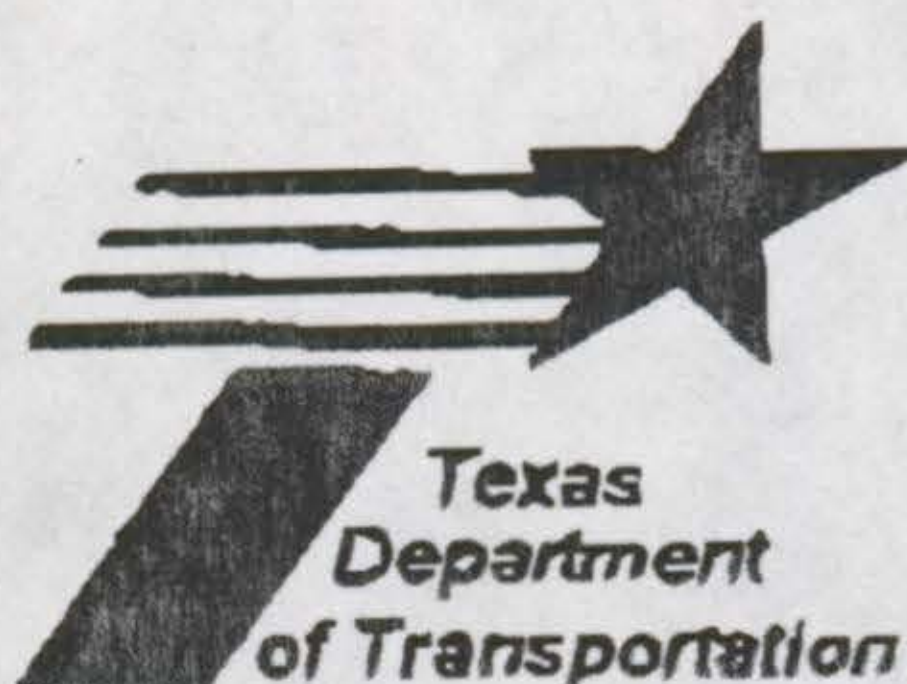


340



FAX TRANSMITTAL

Texas Department of Transportation

Austin District

DATE: 8-19-97

5 PAGES (including cover sheet)

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DISTRICT LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

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COMMENTS:

The '95 traffic count on US 290 at this site indicated 4000 to 5000 cars per day.

The 'redbud' trees used in this garden also have "cousins" that grow in Arkansas and elsewhere east of Texas.

Roadside Chronology (underscore = Mrs. Johnson, **bold** = USDOT/FHWA):

1965 - With Secretary of Interior Udall, Mrs. Johnson formed the Committee for a Beautiful Capitol. The beautification movement now had an advocate in a powerful place.

1965 - Highway Beautification Act

Focused attention on highway landscaping, billboard removal & junkyard screening.

She lobbied for its passage. "We are obligated to leave the country looking as good is not better than we found it." she said.

1969 - Returns to Texas and concentrates on beautification and preservation of Texas roadsides.

Establishes an annual awards celebration for Texas Highway crews. Influence continues.

1973 - "Operation Wildflower" FHWA signs an agreement with the Federated Garden Clubs. When garden clubs provide wildflower seed, State Highway crews shall provide labor to plant.

1982 - On her 70th birthday she founded the National Wildflower Research Center, "A pioneering effort, and sometimes I feel overwhelmed with a sense of so much to do and so little time, because of all we need to discover. Yet I can hardly wait for spring each year! Already we are on the road to unlocking some of the secrets of wildflowers and to assuring their bounty in our landscapes for generations to come," she said. Nationally her influence grows and is well known.

(The Center serves as a clearinghouse for homeowners and organizations who needed more information about the use and preservation of native wildflowers and all native plants.)

1987 - She invited 5 State Departments of Transportation to the ranch to discuss wildflower programs (Texas, Michigan, Ohio, Florida, and Minnesota). From them she learned

that what held them back was lack of funding and lack of department support.

Later

that year she saw to it the all States got what they needed to do more on roadsides.

1987 - Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act (STURAA)

Thanks to her friend - Senator Lloyd Bentson - an ammendment required that 1/4 of 1% of the landscape budget used on any highway construction project using Federal funds, must be spent on planting of "native" wildflowers.

1988 - FHWA distributes guidelines to all State Departments of Transportation to implement the wildflower requirement.

1987-1993 - Mrs Johnson continues to visit States Governors to influence their commitment to wildflowers in their States. It works in many States!

1993 - Mrs. Johnson visits Secretary Pena to check up on the future of the wildflower program at headquarters level. Jane Garvey, Deputy Administrator said. "Her devotion to improving our roadsides and her energy and untiring support for the wildflower program is a true inspiration. Her work shows that our roadsides can be aesthetically pleasing as well as ecological and economical and it is a

legacy

that will be reflected for generations to come.

1994 - FHWA wildflower program strengthens commitment with a quarterly newsletter,

Greener Roadsides, a video sampler of State Wildflower Programs, and an annual wildflower photography competition for all State Departments of Transportation.

1997 - A roadside garden of native plants dedicated to Mrs. Johnson

ROADSIDE "BEAUTIFICATION"

Mrs. Johnson began the movement, and we are committed to continue it.

1964 In an address soon after his election, LBJ said,....."once our natural splendor is destroyed, it can never be recaptured. And once man can no longer walk with beauty or wonder at nature, his spirit will wither, and his sustenance be wasted.

Mrs. Johnson's reaction to Washington.

"When I found myself in the White House, it was natural - and inevitable - for me to turn to the movement we called beautification* (we never could think of a better word!)"

"Though the word beautification makes the concept sound merely cosmetic, it involves much more: clean water, clean air, clean roadsides, To me, in sum, beautification means our total concern for the physical and human quality we pass on to our children and the future." From her 1993 book, *Wildflowers Across America*.

1965 Environmental issues were emerging.

1961 Stewart L. Udall becomes Secretary of the Interior...he stays on with LBJ

1962 Rachel Carson raises pesticide awareness with *Silent Spring*

1964 Land and Water Conservation Fund considered a turning point in conservation.

February 8, 1965 President Johnson sent a message to Congress on natural beauty.

Within his appeal to protect that natural beauty he said, "The beauty of the land is a

natural resource. Its preservation is linked to the inner prosperity of the human spirit."

"Early legislation on water and air pollution, on clean rivers, on highway beautification,

and on the preservation of wilderness areas is a proud part of those years."

The Highway Beautification Act of 1965.

Mrs. Johnson actually lobbied key congressmen to pass this bill. She said, "We are obligated to leave the country looking as good if not better than we found it."

The act required a level of landscaping of all highway construction projects;

removal of billboards, and screening of junkyards

1969 **Concentrates on beautification and preservation of Texas roadsides**

The Texas beautification program was credited to Judge W.R. Ely in 1929. Highway engineers were urged to preserve plants when laying out a road. Neighboring landowners were asked to donate an extra acre to establish roadside parks.

Mrs. Johnson wanted to thank and encourage the Highway Department to continue to respect that natural beauty. For years she hosted a fall barbeque at the LBJ State Park, personally handing out awards to some vedry proud Highway crews.

1982 **On her 70th birthday she founded the National Wildflower Research Center.**

She had continued learning about the natural beauty of the countryside, and was convinced that using an protecting native plants was important. "This is a pioneering effort, and sometimes I feel overwhelmed with a sense of so much to do and so little time, because of all we need to discover. Yet I can hardly wait for spring each year! Already we are on the road to unlocking some of the secrets of wildflowers and to assuring their bounty in our landscapes for generations to come."

1987 **She invited 5 State Departments of Transportation to discuss wildflower programs** (Texas, Michigan, Ohio, Florida, and Minnesota programs.)

She asked us all the hard questions about why we could not get more done. We told her we lacked funding and we lacked department support. She never told us about the politics of all this. However, her friend Senator Lloyd Bentson, soon revealed what she was thinking.

Surface Transportation and Relocation Assistance Act of 1987, thanks to the Senator's amendment, required that 1/4 of 1% of the landscape budget used on any highway construction project using federal funds, must be spent on planting "native" wildflowers. And so it was that State DOT wildflower programs began to get the support they needed to expand their efforts.

1993 **Mrs. Johnson visits Secretary Pena** to check up on the future of the wildflower

program at headquarters level. Jane Garvey, Deputy Administrator says, "Her devotion to improving our roadsides and her energy and untiring support for the wildflower program is a true inspiration. Her work shows that our roadsides can be aesthetically pleasing as well as ecological and economical and it is a legacy that will be reflected for generations to come."

1997 A roadside garden dedicated as a gift for Mrs. Johnson

The FHWA's opportunity to thank Mrs. Johnson and underscore our commitment to taking care of roadsides, the native wildflowers, the environment as a whole.

Mrs. Johnson's influence has been great. Highway corridors have less billboards, fewer junkyards, more landscaping, and more wildflowers.

FHWA's commitment has grown to include more funding for related research, more private/public sector partnerships, and more support for restoration and preservation of native wildflowers and other native plants.