

**City of Austin's BCCP Activities**  
**Quarter 3 Update: 1 April – 30 June 2018**

<b>BCCP Administration</b>	
Infrastructure Projects	Seven Infrastructure Habitat Assessment Applications were processed, and Determination Letters were issued from April - June 2018.
Land Acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village at Western Oaks Karst Preserve and Watershed Management Area- An interdepartmental agreement between Watershed Protection Department (WPD) and BCP was approved by both directors to allow permit cave Get Down Cave to be managed according to BCP karst management plan and allow WPD to repair a failed wetpond.</li> <li>• BCP is working to acquire a 5 acre Massey tract adjacent to Barton Creek Wilderness and Shudde Fath Water Quality Protection Lands (WQPL). It contains one known Golden-cheeked Warbler territory and at least one known cave.</li> <li>• BCP staff met with Alamo Drafhouse representatives for initial discussion on management of BCP permit Pipeline Cave according to BCP karst management plan.</li> </ul>
Reports and Events	BCP staff are continuing to work on the update to the 1999 Tier II-1 Public Access Management chapter
Personnel	Buildings and Grounds Lead Robbie Boyer and GIS Analyst Cara Wade left Wildlands during this period.
<b>Rare and Endangered Resources Management</b>	
Golden-cheeked Warbler (GCWA) and Black-capped Vireo (BCVI)	Conducted surveys for GCWAs and BCVIs through June. Banded birds totaled 62 for GCWAs and 3 BCVIs. Of the color-banded males observed in 2017, ~43% of the GCWAs, and about 33% of the BCVIs, returned in 2018. Staff monitored 106 Golden-cheeked Warbler nests, the last of which fledged on June 15. The most recent of the 26 documented Black-capped Vireo nests was found on June 22, however, Black-capped Vireo monitoring is ongoing. Staff are currently entering data and will begin analyses once data entries are complete.
	The oldest known GCWA, nicknamed "Candy", returned to his territory on Wild Basin/Vireo Preserve again this year. Candy was banded in 2011 as an after-second year bird, so is at least 9 years old in 2018. He recently made the news! <a href="https://www.statesman.com/news/local/golden-cheeked-warbler-named-candy-calls-wild-basin-preserve-home/JKwr8BOJBtvHSczhGFEV8O/">https://www.statesman.com/news/local/golden-cheeked-warbler-named-candy-calls-wild-basin-preserve-home/JKwr8BOJBtvHSczhGFEV8O/</a>
	Juvenile survival is a critical parameter for predicting extinction risks. To learn more about GCWA juvenile survival, the U.S. Forest Service/Univ. of Missouri (under contract with COA) attached tiny radio transmitters to 7 GCWA nestlings in 2018. The purpose of this study is to estimate survival, habitat use, and dispersal during the first few weeks out of the nest.
Bracted Twistflower	Staff coordinated and completed surveys of all known Bracted Twistflower populations on BCP. Data will be compiled and submitted to the Texas Natural Diversity Database.
Jollyville Plateau Salamander	Staff continue to work on restoration of Moss gulley spring. BCP continues to locate and conduct flow measurement, aquatic life surveys, and water-quality sampling of springs across the BCP on a periodic basis in hopes of locating new salamander locations.

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Karst invertebrates/ karst work	BCP staff have prepared additions to the Environmental Criteria Manual regarding cave restoration to bring City Code more compliant with federal permit requirements and provide greater protection for sensitive preserves. Proposed ECM addition is attached.
	Flint Ridge Cave drip analysis and hydrogeological study report still underway. Continuous flow into Flint Ridge Cave is monitored by Watershed Protection Department and continuous drip rate and periodic water sampling is being conducted by BCP. A regular monitoring plan for flow and water quality is being prepared for FY2019.
	Conducted cave faunal surveys and cave cricket exit counts (ongoing). Staff finalized data entry from 2017 surveys and counts submitted to Travis County staff to merge data for annual report.
	Conducted cave excavation and restoration work at several sites. Locating and assessing undocumented karst features (ongoing), currently focusing on Rollingwood Karst Faunal Region. Documenting flow rates at springs (ongoing). Cave restoration was conducted at Another Cave and Williams Well, two cave close and possibly connected to permit caves (Slaughter Creek and Blowing Sink). On April 11, Mayor Adler proclaimed "Educational Cave Restoration Day" and a celebration was held with Watershed Protection staff and director at LaCrosse Cave. A presentation on cave restoration to the Environmental Commission (item 6A) on May 16: <a href="http://austintx.swagit.com/play/05162018-1286">http://austintx.swagit.com/play/05162018-1286</a> KVUE aired a special report on our cave restoration on June 2: <a href="https://www.kvue.com/article/news/local/cave-clean-out-a-look-inside-austins-hidden-caverns/269-569333830">https://www.kvue.com/article/news/local/cave-clean-out-a-look-inside-austins-hidden-caverns/269-569333830</a>
<b>Plant and Animal Control</b>	
Mammals	15 hogs were removed by contractors and City staff this quarter.
Red-imported fire ants and Tawny crazy ants	Tawny crazy ants continue to be monitored per established protocol from Section 6 grant. City Council authorized staff to negotiate and execute an interlocal agreement to approve funding for a UT study experimenting with a fungal treatment.
Soft ticks/ Relapsing Fever	Soft tick collection continues, including all publicly accessible guided caves. Our new standard is to survey public access caves annually. Specimens captured are delivered to Texas State researchers. BCP is collaborating with the Austin Health Dept and CDC on evaluating the extent of soft ticks that transmit relapsing fever in the Austin area. Their report published in June: <a href="http://www.tcms.com/uploadedFiles/Travis_County_Medical_Society/Communications/Journal/2018-May-June.pdf">http://www.tcms.com/uploadedFiles/Travis_County_Medical_Society/Communications/Journal/2018-May-June.pdf</a> . On May 15, KVUE aired a report on relapsing fever based on the CDC patient survey that was corrected based on best available information on soft tick locations from faunal surveys by BCP biologists: <a href="https://www.kvue.com/article/news/local/austin-sees-jump-in-rare-tick-borne-infection/269-552420585">https://www.kvue.com/article/news/local/austin-sees-jump-in-rare-tick-borne-infection/269-552420585</a>
Invasive Plants	BCP staff and volunteers are continuing efforts to remove non-native plants on COA BCP tracts.

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<b>Land Stewardship</b>	
Habitat Restoration	Staff and volunteers continue to implement demonstration projects at the Vireo Preserve to promote slope stabilization, soil restoration, and regeneration of native plants on degraded areas that are currently not habitat for either the GCWA or BCVI. Since Vireo Preserve supports many of the habitat types observed throughout the BCP, lessons learned from restoration work at this site are applicable to other areas within the BCP.
	Austin Ridge Riders applied for a grant to make motorcycle trails on Emma Long sustainable and were awarded a grant but ARR canceled the project for unclear reasons. The requirement by the awarding agency (Texas Parks & Wildlife) that rare plant species surveys be conducted and BCP staffs offer to support the project by conducting the surveys were listed as a principal reason for canceling the project.
Fencing	No fencing projects were completed during this time.
Wildfire Preparedness	No fuel reduction treatments during this time.
<b>Law Enforcement</b>	
Trespass and Criminal Mischief	PARD staff, with information from BCP staff, worked with neighbors to remove most encroachments from the Barton Creek Wilderness Park before Austin Fire Dept. began implementation of the shaded fuel break. BCP and PARD staff coordinated the removal of trash dumps from the Barton Creek Wilderness Area. The contractor, Abescape, removed 4 trailer loads, each stacked about 8 feet high (staff estimated ~28 cubic yards).
<b>Outreach/Volunteers</b>	
<i>See BCP Partners Education Summary April - June 2018</i>	