TRANSPORTATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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Lee Stone, Senior Biologist
City of Austin - PARD
P.O. Box 1088
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RE: FY99 Annual Report for the Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan

Dear Ms. Stone:

We are submitting this letter to you as the Travis County portion of the fiscal year 1999 Annual Report for the Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan (BCCP). We ask that you incorporate this information in the Annual Report you are preparing to be to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) by BCCP Coordinating Committee Secretary Jesus Olivares. Following are the items as listed in the BCCP permit for the reporting period October 1998 through September 1999.

1. **A list of all development activities west of the MOPAC Railroad**. Beginning with October 1998, we now provide this information directly to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service office every month, in order to provide development activity information on a more timely basis than at the end of the year.

2. **A list of all tracts for which Participation Certificates were purchased.** Following is a list of all Participation Certificates purchased under the BCCP during FY 1999.

Date Issued	BCCP #	Name	Category	Amount Paid
10/15/98	0125	Foxworth-Galbraith Lumber	Commercial	$8,453
12/10/98	0168	E. & T. Uecker	Single Family	$1,500
12/21/98	0124	C. & L. Cullen	Single Family	$1,500
12/22/98	0190	K. & L. East	Single Family	$1,500
1/26/99	0191	E. Johnson	Single Family	$1,500
1/28/99	0195	C. & J Kagy	Single Family	$1,500
2/10/99	0198	J. & A. Brockell	Single Family	$1,500
2/10/99	0193	J. Baum	Single Family	$1,500
2/22/99	0203	R. Harden	Single Family	$1,500
2/23/99	0205	Jonestown Water Supply Corp.	Infrastructure	$4,350
2/25/99	0204	American Retirement Corp.	Commercial	$46,111
3/22/99	0164	J. Kern	Single Family	$1,500
4/9/99	0213	West Austin Athletic Club	Commercial	$28,800
4/20/99	0036	Kaufman & Broad Lone Star, LP	Commercial	$52,050
5/10/99	0216	Werkinthin Enterprises	Commercial	$39,300
5/10/99	0214	R. Garriott	Subdivision	$54,900
5/14/99	0119	J.C. Jordan	Commercial	$12,000
Date Issued	**BCCP #**	**Name**	**Category**	**Amount Paid**

5/14/99	0119	J.C. Jordan & R.J. Baker	Commercial	$11,400
5/18/99	0201	B. & V. Kendrick	Single Family	$1,500
6/7/99	0211	M. Peak	Single Family	$1,500
6/24/99	0209	D. & C.M. Fowler	Subdivision	$32,000
6/30/99	0223	Lago Vista Ventures, LLC	Commercial	$18,900
7/1/99	0219	Staybridge Suites Hotel	Commercial	$165
7/14/99	0215	Sterling Acres	Comm./Subd.	$36,450
7/27/99	0225	Investors Life Insurance Company of North America	Commercial	$2,453
9/14/99	0237	R. & K. Hope	Subdivision	$900
9/23/99	0220	T. Diegel	Single Family	$1,500
9/27/99	0222	W. & K. Cutshall	Single Family	$1,500
			TOTAL	**$367,732**

3. **Amount of funds collected for land acquisition through the issuance of Participation Certificates.** All the funds collected through issuance of Participation Certificates are listed under #2 above (total: $367,732). In addition, mitigation fees were paid to the BCCP under USFWS' direction based on determinations by the USFWS for permits they issued (total: $818,400) as follows:

Date Paid	BCCP #	Name	USFWS#	Amount Paid
11/19/98	0157	C. & V. Sullivan	PRT-798532	$1,500
3/24/99	0175b	Great Hills Reserve	PRT-782832	$307,800
4/27/99	0218	P. Davis	PRT-800131	$1,500
7/7/99	0175	Great Hills Reserve Ph. G	PRT-782832	$48,000
8/2/99	0230	F. & J. Stein	TE-007891	$1,500
8/13/99	0236	Westminster Glen I-C, I-D, I-E	PRT-793122	$315,000
8/23/99	0175	Great Hills Reserve Ph. C	PRT-782832	$143,100
			TOTAL	**$818,400**

4. **Amount of funds expended for land acquisition.** The County did not purchase any tracts during this reporting period; however, $61,737 was expended on various related items in preparation to acquire portions of Vista Point and Grandview Hills (for appraisals, land planning, boundary surveys, and environmental site assessment). The County submitted its second HCP acquisition grant application in January 1999 and received notice of a $1.5 million award in May 1999. The grant contracts with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for Vista Point were approved in October 1998 (Phase I) and November 1999 (Phase II).

5. **Amount of funds expended for operations and maintenance.** Travis County expended $258,435 for operations and maintenance for two of the four Travis County properties included in the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (Hamilton Pool Preserve and Wild Basin Preserve). This figure does not include expenditures by The Committee for Wild Basin Wilderness, Inc., which has a contract with Travis County to conduct educational programming and management activities on the County-owned Wild Basin Preserve; nor does it include Natural Resources Program staff time spent on endangered species surveys, plant surveys, land management planning, and other biology related activities. The two other BCP properties owned by the County are Romberg and Lake Perspectives.

6. **An updated map of the lands dedicated to preserve management.** The properties included in the current map of the BCP have not changed since last summer, when we distributed maps to the City of Austin, the Lower Colorado River Authority and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. A portion of

Schram Ranch needs to be included in the BCP, however we have not yet been informed by the USFWS of the actual preserve boundaries.

7. **A list of public use and habitat management activities that have been undertaken or completed within the bounds of the preserve units.** Travis County owns four tracts that are dedicated preserveland for the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve. Following are descriptions of activities for each tract:

   Hamilton Pool Preserve – Pre-existing (to the BCCP) public use continued during the reporting period. The Preserve staff maintain approximately 1.5 miles of nature trails for daily public access. Hours are restricted to day use only; fees are charged; public access is restricted to trails and pool area. Pets, fires, cooking, fishing, and collecting are prohibited. Habitat management activities included routine trail maintenance, endangered species surveys, and deer survey protocol preparation.

   Wild Basin Wilderness Preserve – Pre-existing public use continued during the reporting period. The Preserve is managed by The Committee for Wild Basin Wilderness, Inc., with financial and staff support from the County. Approximately 2.5 miles of nature trails are maintained for daily public and educational tour use. Hours are restricted to day use only; visitor access is restricted to designated trails. Picnicking, pets, and collecting are prohibited. Habitat management activities included endangered species surveys, trail improvements to the 1/3 mile easy access trail involving short sections of rerouting, and routine trail maintenance.

   Romberg Preserve – This portion of Bob Wentz Park at Windy Point is separated by Comanche Trail from the rest of the park. Romberg Preserve is not used by the public. Land management activities included boundary checks and endangered species surveys.

   Lake Perspectives – This is a new acquisition for the County, received by transfer of title (off-site mitigation for commercial and residential development on the Balfour tract) in April 1999. The preserve is not open to the public. Land management activities included endangered species surveys, deer survey protocol preparation, and other biological surveys.

   In addition to land management activities on County-owned BCP lands, Travis County's BCP activities included the following:

   - Management of the **cowbird program** for various properties, both public and private, in the vicinity of known black-capped vireo habitat;

   - Preparation and staffing of the BCP exhibit for Wildlife Expo (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's annual event); and,

   - Continued efforts to determine and track cave status of 62 **karst features** covered by the BCCP 10(a) permit: 18 owned by the City of Austin and 44 privately owned, including 21 protected and 23 unprotected caves. One in this latter group is on the Shellberg tract, acquisition pending by Travis County. Threats to private caves continue: Cave X and Get Down Cave are being protected under draft cave management agreements with the City of Austin, due to development pressures; Pennie's Cave may have been filled (cannot be located); and caves in the McNeil Cluster are under threat of development. A hydrogeological study is being prepared for Flint Ridge Cave due to possible impacts from the proposed SH 45. Austin caving organizations and volunteers continue to play key and vital roles in researching and protecting caves in the BCP area.

8. **A copy of all research or investigation reports that have been prepared.** One report was prepared by Travis County staff during the reporting period and has already been submitted to the USFWS, as well as the City of Austin and the Lower Colorado River Authority:

   Gass, Leila. *1999 Endangered Bird Survey Report,* August 1999.

If you have any questions or need additional information for the Annual Report, please contact Ms. Terri Siegenthaler or me at 473-9383.

Sincerely,

John Kuhl
Travis County BCCP Program Manager

0905 BCCP Annual Report for Travis County

xc: Samuel Biscoe, Travis County Judge
Karen Sonleitner, Travis County Commissioner Pct 2, BCP Coordinating Committee Member
Jesus Olivares, City of Austin PARD Director, BCP Coordinating Committee Secretary
Juan Valera, Ph.D., City of Austin PARD
Joseph P. Gieselman, Travis County TNR Executive Manager
Charles Bergh, TNR Division Director, Parks & Natural Resources
Terri Siegenthaler, TNR Natural Resources
Rose Farmer, TNR Natural Resources