



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Explore Nature, Capture Beauty, and Share Your Story

Photo contest encourages youth to explore nature and get outdoors

Quinta Mazatlán in partnership with the Valley Land Fund, invites youth ages 6 to 18 to participate in the free Southern Exposures Youth Nature Photo Contest, encouraging young photographers to explore the outdoors and showcase the beauty of South Texas through their own lens.

Participants may submit up to six original photographs of South Texas nature, including birds, butterflies, wildflowers, reptiles, sunsets and other outdoor scenes through July 31, 2026. Families are encouraged to spend the summer exploring local parks, nature centers, wildlife refuges and even their own backyards in search of nature's beauty.

"We are proud to partner with the Valley Land Fund on this initiative that encourages our youth to get outdoors, explore the natural beauty of the Rio Grande Valley, and express their creativity through photography," said McAllen City Manager Isaac J. Tawil. "Programs like this help foster a deeper appreciation for our environment while creating meaningful experiences for families."

All participants will be recognized during a free Awards Ceremony and Photo Exhibit on Thursday, August 13, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. at Quinta Mazatlán. Each participant will have one submitted photograph displayed and will receive a commemorative gift. The evening will also feature family activities and a live Birds of Prey presentation. The event is presented by the Valley Land Fund in partnership with the City of McAllen's Quinta Mazatlán and is supported by H-E-B, Magic Valley Electric Cooperative and AEP Texas.

For contest rules, online entry and additional information, visit the Valley Land Fund or Quinta Mazatlán, or contact Quinta Mazatlán at (956) 681-3370, or register online with the following link, <https://vlfsonthernexposures.com/>.

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About the City of McAllen

Founded in 1904 and incorporated in 1911, the City of McAllen has grown from a small agricultural community into one of the most vibrant and fastest-growing cities along the U.S.–Mexico border. Known as the "City of Palms," McAllen serves as a hub for international trade, retail, tourism, and culture in the Rio Grande Valley. Today, the city employs more than 2,600 dedicated public servants across 41 departments, delivering essential services to a community of more than 150,000 residents. McAllen city leaders remain committed to transparent governance, fiscal responsibility, and enhancing quality of life through innovation, infrastructure, and community engagement. For more information, visit www.mcallen.net and follow us on social media @cityofmcallen