



## **Water Quality Protection Lands Stakeholder Committee Meeting**

July 14, 2009 6:00-8:30pm

Waller Creek Center, Austin Water Utility

### **1. Introduction and Program Updates – Kevin Thuesen**

Kevin gave a brief history of WQPL for the benefit of new stakeholders. He said the Water Quality Protection Lands were created with bond purchases by the Austin Water Utility starting in 1998 with the goal of purchasing 15,000 acres in fee simple and conservation easements to protect water quality and quantity reaching Barton Springs. By October 1999, 14,916 acres had been purchased. Grants and additional bonds issued in 2006 and other funding helped purchase an additional 8,739 acres, bringing the current total to 23,655 acres.

The WQPL are managed to produce the optimal amount of water from project lands to recharge the Barton Springs segment of the Edwards Aquifer. Management of the WQPLs is guided by a Land Management Plan, which is currently being revised. WQPL landscape goals are prairie and savanna restoration with some riparian restoration along creeks. Kevin said the goals aim for less than 30% woody cover for savannas and less than 15% woody cover for grasslands. The benefit of such vegetation types is that they yield both additional water and water of a higher quality. Tools used by the program include mechanical thinning, over-seeding of native grasses, prescribed fire, karst management, and others. The WQPLs also support open space, carbon sequestration, public access, and a host of other ecosystem services.

The WQPL Stakeholder Steering Committee (SSC) was formed to recommend what public uses and activities would be allowed, where they would be allowed, and how the access would be funded and maintained. The SSC followed guiding principals including the following: no access granted or precluded on conservation easements, any access occurring on the lands should have negative impacts mitigated with the goal of having no net loss to water quality or quantity (and hopefully a net gain), WQPL cannot become parkland in name or intent, access must support the mission of WQPL, and funding for more than education-related access is beyond the mandate of the Austin Water Utility. SSC Meetings began in September 2000 with formal recommendations submitted in May 2001. SSC recommendations were presented to the Water and Wastewater Commission for advisory approval and then to City Council for final approval. Kevin said we will follow the same recommendation process with the Walk For a Day trail.

### **2. New Properties Overview and Sensitivities: Lower Bear & Little Bear – Steve Windhager**

Steve said the Wildflower Center led the development of the management plan for the WQPL. He said in doing so they have aimed to strike a balance between optimizing the amount of water entering the aquifer and also ensuring that it is clean water. He said his team has several priorities in conducting the suitability analysis. He said the WQPL landscape is diverse, and some areas are more suitable than others for effectively designing a trail. Water quality and quantity must be protected and soil erosion must be minimized. There are a number of karst features out there. Some are sinkholes that have some soil, and others are open holes in the ground that are direct conduits to the aquifer. These features have similar sensitivities to pollution. We also want to avoid impacting land management activities that improve the lands for water quantity and quality.

We should ask ourselves if there are ways that a trail could benefit land management. For example, maybe a trail could be used as part of a fire break. Finally, we need to protect sensitive areas including endangered species habitat and karst features. Even though it may not be the direct mission of the WQPL, the federal law requires it.

Steve said his team will soon begin field testing a 300-foot wide corridor that he presented in his presentation. At the last stakeholder meeting, he talked about the weighted overlay that presented suitability issues. Steve said he is confident that there is much more on these lands that his team doesn't know about. They will begin the fieldwork at the end of July to see if a trail can be safely routed there.

- *It looks like the bulkiest areas of the corridor are starting just below the Travis County line. Where are you going to begin your analysis?* Steve said he will probably begin at Hays County Ranch because it is a very sensitive area and there are not a lot of options for a trail.

Steve said his team will bring the information learned from fieldwork back to the stakeholders. It will require extensive field inventory that wouldn't have been able to be done without the funding from the City.

#### Lower Bear Creek management unit

Wenzel is an 85-acre quarry site. At the bottom of the quarry, it is attached to the aquifer. When the aquifer is high, there is water in the bottom of the quarry. Hays County Ranch is really brushy overall, but has some open grasslands as well. It also has very interesting persimmon, yaupon holly, and mountain laurel thickets. The northern part of Hays County Ranch was chained by bulldozers at some point in the past to knock down all of the vegetation. This got rid of the Ashe juniper, but the persimmon, yaupon holly, and mountain laurel grew back in impenetrable thickets. All three are resprouting species that can resprout from the roots if cut at the ground level.

Most of the grasslands are primarily native. Golden-cheeked warblers and black-capped vireos have been sighted. They probably were transitory birds and not nesting pairs. The land was purchased because of the abundance of karst features including large caves. One of the karst features has a surrounding pond that a ranch owner created a long time ago. The area has a significant population of feral hogs, which are being managed with trapping. Safety will definitely be an issue. Steve said the area is divided into six management units. Kevin said the stakeholders will drive by a 250-acre prescribed fire that was recently done on this area on Saturday. Steve said prescribed fire is an effective technique for controlling woody expansion that is also cost-effective.

Steve showed the stakeholders a map of bird sightings.

- *Are the vireos migratory as well?* Yes, and they are both primarily here in the spring and summer. Willy said the vireos linger in September, but the warblers leave around the beginning of August.

Long-term ecological research is occurring on the site, and there are also work areas for staff equipment. Steve showed the suitability map for Lower Bear and Little Bear. He said sensitive areas were purposely blurred and appear larger because this map will be available to the public.

In 2001, the stakeholders recommended that this portion of WQPL would be used primarily for hunting and education, and that is how the area has been used. There was a conditional recommendation for hiking and mountain biking only if the first phase uses were successful and trails were successfully implemented on other sites.

Willy noted that the WQPL Conceptual Plan also stated that the stakeholders could reconsider decisions after seven years. Steve said the group was scheduled to have revisited these decisions on use by no later than 2008 according to the plan. Willy added that part of the reasoning for that agreement was because we had limited knowledge about the natural resources. It was also understood that once resource management techniques (related to trails) were in place things could change.

Steve said on Bull Creek we have seen minimal negative effects from the trail barring some vandalism of monitoring equipment.

### Little Bear management unit

Little Bear was purchased in 2008 and was one of the most expensive conservation deals in Texas. It was saved from development purposes, and Steve said it was a very good purchase. The land is primarily dominated by King Ranch (KR) bluestem, which is a nonnative species from Eurasia. There is also a fairly healthy live oak population and many young junipers are coming in. It will be a thicket in the not too distant future if nothing is done. There is also a lot of mountain laurel and Texas persimmon on the site. It is in the recharge zone of the Edwards aquifer, and much of these show evidence of the Edwards formation on the surface. This suggests there are many karst features.

- *How does the brushiness of the land affect the ability of the karst features to percolate the water? Why is that a bad thing?* Steve said it is not necessarily a bad thing, but woody species in general use more water than grasses do. A general rule is that if the woody canopy is kept below thirty percent, there are remarkable increases in the amount of water running off into the aquifer. Ten to fifteen percent woody canopy is even better. Ashe juniper is a non-resprouting species, so it is a good one to control. Oak is not an easy one to get rid of because it resprouts.

Steve said Little Bear is not great warbler habitat, but there have been some vireo sightings. He said there were no recommendations made for this land in 2001 because the City did not own it.

Steve said the sites in the upper end are fairly similar and he guesses that this area wouldn't have been recommended for trails in 2001 because of the karst features. He said it probably would have been conditionally recommended for later uses like Lower Bear.

- *What is your estimated plan for how wide the trail will be?* Steve said it won't be uniform everywhere. Chuck said he would address that in his presentation.

### **3. Planning Considerations for WFAD – Chuck Flink**

Chuck represents Greenways, Inc., which was established in 1986 and is based out of North Carolina. They have worked on trails in 35 states and overseas. Chuck said their specialties are trail design and open space, green planning, and bike paths. In Austin, Chuck has worked on Shoal Creek, Waller Creek, and Walnut Creek. Hill Country Conservancy hired Greenways to do trail planning for the length of the Walk For a Day trail.

Chuck said many of his comments will be directed toward WQPL tonight, but his charge is to consider the entire length of the WFAD trail. The Greenways philosophy focuses on low impact and sustainable design. Chuck said the standards for this trail are ones that he has worked with quite a bit. The goal is to balance sustainable trail design with the protection of the environment.

Chuck said that in his conversations with Hill Country Conservancy, they have grouped the trail into three segments: the Barton Creek greenbelt, Sunset Valley, and Water Quality Protection Lands.

Chuck said we need to ensure that that objective of WQPL is achieved while we also try to accomplish public access. He said that after visiting the lands, he really understands how spectacular they are and that the landscape is rapidly disappearing. He was struck by how sensitive the landscape is. Farming, ranching, and invasive species have changed it over time.

The karst features vary widely on this land. Even after construction, karst features may be uncovered and the trail may need to move again. He said it's better to take it slow and do it correctly the first time.

Chuck said he was asked to give some examples of where his team has encountered similar environmental situations. He said he worked with the National Park Service on the Grand Canyon Greenway project over a ten-year period. They implemented a 72-mile network of trails on the north and south rim of the Grand Canyon. The NPS mandate was to "design and build a timeless, low impact network of rim-top trails." Chuck talked about the experience of people only taking a photo in front of the canyon and then leaving. The goal was for them to get out and explore the area without destroying the very thing that they wanted everyone to enjoy.

He said much of the trail construction was done by hand. Environmental restoration was a part of the project to mitigate the impact on the environment and make the trail look like it had always been there. There were so many social trails on the South Rim and they needed to encourage people to stay on the official trails. Chuck said his team wanted to narrow the impact zone and decided to go with an all-weather surface to keep people on the trail.

Chuck said we want the WFAD trail to be a fun and stimulating experience, but at the same time we need to protect the resources. He said he saw in the notes from the last meeting that stakeholders agreed with that statement. The trail system is not going to be all things to all people. It is a given that the trail environment will be restricted. Even though the trail will be going north and south, we want lateral linkages wherever possible. Walk For a Day has a chance to become an extension of a healthy lifestyle that has been a part of Austin for so many decades.

Good examples of urban trails are found in Sunset Valley. The trails there will be wider and will accommodate multiple user groups. In the WQPLs, hiking and possibly mountain biking are the only uses that may be possible without negatively affecting the environment.

- *We are in critical drought right now, so the lands look vastly different than they did two years ago.* Chuck said it really is all about management, and design will only go so far.
- *Can you speak of the distinction between a hiking trail and a mountain biking trail and their potential impacts?* The amount of use and wear will vary, but tread will probably be about the same size. Chuck said he saw at Grand Canyon that foot traffic alone can pulverize rock. Cycling does the same thing and adds the torque and tire configuration to that. Chuck said he can't say that one is more impactful than the other. He said he's an advocate of prepared structure surfaces (native or not) because he knows that the impact from the trail will be there eventually. He said he's not sure that there will be much difference in impact from the water quality perspective between hiking and mountain biking, but the user experience may be a differentiator. Chuck said everyone should be a trail steward, not just City staff.
- *Are you suggesting that there could be two separate trails for hiking and biking, which would double the impact?* Chuck said he's not ruling it out. He will conduct three public workshops.

He said he's in the mode where he wants to listen. He wants to capture what trail experience people in this community want to have.

Willy said we must plan ahead for how user groups will want to use this trail. He said he initially had the same reaction when he heard that option, but he said that with poorly designed and managed trails, we can end up with two trails or ten trails (like Barton Creek) in some places. Willy said it may be a more responsible way for the trail to be managed.

- *When you use the term "prepared tread", are you talking about preparing the natural surface tread or adding surface material?* Chuck said there is a wide range of options. Rather than leaving it up to users to decide where the tread goes, he'd rather start with a tread that has been constructed to support the use. Chuck said he is also working in Durango, Colorado and having a similar conversation there. The natural surface trails are having a large impact to the environment and the wildlife.
- *Have you toured Barton Creek or other places in the Austin area where nonnatural materials were used for trail building and that has plugged up recharge features? These landscapes have been damaged by the exact thing you are proposing.* Chuck said yes, he has looked at places like Barton Creek and Shoal Creek where issues like this are occurring. Chuck said educational and outdoor classrooms are another aspect to the management plan. As our population becomes more and more ignorant of the natural resources, we need to show people the water source and use it as an opportunity for education.

Chuck said trailheads are very important and they are very high impact zones. People will need to park, which means very polluting devices will be brought on to the land. We will have to think about how to mitigate the impact of cars being there. There will also be high impact zones around the trailheads, creating a more intense impact.

For urban trails, trail tread is generally wider. He recommends a minimum width of ten feet to accommodate all users. The surface should support frequent use and he recommends using a prepared surface. Chuck showed the stakeholders a picture of decomposed granite.

- *Is there a possibility that you avoid using decomposed granite? It washes into creeks during flood events and clogs karst features. I'd prefer natural, native materials.* Chuck said his team will definitely look into that and that decomposed granite would be considered for urban zones only and not WQPL. Willy said no decisions have been made about anything being on or off the table.
- *There are many other materials we can use. There are binders for decomposed granite and soil stabilizers. Among this group, we have a lot of shared knowledge we can utilize when choosing materials.*
- *Is the ten-foot width edge to edge of the granite? Yes, with an additional two-foot shoulder for safety on each side.*
- *How do you go about building a trail like that?* Chuck said he likes to make sure the urban trails will be there for a long time. They use a geotextile fabric to support the sub grade so that it doesn't disappear, which would cause the surface to collapse. Then they add a surface course on top. Those are the three components of the trail. Chuck said he prefers to use native materials when possible.
- *Is the sub grade permeable?* Chuck said yes, it is designed to move water through. The geotextile fabric also helps to keep the surface stable.

Chuck said more rural trails (such as those that could be built on WQPL) are narrower. Four feet is suitable for hiking, and mountain biking trails are sometimes even narrower. The tread can be natural surface and will require constant management. The tread can be prepared using a soil binder and should be matched to user needs. The goal is to create a surface that will keep people on the tread rather than getting off of the trail.

He said in terms of management and operations, we must consider trail users' safety and security as well as resource protection. Chuck said he has been talking with Public Works staff to determine the cost to maintain this trail in the short-term and long run. His team is writing a management plan for the trail while they are also planning the design of the trail. Chuck said it will traverse through a multijurisdictional area that currently does not have a definition of which emergency services would respond to trail users. That issue is already being discussed and worked on. Chuck also mentioned the concept of establishing and possibly rotating use zones if high impact is occurring.

Chuck said his team will be working on the Walk For a Day plan over the next four or five months, but even after that time, we won't have all of the answers. More will be learned as construction begins. It's important to be flexible and keep in mind the goal of protecting the resource vigorously while also accommodating public access.

George mentioned that Sunset Valley will be hosting a public workshop about Walk For a Day on August 5<sup>th</sup>. Chuck and Steve will both be in attendance.

George also mentioned that there will be statewide trails conference in Austin next January. He said it will be a great learning opportunity for the stakeholders. A few stakeholders are planning workshops and field visits for the conference.

#### **4. Initial Feedback from Stakeholder Steering Committee: Issues, Priorities, Concerns**

Sheila Balog is an organizational consultant with the City who will work through facilitation for this project. She asked the group what issues and concerns they have about the trail.

- *I used to go mountain biking on these lands on and was prohibited from going there because they were so sensitive. Now all of the sudden it seems they are not so sensitive. Short of building a giant fence, how are we going to keep people from wandering over to archeological sights and karst features? I'm mind boggled (comment from a member of the public).* Sheila said she heard two questions in the comment: first, what has changed and second, how will the trail be managed. She said it sounded like he was asking for the practical application of how this project will be done. Kevin said step one is identifying the sites for cultural resources, caves, and natural resources that we don't want people near. He said the stakeholders will see such areas on Saturday during the field trip. For the second part of the mentioned concerns, there will always be a small part of the population that will not follow rules or keep out of fences. That is where the management part becomes very important.

Willy said nothing has changed. In 2000, the City invested 73 million dollars in land to protect the aquifer. Today the investment is much closer to 125 million dollars. An important part of getting the most out of the investment is educating people in what it takes to protect and manage it, and that has always included getting people on the land. With respect to user management, Willy said City staff has brought in trail planners and other resources that they didn't have in 2000. He said his vision has always been that the trail won't just appear in six months. Operating the trail on less

sensitive sites will allow us to learn how we can do the same on the more sensitive sites. Willy said we all may learn that we can't achieve all of the things we hoped for and end up closing some part of the trail. He noted that things have changed about what we know about the land, but he has always told sponsors to "show [him] the money." He said before a trail is built, we need the understanding of where money will become available to build it and maintain it over time. Willy said that City Council members are the ultimate decision makers, but that has been his advice to them all along.

- *Expenses are another concern.*
- *I can see the trail potentially being a really wonderful thing, but it will take a lot of money and a very organized system of management. I'm glad to hear what you are saying, Willy. Willy said it will need to be a combination of hard endowment (money set aside to earn interest from) and soft endowment (volunteer resources, etc.). It will be an expensive and complex challenge.*
- *I have a specific concern about the location of trailheads. It makes sense to place a trailhead where it serves the most people. I can see that happening in my neighborhood. My neighbors would be concerned because of the traffic impact, because people may come into the neighborhood from other places, and because of the law of unintended consequences (for example, people coming to live in our neighborhood parks like what has happened in neighborhoods along Barton Creek).*
- *People will get to these places in their cars. We should consider that when the parking lot is at capacity, the trail is at capacity. But when we have trail spurs all over, the trail could get out of control.*
- *Yes, like the parking issue with Barton Creek. It spills onto 360 and even into the mall parking lot sometimes.*
- *How will the trail users get across Highway 290?*
- *Or Highway 45 when it is built? Kevin said the stakeholders will look at Highway 45 and also 967 on Saturday. The trail will also have to cross 967, which will eventually be widened to four lanes.*
- *In full disclosure, I don't represent a constituency and represent a role that is nebulous. I'm going to put on my neighborhood hat right now. I'd be tickled to be able to jump over my fence or walk to the trail from my house. It would minimize the need for giant amounts of parking. I think the idea of having spurs or loops is a great one. I think the Slaughter trail works well with having a limited number of parking spots. It would be hard to restrict pedestrians or bikers from going on the trail, but I don't think we would want to do that. Kevin said time will tell if Slaughter Creek has been done right. He said we haven't been able to test it yet. Willy said we have already prosecuted someone at Slaughter Creek for cutting the fence and creating a spur trail from their backyard. This even happens in areas that don't have trails. If staff wasn't managing the land, we wouldn't even know this was happening.*
- *Whose staff from what City will be paying people to manage and police? This is a real concern for me. I know this hasn't been determined yet. Charlie said the people signing up for this know about those issues and they won't do it if they can't handle those issues. Willy used the Bull Creek trail as an example. He said even though it is only a 1.5 mile trail, it is working. The City gets calls from trail users about social trails and by the time he or Kevin gets there, the trail stewards have already closed them. The soft endowment is working.*

- *But that trail is two miles, not thirty-five. I'm concerned that we are not doing what we agreed to do as a group. We have a tiny bit of experience and are making a big leap.* Willy said no decision has been made about Walk For a Day yet. A sponsor (HCC) came forward and made a proposal. It was a scary proposal, and staff spent a year just talking with HCC about what that vision would look like, and now it's time to involve the stakeholders. The City has great resources that they didn't have before. Willy said in his mind, staff is doing what they told the stakeholders they would do.
- *Is this an all or nothing situation in terms of money or could it be done in small segments as money becomes available?* Willy said we probably won't see any proposals to break ground on WQPL for three to five years. It's not all or nothing. He said we are asking you stakeholders to make recommendations to City Council.
- *It's helpful to me to hear as a stakeholder what you all have gone through. Please remember that we haven't met for several years, so we don't know what City staff and HCC have been doing. To hear you say, Willy, that you've wrestled with this for a long time puts my mind at ease. It builds trust about the process. When the trail was first introduced to us it sounded like a done deal. To hear you say it is not a done deal is very reassuring. It's wonderful that Steve and Chuck have been part of this. It's helpful and informative, but we haven't been involved in that process so we are just getting that information for the first time tonight. The more we know, the more we get comfortable with it. I know people don't want lots of meetings, but this is one of those projects that will require it. Right now you are seeing the results of us not having a lot of meetings. We have to rebuild trust so that we can all participate together.* Willy said he completely agrees. He said we feel like we have a responsibility to the stakeholders and the sponsor. If staff came forward with this one year ago, it could have pretty much killed Walk For a Day. He said that would have not been a responsible way to handle it.
- *I'm not saying that you should have come to us sooner, but we need to know and feel like we are going to be participants. At the last meeting it felt like we were just brought in to rubber stamp this. It doesn't feel like that now. Tonight has been a great meeting. Sheila has done a great job facilitating and the presentations have been very helpful.* Willy said at the last meeting we committed to more meetings and a field trip. At the next meeting we will have a more structured discussion about uses and issues like that. We will ask Chuck and Steve to come back to the group with a draft product. If we get to the end of the meeting on August 4 and the stakeholders are not ready to give a recommendation, we can have more meetings. We can't keep Chuck and Steve forever, but we can bring this group together as often as needed.
- *I think we will all come to an agreement that this is a good thing. However, just because we do that doesn't mean that we will be finished.* Willy said he spoke with George a year ago and said he thought something like Walk For a Day would exist eventually. He said he thought a regional trail was always at least a possibility. The City has spent 150 million dollars on WQPL wants people to be able to understand and experience it.
- *I have some comments about social trails. I've helped with trail maintenance at Wild Basin. It backs up to a good neighborhood, but it's still a battle. We were practically building walls along the trail to prevent social trails. I think the only thing that would keep people out of caves would be jailhouse gates.* Willy said they are putting such gates on caves already. He said Chuck has seen those problems in other parts of the country. We'll never eliminate it, but we need to manage it. Part of it is designing a trail that people will want to be on. We need a management plan, and we need to be able to fund it. The master trail plan will address these issues. Kevin

noted that what we see in Austin is not unique, and people are experiencing such issues all over the country.

- *Maybe in neighborhoods we could permit pedestrian access only so that anyone could exit the trail, but only neighborhood residents would have inbound access.* Willy said we don't want to make the trail exclusive. He said everyone in Austin paid for the land, and we shouldn't exclude anyone.
- *What will the trail corridor look like 30 to 40 years from now in terms of population density? The trail will be surrounded by subdivisions. For example, the Sunset Valley trails have infinite access and there is no way to change that. The other portions of the trail will be faced with the same issue. We need to be thinking about the systems we put in and how we will address these issues decades down the road.* Willy said he's thought about that issue a lot. For example, much of the City's BCP properties are in northwest Austin and surrounding development has already happened. He said there are still users who feel they can do whatever they want on the land. Maybe fifty years from now, people will have grown up with an established trail system and a surrounding community that understands the rules and the purpose of the land. Maybe then the management challenges will be different.
- *I think that points out that we need to encourage the communities along the way to take on that attitude and become partners to help manage the trail.*
- *I am concerned about the general public not acting responsibly. As a user, I would love to become more educated. I'd like to know what to do, what not to do, and how to be a more responsible trail user (comment from member of the public).* Willy said increasing education and outreach staff by 100% was one of the needs first identified. The trail system needs its own education and outreach component.
- *It probably goes without saying, but I don't see camping as an appropriate use. The trail would be better for day use. Also, I've worked in state parks. They require visitor permits and fees. Maybe something like that would help provide controls with education.*
- *I'm very in favor of an outreach program if there is a fee associated with the trail so that everyone has access. I think we all benefit from that sharing.*
- *Part of our basis for access to WQPL in the past was education and giving back to the land, and that really built a lot of responsible activity. Many of those people now lead tours, but this has been on a small scale. The people are trained and trustworthy.* Kevin said also part of the stewardship program was doing more than just on those specific areas of the WQPL. The aim was also for people to go home and do things there and to expand the outreach by talking with neighbors, family, and others.
- *I feel so strongly about those lands because of the training and volunteer hours I've completed there. I'm almost willing to die for those lands.*
- *I'm concerned about having multiple spurs and access points. I say that while being sympathetic of neighborhoods, but I see it as more of an adventure trail with very limited access for people would be willing to take a long hike to get to a beautiful spot. I'm hearing that no amount of education will prevent some of the degradation to the area if it is too easy to get to. We don't really want people to drive up and immediately be in a beautiful area.* Sheila said so maybe by having fewer access points and forcing people to take a longer hike, people might self-select out. Kevin said the stewards were able to go out to the middle of nowhere where there were no

other people and have wonderful experiences that were different than they would have had on a trail, but there is a balance there too between what the properties are about.

Chuck said he wanted to reinforce how the design process will work. He said from the past two meetings he got the sense that people felt that they are not in control of what is going on, but that is not true. He said the City is considering putting public access on this restricted landscape. He guaranteed that access will be phased in and adjustments and improvements will be made along the way. He said he and Steve are only trying to figure out what is possible and identify the parameters. He said they are studying the capacity of the land to accept public access. The participatory process will continue for another six months, and this community will decide what level of access will be permitted. Chuck said he wanted to reiterate that the stakeholders and the public who attend workshops are in control.

- *Concerning the idea about fee-based entrances to the trail, can we do that even though the land was purchased with public funding? To me that doesn't seem in line with public access. Another stakeholder said Barton Springs and state parks are examples of such lands that require fees for entrance. Willy said no decision has been made about fees and that is just one recommendation that has been made.*
- *Regarding the discussion about spurs and loops, my opinion is that if you add spurs into your design, you prevent social spurs from occurring. A loop trail is a more pleasant experience than an out and back trail.*

Sheila thanked the stakeholders and reminded them about tomorrow's Walk For a Day public meeting at the Wildflower Center. Kevin noted that the agendas for the public meeting and Saturday's WQPL field visit were in the meeting packet. He also reminded the stakeholders attending Saturday's field trip to wear sturdy boots, long pants, a hat, and sunscreen on Saturday. The group will meet at the Wildflower Center cistern at 8:00am to tour WQPL properties. He noted that no GPS units will be allowed because the group will be visiting caves.