BCCP Administration	
Public Participation	Twenty-six Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan (BCCP) applications were received and processed, and 12 Participation Certificates were issued. A total of $1,305,550.00 in mitigation payments were received and split 50:50 between Travis County and the City of Austin.
Personnel	Emily Ackland was promoted from Natural Resources Program Manager to the Natural Resources and Environmental Quality Division Director in December. Natural Resources Specialist, Blake Sissel, resigned in December. Bobby Aleman was hired as a Community Liaison in February. Jeremy Hull was promoted from Environmental Project Manager – Outreach to Assistant Director of Natural Resources in April. Winter season temporary Natural Resources Techs, Abigail Cox, Christian Bradbury, and Luis Alatorre completed their terms in January, February, and March, respectively. Spring season temporary Natural Resources Techs, Addison Denton, Makayla Timms, and Reese Williford began in March.
BCCP Annual Report	The FY 2024 BCCP Annual Report was submitted to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) in January. It can be viewed at: https://www.traviscountytx.gov/tnr/nr/bccp-2024-annual-report
Rare and Endangered Resources Management	
Golden-cheeked warblers and Black-capped vireos	The first golden-cheeked warbler to arrive on the BCP was documented on March 4th. Travis County Natural Resources staff (Staff) began intensive plot, enumeration, and presence/absence surveys in mid-March. The first black-capped vireo was observed on the BCP on March 23rd.
Karst Invertebrates	Staff performed fall season faunal surveys at eight BCCP-listed caves. Winter season surveys were conducted at seven BCCP-listed caves and two additional endangered species caves. Fall season cave cricket exit counts were performed at four BCCP-listed caves. Winter season exit counts were conducted at five BCCP-listed caves and one additional endangered species cave. A contractor, Zara Environmental, initiated excavation work on caves in the Cuevas and Cuevas East tracts. They observed *Texella reyesi* in Two Trunks Cave, which was the first time this species was documented at this cave.
Bats	Staff visited caves and swabbed tricolored bats and cave walls for *Pseudogymnoascus destructans*, the fungus which causes white-nose syndrome in bats. Results are pending.

Salamanders	In March, County, City, and FWS biologists conducted occupancy surveys for the Jollyville Plateau salamander in upper Bull Creek tributaries and improved habitat in areas of known occupancy by removing vegetative debris clogging the waterways.
Plant and Animal Control	
White-tailed deer	Staff harvested 32 deer on the BCP this fall and winter: 18 from the Cypress Creek Macrosite, 11 from the Kotrla Unit, two from the Medway tract, and one from the Lucas tract. The meat was donated through the Hunters for the Hungry Program.
Feral Hogs	Staff trapped and harvested nine feral hogs on the Flying K conservation easement.
Invasive Ants	University of Texas researcher, Dr. Ed LeBrun, continued microsporidian pathogen inoculation and monitoring of the rediscovered tawny crazy ant population at No Rent and Weldon Caves. Travis County staff conducted ant density sampling within those caves during the fall and winter faunal surveys. Tawny crazy ants were observed at Sandy Creek Park, adjacent to the Wheless tract. The extent of that colony was mapped, and specimens were collected to test for the microsporidian pathogen.
Invasive Plants	Staff, contractors, and volunteers removed 8,919 invasive plants from 12 BCP tracts. The pilot year of the Native Plant Exchange Program served 14 homeowners and three Homeowner Associations. Overall, 1,394 invasive plants were removed, and 120 native plants were installed.
Land Management	
Habitat Restoration	Staff and volunteers planted approximately 3,000 native plants in the Medway, Sam Hamilton, Kotrla, Cuevas, and Bunten tracts. Approximately 560 linear feet of berms and swales were constructed on the Medway tract in December. Staff and the Texas Conservation Corps conducted prescriptive tree thinning to encourage oak regeneration and used the slash to create brush berms on degraded slopes on the Medway tract. A contractor, Heritage Tree Care, installed 70 trees in the canopy restoration project area at the Woods of Greenshores conservation easement. Brush management to enhance black-capped vireo habitat occurred on the Kotrla Unit and the Vireo Ridge tract. A contractor hand-cleared and chipped an 8-acre area on the Kotrla Unit, and staff used a forestry mower to add lanes in a previously restored area on the Vireo Ridge tract.

Oak Wilt Mitigation	An oak wilt center on the Woods of Greenshores conservation easement was trenched in December. Approximately 1,870 feet of trenching was completed.
Fence, Road, and Trail Construction and Maintenance	A contractor, Sundt, made repairs to 4.7 miles of primitive service roads in the Jollyville and Cypress Creek Units. A new gate and 190 feet of fence were installed on the Snowden tract. A new gate and 128 feet of fence were installed on the Wheless tract. 430 feet of new fence was installed along the Saldivar tract boundary.
Buildings	A contract was awarded to HCS, Inc., for the construction of the second-floor office space remodel at the BCP building. Jackson and McElhaney Architects continued to work on the development of construction plans and pursued permitting for the Travis County BCP Visitor Center, located on the first floor and grounds of the BCP building. The contractor, Huitt-Zollars, Inc., worked on design plans for an equipment storage building that will be located on the Nootsie tract. A geotechnical report and 50% design documents were submitted to the County for review.
Conservation Easements	Four annual reviews were conducted on BCP conservation easements.
Wildlife Preparedness	Staff conducted winter storm Mara tree damage clean up in the shaded fuel breaks at the Trails End West and Romberg tracts, and the Lime Creek Unit; Lake Travis Fire and Rescue cleaned up damage at the Canyon Vista tract and at the Steiner Ranch conservation easement; The Texas Conservation Corps installed new shaded fuel breaks at the Greenshores and Cuevas tracts, and cleaned up storm damage on the Vireo Ridge tract; ESD4 completed a shaded fuel break on the Woods of Greenshores conservation easement. Staff conducted brush pile burning on the Kotrla Unit to reduce the fuel load created by vireo habitat restoration efforts.
Utility Infrastructure Corridors	The Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA), Austin Energy, and the Pedernales Electric Cooperative (PEC) conducted routine inspections and vegetation clearing along their transmission lines, which cross through the BCP. LCRA conducted road maintenance on the Karnik tract to improve access to their utility lines. Travis County and LCRA signed an Interlocal Cooperative Agreement regarding maintenance of this shared access road. PEC de-energized, removed lines, and cut poles on a distribution line which was no longer needed on the Volente tract. PEC is working with Travis County to realign a utility line from the interior of the Lake Perspectives tract to along Bullick Hollow Road. This move will help reduce wildfire risk for the BCP and is better for protected species. It is currently in the planning stages.

Patrol and Law Enforcement	
Trespass and Property Damage	Surveillance cameras documented 80 trespassers on nine tracts. There were three trespasser encounters with staff and two criminal trespass warnings were issued. There were three incidents of fence damage due to vehicle collisions on the Lucas tract. There were two incidents of dumping on the Molberg and Cuevas tracts. Stolen mail was found on two occasions at the SAS tract. A tree cutting incident on the Steiner Ranch conservation easement was resolved with the offending party providing restitution for the damages.
Outreach/Volunteers	
See *BCP Partner Education Summary Report for FY2025, October 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025*	





City and County staff improved habitat for Jollyville Plateau salamanders by removing vegetative debris clogging tributaries of upper Bull Creek. Photos show before (left) and after (right) the cleanup at one of the sites.





Repairs and improvements were made on 4.7 miles of primitive BCP roads. While most of the roads are now flexbase (left), concrete pavement was used on steep areas (right).



Staff conducted brush pile burning on the Kotrla Unit to reduce the fuel load created by vireo habitat restoration efforts.

BCCP Administration	
Public Participation	Twenty-seven Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan (BCCP) applications were received and processed, and nine Incidental Take Permits were issued. A total of $210,400.00 in mitigation payments were received and split 50:50 between Travis County and the City of Austin.
Personnel	Madison Ebest was promoted from Natural Resources Tech to Natural Resources Specialist in April. In May, Cara Wade and Alexandra Thompson switched job duties. Cara is now the Environmental Specialist Senior - Conservation Program and Alexandra is the Environmental Specialist - BCCP Administration. April Rose was hired in July as the Environmental Project Manager - Outreach. April was previously with the Travis County Parks division. Natural Resources Tech, Audrey Gray, left employment with Travis County in July. Carlos Leos was hired as a Natural Resources Specialist Senior in August and will lead the Patrol Team. Logan Kirk worked as a Mickey Leland intern from May to September. In September, Valarie Gabbard was hired as a Natural Resources Specialist working on climate resilience planning and habitat restoration projects. Spring season temporary Natural Resources Techs, Addison Denton, Makayla Timms, and Reese Williford completed their term in September. Winter season temporary Natural Resources Techs, Joseph Garcia, Orianis Moore, and CJ Williams started their term in September.
Rare and Endangered Resources Management	
Golden-cheeked Warblers	Natural Resources staff (Staff), contractor Jennifer Reidy, and volunteers conducted golden-cheeked warbler intensive plot, enumeration, and presence/absence surveys during March through June on Travis County BCP and Parks land. Fifteen golden-cheeked warblers were color banded this season on Travis County BCP intensive survey plots. Color banding aids in identification of individuals while surveying.
Black-capped vireos	Black-capped vireo surveys were conducted from March through September. Fifty-eight territories were identified this year on Travis County BCP, Parks, and conservation easement lands. This is the highest number of territories recorded on County properties since the inception of the BCP. County and City of Austin staff banded 111 black-capped vireos this season on Travis County properties, including 74 nestlings.

Karst Invertebrates	Staff performed spring season faunal surveys at six BCCP-listed caves. Summer season surveys were conducted at seven BCCP-listed caves and two additional endangered species caves. Spring season cricket exit counts were performed at four BCCP-listed caves. Summer season exit counts were conducted at six BCCP-listed caves and one additional endangered species cave. Zara Environmental completed excavation activities that were partially funded by the Texas Department of Transportation as part of a mitigation project for impacts to Karst Zone 1 habitat along FM 620. Excavation work was conducted in Amber, Kretschmarr, Encinal, North Root, Root, and Two Trunks Caves. During these efforts, *Texella reyesi* was collected from Two Trunks Cave, representing a newly documented location for this endangered harvestman.
Salamanders	Following the July 4th rains, Jollyville Plateau salamanders were documented on the Wheless tract at Long Hollow Creek. With help from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the City of Austin salamander team, two individuals were found in a spring head of a creek that had been dry for at least the last five years.
Bats	Staff and volunteers deployed bat acoustic monitoring stations on the BCP and have begun reviewing the recordings. Staff swabbed bats and cave wall surfaces to test for the presence of the fungus that causes white-nose syndrome. The samples have been sent to the Pathogen and Microbiome Institute at Northern Arizona University for processing.
Rare Plants	Staff began a Texas amorpha (*Amorpha roemeriana*) population survey to determine its distribution on the Jollyville Unit.
Plant and Animal Management	
Bird Banding	Staff completed the third year of a Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship (MAPS) banding effort on the New Life tract. Staff captured, banded, and collected data on 56 new birds and 26 previously banded birds representing 15 different species between May and July.
Brown-headed cowbirds	Natural Resources staff, Parks staff, and volunteers operated nine cowbird traps from April through June. Three new sites were added this year: one on the Kotrla Unit and two at Pace Bend Park. A total of 126 cowbirds were captured.
White-tailed deer	Staff conducted camera deer surveys on the Jollyville Unit in September. Deer spotlight surveys began on the Kotrla Unit and Hamilton Pool Preserve/Reimers Ranch Park in September and will continue through October.
Feral Hogs	Staff trapped and harvested 26 feral hogs on the BCP: 18 from the Woody Hollow tract and eight from the Sam Hamilton East tract.

Invasive Ants	Staff treated 48 red imported fire ant mounds at four BCCP-listed caves. University of Texas researcher, Dr. Ed LeBrun, continued microsporidian pathogen inoculation and monitoring of the rediscovered tawny crazy ant population at No Rent and Weldon Caves. Travis County staff conducted ant density sampling within those caves during the spring and summer faunal surveys. Notably, no ants were observed, and at this time the inoculation appears to be effective in reducing ant densities. The tawny crazy ant infestation first detected at Sandy Creek Park in September 2024, has continued spreading north and west and, as of July 2025, had reached the Trails End tract. Dr. Ed LeBrun's lab is monitoring this population for potential inoculation.
Invasive Plants	Staff, contractors, and volunteers removed 16,613 invasive plants from 11 BCP tracts. In addition, staff continued treating Johnson grass, bamboo, wisteria, and Japanese honeysuckle on various tracts. Heritage Tree Care conducted a follow-up treatment of Johnson grass control at the Crossings conservation easement.
Land Stewardship	
Habitat Restoration	During the summer, climate resiliency restoration field work was limited to seed collection and watering, caging, and mulching native plants that were planted in restoration areas during the previous year. Five acres of black-capped vireo habitat were restored on the Flying K tract, and maintenance mowing was conducted on existing vireo habitat on the Vireo Ridge tract.
Fence and Road Repairs	In September, the contractor, Sundt, began repairs on the primitive service roads in the Kotrla and Bull Creek Units. The road on the Medway tract was paved by a neighbor who has an access easement through the property.
Facilities	A contract was awarded to HCS, Inc., for the construction of the second-floor office space remodel at the BCP Building. The 100% construction documents for the first-floor Visitor Center are almost complete, and a bid package should go out this winter. A pipe gate was installed along the BCP Building driveway as added security. A new native plant nursery structure was installed on the BCP Building grounds. Internet was installed at the Snowden House. The Nootsie maintenance building had new security cameras installed. A heavy equipment storage building planned for the Nootsie grounds is in the design and permitting phase.
Conservation Easements	Ten annual reviews were conducted on BCP conservation easements. All of the property owners were in compliance with the easement rules.

Wildfire Mitigation	During the summer, staff flagged treatment areas in the wildland-urban interface in preparation for fall and winter fuel mitigation work. Staff resumed shaded fuel break maintenance on the Greenshores tract in September.
Utility Infrastructure Corridors	Pedernales Electric Cooperative (PEC) and Travis County are working on agreements to permit the realignment of a PEC utility line on the Lake Perspectives tract from the interior of the BCP to the BCP edge along Bullick Hollow Road. The Lower Colorado River Authority conducted transmission line inspections on the Ribelin and Sam Hamilton East tracts in September.
Water Quality	On September 3, 2025, a damaged City of Austin force main pipe on the southeast corner of 8600 N FM 620 was discovered that was discharging sewage onto the ground and into an adjacent stormwater drain. Approximately 8,400 gallons of untreated sewage flowed into the preserve at SAS Canyon and into the tributary affecting three springs. Remediation is ongoing.
Flood Damage	The July 4th flood caused considerable tree and fence damage on the Kotrla Unit. Staff assisted with the cleanup efforts in the Sandy Creek area.
Patrol and Law Enforcement	
Trespass and Property Damage	A break-in and some property theft occurred at the maintenance building located on the BCP Building grounds in May. Some stolen copper was discovered on the Collins tract in July. Both investigations are ongoing. Thirty-four Courtesy Notices were issued to BCP neighbors for minor back-of-lot violations, such as dumping yard waste, and mowing, weed-eating or using herbicides on the BCP. Two Criminal Trespass Warnings were issued to trespassers.
Outreach/Volunteers	
See *BCP Partner Education Summary FY24 Biannual Report for April 1 – September 30, 2025*	



This male hatch-year golden-cheeked warbler was banded at the MAPS banding station on the New Life tract in 2023 and was re-sighted this year on the Davenport tract, a distance of about 1.25 miles from its orignal capture site. He was followed during an enumeration survey and was known to have established a territory and raise at least three fledglings.