



Balcones Preserves Trail Master Plan Stakeholder Committee Meeting

September 23, 2008 6:00-8:00pm

Waller Creek Center, Austin Water Utility

1. Welcome and Review Trail Master Planning Process Timeline – Mike Hockmuller

Mike reminded the group that there are only three more stakeholder meetings before the final Trail Master Plan document will be due to the BCCP Coordinating Committee.

2. Mapping Exercise in Small Groups – Mike Hockmuller

The stakeholders continued the mapping exercise from the September 9th meeting in the following groups:

<u>Group 1</u>	<u>Group 2</u>	<u>Group 3</u>
Jeff Mundy Sheila Holbrook-White Rusty Ray Jeb Boyt	Yates Barreda Valarie Bristol Judi Ronkartz Scott Rowin David Steed Peter Torgrimson	Gabe Ayson Kevin Connelly Willy Conrad Gary Rochelle Bill Seawell

Some groups had membership changes from the September 9th meeting due to stakeholder attendance. City of Austin BCP staff members Lisa O'Donnell, Bill Reiner, Mark Sanders, and Dolph Scott were on hand to answer questions about BCP properties.

3. Debrief Mapping Exercise and Determine Ins, Maybes, and Outs – Mike Hockmuller

Mike asked the stakeholders to share their comments on the mapping exercise.

Stakeholder Comments

- *It was brutal.*
- *Avoiding habitat and karst were our biggest considerations.*
- *We had a shift in group membership since the last meeting, and our list changed as a consequence. Our new group members had experience with some of the properties and we made some changes on those as a result.*
- *It was useful to have BCP staff present to discuss property specifics.*

Representatives from each group shared their classifications for each tract on a poster-sized chart. Group 1 did not reach consensus on some tracts. Results for all three groups are found on the following page.

<u>Macrosite</u>	<u>Tract</u>	<u>In</u>	<u>Maybe</u>	<u>Out</u>
Barton Creek	Barton Creek Greenbelt	1 2 3		
	Barton Creek Wilderness Preserve	1 2 3		
	Barton Creek Wilderness Preserve	1 2 3		
	Barton Creek Wilderness Preserve	1 2 3		
	Barton Creek Wilderness Preserve	1 2 3		
	Bohls II			2 3
	Friesenhahn	1 2		3
	Senna Hills		1 2	3

Bull Creek	3M	3	2	
	Barrow	2		3
	Beard Trust			2 3
	Bowman			2 3
	Bull Creek Greenbelt	1 2 3		
	Bull Creek Park	1 2 3		
	Canyon Ck		2 3	
	Canyon Ck 2		2	3
	Canyon Ck 3			2 3
	Canyon Ck 4			2 3
	Forest Ridge/Bull Creek Park	1 2 3		
	Franklin			1 2 3
	Gardens at Bull Creek		3	1 2
	Hanks		3	2
	Hiller			2 3
	Hilltop			1 3
	Ivanhoe		3	1 2
	Jester	2 3		
	Krueger			2 3
	Lanier			2 3
	St. Edward	1 2 3		
	Stillhouse Hollow	1 2		3
	WTP4			1 2 3
	WTP4			1 2 3

Cypress Creek	Austin Simon		1	2 3
	Lime Creek		1	2 3

North Lake Austin	Coldwater		3	1 2
	Coldwater		3	1 2
	Coldwater		3	1 2
	Cortana	1 3	2	
	Emma Long Park	1 2 3		
	Long Canyon		3	1 2
	Park West		3	1 2

South Lake Austin	Bohls	1 3	2	
	Commons Ford	1 2		3
	Double J & T	2 3	1	
	Double J & T	2 3	1	
	Double J & T	2 3	1	
	Reicher Ranch	1 3	2	
	Sansom	2 3	1	
	Schramm Ranch	3		1 2

West Austin	Barton Creek Greenbelt	1 2 3		
	Mt. Bonnell			1 2 3
	Ulrich WTP			1 2 3
	Vireo Research Area		1 2 3	

Mike said the stakeholder group's next task was to attempt to reach agreement on the "In" tracts that have a potential for trails in the future.

Group Comments on Specific Tracts

- Barton Creek
 - Our group focused on restoration potential on existing trails.
 - We talked about mitigation and whether or not we need to "tighten" some of the informal trails to make the trail system more cohesive.
 - There's a lot of opportunity for enhancing authorized trails and closing/restoring unauthorized trails.

- Bohls II
 - This tract has a very dangerous entrance along Highway 71 and this creates access issues.

- Friesenhahn
 - This tract is immediately across 360 from Barton Creek Mall (near Walsh Tarleton). There is no parking, and access is directly off the highway and dangerous. We thought it was not a candidate based on this access/infrastructure issue.
 - There could be other access points from existing trails.
 - On the ground there is no way to distinguish this tract from Barton Creek. There is unauthorized camping on this site and our group thought getting trails there would help manage this problem.

- 3M
 - We thought that this site was given to the City with the provision of no recreation. (The group agreed that this is unclear and needs to be researched.)
 - We categorized this tract as "Maybe" because we understood that it is part of the existing authorized trail route from Forest Ridge to St. Edward that is already managed by the BCP.
 - We have several years of existing access (authorized and unauthorized) on this tract.
 - We proposed existing uses staying the same and adding biking access experimentally for Forest Ridge, Bull Creek, Jester, and 3M.

- Canyon Creek 1-4
 - These tracts have high concentrations of karst.
 - Canyon Creek 1 and 2 are less dense in karst features and bird sightings, so we labeled them as "Maybe."
 - Bull Creek macrosite is biologically difficult to hold a trail, with the exception of the dually managed lands.

- Bowman
 - This tract is adjacent to WTP4 and adjoins the Concordia development.
 - This tract has a high concentration of karst.

- Franklin
 - Jollyville Plateau salamanders and karst are found on this site.
- Gardens at Bull Creek
 - This site has a water retention pond.
- Hanks, Hiller, and Hiltop
 - These sites do not have high potential for trails.
- Ivanhoe
 - This tract is encumbered by five or six HCP permits for private development elsewhere. Each permit would have to be amended to allow public access, so trails are very unlikely.
- Jester
 - We talked about this tract in the broader context of the Forest Ridge system. We'd keep the existing trails and add mountain biking as an experimental use.
 - We wanted restoration on existing trails in the area. We didn't talk about mountain biking on those tracts.
 - We talked about the possibility of Gabe's trail running crew taking over sponsorship on this tract.
- Kruger
 - This tract is outside of the Forest Ridge trail system.
- St. Edward
 - This tract has existing parkland and is grandfathered.
- Cypress Creek
 - These tracts have significant amounts of karst, warbler habitat, and vireo habitat.
- North Lake Austin
 - We said "Maybe" on all tracts (except Emma Long) because we didn't feel comfortable saying "No" forever.
- Cortaña
 - We said "Maybe" because we were concerned about having to go through habitat for access.
 - Riverplace is scheduled for annexation to the City of Austin, and its community parks will become city parks. One of those parks is adjacent to Cortaña and could be a good access point in the future.
- Long Canyon and Park West
 - These tracts are very significant biologically.

- Bohls
 - We said “Maybe” because wastewater treatment is going in at the southern portion of the tract and may make access difficult.
 - It is possible that Bohls won’t have the access point, but it could join up with a trail on Reicher.
- Commons Ford
 - This tract was grandfathered, so it is not a possibility.
- Reicher Ranch
 - We thought that if a trail was on this site, the public would still have access when Wildland Conservation offices are closed, and this could result in vandalism.
 - We looked at the border of Bohls and Reicher. We thought the opposite of the other group. Having BCP staff around could prevent vandalism and unauthorized activity.
- Sansom
 - This is a very small site.
- Schramm Ranch
 - We said “In” because we considered South Lake Austin macrosite as a block.
 - We said “Out” because of permit issues.
- Vireo Research Area
 - We said “Maybe” depending on if it works as vireo habitat.
 - Potential trail access could be through Wild Basin.
 - Volunteers from Wild Basin could be interested in stewarding a trail there.

Stakeholder Questions/Comments

- *Most of the tracts we’ve agreed on as “In” already have trails. The issues will be sustainability and how to make existing trails better. Cortaña and the South Lake Austin tracts are really the only tracts that don’t have trails now.*
- *We already have problems with erosion, trash, and illegal access on Barton Creek Greenbelt. How can we propose more trails there? Willy said in order to move forward from consideration to action, a group will be required to steward the trail. If action is not followed through, the process can be reversed. For example, Bull Creek Foundation is the group stewarding one of the new trails that came about from the WQPL trail planning process. Willy noted that he has periodically brought issues to their concern, and they have always acted on them.*
- *Question to Barton Creek Greenbelt Guardians and BCP staff: Do you see concentrations of litter in certain areas on the greenbelt? Yes, it concentrates by the main creek, trailheads, and near streets.*

- *From this discussion, it seems like we need to demonstrate that we can take care of what we've got before we add additional trails.*
- *Austin Parks and Recreation Department has not been attending meetings since we began our science discussions. They acknowledge the unauthorized trails at Barton Creek Greenbelt as part of their system. We need to get them involved in this discussion to get them onboard. A new PARD director will start working in the next few weeks.*
- *What will this group's work product look like? Willy said the product will include a listing of proposed trails and activities, the management constraints, and the resources that will be needed to make it happen. Based on the WQPL model, we would negotiate a specific agreement when sponsors come forward for specific trails.*

Mike recapped the four blocks of sites with highest potential for trails as determined at tonight's meeting:

- Barton Creek macrosite – Barton Creek Greenbelt and Wilderness Preserve
- Bull Creek macrosite - Forest Ridge, Bull Creek Greenbelt, Barton Creek Park, Jester, and St. Edward (3M is unclear due to issue discussed tonight)
- North Lake Austin macrosite - Cortaña and Emma Long
- South Lake Austin macrosite – Bohls, Commons Ford, Double J & T, Reicher Ranch, and Sansom

4. Next Steps – Mike Hockmuller

Our next stakeholder meeting is next **Tuesday, October 7th 6:00-8:00pm** in Waller Creek Center room 104.

The next logistics meeting is Tuesday, September 30th at 2:00pm. The meeting is at the Learning and Research Center, and a link to MapQuest directions is found here:

<<http://www.mapquest.com/maps/2800+Spirit+of+Texas+Dr+Austin+TX+78719-2354>>.