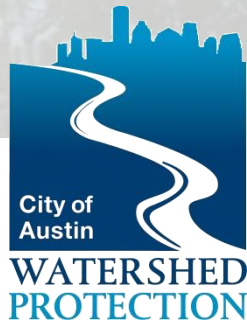




2018 Bond Development Proposal: Watershed Open Space Bond Overview

Presentation to the Environmental Commission
January 3, 2018



Watershed Open Space Goal Statement

The goal of this program is to protect the quality of life for all Austinites by systematically purchasing or protecting undeveloped lands that preserve water quality and quantity to the Barton Springs segment of the Edwards Aquifer while also providing comprehensive watershed benefits to all downstream creeks and lakes.

These watershed **benefits include protection of drinking water, reduction of flood impacts, and preservation of recreational resources.**

Bond sales are the only funding vehicle available to the City to make these green infrastructure investments.

Presentation Overview

- Overview of Watershed Open Space
- Key Talking Points
- 2018 Bond Needs Assessment & Leveraging Opportunities
- Next Steps



Overview of Watershed Open Space

Watershed Open Space

- Purchase of undeveloped lands managed specifically for water quality and quantity
 - Lands managed in Austin Water by existing Water Quality Protection Lands Program
- WPD can only purchase and/or leverage purchase of open space lands with bond funding



Water Quality Protection Lands Program

- Focus in the Barton Springs Zone (one of Austin's Source Water Protection Zones)
- Lands managed by Austin Water
- Interdepartmental team for acquisitions:
 - Austin Water
 - Office of Real Estate Services
 - Watershed Protection



Water Quality Protection Lands Program

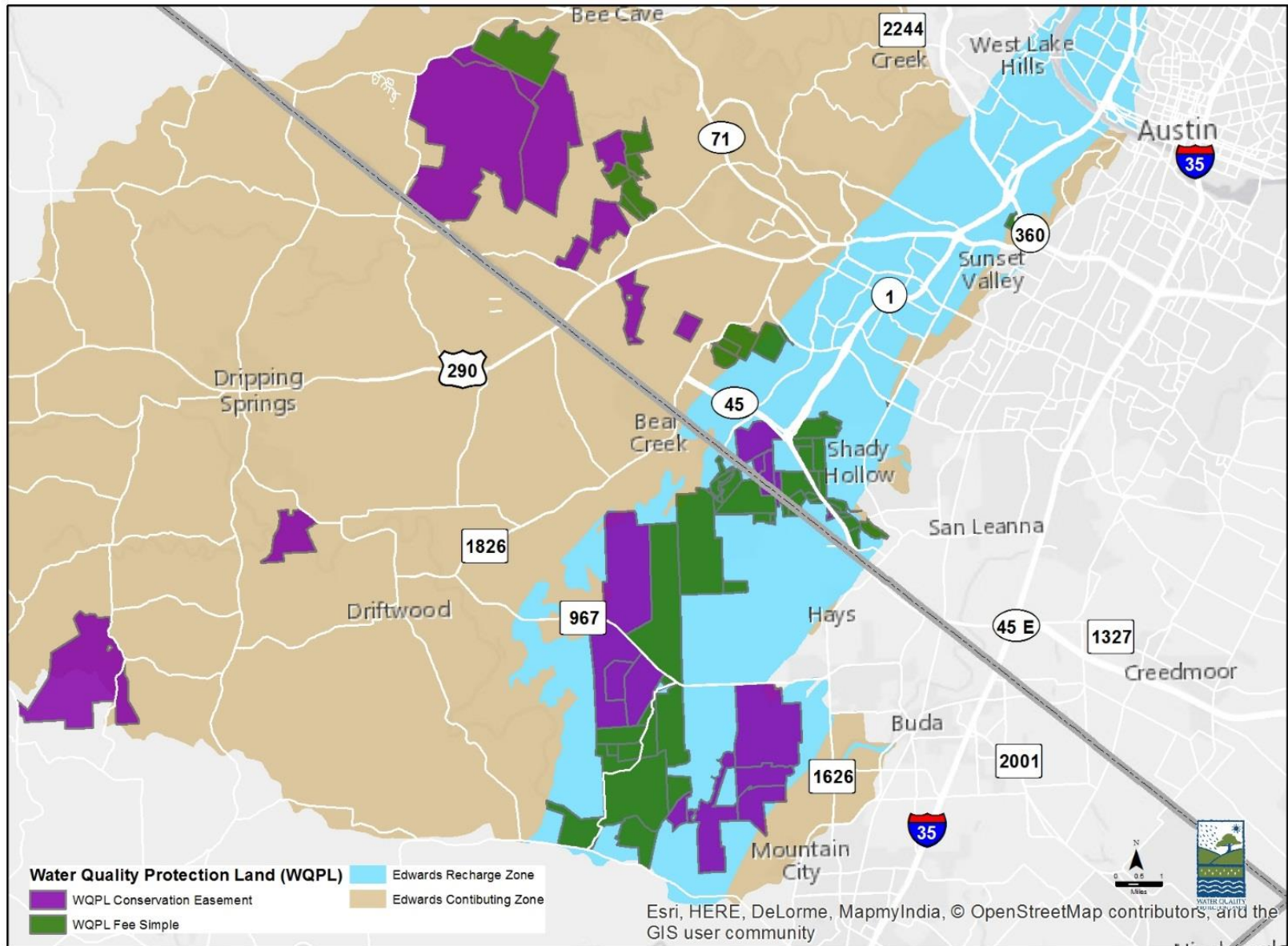
Four voter-approved bonds:

May 1998	\$65M	15,047 ac.	<i>56% vote</i>
Nov. 2000	\$13.4M	5,000 ac.	<i>66% vote</i>
Nov. 2006	\$50M	6,530 ac.	<i>68% vote</i>
<u>Nov. 2012</u>	<u>\$29.2M</u>	<u>1,777 ac.</u>	<i>56% vote</i>
Total to Date	\$157.6M	28,354 ac.	

Partnership
Contributions \$24M

Conservation Easements	(17,513 ac.)	62% land area
Fee Simple Purchase	(10,841 ac.)	38% land area

Water Quality Protection Lands Program



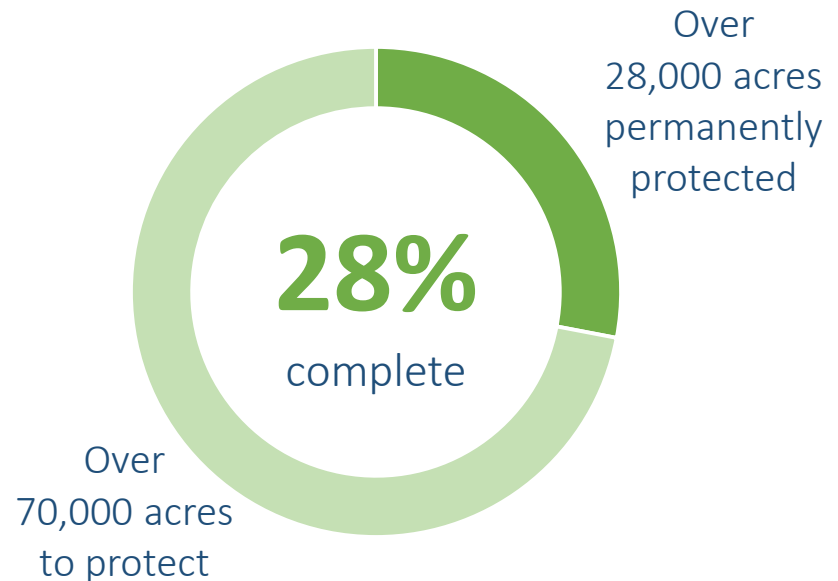
Watershed Open Space Goal

Protection of critical areas in Source Water Protection Area to preserve or mitigate water quality and quantity through the strategic acquisition of land along main channels, tributaries, and significantly large upland tracts.

Long-Term Protection Goal:

Maintain overall impervious cover percentage **at under 10%***

- Permanently protect up to 100,000 acres of land in the Source Water Protection Area



**Irreversible water quality impacts observed when total impervious cover exceeds 10%*



Watershed Open Space Key Talking Points

Watershed Open Space Key Talking Points

- Protects future drinking water supplies
- Mitigates flood impacts (volume & duration)
- Ensures that all residents have access to the same level of high quality natural recreational resources
- Protects green infrastructure needed for PARD's proposed trails and greenbelts in southeast Austin
- Implements Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan, the City's blueprint for directing long-term growth
- High urgency to acquire lands due to rising land costs and rapid loss of undeveloped lands
- Opportunities to leverage funding

Imagine Austin Directives



- Direct growth away from the Barton Springs Zone of the Edwards Aquifer recharge and contributing zones and other water-supply watersheds (*p97*)
- Expand the City of Austin's acquisition of environmentally significant land, conservation easements, and/or development rights for the protection of sensitive areas (*Conservation & Environment Priority Action CE A15, p246*)
- Supports City Council's Health, Safety & Mobility Strategic Outcomes



Health

Enjoying a sustainable environment and a healthy life, physically and mentally.



Safety

Being safe in our home, at work, and in our community.

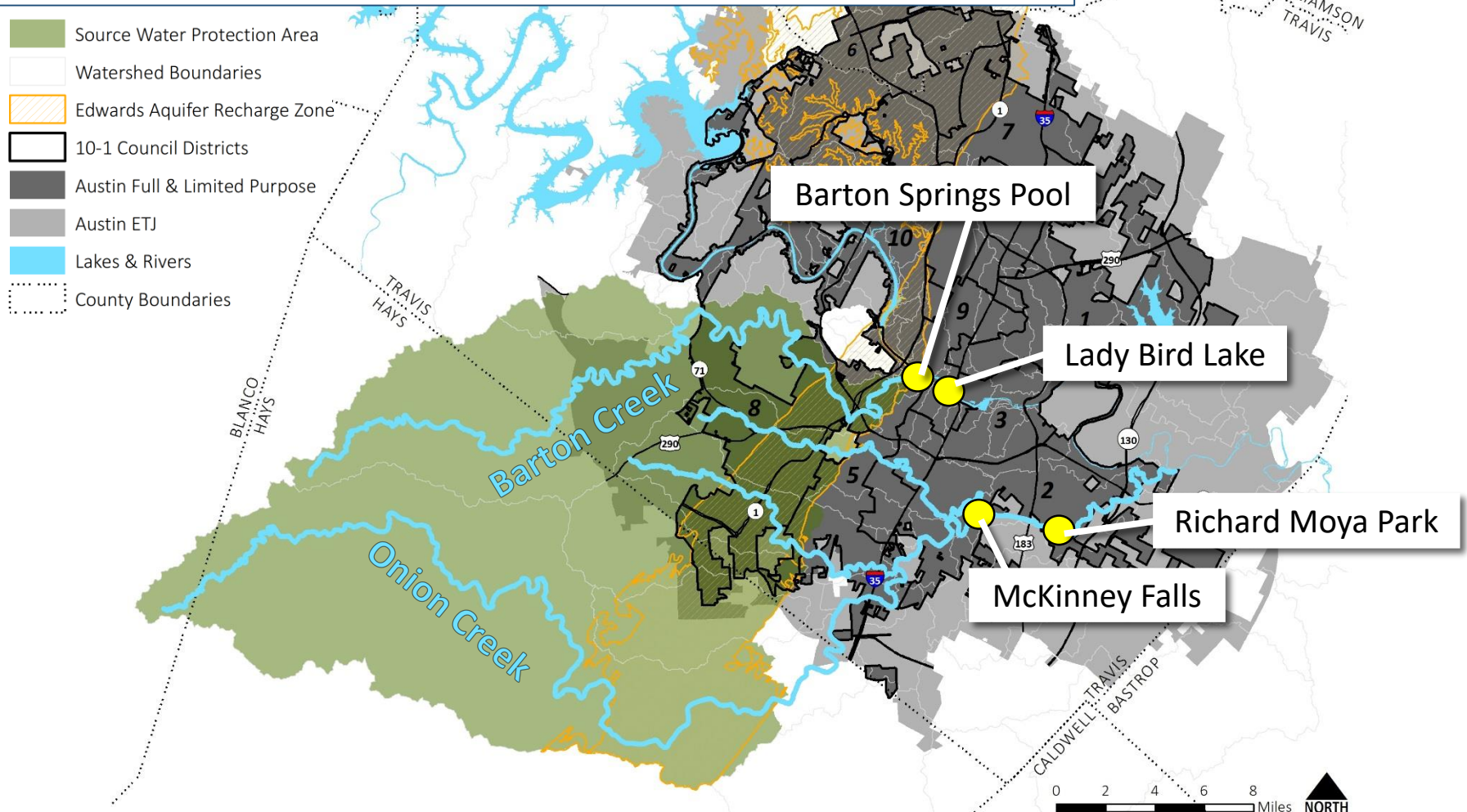


Mobility

Getting us where we want to go, when we want to get there, safely and cost-effectively.

Equity & Downstream Benefits: Local and Regional Green Infrastructure Assets

Broad area of southern Travis and northern Hays Counties provide water for drinking, swimming, fishing, and boating



Equity & Downstream Benefits:

Local and Regional Green Infrastructure Assets

- Portion of COA future drinking water supplies
- Groundwater resources in Hays and Travis Counties
- Barton Creek Greenbelt
- Barton Springs Pool
- Lady Bird Lake – 20% of flows come from Barton Springs
- Lower Onion Creek
 - Onion Creek Metropolitan Park
 - McKinney Falls State Park
 - Richard Moya County
 - Lower Onion Flood Buyout Area
- Lower Colorado River
 - Roy G. Guerrero Park

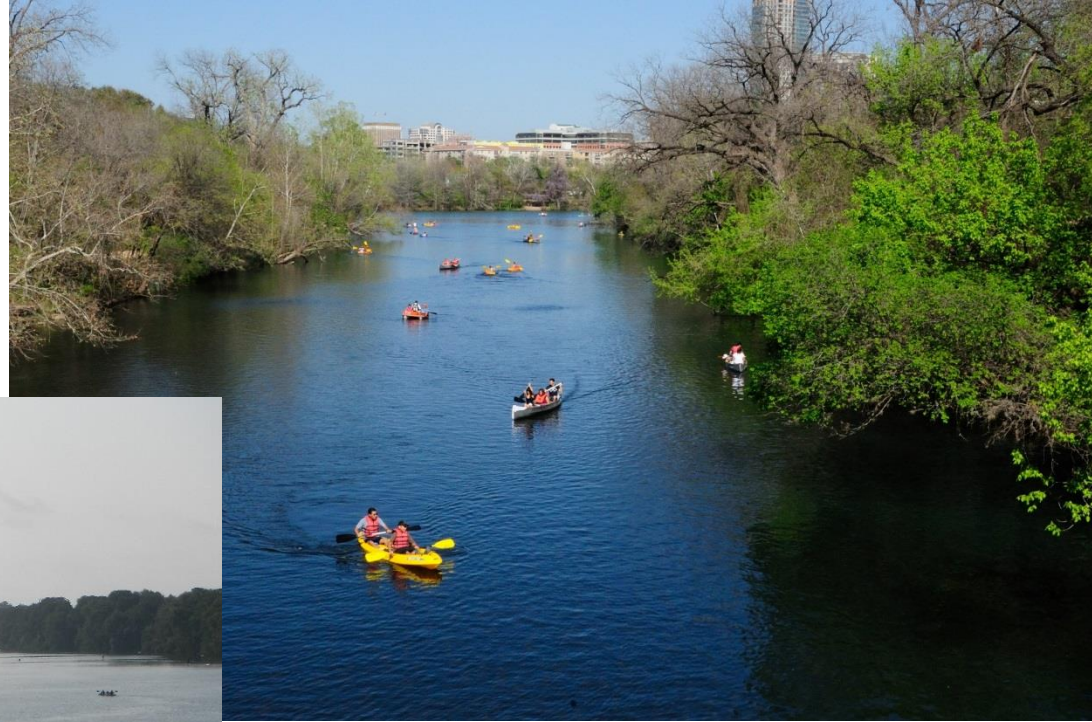
Barton Creek Greenbelt



Barton Springs Pool



Lady Bird Lake



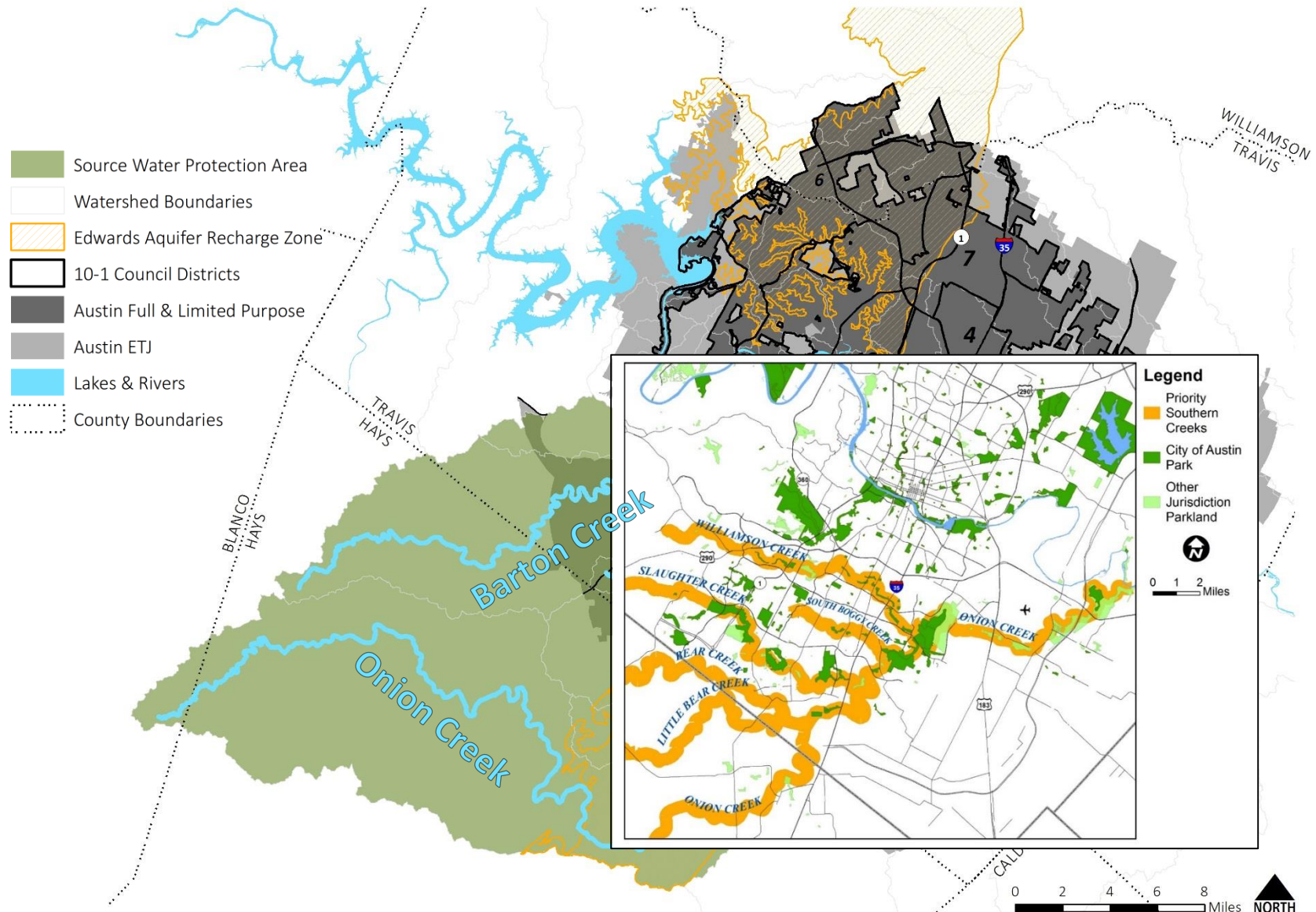
Lower Colorado River



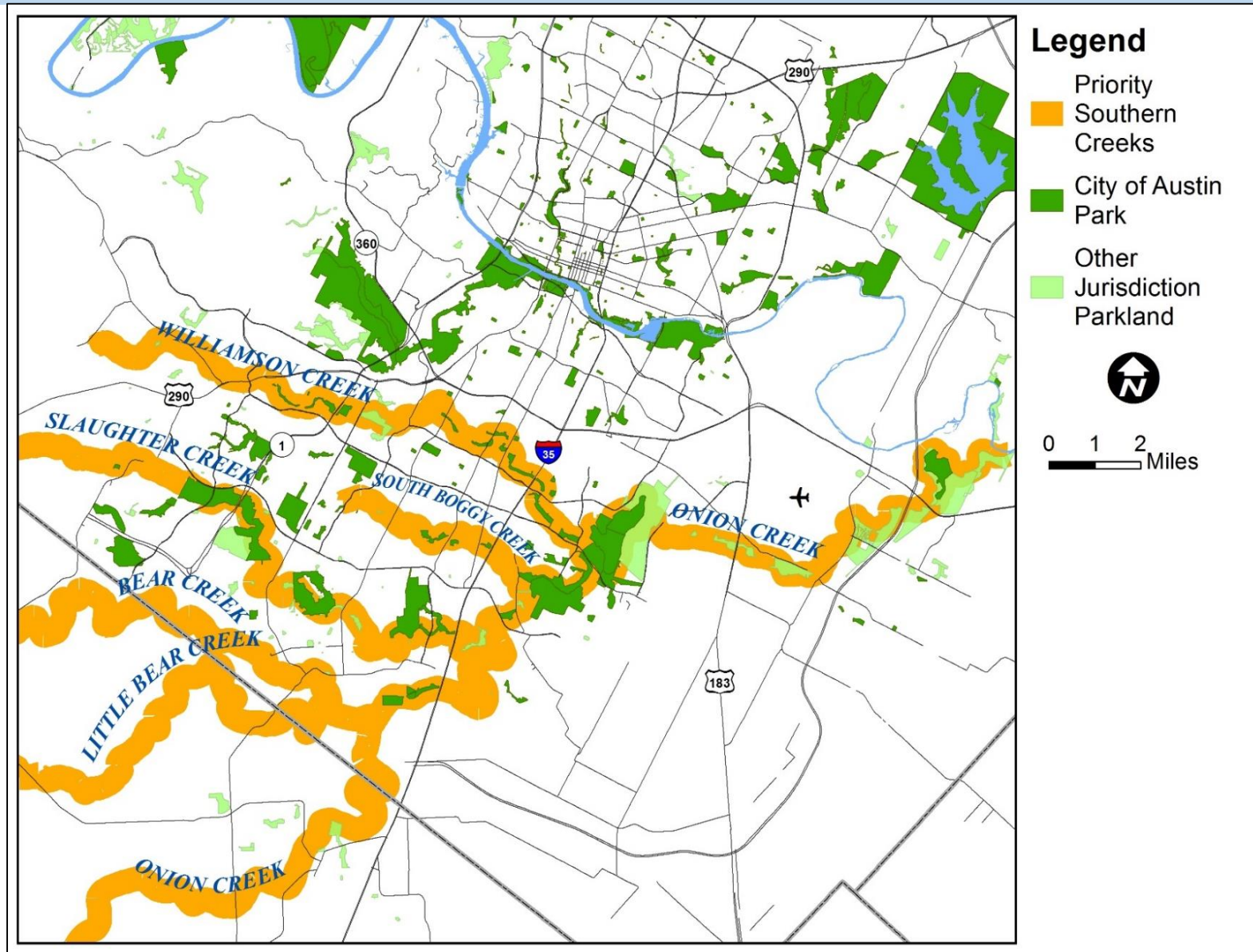
Lower Onion Creek at McKinney Falls



Equity & Downstream Benefits: PARD Infrastructure Priorities



Equity & Downstream Benefits: PARC Infrastructure Priorities



Development and Downstream Impacts

Reduced Impervious Cover Benefits

Acquisition of Open Space and the consequent avoidance of additional increased impervious cover will help mitigate flood impacts as the upstream basin develops (e.g. Dripping Springs, Kyle, Buda, etc.)



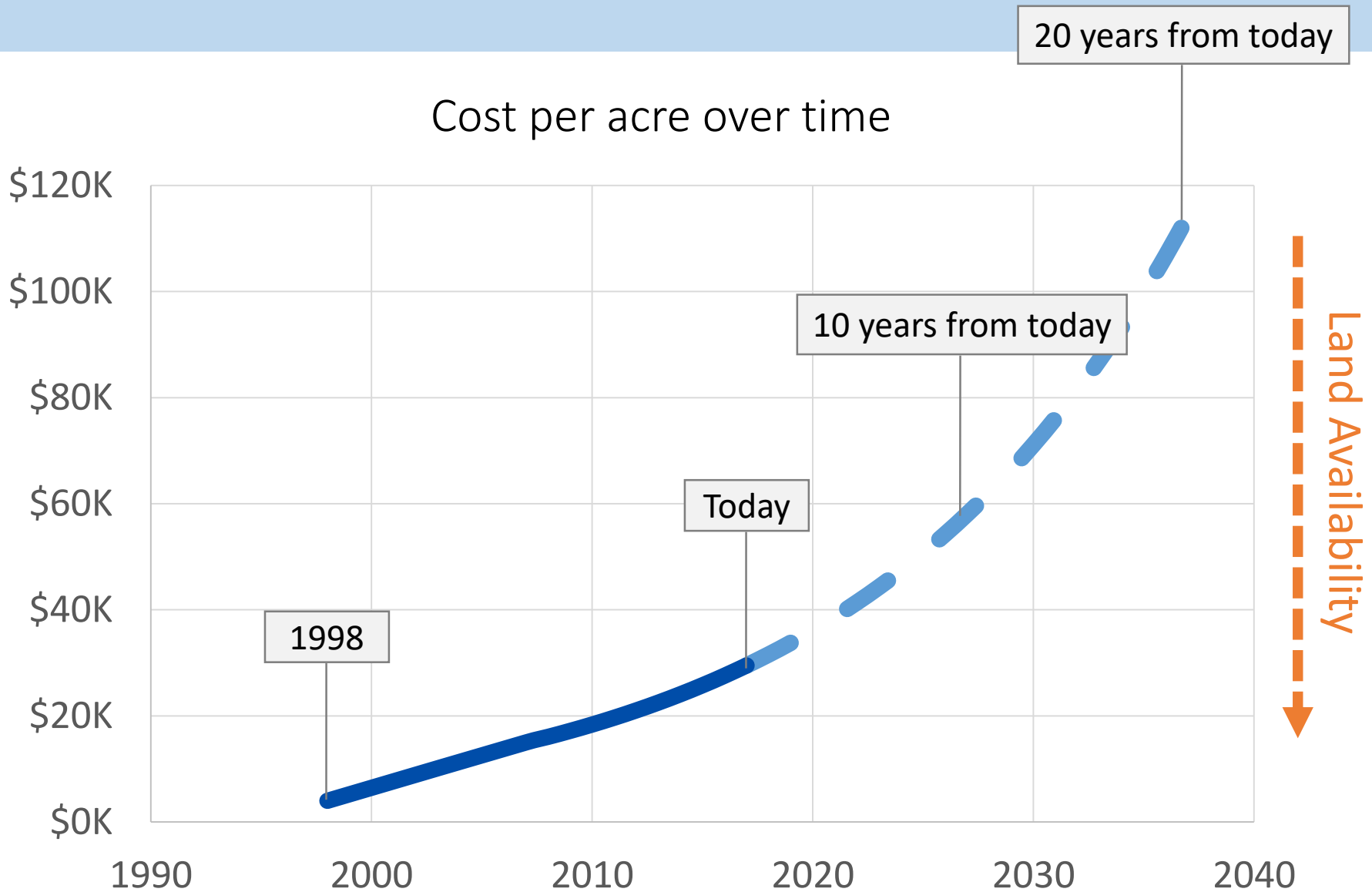
Development and Downstream Impacts

Reduced Impervious Cover Benefits

- Reduced volume & duration of flood waters
- Reduced flooding of small tributaries (localized flood)
- Reduced erosion of the stream from floods
- Reduced pollution to all segments of the creek, particularly southeast Austin

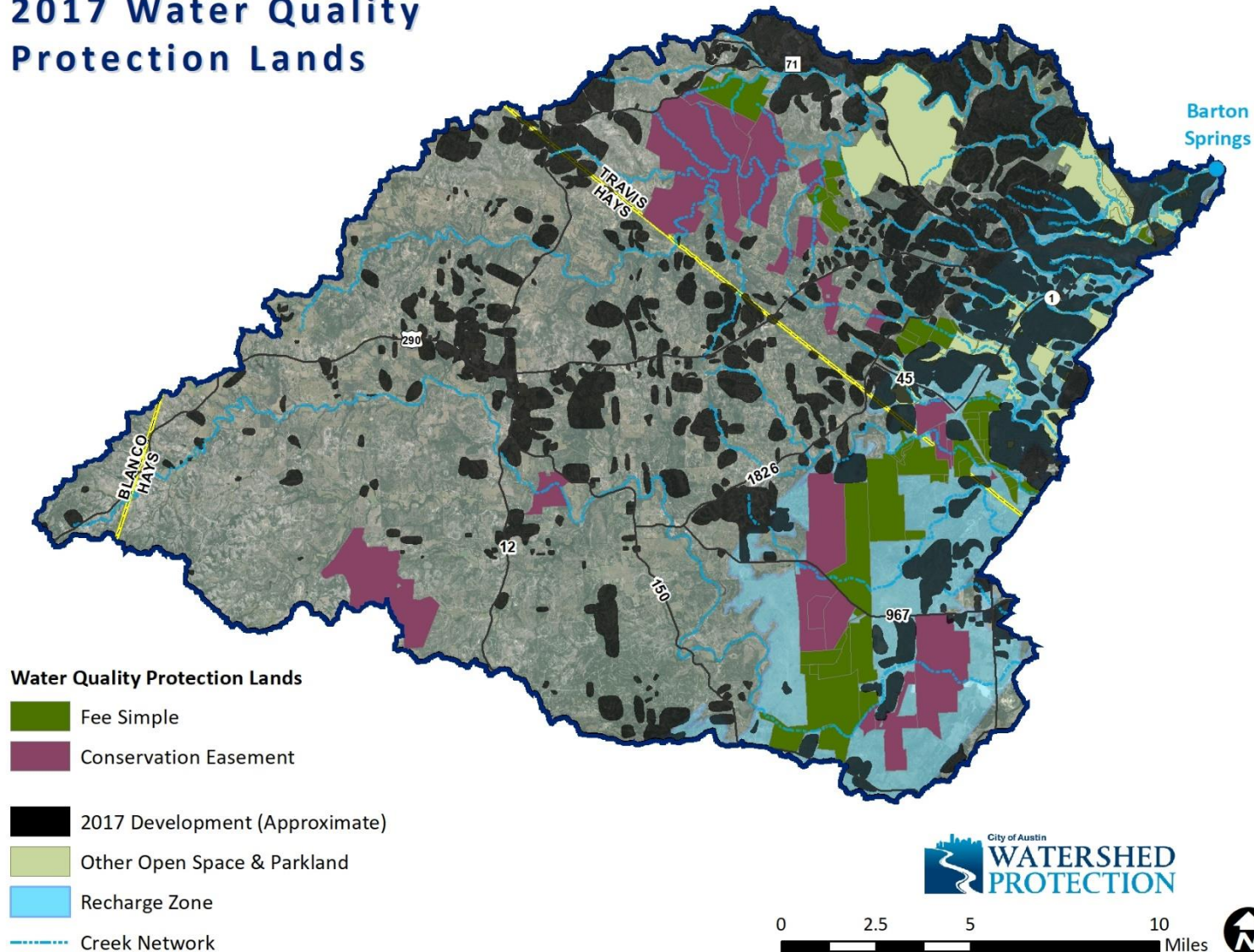


Urgency: Rising Land Costs



Urgency: Diminishing Open Space Availability

2017 Water Quality Protection Lands





2018 Bond Needs Assessment: Watershed Open Space

2018 Bond Needs Assessment Summary: Watershed Open Space

\$150M WPD near-term unfunded need

- Identified in the FY17 Rolling Needs Assessment in the Long-Range CIP Strategic Plan (10-year timeframe)
- 3,000 ac fee simple and 6,000 ac conservation easement
= 9,000 acres permanent protection

\$50M WPD Proposal & Preliminary Working Group Recommendation

- Based on immediate opportunities, urgency, and previous allocations
- 1,000 ac fee simple and 2,000 ac conservation easement
= 3,000 acres permanent protection

\$20M “Starting Point” for 2018 Bonds

- Presented to BEATF & Council in June
- Represents a single 800 ac fee simple transaction
= 800 acres permanent protection

Questions?

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