TRANSPORTATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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Don Koehler, Senior Biologist
City of Austin - PARD
P.O. Box 1088
Austin, Texas 78767

RE: FY00 Annual Report for the Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan

Dear Mr. Koehler:

We are submitting this letter to you as the Travis County portion of the fiscal year 2000 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 1999 through September 2000.

1. **A list of all development activities west of the MOPAC Railroad**. Beginning with October 1999, 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 2000.

Date Issued	BCCP #	Name	Category	Amount Paid
11/10/99	0206	B. & C. Medford	Single Family	$1,500
12/1/99	0243	P. McKiernan	Single Family	$1,500
12/3/99	0231	T. & F. Baird	Single Family (7)	$10,500
12/17/99	0137	B. Theriot	Subdivision (karst)	$330
1/5/00	0249	D. Kesslinger	Subdivision	$900
1/14/00	0227	L. Hartman & WD Jones	Single Family	$1,500
2/17/00	0261	L. Holmes / AT&T	Infrastructure	$300
2/18/00	0253	L. & E. Herczeg	Single Family	$1,500
2/23/00	0248	B. Magee	Subdivision	$71,700
2/24/00	0212-1	S. Morse	Subdivision	$17,402
2/24/00	0212-6	S. Morse	Subdivision	1,403
4/28/00	0156	Lane	Single Family	$1,500
5/11/00	0258	CCNG	Golf Course	$242,400
5/11/00	0212-7	S. Morse	Subdivision	$8,698
5/11/00	0212-8	S. Morse	Subdivision	$14,179
5/31/00	0212-9	S. Morse	Subdivision	$10,846
5/31/00	0212-10	S. Morse	Subdivision	$7,014
5/31/00	0212-3	S. Morse	Subdivision	$22,859

5/25/00	0266	Eppright	Subdivision	$45,900
5/31/00	0265	Lago Vista	Subdivision	$18,300
6/2/00	0260	R. Redmond	Subdivision	$25,950
6/9/00	0252	BVD Partners, L.P.	Subdivision	$52,527
6/20/00	0242	D. Burnett	Subdivision	$27,000
6/22/00	0279	M. McGarrah	Single Family	$1,500
7/11/00	0254	Graham Parker	Subdivision	$5,788
8/3/00	0166	Mark Burgessporter	Subdivision	$5,700
TOTAL				**$598,696**

In addition, we have received mitigation payments of $19,950 for BCCP #0239 (partial payment only) and $300 for BCCP #0259, but have not yet received signed contracts or issued Participation Certificates.

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: $598,696). In addition, mitigation fees were paid to the BCCP under USFWS' direction based on determinations by the USFWS for permits they issued (total: $1,500) as follows:

Date Paid	BCCP #	Name	USFWS#	Amount Paid
9/13/00	0285	Mark Hogan	TE-005497-0	$1,500.00

4. **Amount of funds expended for land acquisition.** The County purchased the Grandview Hills tract during this reporting period for a total purchase price of $5,521,334, plus an additional $58,649 expended on related items to acquire Grandview Hills (for appraisals, land planning, boundary surveys, and environmental site assessment). The acquisition of the 581 acre Grandview Hills Tract was completed in August 2000 (Phase 2) and October 2000 (Phase 1). In preparation to acquire the Bunten Tract, $5,060 was expended on a related item (appraisal)(ESA?). The County submitted its second Section 6 HCP acquisition grant application in January 1999 and received notice of a $1.5 million award in May 1999. The County submitted its third Section 6 HCP acquisition grant application in January 2000 and received notice of a $4.14 million award in June 2000. The grant contract was signed by Texas Parks and Wildlife on 8/24/00 and by the Commissioners' Court on 9/12/00.

5. **Amount of funds expended for operations and maintenance.** Travis County expended $299,635 ($258,435 in 1999 Annual Report for HP & WB) for operations and maintenance for the Travis County properties included in the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (Hamilton Pool Preserve, Wild Basin, Romberg, Lake Perspectives, Grandview Hills 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.

6. **An updated map of the lands dedicated to preserve management.** An updated BCP ownership map is attached showing the new tracts that have been added to the preserve since last year's annual report. The following tracts with existing 10(a) permits will be added to the preserve ownership map once the boundaries of the preserve acres have been designated by USFWS as required by their 10(a) permits: portions of both the Schram Ranch and the Balfour tracts.

7. **A list of public use and habitat management activities that have been undertaken or completed within the bounds of the Travis County preserve units.** Travis County owns five tracts that are dedicated preserveland for the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve. Following are the top activities for each tract in FY 2000:

Hamilton Pool Preserve –

- Pre-existing (to the BCCP) public use continued during the reporting period. The Preserve staff maintained approximately 1.5 miles of nature trails for daily public access. Hours were restricted to day use only; fees were charged; public access was 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.
- In the 2000 nesting season, 9 male golden-cheeked warbers (GCWs) held territories and also 8 female and 20 fledgling GCWs were observed within the preserve.

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, erosion controls, trail improvements, and routine trail maintenance.
- In the 2000 nesting season, 2 male golden-cheeked warbers (GCWs) held territories along with 2 female CGWs within the preserve.

Romberg Preserve –

- The Romberg Preserve is not open to the public. Land management activities included boundary checks and endangered species surveys.
- Two visits yielded no GCW activity in 2000, though 2 males were heard singing off property to the east. Historically, warblers have used the preserve for foraging and juvenile dispersal but no nest activity has been documented on the preserve.

Lake Perspectives Tract –

- The Lake Perspectives Tract is not open to the public. Land management activities included endangered species surveys, deer survey protocol preparation, and other biological surveys.
- In the 2000 nesting season, 9 male GCWs held territories (some partly in adjacent tracts) and also 7 female and 10 fledgling GCWs were observed within the preserve.

Grandview Hills Tract –

- The 590 acre tract was acquired in two phases in 2000 (August and October). A land management plan will be prepared for the next reporting period.
- The Grandview Hills Tract is not open to the public. Management activities included locating boundaries and old roads, estimating fencing needs, determining procedure for solving an erosion problem, and reviewing historic survey data.

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

Cowbird Trapping Program

Management of the **cowbird program** for various properties, both public and private, in the vicinity of known black-capped vireo habitat; (See Cowbird Report attached)

- 301 brown-headed cowbirds were trapped and removed from the area. Of these, 123 were female.
- There were 8 traps for brown-headed cowbirds located on the following tracts: Hamilton Pool, Travis County Satellite 2 (at Mansfield Dam), Canyon Creek, Cortana, 3M, Ivanhoe, River Place, and Steiner Ranch.

Education/Outreach

- Preparation and staffing of the BCP exhibit for Wildlife EXPO (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's annual event).
- Gave several presentations about the BCCP Public Participation process to real estate professionals.
- Lead Austin Science Fun Day activities in partnership with Oak Hill Elementary.

Karst Protection

Staff continued efforts to determine and track cave status of 62 **karst features** covered by the BCCP 10(a) permit: including 41"protected" and 21"unprotected" caves, with 21 of the "protected" caves owned by the City of Austin. Many of the caves designated as "protected" with the status of "good" in the following table may not have adequate setbacks to be adequately protected to meet the criteria listed in the new "USFWS Recommendations For Karst Preserve Design". The terms "protected" and "good" listed here refer to caves with *some* amount of setback around the entrance and *some* amount of protection over the footprint of the cave.

Caves on preserve land generally have adequate setbacks and are receiving adequate protection. Threats to private caves continue. Cave X and Get Down Cave are being protected under 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 was done for Flint Ridge Cave relating to possible impacts from the proposed extension of SH 45. Austin caving organizations and volunteers continue to play key and vital roles in researching and protecting caves in the BCP area.

Karst Table. 62 BCP karst features. The 35 endangered species caves are listed as ES and the 27 additional caves for species of concern are listed as SOC.

Cave Name	ES or SOC	Current tract/owner. On BCP Land or private	Cave Cluster	Status
Adobe Springs Cave	SOC	BCP Lehmann/TNC		Good
Airman's Cave	SOC	BCP Barton Creek/COA		Good
Amber Cave	ES	Pending TC (for 10(a) permit)	4 Points Cl (Parke)	Good
Armadillo Ranch Sink	SOC	Private		Unknown
Arrow Cave	SOC	Slaughter Cr. Metro Pk./COA		Good
Bandit Cave	ES	Private		Unknown
Beard Ranch Cave	ES	BCP Ivanhoe/COA		Good
Bee Creek Cave	ES	Private		Unknown
Blowing Sink Cave	SOC	COA		Good
Broken Arrow Cave	ES	BCP Lime Cr. Prs./COA		Good
Buda Boulder Spg.	SOC	Shoal Creek Grblt./COA		Good
Cave X	SOC	Private/COA Protection Agreement		Unknown, New agreement not working smoothly yet
Cave Y	ES	Barton Creek Grblt/COA		Good
Ceiling Slot Cave	SOC	Private		Unknown
Cold Cave	ES	Private	Northwood Cl.	Unknown
Cotterell Cave	ES	BCP Spicewood Spgs. Pk./COA		Good
Disbelievers Cave	ES	BCP Private 10(a)	4 Points Cl. (Perot)	Good
District Park Cave	SOC	D.Nickols Pk./COA		Good
Eluvial Cave	ES	BCP Private 10(a)	4 Points Cl. (Perot)	Good
Flint Ridge Cave	SOC	COA		Good
Fossil Cave	ES	Schroeter Pk./COA		Can't find entrance, park is Protected however
Fossil Garden Cave	ES	Private	McNeil Cl.	Unknown
Gallifer Cave	ES	Private TSNL	4 Points Cl (Parke)	Good
Get Down Cave	SOC	Private/COA Protection		Good, agreement working,

		Agreement		TCMA manag., putting up kiosk
Goat Cave	SOC	Goat Cave Karst Preserve/COA		Good
Hole-in-the-Road	ES	Private	Northwood Cl.	Unknown
Ireland's Cave	SOC	Private Circle C		Poor, watershed probs., golf course
Jack's Joint	SOC	Private		Unknown
Japygid Cave	ES	BCP Private 10(a)	4 Points Cl. (Perot)	Good
Jest John Cave	ES	BCP Forest Ridge/COA		Good
Jester Estates Cave	ES	Private (adj.COA Ivanhoe)		Unknown
Jollyville Plateau Cv.	ES	BCP Private 10(a)	4 Points Cl. (Perot)	Good
Kretschmarr Cave	ES	Private TSNL	4 Points Cl. (Parke)	Good
Kretschmarr Dble. Pit	ES	Private TSNL	4 Points Cl. (Parke)	Good
Lamm Cave	ES	Private Section 7		Good
Little Bee Cr. Cave	ES	BCP Ullrich WTP/COA		Good
Lost Gold Cave	SOC	Private		Unknown, new house on adj. or same lot? (not through BCCP)
Lost Oasis Cave	SOC	Private TCMA		Good
M.W.A. Cave	ES	Private 10(a)	4 Points Cl. (Perot)	Good
Maple Run Cave	SOC	Goat Cave Karst Preserve/COA /COA		Good
McDonald Cave	ES	Private		Unknown
McNeil Bat Cave	ES	Private	McNeil Cl.	Unknown
Midnight Cave	SOC	Slaughter Cr. Met. Pk./COA		Good
Moss Pit	SOC	Private		Unknown
New Comanche Tr. Cave	ES	Private		Unknown
No Rent Cave	ES	Private	McNeil Cl.	Unknown
North Root Cave	ES	Private TSNL	4 Points Cl (Parke)	Good
Pennie's Cave	SOC	Private		Unknown
Pickle Pit	SOC	Private Sec. 7		Unknown
Pipeline Cave	SOC	Private		Unknown
Rolling Rock Cave	ES	BCP Lime Cr. Prs./COA, Sec.10(a)		Good
Root Cave	ES	Private TSNL	4 Points Cl (Parke)	Good
Slaughter Creek Cave	SOC	Slaughter Cr.Metro Pk./COA		Good
Spanish Wells	SOC	Private		Unknown
Spider Cave	ES	BCP Park West/COA		Good
Stark's North Mine	SOC	Private		Unknown
Stovepipe Cave	ES	Private Sec. 7		Good
Talus Springs Cave	SOC	Pending TC (for 10(a) permit)		Only 50' setback from dev., impact unknown
Tardus Hole	ES	Private TSNL	4 Points Cl (Parke)	Good
Tooth Cave	ES	Private TSNL	4 Points Cl (Parke)	Good
Weldon Cave	ES	Private	McNeil Cl.	unknown
Whirlpool Cave	SOC	Private TCMA		Good

Table 3. Caves which are currently gated, fenced and/or open to the public. Under "Public Access", access by permit

Cave Name	ES or SOC	BCP Tract/owner	Gated/Fenced	Public Access
Amber Cave	ES	Pending TC (for 10(a)	Concrete/ manhole cover [2]	
Airman's Cave	SOC	Barton Creek/COA		open
Bandit Cave	ES	Private	Gated	

Cave X	SOC	Private w/ COA Agreement	Gated	
Cotterell	ES	Spicewood Sprgs. Pk./COA	Fenced	
District Park Cave	SOC	D.Nickols Pk./COA	Gated after the 1st room.	1st room open, past the 1st room access by permit*
Gallifer Cave	ES	Private TSNL	Gated [2]	
Get Down Cave	SOC	Private	Gated	
Goat Cave	SOC	Karst Preserve/COA	Gated [1]	access by permit*
Jester Estates Cave	ES	Private, adj. COA Ivanhoe	Gated [2]	
Jollyville Plateau Cv.	ES	Private 10(a)	Gated [2]	
Kretschmarr Cave	ES	Private TSNL	Gated [2] and Fenced	
Lost Gold Cave	SOC	Private	Gated	
Lost Oasis Cave	SOC	Private TCMA	Gated and Fenced	controlled access**
Maple Run Cave	SOC	Karst Preserve/COA	Gated	access by permit*
Midnight	SOC	Slaughter Cr. Pk/COA	Fenced	access by permit*
Pickle Pit	SOC	Private	Gated	
Pipeline Cave	SOC	Private	Metal frame [2]	
Tooth Cave	ES	Private TSNL	Gated [2]	
Whirlpool Cave	SOC	Private TCMA	Gated	controlled access**

* Access by Permit - Permit may be issued by COA - PARD staff.
** Controlled Access - Private cave owners control the access
[1] Future plans will remove the gate and install fence to encourage bats to return.
[2] Needs gate repairs/improved gate.

8. A copy of all research or investigation reports that have been prepared. The *Monitoring of the Golden-cheeked Warbler – 2000 Field Season* report, prepared by James Bailey and Paul Fushille for Travis County tracts, is enclosed in this submission. Also the *Brown-headed Cowbird Report – 2000 Field Season* report, prepared by James Bailey for several BCP tracts, is enclosed in this submission.

If you have any questions or need additional information for the Annual Report, please contact Ms. Rose Farmer 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
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