When a big county and a medium-size city in Texas formed a park partnership something amazing happened – a green gem called Crescent Bend Nature Park.

In September 2009, the City of Schertz (population 33,000) and Bexar County (population 1.7 million) proved jurisdictions of different sizes can work together on a common sense project.  And, they had the perseverance to overcome numerous obstacles.

Born out of the tragedy of two floods, a lengthy federal buyout, and years of planning, Crescent Bend Park covers 175-acres and is the flagship of the Bexar County and Schertz park systems.

The brain child of Bexar County Commissioner Tommy Adkisson and Schertz Assistant City Manager David J. Harris, Crescent Bend Nature Park was conceived because floods in 1997 and 1998 decimated the local community and made the area unlivable. The story of how the park came about is a testament to Texas perseverance.

“We took an area where a tragedy occurred for some people and turned it into an absolute gem for Bexar County and the Schertz area,” said Harris, who worked for Bexar County in 1998 and got the ball rolling for the project. “It was a win-win situation for both teams.”

The land now known as Crescent Bend Nature Park was purchased through Bexar County funds and through a FEMA buyout program. Bexar County invested an additional $400,000 to construct park amenities including a 1.5-mile walking trail, five new picnic sites along Cibolo Creek, a restroom facility with drinking fountains, and two new parking lots. With the help of the Maroon “Alamo Fire” Bluebonnets, the park has been seeded and turns into a wildflower paradise every spring.

The colorful transformation draws visitors anxious to drink in the beauty of the creek side park as winter withers away. And, it is not unusual to see walkers in the park waving to people fishing on the banks of nearby Cibolo Creek.

The park has 40 to 50 different types of trees, many species of flora and fauna and is full of wildlife; deer, wild turkey and birds. In fact, the park has become a birdwatchers paradise and inspired a book: *The Nature Within: Crescent Bend Nature Park* by C.A. Mallard. The book is a photographic document of bird life in the park during late summer, fall and winter.

“There is a great opportunity for the people of Schertz to really appreciate a beautiful piece of Mother Nature,” said Commissioner Adkisson. “This park has an amazing natural beauty to it.”

Bexar County is leasing the park to Schertz for 25 years. The city’s monetary responsibility is the cost of maintaining the park, an estimated $50,000 per year.

Joel Tanner attended the dedication ceremony for the park on September 18, 2009 and was impressed. Tanner, a Schertz resident and president of the Greater Lost Meadows Neighborhood Watch, said at the dedication he has been working with the city and Bexar County to make sure the local community had a voice in park development decisions. Tanner said he has been extremely impressed with how much Schertz and Bexar County have been supportive with requests to maintain a peaceful country atmosphere.

“We as neighbors have been interested in seeing that [Crescent Bend Nature Park) be a quiet park,” Tanner said. “We moved out here to be away from the busyness of the city and all of lights and noise. Everyone has been very receptive to us. I truly appreciate that [the City of Schertz and Bexar County] want everyone to be happy with this park.”