

## AGENDA



Thursday, February 17, 2011

**Austin Water Utility  
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION****Item No. 3**

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**Subject:** Authorize negotiation and execution of a 12 month Collection Agreement with the United States Forest Service to provide research, monitoring, data analysis, and population and habitat suitability modeling for the endangered golden-cheeked warbler and Balcones Canyonlands Preserve with four 12-month extensions in an amount not to exceed \$66,155 for the first year and \$65,000 per extension for a total contract amount not to exceed \$326,155.

**Amount and Source of Funding:** Funding in the amount of \$66,155 is available in the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan Participation Certificate Account. Funding for the remaining 48 months of this agreement is contingent upon available operating budget of the Austin Water Utility or the Participation Certificate Account.

**Fiscal Note:** There is no unanticipated fiscal impact. A fiscal note is not required.

**For More Information:** Scott Rowin, 972-1664; Denise Avery, 972-0104

**Boards and Commission Action:** Recommended by the Water and Wastewater Commission.

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The Austin Water Utility's Wildland Conservation Division requests authorization to enter into a Collection Agreement with the United States Forest Service to provide the City of Austin with services related to research, monitoring, data analysis, and population and habitat suitability modeling for the endangered golden-cheeked warbler and Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (BCP).

This project will focus on addressing four primary questions: 1) What is the absolute abundance of the Golden-cheeked Warbler (warbler) on the BCP and on individual macrostites? 2) How do demographics (e.g. density, productivity, survival) vary with landscape and habitat factors? 3) How viable are these populations? And 4) How do various management scenarios influence population viability? These are questions staff considers critical in assuring the long-term viability of the warbler which is a fundamental goal of the Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan and will help assure permit compliance for the City and County. To answer these questions, estimates of fecundity, recruitment, dispersal, abundance, survival, and habitat characteristics are needed across space and time within the BCP. In order to fill knowledge gaps, understand species' response to management, and provide reasonable demographic measures based on real data for modeling population growth and persistence, more intense monitoring than what has been conducted to this point is necessary. This project will provide the needed support to obtain this information.

The Wildland Conservation Division is made up of the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve program and the Water Quality Protection Lands program protecting over 39,000 acres of land from roughly Cedar Park to Kyle. The Balcones Canyonlands Preserve was established as a result of a Federal Permit issued to the City of Austin and Travis County to authorized impacts to eight endangered species. This permit requires active management, monitoring, and research for these endangered species.