

BCP Strategic Research Plan Outline

I. Vision: The Balcones Canyonlands Preserve Strategic Research Plan is the guiding document for facilitating collaborative interdisciplinary research across the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve.

II. Purpose and Need

- To ensure new information is readily available for incorporation into management strategies.
- To facilitate inter-agency collaboration in research.
- To prevent redundancy in research (probably not much of an issue).
- To guide studies in the social sciences to complement research in the physical and life sciences (i.e., ensure research is truly interdisciplinary).

III. Existing Research

- A bibliography will be built initially in Trello
- Eventually, a dedicated online system will be developed. This system may incorporate activities incidental to research, such as education, outreach, volunteers, etc.

IV. Proposed Future Research

- Based on the 2007 Land Management Plan (to be updated with updates to the LMP)
- The plan will call for more research in the social sciences and impacts of climate change
- Research needs will be listed in Trello; eventually in the new online system
- Stakeholders may call for research into specific issues via the online system

V. Resources

A. Institutions and Agencies

- Concordia University Texas
- St. Edward's University
- University of Texas
- City of Austin
- Travis County
- Lower Colorado River Authority
- Travis Audubon Society
- The Nature Conservancy
- Westcave Outdoor Discovery Center
- Private landowners (BCP and adjacent)
- Texas Land Conservancy
- Hill Country Conservancy

B. Volunteer Groups

- Texas Master Naturalist

- Texas Stream Team
- Native Plant Society of Texas

C. Facilities and Technologies

- Call for identification of these
- Collaborative technologies: Trello, Adobe Connect, Quip, Web X, Vue, Google Docs, etc.

VI. Structure

- A coalition of universities and other researchers
- Tied together by a Strategic Operating Agreement
- Governed by a committee (probably the SAC); permitting of projects will still be governed by land managers.

VII. Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

A. Planning and Permitting

- All members of the coalition will have access to proposed and current research
- Coalition will neither approve or deny permits, but make suggestions

B. Collaboration

- Coalition ensures interdisciplinary approach; group shaping of research problems
- Develop structure for collaboration; build partnerships; workshops to train

C. Adaptive Management

- The SRP calls for the design and implementation of an adaptive management cycle by which research collaborations are operated.
- Adaptive management in this context emphasizes frequent analysis of research findings to determine if the SRP is effective. Results are then communicated to the Coalition, which begins again the collaborative problem conceptualization process. The SRP is then amended as needed.
- The adaptive management system depends on excellent communication and collaborative brainstorming between Coalition members.

D. Monitoring and Reporting

- Researchers will submit findings to Coalition; which will update online