



Recommendation for Action

File #: 19-3627, **Agenda Item #:** 7.

12/5/2019

Posting Language

Approve an ordinance amending the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Wildland Conservation Fund Operating Budget (Ordinance No. 20190910-001) to increase appropriations by \$320,000 and decrease the ending balance by the same amount for the purchase of real estate for the Balcones Canyonland Preserve. Related to item #24

Lead Department

Austin Water

Fiscal Note

Funding in the amount of \$320,000 will be derived from reserves in the Austin Water Balcones Canyonland Conservation Plan mitigation fund. Funding for the remaining obligation will be identified in future budgets or with grant funds.

For More Information:

Inquiries should be directed to the City Manager's Agenda Office, at 512-974-2991 or AgendaOffice@austintexas.gov <<mailto:AgendaOffice@austintexas.gov>>.

Additional Backup Information:

Austin Water is requesting this budget amendment to use existing revenues to purchase a five-acre real estate parcel for the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve. Revenues will come from the Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan (BCCP) Mitigation Account. Revenues deposited in this account are generated by the BCCP Coordinating Committee by allowing private property owners to use endangered species mitigation credits established in the BCCP and its federal permit for the development of private property. Private property owners pay a fee to use these credits. Revenues collected from these fees are split between Travis County and the City. The federal BCCP permit (PRT-78841) and an associated Interlocal Agreement between Travis County and the City specifically requires that funds collected through the fees shall be used for the acquisition of preserve land and other preserve needs. An appraisal was completed May 29, 2019 that appraised the value of the lot at \$490,000. Wildlands Conservation is seeking outside grants to help cover the total \$490,000 purchase.

The BCCP was established in 1996 to provide for conservation of eight endangered species, twenty-seven species of concern, and to promote continued economic development in Austin and Travis County. The BCCP benefits the local economy by providing private property owners a streamlined, certain, and economical way to comply with the Endangered Species Act. In turn, local tax bases grow because of the development facilitated by the BCCP. In 2013, the assessed value of improvements to real property that occurred through participation in the BCCP was \$4.5 billion.