

## From the President

Dear Friends of Barton Springs,



Writing for the annual newsletter and leaving the SBCA presidency is a little sad and sobering, even as we enjoy the autumn weather in this political season of hope and change. This year, although there have been some important issues, there haven't been many definitive "wins" for the Edwards Aquifer and her watersheds. And yes, as indicators of awareness and support for environmental sustainability, there have been some disappointments. The follow-through work and advocacy were not often as high profile as in the late 1990's and often impossible to "sound-bite", but serve the same crucial imperatives in 2008 and 2009.

In retrospect, it seems incredible that we're moving into the ninth year of the new century already. The turning of the millennium was such a grand celebration of the future's arriving, with maybe just a little feeling of relief that Y2K wasn't actually going to shut down any of the world's computers.

Stepping into the twentieth century brought a super reality-check of horrific tragedies and, environmentally, increasingly scary symptoms of global change. Along with all the manipulations of politics and man, we had to understand that actual environmental consequences had arrived, not still somewhere in the future with ample time ahead to turn things around.

We enjoy this autumn after a very hot, virtually rainless summer and a long year of oil dependency in-your-face, reminding us that all the natural resources we always knew were finite, including water ... are finite. We've just found out that Jacob's Well (Trinity Aquifer underground spring) is not producing any water, for only the second time in all of history. That's a forceful reminder right here at home that changes in environment and conditions in one place cause peripheral and subsequent environmental impact elsewhere. Mayor Wynn's leadership in climate change imperatives here has been a welcome focus for a crucial scope of awareness,

and never forgetting the "local" component of "global" Austin and the region aren't in a magically protected vacuum simply because we've articulated our commitment to preserve our resources. In an autumn of hope for positive change and determination that we can and will turn other things around, maybe the real "trickle down" that makes change is attitude. In anticipation, we as a City and community could make a determined recommitment.

As a community we've been good at articulating environmental commitment and supporting it through advocacy efforts. It's also enlightening and cheering to list some of the descriptive nomenclature we've given ourselves: Waterloo, River City, Live Music Capital of the World, City of Ideas. We say that we solve problems here, love a challenge, and do it with (Austin) style. Well, it's time to get those old-fashioned statement "hats" off the shelf again, because we're not quite home safe yet.

SBCA's awards this year include hard-working folks we've seen and appreciated all around us as we worked on issues together. One of those efforts is also one of our highest priority issues in fighting the precedent for direct effluent discharge into Little Bear Creek from Belterra development. We'll continue putting SBCA resources into that fight until State legislation is passed to ban direct discharge over the aquifer and/or until TCEQ rules are changed for treated wastewater discharge over the Edwards Aquifer. (...water, water everywhere, but not a drop to drink...")

A second very high priority issue is revising the City's Environmental Criteria Manual rules for erosion/sedimentation controls during construction. We remember some notable control failures during

construction, like AMD's development site. The ECM revision is still in progress, begun separately from the Barton Springs Zone Redevelopment ordinance rather than as a part of it.

Of course there have been land use and zoning cases along the way that raise concern as projects at odds with Austin's

### Save Barton Creek Association Membership Levels for 2008-2009

Lifetime Associates	\$1,000
Patrons	\$500
Sustainers	\$250
Friends	\$100
Donors	\$50
Families	\$15
Individuals	\$10
Students/Retirees	\$5

A contribution form and remittance envelope are enclosed for your convenience.

You may also sign up online at <http://www.savebartoncreek.org>

Thank you!

## Articles in this Issue

Letter From the President	1 / 11
Jackie Goodman	
New Construction-Phase Erosion and Sedimentation Criteria	2
Kedron Touvell	
SBCA fights Belterra Discharge	3
Jon Beall	
Pave Oak Hill!	4
Steve Beers	
BS/EACD Annexation News	5
Craig Smith	
Our Aquifer Map	6 / 7
Stefan Pharis & Jennifer Galland Bosse & Turner Associates	
Conservation News	8
Kedron Touvell	
Gift Selections	9
SBCA sponsors Zilker Trek	10
Karen Kocher	
SBCA sponsors Earth Camp	10
Susan Wall, Director	
Water Quality Education on TV	10
Pam Thompson	

# Join Us

## SAVE BARTON CREEK ASSOCIATION MEETS EVERY MONDAY

7 p.m. at VINNY'S  
Italian Cafe  
1003 Barton Springs Road  
Phone (512) 482-8484

Please join us for good  
conversation and the latest  
updates on Barton Springs issues.

THANK YOU Vinny's for another  
year of cold beer and great  
service!

### Vinny's Hours:

Sunday – Thursday 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.  
Friday & Saturday 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.



## New Construction-Phase Erosion and Sedimentation Control Requirements for Austin Builders

Many experts say the period of development most dangerous to water quality is the construction phase, when the land is cleared of vegetation and graded in preparation for building. With no vegetation or natural features to keep the soil in place, a well-timed rain event can flush tons of sediment into nearby creeks and streams. Recent local events, such as the massive silting of Hamilton Pool last year, confirm this danger and cost local governments millions of dollars in clean-up costs as well as ecosystem damage and the loss of recreational value.

Local environmentalists have long sought an update of the Austin's construction-phase erosion and sedimentation control requirements. After the passage of the SOS redevelopment ordinance earlier this year, the city decided the time was ripe. Mike Kelly, a supervisory engineer with the city's Watershed Protection Department, was tapped to lead the effort.

Mr. Kelly began the process of updating the city's Environmental Criteria Manual, a highly technical guideline for Professional Engineers, early this year. After an informal review process lasting several months, a draft document was released for comment in September. This document was then circulated to stakeholders, including environmental groups, development and construction firms, and the engineering community. A series of open meetings took place in October and comments were also accepted via email. The current schedule is for the changes to reach the Boards and Commissions by early next year.

SBCA contracted with Dr. Lauren Ross, P.E., to review the technical component of the criteria changes. Dr. Ross is well-versed in the issue of erosion and sedimentation requirements, having worked in the permitting department of Sunset Valley. She has provided a number of suggestions and ideas to Mr. Kelly's team.

Although no final staff recommendations have been made, the draft document contains many suggestions that will be beneficial to water quality over the aquifer. Better fiscal surety requirements codify financial liability for sediment escape and incent a construction process that exposes less unsecured soil. New training requirements mean that engineers will have more specific knowledge in best practices and techniques. Required soil depth will be increased and a limit on total nutrient load will be placed in order to minimize the damage caused by a runoff event. Phasing will be required on certain size lots and a strict schedule of construction must be documented and abided by. Measures to improve compliance and enforcement are also included.

-- Kedron Touvell

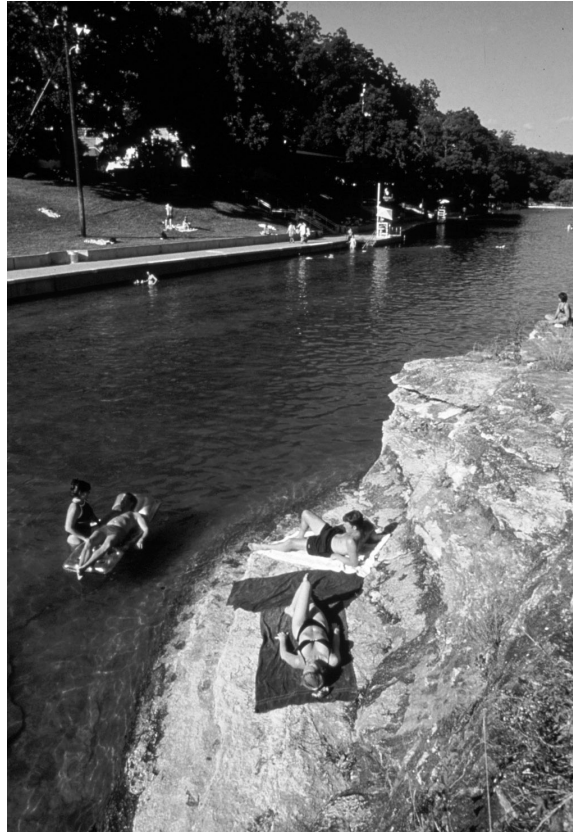
# SBCA Joins the Fight Against the Belterra Direct Discharge Permit

The Belterra Subdivision is an idyllic, suburban residential development perfect for growing families. There, one can buy a four-bedroom, 3000 sq. ft. house for \$300K, or about the same price as a one bedroom, 700 square foot condo in downtown Austin. Nearby Rooster Springs Elementary just opened with 700 kids. Neighborhood women have book clubs, a bunko group, and every year there's a huge Halloween celebration.

Unfortunately, there is trouble in paradise. They will soon generate more sewage than they can dispose of. Their preferred solution is to discharge the treated effluent into nearby Bear creek which eventually recharges Barton Springs. If the State of Texas (TCEQ) approves their permit, they will be the first and only sewage treatment plant allowed to discharge effluent into the Barton Springs Zone.

The best solution for everyone is for the developer (Makar Properties, Newport Beach, CA) to expand its current 50-acre irrigation field to dispose of the additional sewage. Instead, Makar intends to reserve all of the remaining undeveloped land for building lots and dump the additional generated effluent, 500,000 gallons per day, into the Contributing Zone of Barton Springs. We believe they should respect the property rights of their downstream neighbors and take responsibility to clean up their own messes.

Every nearby government entity and the downstream neighbors opposed the permit. Despite this opposition, TCEQ issued a draft permit, which was immediately challenged. After a year of negotiations, several opponents agreed to a settlement agreement that required a tougher set of treatment standards than TCEQ's original permit.



The remaining opponents continued the legal challenge, and, in July, a week-long trial ensued. The trial pitted Belterra against the City of Austin, Hays County, and two downstream neighborhood groups. The State considered this case important enough to take the rare step of assigning two Judges to hear the case.

The trial did not cost Makar a cent. The Belterra MUD, controlled by the developer, applied for this permit, which means the homeowners foot the bill through their MUD fees. Just recently, a new MUD Board election added residents, and we expect they may question the huge legal fees benefitting the developer.

Important players in this contest include Hays County Commissioners and their attorney, David Frederick; the City of Austin and their attorneys Patricia Link and Holley Nolke; TCEQ Office of Public Interest Counsel Attorney, Christina Mann; and

downstream neighbors represented by Sarah Baker, Stuart Henry, Bob O'Boyle and Barbara Stroud. Alston Boyd, a downstream homeowner, organized much of the opposition.

Did the TCEQ correctly follow the regulations in drafting the permit? Our side says no: TCEQ did not apply the correct non-degradation standard, specifically a Tier 2 analysis, and they did not look at accumulated pollution as it gradually moves downstream over more than one year.

Save Barton Creek Association provided substantial funding for attorneys Drew Miller and Deborah Trejo, experts in appellate law (Drew and his firm, Kemp Smith, won the Lick Creek settlement). Deborah attended the entire trial while 9 months pregnant, and they will help on appeal in District Court should the ruling go against our side. Thanks to everyone who donates to SBCA for enabling us to pursue this action.

After the trial, both sides submitted their final arguments in writing. One good sign - the TCEQ's own Office of Public Interest Counsel, Attorney Christina Mann, recommended denial of the permit. The Judges should make a ruling before Christmas. Depending on the outcome, each side may appeal the ruling to a higher court. Rest assured, the Association and our allies will fight this precedent-setting permit as long as we are able.

-- Jon Beall



# New Oak Hill Neighborhood Plan Fails to Protect Barton Springs

Austin Tomorrow, the City's adopted Master Plan for managing growth, as well as the regional Envision Central Texas plan, seek to steer major polluting development to areas downstream of the Edwards Aquifer. As drafted, however, a new City zoning plan for 11,000 acres on the aquifer contradicts Austin's long-standing "smart growth" policy.

Following more than two years of community surveys and meetings, an Oak Hill Neighborhood Plan finally emerged. Southwest Austin residents spoke out in remarkable unity. They desired more services and development, but they also wanted preservation of natural space in order to protect the environment and preserve "rural character."

Of course, there is a tension between mixing development and preservation—"having your cake and eating it too." But in the case of Oak Hill, it seems feasible. There is still quite a bit of undeveloped vacant land in Oak Hill, some 3,700 acres out of 11,000.

Consensus emerged that future development should be clustered in a new dense 'Town Center' near the "Y" intersection of US 290 and SH 71. Residents could live, work, and shop in a pedestrian/bicycle friendly location efficiently served by transit. Existing impervious cover would be redeveloped, rather than pursuing "greenfield" development.

Meanwhile, vacant land would be reserved for lower intensity land uses or parkland. So, Oak Hill residents' ideas for protecting open space would also incidentally protect the aquifer.

Unfortunately, an unexpected change occurred before the Plan got finalized. The published draft Future Land Use Map (FLUM), intended to guide future zoning decisions, contradicts the intentions of the Neighborhood Plan in the following ways:

- Strip development sprawls continuously along all major roadways, rather than being clustered in a Town Center.
- There is no increase in parks or open space beyond what already exists.
- Nearly all vacant property is slated for intensive commercial or apartment development.

Multiple zoning classifications are allowed under each land use category. For example, "Mixed Use" allows everything from agriculture to 12-story office buildings. Consequently, there's no way to reliably predict and provide for infrastructure needs—because the number of people to be served and the amount and types of future development are all unknown. There's no viable plan to expand schools, roads, utilities, flood control, and parks.

Using the most intense zoning available, the FLUM allows almost 93,000 apartments, half the number that currently exist in the entire Austin area today. The maximum possible commercial figure of 79 million square feet equals nine downtowns worth of office and retail space. A "super development" scenario of 159 million square feet would allow 12-story high-rise buildings on all major highways in the area. The FLUM allows for one or the other of the above scenarios, or an unknown mix of apartments, retail, and office.

The City's staff claimed that such extreme scenarios were unlikely to ever occur in Oak Hill. They produced far lower estimates of future development. Their estimated buildout rested on three assumptions: a 60 foot height for buildings, no more than 23 units per acre for apartments, and strict adherence to SOS impervious cover limits on all new development.

In reaction to the FLUM, neighborhood residents launched a website, [www.SaveOakHill.com](http://www.SaveOakHill.com), with a petition calling upon the City to revise the FLUM. "Save Oak Hill" sought height, density, and impervious cover limits. SBCA and other environmental groups joined them in making this request to Council.

Under the initiative of Council Member Laura Morrison, City Council passed the proposed height and apartment density limits on first reading October 23. However, the Council also moved to exempt any Planned Unit Development (PUD) from these limits. This is important because the Westpark PUD near the corner of US 290 and RM 1826 will come before Council in the next few months and is requesting an exemption from the SOS ordinance to build at 40% impervious cover.

By the time you read this, Austin's City Council may have taken final action on the Oak Hill Neighborhood Plan and FLUM. SBCA hopes the Council continues to uphold the vision expressed in the City's master plan for growth, Austin Tomorrow, as well as the regional Envision Central Texas Plan. This longstanding smart growth policy seeks to steer major polluting development to areas downstream of the Edwards Aquifer. We hope Austin's city leadership responds to the need to protect Barton Springs, as well as Oak Hill's unique quality of life.



-- Steve Beers

# Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District News

The Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District is a groundwater conservation district created in 1987 with a mission to “conserve, protect, and enhance the groundwater resources” of the District, which extends from Barton Springs south to Kyle, east beyond Creedmoor, and now reaches as far west as West Lake Hills and Oak Hill. The District’s primary authority under state law is to regulate wells and the pumping of groundwater within that territory. The District has begun a process of considering whether to add more territory in western Travis County that is not currently in any groundwater conservation district.

All of western Travis County south of Lake Travis is part of the Hill Country Priority Groundwater Management Area designated by the Texas Commission On Environmental Quality (TCEQ) because of its vulnerability to groundwater depletion and quality problems. The LCRA pipeline that provides surface water to the U.S. Hwy. 290 corridor has relieved those problems only for some. The TCEQ has announced that it is considering whether to create a new groundwater conservation district for the unprotected area, if it is not annexed by one of the neighboring districts in Blanco, Burnet, Hays, or Travis County. Such a new district would be tax-funded, whereas the Barton Springs District is supported by production permit fees paid by major groundwater users plus a contribution from the City of Austin. Because the area is relatively small, a new district would have a limited tax base and so would probably be limited in its activities. With an established funding base and staff, the Barton Springs District is capable of providing groundwater conservation district protection to the area fairly quickly and at a manageable cost. So far, none of the other districts has taken any steps to accept that responsibility.

Annexation of part or all of the unprotected area by the Barton Springs District would require voter approval in a confirmation election held in the area to be added. The District has held two public meetings to explain the possible annexation and gauge the degree of support or opposition that could be expected. The first was in Bee Cave on October 22 and second in the Pedernales River vicinity on November 6. Lakeside communities that depend only on surface water may be left out of any annexation because of their expected opposition.

Although it could be done without state legislation, the Barton Springs District may decide to accomplish an annexation through a bill in the 2009 session. That would allow an increase in the number of board members and change the current limitation on the number of board members who may be residents of Austin. Annexation would not take effect until after a successful confirmation election, which could not occur before May 2009 and might be as late as May 2010.

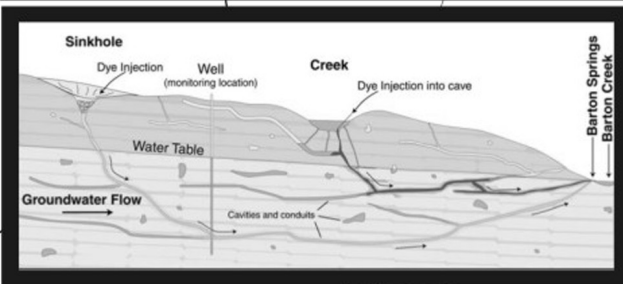
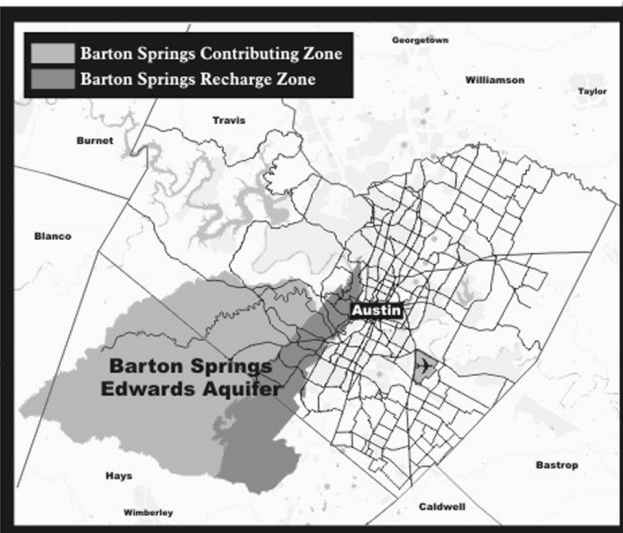
The addition of part or all of southwestern Travis County would bring into the Barton Springs District many groundwater users who depend on the Trinity Aquifer, the water-bearing unit beneath the Edwards Aquifer which is much less plentiful. Despite its limitations, the Trinity Aquifer is being tapped more and more often for new subdivisions and businesses in the Hill Country, where the Edwards formation has been lost to erosion. Research has shown that the Trinity Aquifer is already being “mined” by water withdrawals at greater rate than it is being recharged. If southwestern Travis County is annexed to the Barton Springs District, the District would be able to set well spacing rules and other requirements to prevent existing wells from being depleted.

The Barton Springs District conducted a study of the sustainable yield of the Barton Springs Aquifer in 2004 and determined that groundwater pumping could not be allowed to continue to increase beyond current levels without risking serious problems if a severe drought were to occur again. Those problems could include dry wells and even the cessation



of springflow at Barton Springs, something that has not happened in recorded history. Based on that study and a statistical model of the “drought of record” in the 1950’s, the District has put a “soft cap” on production permits that is intended to keep the sustainable yield from being exceeded. Under the District rules that implement the cap, any new or increased pumping of water from the freshwater Edwards Aquifer is allowed only under conditional permits that are subject to reduction in drought and even to total curtailment in a severe drought that threatens to deplete springflow. Applicants for new conditional permits must demonstrate at the outset that they have alternative sources of water that would allow them to meet their needs in the event of such a curtailment. It is the District’s goal to enable all of its permittees, which are mainly public water systems, to have alternative water supplies so that springflow can be maintained, even in a drought.

SBCA Board Members Craig Smith and Jack Goodman are on the board of the BS/EACD.



In grey we see the watershed addressed by the Regional Water Quality Protection Plan. The aquifer for Barton Springs is darker. Creeks across the watershed flow to the Barton Springs, or drain into the Trinity aquifer. Beneath our feet is a dynamic series of surface and underground waterways. Dye, inserted into numbered points along the Barton Springs aquifer to trace underground flow, surfaced in days or weeks at or near Barton Springs, following channels indicated by arrows. Conservation measures and regulations are emerging to preserve this unprotected, flowing matrix. Thanks to Stefan Pharis for the map.



**Regional Water Quality  
Plan Boundary**

TRAVIS COUNTY  
HAYS COUNTY

101

12

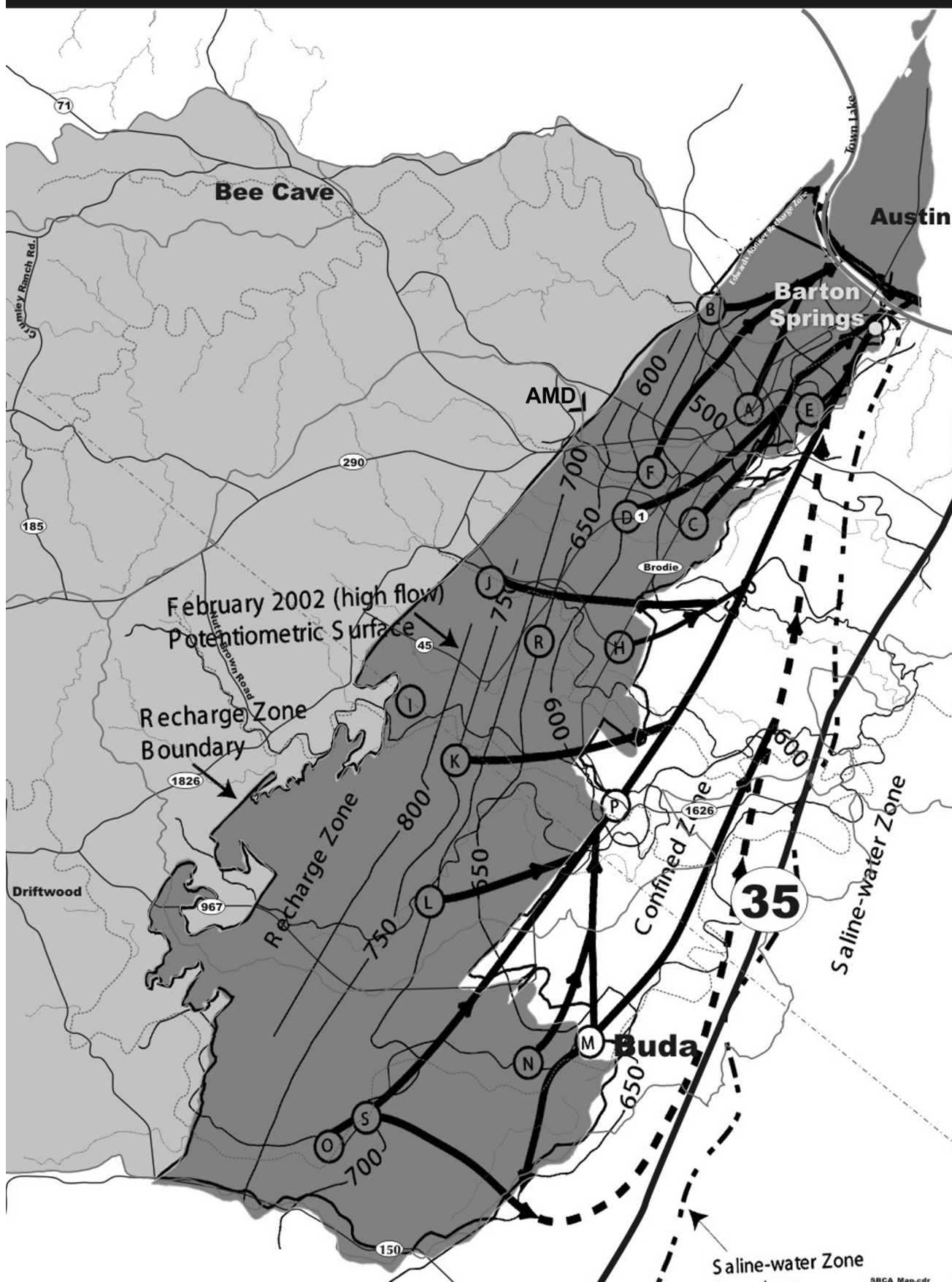
Fitzhugh Rd

**Dripping  
Springs**

**Regional Water Quality  
Plan Boundary**

2325





SBCA Map.cdr

# WHAT LIES BENEATH

0 2000 4000 8000 ft.  
Original Scale: 1 in. = 4000 ft.  
Prepared by Bosse & Turner Associates



November 2005  
BOSSE & TURNER  
CONSULTANTS, INC.

# More Conservation Gains in the Barton Springs Aquifer Region

In the thunderstorm-prone areas of Central Texas, lightning can often strike twice. Yet the region has never seen anything quite like the back-to-back conservation achievements of the last two years. Fresh off the heels of last year's acquisition of over 3,000 acres of land and development rights over the aquifer using \$30 million in voter-approved bond money, the City of Austin and its partners are at it again. This time, a generous matriarch of an old ranching family is leading the charge.

The Dahlstrom ranch is a 2,275 acre tract located directly over the recharge zone just west of Kyle and Buda. The Dahlstrom family has owned the property for generations, and wishes to preserve its rustic nature in the face of sprawling growth. Together with the Hill Country Conservancy, Hays County, and the City of Austin, the family has reached a deal that will save this natural habitat in perpetuity.

The gains for water quality are tremendous. At a total cost of \$9.9 million for the purchase of development rights on this historic ranch, the price is well below market value for similar

properties in the area. As mentioned, the land is situated directly over the aquifer recharge zone, and contains dozens of critical environmental features (CEFs) that increase its importance to Barton Springs and other watersheds. Over two miles of Onion Creek flow through the property. Scientists with the City and the Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District believe that the combination of abundant CEFs and total aquifer recharge capacity make this the most important conservation property in the aquifer region.

Appropriately, the purchase was quickly approved by the City (\$1 million) and Hays County (\$4.9 million) over the summer. The remaining \$4 million will come from a Federal NRCS/Department of Agriculture "Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program" grant administered by the Hill Country Conservancy. Although the final terms of the conservation easement on the Dahlstrom Ranch have not yet been finalized on this grant, HCC Executive Director George Cofer is confident the project will be completed successfully.

## Transfers of Development Rights Help Protect Barton Springs

Although local governments have spent millions of dollars on open space acquisition in recent years, there will never be enough public money to achieve our conservation goals. Therefore, public-private partnerships must be encouraged in the region.

Voluntary "Private Lands Preservation Agreements" (also known as "Conservation Easements") are becoming increasingly popular in Texas. In 2005, the Texas Legislature passed SB 1273 – the Texas Farm and Ranchlands Conservation Program designed to enable and facilitate the purchase and donation of conservation easements. A relatively new source of funding for purchasing conservation easements from landowners is the Farm and Ranchland Protection Programs, administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (U.S. Department of Agriculture). Also, Congress recently greatly expanded the potential for landowners to garner significant federal tax credits from donating conservation easements to qualified organizations. The acquisition of the Dahlstrom Ranch property mentioned above depends heavily on these new programs.

Creating a robust and systematic "Transferable Development Rights" (TDR) system is an important conservation strategy of the Regional Water Quality Protection Plan for the Barton Springs Segment of the Edwards Aquifer. TDRs refer to the ability to transfer the "right" to develop from one property to another. In the context of the Regional Water Quality Protection Plan, the use of TDRs would allow some property to be developed at a greater impervious cover percentage provided that additional property is developed at an appropriately lower impervious cover percentage. Neighborhoods such as Oak Hill are highly interested in using TDRs and other like mechanisms to create



local open space and cluster new development.

Currently, TDRs are used and considered in a highly ad hoc fashion. In order to successfully prosecute a TDR, governments must match donor properties with appropriate development projects all within a short time frame and corresponding financial needs. Without a systematic TDR scheme and a property inventory, this is a difficult task.

SBCA believes it is critically important for its members and all citizens to continue to support public funding for the conservation of the natural treasures of the Aquifer Region and Texas Hill Country. But we also believe that governments across the region should work to create an environment in which private interests align with public conservation goals. Now is the time to begin using all the tools in the toolbox.

-- Kedron Touvell





## Season's Greetings Gift Selections

A meaningful way to show your support for Save Barton Creek Association



Save Barton Creek Association is once again pleased to offer many great gift ideas for the holiday season and as "premiums" for renewing your membership. Please use the enclosed Contribution Form to place your order or check online for note cards and other gifts today to send to family and friends. They will enjoy seeing and learning about the beauty and unique wonders of Barton Creek and Barton Springs. Thank you in advance for your generous support.

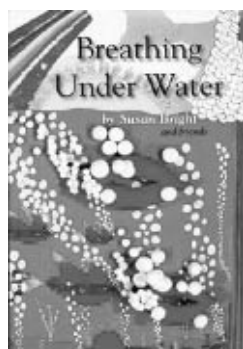
\*These items are also available at our new on-line store\*

<http://www.savebartoncreek.org>



Chandra Moira Beal has generously contributed copies of her book "Splash! Across Texas" to SBCA so that every home can have one. This 376-page comprehensive book is the definitive guide to swimming holes in Central Texas. Order your copy today (\$16.95), and be ready for the next sunny weekend! Ten dollars from every sale goes directly to conservation of the land and waters of the Barton Springs Aquifer.

Sets of sixteen "Barton Springs Pool" note cards are \$20.00, including envelopes. Make your personal correspondence stand out with a view of the pool or one of its beautiful inhabitants! A colorful picture of the world's largest natural limestone swimming pool now grace four-color note cards available in 5" x 8" size. Photographer Eric Beggs captured the images on a day when the pool waters were crystal clear. The diverse colors of the limestone pool bottom and the sunlight dancing on the water make this a card you will enjoy sending to friends and family. Color pictures available online.

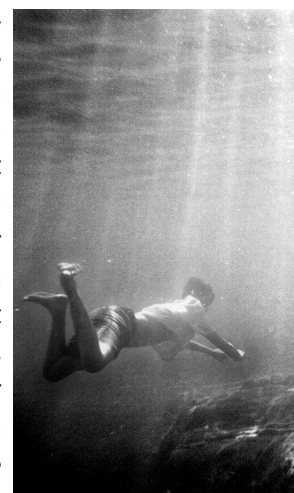


Breathing Under Water (\$13.95), by Susan Bright is a collection of poetry spoken in the voice of the community which swims at and works for the preservation of Barton Springs. "This is what poetry must be if it is to play a part in the future of American artistic expression . . .

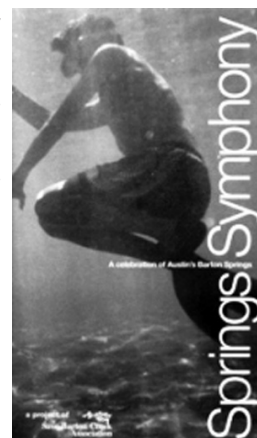
. . . Susan Bright and her swimming companions are the secret angels of

Austin's soul who in their daily dedication to those cold waters invite us to dive into the waters of community itself." (Ric Williams, Austin Chronicle)

The Barton Springs CD-ROM, produced by Marshall Frech, includes a feature-length documentary with more than an hour and a half of great interactive content, including hundreds of spectacular photographs, along with film and video footage, that present the topics of popular culture, human history, and aquifer science. The CD-ROM runs on both Mac and PCs and can be ordered for \$20.00 from SBCA.



Springs Symphony is a beautifully made film by Karen Kocher, with music by Austin's own David Murray. This ten-minute film will warm the heart of any Springs supporter. 100% of the proceeds from the sale of "Springs Symphony" (\$20.00) will go toward land acquisition in the Barton Springs watersheds.



Please use the enclosed Contribution Form to order note card sets, Springs Symphony, the Barton Springs CD-ROM, Splash! Across Texas, or Breathing Under Water. Or, you may order any of these gifts by calling

480-0055 or purchasing them online at:

<http://www.savebartoncreek.org/>

## SBCA and Earth Camp: A Partnership of Growth

In the past four years Earth Camp has almost doubled its initial success – reaching more than 900 students annually. Increased support from SBCA for Earth Camp assistants has made this growth possible.

Earth Camp is the City of Austin Watershed Protection and Development Review Department's water quality education program for fifth-graders in AISD schools serving a high percentage of low socio-economic students.

SBCA provides salary for an assistant to help lead students through a cave in the Edwards Aquifer, the Splash! Exhibit, a tour of Barton Springs, and to teach students to practice gardening for water quality at the Green Classroom. With assistants, large classes are divided into groups of 10-15, allowing for effective learning in the outdoors.

Teachers who have been mentored one year at Earth Camp can sign up to lead their classes through the Earth Camp field studies the following year. Teacher-Led Earth Camp, as we have named it, allows us to continue to support a teacher attending Earth Camp annually, while reaching new teachers with the city-led program. Teacher-Led Earth Camp is effective because we have assistants each day to help the teacher divide the class into small groups.

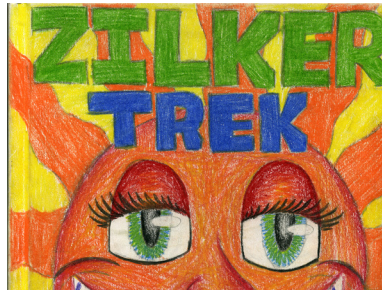
- Susan Wall



## Save Barton Creek Association Sponsors Sunshine Camp and Zilker Trek

by Karen Kocher

Thanks to the fiscal sponsorship of the Save Barton Creek Association and AT&T, Austin kids have a new way to learn about the many wonders of Zilker Park. The Zilker Trek mobile media scavenger hunt uses video i-pods, printed help sheets and a beautiful map by Austin artist Chris Celusniak to guide kids through 8 hands-on explorations of Zilker park including flora, fauna, geology, history, art and literature. Zilker Trek encourages kids to be close observers of the natural and built environment through fun activities, journaling, and culminating in the creation of an original environmental sculpture.



The project, along with 24 i-pods and other trek materials, was donated to the Sunshine Camp for use in their summer programs. The digital content and printed materials will soon be available to the entire community for free download from [www.zilkertrek.org](http://www.zilkertrek.org). Further outreach to scouting and home school groups is in the works.

Zilker Trek was created and produced by Karen Kocher, a local media producer and University of Texas at Austin faculty member. Zilker Trek is a pilot program exploring the use of video i-pods for outdoor learning. Thanks to Margaret Russell, George Cofer and the many subject matter experts who lent their time and expertise to make this project possible. For a full list of thanks, please visit the website.

## Water Quality Education on TV

Environmental activist and Save Barton Creek Association Board member Pam Thompson hosts an award-winning weekly TV program called Austin News Real. Her show focuses on a range of local topics with an emphasis on environmental matters and especially an interest in water.

Austin News Real is produced by iconmedia, a project of Thompson and her husband Stefan Wray, a Board Member of the SOS Alliance. It airs on Austin cable TV channel 10 on Thursdays at 6:00 PM.

Within the past year, Austin News Real developed a SBCA and Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District-sponsored series called Texas Water 101 that featured area leaders with expertise in a full spectrum of water issues – water quality to wastewater management and drought. This series recently won an award from the Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer district for community education.

"I've received numerous compliments on the series," Thompson says. "I think it's been helpful in raising people's awareness about the need for the preservation of our limited and fragile water resources in Central Texas."

The hour-long programs can be viewed at [www.iconmedia.org](http://www.iconmedia.org). The shows include interviews with representatives from SBCA, BSEACD, The Sierra Club, Texas Parks and Wildlife, United States Geological Survey and the City of Austin, as well as authorities on water such as hydrologist Raymond Slade and master naturalist Charles O'Dell.



master plan, (surely, the new City Manager/staff/consultant-led master plan as well), development policies embodied in Envision Central Texas, the goal of regional environmental plans, and so on. Too, there is the case of an aquifer land-owner given zoning and land use rights outside of the zoning process as we've known it. We're watching an upcoming P.U.D. proposal seemingly at odds with the text of the Oak Hill Neighborhoods Plan and not currently proposed to comply with our water quality protection ordinance. The Land Development Code includes that ordinance ("SOS"), and City attorneys have said time and again the Code and ordinances are the legal implementation of our master plan. Those individual cases remind us, too, of how critically important the Government Online initiative is for truly accessible and truly complete public information.

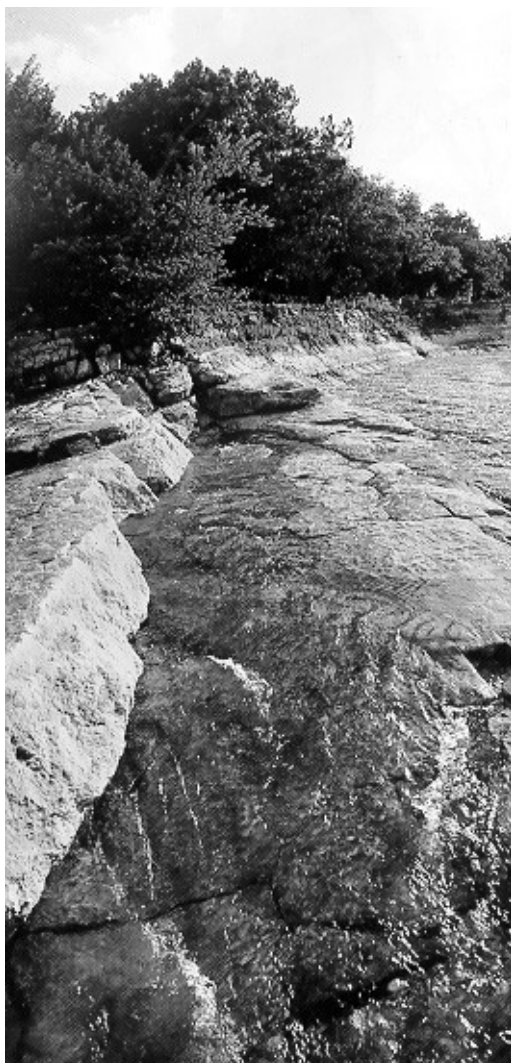
So, yes, maybe a little renewed commitment and dedication would be a good and timely thing to do right now.

In closing, it has been an honor for me to serve as SBCA President for the last two years. Leaving that job now in the good hands of Jon Beall, I thank the others on our eternally hard-working Board, our eternally overworked contractors, and many thanks to all the Save Barton Creek-ers (segue !): "Barton Springs Eternal !"

On behalf of the SBCA Board of Trustees, I thank you for your continued support and invite you to join us for the annual Awards Banquet November 24th.

Sincerely,

Jackie Goodman  
President



## SBCA Awards Party and Banquet

Monday, November 24, 2008

6-9 pm

Zilker Clubhouse, 200 Zilker Clubhouse Road

Catered by Salt Lick

Musical Entertainment by Bill Oliver and Friends

Contact: [me@kedrontouvell.com](mailto:me@kedrontouvell.com) 512-680-5998



**Earth Share**  
OF TEXAS

## Earth Share of Texas

Save Barton Creek Association is a member of Earth Share of Texas, a state-wide coalition of 70 local, state, national and international conservation organizations working collaboratively to educate and seek contributions from employees during workplace-giving campaigns throughout Texas.

City, county, state and federal employees and employees of many leading private sector companies may designate payroll contribution gifts to these environmental organizations through Earth Share of Texas.

Earth Share of Texas can provide additional information about payroll contribution campaigns in the workplace. For details, visit Earth Share of Texas on the web at [earthshare-texas.org](http://earthshare-texas.org), call 1-800-GREENTX, or e-mail [estx@earthshare-texas.org](mailto:estx@earthshare-texas.org).



# SAVE BARTON CREEK ASSOCIA- TION

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TRUSTEES FOR  
2007-2008

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## Shopping can help preserve Barton Springs



You can now link your Randalls Remarkable Card to Save Barton Creek Association, which benefits through your participation in the Randalls Good Neighbor Program. This program offers Randalls customers a way to direct the firm's donation dollars to their favorite non-profit organization, church or school. Simply link your Remarkable Card to SBCA's fundraising effort. Remember to Shop for the Springs!

If you have not yet linked your Remarkable Card to us, ask a customer service representative at any Randalls store to link your card to SBCA (account no. 343). SBCA will then receive a charitable contribution from the Randalls Good Neighbor Program every time you make a purchase.

With only a few of its members linked at this time, SBCA has received more than \$2,300 from the Good Neighbor Program. Since the program began in the fall of 1996, Randalls has donated millions of dollars to thousands of participating organizations.

Please link your Remarkable Card to 343 on your next visit to Randalls so SBCA can receive many hundreds of dollars in future years.

## Play Bingo to Support SBCA!

SBCA hosts bingo at  
Big Star Bingo

910 W. Anderson Lane  
Doors open daily  
at 4:30 p.m.  
Call 452-9904  
for more info.



## SBCA Purpose Statement

The purpose of the Association, which was incorporated in Texas in 1979, is the preservation of Barton Springs and the unique environment of the Barton Creek Watershed and Zilker Park. Specifically, the Association has the following objectives:

To protect the quality of the water flowing into Barton Creek and Barton Springs Pool in an effort to restore and preserve the purity and crystal clear quality of the water;

To research alternative land uses for the Barton Creek Watershed in order to determine which land use plan is most compatible with the conservation of Barton Creek and Barton Springs;

To encourage the acquisition or designation of land in the Barton Springs watersheds for public use. Such acquired or designated land could be used as additions to the Barton Creek Greenbelt in order to provide further public access to Barton Creek for recreational, educational, and conservation purposes. Such land would be maintained as close as possible to its original natural state.

To educate the public about the natural history of the Barton Creek Watershed, including but not limited to: ecology, biology (flora and fauna), geology, hydrology, archaeology, climatology, ornithology, and the history of urban development in the watershed; and,

To provide the public with information regarding environmentally sound urban and conservation development plans for the land in the Barton Creek Watershed. Such plans will recognize the interaction of the hydrogeologic system (Barton Creek, the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone, and Barton Springs) with the complete ecological system of the Barton Creek Watershed. Such plans will emphasize aesthetic and environmental values of the watershed.

## SPECIAL NEWSLETTER THANKS TO:

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