

Status of the Water Quality Protection Land Acquisition Program

**City of Austin
Environmental Board
April 16, 2014**

**David Johns – Watershed Protection
Junie Plummer – Public Works/Real Estate**



Agenda

- Introduction
- Benefits of Open Space
- Program Status



Open Space Benefits

- Enhanced water quality and quantity
- Protection of future water supply
- Groundwater “rule-of-capture” protection
- Endangered species protection
- Carbon sequestration



Community Benefits

- Protection of Barton Springs
- Preservation of natural heritage
- Scenic views and vistas
- Public access opportunities, including Violet Crown Trail
- Potential for increased adjacent property values



Partnerships

- The Nature Conservancy
- Hill Country Conservancy
- Trust for Public Land
- Hays County
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service



Acquisition Criteria

- Creek and Aquifer Protection
- Avoided Pollution – Prevention of Development
- Contiguity
- Management Considerations
- Public Use Value (2006)
- Financial Feasibility

History: Acquisition

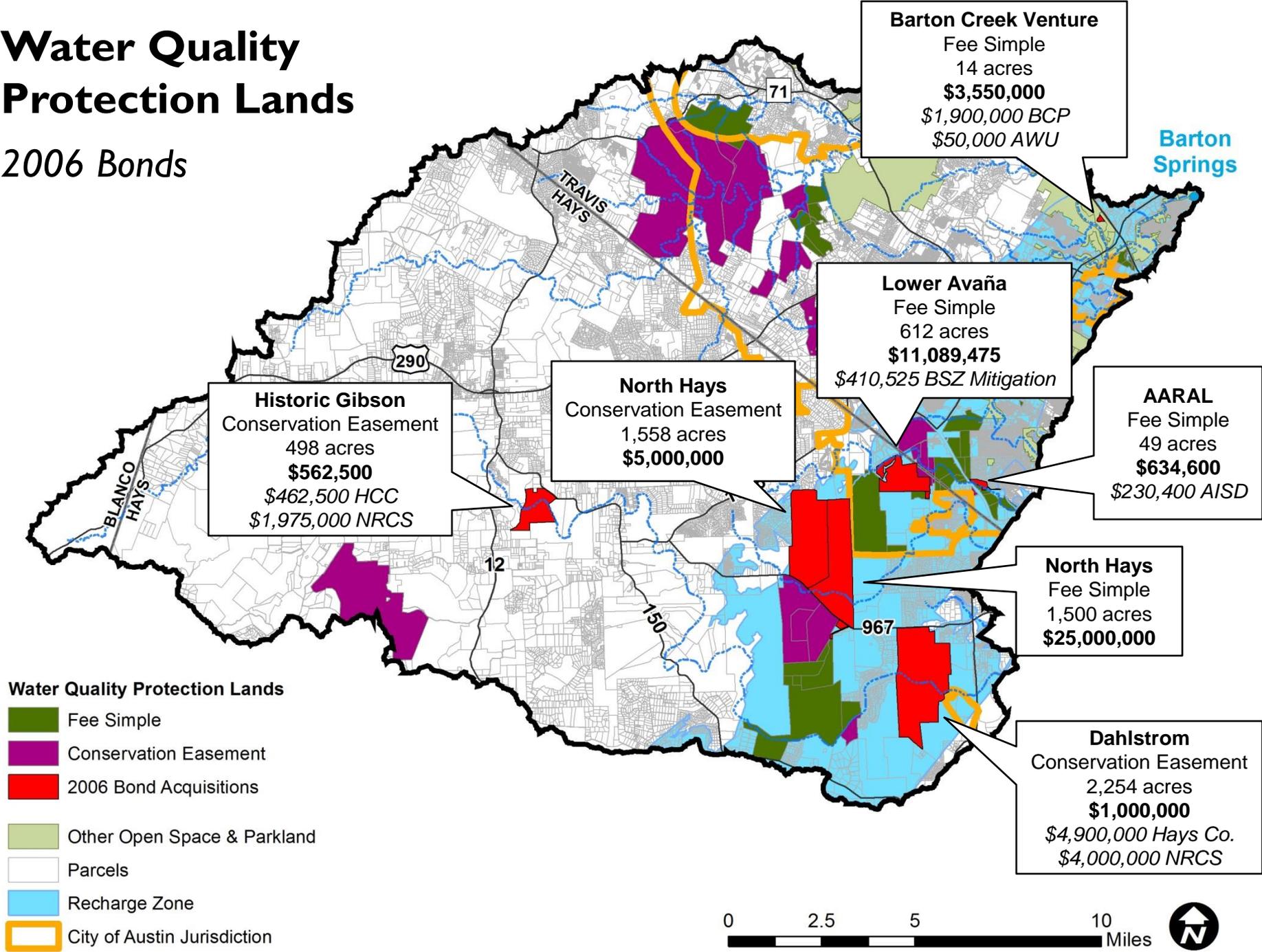
May 1998	\$65M	15,047 ac.
Nov. 2000	\$13.4M	5,000 ac.
Nov. 2006	\$50M	6,530 ac.
Nov. 2012	<u>\$27.5M</u>	<u>1,045 ac.</u>
	\$155.9M	27,622 ac.

Partnership Contributions \$21M

Conservation Easements (16,781 ac.)	61%
Fee (10,841 ac.)	39%

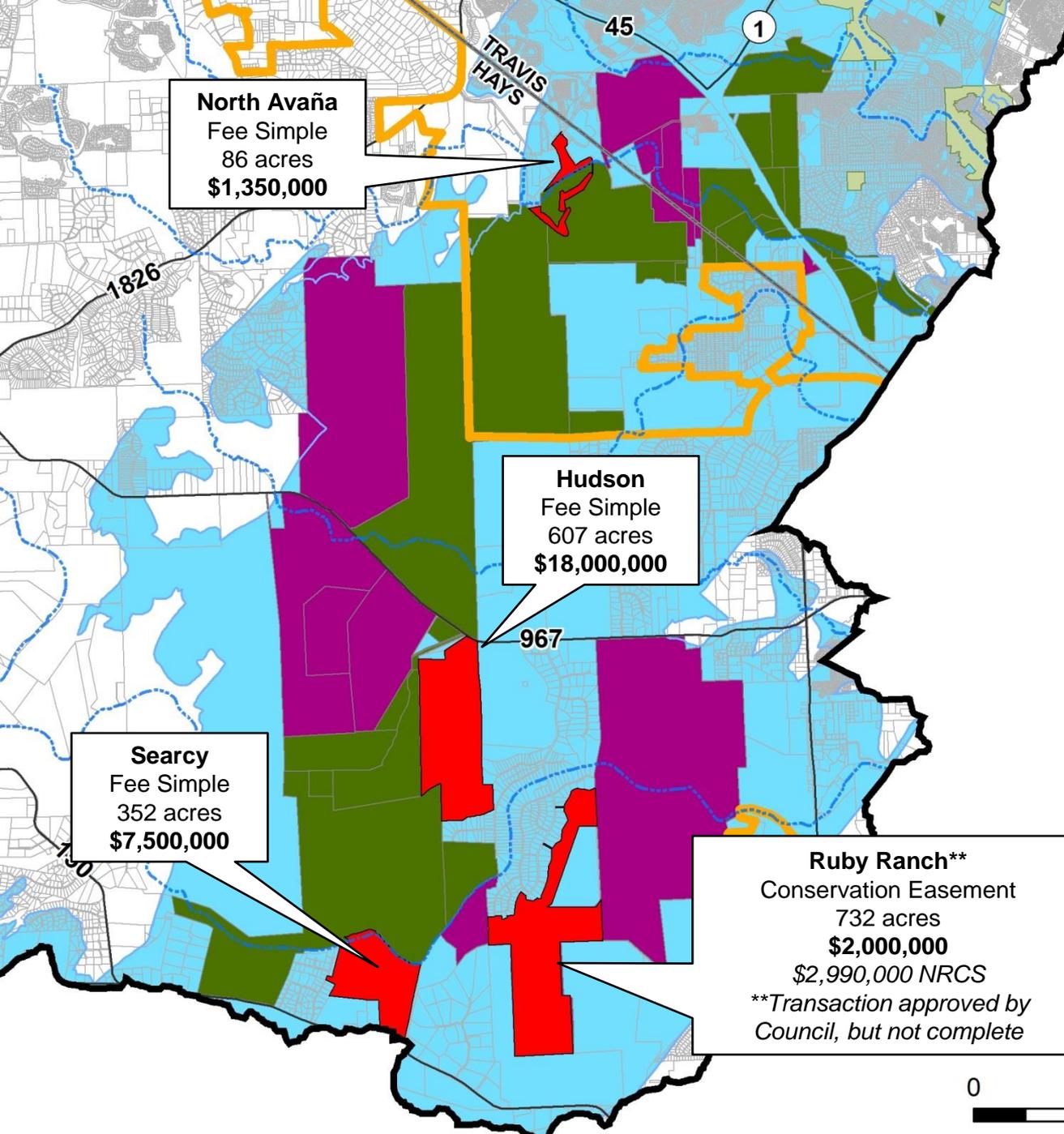
Water Quality Protection Lands

2006 Bonds



Water Quality Protection Lands

2012 Bonds (to date)



- Water Quality Protection Lands**
- Fee Simple
 - Conservation Easement
 - 2012 Bond Acquisitions
 - Other Open Space & Parkland
 - Parcels
 - Recharge Zone
 - City of Austin Jurisdiction





Program Benefits

- 23% of the Barton Springs recharge zone is protected as Water Quality Protection Land
- An additional 6% is protected as Balcones Canyonlands Preserve or parkland
- Includes 100's of significant karst features
- Miles of creeks recharging the aquifer

Hudson/Jeremiah Ventures



Searcy Ranch



Imagery Date: 10/31/2013 30°03'05.96" N 97°56'17.51" W elev 809 ft eye alt 18343 ft



11/22/2013

Ruby Ranch





Questions