

Efforts to draft a Managing Partner Agreement with the City of Sunset Valley

Since 1991 the City of Sunset Valley has owned a 21.894 acre tract of land known as the Gaines Greenbelt. This tract is adjacent to property owned by the City of Austin and is located north of Highway 290 and east of Mopac. The Gaines Greenbelt is home to the golden-cheeked warbler (*Setophagia chrysoparia*). The Gaines Greenbelt is also contained within the original BCP Preserve Acquisition Boundary, an area defined as the best habitat for the species listed on the permit.

Current use of the Greenbelt is determined by deed restrictions which require that it is used exclusively as a park, recreational, greenbelt and/or preserve for use by the public. A portion of the Gaines Greenbelt contains a trail that meanders between Austin and Sunset Valley. This trail would also be part of the regional Violet Crown Trail. Phase 1 of the Violet Crown Trail would link Zilker Park to Sunset Valley.

For many years the City of Sunset Valley has been working with representatives from Travis County and the City of Austin to address the possibility of joining in the regional effort to protect endangered species. At this time the City of Sunset Valley would like to pursue the development of a Managing Partner Agreement with the Balcones Canyonlands Coordinating Committee. This Agreement will allow the City of Sunset Valley to formalize their commitment to protecting endangered species habitat on the Gaines Greenbelt and define its relationship to the BCCP. At the March 6th Sunset Valley City Council meeting, the Council authorized staff to work with staff from other BCCP partners to develop a managing partner agreement and approved the following items to be included in the agreement:

- Designate 21 acres of the Gaines Greenbelt as preserve system lands in perpetuity.
- Work with the BCCP Coordinating Committee to create, edit, and update the BCP Land Management Plan regularly as needed for adaptive management as required by the Permit.
- Manage the property in accordance with the “Land Management Plan and Guidelines” of the BCCP Permit and the current BCP Land Management Plan.
 - Work in cooperation with the City of Austin and Travis County for endangered species, deer, fire ant, oak wilt, nest predators, and feral hog management.
 - Conduct invasive species management for trees such as Japanese Ligustrum and Nandina.
 - Conduct surveys for golden-cheeked warblers every two year.
 - Construct, monitor, and maintain trail on a regular basis and repair accordingly.
 - Close down additional social trails as they develop.
- Sunset Valley would submit a yearly annual report regarding the previous fiscal year’s management activities to meet USFWS directed reporting deadlines and participate in BCP Land Management Meetings.
- Retains title, tax liabilities, and obligations associated with the Gaines Greenbelt.
- Sunset Valley would have one representative on the BCCP Citizen’s Advisory Committee.

**City of Sunset Valley
Proximity to
Balcones Canyonlands Preserve**

