

## A G E N D A



## Recommendation for Council Action

Austin City Council		Item ID	47499	Agenda Number	3.
Meeting Date:	8/6/2015		Department:	Austin Water Utility	
Subject					
Approve an ordinance amending the Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Wildland Conservation Fund Operating Budget (Ordinance No. 20140908-001) to increase appropriations by \$196,420 and decrease the ending balance by the same amount for the purchase of real estate for the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve. Related to Item # 24.					
Amount and Source of Funding					
Funding is available from contributions collected by the Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan for participation in the Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan.					
Fiscal Note					
A fiscal note is attached.					
Purchasing Language:					
Prior Council Action:	September 8, 2014- Council adopted the Austin Water Operating Budget.				
For More Information:	William Conrad, 512-972-1661; Sherri Kuhl, 512-972-1664; Daryl Slusher, 512-972-0218; Denise Avery, 512-972-0104				
Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:	July 8, 2015 - Unanimously approved by the Water and Wastewater Commission on a 9-0 vote. Recommendation Number 20150708-D3.				
MBE / WBE:					
Related Items:					

## Additional Backup Information

A budget amendment is being requested to use existing revenues to purchase a ten-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. An 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.

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.

The BCCP Agreement allows development to continue within the area covered by the Plan by allowing private property owners to voluntarily purchase Endangered Species Mitigation Credits from the BCCP. As called for in the Interlocal Agreement, when revenues are collected from the sale of mitigation credits, the City and County split these revenues and deposit them into accounts that have been established to fund the acquisition of preserve land and other preserve needs. The FY 15 budget for the AWU BCP fund was \$438,380: \$300,000 was budgeted for BCP fencing, \$85,000 for a USFS study on the golden-cheeked warbler, and \$53,380 for seasonal biologists to conduct endangered species monitoring and research. Due to the opportunity to make this important acquisition for the Preserve, we are diverting \$203,580 of the fencing budget for this purchase.