

## **Lone Star College CyFair Campus by SWA Group Named to Innovative International Sustainability Rating System**

**Houston Texas, May 25, 2010** — The Sustainable Sites Initiative™ (SITES™) announced the selection of Lone Star College CyFair Campus as one of the first landscapes to participate in a new program testing the nation's first rating system for green landscape design, construction and maintenance in conjunction with the well-established Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program of the U.S. Green Building Council.

Lone Star College CyFair Campus joins 150 other projects from 34 states as well as from Canada, Iceland and Spain as part of an international pilot project program to evaluate the new SITES rating system for sustainable landscapes, with and without buildings. Sustainable landscapes can clean water, reduce pollution and restore habitats, while providing significant economic and social benefits to land owners and municipalities.

SITES, a partnership of the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at The University of Texas at Austin and the United States Botanic Garden, selected Lone Star College CyFair Campus based on its extensive environmentally friendly elements. These sustainable practices include: water harvesting and re-use, storm water management on site, restoration of the Katy Prairie and use of native and naturalized vegetation requiring minimal irrigation and on-going maintenance and creation of habitat for wildlife and the thousands of migratory that visit the Katy Prairie annually.

Lone Star College CyFair Campus joins other pilot projects that include academic and corporate campuses, public parks with hundreds of acres, transportation corridors and private residences of less than one acre. Among the 150 other projects is the Smithsonian Institution's African American History & Culture museum, a New Orleans' project to absorb storm water on the streets of the Lower Ninth Ward flooded during Hurricane Katrina.

Lone Star College CyFair Campus was designed by SWA Group and Gensler Architects and constructed by the Gilbane Building Company. The 200-acre site was developed to restore the vanishing Katy Prairie ecosystem and habitat while managing storm water runoff and preserving water resources. Like the other pilot projects, the site will test the point system for achieving different levels of site sustainability on a 250-point scale, and the performance benchmarks associated with specific credits within the *Guidelines and Performance Benchmarks 2009*. The site's other sustainability features include the greening of parking lots to minimize the heat island effect and slow storm water runoff, utilization of local and on-site building materials, utilization of native or naturalized plant materials as well as restoration of migratory bird and other wildlife habitat.

SITES will use feedback from this and the other selected projects during the pilot phase, which runs through June 2012, to revise the final rating system and reference guide by early 2013. The U.S. Green Building Council, a stakeholder in the Sustainable Sites Initiative, anticipates incorporating the guidelines and performance benchmarks into future iterations of its LEED® Green Building Rating System™. More information is available at: <http://www.sustainablesites.org>. For general media queries about SITES, go to: <http://www.sustainablesites.org/news/>.

### **About the Sustainable Sites Initiative**

The Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES) is an interdisciplinary partnership led by the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at The University of Texas at Austin and the United States Botanic Garden to transform land development and management practices with the nation's first voluntary rating system for sustainable landscapes, with or without buildings. As these guidelines become the accepted practices by professionals and nonprofessionals alike, they will transform the ways we design and build on the land, creating landscapes that nourish life for generations to come. For more information, visit [www.sustainablesites.org](http://www.sustainablesites.org).

## About SWA

SWA Group ([www.swagroup.com](http://www.swagroup.com)), established in 1957, is an international landscape architecture, planning and urban design firm. SWA has offices in Sausalito, CA, Los Angeles, Laguna Beach, CA, San Francisco, Dallas, Houston, Shanghai and Dubai. Since its inception, SWA Group has worked in over 60 countries, and its projects have garnered more than 600 awards.