



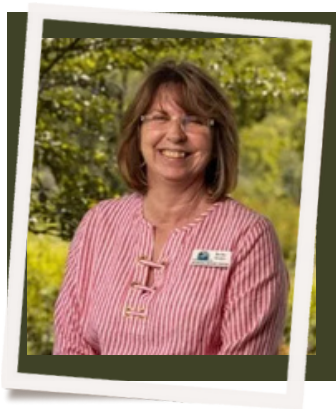
2025 HILL COUNTRY LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

HEART OF THE HILL COUNTRY

HONORING HILL COUNTRY CONSERVATION CHAMPIONS

The Heart of The Hill Country Award was created by HCA in 2019 to recognize and thank our region's greatest natural resource champions. This year's honorees are Becky Etzler and Elizabeth Bowerman – two women who have nurtured and led impactful conservation and environmental education organizations in their communities.

Becky and Elizabeth will be presented with a beautiful award, designed and crafted by Hill Country artist J.J. Priour using Cordova limestone and glass. Much like the limestone used in his art, Priour has deep ties to the Hill Country and his late father Damian was instrumental to the formation of the Hill Country Alliance.



Becky Etzler: Executive Director - Riverside Nature Center

Becky has dedicated over 10 years to nurturing and leading the Riverside Nature Center, which provides educational opportunities and activities to children and adults from throughout Kerr County and broader region. Through her work, Becky is especially proud of the opportunity to help children cultivate a sense of environmental conscience. She brings a passion and enthusiasm for the wonders of nature to her work and enjoys facilitating educational programs for all ages. Becky has been instrumental in the Riverside Nature Center's ability to grow new partnerships, provide one-of-a-kind programming, and develop the facilities of this Hill Country gem located on the Guadalupe River.

Outside of her work at the nature center, she serves as a Board Member of the Kerr County Friends of the Night Sky and as an advisor to the Kerr County Water Alliance. In the wake of the 2025 floods, it has been clearer than ever how beloved Becky and the Riverside Nature Center are and how invaluable they are to Kerrville.



Elizabeth Bowerman: Founding Board Member - Comal Conservation

Elizabeth has spent more than two decades as a volunteer and conservation leader in Central Texas, most notably with Comal Conservation. Here, Elizabeth served as founding Vice President and then as President for six years. During this period, Elizabeth was instrumental in guiding the group from its grassroots beginning through hiring a full-time Executive Director in 2023. During this time, Comal Conservation became an invaluable champion for conservation and community engagement. By focusing on engaging not only the public at large, but also local governmental and business leaders, the organization continues to bring a needed spotlight and momentum to conservation issues across Comal County.

Originally from the east coast, Elizabeth fell in love with the Texas Hill Country while traveling through the area in 1996 and decided to make Texas her home. Since arriving, Elizabeth has been active in nature and conservation groups, learning, teaching and passing along her passion for nature in organizations like Native Plant Society and the Texas Master Naturalists. She is inspired every day by the dedicated conservation professionals and volunteers working throughout the Hill Country to protect this unique region.



Support the Hill Country Alliance!

Inspired by the stories, the people, and the information you gathered today? Donate to support our work! Simply **scan the QR code at left or go to bit.ly/Summit25Donations** and follow the prompts to make your donation.

Every dollar you give goes directly to conservation efforts for the lands, waters, communities, and night skies of our special part of Texas.