b>Position Title</b>	<b>&gt; 8 Years of Service</b>					
GW (C3) / SPPO	\$69,541	\$5,795.08	\$57,000	\$5,370.00	\$425	7%
GW (C4) / SPPO Sergeant	\$77,639	\$6,469.92	\$68,400	\$5,939.00	\$531	8%
GW (C5) / SPPO Lieutenant	\$85,777	\$7,148.08	\$73,200	\$6,532.00	\$616	9%
GW (C6) / SPPO Captain	\$102,265	\$8,522.08	\$79,200	\$7,160.00	\$1,362	16%
GW (C8) / SPPO Major	\$116,428	\$9,702.33	\$85,200	\$7,224.00	\$1,978	20%
GW (Assistant Chief) / SPPO Chief	\$126,720	\$10,560.00	\$97,200	\$8,250.00	\$2,310	22%
<b>GW vs. SPPO</b>	<b>GW Annual Salary</b>	<b>GW Monthly Salary</b>	<b>SPPO Annual Salary</b>	<b>SPPO Monthly Salary</b>	<b>Monthly \$ Difference</b>	<b>% Difference</b>
<b>Position Title</b>	<b>&gt; 12 Years of Service</b>					
GW (C3) / SPPO	\$72,613	\$6,051.08	\$60,000	\$5,700.00	\$351	6%
GW (C4) / SPPO Sergeant	\$80,821	\$6,735.08	\$70,800	\$6,139.00	\$596	9%
GW (C5) / SPPO Lieutenant	\$89,074	\$7,422.83	\$75,600	\$6,732.00	\$691	9%
GW (C6) / SPPO Captain	\$104,331	\$8,694.25	\$81,600	\$7,360.00	\$1,334	15%
GW (C8) / SPPO Major	\$116,474	\$9,706.17	\$87,600	\$7,924.00	\$1,782	18%
GW (Assistant Chief) / SPPO Chief	\$126,720	\$10,560.00	\$97,200	\$8,250.00	\$2,310	22%

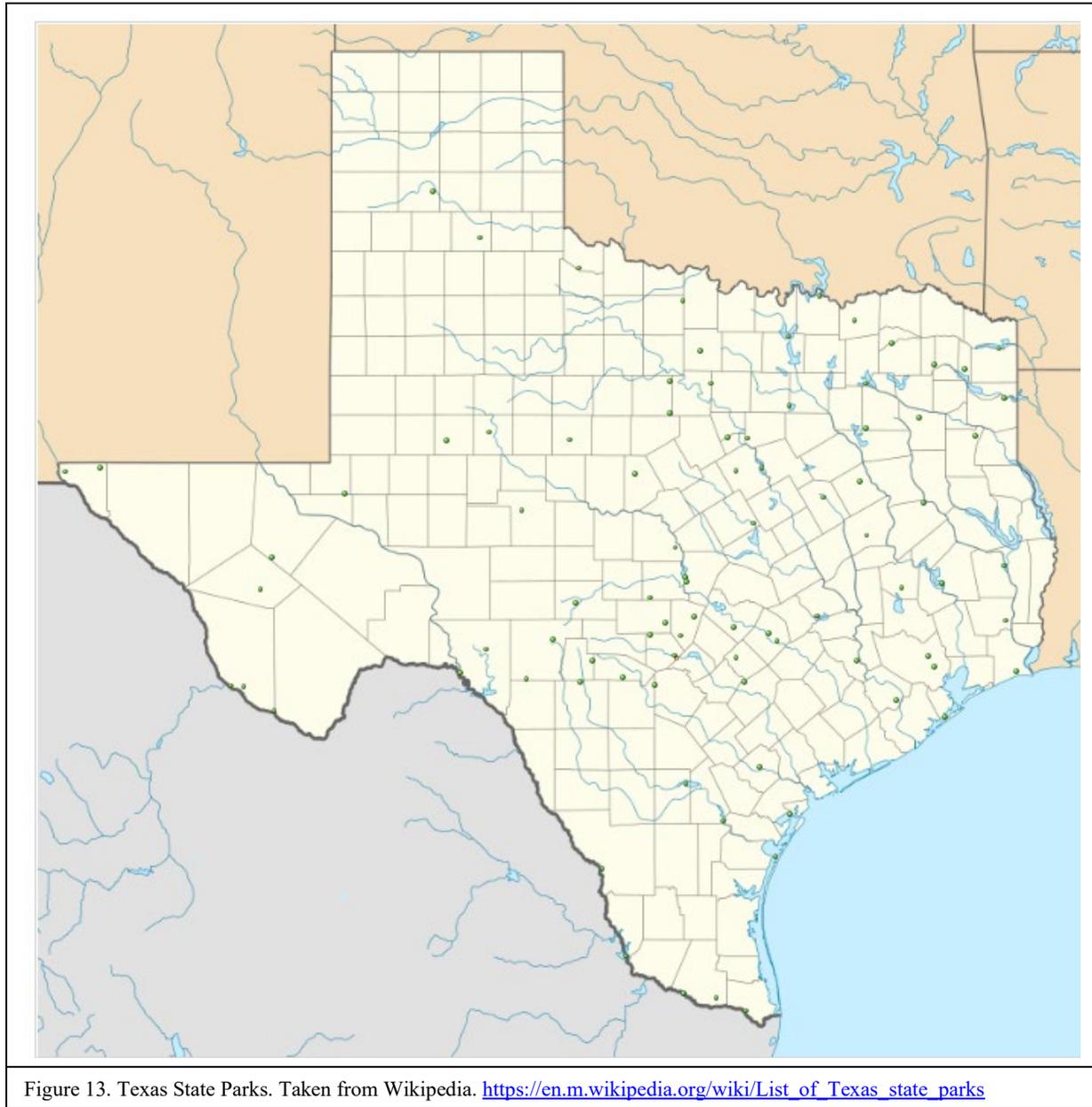
**Table 18 Continued: Salary Ranges Provided by SPPO Chief Wes Masur October 2020.**

<b>GW vs. SPPO</b>	<b>GW Annual Salary</b>	<b>GW Monthly Salary</b>	<b>SPPO Annual Salary &gt; 16 Years of Service</b>	<b>SPPO Monthly Salary &gt; 16 Years of Service</b>	<b>Monthly \$ Difference</b>	<b>% Difference</b>
<b>Position Title</b>	<b>&gt; 16 Years of Service</b>	<b>&gt; 16 Years of Service</b>	<b>&gt; 16 Years of Service</b>	<b>&gt; 16 Years of Service</b>		
GW (C3) / SPPO	\$75,968	\$6,330.67	\$60,000	\$5,700.00	\$631	10%
GW (C4) / SPPO Sergeant	\$84,391	\$7,032.58	\$70,800	\$6,139.00	\$894	13%
GW (C5) / SPPO Lieutenant	\$92,860	\$7,738.33	\$75,600	\$6,732.00	\$1,006	13%
GW (C6) / SPPO Captain	\$106,406	\$8,867.17	\$81,600	\$7,360.00	\$1,507	17%
GW (C8) / SPPO Major	\$116,474	\$9,706.17	\$87,600	\$7,924.00	\$1,782	18%
GW (Assistant Chief) / SPPO Chief	\$126,720	\$10,560.00	\$97,200	\$8,250.00	\$2,310	22%
<b>GW vs. SPPO</b>	<b>GW Annual Salary</b>	<b>GW Monthly Salary</b>	<b>SPPO Annual Salary</b>	<b>SPPO Monthly Salary</b>	<b>Monthly \$ Difference</b>	<b>% Difference</b>
<b>Position Title</b>	<b>&gt; 20 Years of Service</b>	<b>&gt; 20 Years of Service</b>	<b>&gt; 20 Years of Service</b>	<b>&gt; 20 Years of Service</b>		
GW (C3) / SPPO	\$79,323	\$6,610.25	\$60,000	\$5,700.00	\$910	14%
GW (C4) / SPPO Sergeant	\$86,495	\$7,207.92	\$70,800	\$6,139.00	\$1,069	15%
GW (C5) / SPPO Lieutenant	\$95,192	\$7,932.67	\$75,600	\$6,732.00	\$1,201	15%
GW (C6) / SPPO Captain	\$107,682	\$8,973.50	\$81,600	\$7,360.00	\$1,614	18%
GW (C8) / SPPO Major	\$116,474	\$9,706.17	\$87,600	\$7,924.00	\$1,782	18%
GW (Assistant Chief) / SPPO Chief	\$126,720	\$10,560.00	\$97,200	\$8,250.00	\$2,310	22%

**Appendix B: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department operating parks.**

<https://tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/parks-map>

**Table 19: State Parks at Texas Parks and Wildlife Department**



<b>State Park Name - 92 Parks</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>County(s)</b>	<b>State</b>
Abilene State Park	Tuscola	Taylor	TX
Atlanta State Park	Atlanta	Cass	TX
Balmorhea State Park	Toyahvale	Reeves	TX
Barton Warnock Visitor Center	Terlingua	Brewster	TX
Bastrop State Park	Bastrop	Bastrop	TX
Battleship Texas State Historic Site	Laporte	Harris	TX
Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley State Park	Mission	Hidalgo	TX
Big Bend Ranch State Park	Marfa	Presidio, Brewster	TX
Big Spring State Park	Big Spring	Howard	TX
Blanco State Park	Blanco	Blanco	TX
Bonham State Park	Bonham	Fannin	TX
Brazos Bend State Park	Needville	Fort Bend	TX
Buescher State Park	Smithville	Bastrop	TX
Caddo Lake State Park	Karnack	Harrison	TX
Caprock Canyons State Park & Trailway	Quitaque	Briscoe	TX
Cedar Hill State Park	Cedar Hill	Dallas	TX
Choke Canyon State Park	Calliham	Live Oak, McMullen	TX
Cleburne State Park	Cleburne	Johnson	TX
Colorado Bend State Park	Bend	Lampasas, San Saba	TX
Cooper Lake State Park	Cooper	Cooper	TX
Copper Breaks State Park	Quanah	Hardeman	TX
Daingerfield State Park	Daingerfield	Morris	TX
Davis Mountains State Park	Fort Davis	Davis	TX
Devils River State Natural Area	Del Rio	Edwards	TX
Devil's Sinkhole State Natural Area	Rocksprings	Val Verde	TX
Dinosaur Valley State Park	Glen Rose	Somervell	TX
Eisenhower State Park	Denison	Grayson	TX
Enchanted Rock State Natural Area	Fredericksburg	Llano	TX
Estero Llano Grande State Park	Weslaco	Hidalgo	TX
Fairfield Lake State Park	Fairfield Lake State Park	Freestone	TX
Falcon State Park	Roma	Zapata, Starr	TX
Fort Boggy State Park	Centerville	Leon	TX
Fort Leaton State Historic Site	Presidio	Presidio	TX
Fort Parker State Park	Mexia	Limestone	TX
Fort Richardson State Park, Historic Site & Lost Creek Reservoir and Trailway	Jacksboro	Jack	TX
Franklin Mountains State Park	El Paso	El Paso	TX
Galveston Island State Park	Galveston	Galveston	TX
Garner State Park	Concon	Uvalde	TX
Goliad State Park & Historic Site	Goliad	Goliad	TX
Goose Island State Park	Rockport	Aransas	TX
Government Canyon State Natural Area	San Antonio	Bexar	TX
Guadalupe River State Park	Spring Branch	Comall, Kendall	TX
Hill Country State Natural Area	Bandera	Bandera, Medina	TX
Honey Creek State Natural Area	Spring Branch	Comal	TX
Hueco Tanks State Park & Historic Site	El Paso	El Paso	TX

Huntsville State Park	Huntsville	Walker	TX
Indian Lodge	Fort Davis	Jeff Davis	TX
Inks Lake State Park	Burnet	Burnet	TX
Kickapoo Cavern State Park	Bracketville	Kinney, Edwards	TX
Lake Arrowhead State Park	Whichita Falls	Clay	TX
Lake Bob Sandlin State Park	Pittsburg	Titus, Camp, Franklin	TX
Lake Brownwood State Park	Lake Brownwood	Brown	TX
Lake Casa Blanca International State Park	Laredo	Webb	TX
Lake Colorado City State Park	Colorado City	Mitchell	TX
Lake Corpus Christi State Park	Mathis	San Patricio	TX
Lake Livingston State Park	Livingston	Polk	TX
Lake Mineral Wells State Park & Trailway	Mineral Wells	Parker	TX
Lake Somerville State Park & Trailway	Somerville	Burleson, Lee	TX
Lake Tawakoni State Park	Wills Point	Hunt	TX
Lake Whitney State Park	Whitney	Hill	TX
Lockhart State Park	Lockhart	Caldwell	TX
Longhorn Cavern State Park	Burnet	Burnet	TX
Lost Maples State Natural Area	Vanderpool	Bandera, Real	TX
Lyndon B. Johnson State Park & Historic Site	Stonewall	Gillespie	TX
Martin Creek Lake State Park	Tatum	Rusk	TX
Martin Dies, Jr. State Park	Jasper	Jasper, Tyler	TX
McKinney Falls State Park	Austin	Travis	TX
Meridian State Park	Meridian	Bosque	TX
Mission Tejas State Park	Grapeland	Houston	TX
Monahans Sandhills State Park	Monahans	Ward, Winkler	TX
Mother Neff State Park	Moody	Coryell	TX
Mustang Island State Park	Corpus Christi	Nueces	TX
Old Tunnel State Park	Fredericksburg	Kendall	TX
Palmetto State Park	Gonzales	Gonzales	TX
Palo Duro Canyon State Park	Canyon	Randall	TX
Pedernales Falls State Park	Johnson City	Blanco	TX
Possum Kingdom State Park	Caddo	Palo Pinto	TX
Purtis Creek State Park	Eustace	Henderson, Van Zandt	TX
Ray Roberts Lake State Park includes Isle du Bois Unit, Johnson Branch Unit, Jordan Park Unit, Ray Roberts Greenbelt Corridor, and Sanger Marina Unit	Pilot Point	Denton, Cooke, Grayson	TX
Resaca de la Palma State Park	Brownsville	Cameron	TX
San Angelo State Park	San Angelo	Tom Green	TX
Sea Rim State Park	Sabine Pass	Jefferson	TX
Seminole Canyon State Park & Historic Site	Comstock	Val Verde	TX
Sheldon Lake State Park & Environmental...	Houston	Harris	TX
South Llano River State Park	Junction	Kimble	TX
Stephen F. Austin State Park	San Felipe	Austin	TX
Tyler State Park	Tyler	Smith	TX
Village Creek State Park	Lumberton	Hardin	TX
Wylar Aerial Tramway	El Paso	El Paso	TX
<a href="#">Palo Pinto Mountains State Park (under development)</a>	Strawn	Palo Pinto, Stephens	TX

# Texas



Figure 14. Texas Counties, 254 Taken from OnTheWorldmap.com. <http://ontheworldmap.com/usa/state/texas/texas->

Appendix C: Ecoregions of Texas

Table 20.

Ecoregions of Texas



**Appendix D: LE Structure**

**State Park Law Enforcement Program Data (TPWD LE 2021).**

**State Park Police Staffing Complement (TPWD LE 2021).**

- 150 State Park Police Positions
- 98 Law Enforcement Track (26 current vacancies, 12 cadets in the 63<sup>rd</sup> GWTC, 18 graduates from the GWTC currently working as State Park Police Officers)
- 52 Management Track / Dual role

**Recruit and Retention Challenges (TPWD LE 2021).**

- 39% loss of State Park Police Management track officers since 2014
- 35% of State Park Police Officers that graduated from the GWTC moved to the LE Division since 2014
- 11% Annual average turnover rate for State Park Police Officers within the law enforcement track since 2014
- 25% of the current State Park Police Staff (Law Enforcement Track) is vacant

**New Officer Investment Cost (TPWD LE 2021).**

- \$90,000 per officer which includes recruitment costs, cadet salary, academy training and staff costs, field training, and equipment that is not reusable

**Compensation of Officers (TPWD LE 2021).**

- Prior to October 2019 - salary average of (20% - 35%) below schedule “C” (with stipends)
- November 2019 – State Park Police Salaries (6% - 22%) below schedule “C” (without stipends)

*As of November 2019, State Park Police Salary percentage below schedule "C" /without stipends (average stipends are 3%) are:*

<b>Position Title</b>	<b>0 -4 years</b>	<b>4- 8 years</b>	<b>8 - 12 years</b>	<b>12 - 16 years</b>	<b>16 - 20 years</b>	<b>20 years plus</b>
State Park Police Officer I -VI	Equal	9%	7%	7%	10%	14%
Sergeant, State Park Police Officer	NA	6%	8%	9%	13%	15%
Lieutenant, State Park Police Officer	NA	6%	9%	9%	13%	15%
Captain, State Park Police Officer	NA	15%	15%	15%	17%	18%
Major, State Park Police Officer	NA	20%	20%	18%	18%	18%
Chief, State Park Police Officer	NA	NA	20%	22%	22%	22%

\*Schedule C salaries represents how Texas Game Wardens and other state police officers in Texas such as Department of Public Safety, Department of Public Safety Capitol Police, Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission and Texas Attorney General’s Office are compensated. Texas State Park Police are the only state police force not paid on this schedule.

## **Recommendations** (TPWD LE 2021).

The agency law enforcement review team recommends moving the State Parks Law Enforcement Program under the umbrella of the Law Enforcement Division, while adhering to separate accounting requirements for Fund 9 and Fund 64. This structure would provide long-lasting benefits to the Department, including:

- **Unified law enforcement services inside and outside of state parks** (TPWD LE 2021).
  - Allows for continuity of operations. Geographic, site specific and law enforcement priorities will be identified and addressed within one team.
  - Increases the number of TPWD officers who can respond and provide law enforcement coverage to State Parks and surrounding communities.
  - Develops and strengthens partnerships within one division which will improve law enforcement services and officer safety.
- **Unified and consistent training** (TPWD LE 2021).
  - The agency has been moving towards a more unified training model for the last several years. With one chain of command, supervisors will have a more structured and consistent approach when managing expectations of officers.
  - All TPWD officers will receive the same training
  - Officers will receive additional cross-training in their specific fields (game warden and state park police) which improves their overall conservation law enforcement abilities, further supporting the mission of the agency.
- **Combined staff resources such as administration, recruiting, training, and field operations** (TPWD LE 2021).
  - Combining staff improves efficiency and reduces redundancy.
  - One recruitment message, even with different primary responsibilities, helps to reduce competitiveness between two divisions.
  - A single chain of command allows supervisors to manage responsibilities, expectations, uniformity and response in a more efficient and productive way.
- **One law enforcement hiring process** (TPWD LE 2021).
  - One application for both positions.
  - One hiring process that includes physical readiness testing, interview and background investigation.
  - One final selection process for employment and start of the academy.
- **Cadet assignments based on agency law enforcement priorities** (TPWD LE 2021).
  - All academy graduates will be assigned based on operational priorities to a game warden or state park police officer position.
  - Provides greater flexibility with cadet assignments.
  - Allows qualified officers to transfer between game warden and state park police positions based on agency law enforcement priorities.

- **Improved and consistent officer performance measures and accountability** (TPWD LE 2021).
  - Uniform performance standards
  - Unified disciplinary and accountability process
- **Efficiency in budget management and purchasing** (TPWD LE 2021).
  - Allows consistent purchasing of law enforcement equipment with management decisions based on division law enforcement priority needs.
  - Managing one budget with one purchasing contact would noticeably increase efficiency and reduce redundancy.
  - Combining budget and purchasing positions from both teams will ensure consistency and improve efficiency.
- **Unified Legislative Appropriation Requests** (TPWD LE 2021).
  - Allows for consistent FTE, budget, equipment, and compensation requests for law enforcement within TPWD.
  - Would eliminate the need of a law enforcement request from the State Parks Division, allowing the division to focus efforts on operational priorities.
- **Improved radio communications between officers.** (TPWD LE 2021).
  - One primary radio communications POC, identical equipment and radio protocols will improve officer safety, efficiency, and professionalism.
  - Equipment will be maintained and shared during emergencies.
- **Standardized General Orders and policies reduce potential liability issues** (TPWD LE 2021).
  - Work has occurred in recent years to create policies that are the same for both Divisions. However, the agency still has two sets of policies, one for each division.
- **Standardized equipment** (TPWD LE 2021).
  - Standardized equipment, uniforms and training will all work to improve overall Agency continuity, effectiveness, and performance.
- **Unified emergency/disaster response** (TPWD LE 2021).
  - One chain of command will eliminate duplication of communication when resources need to be deployed and allow for one reporting procedure.
- **Improved officer safety** (TPWD LE 2021).
  - One chain of command eliminates duplicate or conflicting orders and confusion in an emergency.
  - Identical training (academy, field, and in-service), equipment, policies, response, hiring and recruitment all equate to a more professional organization. In turn, this leads to higher expectations and ultimately improved officer and public safety.
- **Improved communication** (TPWD LE 2021).
  - Eliminates email string from two separate chains of command, in which information may differ.
  - Consistent message from one chain of command.

- **Reduced agency liability** (TPWD LE 2021).
  - Identical training, equipment, policies, response, hiring, performance measure accounting, consistent disciplinary process and recruitment leads to improved officer and public safety.
- **Unified teams (K9, Dive, SAR, Drone, CIRT, Chaplin, etc.)** (TPWD LE 2021).
  - Allows more recruitment, competitiveness and opportunities for officers.
- **Improved staffing levels through more efficient use of officer assignments** (TPWD LE 2021).
  - Increases the number of officers who can respond and provide law enforcement services to State Parks and surrounding communities.
  - Creates a more versatile officer with the unity of the LE teams and provides a clear understanding of both areas of responsibility.
- **Greater flexibility, training opportunities, advancement and professional development for law enforcement staff.** (TPWD LE 2021).

Providing one chain of command focused on conservation law enforcement for the state, state park visitors and staff will allow the Department to better utilize FTE, budget and staff resources to provide these services. It is important that the differences in program identity and duties between game wardens and state park police and the different operating environments for these officers be preserved, regardless of their placement in the Department's organization. Any prospective change must consider impacts to communication, coordination and resources of the programs; enhance officer support; standardize officer training and accountability; provide enforcement services to the public; etc. Although specific differences necessarily exist between the two law enforcement programs, a combined management and support structure for the Department's law enforcement resources could provide greater flexibility and support for field and administrative operations, and more efficiently allocate resources to address enforcement priorities throughout the state.

### **Conservation Law Enforcement Case Studies (TPWD LE 2021).**

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department agency law enforcement review team contacted multiple state systems that have merged their state park police and game warden divisions. Through collaborative discussions, the State of Florida was determined to have similarity in functionality, scope, size, values, and mission with TPWD. The analysis team deliberated with Florida leadership to expand insight into potential approaches and influences of a unification.

#### ***Considerations and programs learned from the Florida merger integrated:***

- Prior to Florida's merger, the dual function law enforcement jobs within park management were removed.
- Florida's timeline to complete the union was accelerated due to legislative action—it was recommended that TPWD stay upfront of any imposed action.
- Combining law enforcement staffing (park police and game wardens) improved the overall law enforcement and public safety services.
- Effectiveness enlarged within servicing the overall mission of the agency.
- Connection of law enforcement operations was achieved.
- Improved communication and morale in officers were noted.
- Consistent training was gained.
- Created a unified hiring and disciplinary process.
- Combined emergency operations and response teams for natural disasters.

**Appendix E: Interview Transcript for:** (Texas Legacy 2021).

**State Park Police Officer Chief Wes Masur and Game Warden, Colonel, Chad Jones.**

Richard G. Powe Directed Research Interviews Transcript

Chief Wes Masur

By **Richard G. Powe**

Transcript

October 29th, 2020 - 9:04 AM. Digital Recording Chief Masur State Park Police Office of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). Ended, 10:11 AM.

TRANSCRIPT (1:06.50)

INTERVIEWEE: **Chief Wes Masur (WM)**

INTERVIEWER: Richard G Powe (Rgp)

DATE: October 29th, 2020

LOCATION: Chief Masur in Austin, Richard G. Powe, in Bertram, Texas

TRANSCRIBER: Richard G. Powe

REELS: listened over and over, rewinding and replaying to get each word.

Please note that the recording includes background noise sound tones. The recording was supposed to be via Zoom recording. The internet was down, so Richard G. Powe traveled to the top of Balcones Ridgeway and the crossroad Chaney's Crossing, where construction was going on for a new member of Whitewater Springs Community. Fortunately, a digital recorder was used to record via cell phone the conversation between Chief Masur and Richard G. Powe having the interview questions found in the Methodology of the paper "*Comparison of Professional Positions and Duties Between State Park Peace Officers and Game Wardens for Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.*" Chief Masur was phone called during the interview time on top of the hill where cell services are prominent when the internet is out of service and is the place to get service while surrounded by Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge.

Rgp: Hello, Chief Masur. My name is Richard G. Powe. I am here for the Interview between Peace Officers for Texas Parks and Wildlife for my directed research paper as the discussion finds out about the duties and culture between park police and game wardens. A paper that will fulfill part of the obligation in obtaining a master's in applied geography resource and environmental studies at Texas State University. It is October 29th, 2020, and I am in Bertram, Texas, talking to Chief Masur in his office in Austin, Texas. I just wanted to thank him for taking the time to talk about his life and career and answer these questions for his field.

Rgp: Ok. I don't know if you've had a chance to look at the questions that I sent you or not?

WM: I've looked—I've looked through most of them, yeah, so, yes, sir. I'm usually fairly good at impromptu stuff, so ah, and I've been doing this for a long time, so ah. I hope I can give you all the information that you need.

Rgp: I think that you can, and last night I went through and was reading over the ah—spreadsheet the item you sent to me—the executive summary, and I was looking at the

spreadsheet you sent me (that has the pay variances between SPPO and GW over the twenty-year schedule). I was trying to mess with that (decipher) started to look at that the morning of the interview and went to connect the internet, and it didn't work, and I was, like, oh crap! Ugh. So I was.

WM: That happens, man.

Rgp: Well, I never thought it would because, well I, ah I don't know, I guess sometimes that's what happens when you live out here next to a wildlife refuge. (laugh).

WM: That's exactly right. That's exactly right. Good, man.

Rgp: The wind was blowing. Cool, so the interview questions are like I don't think it will take more than forty minutes, but I think we can cut it down quickly (thinking that I don't want to waste Chief Masur's time). You know it's about the Green Criminology was the first section.

WM: Sure.

Rgp: We're talking about the public safety, the natural resources, the environment around the park use, and I didn't realize the park police were the same function as the state parks as far as ah—like the—um—like ah, Shawn Greene, like he's a superintendent or John Alvis, he's a superintendent but they are also parked police.

WM: Yeah, the difference of the two is that those guys' primary jobs are doing, of course, managing the park systems, but their primary job is not law enforcement. As I was explaining to you, we changed all that in 2014, so we have a dedicated police force, and then basically those guys that are in those management roles that are basically dual-purpose type positions, and you know, they're going away by attrition, and ah—like I said in 2014 we had ninety-two of those positions, and now we're down to forty. Um—so, ah. Anyway, you know, the primary goal, their primary functions are not law enforcement, but they are a section of our law enforcement team. You know, they respond to calls they are not as proactive as our state park police full-time force because you know our guys, our goal is to prevent and do patrols that kind of stuff like that and be a part of that interaction with everything happening in the park, and Park Managers serve as a backup unit is what I would call it.

Rgp: Right. Yeah, that is pretty interesting. I mean, I didn't realize, so they did not have to. Ah, then—they don't do the training like I know the game wardens and park police go to Hamilton, to do training. They didn't do that, or was this training something that got interacted later on?

WM: Yeah, that was, later on, so we had our academy at the time, so most of the guys you see in that park manager type role were in commissioned positions had been on for a while. What we decided to do was not take their law enforcement duties away from them. We let them continue doing law enforcement, they still have to go to the same update training as our regular officers, but their basic training did not require them to go through the game warden academy in Hamilton, Texas.

Rgp: I gotcha. Well, those questions were not really part of what I had in mind, but I was going to go off the script that I sent you, and I guess I'll continue that and I am just letting you know that you know, after looking at the spreadsheet, and I thought earlier that there wasn't too much of a difference, but after getting down to the number there is a pay difference, and it looks like you guys are still trying to coordinate getting together and combining the two funds, the 964 and

WM: Correct, yes.

Rgp: I don't know if that is going to be going on soon or not?

WM: Yeah, it should be in the legislative session that begins in January, um, yeah, so I mean hey, you can go off the script and then you can ask me anything that you want to because I want to make sure I give you all the necessary stuff that you need to do...to do your report correctly.

Rgp: Ok, well, so I'm gonna go off the script as these are questions, I made before I ever talked to you and was not aware of the situation, so this has to do with the Green Criminology theory and so *'What are the differences in the way a peace officer reacts to wildlife crimes versus the reaction to common traditional crimes'* (The questions are based off the literature review, I found in the research for the differences between duties and culture. There were many sources, yet not many specifics towards the actual duties, more behavior situations that foretold the differences in duties and culture. These types of questions, the best option would be how each SPPO team and GW team provide this in the comments at the end of the survey).

WM: Well, first of all, Richard, let me just say, that ah, a crime is a crime, so as trained law enforcement officers ya know, number one, we have to figure out the elements of a crime, that a crime did take place...ah, so every crime, whether it's a wildlife crime or a crime against a person. Ya, know, you got to determine that there was a crime that took place, probable cause, the elements of the offense, that kind of stuff like that. So, what I would say um—you know, the initial call for a crime when we respond to it—you know, the first thing an officer does when they get there is, of course, you know, they introduce themselves— they try to figure out what's going on, make sure that they have those elements of the crime like I said. And then basically determine if it's an actor or a crime against a person or a crime against a wildlife resource, but we handle the starting of the crime the same way whether it's wildlife or—or a different type of crime.

Rgp: Ah, ok.

WM: Ah, but what I will say is, it all depends on the investigation. Ah, so, for instance, if you're doing an investigation of a crime against property, um—you know, a lot of times if you're investigating, for example, ah, like burglary of a vehicle—um—you know— you've got a non-living thing there where there has not been basically like a life taken against like a wildlife crime. Um, so you would do an investigation, you know, to figure out if you can determine if there is an actor to perform a crime against a vehicle or the same thing against wildlife. So, a lot of times, the significant difference I'm gonna say is, ya know, when you have a crime against wildlife is not going to be able to talk to you. Ah, if there is no person/witness, the challenges always determine all the factors in an investigation. Since you can't interview somebody, ah, you know,

a crime against wildlife, ah, is not able to do that so, I'm gonna say the major differences from— from our standpoint a lot of times is that, ah, if you don't have a witness, it's pretty hard to— to interview, ah, somebody of a victim of a crime especially when it comes to wildlife.

Rgp: Yeah, that's very understandable, and I guess, you know, sometimes the wildlife might have been injured or deceased or—or you're going back and finding remains, or I don't know if that's possible of something you guys do?

WM: Sure.

Rgp: Well, thanks for answering that, um, so the next question, *'Is there an awareness you guys have about the global and ecological crimes that are unlawful about the trade of wildlife, the crimes of pollution, and environmental destruction?* What I mean is that situation in everybody's mind during, you know, at most times or is that sometimes forgotten?

WM: Absolutely, yes, sir. Absolutely. First of all, what I'd like to say is, ah, you know, conservation law enforcement officers, you know, state park police, game wardens. Ah, we're all partners, ah, within the agency within the state of Texas, and then we also have federal and state partners across the United States that we network with. Ah, that basically, we all try to network together talking about crimes that are related to wildlife, pollution or environmental destruction because what you may have is you may have, you know, a specific need or a certain type of environment, ah, that is being taken away in one part of the United States. And you know, the people that are committing those types of crimes or crimes that are hurting the environment. You know it moves around kind of thing. So, if you have a crime, ah, that's you know, against, ah, the specific type of wildlife resource, and I'm gonna use, ya know, like some plant where people are going out stealing a native plant in California. We have the same type of native plant here in Texas—at some point, you know, those types of crimes because of need are going to migrate into these types of areas so, what I think is important is we network all across the United States, which we do. We usually do that by meetings, by emails, by updates. We call them intelligent updates, and we send stuff out that says, hey, basically we are having problems with this in the State of Texas, and then, of course, we do that in meeting too, but I have those in open discussions, ah, about the different types crimes that are out there. So, and of course, you know, pollution is a huge part, I know Col. Jones will be able to answer that one a whole lot better because there is a specific, um group, of officers in the game wardens that do specific investigations on—on pollution and environmental crimes across the State of Texas and of course they network, ya know, all across the United States as well with that team.

Rgp: 10:11. Right, that's pretty, ok. Ya know, when I found out my internet was not working, I was trying to find out what the difference between Colonel, Sergeant, or like Lieutenant and all that kind of stuff, and how they ranked, and then I realized it wasn't working and then I started freaking out. I rebooted my router, and then I'm like, ok, so, I'm glad I came up the hill before, well ya know, I always try to make use of my time if I find there might be some sort of issue. I'm glad I'm able to do this kind of impromptu interview, right? Hah ha.

WM: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, and that's good it works out, and like I said, I want to make sure you get all the information you need for your stuff.

Rgp: Yeah, awesome! And I had this digital recorder so, this is good. I'm sure Col. Jones can provide me with a lot of useful information as well.

WM: Yeah, there are a few of these questions, Richard, that are gonna be better off answered by him specifically that one like when I told you they have a team of environmental crimes investigators in the game warden group- they're going to be able to answer that on a more specific basis when my answers to it are going to be more broad.

Rgp: yeah, yeah

WM: We normally handle those when they're in the park's kind of thing.

Rgp: Ok, and I guess that's like when you're generally stationed at a specific park but, I think going forward, if you integrate, you would be able to do that wherever you are at. Is that correct?

WM: Absolutely. Absolutely. And you know that is one thing, you know, about an integration, together, and we aren't gonna do a thing but make our agency stronger. Which is going to be able to not only support, you know, all the resources of Texas out there, but it's gonna expand our partnerships and expand our ability to do or to be more thorough, ah, for sure. So, it is going to be positive, and ah, like I said, we're already migrating that way. It just doesn't look like that on paper at this point.

Rgp: Gotcha, gotcha. Well, ok. So, the next question was a *how often is there an investigation on the illicit trade of plants and animals for domestic and is there any mistreatment that you've seen, and if so, is there any domestic violence found that is prevalent in these police investigations?*

WM: Sure, well. First off, I'll start and talk a little bit about flora and fauna. So, it seems like, ya know, from my team of officers, traditionally, ah, we deal with this in specific areas of the state like state parks. So, you know like having specific wild resources and natural habitat, for instance, the okiya type cactus, this is very common out at Big Bend and very often very sought out types of plants that people like to put in their landscape for your yards and stuff like that, so, we deal with groups of people trying to come out there and take those specific wildlife resources, not only form that site but other sites. And I'm just giving the specifics for us, but it can fall to a particular plant, tree, that kind of thing, and stuff like that, so we are always vigilant about that. Networking and partnering with people that you know that there is a shortage in the United States for a particular type of plant and you always have a criminal element that's willing to go out there and take the chance and take them off of protected resources, so it's just we got to be very vigilant about that and pay attention to what's going on. Do a bunch of backcountry patrols. You don't just ride around in your vehicle. You gotta get out and walk and make sure that these resources are taken or damaged out in the field. Um—so—so, the number of investigations we have on flora and fauna. It depends on every year. Um—I would say last year, I looked up the statistic, we had eighteen investigations, and we were able to make some cases on some specific type of plant removed from our state parks.

And then, of course, from domestic animal mistreatment, um—the way I look at it is everybody wants to go to their park. Everybody travels—travels uh, to parks as families, so, what they do is they bring their pets with them. Um, so, everybody's responsibility when they go to a park is to take their pets with them. They make sure that they take care of their animals. So, at times do we have animals that are mistreated? Yes, we do. Sometimes it's not intentional because—just to give you an example. Um, when park visitors don't understand that you are doing hikes and it's a hundred and ten degrees, and you're going through rocks, and your dog's paws may burn, ya know, that kinda stuff like that. There are some unintentional mistreatments of animals at times. So, it's our job to educate and make sure that there is no crime being committed, um—you know, to harm those animals or something intentional. We don't run into a whole lot of that. We run into many um visitors' n stuff they bring the animals that they care about out there. They put them into an environment where ah, they are not used to and so sometimes that can lead to improper treatment of the animal well, of course, it's sometimes lack of knowledge by our visitors and stuff. So, we do run into that, so we'll have animal conflicts. Ya, know, one group of people that bring their dog and it's the nicest dog in the world and their walking on a trail, and there's the other group of visitors that have their dog in it's the nicest dog in the world. But when they run into each other on the trail, you can have, you know, animal fights and stuff like that, so, um, you know, a lot of that is just putting animals, domestic animals in an environment they are not used to and then having conflicts with other domestic animals at times. So, that's how we deal with that. So, and then the next part of the question was about domestic violence found prevalent in our police rounds.

You know, ah, we have about ten million visitors, ah—a little less than ten million visitors that visit our state parks every year. Um, so, you know, a lot of times when there are problems at home related to the family, they bring those problems to the park too as well. So, if you have domestic violence used at home, and then you come on vacation, ah, a lot of times you have the same thing. So, we do deal with a lot of domestic violence. Ah, we deal with a lot of protective orders—ah, that type of stuff. Ah, you know, basically, out there doing our police rounds—ah—as I said, and when you involve alcohol and—and other types of—other kinds of things that can—can alter the mind of people from making good decisions—ah—when they are out recreating, then yes, we have the same thing—ah—happen is—is—that city—city police officers in stuff do—ah— it's just not their permanent residence. They're usually on vacation or—or ah—staying in a park kind of thing.

Rgp: Right.

WM: So, yes, we have those. Um, I would like, I do—I do like ta, I wanna throw one more thing there, too. Ah, ya know, there are three parts to this question—the flora/fauna, trade and ah—and—and, theft of that, ya know, even ah, domestic ah, animal mistreatment, domestic violence and stuff like that—what we've always found is ah, um, many of the people that we're dealing with that ah, we've caught doing domestic violence, mistreatment of animals, or stealing flora and fauna. A lot of times, I will tell you, there is a criminal background on these people. This instance is usually not their first time committing a crime, and so, when you have a criminal out there that is doing these types of things. Um, they usually had a background in crime. Ah, so it does take a complete investigation to look into. Ya can have somebody, like I said, take a cactus

or some of that from one of our state parks. Often, you're going to find that these people have committed other robberies, theft, that kind of stuff like that.

Rgp: 18:52. Right.

WM: So, once your gonna have a criminal can bring those elements into the park, and there is usually a criminal background that goes with them.

Rgp: 19:01. Ok, yeah, that's pretty interesting. Well, you know, I'm looking at the time, and we have like fourteen more questions, and it's only been.

WM: Well, let's keep on going, bud.

Rgp: Well, I wanted to comment on that, like, I mean, I know that people go out, people want to go out there, you know, and like over 95% of Texas land is privately owned. So, the only time they can go to these places, county parks, city park, state parks, and see this kind of stuff, and they want to take some of that home with them, and its sometimes, in their mind, it is like they think that the parks for them, so they can do whatever they want. Maybe that could be part of why they are doing it. Or, they just don't know, and that could be the issue.

WM: 19:46. Absolutely! You find people that number one, what you always wanna think is you think—that is what you always wanna think is that we, as officers, always want to do our best to educate people to be good stewards of the land and the resources we have there. But, not all the time does that. Did they bring that good thought process to our sites? So, we try number one, to educate people on how to be good stewards of the land. Ah, and of course, when that doesn't work, we have to take enforcement action to make sure that they understand. We require penalties and stuff, but yeah, as we talked about earlier. Sometimes people just come in with the intent or the disrespect of the natural environment, for instance, the land and the animals. So, that's why our job as conservation officers is to protect all those resources and specific order. One, we protect the people, ah, first, because that's our most viable resources, number two, we protect the wildlife and the land, and those things just can't be replaced kinda thing.

Rgp: 20:55. That's true, very true. I know that from my personal experience as well, ah, ya know, I have some land out here, and there is building stuff (more development) out here, and right now, I am parked right in front of a place where they are building a home up here on the hill. And, ah, you know, I know what the lands look like before they were here, and now it's going to be changed and developed, and it can never go back to being the way it was.

WM: Yep.

Rgp: But that's the way lands—landscapes are. We want to preserve them, but it is very hard to do, even in golden-cheeked warbler territory surrounding the wildlife refuge here to protect the yellow bird's habitat. Ok, so I realize some of these questions have more than one question.

WM: That's ok.

Rgp: Ok. Yeah, ah, so, next we're gonna go the question "*protecting the environment, the agency mission,*" and I know there are like two kind of statements or mission statements by the game wardens and then, ah, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, so I imagine they are very similar. And I'm sure that you guys, I know you guys coordinate together, and it's all good.

WM: Right.

Rgp: Um. So, when respecting heritage and embracing the future is one of the game wardens' vision and, um, I'm thinking, or sure that's the same as the park police.

WM: Absolutely. Yes, sir. For us, our mission is to provide, ya know, safe recreational opportunities—ah—within state parks and provide all that for—for—future and present and, you know, future generations, of course. So, yes, all of our missions are tied together.

Rgp: Yeah, So, let's go to that first question. So, was there—was there what was it that made you attend training for law enforcement and what was intriguing as protecting the natural environment.

WM: Well, um...specifically, what created this vision and this, and I might expand on that. You're talking about the joint academies that we do at the game warden academy that we started in 2014, or are you talking about just in general?

Rgp: 22:57. In general, or maybe what your personal decision of why you decided to go into law enforcement, and—and what do you find more intriguing about doing it to protecting wildlife and the environment versus being a regular police officer?

WM: Well, ah, I'll tell ya a quick rundown of my history. Ah, number one, ah, I grew up in a Texas State Park. My dad was the ah, park manager, and park police officer at Lockhart State Park.

Rgp: Ok.

WM: Ah, you know, so, I lived in a park from the time I was two until I was eighteen years old.

Rgp: Sweet!

WM: And then I went to college.

Rgp: Yeah.

WM: 23:35. Um, and, ah, ya know, ah, you know, I saw. First of all, I saw my dad's job as a law enforcement officer. Number one, keeping the people safe and number two, protecting, you know, all the natural and cultural resources in that park, so it was a very well-rounded law enforcement officer were, number one, protecting the people and then you had, you know? All these things to protect, ah, that were natural out there, ah, like a regular police officer they—they basically are a normal police officer first thing for The City of Austin. You know, they're

protecting people, but they're also protecting, ah, you know, buildings, and stuff like that, ah, that aren't natural. They were built kind of things. So, ours is protecting more natural things. So, what led me into this career was number one, growing up in an environment where I loved being outside and being a part of the outdoors. I wanted to see people recreate in a safe, and ah, you know, a place where everybody felt comfortable enough to go where there was a law enforcement presence. Ah, and then check everything as natural as it could. After I graduated college, I spent a little time in the sheriff's department's law enforcement field. Then actually over at Texas State on a drug and alcohol task force there before I came to parks and wildlife. But what is so intriguing to me is being able to do both jobs well. And that is protecting people and protecting natural resources for the future people to come out and enjoy. I want people to recreate safely. Ah, I don't want people to bring their problems to—to the parks. Ah, and I want our parks to stay as natural as they can be, ah—so our generations in the future can come out and see them in their natural setting.

Rgp: 25:26. Right. I agree with that 100%. Ok, let's go on to the next question, "Is there a different feel concerning the mission of conserving natural and cultural resources versus respecting the heritage of resources, or do both the mission statements and vision have identical meaning?"

WM: Well, to me, they—they are, you know, very identical, number one. When you have a mission that is the responsibility that we take very seriously as far as concerning those—those cultural and natural resources, but, and like I said earlier, conserving that for future generations to go out and um, so, yes, I think our mission statement tells us that, you know, that is our task. That is our job, what we're doing. And then what I think you find—you find myself and all of the other officers, ah, already had outstanding respect for these—these lands and wildlife that we're managing and their state parks out there. So, we care about 'em. A lot of the reason is why our law enforcement officers are here is because we have a love for the natural environment, and we want to protect that. Ah, so, I do think that they have a—a similar meaning. Ah, one is a responsibility passed to the agency, and the other is an internal responsibility that our officers have and love for respecting these resources and respecting and feeling good about our jobs.

Rgp: 27:00. That's awesome! Man, I want to—that makes me want to work for you guys. (followed by laughter)

WM: Yeah! (laughter)

Rgp: Of course, I've been trying to work for you guys for a long time or several years. Anyway, so, let's go to the next one. Um, "*When conserving resources, does this mean providing information to people about using less? Is it more about enforcing the limits already prescribed by the laws?*"

WM: 27:25. Well, I think it does mean using the resources less. Um, ya know, we always have to evaluate our resources to make sure there are not—my favorite word is, so they are not overly loved. Um, because, you know, you know, the visitors to our state parks, they usually love and respect the resources we have, and it's got to be loved to death. Ah, so basically, you've got to manage the number of people using all those resources.

Rgp: Right.

WM: To make sure the resources are not destroyed. So, you know, as an agency, we have to look at enforcing public limits in certain areas, ah, as prescribed by law, ah, and we say prescribed by law. The studies our agency does and then recommend the amount of usage that a specific area can take.

Ah, so, we want the people to come out and use our facilities, we—we want to make sure that they stay in, you know, the most pristine, and natural, ah, habitat as before. Ah, and sometimes that does mean that you have to limit the number of people using them. So, we do have to understand that and respect that, and then the most significant thing is, we have to, we have to convey that message to our users so that they understand. Again, it's about them respecting our resources and understanding, so we try to do the very best we can and educate the public on why we have to limit, ah, uses in certain areas. Ah, but not all the time. Does that mean that? We are trying to provide them with that access. We have to limit it.

Rgp: Right. Yeah, I understand that because like last year, I was the Leave No Tract intern for The City of San Marcos, and I had this tent, and I'd work it, and they changed a lot of the rules because of situations like wouldn't allow, ya know, coal burning or wood for barbecue. You had to use natural gas because kids would walk over the hot coal on the ground. And they used to allow people to drink alcoholic beverages on the land, right there in the park, and they can't do that anymore. They can only use the river, and people needed to understand that. A young boy drowned at the San Marcos River, and the Park Rangers could not get to him in time to save him because of the tables and so many folks at the access point. The rules have to change after a tragedy. So, I had to go explain all these things to people, and it was fun to do, but also most would understand afterward. They used to let the grass grow out, but then so many people would trample over it, and now the critical plant structures are surrounding trees at the river edge enclosed by fence structures. That is how they keep it mowed for the people to see where they walk, friendly and tidy.

WM: Yeah, absolutely!

Rgp: 30:06. So, I was gonna ask next about ah, ah... "*Can the duties be performed within the boundaries of Texas State Park areas, or does the duty cross the entire area of every assigned county or region?*" I guess for park police, now, it is only around the park boundaries, but then for game wardens, it extends or is integrated between them both?

WM: Well, here is a good example, right here. Ya know that any state park police officer's primary duty is to protect like I said, the people and the resources within a state park. Ah, our state park police officers have commissioned officers, ah, with full jurisdiction authority in the whole State of Texas. Once you find that, you find a population of people who visit our state parks. They're usually there for a very short time. Um, so, a lot of times, our duties lead us just outside of the park. So, ah, our primary patrol area and area of responsibility is that state park. But when it comes to doing investigations. When it comes to doing, um, you know, basically working with other partners in law enforcement, which are the game wardens and DPS, your

county, and local law enforcement officers, just about general law enforcement crimes, um, we work outside the park. We perform, ya know, traffic stops, you know, as a state-licensed officer, if you're in your patrol vehicle and traveling from a park, and you're on the outside boundaries of the park, and somebody passes you. You see somebody, not operating a vehicle safely, then our duty is to stop them and do a law enforcement action on them whether it is just a warning anywhere to a citation.

Rgp: Right.

WM: So, primary job duty in the park and primary responsibility but many things lead us outside of the park, ah...to not only part of the um, law enforcement agencies in the State of Texas but also provide them with additional support law enforcement resources and I'll say it works both ways. Ah, when we have, you know, a large crime that happens in a state park and, ah, we only have one or two officers in the area. We need additional officers to help us, ah, then we depend on the county, the local agencies, DPS, ah, those type of agencies to come and assist us, so it's really a law enforcement partnership with a primary area we patrol, but a whole lot of duties that lead us outside of the park as well.

Rgp: Ok. Yeah, so that's pretty neat. Ah, so the next question, um, well, you ah, kinda already talked about it. About rural and urban residential neighborhoods. Where you grew up? The hometown, where you grew up, and you already talked about how you grew up pretty much in a state park, and your father worked for 'em. So, you are the State Park.

WM: Yes, sir.

Rgp: And you are the natural resources, and I imagine that I'm sure that influenced your decision to become a state park police officer.

WM: Absolutely, and the only thing that I will expand on that part too is well, just, you know, and think it is just after most people, ah, complete their education part of their life, you know, ah, kinda thing, you kind of figure out what you want to do and basic, for me, it turned into, you know, a love for wanting to do law enforcement to make people safe, having them provide a safe opportunity for people to do...do whatever it was and then...and then just really caring so much for the resources that I saw that needed to be preserved and protected for future generations, really led me to this career, here, ah, at parks and wildlife, where, I can do both. So, ah, it's been a great career, and I'm very happy with it.

Rgp: 34:03. That's awesome. I like it. Well, I was going to move on to the next section for the "Peace Officer Roles (Scope of Power) (Specialized Training)," and, um...I guess, I've already kind of see that there are pay differences between game wardens and state park police officers. It looks like, the first four years that you guys get paid a little bit more and if you multiply that, you know, the four years times twelve, times four years, it winds up being 28K+ more, but then I looked, and they make that up, um, if they work, ya know, year five and six, and almost to year seven they make it all back up with the difference in pay but then they.

WM: Yes, sir.

Rgp: But then they expand on that more. Um, I just wanted to know, are two positions competitive? I mean, don't you guys learn the same things when you are going to the academy?

WM: Yeah, absolutely. Well, ya, I'll take that, you know, first, number one, ya know, game wardens and state park police officers attend the same training academy, they learn the same thing from you know, every, ah, required, ah, basic peace officer training, ah, that involves to specific fish and wildlife to the game to protecting natural and cultural resources. All our officers who began in 2014 have the same training from that point on. Ah, which is really important to make sure that every officer we have accomplishes the agency's mission. Ah, whether it's a law enforcement or conservation law enforcement. There are, ah, two different things that both groups do there, ah, and we integrate and partner very well when it comes to this. I know one of the questions right there, are we competitive? Ah, yeah, internally, we are competitive, but we are also respectful because we are partners kind of thing.

Ah, yes, there is a pay difference like the documents I provided you. A state park police officer and game warden cadet ah, pretty much make similar salaries through graduation through their first four years and then, ah, there is separation because game wardens are on salary schedule C and we're on, ah, a B schedule salary, which, ah, is done by the state auditor's office. Ah, so state park police officers have not been put on the schedule C like game wardens, DPS, and other groups are...are other state law enforcement officers in the State of Texas, right now. Thus, where you see the separation in salary is basically from that four-year mark to the end of their careers. So, at this time, the pay difference is, a game warden, after four years, will make anywhere between seven and fifteen percent more than a state park police officer over their career.

37:10. Now, when you talk about advancement up the ladder-type things, our leadership type positions, which I'm talking for game wardens and state park police, you have lieutenants, captains, majors, and then a chief position. Those positions are traditionally about fifteen percent lower than the game wardens of that type. That is simply because state parks police officers have not put up on schedule C yet. Furthermore, if some things that—ah—as an agency we are looking at trying to make sure we have salary equity. Ah, but it does take legislative enactment to make state park police officers be put on—on the pay schedule C, and that is something we are looking at for the future, kind of thing. So, we think there has been a problem in the past as we have had some police officers' transition to become game wardens, and they have to transfer because they have had the same basic training.

Rgp: Yeah.

WM: Ah...and then, but we believe that once we have the salaries where they are equal out there. It will be where either the game warden or the state police officer doesn't have to look at the—the dollar figure side. They can make sure they're in the right position for themselves, their families, and their goal, whether it is to be more game warden-type work or state park police work.

Rgp: Ok. That's awesome. Well, so, the next question is about ah, how much of the job is protecting nature and wildlife versus the enforcement of traditional infractions like, ah, you know, boating violations or traditional environmental infringements?

WM: 38:57 Well, this is what I'll say. 100% of our job is protecting people, nature, and wildlife. So, when we're all on patrol out there, you know, our goal is protecting all of those elements.

Rgp: So, it's everything, yeah.

WM: The people and those elements, yeah. So, that is our goal the whole time. So as far as infractions and Texas State Parks. Ah, what we find, more than anything, is we probably spend in between sixty and eighty percent of our time enforcing traditional crimes that are, you know, basically related to the penal code, the traffic code stuff. And when I'm talking about that, I'm talking about speeding violations, ah, anywhere from speeding violations, seatbelt tickets, ah, vehicle registration, DWI, the use of drugs, that kind of stuff. So, we spend more time in a park on a specific patrol doing that stuff rather than boating violations and environmental-type crimes related to, uh, the agency's mission for protecting wildlife and resources. So, probably about 30% of the time, are we doing actual investigations or related to that. Um, we spend a lot more of our time doing traditional law enforcement work. I think when you hear Col. Jones, their time is gonna be a little bit different. They are going to probably spend more time doing wildlife and nature enforcement conservation work. Ah, a little more time doing that than we do. Ah, because we got the full gamut of everything when you're in a state park. We are your first responder, we're your law enforcement officer, and we're your conservation law enforcement officer. So, we wear, you know, ah, we have a lot more happening there. It's basically, ah, how I look at every state park because we're like your officer within that own little city, right there. So, we deal with a variety of things.

Rgp: So, it sounds like. It sounds like you guys do more, maybe. Then.

WM: I'm sorry, could you say that one more time, again?

Rgp: It sounds like you guys might do or have more duties than the game warden might.

WM: It does—it does at times. But I think what it is because of, ya know, traditionally, most of the time, a game warden is patrolling a county. They're explicitly working as partners with other law enforcement agencies. Of course, when they're on patrol, they see those crimes that every law enforcement officer has to look for, but, you know, they're in—in the areas looking for—for wildlife, and fish, and conservation officer type of stuff. Um, we have to look at every—every crime that could be committed.

Rgp: Yeah, yeah, the next question was so you could talk about the duties.

WM: The penal code, traffic code, stuff like that, or what the game wardens do?

Rgp: Yeah, the next question I had was about sharing some of the duties, but you answered that in the last question, or you kind of combined that, which is good. So, maybe we can skip that. I

want to make sure we have to give you time because we're already looking like I've already talked to you for forty-two minutes. (One of my goals was to keep the interview at a time that does not interfere with Chief Masur or his duties).

WM: Well, all right.

Rgp: So, anyway, is there any specialized training for protecting plants, the flora, animals, and fauna? Is there any background, or do you have the background, or do you require the background in wildlife science, biology, geography, or cultural resources? Does having this background help in this position? Or do most people have just criminal law?

WM: It's a balance of both. So, no doubt. When we hire new cadets to come in, you know, having a background in understanding and knowing the different types of flora/fauna that we have out there. Animals, wildlife, you know, all that stuff. Having a background in cultural resources, so all of that is extremely beneficial. Number one, I think it makes the employee who wants to come work for us, they have that knowledge and care about it. That's why they probably want to come work for us. So, having that knowledge is really important when you get there. Um, and it's beneficial to us. But I will say that we do have specialized training within our—our academy class. Ah, where we have specific training in first of all identifying. Ya, know, every plant, every animal, every fish, every species. All the resources in—in Texas, so we have classes on number one, identifying them. Number two, having to understand ah, you know, if—if it's an animal that can be hunted, you know when that is, where that is, that kind of stuff. Um, so, I think it starts with identifying them, understanding what they are, and then, ah, being able to enforce the laws with the state has given us and those duties relating to protecting those animals. Um, so, having a background in those areas dang sure does help, but we do retrain that in our academy environment.

Rgp: 44:27 Ok. Oh, cool. And that lasts at least 30 weeks, or is it longer?

WM: 33 weeks.

Rgp: 33 weeks, ok.

WM: 33 weeks.

Rgp: Ok, thanks, Chief Masur. I'm gonna go. So, I'm gonna go to the next part about volunteer engagement, and it's something that I've been volunteering with since. I've been volunteering my whole life, but then I started making sure people know about it, ah, since I got let go from Dell, Inc. back in 2016 and I became a Texas Master Naturalist and became a certified interpretive guide, and I volunteer to all of these places. I've been doing this for parks and—and U.S. Fish and Wildlife because it's fun to do.

WM: Sure.

Rgp: So, do public partnerships like volunteerism help the law enforcement team in protecting the resources?

WM: 45:18. Absolutely! I will tell you that it is one of the best partnerships that we have out there because we find a group of volunteers interested in protecting all the parks' resources. Those people are your educators to the visitors that come out there to visit the site. They are also your eyes and ears when they see somebody abusing something or misusing something, and they can notify law enforcement officers to make those contacts and handle it either from an educational standpoint or in a law enforcement type context. But volunteers are people who care about our resources. People that come out there and have respect for everything that we provide out there. Um, and provide that educational stuff for park visitors out there. It's irreplaceable. That's one of our best. It's one of our best tools that we have as an agency out there—people who volunteer and care about those sites. Um, number one, they lead by example. They're out there taking care of the resources other people that don't understand the resources see how they are performing and what they are doing out there, and so they copy that. So that is a huge thing, and then, of course, these volunteers teach them how to respect and utilize the resources correctly. Of course, our agency, ah, employees do the same thing. But, it's pretty hard when you have, like I said, just under ten million visitors a year. You can't touch everybody.

Rgp: 47:00. Right.

WM: Not all the time do people when they come to parks do they read all the rules and regulations nor understand how, ah, they should be respecting those things. So, the more people we have that communicate that strong message out there, the better off we are.

Rgp: 47:14. Yeah, I agree. Um, I also believe that you know, that I already think I know the answer to this, like, how the volunteers help law enforcement position through their observing duties and they help direct the public, and they help in the search and rescue teams, I guess that's something that. I mean, it takes some special training to be able to do that, right?

WM: 47:39. Oh, Absolutely. And we have, you know, some very well-trained search and rescue teams, ah, and officers, you now, out at the parks. But it can't all just be done with officers. It has to be done with volunteers that are knowledgeable of our sites. They are knowledgeable of all the resources we have there. We have lost people or have had folks who have been injured out there. Um, you know, it takes a full gamut of volunteers and takes partners from fire departments, from local EMSs, other local law enforcement agencies to come out there and help make sure those missions that we're doing are successful kind of thing. Ah, because we want everybody to come out and enjoy the park safely. We don't want them to get injured. Ah, but it does take a wide variety of people to come out and assist with those duties. When dealing with the public, especially when on search and rescue. Those people have always been our eyes and ears, just like our employees are. Ah, so if we notice things or volunteers notice things out there, they can communicate that to our law enforcement officers, and they can go out there and handle the incident accordingly.

Rgp: 48:47. That's pretty neat. I mean, do you like, separate from this questionnaire, I was wondering if, I mean would it be possible, ah, you would just need to talk to somebody at the Texas Parks and Wildlife and say, hey, I want to join, ya know, and help do an activity with you guys.

WM: 49:09 Absolutely. Yeah. We have volunteer coordinators. Number one at every state park that we have, and then we have an agency or division volunteer coordinator group that you can find on our website. Um, so if you're specific to an area that you wanna, you know, do most of your volunteer work at a site that's close to you.

Rgp: 49:27. Yeah.

WM: Then, of course, we encourage you to reach out to a park manager there about being a volunteer, ah, and learning that site, and if there is something you want to travel around the state and do, we want you to go...go through our agency, ah, volunteer representative. Ah, that way, number one, we've had all of our volunteers. We want to make sure, you know, that they understand what our mission is, and we want them educating and teaching people correctly. Um, so, we vet all of our volunteers to make sure they are the type of people that give parks and wildlife a good name.

Rgp: 49:58 Oh, cool. Yeah, so I've been going out to Inks Lake, mostly cause its closest to me.

WM: 50:03. Sure.

Rgp: I like going down there to LBJ and Pedernales, but I always wanted to go out to McKinney Falls, but that's a little far now. It's like the other side of the country, even when I lived in North Austin.

WM: Yeah.

Rgp: So, anyway, ah, so talking about the degree requirements, I guess it's a bachelor's degree is now required to be a police officer, or is that I mean?

WM: That's correct. Our agency for state park police officers and game wardens has had the degree requirement since I believe it began in 2008. What that requirement does is we feel like we could a more well-rounded applicant if they have a strong educational background. Uh, because they have had to put in the extra effort to make sure they've got that bachelor's degree. Um, they're more experienced and have ah, more education in the wide variety of educational classes you get with a bachelor's degree. Since, you know, you can't just take one thing, you have to diverse group there. So, we feel like they can learn the ah different, unique type of law enforcement job we have since it's not a wholly traditional law enforcement work but it's also conservation law enforcement work and all of the different backgrounds that you have in wildlife management, biology, conservation resources, they all play into every law enforcement job we have. Having that full range of education has been very beneficial since we have enacted that mandatory, ah, bachelor's degree.

Rgp: 52:01. But on top of that, wouldn't each peace officer have to do the Tcole (Texas Commission on Law Enforcement), is that correct?

WM: 52:06. That's correct. So, part of our 33-week academy is the, ah, what is called the "b-pop" training. That is the 'basic' police officer requirements for the State of Texas. Ah, it is about

eight hundred, no, excuse me, ah, seven hundred to seven hundred fifty hours that gives you the correct classes and courses just to do law enforcement duties. So, we have that aspect of it, and then we have the conservation and wildlife aspect that you learn in our academy. So, you learn two different things.

Rgp: 52:40. Oh, cool. Yeah, I've been learning about that, the conservation-type parts and stuff since 2017, and I like it. I'm still doing it. I was thinking about, well, I never wanted to get shot. (I have read that since 1919, seventeen game wardens have been killed in the State of Texas, five by drowning). So, I didn't want to do the other part.

WM: 53:00. Yeah, none of us want to do that. (laughter for us both).

Rgp: Right—right.

WM: None of want to get shot sort kind of thing, but unfortunately, you know, but I will say this, the jobs for both a game warden and state park police officers are inherently dangerous. Often, traditional law enforcement jobs, let's say you're working in the City of Austin, at least you have a lot of other law enforcement resources. Ah, many other officers on patrol that can assist you. Ah, a lot of times, we are the only officer out there, and you're back up, ah, usually is not four or five minutes away. Often, they can be anywhere from on average from twenty to thirty minutes out, or you can be at a state park like Big Bend and, ah, it's two hours away.

Rgp: 53:41. Right.

WM: So, you've gotta have great knowledge of law enforcement and know, ah, you know, and have a number one, how to protect yourself in be a smart law enforcement officer.

Rgp: 53:55. I also know that your surroundings, like know wildlife management. I don't know if that's like the next question about it's better to know sciences like wildlife management, biology, anthropology, geography, or another type of science degree if that helps.

WM: Oh, we think, as I said, we think a combination of, well, it's always up to the unique individual, ah, kind of thing so, ah, yes, you know, having that background is a crucial part of the law enforcement and conservation officer job that we do out there. But you also got to know that you are a police officer too. Whether you are, you know, a game warden or state park police officer, you are a police officer. So, you have to deal with the same things they have to deal with that other law enforcement officers deal with. You don't do it as consistently and as repeatedly as they may, which sometimes can be more challenging. Ah, because you usually get better at it when dealing with something a lot more dangerous for, say, or ordinary. So, we have to focus our training to ensure our officers, number one, perform their job safely out there. State Park Police Officers are very well educated on every aspect of traditional law enforcement and conservation law enforcement.

Rgp: 55:14. That's awesome! Well, what do you think about the preservation of law enforcement? Like making sure that, you know, to limit people to make sure that things stay ah, beautiful.

WM: Yeah.

Rgp: I mean, is that part of it, or is that combined?

WM: 55:30. Absolutely! Absolutely, ah, you got to ah, preserve that stuff out there so, we also utilize, ah, you know, the other subject matter experts at our agency when it comes to biologists, ah, when it comes to people who do studies on the land in stuff. To communicate, ah, you know, to us, the amount of usage and things that you need to preserve out there. That way, we can educate people and protect those areas. So, ah, our agency works as a team when it comes to making those decisions.

Rgp: 56:00. Awesome. Well, so, you know, now that we have global heating and climate change is happening, and I don't know if you think that is attributed to people's overuse of resources or not.

WM: Mm hm.

Rgp: But it's happening. Possibly there could be more natural disasters, hurricanes, floods, and training in that field, I guess also being trained in medical treatment like snake bites, and pandemics or training in treating injury could help in the rural and remote areas? You have that training in that injury mitigation, which helps a lot because you sent me that report, and you guys aren't even on the same schedule. Schedule C, where the other forces for the city police have back up only minutes away. You're out there on your own sometimes and could be. Yeah, it could be two, three, four hours before somebody gets out there for support.

WM: Absolutely, it all depends on...on...on your location in the State of Texas, kind of thing. Yeah, but to answer your question right there, you know, natural disasters, we all have training in that of course, you know, we're part of the SOC, which is the State Operating Center that is...that is activated by the governor when he has...when you have natural disasters or emergencies. Ah, as you can imagine, our agency, ah, state park police officers and game wardens. We're trained to be out in rural areas. We're also trained in boat operations, whether it's a swift water operation or a normal operations kind of thing. So, many times, when you have a hurricane or flood. We're the primary response agency.

Ah, that has the resources to perform life-saving measures. Um, so, ah, state park police officers and game wardens traditionally are sent to disaster areas. Ah, to provide support to the local law enforcement, ah, and ah, first responders in those areas. Um, because a lot of times because we have the resources to do it, and when I'm talking about resources, I'm talking about like, ah, big boats in stuff too.

Rgp: 58:23. Right.

WM: We do have specific training in swift water rescue, boat operations during...during adverse conditions. Ah, not everybody has that. Medical treatment, like you, were saying too, when you're that officer in the Big Bend area or out in places where, ah, you're the first

responder who has training and is a paramedic in type stuff. Um, we serve as triage, ah, people. You know, we take care of, you know, emergencies, ah, whether it's, ah, you know, snake bites or injuries out there, ah, because usually, we're the first people on scenes. So, we have, you know, excellent training in stabilizing, ah, patients in, ah, when it comes to injuries. Ah, not only in the parks but outside the parks, too. Ah, because, you know, we're the first responder and what we want to do is provide first aid until we can get the person to the hospital or those emergency paramedics in stuff can get to them.

Rgp: 59:26. Oh, Cool. Is that training part of the 33 weeks? Or is that something?

WM: Yes, sir. That's part of it.

Rgp: Oh, ok.

WM: It is part of the academy training, and then usually every two to four years, we have recertification on first aid, ah, basic first aid, CPR training.

Rgp: Right.

WM: A lot of our officers carry the AED since we're around water. We carry, um, little kits that are for drowning resuscitation, too as well. Um, so, ah, you know, we have a wide variety of stuff, and we also have ropes and PFTs (partial floatation devices). That kind of stuff to help or assist when you run into an emergency.

Rgp: 100:11. Man, that's awesome. (hearing about how all the training and knowledge each officer has to help others). I took the CPR/AED training, but it expired, it only lasts for two years, and then I always wanted to go back and get that redone. But now I don't know because of Covid-19. Who knows what's gonna happen?

WM: (Laughing) That's exactly right. It does make things a little more challenging right now.

Rgp: Yeah, so like, my whole idea was to go out and work for a park or something and then, um, now, I mean this could be a higher risk situation.

WM: Yeah, a high risk. So, everyone just needs to be pretty careful.

Rgp: 1:00:51. Right. Right. Oh well. Well, is there anything else you would like to add, Chief Masur?

WM: Well, ya know, first of all, I would like to say, number one, I ah, I'm glad I could provide you with this information. I know it's important for your graduate project too, but I also think it's essential for everybody who gets to look at your project to understand the vital role our conservation law enforcement officers play in protecting the natural and cultural resources that are here in Texas. Like you said earlier, Texas is about 95 percent private, so the 5 percent or so of Texas that is public want people to come out and be good stewards of our land. We want them

to enjoy and recreate safely. Um, so what I'm hoping is that your project will reach some people—number one, who will come out and enjoy those resources.

Rgp: 1:01:45. Right.

WM: And do it safely. That way, ah, the future generations can see them in their natural, pristine environment.

Rgp: 1:01:50. I also hope that it might help get you guys paid equally.

WM: Absolutely. Absolutely. We've got many people working on that, but yes, I appreciate that, and I'm glad it's recognized by your team too, and you understand the value of both being equal, especially since we're partners within this agency.

Rgp: 1:02:09. Yeah, I'm just wondering why there was a separation between the two in the first place. But that's a different story.

WM: Yeah, yes, sir, I, ah, I do think ah, all that is gonna come together to ah, make us a better agency and more efficient too, as well.

Rgp: Well, I have to thank you so much, ah, Wes, for talking to me today, and I'm going to take this information and decipher it, and I don't know do they have a chance to look at that report that I sent you or, I know you are really busy.

WM: Yeah, I have. I do want to make sure I do because I have not sent out the questionnaire yet.

Rgp: Oh, yeah.

WM: So, I want to make sure that I'm able to do that correctly now.

Rgp: Well, I think, yeah. Because the file transfer issue didn't work because they would not let me send it to outside Texas State University recipients unless I worked for Texas State University, they changed the system during the IRB process, and then ITAC was telling me I could send files. On the phone, the technician stated the files could be sent without any password. I had to explain that they work for the University, and the folks who are doing research can't unless they also are instructors, and it won't allow me to do it. So, I gave them an earful and informed them in text after sending both you and Col. Jones every sheet individually. Only to find out you could not open any of them. Then, they informed me that I could send the files to you encrypted through email. But then, the problem is once it's encrypted, that file, you can't send it to anybody else. It's only for you.

WM: Correct.

Rgp: So, I sent you that file which is not all that great importance for them to, ah, I just wanted them to be able to see that because I took that training for CITI, behavioral human research

study, and for human interaction, that they are fully aware that there is not intended harm to them or their jobs or anything. That's all. I don't want to make them have to read all that information, but maybe they should understand the study. I sent you the correct file that was not encrypted, and it has the Qualtrics link address on it, and your team can just take that survey whenever. There is a little information about no intentional misdirection within the survey, and I guess this is like a learning experience because Texas State University, you know, I thought that they had all the stuff taken care of for all the graduates and Ph. D candidates who do research and they all don't work for the University. I found out that the people who work in the IRB are only like one or two people, and it's one woman looking at everything for all students for the whole University, and she is swamped.

WM: Yeah, ok. So, the last email you sent to me that has the survey can be done using the software, and it's got that on there, and they should be able to that. So, if I send it out, I should be good?

Rgp: 1:04:44. Yes, sir.

WM: Ok, well, that's what I'm gonna do.

Rgp: Well, ok, thank you so much.

WM: Well, all right. Now are we supposed to talk tomorrow too, or are we done for today?

Rgp: No, I figured. Well, ya know, when I was setting this all up, I thought if we had the practice to make sure the Zoom worked and functioned. It was only going to be like for five minutes to make sure it worked. Because that is what happened when I applied to the Texas Outdoor Family Program, TPWD did for me the day before the interview just to make sure everything worked fine, and I thought it would be a good idea to do, but then, you know, things happen, like my internet does not work, it was down. It might be back up now. I don't know. I am up here on the hill, waved to the new neighbors who already came by, did some work, and left. I gotta travel the half-mile back down the hill to my house.

WN: I gotcha. Ok, all right.

Rgp: We always had to improvise and adapt to the situation, and that's what I like to do, and I think I handled it very well, where maybe, others might not have been able to do it, ya know?

WM: 1:05:45. I think. I think you've done great. Well, I'll send the next part out there. Ah, feel free to edit my conversation all to make sure we all sound good and professional. But ah, Richard, make sure you give me a callback, and like I said, I'll be sending this survey out today than to make sure it's done within that time frame of November 24th, I do believe.

Rgp: Yeah, that's good. I think it was the 21st or 24th of November or somewhere in there, but ya know, I can't remember the date exactly. Yeah, I think it was the 24th. You probably know more than I do because you are looking right at the information, and I had stuff written down and

notes onto my spiral before I came up here, and I left that at the house. So, I can't read my chicken scratch. I have this printout of questions that I had for you.

WM: I gotcha.

Rgp: Hey, man. I enjoyed talking to you, Wes, and I'd love to hear more and speak with you in the future.

WM: Hey, no problem, you call me anytime, bud.

Rgp: All right, thank you so much! Have a good day.

WM: Yep! You do the same and take care.

Rgp: All right, bye, bye.

WM: 1:06:49. Bye. Bye.

Richard G. Powe Directed Research Interviews Transcript (Texas Legacy 2021).

Colonel, Chad Jones, TPWD

*By Richard G. Powe*

Transcript

November 2nd, 2020 - 10:00 AM. Zoom Recording of Col. Chad Jones, Game Warden Leader Office of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). Ended, 11:23 AM.

TRANSCRIPT (1:22.57)

INTERVIEWEE: **Col. Chad Jones** (CJ)

INTERVIEWER: Richard G Powe (Rgp)

DATE: November 2nd, 2020

LOCATION: Col. Jones in Austin, Richard G. Powe, in Bertram, Texas

TRANSCRIBER: Richard G. Powe

REELS: listened repeatedly, rewinding and replaying to get each word. Times of the recording was placed as a reference for the author.

The recording was done using Zoom recording and the digital recorder to make sure the audio was captured between Col. Jones and Richard G. Powe having the Interview questions found in the Methodology of the paper "*Comparison of Professional Positions and Duties Between State Park Peace Officers and Game Wardens for Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.*"

Rgp: Hello, Colonel Jones, my name is Richard G. Powe. I'm here for the Interview between Peace Officers for Texas Parks and Wildlife for my directed research paper as I am trying to find out about the duties and culture between park police and game wardens. A paper that will fulfill part of my obligation in obtaining a master's in applied geography resource and environmental studies at Texas State University. It is November 2nd, 2020, at 10:00 AM, and I am in Bertram, Texas, talking to Col. Jones in his office located in Austin, Texas. I just wanted to thank him for taking the time to talk about his life and career and answer these questions for his field.

Rgp: So, yeah, I had an incident on Thursday when I was about the interview, Chief Masur. My internet went down for like an hour or so.

CJ: Oh, wow!

Rgp: Yeah, I had to drive up the hill, and I would call him to reschedule it or something maybe, and I tried to send him an email.

CJ: Uh, huh.

Rgp: And, I was like, well, my internet is not working, so the email did not go through. So, up the hill, I get cell service, so I called him, and I had a digital video. I mean a digital tape recorder, so I had him on speakerphone, and we interviewed on top of the hill. (Balcones Ridgway and Chaney's Crossing).

CJ: Oh! Ingenuity.

Rgp: Right on. OK.

CJ: Yeah, we haven't had to do that in quite some time, but I was trying not to use the phone today because it's always ringing, and the emails are going off, and it kinda interferes with it. So, I wanted to make sure we could use the computer today to come up here to the office to get that done.

Rgp: Oh, well, that's awesome.

CJ: So, how did your interview go? Did your interview go well?

Rgp: Yeah. It went longer than I thought it would. Um, it went for a little over an hour.

CJ: Um-hm. Yeah.

Rgp: And, I thought it might go. At first, I thought, you know, that we could get through it in like twenty-five or thirty minutes. So, his answers were taking quite some time and, and ah, I was, OK. Ah, and then we were talking. Um, I was asking him some questions that came up that I didn't think about before, and he didn't mind answering those. But, ah, you know, we can just if you wanna get started. I know you are a really busy person, and I.

CJ: No, I certainly appreciate it, but ah. Yeah, we can go ahead and get started. I think I'm ready. You know, I ah, I'll be honest, I didn't try to prepare too in-depth.

Rgp: OK, I can share the questions with you on the screen if you like or...

CJ: I have a...I have a printout, so I think we're good. You know, I looked over them in advance, and I looked over them here today, so, ah, you know, some of the things are smart and some of the specialized training we will get into but.

Rgp: OK.

CJ: So, anyway, whenever you're ready, I am ready.

Rgp: All right, cool. Yeah, so, I guess, um, I wondered if you had a chance to read over the paper that I started to write from last semester that I forwarded to you, I guess, a couple of weeks ago?

CJ: Yeah, I started reading through...started reading through, and ah, of course, got pulled to the side.

Rgp: Sure.

CJ: And I'm getting ready to work with my executive assistant here and to prepare for that email to the field so that I can send out the survey, ah, with the information attached to it, so everybody has what they need.

Rgp: 2:43. Oh, good. Yeah, because we had an issue with that, and like Chief Masur, he sent the encrypted. Um, he tried to sending the encrypted file to them, and then they couldn't open it, and

then I was like, oh, no! And I thought he might think there was something wrong with the link. I was thinking at first that there was something or a problem with the link to the Qualtrics. And so, I contacted like ah.

CJ: Mm. Hmmm.

Rgp: A Ph. D. Candidate, student that was kind of helping me with this, like earlier in the summer and said, oh, it's not a problem, you know, Qualtrics is not the problem. I said, OK, now I know what the problem is.

CJ: Yeah, we'll figure it out. If I run into issues, I'll get with Wes. I am sure he can point me in the right direction and, of course, get in contact with you. So...

Rgp: OK, well, thank you. Um, so. Yeah, I guess we'll get started. Um, you know, I thought it would take about forty minutes, and it might take possibly longer depending upon, ya know, how many conversations we might have in between.

CJ: Yes, sir. I'm prepared for it. We've, I've set aside time just for this, so we're—we should be good.

Rgp: Oh, perfect. OK, so, um, first I was gonna talk about this green criminology theory. The different roles that Texas Parks and Wildlife and there are distinct groups between the positions of state park police and game wardens, and the public safety and natural resources and the environment and the surrounding park. People's interaction within fish and game and all that kind of stuff and I wondered if you could tell me what the differences in the way a peace officer might react to wildlife crimes vs. the reaction to common, traditional crimes are? Like maybe, speeding or not having the registration or anything like that, or are they all considered equally?

CJ: Ah (clears throat), Yeah, that's a very good question, of course, ya know, I know you put some thought into these, um, so, the way I would address that is there are differences in the way that, ah, like a Texas game warden would, ah, react to a wildlife crime versus a traditional crime. Ah, and the reason that is, is multifaceted. Ya know, most of our wildlife crimes that we refer to are a criminal act or flagged as misdemeanors, in Texas, a citation like a speeding ticket. Uh, and because of that, you know, a lot of the interaction that we have as game wardens are with, ah, persons who are engaging almost in a hobby or a cultural way of life. Um, so it's ya—you don't start, you know, I want to be careful how I word some of this. But an adversarial or a high tension situation. So, we meet for the first time. Many times, it's on private property. It's on at someone's camp or even their house at times, and it's usually a visit of mutuality, I would say. And the fact that people understand why you're there and most everything we do, ah, involves almost an investigation each time.

So, let's just say, for instance, something as simple as checking a hunting license which seems pretty simple. Well, many times, that requires maybe anywhere between five to twenty minutes of conversation questioning before you can determine if someone was actually in the act of hunting or not. So, many of the people we interact with that aren't actively committing a crime whenever we make that initial contact. Whereas, on a traditional crime, usually, it's a—a

probable cause or reasonable suspicious stop, and the infractions already occurred at which initiated that contact in the first place. So, I think that's a big difference sometimes between wildlife crimes because it's not always an active crime.

Rgp: 6:50. Right.

CJ: Happen. It may, some of the things that we deal with happened a month or two ago. So, it's almost like an investigation with everything you do.

Rgp: So, you don't. You wouldn't find out, you know. Catch people doing it during the act. It's actually, you're saying most of the offenses happens in the past, and you're getting.

CJ: Yeah, you're the ones...ah, yeah...the ones that you do catch during the act. So, let's talk about some of those because we do have some of those that you do catch in the act. You know, hunting, deer at night. Game animals at night from a public roadway. That's a common issue that Texas game wardens deal with, and, you know, that's an **in-act** offense. Um, some of the differences in that interaction to common traditional crimes are also the nuances of that contact. And what I mean by that is, you know, a high percentage of the time, Texas Game Wardens are very well aware that there are firearms in a vehicle and, or someone had recently discharged a firearm from a vehicle. So, that initial contact, unlike a lot of traditional police contacts. You go into it, understanding that there can be ill intoxication is a high factor involved in those types of incidents. Well, you know, not all of 'em. But a large percentage of 'em. So, a lot of times are dealing with intoxicated individuals with firearms that we know that they have.

Rgp: 8:17. That's some bad news right there.

CJ: And it is, and the interesting part, and I think we're delving into, ya know, the nuances and the differences is what you're after in the fields of police work.

Rgp: Yeah.

CJ: So, what I'll say is, game wardens are highly trained in verbal communication skills and de-escalation skills. Um, in, you know, when you talk to traditional police officers, they're sheriff deputies or DPS troopers, a lot of them will...will say that they wouldn't...they wouldn't want to be employed as a Texas Game Warden because everyone. Because of the high percentage of intoxication and firearms.

And a Texas Game Warden will tell you, most of the time, that we don't mind that so much because we go into that situation knowing what we're facing. And at the high level of training that we receive at the academy setting prepares you for those types of interactions.

Rgp: 9:12. OK. So. It's kinda like given that.

CJ: You put that together and see it's kinda... we're not there, usually isn't a traditional type of crime. So, the mere fact that you're a Texas Game Warden sometimes and the nature of that contact sets the tone differently. So, if you're dealing with a bank robber, it's a little bit different

than dealing with someone who just created a wildlife crime. Even though both are felonies, I think that the person you are dealing with and the cultures that they come from sometimes are vastly different. So, the interaction aren't as volatile. But they can be, don't get me wrong. Game Wardens are trained to identify what that breaking point is like all police officers are.

Rgp: 10:00. Well, thank you.

CJ: I hope it is not too confusing.

Rgp: No, it makes sense. I mean, kind of what I've been studying and learning about, and you know, learning about human interaction and things like that, ya know, so they can make or become more clear. Thank you.

CJ: Yes.

Rgp: Is there an awareness of ecological crimes, um, like the unlawful trade of wildlife, crimes of pollution, and environmental destruction that goes through the minds of people or game warden officers?

CJ: 10:39. Yes, Well, you know. Yeah, part of conservation for people of different generations, of course, is ecological as well as—as you know, like wildlife resource-related and, ah, the culture portion of that is also embedded, which I think is what we'll get into later on Mission statement and Vision statements. Ahem, but yes, ya know, Texas Game Wardens are trained to look out for those types of crimes. So, we actually have specialized, ah, team members and teams that look like these as well. So, let's say like crimes of pollution. Ya know, in our special operations division, we have sergeants who work as environmental crimes sergeants. So, they work like at the ship channels, in Houston, in Corpus Christi, they work with, ah, federal agencies and local agencies, ah, to test sites regarding illegal dumping of chemicals, ah, ill—illegal dumping of solids, and things such as that. So, we have an entire special operations unit that deals with that. So, what the Texas game warden work, and come into a situation, I'll give you a for instance like a real-life situation.

Rgp: 11:48. OK.

CJ: When I was in the field as a game warden, oh, go ahead.

Rgp: Ah, no, I was like agreeing, like yeah, please continue.

CJ: Oh, yeah, how that works is ah, so, as a game warden in Brazos county, I got a call at one time from some police officers who were on a foot pursuit and wound up on a creek in a wooded area behind a shopping complex. And it shows how everything is tied together. So, when they called me, it was because they got back down there after the arrest, they noticed that there was a large quantity of small dead fish and frogs and things like that in this creek. So, you know, I go down at that point in time to see what they located. They were correct, so, as a—as a game warden, I understand, this isn't normal. Right, we're having a fish kill in this one little section of creek as was feeding into the Navasota River, and this could be a large thing. So, that's where

special operations and environmental crimes units would come in and give the expertise and testing to see what the water quality is to track down. Or, the illegal spill or permitted spill, ah, originated. So, clean-up could begin and things that that to protect those waterways.

Rgp: 12:58. That's awesome! Yeah, I grew up in Brazos county.

CJ: Oh, you did?

Rgp: Yeah, I grew up in Lake Jackson, and my father worked for the Southwest Project. He helped build that nuclear power plant in Bay City. And we lived right there, next to Dow Chemical.

CJ: Oh, OK. Mm-hm.

Rgp: I used to go to Surfside beach a lot and go fishing out there.

CJ: Yeah. That's awesome. Ya know, environmental destruction, those are types of things that we're looking for. And some of it has to do with illegal dumping as well when it comes to Texas game wardens and environmental destruction, you know, we don't get into a lot of—when I think about environmental destruction, I kind of think of things we deal with a great deal, which would be, ah, river issues, in Texas. So, like the Frio River, the Nueces River. Some of our rivers that have low rates of flow, ah, where landowners, ah, go in and may dig up sand, gravel, and shale, or try to dig out swimming holes and things like that, which environmentally is hazardous because it affects an ecosystem.

Rgp: Right, correct.

CJ: 14:07. Ah, when we have permits for things like that in which we—we see. We make helicopter flights over those rivers to make sure that people aren't, ah, taking advantage of that resource and changing the river's flow and how that impacts all—everything.

Rgp: The thing is that many people don't understand that, or they don't realize that, and they need to be educated. I mean, I already know that kind of stuff before I started this degree, but I did not know as much detail. They think that they can dig a hole and make a new swimming hole.

CJ: Um-hm. Yeah.

Rgp: Maybe that will lean into a future question that we have.

CJ: Yeah, it probably will. You know, and then like I said, on global ecological crimes, there is—there is a mindset towards that. It's a growing mindset that hasn't always been there, but, ah, we're working on that as we speak. You know, we have point of entry, and inspection teams now started up. So, point of entry on the Mexico border, ah, with Texas where fisheries and resources come in and illegal importation. So, ah, Texas Game Wardens are building a relationship with our federal partners, ah, ya know, CVP, Border Patrol, Customs, and our cases that we assist on for all those cases are decreasing dramatically to the point where we have some game wardens

that work at airports. Ah, ya know, a lot of people forget that it's called a port for a reason. The airport is a port. It's just an inland port. Ya know, we tend to think of a port like you're talking about on the coast. So, we've had some game wardens that work in the ports along with some sergeants that worked here in Austin that do internet crime-like stuff. So, they get on the internet, and they're looking for lizards, and hummingbirds, and turtles, and all the, and I'll say all the little creepy and slimy creatures that people don't think of that need protecting...that need protecting worst, sometimes, more than the river otter.

Um, so, we—we're in that ballpark, ya know, flora and fauna. I think that was actually in there, and ah, ya know, with West Texas. It's a growing trend, and they passed that legislation years ago, ah, on the illegal targeting of—of ah, succulents or cactus. So, we've made, I don't know the number of cases, but we have made cases on the illegal extraction of cactus from private land for sale in the ah, the plant world...the nursery businesses.

Rgp: 16:34. Right.

CJ: So, what they'll do is come in and dig up all the cactus in the middle of the night, and load it on an eighteen-wheeler at night, and drive it into Houston and sell it. Ah, which of course, when you take all the cactus, then there's all ecological and environmental concerns again because there's an effect for everything. So.

Rgp: There is. Yeah, I was thinking like, we moved here to Bertram, and we brought in rocks. I didn't think about it until after we already did it, but we brought in river rocks from Llano. Well, what's gonna happen to the place they took these rocks from? We just changed that ecosystem.

CJ: Right.

Rgp: I'm over here trying to protect the environment and learn all about it in school, and I'm over here destroying it some other place. I mean, aahhgg!

CJ: (laughing...right). Well, we have permits for some things and some things we don't. Ya know, it's not up to you to understand that. And you know, we talk about that, at the ah—the ah, education factor behind things.

Rgp: Right.

CJ: And how important that is to our mission, so.

Rgp: Do you mind if I ask maybe some further questions that I came up with like, this semester, we're actually learning about environmental problems on the US Mexico Border, and you know, I don't know what you think about the wall going up, and it's going to change, ah the habitats and migration patterns for flora and fauna. And I just realized that I just found out this semester that the Rio Grande used to have a forest that surrounded its whole lower basin, and ah, the only real part that is left is like 2000 acres of the Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge.

CJ: Yeah.

Rgp: Do you think, I mean, I dunno, there has been a lot of laws that the federal government has to build the wall and they take away from the endangered species act and the clean water act and all these other acts that have been made because of new legislation for Homeland Security.

CJ: Yeah. Ya know, we've dealt with that as an agency, as a division, not so much, and when I say a division, ya know I talk about um—law enforcement. But, what—whatever the wall issue came up, um, parks and wildlife, which, I can't speak to their entire stance, but the issue they're given then was migration patterns, ah, wildlife, the effects of the wildlife, you know, the birders down in that area. Um, so, the Rio Grande Valley has a lot of, ah, diverse wildlife in the area that can be expected from those types of things. So, I know that—that agency, ah, assisted the federal government and those communications on how that would work. But, ah, yeah, you know, part of our mission, so we had a border mission at one point in time that we still work on the border, but not in a concerted effort like we used to when we would direct, you know, twenty to thirty game wardens to work. But those are the areas that we worked in, like the national refuge you're talking about and things like that. I don't want to go too deep in there, ya know, Texas game wardens don't have the authority to work immigration. That's federal.

Rgp: Yeah, that's right.

CJ: So, if we go with illegal immigrants, we're dealing with them from Texas law standpoint. They're trespassing into that forest.

Rgp: 20:13. So, then you have to turn them over to the federal authorities.

CJ: Yes, exactly. Yeah, the detention that we do is solely there, not because of immigration or legal status, because they're in an area where they don't have a legal right.

Rgp: Right.

CJ: So, even our border mission down on the river gorge and on the ranches and things like that, and it's the private property rights is with the trespassing issues, the illegal importation of wildlife. Ya, know, narcotics issues. Ya know, not all illegal immigrants are coming here to take advantage of those loopholes. What happens is, the cartels embed themselves clandestinely within those groups.

Rgp: 20:57. Yeah, and they infiltrate into America, and that's the problem.

CJ: Yep. OK, so that's the issue, and like you said, plus like you said, some environmental issues come along, but that's international treaty and stuff that I'm not that well pursued in.

Rgp: Yeah, I am starting to learn that kind of stuff this semester, and I'm like, oh wow. Yeah, the next question is about the unlawful trade of flora and fauna, you know, and then about domestic animal mistreatment or during your place of arrest or investigation. Do you find any domestic violence?

CJ: Yeah, so we talked about flora and fauna. Domestic animal mistreatment is not something that we really get involved in that much. If we run into things like that, we usually contact the local Sheriff's Office or animal boards that take care of that. So, that's one of those things that we—we probably run into just by the mere fact of where we're at, but that is something that we would lean on, ah, the more local authorities for or the county or municipal level to take care of. You know we've seen not an increase, but I think with social media, video feeds are available, you know. We've had some issues where some district attorneys' taken up, ah, the mistreatment of wild animals actually, it—it. It used to be just domestic animals, but now we've had some instances without going into great detail, were like wild rabbits, were inhumanely. Ah, killed, let's say, I'll just be blunt, you know, with videos, and things like that. So, that's something that Texas Game Wardens do take seriously, and we work with the local District Attorney and County Attorney to make sure those types of incidents no longer occur.

Rgp: OK. 27.56. Thank you. Ah, so the next set of questions goes into protecting the environment, the agency mission, and—and there's a couple—they're pretty similar. The park police's statements and then for the game wardens, and I was wondering, um, if we have five questions under this area.

CJ: Um-hm.

Rgp: And I was kind of wondering. What you thought about, um, what created the decision for you to attend the training for law enforcement, and was it more intrigued, were you more intrigued about protecting the natural environment when you decided to become a game warden?

CJ: Yeah, I think that answer. I'm interested to see what that answer is across, you know, the spectrum of Texas game wardens and state park police, for me, ya know, to attend the law enforcement happened from an early age. I knew I wanted to go into law enforcement. I kind of thought that natural urge and made up my mind while I was in college.

Um, you know the—the decision that created that. It's a long story, but I'll make it brief. You know, I've said it in—in YouTube videos and podcasts that I've done. From a very early young age, I was introduced to a police chief in a small town where my mother was getting her driver's license renewed, and, ah, you know, that police chief, he took time to take in a scared little kid into his office and talk to him about what law enforcement really does for the public. Which is the protection of citizens and service, and, ah, really changed my viewpoint at six or seven years old about, you know, what police organizations really do. And—and because of that, it set me on a path toward that endeavor of becoming law enforcement. So, you know, that's one thing we talk about with me talking about layers of law enforcement being very involved in their communities.

Rgp: Right.

CJ: Most of them understand that they met game wardens when they were young, and they understand the impact you can have on youth. So, I am an example of the impact of education and outreach and showing compassion and empathy. So, a young kid that completely changed the route of their life.

Rgp: 25:14 That's something that I would try to do myself is, ah, be out there and try to be part of the education and outreach. I decided I wanted to be a park ranger.

CJ: Mm-hm.

Rgp: When I got let go from Dell, Inc. in 2016, and I've gone to the City of Austin and interviewed with them and applying to Texas Parks and Wildlife, and one of these days, I'll get there, but maybe not. I'm trying to learn all the stuff about geography and the natural world and about the environment so I can go out and teach others about it and—and it's awesome. I don't think I could ever be a police officer because I'm so frightened of getting shot.

CJ: Yeah, that's something you can't think about. You know, I don't know how we got into this study, but we had this psychiatrist come into the academy when I went through it in '04. They gave us a questionnaire and never saw the results, and that is a question that they all have been trying to solve over time is like you just said. There is nothing wrong, either way, but the question was why because some people run into gunfire and others away from gunfire. You know, and I can't even answer that because most of every game warden that you talk to probably at some point in time has run into something that they should be running away from. It's not a natural human tendency to run towards danger and fire, and things like that, so, um, I just think that just like you said, that overall drive to help people overrides that self-help mentality.

Rgp: 26:55. Right. You need to stop what's happening, I guess. Maybe that's the reason why you would run towards it because you want to prevent that from hurting somebody else.

CJ: Yeah. Yeah, I would say so. That overriding, ah, urge to be of service outweighs that. So. Often, when the events are over like you said, you're looking and wondering why did we do that? You know? (laughing from Col. Jones).

Rgp: (Laughter from Richard) Well, I think you kind of answered this before, like, uh, the next question, if there is a feel or a concern in the mission of the natural, cultural resources versus. Oh, no, respecting the heritage of resources. Do both these mission statements, are they pretty similar or do they have identical meanings, or are they different? Do they mean something different to park police or game warden?

CJ: 27:50. To clarify, I've been the Colonel for three months now.

Rgp: Oh, my. Congratulations!

CJ: What I've done in a short time was that vision statement for law enforcement doesn't exist anymore. We took it out of our—we took it off of our website in stuff because we need to match our mission statement with the agency. That's what we did, so.

Rgp: OK.

CJ: I realigned—I realigned the law enforcement's vision statement, and you know what? It's just easier to do away with a sentence and separate vision statement because—our MISSION statement is our CORE.

Rgp: OK.

CJ: of what we do.

Rgp: That's good. That's good the hear.

CJ: Yeah.

Rgp: Bringing you guys, ah, both together as one—one unit.

CJ: Yeah, Yeah, that's the intention. Yes, sir.

Rgp: 28:50. So, when you're conserving resources, does this mean providing information to the people about using less, or is it more about enforcing the limits prescribed by laws?

CJ: Yeah, that's like a kind of a dual question, I feel. Um, you know, it's like the education portion of things and ah, the mission focus behind what we do. So, let me hit both of 'em.

Rgp: OK.

CJ: When conserving resources, ah, does this mean providing information to people about using less? So, conservation for future generations, of course, is to make sure, ah, that, you know, the generations behind us have the resources for the enjoyment. That's not just hunting and fishing, but that's also enjoyment. So, it's to make sure that we maintain 'em.

I've learned over my lifespan as a Texas game warden, and—and even my interactions with other countries like Africa, and things like that, is, ya know, in Africa, there is a preservation model rather than a conservation model. So, in Texas, of course in the United States, and the North American model, it's a conservation grid model, where everybody takes part of it, correct. So, the hunters, the fishers, the outdoors enthusiasts. They all have buy-in on that, so the education portion of it, of course, is that to educate people on why we have to get into the next one. Why we have the limits are important. Why we have seasons about the habits and the life cycles that are behind it? So, I think that's where parks and wildlife hit a home run is because all of our divisions work together.

We're all turning towards the mission. That's why we did away with that vision statement. And then I have biologists, fisheries biologists, wildlife biologists, paddle trail enthusiasts, everybody pulling the same direction to make sure that game wardens aren't the only ones that have to try and figure out why it's important. You know what I mean?

30:52. So, I think that's—I think that's the beauty in what we do.

Rgp: 30:55. I agree that preservation is more important than conservation. I know there is a distinction between the two.

CJ: Mm-hm.

Rgp: Like conservation is to use the resources for later, where preservation is limiting the resources so others, I think can use that later and still be beautiful and show the same aesthetics as it once did, and if have to limit people going into parks, and I like how that's, you know, ya have to get on the internet and getcha a ticket/permit, or you can become a Texas Master Naturalist, like myself, and go there and volunteer and get to go places other public don't get the opportunity to enjoy some of the same preserved places when you have the time to do it. Most folks work and don't get the time to play. So, how do we get to that limit for folks getting out and enjoying these places? We have to make it available to over seven and half billion people to use that resource. Not just the three hundred thirty-one million people in the United States.

CJ: Yeah. As the population increases, of course, those constraints always increase and how we get there. In Texas, we're fortunate because they recently passed a constitutional right to hunt and fish. You know, so, ah, it's not a question anymore of whether that's an alienable right or not. It's a fact now. And, will that change twenty years from now? You know, I don't know, but hope we're educating Texans in such a way that they understand how a healthy environment correlates to healthy humans. You know, I don't want to get into all that, but there is a national training that I've intended to coach. A person from Harvard, who'd been doing a study on the correlation between health and the outdoors.

Her testimony is this. She had been paralyzed from the neck down due to a disease. They told her she would never walk. But her husband would get her up every day and just take her out in the back yard, and she'd see the birds on the walk and the trees and feel the wind. Well, low and behold, over two years, she's walking on her own again during the study for Harvard. How can the environment be used for physical rehabilitation? How does a healthy mindset and a healthy world bring that—that equilibrium to us? So, I think that's an important question. People believe science now, you know, they believe what they see on social media. 34:07 And if you can get that message out there on different— and I hope Texans, and I believe most do, and that's— that's part of my choice for Texas game wardens as well, is to spread that message of how important these wild things and wild places as our director often uses is, to the overall health of us as individuals.

And you know, what's our piece to the message as Texas game wardens, how do we make that happen? How do I get that message out to a Master Naturalist such as yourself that if not for our daily patrols, that you may not see a red bird or a mocking bird? Because just the mere fact that someone's out there to enforce those migratory birds, those bird treaties that passed.

Rgp: Right.

CJ: 34.50. You know, so many years ago, that if not for that effort.

Rgp: It was 1906.

CJ: People would, 1906?

Rgp: Yep, that's when they made that international bird treaty, in was 1906.

CJ: Mm-hm. So, you know, since 1895, Texas game wardens have been here, and you know, we—we build off that foundation of—of community orientation and education.

Rgp: 35:12. I just know that because I just read about it and did some reading last week. A refresher for a few years back when I first learned about the 1906 International Migratory Bird Act, and it was fresh in my mind.

CJ: Right! Good. I'm terrible with dates, so I'm glad you remembered.

Rgp: Well, I had to know this for several exams over the years and the embedding into the brain, but once you have to know something for a semester, and then more stuff comes in, and all that goes bye, bye, and you're like, oh no! But you get the overall impression, right?

CJ: Yep.

Rgp: So, this next question was about the duties, um, and I think Chief Masur kinda covered this was like within the boundaries of Texas State Parks area, but you guys, game wardens are throughout the entire state of Texas. Is that correct or?

CJ: Um-hm. Yes, yes. Yeah, so, ah, Texas peace officers are peace officers throughout the state. Texas game wardens, of course, are game wardens throughout the state. So, ah, ya know, we used to joke, which may be a little orange. If a young game warden says, well, this isn't my county, it's not my issue. An older game warden would go, well, I thought our patch said the State of Texas on it!

Rgp: Right!

CJ: (laughing) You know. So, that responsibility doesn't cease just because of the county line. As a matter of fact, not only county lines but Texas game wardens. Game wardens work with other conservation enforcement agencies. Colorado, Wyoming, Florida, South Carolina, California. There, I can't even begin to tell ya how many cases have been made assisting other state conservation agencies with violations that occurred in their state. And of course, under federal law, which they're reexamining the Lacy Act right now. But, you know, the Lacy Act allows. It does allow ya to create wildlife, a wildlife crime in California, and it's also a crime in Texas once you cross those federal/state lines.

Um, so there is a lot of that, so not only, so, you know, that's what I'm trying to tell Texas game wardens is not just. Not only do we cross counties, but we cross state boundaries as well and international boundaries when it comes to this, so. Creating that mindset that what you do here today can impact, ah, someone two thousand miles away. Ya know?

Rgp: Right.

CJ: So, ya just kind of dive into that. You know, we have that international wildlife crime. Ah, organizations. They share information, and they are looking at trying to create a repository for information. 37:35. To where, like I said, someone in California, a game warden can type in a name that they dealt with in Texas, and it'll pop-up. Ya know, this is what they've done.

Rgp: So, it gives them a whole history of what this person has done, which is good. So.

CJ: 37:50. Yeah.

Rgp: That's pretty good. That's good news. Um, so, this last one, I think you already talked about how you grew up in a small town.

CJ: Um-hm.

Rgp: And, I'm wondering, ya know, you said that this natural environment helped you come to do that? Like actually help you become a game warden, or was it what the officer did for you when you were young?

CJ: 38:15. Um-hm. So, it's a mixture of both. You know, here's the story. Whenever I was young, Game Wardens would come in and speak to our classes when we were young, and they would talk about wildlife crime. They would talk about, you know, the right way to hunt, they would ask questions, and things like that so, it's—it's kind of odd when you grow up in a rural environment, ah, I meant, and I'm not gonna say that I was poor by any means, but we weren't well off. And, ah, you know there is always, every person at some point in time regardless of your social, economic status or what size town you lived in, have some kind of personal issues that they deal with.

Rgp: 38:52 Yep.

CJ: 38:53 And one thing I always remember is being from a small town and those game wardens. I looked up to them because when you saw 'em they were professional. They always had their stuff together, and you were like, man, ya know, that person understands. They're together. They understand. So, one thing I've noticed from—from my raising, however, is not everybody's liked the game warden in the small town I was in, but they respected the game warden. But I knew at the end of the day what he or she stood for, ah, and they knew that behind those convictions, they maintained that strong foundation. So, you—you didn't have someone that was on one side of the fence and one side of the other. They always had their—their mission was dead on focused. And people understood that they were part of the community. So, that's what I think somebody asked me that question the other day, if you took ten-game wardens and lined them up, you're gonna find probably seventy to eighty percent are involved in their communities somehow via parent/teacher organizations, via the school board, being a coach for little league, ah, ya know via, donate in time at a food bank.

These game wardens, our there, are part of their communities. They are not aside from the communities. So, a young guy like me coming up to have that person and be able to model that was important.

Rgp: 40:19. That's pretty neat. I like that. So, having models that you can look up to when you're young can have a detrimental effect and become a great, huge factor in what you do the rest of your life—and being able to see somebody that you can model your life after. That's pretty neat to have. Somebody, like a Texas game warden, come talk to you when you're young.

CJ: 40:40. Um-hm. Yeah. I'm sure not everybody has that story, you know, we talk about how I grew up in a rural environment. Surrounded by national forests. Texas is not a huge public landscape, and I was fortunate to grow up in the middle of public lands.

Rgp: 40:54. Right.

CJ: So, ah, you know, as a kid, when you're seven years old, ya know, I hate to say this out loud on video recording. But just to jump your fence and go walking for, you know, twenty-four hours.

Rgp: 41:06. Well, some people do that. I had a friend I met hiking at Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge. He died recently of cancer. He was nineteen years older than me. We used to go hiking at Doeskin ranch. I would always stay on the trail, and he would talk about going off the trail and exploring more. He convinced me to go off it. He would say, we're not gonna hurt nothin. We're just walking.

CJ: Yeah, right.

Rgp: I would tell him, well, we're not supposed to be doing this. There is a sign that tells folks to stay out of that area. We did it, and he explained how a few times he was caught by Lonnie Castillo, the police for US FWS, and claimed he would not do it anymore.

CJ: Yeah, I grew up hunting and fishing, and I always understood that and always enjoyed the outdoors more than just the activity rather than just hunting and fishing. Here is one thing I always tried to embed into my children and to the game wardens I talked to.

So, my youngest son came down to visit with me the other day, and he. It was just he and I, so, you know, father and son time, my youngest one, and we went to Lake Pflugerville, which is right here in Pflugerville.

Rgp: Right.

CJ: I mean, it's surrounded by a subdivision, ya know, there's traffic.

Rgp: Those are some of my old stomping grounds. North Austin, Decker Lake.

CJ: Yeah! We had a great time. He got to interact with ducks. He got to understand the difference between a coot and a grebe. He got to see fish, you know, he got to interact with other people. I guess my point is, I try to take. They live right now where I grew up. So, they have the opportunity I had. What I'm trying to instill with them is and in Texas game wardens is, when, me, like a pearl at Texas Parks and Wildlife, law enforcement, can go out and enjoy a public space like Lake Pflugerville, and understand that the difference between someone growing up in a rural environment and an urban environment can mirror each other. It's just you have to understand that there's a three-hundred-foot circle with trees and bushes in it and birds, that is the outdoors to that urban environment. And they can enjoy that and love it just as much and passionately as someone who grows up on a thousand acres. So.

Rgp: Right. That's true. Very true.

CJ: And that's the thing. People identify with what is outdoors differently. So, people look at it as ten thousand acres on the side of the mountain. Some people look at it as a bike trail in downtown Austin. It's all about perception.

Rgp: OK, that's pretty neat. I like that. Well, now we're going to move into the next section, um, for peace officer roles and specialized training. I know both the park police and game wardens go to the training academy in Hamilton, Texas. They spend thirty-three weeks there, is that correct?

CJ: 43:56. Yes, sir.

Rgp: OK. I found at first, when I was doing this research, that Dr. Sansom thought that there might be some pay variances between the game wardens and park police. I found the pay scale for each. I was not sure how they were. Well, the first four years, the park police made a little more, and the salaries were pretty similar across the board, but then, ya know, game wardens make a little more, later on in their years of service for their career. It stops increasing after twenty years, but you need to be recognized as an officer to make more versus just the years of service. If you were doing well and promoted as park police, you could make more is what I thought. Chief Masur showed me another excel template that there is a pay discrepancy, and it has slimmed down from what it was, yet it is still there, and I wanted to know what you think about that. Is there a pay variance between park police and, if there is, are the two positions competitive?

CJ: 45:02. OK. Yeah, there is a pay variance at the moment between park police and game wardens. Ah, you know, going into the history, I don't have it all in front of me, so I want to be careful how I introduce that. Historically, like you said, there is a difference in um, in the jobs, of what the job description from what park police officers did even between then and today. So, park peace officers of the past were, ah, required to do what we called non-commissioned or civilian-type jobs.

Rgp: 45:33. Yes.

CJ: Which they would upkeep, ya know, they would upkeep buildings, they would mow yards, they would take the trash.

Rgp: They were like the Superintendents of this wildlife of Texas Parks and Wildlife, ah, for all state parks. I did not realize that until I spoke with Chief Masur on Thursday, October 29th, 2020. I did not realize that the Superintendents were former police officers.

CJ: Yeah, with that being said, there has been a shift on the state park side, ah, requiring a four-year college education. We are going away from the dual role of being park superintendent and a peace officer. Some of the park's superintendents have maintained that authority, but most of them went to the civilian side. So, I think what's happening now is you're shifting into more of a role that models what Texas game wardens do. And when I say models that, I'm saying the education requirement, the role that they play there. Interaction and the law enforcement world. Inside and outside of the park whenever they are called upon. Ya know, state park peace officers, now, unlike when I first started when we have, and I think we get into that later. You know, natural disasters, hurricanes, fires, things like that. When we're together better than we ever have as far as reaching out to our state park police officer partners and working out of the same emergency plan. So, you know, with that being said, you know, ah, Wes had done a good job in trying to bring park police officers up to a paid ferry, but it's a legislative issue. So, Texas game wardens are on a schedule C pay plan, and Texas state park police officers are on a different pay scale. Only one or two things could happen.

Rgp: They're on a B pay scale in the hopes of moving to C, I guess?

CJ: Yes, they desire to move from schedule B to schedule C, like most Texas peace officers. Like state employees, they are on schedule C. So, those conversations are in the works, but I guess the most important part I would point out is, there has been a dialog started. I don't know if Wes covered that or not.

Rgp: Yeah, he did a little bit.

CJ: State park police officers in Texas game wardens are on a linear chain of command, where it's one law enforcement division and not two.

Rgp: Yeah.

CJ: You have different roles, but it would be under the same umbrella.

Rgp: 48:16. And I think that's—that could be really good because you both go to the same academy and have identical training since 2014 and learning the same things. Wes says he is getting short on peace officers as some are moving over to become game wardens and can have the same training to do that. So, that's pretty neat.

CJ: Um-hm.

Rgp: OK, so, I guess this job is mainly about protecting nature and wildlife versus traditional infractions. Um, like boating violations or speeding tickets. So, you get called out for, you know, people hunting when they are not supposed to be, and people who don't have their fishing license or something like that?

CJ: 49:05 Um-hm. Yeah. So, how much of the job is protecting nature and wildlife versus enforcement of traditional infractions?

So, you know, they intertwine so much, so, depending upon where you're at. Like I said, in some counties, it's one thing I will say, our primary goal and focus is conservation law enforcement, first. Because of the nature of the environment, we operate in, we run into so many different things. Ya know, one thing, drugs, you know, illegal narcotics, are a huge part of what Texas game wardens do, and when I say that, it's not like, well, yes, there's been times when we had to deal with cartel type loads. We're talking about, you know, on the U. S./Mexico Border, where game wardens are out there working people who are illegally netting our resources but then we get into a chase with a cartel boat that has, ya know, a thousand pounds of marijuana on it, or, cocaine at the bottom of the boat. They're bringing their narcotics across our rivers and our lakes to get there. So, we're in tune with that as well on the border. Inland, a lot of it is, of course, personal use narcotics, ya know, you get a lot of methamphetamine out in the woods because of the clan descent nature of the manufacture of it. Um, you know, the traditional type of thing that we really have taken a huge part in is protecting children, which DPS started in the Governor's Office.

With the training that Texas game wardens are taking, we've realized that we can identify children who are being trafficked and/or held against their will. So, we've found missing children, we've found children who are being sexually assaulted, who are part of the sexual trade. Illicit trade, and the reason that being is often state park peace officers are highly involved in that because a lot of the times these predators take these children to parks so people won't see them. They can't find them. Ya know, from the outside looking in, it looks like it's your kid when you're in the park.

Rgp: Right.

CJ: 51:17. But you're trained to see cues. You pick them up, ya know, and, ah, so, we're highly involved now, game wardens and park police officers trained with DPS, side by side, so that we can identify those types of things. So, it's interesting. I always say the same things happening in the river and the woods can get very interesting (starts to laugh as a release mechanism).

Rgp: Yeah, they can.

CJ: So, we're highly trained in that. So, you know, our primary focus, of course, is conservation law enforcement. The friends of all Texas laws, game wardens deal with every day.

Rgp: Yeah, I like that. That's good. Thanks for giving that information.

CJ: Um-hm.

Rgp: Um, I guess you've kind of talked about the duties and cultural activities already?

CJ: 52:04. Um-hm.

Rgp: We can skip that question if you like.

CJ: Yeah.

Rgp: Um. Is there or do you have any specialized training for protecting plants and animals? I guess you got that training when you went to the academy for 33 weeks?

CJ: Yeah, most of that happens, and we have an FTO program, now, that's doing a really good job of, ah, field training officers, so a lot of the game wardens will learn what's important in their areas. So, you know, Texas is an area that is so varied in ecosystems, ya know?

Rgp: Right.

CJ: Like the North Texas plains and the mountains of West Texas to the East Texas woods and forests, ah, to the desserts.

Rgp: So many ecoregions.

CJ: Ya know, I don't know, I would have to look.

Rgp: There are so many different ecoregions. I mean, I've learned these and know of them.

CJ: I've never really looked at how many we actually have. I'll give you a for instance, I was working in West Texas as a field game warden for mule deer, and we entered a ranch on the plains. I mean, it was grass plains, with pronghorn antelope standing out there. We went through the ranch gates, checked some hunters. We went through an actual mountain range, which was mule deer, and all that sheep, and when we came out the other side, we were in the Chihuahuan desert. So, on one property owner's land, was three different ecosystems, basically, environments.

Rgp: 53:29. Right.

CJ: 53:30. Rolling plains, well flat plains with grasslands, mountains, and dessert. I just don't know how many states other than California where you find that in.

Rgp: 53:40. Not many.

CJ: Yeah, so, you know, we used to require wildlife science, biology degree or things than that. Now we require a four-year degree, but it doesn't have to be specialized anymore.

Rgp: 53:55. OK. So, do more people do more of the criminal investigation in criminology?

CJ: Yeah, I think it's a healthy mix, ya know, like me, I'm a criminal justice major from Sam Houston. Ah, you know, that's what I chose to do. Um.

Rgp: That's where my sister went, Sam Houston.

CJ: Oh! Bearcat.

Rgp: Yeah, I'm a Bobcat.

CJ: You know, we have a high percentage of people from Texas A&M, we have a high percentage of people from Sam Houston. Ah, and I think when you look at some of those environments, of course, in the rural counties around those colleges, a lot of them, um, but, you know, what you learn in the academy. What you find out, really, is that you'll learn patterns and trends on how wildlife operates, usually through your relationships with landowners and game wardens.

55:00. Yeah, that's what I tell people. I'm not what you would sometimes say a traditional game warden, because people say that they sometimes think of people who understand when, you know, food plots out, what the moon phase is, and when the deer are moving, and things like that. Where I grew up, I'd say we were on public land, so you didn't, we didn't plant food plots. We didn't have tree stands. We didn't have box blinds.

Rgp: Right.

CJ: 55:25. We didn't have a lot of traditional things that you see in Texas. So, it was more of a, ah, what you would say was a natural hunting model (laughing).

Rgp: 55:35. Well, not everybody understands those things that you learn, you know, growing up in the wide country, what you were just saying like, about planting and explaining those different things to bait and everything. I mean, you get that training on the job and being associated with other people, friends, and those who do that professionally.

CJ: Yeah, and that's correct. It was also put into the mindset of Texas game wardens and through that FTO program, that (Field Training Officer) Program that not everybody knows that and it's up to us to teach the community we live in. Now, when I say the community, we live in. I mean other game wardens, but it's OK that a game warden doesn't understand, maybe, ah, you know, let's just be honest about this. That it's OK if when you come to the academy that you don't know what a—a red drum is, from the coast, because you grew up inland. We'll teach you that, and if you wind up on the coast, we pick people who show that innate abilities and the traits to learn that kind of information, right?

Rgp: 56:36. OK.

CJ: They're willing to learn. So, like for me, I've been in East Texas, Central Texas, South Texas, South Texas Coast. You just have to have the capacity to understand how things work and look at it from a different view. So.

Rgp: Sure.

CJ: That, you know, when that red snapper come in, and you know when it's important to be out there working, you know? You don't necessarily need to know the biology behind it, but you just know that snapper there. You know? (laughing)

Rgp: 57:02. (Also laughing) Sure. OK, there had been some confusion about it. I thought that sometimes, a lot of the game wardens, you know, had wildlife management or wildlife science or knew about wildlife ecology or something like that. I was like, oh, thinking I might want to start doing that, but then, I don't know, with various injuries, most likely won't pass the physical.

CJ: Mm-hm. Yeah, so, in some states throughout the United States, they do that. They're duel. They're biologists and wildlife law enforcement, you know, we moved away from, ya know, I don't know if we were ever in that bottle. Well, ah, the first game wardens didn't have guns but, that's a whole different reason behind that because of peace officer status, and that's what changed things like that.

So, we shifted away in 1975, 1978, somewhere in there, to peace officer status, and that's what kind of changed how, you know, ah, the law enforcement division does its job, today. That's the reason why I told you about the importance of the relationships with our other divisions like biologists and things like that. So, that where we learn a lot of this from. I can sit down with the director of Inland Fisheries Office, and he can explain to me why this is so vitally important, and it's my job, of course, as the Colonel to take that information and present it to the field in such a way that they understand the importance behind the biology factors of it.

Rgp: 58:29. That's good stuff. I'm writing down notes of what you're saying. It's like I'm in class and learning, and you're my instructor. Oh, well, let's go to the next section, and I know we are getting close to an hour of talking. So, I like to volunteer myself, being a Texas Master Naturalist.

CJ: Mm-hm. Yes, sir.

Rgp: 1:10:33. Right. Well, I guess we'll go to the last section, which is education requirements. I guess we already talked about and went over the education description. There used to be, I guess, years ago. All you needed was a GED or high school education. Do you know what year they required a diploma for four years? If you don't, no big deal, I can look that up.

CJ 1:10:57. I would have to research that. I know it was in the nineties.

Rgp: Yeah, I think I ran through that, but I can't remember right now or write it down somewhere, and now my brain doesn't think of it. No big deal.

CJ: Yeah, I kind of rely on the PowerPoint for the history to be a game wardens' job. We did. We currently have game wardens that have backgrounds with associates degrees and still work for us. Most of them went to work in the mid-nineties.

Rgp: 1:11:23. Yeah.

CJ: Um. You know, that numbers are coming down every day to where it's a bachelor's degree requirement.

Rgp: OK. Do you think having a degree in wildlife management or biology or anthropology or geography or a science degree would help somebody who would be a game warden? Does that matter?

CJ: 1:11:48. I think the Harriet that may come to play as we said, if you, just to be blunt. If you didn't grow up in an environment that the natural state of the world was part of what you did every day, and I don't know if that's too broad of a term. But, you know, if you grew up in an area where you had wildlife roaming freely with your cattle and your horses and your chickens and your ducks. Ya, kind of have a type into the natural world, and you grew up hunting and fishing, and you know what every species of fish are. Then I guess biology or a geography degree may not benefit you as much then it would take someone who has had all of those experiences.

So, say you decided you wanted to be a Texas game warden, and you haven't had those fishing experiences and the hunting experiences. You didn't grow up in the natural forest or on two hundred acres of land. You know, and is that impairment to being a game warden?

No, we can teach you that, but showing up with a biology degree, might help. Yes, it might help because you understand the natural world and how it's working. Depending upon what' cha get, you know, like I said. Look, we have a lot of wildlife management, I would say. I don't know the percentage. So, you know, we have a wide variety of people who have had wildlife management degrees. It seems to be a common thread. If it's not criminal justice, it's wildlife management.

Rgp: 1:13:09. Yeah.

CJ: Business degrees, surprisingly are...are here, but I'm not so sure that's not a generational thing. You know, I don't know if it helps to be a game warden. I'm just wondering if it's more of a culture and generational thing that group of citizens that came up. When business was what you wanted to do, you're supposed to be an entrepreneur and independent.

Rgp: 1:13:28. Right.

CJ: Ya wind up being a Texas game warden. Ya know? So, I don't have the.

Rgp: 1:13:26. I don't know, like twenty years ago. I decided to become an accountant because I was good with numbers. I worked for Dell, Inc. After close to seventeen years. They released me. I decided I wanted to work in the outdoors instead of in an office.

CJ: Mm-hm. Here you are.

Rgp: I don't know if I chose something different twenty years ago, would I be a game warden? I was like, just helping people understand and working in education and outreach is what I'm looking to get into.

CJ: When I started college with an animal science degree because when I started you had to have a specific degree, and then also grow up in a rural community and I don't do it anymore but, when I was younger, I rodeoed for a living, and I would go to college on a rodeo team and things like that. So, I sometimes get into this mindset that hey, I have to be an ag science major because this is my life story. I think you get some people, such as myself, you get introduced to a new way of thinking. Hey, I don't have to live in this little box. I can be whatever I want to be. You know what I mean? Then you get the courage from all the relationships to say. I'm gonna change my path. You know? I guess now. We're talking philosophy.

Rgp: 1:14:54. (Both of us are laughing hard). It's all good. Well, the last question.

CJ: I had a lieutenant at one time, and I used to call him my little gray squirrel. He says the little gray squirrel just runs around and chatters sometimes.

Rgp: So, you are giving me different things to start thinking about?

CJ: 1:15:10 Yeah, just like that conversation, right there. Don't let that gray squirrel get a hold of ya.

Rgp: We have one more question, and you kind of talked about it a bit. The natural disasters, hurricanes, floods, or knowing about medical treatment for snake bites or now we have a pandemic. Um, such as safety and mitigating injuries that can happen in rural and remote areas. I put a question mark there but wanted to discuss about it. It's not a question, but what are your comments about that? Like having somebody experienced in natural disasters and things like that, I guess I think that would help.

CJ: 1:15:58. Would that help?

Rgp: Yeah. I'm sure that helps game warden or park police to know about that kind, to treat a person with an injury, previous medical training. Well, I know that you guys are out in remote areas. It takes so long for backup to get to you, so knowing how to treat somebody would probably be beneficial if there is a medical emergency.

CJ: 1:16:30. At the academy, we train in basic first aid, tourniquets, wound care, medical, some kind of medical emergency type training. And then hurricanes and floods. You know, when I became a Texas game warden, we didn't have. We had swift water training where you went down the Comal River and the river and went through the tube chutes. So, you could learn how to swim in swift water, but now we have an entire swift water rescue team that learns how to operate boats in swift water conditions. They learn the proper way to do things, and they get

recertified. Ah, on a basis, I would have to look at the timeframe on that. Um, ya know, trauma medical care, we all carry a trauma medical kit on us now.

Ya know, a lot of this training comes about now. Trauma care comes back to our military personnel that comes back from overseas, and they've had that training and understand the importance of it—bringing it into our division as well.

Rgp: OK, cool.

CJ: And then, of course, that's kind of where we're at on that. Everybody is first aid certified. Everyone is trauma care certified. Um, tourniquet certified. Everybody goes through water survival now.

Rgp: 1:17:50. And you have to get recertified after several years or something like that?

CJ: Yeah, after a set time, I can't remember the actual certification. I believe our swift water folks get recertified yearly, just so they will be on the safe side, but, you know, we started the officer water survival training now, which is a very in-depth course on how to survive once you hit the water. We do that at swimming pools across the state. We are almost all certified now. I think we only have one class left. So, you know, in the nineteen nineties, when you hired on, you didn't have to know how to swim. Ya just became a game warden, but drowning was one of our number one causes of death in the line of duty.

Ya know, we've realized, over time, that it's finally important enough to operate safely in and around the water. So, we have implemented that program now.

Rgp: 1:18:34. OK. Well, that was the last question, Colonel Jones. Unless you want to add something else, um, I enjoyed our conversation, and.

CJ: 1:18:47. I don't know. I can talk, forever.

Rgp: 1:18:51. Right.

CJ: 1:18:52. I appreciate the questions. Um, I'm working on getting the survey sent out. I hope you have some patience with me.

Rgp: 1:18:58. I do. I can extend that date to later if you need me to.

CJ: 1:19:03. I think we're good, for right now. I'll get it sent out and put a deadline on it. If we need to go past that, just let me know.

Rgp: I guess I can contact you in a couple of weeks and see how things are going, or is that all right?

CJ: 1:19:13. Yeah, I'll let you know when I send it out. I may CC you on the blind copy so that you know that it's been sent.

Rgp: 1:19:24. OK, and the more game wardens you can get to take the survey, the better, but if you have a limit of whom you send it to. It's OK if you only send it to a certain number. I mean, whatever is more comfortable for you.

CJ: 1:19:38. Yeah. Naw, I'll do it. I'll probably send it out division-wide. All five hundred and fifty-seven, and we'll see what we get back.

Rgp: 1:19:47. Five fifty-seven. I thought you said there was five fifty-one last time I talked to you?

CJ: 1:19:50. There is. Well, I said five fifty-one. The last numbers I got were five fifty-seven.

Rgp: 1:19:56. You hired six more from the last time I spoke with you. (laughing).

CJ: 1:20:00. (Laughing). We're legislatively capped, but the weird part is how we've word a true FTE is like a person, is the amount of money. If I have to say, like say a lieutenant colonel that's not there, and I decided that I have to replace him. I might have two extra FTEs.

Rgp: 1:20:19. OK.

CJ: 1:20:20. I'd stick with five fifty-one. Five fifty-seven is kind of how my mind works because of where the pay scale is.

Rgp: 1:20:35. Well, thank you, Colonel Jones. I really appreciate your help.

CJ: 1:20:40. No, Well, thank you for having an interest in it. I'm really interested to see how it turns out. But I know that we're going to have some differences and, ah, we're actively working on that state parks and law enforcement interaction and how that looks in the future of the linear chain. How to get the law enforcement division and so, it was interesting that you wanted to talk about this.

Rgp: 1:21:02. Well, it's the whole. What I mean is the whole thing that you guys are talking about it, and you're coming together, and you want to be one unit. That's awesome. Instead of having two separate units, that I mean, one is being paid by the fishing licenses, and the other is the sales and use tax.

CJ: 1:21:24. Yeah, that's our biggest issue. Yeah, our biggest issue is not so much coming together. It's this behind the scenes on how those budgets work. Because it's federal law, and it's against the law for me to take like you said, the money that state parks are working off of, and then co-mingle that with law enforcement money because of the way it's set up in the funding streams. So, the ah, the fact that Texas game wardens and state park peace officers care about each other and what each other does and can understand how that works together, ah, I think is the easy part.

The hard part is for me if I'm a lieutenant colonel, and Wes is supposed to figure out how you pay for it, to be honest with ya (laughing). So, look at if you buy a white truck that says state

parks, it can't come out of the same bucket as the same money as the gray truck that says Texas game wardens. And of course, you deal with culture too. We could talk for hours about that, you know? You know? Do you go on in the same colored truck? Do you all wear the same colored pants? That—That's a whole different ball game.

Rgp: 1:22:24. That's part of the uniform, right?

CJ: 1:22:28. Right. Yeah. We'll get it figured out. Well, hey, I definitely appreciate your time and thanks for having an interest in us. And now, I'm going to answer these seventy-two emails or nine phone calls and see what they want.

Rgp: 1:22:42. I get hundreds of emails myself every day. You aren't the only one. (laughing)

CJ: 1:22:48. All right. I get it. Well, thank you, I appreciate your time. If you need anything, give me a holler.

Rgp: 1:22:50. All right. Thank you so much. Bye. Bye.

CJ: 1:22:53. All right. Bye.

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