

November 19, 2009
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**“Sustaining the Hill Country — Now and for Future Generations”
Forum Scheduled February 26th and 27th in Fredericksburg**

Central Texas is all about the Hill Country — rolling vistas, dramatic bluffs, seeps and springs, and diverse wildlife. But the character of the Hill Country is changing due to explosive growth. On **February 26th and 27th**, 2010, the Bexar Audubon Society, Green Spaces Alliance of South Texas, the Hill Country Alliance, the Texas Wildlife Association, and the US Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service will focus on this challenge at the 7th Farm & Range Forum, **“Sustaining the Hill Country — Now and for Future Generations.”** The forum will be held in **Fredericksburg**, Texas.

The Farm & Range Forum begins Friday evening with a tour and reception at Becker Vineyards in Fredericksburg and continues on Saturday at the Fredericksburg Inn and Suites. Out-of-town attendees may request discounted rates at the Fredericksburg Inn.

Topics include the natural history of the Hill Country and an assessment of its current status, water resources, wildlife and habitat, brush management, nature tourism, managing the homestead, food production, and public policy incentives to promote good stewardship. Keynote speakers and panelists with diverse backgrounds offer a depth of experience. There will be opportunities for sharing of experiences and discussion.

Who should attend? Everyone interested in the future of the Hill Country. The forum will help land owners, Hill Country residents, and urban and rural conservationists better understand the history and dynamics of the region, as well as the choices and events that are irrevocably shaping its future.

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Human residents have flocked to this landscape at an amazing rate over the past several decades. More than 57,000 more people are coming to live in the Hill Country every year. The 17 county region's current population of 3.1 million is projected to climb to at least 4.3 million by 2030.

To sustain what people love about the Hill Country requires a strategy including dedicated land stewardship, protection of natural resources, and incentives to help land owners conserve open spaces and make a living on the land. This is a challenge to urban dwellers, as well as rural communities, because their objectives and interests in conservation and sustainability are intertwined.

For information on sponsorships and for registration information, contact Helen Holdsworth at HHoldsworth@texas-wildlife.org or 800-TEX-WILD (210-826-2904). Program details and registration materials will follow in subsequent releases and on the following websites: www.texas-wildlife.org, www.greenspacesalliance.org, and www.hillcountryalliance.org.

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