City of Austin's BCCP Activities
Bi-Annual Update: 1 October 2024 – 31 March 2025

BCCP Administration	
Infrastructure Projects	LCRA repaired damaged crossarm ***and*** rotten pole on structure 7/7 of the T161 (Marshall Ford to McNeil) transmission line which is located on 3M.
	Six Infrastructure Habitat Assessment Applications were processed, Determination Letters were issued from October 2024 through March 2025.
	AE completed 2 pole replacements on City Park Road.
	PEC completed vegetation work on multiple BCP tracts which included adding 2 gates to facilitate easier access to their line crossing St Edwards/ 3M tracts.
Land Acquisition /Management Agreements	AW BCP continues to work toward the land acquisition of the Four Points Preserve to transfer ownership to the City. This site is a high priority acquisition, containing 4 BCCP permit caves, springs with Jollyville salamanders, and GCWA habitat.
Reports and Events	Hosted habitat restoration workdays for several corporations and tours for City staff and non-profit groups. See Austin Water Wildlands (City of Austin BCP) Education Partners Report FY25 Q1 & Q2.
	Submitted annual BCCP report to USFWS (BCCP 2024 Annual Report)
	WCD staff presented about caves and cave biology to neighbors of Westcave Preserve
Dual-managed Properties	Coordinating with PARD on issues related to BCP research permits, homeless camps, unauthorized trails, and Austin Archery Club agreement.
Personnel	Olivia Lopez joined WCD as BCP Program Manager. Damion Wilson and Dennis Green joined WCD as Facility Service Specialists. Darrell Hutchinson rejoined WCD as Biologist for 2025 avian monitoring.
Rare and Endangered Resources Management	
Golden-cheeked Warbler (GCWA) and Black-capped Vireo (BCVI)	Golden-cheeked Warbler Delisting Lawsuit • On 5 September 2024, a federal court ordered that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) second negative 90-day finding on a 2015 petition to delist the GCWA be vacated and remanded to USFWS for further consideration. • On January 21, 2025, USFWS published a positive 90-day finding on the petition (petition provided substantial information to indicate the petitioned action *may* be warranted). This finding followed a District Court ruling on a lawsuit filed by the General Land Office that USFWS did not apply the correct procedural standard when reviewing the petition. As with the 5-year review, the positive 90-day finding does not change the listing status.
	Golden-cheeked Warbler 5-Year Review - On January 7, 2025, USFWS announced completion of its 5-year status review and recommended downlisting the GCWA from endangered to threatened under the Endangered Species Act.
	The 90-day finding and 5-year review do not result in a change in listing status, so the GCWA is still listed as endangered. Reclassification requires publication of a proposed rule in the Federal Register, which is open to public comment, followed by publication of a final rule.
	Initiated BCVI and GCWA surveys and color-banding in March. Conducted a volunteer training to search for banded GCWAs outside the study plots on March 1.

Bracted Twistflower	Winter checks showed few, if any, seedlings. Likely due to low fall and winter rainfall.
Jollyville Plateau Salamander	BCP staff continues to conduct twice yearly JP salamander survey in Testudo Tube, all salamanders captured were photographed for future population analysis.
	BCP staff assisted WP staff in their JPS occupancy study, surveying randomly selected transects throughout much of their known range.
	BCP continues to conduct aquatic life surveys 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	AW BCP conducted cave faunal surveys and cave cricket exit counts on all other assigned caves (ongoing).
	Currently hydrogeological studies continue in the FM 2222 and RM 620 area. Contractors and staff continue to excavate filled caves on AW BCP preserves along FM 2222 and RM 620 with funding provided from Texas Department of Transportation to mitigate the FM 2222 bypass to RM 620.
	Staff continue efforts to find suitable substitutions for the privately owned Jack's Joint and Armadillo Ranch Sink permit caves. Currently nearby Collaboration Cave has been restored on the adjacent Balcones Canyonlands NWR and staff are working on a second feature and just located a 3rd promising feature.
	AW BCP took WPD Eric Brown to caves and karst features at the Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center. Additionally, staff made cave footprints of Cricket Cave, LaCrosse Cave and Wildflower Cave for the LBJWFC.
Plant and Animal Control	
Mammals	In an effort to reduce feral hog numbers, staff continue to operate several hog pen traps as well as occasionally shooting trap shy hogs from stands. Staff removed 35 hogs in the Bull Creek watershed.
Red-imported fire ants and Tawny crazy ants	Under the interlocal agreement with the University of Texas at Austin, Dr. Ed LeBrun continued monitoring TCA and native ant densities. TCAs have recently been found at the Lime Creek Preserve, Whitewater Karst Preserve, and Wilcox Cave Preserve. Dr. LeBrun plans to inoculate TCAs at these sites with microsporidia, a type of fungus that provides a natural control agent specific to TCAs. This method has been shown to be an effective and non-toxic control method, leading to the collapse of infected colonies.
Invasive Plants	BCP staff continue to remove non-native plants on COA BCP tracts. Worked with volunteers to remove invasive plants at Long Canyon. Volunteer tract stewards assisted with invasive plant removal on the Cortaña tract.
Land Stewardship	
Habitat Restoration	After being awarded Urban Forest Funds, installed conservation terraces, check dams, and stabilized an eroded area. Worked with American YouthWorks and volunteers to reforest these restoration sites.
	Staff led habitat restoration workdays for volunteers and corporate groups 3-4 times each week. Restoration projects include rehydration, slope stabilization, erosion control, native plant propagation, and support of native plant rescue efforts to support reforestation and connect habitat patches for GCWA and BCVI. Planted over 1000 native trees and shrubs from October-March.

	Continuing to work with Northern Arizona University to understand the role of beneficial soil microbes in forest health and resiliency, including soil moisture and reduced wildfire risk.
Fencing	Contractors installed 1650' feet of fence along the western portion of the Park West tract, adjacent to the new Milky Way development.
	Staff removed encroaching vegetation from roads and trails.
Access	Staff began discussions with River Place Limited District for improved access to the southern Cortaña tract for land management, including patrols and fire prevention.
Oak Wilt	An oak wilt trench was completed on JJ&T tract.
Wildfire Preparedness	Using funding from the COA's Innovation Office, working with Dr. Ashley Matheny/University of Texas at Austin to deploy sensors that measure water content in trees and soil. Data will be ground-truthed using live fuel moisture data, and used to determine/improve accuracy of remote sensing data. The goal of this project is to create a continuous monitoring system for wildfire risk.
	Removed storm-downed trees and limbs from multiple tracts.
	Since 10/24, 6,681' of WUI shaded fuel break was completed on the AW managed BCP tracts. Project areas include: Coldwater, Kent Butler, Forest Ridge/ Bull Creek, and JJT.
	Additional 4,074' of shaded fuel break completed along ignition corridors. Ignition Corridor shaded fuel break work occurred on Forest Ridge / Bull Creek.
Law Enforcement	
Trespass and Criminal Mischief	A neighbor installed an illegal gate into the newly installed 3M fence, staff are working to rectify this illegal act.
	Staff reported an illegal break-in at goat cave, called police and had the individuals in custody, but later released with just a trespass warning.
	Staff and neighbors have continued to see an upswing in illegal activities at the end of Old Lampasas Trail. Staff monitor the gates and have contacted law enforcement on multiple occasions to curtail illegal activities. Multiple trespass warning letters have been issued to the offenders.
	A neighbor has been using an easement on preserve property at the southern end of the Cortaña tract to store construction materials. Those materials now block staff access between two preserve gates. Communications with the neighbor have been initiated.
	Continued patrols of Preserve boundaries.
Outreach/Volunteers	
See above and *BCP Partners Education Summary October 2024 – March 2025*	

City of Austin's BCCP Activities
Bi-Annual Update: 1 April 2025 – 30 September 2025

BCCP Administration	
Infrastructure Projects	Austin Energy installed a new electric circuit to the Four Seasons property of Bridge Point Rd. Upgrades and repairs to the existing line that runs along the southern portion of Long Canyon were part of that project. One pole on Canyon Creek was relocated off the preserve and brought closer to the road.
	Seven Infrastructure Habitat Assessment Applications were processed, Determination Letters were issued from April 2025 through September 2025.
	ATT installed a temporary tower on Austin Water's water tank property that is located adjacent to Vireo Preserve
Land Acquisition /Management Agreements	AW BCP continues to work toward the land acquisition of the Four Points Preserve to transfer ownership to the City. This site is a high priority acquisition, containing 4 BCCP permit caves, springs with Jollyville Plateau salamanders, and GCWA habitat.
Reports and Events	Hosted habitat restoration workdays for several corporations and tours for City staff and non-profit groups. See Austin Water Wildlands (City of Austin BCP) Education Partners Report FY25.
Dual-managed Properties	BCP staff worked with PARD on encampment cleanups, graffiti removal, illegal overlook platform, and unauthorized trail clearing.
Personnel	Bill Reiner received recognition for 20 years of dedicated service.
Rare and Endangered Resources Management	
Golden-cheeked Warbler (GCWA) and Black-capped Vireo (BCVI)	Staff and volunteers mapped territories, color-banded adult birds, and documented nesting success of GCWAs on 11 intensive study plots (including one on The Nature Conservancy's Barton Creek Habitat Preserve) from March through June. (Travis County BCP staff monitored an additional 2 plots.)
	Sixty-six volunteers searched for banded GCWAs outside the study plots on thirty-one 100-acre search areas between late March and late May. (Staff searched an additional area.) WCD and County BCP staff held an appreciation event for those volunteers on July 12.
	During summer months, staff entered data into ESRI ArcPro, performed quality assurance/quality control, and prepared spreadsheets for data analyses.
	From March to early August, staff mapped territories and color-banded adult BCVIs, in seven areas where the species has attempted to establish territories in the past. Nesting attempts were monitored and confirmed successful at four of the seven sites.
	Initiated a BCVI population genetics project using previously collected blood samples from across the BCP (2022-2025). The purpose of this project is to examine BCVI genetic diversity, inbreeding depression, and hatch year dispersal on the BCP. We are collaborating with Dr. Kathryn Turner at Idaho State University to complete genetic sequencing that aim to quantify relatedness, gene flow, and other population genetics measures.
Bracted Twistflower	Staff and volunteers censused a total of 268 plants across the preserve, a low count as expected from the low fall/winter rainfall.
Jollyville Plateau	BCP staff continues to conduct twice yearly JPS survey in Testudo Tube, all salamanders captured were photographed for future population analysis. A water sample was taken from the cave stream for analysis.

Salamander (JPS)	BCP staff assisted WP staff in their JPS occupancy study, surveying randomly selected transects throughout much of their known range.
Karst invertebrates/ karst work	AW BCP conducted cave faunal surveys and cave cricket exit counts on all assigned caves (ongoing).
	A water sample was taken from the cave passage know as Eilleen's River at the bottom of Blowing Sink Cave for analysis.
	Prep work for future hydrogeological studies continues in the FM 2222 and RM 620 area. Contractors and staff continue to excavate filled caves on AW BCP preserves along FM 2222 and RM 620, including Persephone Cavern's and Gaping Jaw Cave on Stovepipe Karst Preserve, and Merkin Hole Cave on Kent Butler Preserve.
Plant and Animal Control	
Mammals	In an effort to reduce feral hog numbers, staff continue to operate several hog pen traps as well as occasionally shooting trap shy hogs from stands.
Red-imported fire ants and Tawny crazy ants	Under the interlocal agreement with the University of Texas at Austin, Dr. Ed LeBrun continued monitoring TCA and native ant densities, as well as looking at introducing a species specific, naturally occurring virus to combat red imported fire ants. In late April Ed LeBrun inoculated the newly discovered TCA with microsporidia at Lime Creek Preserve, and Wilcox Cave Preserve. The species-specific microsporidia (*Myrmecomorba nylanderiae*), a type of fungus that provides a natural control agent specific to TCAs has been shown to be an effective and non-toxic control method, leading to the collapse of infected colonies.
Invasive Plants	BCP staff continue to remove non-native plants on COA BCP tracts. BCP and Outreach staff worked with volunteers to remove invasive plants on the Long Canyon tract.
Land Stewardship	
Habitat Restoration	Awarded Urban Forest Funds to reforest an approximately 4.1-acre borrow pit on JJ&T. We will be working with American YouthWorks and volunteers to reforest this restoration site.
	Staff led habitat restoration workdays for volunteers 3-4 times each week. Restoration projects include rehydration, slope stabilization, erosion control, native plant propagation, and support of native plant rescue efforts to support reforestation and connect habitat patches for GCWA and BCVI.
	Continuing to work with Northern Arizona University to understand the role of beneficial soil microbes in forest health and resiliency.
Fencing	Staff assisted with pre-planning efforts for ice storm debris removal along the fence lines of the JJ&T and Cortaña tracts.
Access	Staff initiated coordination with the River Place Limited District to enhance access to the southern Cortaña tract for land management activities, including routine patrols and fire prevention measures. Preliminary work to establish this access has commenced within the Cortaña tract, and installation of the gate access is anticipated to begin in the coming months.
Oak Wilt	Staff inspected several known oak wilt centers during this period. Aerial reconnaissance, with Austin Police Department, was used to locate new infections. One new oak wilt center was discovered, and verified, on the Cortaña tract.

Wildfire Research and Preparedness	Using funding from the COA's Innovation Office, working with Dr. Ashley Matheny/University of Texas at Austin to deploy sensors that measure water content in trees and soil. Data will be ground-truthed using live fuel moisture data, and used to determine/improve accuracy of remote sensing data. The goal of this project is to create a continuous monitoring system for wildfire risk.
	United States Forest Service led re-measurement of "Baylor study" transect plots to assess change over time and present condition of wildland fuels on COA BCP. Canopy measurements completed June 2025 with surface fuel measurements initiated in Sept. 2025.
	4.88 acre dead and downed removal project initiated in September and in progress at time of report. Project location is Kent Butler. Project objective is reductions of dead and downed woody fuels in canyons adjacent to ignition corridor aligned with local winds. Primary project objective is habitat protection (wildfire risk reduction).
	0.72 acre dead and downed removal / invasive species removal project completed at Whirlpool Karst Preserve in Sept. 2025. Project goal was wildfire risk reduction in areas of the preserve where structures exist within the 5'-30' and 30'-100' zone of the Home Ignition Zone (HIZ).
Law Enforcement	
Trespass and Criminal Mischief	No citations were written by law enforcement on COA BCP properties from April - Sept. 2025.
	Staff are always working to strengthen relationships with law enforcement agencies to increase understanding of the preserve and the HCP and to facilitate coordination as needed. To this end, Rob Brooks, Land Management Ranger Lead, coordinated a joint patrol of City-owned BCP waterfront properties with APD lake patrol unit. He explained our properties and common challenges related to trespass and toured some of the property lines together.
	Continued patrols of Preserve boundaries.
Outreach/Volunteers	
See above and *BCP Partners Education Summary April 2025 – September 2025*	