



Record of Decisions

Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan (BCCP) Coordinating Committee

May 29, 2020, 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

This meeting was held via videoconference and a recording is available here:
<https://austintx.new.swagit.com/videos/75871>

Attending:

Austin City Council Member District 7 – Leslie Pool, Chair
Travis County Commissioner Precinct 2 – Brigid Shea, Co-Chair
USFWS – Adam Zerrenner, Member (Ex Officio)
BCCP Coordinating Committee Secretary – Kimberlee Harvey

Citizen Communications - None

Items for discussion:

1. **Approve Record of Decisions for the November 22, 2019 Regular Meeting-** Motion from Shea to approve, second by Pool, Carried 2/0
2. **David Steed Remembrance** – Secretary remembrance of David Steed who served as an original member of the BCCP Biological Advisory Team.
3. **FY2019 BCCP Annual Report Posted and Submitted to the USFWS–** Secretary update
4. **Golden-cheeked Warbler Lawsuit Update** – Melinda Mallia, Travis County Natural Resources Program Manager, reported that the 5th Circuit Court in New Orleans heard the arguments of the GLO appeal of Judge Spark's ruling. She stated that the Golden-cheeked Warbler was not delisted, and that the Service was directed to complete Species Status Assessment. Zerrenner added that the Service would revisit the petition finding based on the correct standard.
5. **Wildfire Mitigation on the BCP** – Julie Murray, Travis County Natural Resource Specialist, gave a presentation on shaded fuel break work on the BCP, with commentary from Mallia, along with Justice Jones, AFD Senior Environmental Compliance Specialist.
6. **Rehydration / Flood Mitigation on the BCP Landscape** – BCP Staff presented the BCP Vireo Preserve Bioswales Project video found here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jK6Jwv5cJ8U>
7. **Receive BCP Partner Reports–** BCP Partner Reports for April through June 2020 were

reported. Linda Laack, Travis County Natural Resources Field Supervisor, reported that COVID19 impacted field activities by temporarily suspending bird surveys and Tawny Crazy Ant studies, but that property patrolling continued. She stated there has been an increase in trespassing and illegal clearing on the BCP. She also reported that there was a prescribed burn on the Kotrla unit to enhance Black-capped Vireo habitat, and Black-capped Vireos were seen using that area this spring. Additional Black-capped Vireos were also seen on an adjacent BCP area that was the site of a prescribed burn in 2019. Sherri Kuhl, City of Austin Wildland Conservation Division Manager, reported that City fieldwork and research were also impacted and temporarily suspended because of COVID19. Nico Hauwert, City of Austin BCP Program manager, reported that Golden-cheeked Warbler survey data is showing a 30% decrease in sightings in the intensive survey plots, and that some locations saw as high as a 50% decline. He also reported that there have been more Black-capped Vireo sightings this survey year, including one at the Vireo preserve. Hauwert spoke about an acquisition of a portion of Whirlpool Cave Preserve, and the restoration effort at Pipeline Cave which revealed a large cave room. Johanna Arendt, Travis County Community Liaison, reported on the education and outreach highlights, stating that there was a significant increase in public participation because of growing local partnerships, but stated that COVID19 temporarily suspended public education and volunteer events. Cait McCann, City of Austin Education and Outreach Coordinator, stated that fuel moisture monitors were continuing to collect data, using social distancing protocols. She also reported that there were some on-line webinars available during this time, to continue reaching the public.

8. **Identify Future Agenda Items-** Commissioner Shea requested wildfire mitigation be a running agenda item. Request by committee for a Bone Cave Harvestman lawsuit update.