

**TRAVIS COUNTY'S BCCP Activities FY2022 Quarter Update: 1 January 2022 – 31 March 2022**

<b>BCCP Administration</b>	
Public Participation	Twelve BCCP applications were received and processed in the second quarter. Seven Participation Certificates were issued for a total of \$249,575.00 in mitigation payments. Fees were split 50:50 between Travis County and City of Austin.
Personnel	<p>Leigh Stuemke was hired as the Environmental Specialist/BCCP Administrator and started in February.</p> <p>Johanna Arendt was promoted to the position of Environmental Project Manager for Community Resiliency in the Environmental Quality Program of the NREQ Division.</p> <p>Three temporary Natural Resources Techs were hired to help with bird surveys and other management activities. Kylynn Parker started in January and Jacob Olsen and Nick Johns started in February.</p>
BCCP Annual Report	The FY2021 BCCP Annual Report was submitted to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in January. It can be viewed at: <a href="https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/tnr/nr/2021-annual-report">https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/tnr/nr/2021-annual-report</a> .
<b>Rare and Endangered Resources Management</b>	
Golden-cheeked warblers and Black-capped vireos	<p>The first golden-cheeked warbler to arrive on the Travis County BCP was documented on March 14<sup>th</sup>. Travis County staff (staff) began intensive plot, enumeration, and presence/absence surveys in mid-March.</p> <p>The first black-capped vireo was observed on the Travis County BCP on March 23<sup>rd</sup>.</p>
Karst invertebrates	<p>Winter season faunal surveys were performed at seven BCCP-listed caves and one other endangered species cave. Faunal surveys were also performed at four biologically significant caves on the Kotrla Unit and at Hammett's Cave at Westcave Preserve.</p> <p>Winter season cave cricket exit counts were performed at six caves.</p> <p>A contractor, Zara Environmental, conducted karst work on the Kotrla Unit including excavating karst features and using LIDAR data to look for potential karst features.</p>
<b>Plant and Animal Control</b>	
Feral hogs	Staff removed five feral hogs from the Ribelin and Sam Hamilton East tracts.
White-tailed deer	A study conducted by Orion Research and Management Services and the University of Texas – El Paso found that 37% of the deer sampled on the BCP and other areas of Travis County tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 antibodies. A paper describing the findings can be found at: <a href="https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/10.1089/vbz.2021.0094">https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/10.1089/vbz.2021.0094</a> .

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<p>Tawny crazy ants and Red imported fire ants</p>	<p>Dr. Ed LeBrun, with the University of Texas, continued to research tawny crazy ants at the Anderson Mill/Collins tract site and other locations in Travis County. Dr. LeBrun's work was recently highlighted on two media sites and can be viewed at: <a href="https://www.wired.com/story/a-killer-parasite-is-wiping-out-hordes-of-ants-in-a-good-way/">https://www.wired.com/story/a-killer-parasite-is-wiping-out-hordes-of-ants-in-a-good-way/</a> and <a href="https://www.kxan.com/news/local/austin/ut-researchers-find-key-to-stop-invasive-crazy-ants/">https://www.kxan.com/news/local/austin/ut-researchers-find-key-to-stop-invasive-crazy-ants/</a>.</p> <p>Staff conducted canopy arthropod sampling as part of a tawny crazy ant impact study on the golden-cheeked warbler's food supply.</p> <p>Staff conducted fire ant control at three BCCP-listed caves.</p>
<p>Invasive Plants</p>	<p>Staff, volunteers, and the Texas Conservation Corps hand-pulled or treated more than 9,300 invasive plants from eight BCP tracts.</p>
<p><b>Land Stewardship</b></p>	
<p>Habitat Enhancement</p>	<p>Staff contracted with Heritage Tree Care to plant 190 native trees on the Woods of Greenshores tract. The trees were planted in the Wildland-Urban Interface to encourage a future tree canopy that will shade out grasses and allow for a shaded fuel break.</p> <p>Natural Texas was contracted to conduct black-capped vireo habitat restoration projects on the Ribelin and Vireo Ridge tracts; Staff conducted black-capped vireo habitat maintenance work on the Vireo Ridge tract; Natural Resources and Parks staff conducted a 15-acre prescribed burn on the Kotrla Unit to improve vireo habitat.</p>
<p>Water Quality</p>	<p>Staff monitored water quality at five sites on or near the BCP using Environmental Integrity Index methodology.</p> <p>Travis County Environmental Quality staff and St. Edwards University staff coordinated to develop a plan to enhance the North Hollow Pond on the Wild Basin Preserve. This pond had become filled in with sediment, debris, and overgrown vegetation. Phase 1 of the restoration was completed this quarter and included removing the vegetation. Phase 2 will take place in the fall and will involve sediment excavation and vegetative restoration on the banks.</p>
<p>Fence and Trail Construction and Repairs</p>	<p>The Texas Conservation Corps built a pedestrian bridge on the Snowden tract along a trail that is used for guided hikes.</p> <p>Repairs were made to a fence on the Lime Creek Unit that had previously been damaged by a vehicle collision. Repairs were also made to the boundary fence on the McNeil High School tract.</p> <p>A new pedestrian gate was installed on the Trails End tract. Boulders to block side trails and signage were also added to direct visitors to stay on designated trails.</p> <p>Undine LLC installed fence around their wastewater treatment plant and associated drip irrigation fields on the Greenshores conservation easement.</p>

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Wildfire Preparedness	Maintenance of the existing fuel mitigation projects was completed on the BCP in the Wildland-Urban Interface at the Woodland Hills Trail, Mira Mesa, Steiner Bell Ranch Apartments, Horseback Hollow East, and Portofino segments of the Steiner Ranch conservation easement, the Wilson Parke Well and Wilson Parke Road segments of the Grandview Hills tract, and on the SAS tract. The work was conducted by the Texas Conservation Corps and Lake Travis Fire and Rescue.
Conservation Easements	Staff conducted annual conservation easement monitoring at 11 privately-owned properties managed by Travis County through conservation easement agreements. Three of the conservation easements had violations but the issues were later rectified.
Buildings	<p>A new septic system was installed at the Snowden House.</p> <p>New HVAC units were installed at the BCP Building at Wilson Parke Avenue; Staff worked with architects in the Travis County Facilities Management Department to develop plans for moving Natural Resources offices to the second floor of the BCP Building.</p> <p>A new public restroom was constructed in the parking lot of Wild Basin Preserve. The restroom uses evaporative technology that does not require water or a septic system.</p>
Utility Infrastructure Corridors	The Pedernales Electric Cooperative (PEC) trimmed vegetation along utility lines on the Nootsie and Wheless tracts.
<b>Patrol and Law Enforcement</b>	
Trespass and Property Damage	<p>Surveillance cameras documented trespassers on the Grandview Hills, SAS, Sam Hamilton East, and Ribelin tracts.</p> <p>A vehicle collision caused damage to the Lucas tract boundary fence.</p> <p>Staff discovered tree cutting areas on multiple BCP tracts that appear to be related. This case is ongoing and Park Police are assisting in the investigation; Two additional cases of tree cutting were documented on the Snowden and Collins tracts. These cases are ongoing; Settlements were reached on two previous tree cutting cases.</p>
<b>Outreach/Volunteers</b>	
<i>See BCP Partner Education Summary Second Quarter: January 1 – March 31, 2022</i>	



The Texas Conservation Corps built this pedestrian bridge on the Snowden tract along a trail that is used for guided hikes. This bridge also provides utility vehicle access between the Natural Resources Field Office and the Snowden House.



Plant cocoons were added to the trees and shrubs planted on the Woods of Greenshores tract. These cocoons leverage condensation and focus the water to create a deeper tap root.