

City of Austin's BCCP Activities
Quarter 4 Update: 1 July – 30 September 2021

BCCP Administration	
Infrastructure Projects	Seven Infrastructure Habitat Assessment Applications were processed, and Determination Letters were issued from July through September 2021.
Land Acquisition /Management Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 216-acre Bright Leaf Preserve, located near Mount Bonnell, was acquired August 19, 2021. Bright Leaf Preserve is fairly unique among BCP preserves in that it is operation directed by a Will and court judgment, its operation is supported by a dedicated endowment, and it has a director/resident, all of which support operations according to BCP land-management requirements. Bright Leaf Preserve supports Golden-cheeked Warblers in the spring and the ESA-candidate Bracted Twistflower (<i>Streptanthus bracteatus</i>) was observed here in 2002, although this plant was not observed in the spring of 2021. It contains spring-fed Dry Creek, which will be surveyed for aquatic life. • Future expected preserve donations include a 10-acre addition to Parke West at the east end of Milky Way in River Place and Four Points Preserve adjacent to Sam Hamilton tract along the west end of Riverplace Boulevard. • AW BCP continues working with West Lake Hills neighbors of the 18-acre AW BCP Little Bee Creek Preserve and other land conservation groups to expand the preserve. This preserve currently contains only 1 of 4 caves in a designated protected preserve known to provide habitat for the endangered Bee Creek Cave harvestman (<i>Texella reddelli</i>), that is restricted to this portion of Austin; the ESA-candidate Bracted Twistflower; and aquatic permit species of concern. Preservation of this creek also supports high water quality for the adjacent Ullrich WTP.
Reports and Events	No activity to report.
Dual-managed Properties	No activity to report.
Personnel	Austin Water hired Matt Hollon as the new Division Manager for the Wildland Conservation Division. Matt has worked over 31 years as an environmental planner, with the last 16 as planning manager for Watershed Protection. His work has focused on watershed planning for Austin and Central Texas, with additional experience on national and international watershed projects. He also serves on the Regional Flood Planning Group for the Lower Colorado and Lavaca River basins.
Rare and Endangered Resources Management	
Golden-cheeked Warbler (GCWA) and Black-capped Vireo (BCVI)	Monitoring of 2021 BCVI territories finished. Staff worked to enter BCVI and GCWA observation data into the geodatabase and summary spreadsheets to be compiled and submitted for annual reporting.
Bracted Twistflower	AW BCP staff met with PARD staff to discuss options for reducing social trail use in Bracted Twistflower habitat at Mt. Bonnell.

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Jollyville Plateau Salamander	BCP continues to conduct aquatic life surveys of springs across the BCP on a periodic basis in hopes of locating new salamander locations and other rare stygobitic life.
Karst invertebrates/ karst work	AW BCP staff are collecting data for preparation of karst completion status analysis and report expected in FY21 with TC BCP.
	AW BCP conducted cave faunal surveys and cave cricket exit counts on all other assigned caves (ongoing). Currently hydrogeological studies continue in the FM 2222 and RM 620 area. Contractors and staff continue to excavate filled caves on AW BCP preserves along FM 2222 with funding provided from Texas Department of Transportation conservation measures for the FM 2222 bypass to RM 620. AW BCP is completing a hydrogeological study report of Airmen's Cave and recommends the establishment of an easement for the portion of the underlying cave with applicants of a proposed redevelopment of Brodie Oaks Mall. While it appears the mall redevelopment has little chance of impacting the cave, placing the cave under BCP management will assure that permit terms are continued, and that any impacts discovered can be mitigated.
Plant and Animal Control	
Mammals	25 hogs were removed by contractors and City staff this quarter.
Red-imported fire ants and Tawny crazy ants	No activity to report.
Invasive plants	BCP staff and volunteers are continuing efforts to remove non-native plants on COA BCP tracts.
Land Stewardship	
Habitat Restoration	Working with TreeFolks, Development Services, City BCP, and County BCP to collect "hyperlocal" native woody plant seeds. Seeds are shipped to a vendor, who prepares (stratify and/or scarify) seeds for planting, grows out a subset to determine viability and for future planting, and returns the remainder to be sown directly in the field.
	Austin CCC assisted with tree planting on habitat restoration sites on the JJ&T tract.
	Due to Covid-19, a limited number of staff and volunteers maintained restoration projects on the JJ&T and Vireo Preserve tracts to promote water retention, slope stabilization, soil restoration, and reforestation on degraded sites to promote future habitat for GCWA and BCVI.
Fencing	No fencing was installed during the GCW nesting season. However, a segment of fence and gate installed by the Travis Country neighborhood was found to obstruct access for cave monitoring. BCP staff negotiated access with the neighborhood.
Oak Wilt	BCP staff inspected several known oak wilt centers this quarter. Aerial reconnaissance, with Austin Police Department, was used to locate new infections. None were found.

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Wildfire Preparedness	Staff expanded its live fuel moisture (LFM) monitoring program to include three sites in closed canopy forest, in addition to two long-term sites in open, unshaded areas. Closed canopy forest, particularly with large trees, high species diversity, and fuel moisture greater than 70% may be resistant to burning. Such forests might serve as natural firebreaks and present a strategy to help minimize fire risk. The expanded fuel moisture data would allow objective evaluation of these concepts within the BCP.
	Contractors directed by Wildland Conservation Division staff implemented shaded fuel breaks adjacent to neighborhoods on the JJ&T tract. Shaded fuel breaks reduce the risk that fires originating in residential areas will spread into wildlands.
Law Enforcement	
Trespass and Criminal Mischief	Continued patrols of Preserve boundaries. Biologists patrolled tract interiors in connection with BCVI monitoring, oak wilt monitoring, and habitat restoration.
	With assistance from the Austin Police Department, staff patrolled all tracts via aerial reconnaissance in July.
	Staff mapped unauthorized trails reported by volunteer on Barton Creek Wilderness, and reported to Parks & Recreation Dept. rangers.
Outreach/Volunteers	
Staff worked with volunteers to promote forest restoration at JJT and Vireo Preserves, maintain demonstration gardens at Reicher Ranch, remove invasive plant species, and expand Live Fuel Moisture monitoring.	
Staff provided photographs and text on birds of the Barton Creek Greenbelt to expand the Barton Creek time stream project.	