

City of Austin's BCCP Activities Update: 1 January – 31 March 2017

BCCP Administration	
Infrastructure Projects	Five Infrastructure Habitat Assessment Applications were processed and Determination Letters were issued from January – March 2017
Land Acquisition	No new parcels were acquired in this time period.
Reports and Events	We issued 8 BCP research access permits, including wildlife and stormwater monitoring and school science projects.
Personnel	Wildlands Conservation Division hired Cait McCann as the Outreach Coordinator. The Balcones Canyonlands Preserve hired four seasonal biologists in February 2017 to assist with endangered species surveys, habitat restoration, and outreach/education. Wildland Conservation Division will hire a Volunteer Coordinator in 2017.
Rare and Endangered Resources Management	
Golden-cheeked warbler and Black-capped vireo	The first of three manuscripts on the 5-year Golden-cheeked Warbler Population & Habitat Viability study has been published: Reidy, J.L., F.R. Thompson, and L. O'Donnell. 2017. Density and nest survival of golden-cheeked warblers: spatial scale matters. Two more manuscripts will be submitted in 2017.
	On March 1, 2016, the Texas Public Policy Foundation, on behalf of the General Land Office, filed a 60-day notice of intent to sue the Secretary of Interior over the listing of the Golden-cheeked Warbler as endangered and not designating critical habitat for this species.
	Staff initiated surveys for Golden-cheeked Warblers and Black-capped Vireos in March. We found a female Golden-cheeked Warbler building a nest on March 10, which fledged on April 12; this is the earliest recorded nest that we are aware of. Staff continued to band Golden-cheeked Warblers and Black-capped Vireos on selected properties.
Jollyville Plateau salamander	With lowered Lake Austin levels from January to mid Feb. 2017, trips were made to historically documented Mormon Springs below Mt. Bonnell (Peter Sprouse and Tom Devitt) as well as Santa Monica Springs between Commons Ford and Cortana BCP tracts (Nico Hauwert). Although lake levels lowered roughly 15feet over Santa Monica Springs, they were not exposed. Staff conducted one mark/ recapture of JP salamanders at testudo tube
Karst invertebrates	A karst completion meeting was held on Feb. 2 to review the status of roughly half of the 62 permit caves. Conducted cave faunal surveys and cave cricket exit counts. (ongoing)
Plant and Animal Control	
Feral hogs	We had a total of 11 hogs on BCP dispatched during this quarter. 1 on Lanier and 10 on 3M.

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Red-imported fire ants and Tawny crazy ants	Tawny Crazy Ants: Staff from the University of Texas at Austin, Travis County, and City BCP continue to work on the Section 6 tawny crazy ant research. Ed LeBrun hired technicians to help City and Travis County staff on the research and monitoring efforts.
Invasive Plants	BCP staff and volunteers are continuing efforts to remove non-native plants on COA BCP tracts.
Oak Wilt	BCP staff continued to monitor the movement of the fungus in known oak wilt centers and the success of control trenches.
Land Stewardship	
Habitat Restoration	Staff and volunteers are continuing to implement demonstration projects at the Vireo Preserve to promote slope stabilization, soil restoration, and regeneration of native plants on degraded areas that are currently not habitat for either the GCWA or BCVI. Staff completed a fencing for a native plant nursery that is run by volunteers. Since Vireo Preserve supports many of the habitat types observed throughout the BCP, lessons learned from restoration work at this site should be applicable to other areas within the BCP.
Fencing	Redesigned and Installed the Hanks watergap and adjacent adjoining fence that was damaged from past flood events (tributary 6). Installed 1,080 linear feet of game fence on Forest Ridge BCP along Lakewood Drive.
Wildfire Preparedness	In January 2017, the Austin Fire Department Wildfire Division completed 1450 linear feet of wildfire fuels reduction treatment on the JJ&T tract. The work removed 16.5 tons of understory vegetation from approximately 1.8 acres along the boundary with the Apache Shores neighborhood. Canopy density surveys conducted before and after the work concluded that the average overstory canopy density was reduced by 16 percent. Future surveys will help determine the understory vegetation and canopy recovery rates for this type of treatment.
Law Enforcement	
Trespass and Criminal Mischief	On January 7, 2016 a security camera was installed at Midnight Cave which observed 4 individuals inside the enclosed area later that evening. The 4 persons were apprehended but released on warning after identification. A new security gate lock was installed and no further trespassing has been observed. On March 8, two BCP researchers were harassed and chased off of the Emma Long BCP by motocross riders. Harassment complaints were filed with the Austin Police Department. The BCCP Coordinating Committee and City of Austin staff communicated to motocross representatives that neither them nor any of the motocross riders, has the authority to ask people in the park for their IDs, or to confront or harass City workers or volunteers in any way.
Outreach/Volunteers	
See <i>BCP Partners Education Summary January– March 2017</i>	