



Record of Decisions

**Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan
Coordinating Committee
August 21, 2015, 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon
Travis County Commissioner Courtroom
700 Lavaca Street, Austin, Texas 78701**

Attending:

Precinct 3 Commissioner Gerald Daugherty, Chair
District 7 City Council Member Leslie Pool, Member
Field Office Supervisor Adam Zerrenner, Member (Ex Officio)
Coordinating Committee Secretary Willy Conrad

Call to Order 10:02 AM

1. **Citizen Communications** – Kent Browning read a prepared statement regarding Scientific Advisory Committee recommendations on the effects of mountain biking on golden-cheeked warblers. Following his statement Secretary Conrad ask the chair if he could ask the speaker a question. He asked Browning to describe his education or experience related to wildlife biology, ornithology or avian population dynamics. Browning said he had none. Conrad then asked Browning how he could make the statement that “2012 data indicates a positive effect of mountain biking on warblers” with no education or experience that would qualify him to review one year’s data only, and draw that conclusion. Conrad noted that contractors who are renowned avian experts from the University of Missouri and the U.S. Forest Service reviewed the same data; and advised the City that no conclusions about recreation impacts (including motorcycles) could be drawn from the same data because it was not robust enough to speak to that question. Conrad also questioned Browning’s use of his P.E. Seal on his “Audit Report” as a violation of ethical standards, because he is not a subject matter expert qualified to draw the conclusions in his report and his discussion of his report. Browning discounted Conrad’s questions and challenge stating he is qualified to do a “statistical analysis” of the data. He also advised discussing the ethical implications of use of his P.E. seal with the ethics chair for the Texas Board of Professional Engineers and that person found no concerns. Conrad responded likely because there’s no ethics complaint filed, yet.

Tomas Pantin read a prepared statement that he distributed to Members and the Secretary in to the record.

2. **Approve Record of Decisions for the June 26, 2015 regular meeting** - Motion from Pool to approve as presented, second by Daugherty, Carried 2/0

3. **Brief Members about procedures used by public service infrastructure owners, including Pedernales Electric Cooperative, to access BCP properties for routine and specialized maintenance.**
4. **Review and take action regarding BCCP Karst Substitution Process being developed by the Coordinating Secretary as a recommendation for new Coordinating Committee policy** – Conrad provided members with the Substitution Task Groups final draft Cave Substitution Policy and recommended adoption. Following a brief discussion Member Pool made a motion to adopt the Cave Substitution Policy as Coordinating Committee Policy, second by Chair Daugherty, Carried 2/0
5. **Report from Scientific Advisory Committee** - Chair Jean Krejca was absent. Members accepted her written report
6. **Report from Citizens Advisory Committee** - Chair Peter Torgrimson gave members a brief review of recent committee activity noting that they had not taken any formal actions. He advised members that the CAC and SAC will soon begin work to develop a state of the BCP report
7. **Receive reports from BCP partners on wildfire planning and actions; take action as appropriate** –Willy Conrad and Melinda Mallia gave members a short briefing
8. **Receive reports from BCP staff regarding Land Management, Public Outreach, BCP Participation, Infrastructure Management, and BCCP Compliance.**

Sherri Kuhl reviewed the City's written report with members. During her report Chair Daugherty noted the City BCP staff's offer to work with stakeholders from Emma Long Motorcycle Park to use the BCP Trail Master Plan process to develop and implement a plan to build a new trail to replace the one closed adjacent to Connors Creek. He also advised members and staff that he intended to ask that an item be placed on a future Coordinating Committee meeting agenda to allow a more robust discussion about Emma Long Motorcycle Park and Connors Creek.

Melinda Malia and Linda Laack reviewed the County's written report with members. They noted two substantial recent land acquisitions that brought the BCP total acreage up to 31,730 acres. An additional cave listed on the BCCP federal permit was also protected, and these tracts also contribute a significant addition to protected and managed black-capped vireo habitat.

Secretary Conrad asked the chair for a moment of personal privilege and used that time to announce his upcoming retirement and thank members and staffs for their support and dedication during his tenure as Coordinating Committee Secretary. All members and several staff members offered kind words of thanks and applause to Conrad.

Following that brief discussion the chair announced that the time for sucking up had come to an end and adjourned the meeting at 11:20 AM