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Addendum to the Baker Sanctuary Tier III Land Management Plan, dated August 2013, for the proposed new facilities

May 11, 2017

INTRODUCTION

This addendum to the Baker Sanctuary Tier III Land Management Plan (dated August 2013) provides current information on recent planning by Travis Audubon Society (TAS) for improved facilities and needed repairs at Baker Sanctuary.

In April 2015, TAS signed a Conservation Easement with Travis County covering all of Baker Sanctuary, except approximately 43.47 acres surrounding the Headquarters (Figure 1). Approximately 3.47 acres of the excluded tract is in the Lime Creek Road right-of-way, and 40 acres is preserve land adjacent to the ROW. At the same time, TAS also signed a Management Agreement to include Baker Sanctuary as part of the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (BCP), the preserve system created by the BCCP.

The 40-acre Headquarters area includes the sites needed for new facilities, as described below. The Headquarters area also includes existing structures that need repair, such as Baker Cabin and windmill, a stone barn/bunkhouse and the Jackie Arnold Education Center, and the Baker family cemetery. TAS plans to construct new facilities and repair the existing buildings.

EXISTING FACILITIES

TAS uses Baker Sanctuary as its main outdoor learning center. The Sanctuary manager lives on-site and conducts programs at the Sanctuary's existing minimal facilities. The only existing permanent or semi-permanent education, maintenance, and housing facilities are as follows (see Figure 2). Section 2.1.1.1 of the August 2013 Land Management Plan gives a detailed inventory of the tract features summarized below.

- 1) **Education Facilities** – The Jackie Arnold Education Center (JAEC), which consists of a 26' x 38' open-air pavilion that can comfortably seat approximately 25 to 30 students. Because it is an open-air pavilion, the JAEC cannot be utilized in inclement weather. Attached to the JAEC is an 8' x 16' storeroom, currently filled to capacity, and an 8' x 12' area, which houses the only public restrooms on-site (two composting toilets that can each safely serve only about seven people). The JAEC has a rainwater collection system with a 2,500-gallon tank (6' diameter x 8.5' tall), but does not have running water or a septic system.
- 2) **Maintenance Facilities** – Two storage sheds (approximately 9.5' x 11.5' and 4.5' x 8.5') are both currently filled to capacity. The workshop is a 10' x 20' shed near the Sanctuary manager's residence, and is also filled to capacity. Due to the small sizes of the sheds and workshop, larger tools such as extension ladders, ATV, lawn mowers, etc. are stored outside and are not well-secured.

- 3) Housing – The current Sanctuary manager's residence is a 15' x 50' single-wide manufactured home, which was installed on-site in 1998. The trailer serves as a combination of residence/meeting space/office for the Sanctuary manager.
- 4) Baker Cabin – the old Baker Cabin is used only occasionally and needs repair.
- 5) Stone Barn/Bunkhouse – an old stone barn that appears to have been used as living quarters by quarry workers is in very dilapidated condition and is unsafe. Restoration would enable TAS to use the Bunkhouse for various program activities.

PLANNED FACILITIES

Travis Audubon has historically operated to protect nature and to promote public education and appreciation of nature. Baker Sanctuary is TAS's original preserve and is a critical part of TAS's wildlife habitat protection and education efforts. The Vision Statement for Baker Sanctuary is "To protect and enhance habitat to facilitate recovery of populations of target endangered and threatened species while expanding opportunities for public education and community engagement."

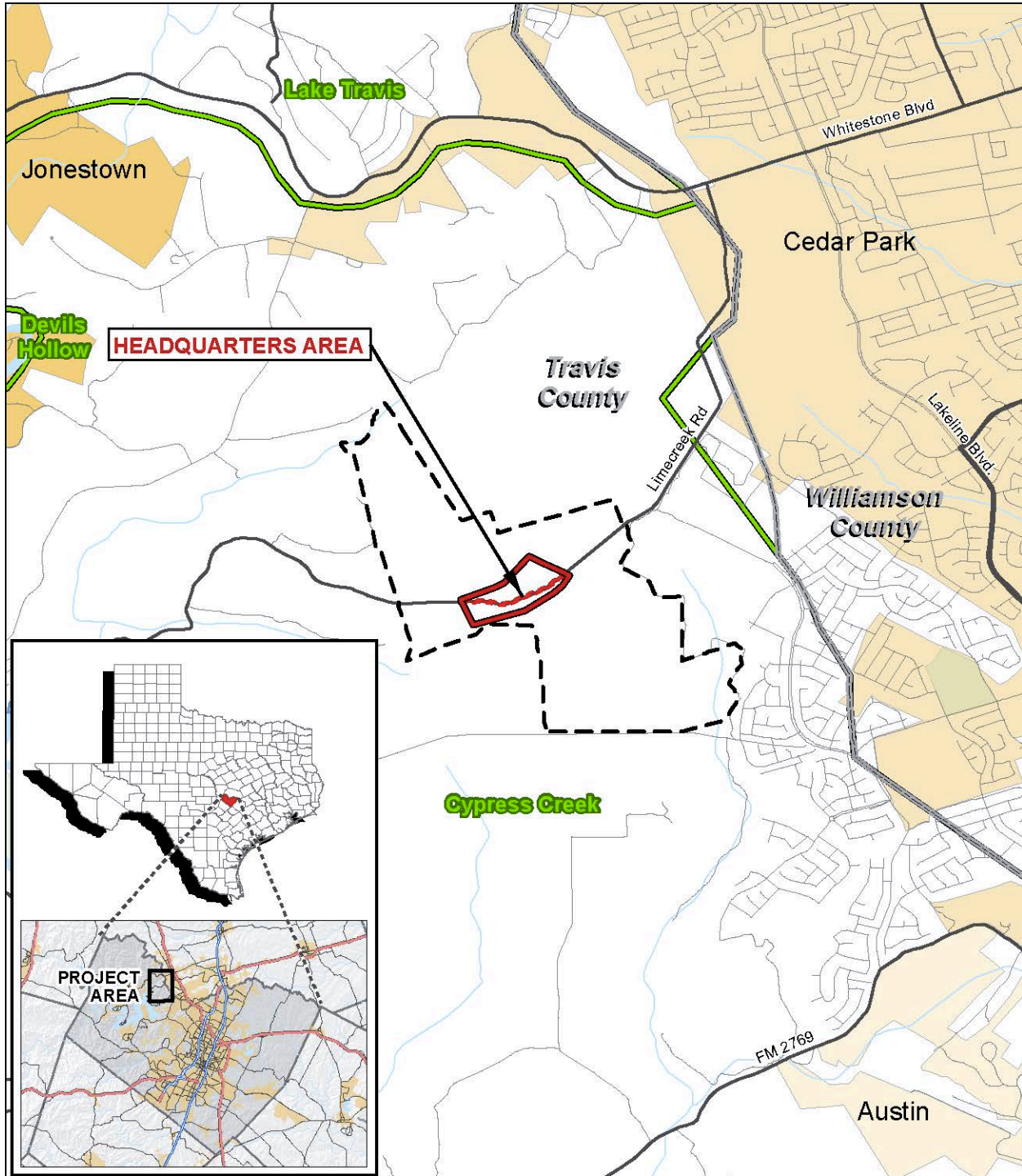
TAS plans to construct better facilities, including a classroom and office suitable for year-round use by up to 50 people, a maintenance barn, and a manager's residence. The planned facilities are needed to help educate children and adult visitors, provide office space for Sanctuary management and biological research on the golden-cheeked warbler (GCW) and its habitat, provide sufficient maintenance facilities for Sanctuary management, and provide suitable living quarters for the Sanctuary manager.

- 1) Proposed Classroom (approximately 1,500 to 2,000 sq.ft.) – This would be a new building with classroom space suitable for year-round use by up to 50 people and sufficient office space for Baker Sanctuary management and research. The classroom would include adequate space for a library of Balcones Canyonlands natural resources and management, along with space to house TAS computer hardware, printer, etc. A storage room and closet/cabinet space sufficient for program needs would be included. The classroom building would also be used by occasional guest researchers and student interns. It would include restrooms with sufficient capacity to accommodate building users. The proposed location is shown in Figure 2.
- 2) Proposed Maintenance Barn (approximately 1,500 to 2,000 sq.ft.) – The new maintenance barn would include sufficient secure area for equipment and tool storage (ladders, ATVs, mowers, hand tools, power tools, etc.), work benches, and material storage space. The proposed location is shown in Figure 2.
- 3) Proposed Manager's Residence (approximately 1,500 to 2,000 sq.ft.) – A new residence for the Sanctuary manager would be constructed near the classroom and maintenance barn. The proposed location is shown in Figure 2.
- 4) Baker Cabin Restoration – The old cabin continues to deteriorate and will, at some point, become unsafe for use. Part of the infrastructure plan would see the cabin restored to something resembling the original condition.
- 5) Stone Barn/Bunkhouse renovation – The stone barn appears to have been built for housing, possibly for quarry workers. It is now dilapidated and unsafe, but possibly is repairable. Renovation of the stone barn would make it useable for material storage





- and provide for historical interpretation, and an evaluation of the feasibility and cost of restoration should be included in Phase One.
- 6) Rainwater Collection System – the roofs of all new buildings would likely be used to collect rainwater for all uses. The Sanctuary is not close enough to a public water supply for an economically feasible water supply connection. Refurbishment of the existing well at the Baker Cabin is still being evaluated as an option.
 - 7) Septic System – At present, the existing septic system is associated with the mobile home. It is old and located too close to the well providing the drinking water supply. It will likely need to be retired and a new system installed at the development site. The tentative new location is in the grasslands south of the planned buildings.
 - 8) Restrooms – Additional restrooms are being evaluated, including options as part of the maintenance barn or classroom.

The proposed locations for new structures were selected after considering various alternatives. The criteria for site selection were: 1) avoidance of wooded areas, 2) avoidance of areas occupied by GCW, 3) preference for previously disturbed area, and 4) preference for compactness and proximity to other facilities. The proposed locations shown in Figure 2 are considered the best locations at the time of this writing, but could be slightly changed at the time of final building design and with possible additional environmental investigations.

All the planned new buildings would be designed and built for energy efficiency, water efficiency, and wildfire protection, and would be built using the best building practices reflecting TAS's brand and identity. Rainwater collection and storage is anticipated for the three new buildings. The surrounding landscaping would include all native vegetation, planted and maintained for wildlife benefits and wildfire protection, and would be used as much as possible as a demonstration area to help educate visitors about living in nature. Driveways and walkways would connect the buildings as needed to the existing driveway and to each other. A septic system would be necessary and would probably be placed in the grasslands south of the planned buildings.



Base Map: ESRI-USA Base Map,
ESRI-U.S. and Canada Detailed Streets

-  Headquarters Area (43.47 acres)
-  Baker Sanctuary
-  BCCP Microsite
-  Existing Right-of-way



1:48,000

Feet



Figure 1
Location of
Baker Sanctuary

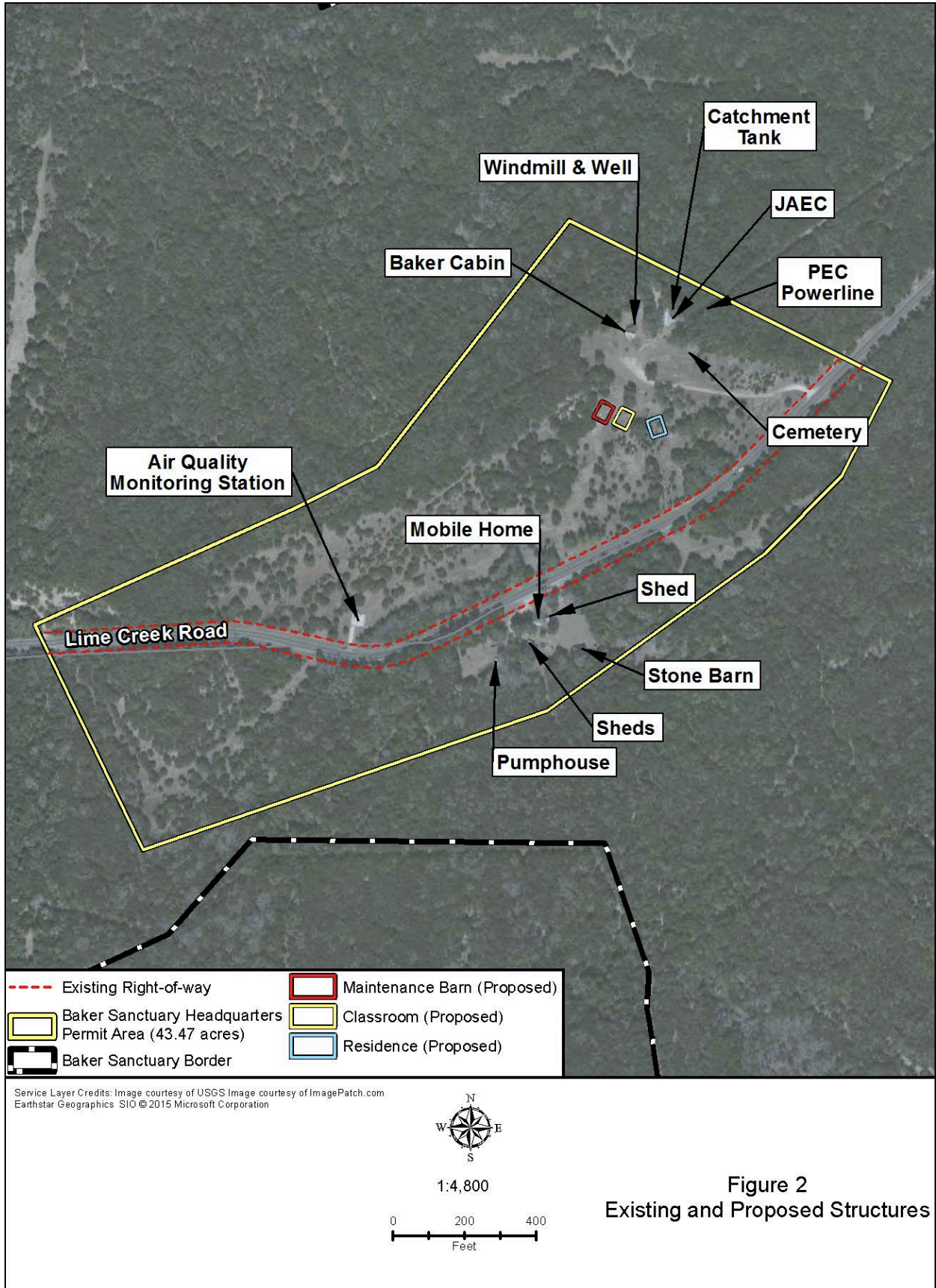


Figure 2
 Existing and Proposed Structures