



# BCP PARTNER EDUCATION SUMMARY

FY 2017 Fourth Quarter: July 1- September 30, 2017

City of Austin, Travis County, The Nature Conservancy, Travis Audubon, Westcave & Wild Basin

## 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter: Outreach & Education (All Partners)

Activity	Location	Events	Youth	Adults	Volunteer Hours
Guided Hikes	Onsite	118	334	1,354	218
Programs / Presentations	Onsite	23	537	286	20
	Offsite	14	410	528	22
Land Stewardship	Onsite	59	39	150	731
Ecological Monitoring	Onsite	17		21	63.5
Visiting Groups / Educators	Onsite	5	30	107	
Administrative Help	Onsite	3	2	12	59
Campouts	Onsite	1		13	
Training	Onsite	1		12	23
<b>Jul - Sep Total</b>		<b>241</b>	<b>1,352</b>	<b>2,483</b>	<b>1,136.5</b>

Monetary value of volunteer work (\$25.11/hour): **\$28,537.51**



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## ANNUAL SUMMARY: Outreach & Education (All Partners)

Activity	Location	Events	Youth	Adults	Volunteer Hours
Guided Hikes	Onsite	489	2,436	6,012	1,278.5
Programs / Presentations	Onsite	187	4,024	2,300	489
	Offsite	44	1,406	1,207	22
Land Stewardship	Onsite	273	199	693	3,303
Ecological Monitoring	Onsite	62	1	206	1,195
Visiting Groups / Educators	Onsite	54	146	957	112
Administrative Help	Onsite	16		13	179
	Offsite		2	13	39
Campouts	Onsite	5	59	37	42
Training	Onsite	8		138	203
<b>Oct 2016 – Sep 2017 Total</b>		<b>1,138</b>	<b>8,273</b>	<b>11,576</b>	<b>6,862.5</b>

Monetary value of volunteer work (\$25.11/hour): **\$172,317.38**

## SELF-GUIDED PUBLIC ACCESS (Estimated Annual Visitation)

*These numbers are not included in the Outreach & Education chart above. They represent a sample of BCP areas with public access – we hope to include more complete visitation numbers in future reports.*

Hamilton Pool (Travis County): 173,136

Wild Basin (St. Edward's Univ. & Travis County): 10,000+

Baker Sanctuary (Travis Audubon): 468

Westcave - BCP portion (LCRA): 6,840



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## 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Highlights

### CITY OF AUSTIN



- The Wildland Conservation Division welcomed a new volunteer coordinator, Audrey Stewart (pictured above left), in August. She holds a master's degree in biology and has experience both in field research and in developing programs for the public.
- At Barton Springs University, BCP Program Manager Nico Hauwert (above right) and staff shared Austin's cave heritage with students from high schools all over the city. Students played a game to try to identify caves by their connection to the surface and BCP staff Colin Strickland and Drew Thompson discussed unique karst invertebrates and introduced them to the vertical caving techniques sometimes used to survey local caves.
- Local artist Robin Gary visited a cave with Wildlands staff to get a first-hand view of the underground species protected by the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve. This visit inspired an exhibit that's on display until October 21 at the Dougherty Arts Center, paired with talks about the cave ecosystems, coyote research, and mixture of land stewardship and art that makes Austin unique.



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## BAKER SANCTUARY (TRAVIS AUDUBON)



- Sean Smith, with the help of Boy Scout Troop 202, built a new chimney swift tower (pictured above) to fulfill requirements for his Eagle Scout merit badge. The scouts invested a total of 130 volunteer hours and three days in its construction.
- Audubon staff gave a presentation about the natural history of the Golden-cheeked warbler to 20 members of the Anderson Mill Garden Club. The club's meeting spot is adjacent to the BCP.
- Long-time Travis Audubon member Gaines Whitcombe was recently recruited to patrol the sanctuary's many trails and report on maintenance and/or trespass issues.



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## TRAVIS COUNTY



- Travis County is pleased to introduce a new short video about the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (BCP). It was made possible by the collaboration of many community partners. The City of Austin Wildland Conservation Division provided an interview with Texas Senator Kirk Watson about the creation of the BCCP. BCP volunteers Russell Hughes and Bret Whitney donated the drone videography and black-capped vireo nest footage, respectively. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, The Cornell Lab of Ornithology, USFWS, and multiple individuals also provided invaluable content. The video is being shown on TCTV, and can also be viewed on Travis County's Youtube page and the County BCP's Facebook and Instagram accounts.
- This quarter, the volunteer program focused on trail maintenance. These trails not only allow us to provide public hikes, but also aid in land management and species monitoring. Our biggest work day was part of National Public Lands Day, when the Texas Conservation Corps recruited 24 volunteers to help maintain our trails. This quarter we've also worked with trail-work volunteers from FreightPros and NERA Economic Consulting, as well as from neighborhoods around the preserve and beyond.



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## BARTON CREEK HABITAT PRESERVE (THE NATURE CONSERVANCY)



- On July 17<sup>th</sup>, 26 students and eight adults with Camp Champions volunteered picking up trash from the preserve along Southwest Parkway.
- City of Austin Water Division held a morning retreat at the preserve on July 21st.
- The Boy Scouts of America held a two-day leadership training event on September 23rd and 24th.



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## WILD BASIN WILDERNESS PRESERVE



- Wild Basin is excited to welcome our Fall 2017 Artist in Residence Heidi Miller Lowell! During her residency, Heidi (above left) aims to celebrate the flora and fauna at Wild Basin through watercolors and by bringing attention to the importance of caring for our wild spaces. Heidi will be at Wild Basin every Friday, from 9am to 4pm, starting with a morning hike, and will hold a workshop for children and adults later this fall.
- With five projects throughout the academic year, **St. Edwards Reflect, Volunteer, Engage (S.E.R.V.E.) 1-Day** partners with Austin nonprofits to engage in meaningful projects that benefit both students and the organizations they serve. At each S.E.R.V.E. 1-Day, team leaders help small groups engage in the project while getting to know each other. Wild Basin had an amazing group of students (above right) volunteer for a day of land stewardship activities as part of the S.E.R.V.E program.
- Project Learning Tree hosted “Exploring the Urban Forest” at Wild Basin. Participants enjoyed a day of hands-on activities led by April Rose of Rosewood Arboriculture to help students and K-8 educators identify correlations between the urban forest and local environmental issues such as climate, hydrology, fire, urban heat island, and wildlife. The workshop featured TEKS-correlated environmental education and connected participants with local resources to assist with student-led investigations and service learning opportunities.



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## WESTCAVE PRESERVE



This past September, Westcave partnered with Austin Independent School District (AISD) to begin the first Girls Outside (G.O.) program. This program works with girls in grades K-12, partnering an elementary student with either a middle school or high school mentor. The program also focuses on environmental education and outdoor career opportunities. Ten total AISD campuses participated over five days and Westcave's Roadrunner Outdoor Adventure Bus transported everyone.

The girls met their mentor/mentee, learned about outdoor careers from female staff and volunteers, and were educated about the Pedernales River and local watersheds. The program included a guided hike to the Westcave Grotto as well as time to journal and talk with their mentor/mentee. The students and teachers really enjoyed their time at Westcave and are already planning their next field trips, which include a trip to Pedernales Falls State Park in February and a trip to the City of Austin Camacho Center in April.



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## ACTIVITY DEFINITIONS

### **Guided Hikes**

Hikes on the BCP guided by staff or volunteers; includes education about the BCP, wildlife, and land management practices.

### **Programs / Presentations**

Presentations by staff or volunteers about the BCP and related scientific and land management topics; includes educational events and programs.

### **Land Stewardship**

Volunteer work on the BCP that includes removing invasive species, preparing for prescribed burns, creating fuel breaks, restoring habitat, patrolling, and maintenance of grounds, trails & facilities.

### **Ecological Monitoring**

Includes surveys of endangered species, vegetation, and nuisance species such as cowbirds, hogs and red imported fire ants.

### **Campouts**

Campouts on the BCP, usually organized by outside groups such as the Boy Scouts.

### **Visiting Groups / Educators**

Groups visiting or hosting an event on the BCP that was not organized by BCP staff.

### **Administrative Help**

Volunteer help with administrative work such as office work, research, and event coordination.

### **Training**

Volunteer training & other trainings that support the BCCP's mission. Examples include educating emergency response and infrastructure maintenance staff about protecting sensitive environmental features and complying with clearing restrictions.