

**City of Austin's BCCP Activities**  
**Quarter 1 Update: 1 October – 31 December**  
**2019**

<b>BCCP Administration</b>	
Infrastructure Projects	One Infrastructure Habitat Assessment Application was processed, and Determination Letter was issued from October - December 2019.
	An Austin Energy contractor completed repair of a Cortaña tract road that had been rutted by AE crews early in 2018.
	Austin Energy began implementing expanded vegetation trimming standards along powerlines. Some proposed changes adjacent to the Travis Country residential area could impact shaded fuel breaks completed by Austin Fire Dept. to reduce the risk of wildfire on the Barton Creek Wilderness. Staff proposed coordination between the two departments.
Land Acquisition /Management Agreements	AW BCP is currently negotiating a management agreement with Texas Cave Management Association for management of two BCP permit caves (Whirlpool and Lost Oasis). Also drafting management agreements with PARD maintenance operations and LBJ Wildflower Center. BCP is continuing to work toward acquisition of Carol Lee Preserve, expected by March 2020.
Reports and Events	BCP staff hosted a Golden-cheeked Warbler Researcher Coordination meeting on November 20 and led a field trip to view oak recruitment under forest canopy on the Kent Butler tract on November 22. Staff participated in the Westcave Christmas Bird Count, where the count area overlaps BCP property, Dec. 17.
Personnel	BCP staff hired two technicians to assist with the Golden-cheeked Warbler genetics study during the 2020 field season. The positions are being funded by a grant to Dr. Giri Athrey/Texas A&M University.
Administrative	Staff resumed discussions with neighbor holding an easement across the Cortaña tract to relinquish that easement in exchange for City access from Big View Drive.
<b>Rare and Endangered Resources Management</b>	
Golden-cheeked Warbler (GCWA) and Black-capped Vireo (BCVI)	<b>Golden-cheeked Warbler Delisting</b> – Oral arguments on the appeal of the February 7, 2019 court ruling that upheld USFWS's decision on the 90-day finding (GCWA remains on the endangered species list) were heard in the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals on December 4, 2019.
	BCP staff completed avian data entry and quality control, then began drafting annual report.
	Staff is collaborating with Texas A&M University to assess the genetic structure of GCWA populations across its breeding range.
Jollyville Plateau Salamander	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 and other rare stygobitic life.
Karst invertebrates/ karst work	Staff continued to conduct assessments of City properties for previously unknown caves and karst features with the goal of finding potential substitution and or supplementing existing BCP permit caves, and to aid in future hydrological studies. Corridor Mobility department is contributing about \$100,000 toward a hydrogeological study along Slaughter Lane. In November 2019, after removing 1950's-1960's age trash from BCP permit Pipeline Cave, a large room was discovered that appears to have historically been a bat roost.

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	Conducted cave faunal surveys and cave cricket exit counts (ongoing).
Bracted Twistflower	BCP staff submitted 2019 survey data to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.
<b>Plant and Animal Control</b>	
Mammals	26 deer and 8 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.
Soft ticks/ Relapsing Fever	AW BCP staff continue to monitor caves in the Austin area for soft ticks to improve public safety and study means for discouraging their habitation of caves. AW BCP staff continue to work with Texas State University, Baylor College of Medicine, Austin Health Department, and Center for Disease Control to study factors influencing habitat preference of soft ticks in the Austin area. AW BCP staff continue to monitor Bullet Cave on the Barton Creek greenbelt and Live Oak Cave in the Village of Western Oaks Karst Preserve and Watershed Management Area to make certain that the warning signs and gate (on live oak cave) are still in place.
Invasive Plants	BCP staff and volunteers are continuing efforts to remove non-native plants on COA BCP tracts. The exotic plant mapping and removal contract with Zarria Environmental has been completed.
Oak Wilt	BCP staff continue annual inspection of known oak wilt centers. Planning has begun for an installation of a trench on Emma Long.
<b>Land Stewardship</b>	
Habitat Restoration	Staff and volunteers continue to implement demonstration projects at the Vireo Preserve to promote water retention, 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. Staff are also now expanding these efforts to other BCP preserves.
	Bioswale projects were completed on Vireo Preserve and begun on JJ&T, made possible by an Urban Forestry grant. The first phase of rainwater harvesting on JJ&T has been implemented. A pole barn and water tanks have been installed. Bioswales are to be completed in early 2020.
	Staff has been conducting research on oak survival and has found complete mortality of oak seedlings in full sun in late summer, and that shade is critical for oak regeneration. A manuscript of findings from a 2013-2017 study on shin oak regeneration was accepted for publication in Ecosphere.
	Based on findings of the oak regeneration research, BCP staff planted plateau live oak, Texas red oak, and shin oak acorns in areas with low plant diversity on Reicher, JJ&T, Cortaña, and Vireo Preserve.
Fencing	Staff negotiated access routes and trees to be protected for upcoming fencing projects.

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Wildfire Preparedness	Shaded fuel break (SFB) was conducted a second time at Kent Butler. The Bohls SFB commenced in December and is ongoing.
<b>Law Enforcement</b>	
Trespass and Criminal Mischief	Staff reported to PARD Rangers re-encroachment by Travis Country neighbors into Barton Creek Wilderness – encroachments that had been removed for implementation of a shaded fuel break the previous year.
<b>Outreach/Volunteers</b>	
<p>See <i>BCP Partners Education Summary October – December 2019</i>.</p> <p>BCP staff and volunteers conducted 2 neighborhood native plant events, one at Travis Country adjacent to the Barton Creek Wilderness Park and the other at Jester Estates adjacent to the Bull Creek Macrosite). Aside from giving away native plants, the focus was on educating the public about the benefits of native plants and the BCP in general.</p>	