



Record of Decisions

Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan Coordinating Committee

Wednesday February 7, 2007 2:30 PM to 4:00 PM
Travis County Commissioners Court Room
314 W. 11th Street, 1st Floor
Austin, Texas

ACTION ITEMS

1. **Approve Record of Decisions for 11/20/06 meeting.** Approved on a motion by Daugherty, second by Wynn, carried 2/0
2. **Take action regarding staff recommendations, and advisory committee recommendations for drainage easements on the Travis County Nootsie BCP tract.** Member Daugherty made a motion to accept staff recommendations and approve the proposal to impose drainage easements that comply with USFWS requirements on the Nootsie Tract. Wynn seconded, carried 2/0

CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS

Richard Viktorin – objected to current and revised public access provisions for BCP. He asked the Coordinating Committee to establish objectives for increasing public access trails to be achieved by 2010. He does not support the process for considering public access in the revised plans because it will only result in more delay and bureaucracy. He also said that no one agrees with the public access proposal in the revised land management plan.

He complained that four years ago he objected to the three people per group limit for access and at Forest Ridge and that still has not been changed. He also noted that the Citizens Advisory Committee recommended ad hoc groups develop plans to increase public access on Emma Long and Canyon Vista. They did not address Forest Ridge. Today Forest Ridge has no public access

He also noted that the Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge has a federal mandate for public access. This needs more study for BCP. He believes the limitations on BCP public access forces users to concentrate on the sites that allow access thus causing more damage. He believes this creates an unrepresentative example of how public access damages preserves. He said be

believes BCCP is a compromise between economic interests and Public recreation interests, and that BCP access policies do not serve the public interest. He reiterated that BCP plans should have objective plans for trails with quantifiable goals established.

Skip Cameron – Spoke as president of Bull Creek Foundation. He compared BCP to “a soap opera where nothing changes over time.” He sees a lot of money spent for staff and management but nothing changes. He suggested that money could be spent for education and embracing neighbors and the community would be better served. He asks the Coordinating Committee to change policy direction to something that makes more sense. He described early planning efforts involving centrists to preserve species and keep access, and how these plans were changed through a clandestine process. He now believes current plans are not science based and that current research proves that preserve management is wrong. He stated that the public knows more than staff and asked the Coordinating Committee to support recent recommendation by the Citizens Advisory Committee. He stated that the truth is that effects of people on protected needs more information. “Please get into the 21st century.”

Scott Sheppard – Spoke as a mountain biker and a dad. He shares similar concerns as the other speakers with respect to the process of providing public access. He supports the education proposals. He also understands the purpose for BCP and the permit. He believes we can find reasonable consensus for public access without harm to species. He expressed dismay that Canyon Vista is a good place to experience nature, but it has been closed to the public for two years now.