

**Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (BCP)
Updates for McGregor, Wheless and Westcave Preserves**

**Q4 Report
July - September 2017**

Wheless Preserve

LCRA Conservation Services met with Travis County Natural Resources at Wheless Preserve to discuss various issues such as ingress/egress, fences, etc.

McGregor Preserve

LCRA Conservation Services met with contractors to review bids for the Shaded Fuel Break Project. This project will address both access and fuel mitigation at strategic points along the urban interface.

Westcave Preserve Land Management Activities

Westcave Conservation staff launched fall programs and hikes offered to the general public. Eight programs will be given over the next two months including, bird hikes, a night hike and a presentation given by Hill Country Alliance on conservation easements. A new conservation intern from St. Edwards University started at the preserve.

Water quality testing was conducted in the grotto and Pedernales River. The test results were sent to the Colorado River Watch Network (CRWN) and can be found online at <http://crwn.lcra.org/>.

Trail maintenance, repairs and inspections were completed on both canyon and upland trail systems. Fencing/water gaps repaired where hogs were accessing.

Ahrns Grove butterfly garden expansion started with two new gardens built by staff and volunteers. Once funding from a TPWD grant comes in, the area will be fenced and gardens planted.

Management, research and volunteer activities included: non-native plant removal and management, dragonfly surveys, NestWatch (citizen science through Cornell Lab), weeding of gardens by Hays Master Gardeners, many volunteer work days