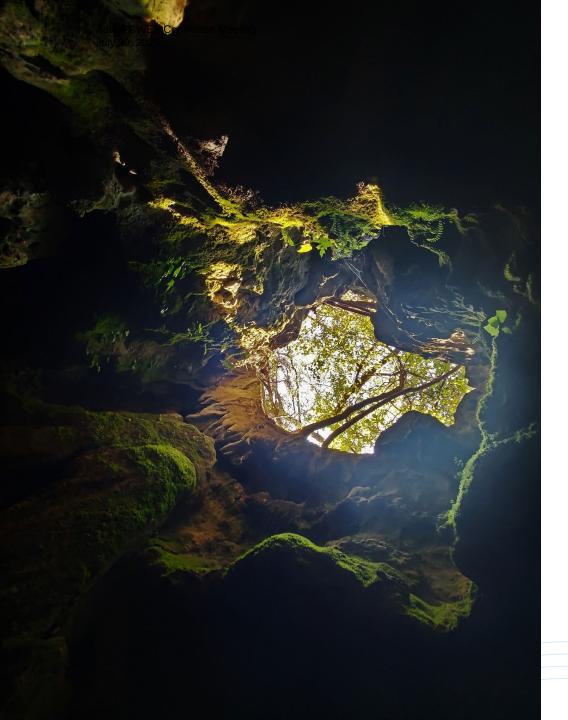
Wildlands for Water, Wildlife, and People

Climate, Water, Environment, and Parks Committee

July 30, 2025







Environmental Resource Office (ERO)

- Wildland Conservation Division
 - Water Quality Protection Lands (WQPL)
 - Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (BCP)
- Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan (BCCP)
- Center for Environmental Research at Hornsby Bend
- Climate Protection









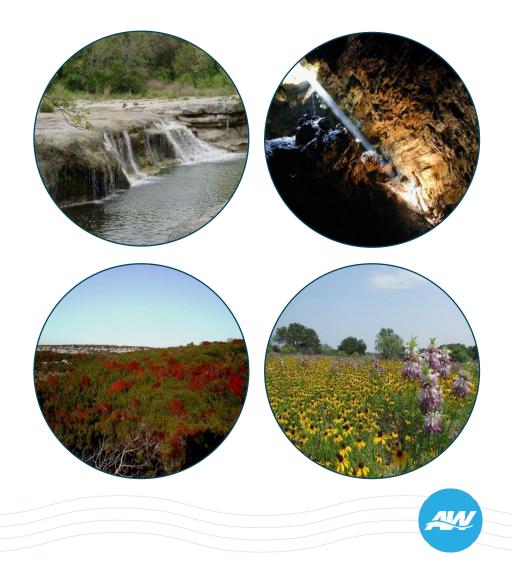


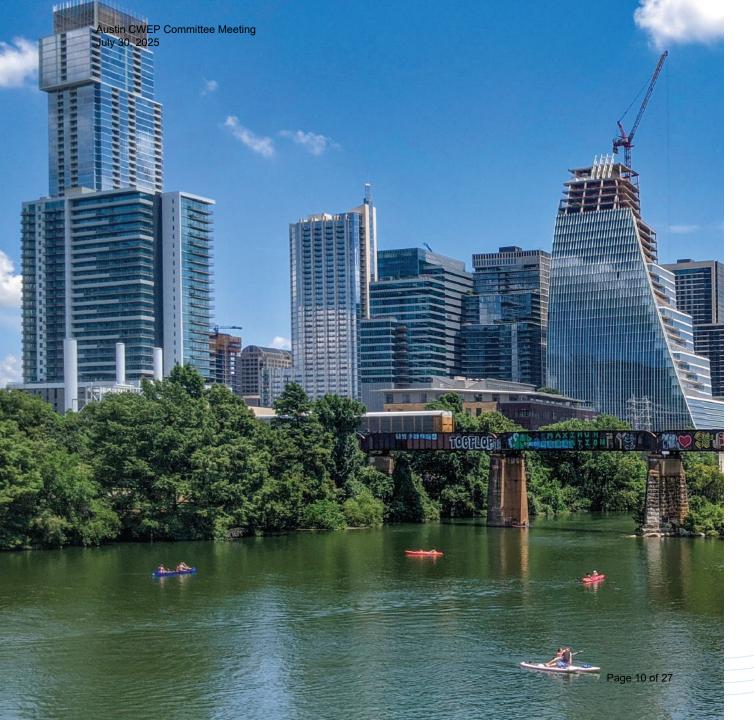




Austin CWEP Committee Frection regions of Texas July 30, 2025 no designed to serve to a spetial fremovark for the research, assessment, management, and monitoring of occaystents and consystent components. These general purpose regions are abled for statesting and implementing ecosystem management statestics across faderal agencies, state agencies, and managementment apparation for a responsible for different types of secures within the This approach usual to compile this map inclused on the premise that cardogical regions can be identified through the analysis of the spatial pattern of bloke and absolic phenomens, including peology, physiographs, vagention, eliants, so is, that the, wildlife, and hybridany. The statics importance of such circumstates a small corn cardigating eight to marties regulate of the himselfacts of most form. The Energies of Tess may not completed at a task of L250,000. Complete and this may use past of a collisionative gripter principle between the TCA CLSERS PLOSS 1380-2800. See unit a wint direct state and followed specials commonly septimined by the state of the collision of the CHIRIN, CH., S.A. Byver, J.M. Ulmenik, J.A. Cametock, A.C. Rogers, B. Harrison, S.J. Hatel, and D. Bezarson, 2014, Euroegicus of Tesas, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Corvallis, OR. PRINCIPAL ALTHORS: Gleen E. Griffith (Dynamus Curpotation), Sunits A. Bryse (Dynamus Curpotation), James M. Grosmil (USBS), Judioy A. Comides, fluida Cusporatori, Auro C. Nagoo (PCES), full Harmon (TCES), Stophen L. Hatch (Fusar A&M Librarish), and Buyel Bourner (Manual Acas Passarsian Association). 23 Arizona/New Mexico Mountain 23a Chihuahuan Desert Slopes 23b Montane Woodlands 24 Chihuahuan Descris 24n Chilauahaan Desics and Playus 24b Chihuahuan Desart Oracolands 24c Low Mountains and Bajadas 24d Chibuahuan Montana Woodland 24c Stockton Plateau 32 Texas Blockland Prairies 25j Shinnery Sands 25k Arid Unno Estacado 32a Northern Blackland Prairie 32b Southern Blackland France 26 Southwestern Tablelands 26a Canadian/Cimanon Breeks 33 East Central Texas Plains 26b Flat Tablelands and Valleys 26c Caprock Carryons, Bullands, and Breaks-33a Northern Post Oak Savanna 26d Semiarid Canadian Breaks. 3.3h Southern Post Oak Savanna 27 Central Great Plains 27 Central Great Plains 27h Red Prairie 27i Broken Red Plains 27j Limestone Plains 33d Northern Prairie Outliers 33f Floodplains and Low Terraces 34 Western Gulf Constal Plain 29 Cross Timbers 34a Northern Humid Gulf Coastel Prairies 134b Southern Subburnid Gulf Coastel Prairies 29b Rastern Cross Timbers 29e Western Cross Timbers 29d Grand Prairie 34c Pleodplains and Law Terrsces. 34d Constal Sand Plain 29e Limestone Cut Plain 29f Carbonate Criss Timben 34c Lower Rio Grande Valley 34f Lower Rio Grande Alluvial Floodplain 30 Edwards Plateau 30a Edwards Plateau Woodland 34g Texas-Louisiana Coastal Marshes 34h Mid-Coast Burrier Islands and Coastal Marshes 306 Llane Uplift 34i Laguna Madre Harrier Islands and Coustal Marshes SCALE 1:2 500 000 35 South Central Plains 30d Semiarid Edwards Platers 35a Tertiary Uplands 35b Floodplains and Low Terroces Level IV cooregion County boundary 31 Southern Texas Plains 31a Northern Nucces Alluvial Plans 31b Semiarid Edwards Bajada 35c Pleistocene Fluvial Terraces --- State boundary 35c Southern Tertiary Uplands 35f Ebitwoods Albers equal area proj. Page 9 of 27 Standard porollets 27: 36: N and 34: 30: N 31d Rio Grande Floodplain and Terrace 1000 35g Red River Hottomlands

Austin:A biodiversity hotspot





Austin's population has doubled every 20-25 years

	Austin	Austin Metro
1940	87,930	214,603
1960	186,545	301,261
1980	345,890	585,051
2000	656,562	1,249,763
2020	961,855	2,283,371



CITY & STATE

ntion, the outlook is grim. We'll run out of vireos in sen 1990 and 1994. — Scologust David Breed

Ecologist David Steed, using eight traps like this one, has been called cowolids as part of a \$40,000 county contract in an effort to save enden

Horn

States set

ut aid od to

, kids

The golder checked wer bler reads in Central Texas. Size a remaining has in 1970, It was assumed that as parameted the same one appear ages

For endangered species,

Ho lac SC

By Joe Vargo

protesters



City disannexes rare birds' home site despite protests

CITY & STATE

Owners of the tract include the School of the Council first voted in late Carbo conneil for the Carbo conneil for the Lake Austin Word pleaned in the Lake Austin Word pleaned in the Lake Austin Word pleaned in the Lake Travia.

Description of the Carbo conneil for the Carbo conneil

on one reading as an emergency on one reading as an emergency. The third and final vote on the Steiner disannexation was Thurs-Steiner disannexation was Thurs-Steiner disannexation was Thurs-Steiner disannexation of the Control of

Environmentalists protest Steiner Ranch Say home of rare bird in danger

By Bill McCann

Charging that the habitat of an endangered bird is birdeterroyed at the control of the Lake Austin

public protest developers of the Lake Austin developers of the Lake Austin project pro

interest to protect to the extent possible all forms of life in the area," said Scott Gregson, manag-ing director of Hughes Interests, which is involved in the develop-

ing director or the develoption of the control of the control of the control

The Steiner Ranch a 500-acre

development of the control of the control

the largest single development ever
planned in the control of the control

the largest single development ever
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tracted considerable attention

because of its size and attention

because of its size and sixty area

bordering the lake, the source of

the city drinking water.

Protesters his for the Birds,

and "Shame on You Al Hughes,

referring to one of the principal

control corp. One of the protesters

came dressed as a bird.

"There are a number of reasons

the city of Austin, and the blackcapped virco is one of them," and

STEINER RANCH Ranch is not to the IS FOR benefit of Austin, and the black-capped vireo is one of them." - protester Timothy Jones HANDS environmental impact study need-ed for the site to be declared a criti-cal habitat. OFF THEHILL

Page 11 of 27

ed for the site to be declared a criti-cal babits. Sciner developers have made a commitment to the city of Austin to develop a habitat man-sagement plan to protect the vireos. "We intend to honor that com-mitment," he said. "We have dome-to try to protect the bird and hope to allay some of the fears." Don Bosse, director of land de-verse of the committee of the com-sistence of the committee of the com-toning the committee of the committee of the committee of the com-toning the committee of the co

the headlines conceal a simpler story - survival

property.

The woman took no longer than other appealers, but she was the only one heckied.

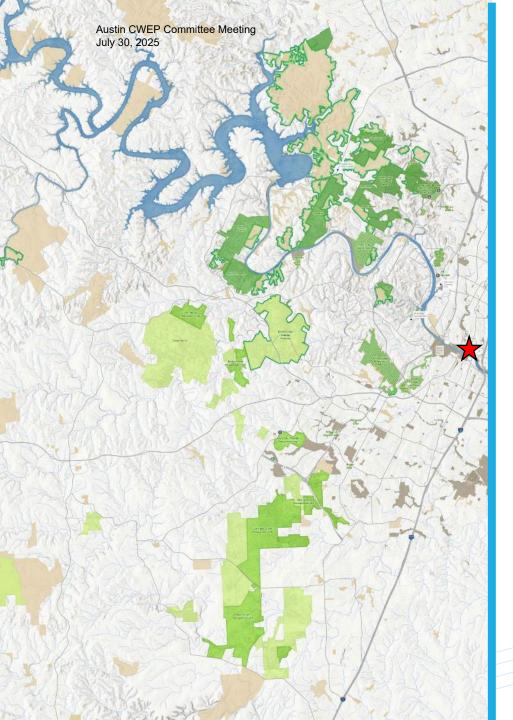
"We know all that," someone called out.

"Sit down!"

'There are a number of reasons the Steiner



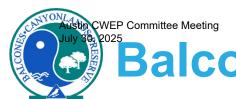




Austin's Wildlands: A Unique Gift

- A 30-year, \$250M+ commitment to protecting Austin's unique landscapes
- A large-scale network of conservation lands that benefit water, wildlife, and people
 - 49,000 acres and growing
- Managed under goals of two programs:
 - Balcones Canyonlands Preserve
 - Water Quality Protection Lands
- Intentionally placed with Austin Water to ensure support and stewardship into the future





Balcones Canyonlands Preserve

- Goal: Protect woodland and cave habitat for endangered species & species of concern
- Provides mitigation for habitat loss from energy, communication and transportation infrastructure
- Public areas of preserve include some of Austin's favorite places:
 - Barton Creek
 - Mt. Bonnell
 - Bull Creek
- Helps to protect quality of our water supply in Lake Travis & Lake Austin watersheds











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33,000+ acres (COA + partners)

Habitat
Conservation Plan
sets targets for
size/configuration
of land in each
macrosite

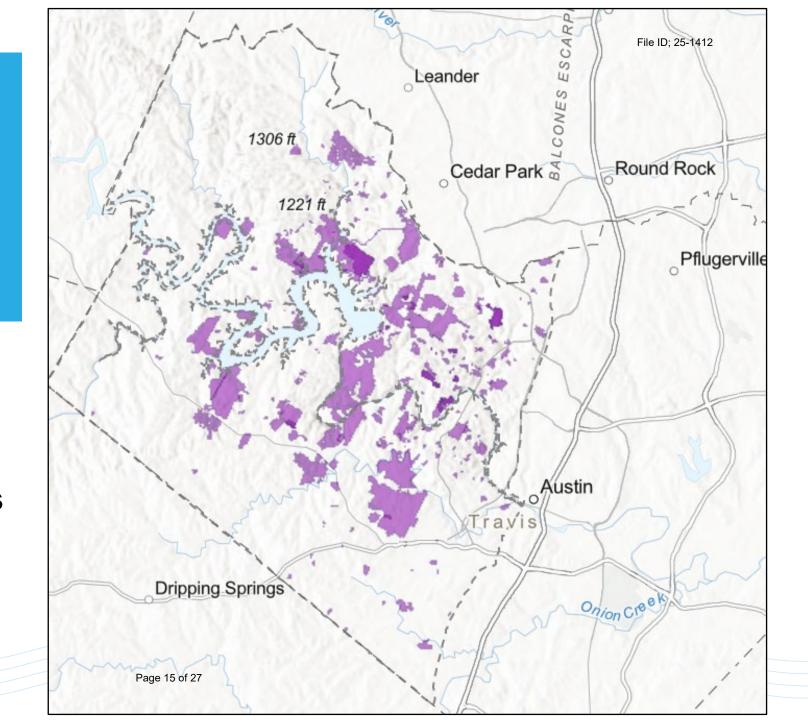
Protection of 62 named caves

The BCCP facilitates development.

1,500+ landowners/ developers

400+ infrastructure projects

12,000+ acres



"Water Quality Protection Lands

- Goal: Protect and restore native grassland savannas and creeks that provide the main source of water flowing from Barton Springs
- Actively manage land over ¼ of the recharge zone to protect groundwater
- Prescribed burn program carefully mimics natural fire cycle using highly trained wildland fire professionals

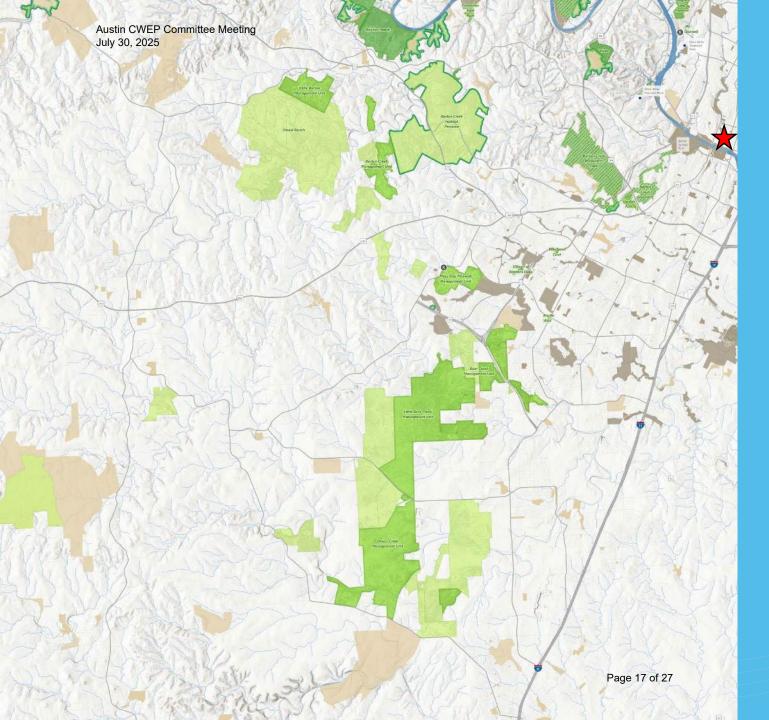












Goal of 100,000 acres protected over Barton Springs Zone

12,000+ acres in fee

22,000+ acres in conservation easements

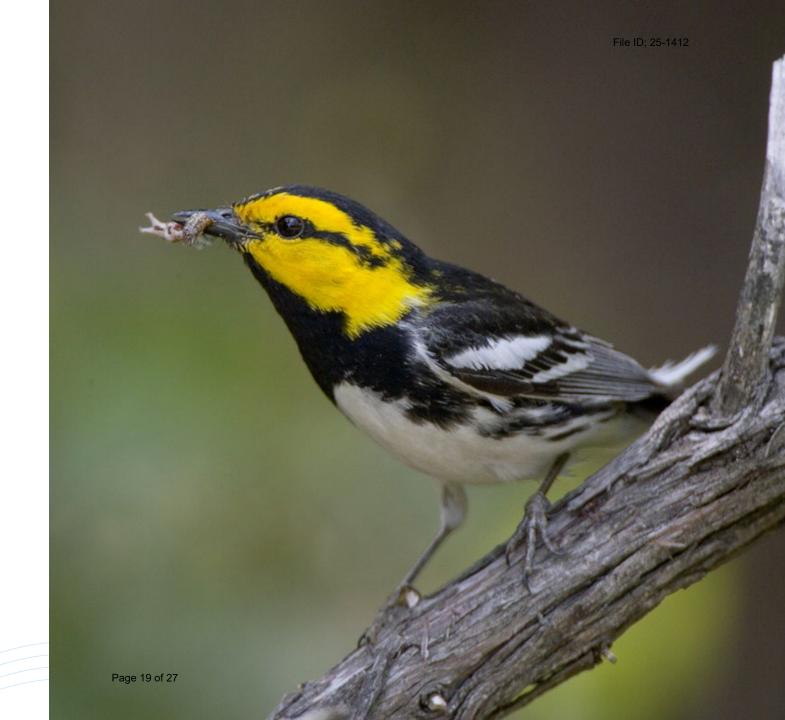
Plus regulatory protection





Understand

- Intensive monitoring of endangered species and species of concern
- Vegetation transects
- Oak wilt monitoring
- Invasive species monitoring/mapping
- Drought, winter storm impacts
- Live fuel moisture monitoring
- In-house and external research



Protect

- Boundary patrols
- Fence construction and repair
- Facility management
- Invasive species management
- Wildfire fuel mitigation
- Conservation easement reviews



Restore/Enhance

- Grassland and forest restoration
- Prescribed fire
- Seed collection
- Nursery operations
- Oak wilt trenching
- Karst feature restoration
- Restoration of degraded sites



Engage

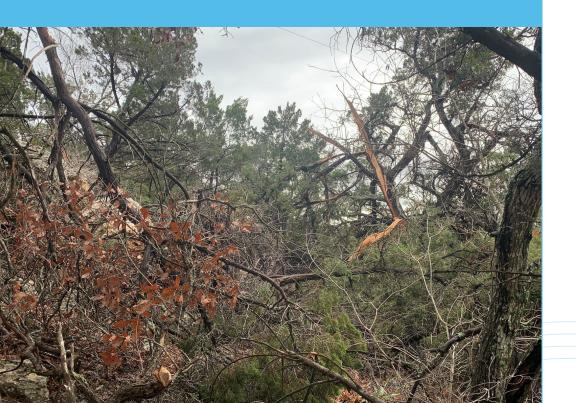
- Volunteer workdays
- Guided hikes
- Ongoing volunteer programs
- Individual volunteers
- Educational and outreach activities
- Social media
- Engagement with neighbors
- Project notifications
- Partnerships







Climate Change & Wildfire



The good news: Austin is not California

- Wetter weather
- Different vegetation
- Less wind

BUT conditions are changing

- Drought and winter storm impacts
- Changing climate

Looking forward

- Quantify changing risks and mitigate where feasible
- Understand potential ecosystem stressors and support resilient natural systems

BCCP Permit Renewal



- 30-year Incidental Take Permit expires May 2026
- City and County finalizing Interlocal Agreement for permit renewal consulting support
- City and County will submit application for Permit Amendment with Changes
 - City/County take authority will remain in effect through permit renewal process
 - Any proposed amendments will be developed transparently and brought to BCCP Coordinating Committee and elected bodies for full review and public input
- Permit renewal/update will need to meet current USFWS regulations and consider new species
- Protected lands need to remain protected forever (serve as mitigation for development)



Protecting Austin's Special Places



- Significant achievements have been made, but the work is not complete.
- Balcones Canyonlands Preserve
 - 10 of 62 required caves remain unprotected
 - Additional acquisitions needed to advance acreage + configuration goals
- Water Quality Protection Lands
 - 1/3 of the way to 100,000 acres protected
 - Significant development continues to occur in Barton Springs Zone
 - Legislative changes have reduced regulatory protection
- Opportunities to acquire lands are dwindling while prices continue to increase

