



The Roots and Reach Initiative was launched in the late fall of 2024, with a vision of raising \$3.7 million to deepen our roots, expand our impact, and ensure the future of the Hill Country Alliance.

As of October 2025, we have raised \$2,118,000, exceeding 57 percent of our total goal. While the fundraising numbers speak to the deep commitment of our donors from across the region, the real story is the impact those dollars have already yielded in the Hill Country.

GOAL  
\$3,700,000

\$3,500,000

\$3,000,000

\$2,500,000

\$2,000,000

\$1,500,000

\$1,000,000

\$500,000

## Deepening our roots: First Place-Based staff position is filled



One of the pillars of this campaign is hiring up to three strategically focused, place-based staff. On July 1, 2025, we hired former Bandera Mayor Rebeca Gibson to the first of those positions—covering a region that includes Bandera, Medina, Kerr, and Kendall Counties.

On July 4, Rebeca's job pivoted significantly in response to catastrophic flooding that forever changed Central Texas. Thanks to Rebeca, HCA was able to hit the ground running—serving hot meals, coordinating clean ups, and leaning into flood recovery from day one following the disaster. Rebeca is here for more than just flood response. She is advancing HCA's mission across all program areas—coordinating efforts to fight a massive transmission line project across the southern Hill Country and deepening our connections in the communities we serve.

Further expanding our capacity, we have added a new Marketing and Communications Manager—Jennifer Berrong joined the staff in June. Jennifer has allowed us to quickly produce and distribute informational resources, program-related communications and research products—telling the story of our work and our region.



## Projects enabled by Roots & Reach Initiative

- HCA is leading on the purchase of ~\$150K in riparian plant and seed materials for flood restoration efforts with landowners across the Hill Country.
- HCA is supporting landowners and a grassroots coalition called Hill Country Preservation Coalition, providing support in advocating against the routing of a major 765kV through the heart of our pristine river basins.
- Our Leadership Institute spinoff program for developers will help us engage in new and meaningful ways with some of the folks having the biggest impact on the future of the Hill Country. That program launches in 2026.

## Expanding our reach: Leadership Institute program growth



*Members of Leadership Institute, cohort 2024, meet in the library of Blue Hole Elementary in Wimberley after a tour of the Hill Country's first One Water School.*

**We are currently recruiting for our fourth cohort of the Hill Country Leadership Institute, and the program continues to exceed our hopes and dreams for impact every year.** The third year of the Leadership Institute led directly to One Water resolutions in both the City of Blanco and Hays County, a tightening of impervious cover rules in Gillespie County, and a growing network of connected elected leaders across the entire Hill Country.

Leah Cuddeback takes the helm as dedicated staff leader of the Leadership Institute. We are actively designing a spinoff program for the development community to launch in 2026.

## Ensuring our future: Funding our Endowment

Thanks to an unrestricted planned gift from Jim and Priscilla Stanley, HCA is well on our way to funding our \$3 Million endowment goal to ensure we are here for the long haul. HCA is building our organizational strength and resilience through investing in additional planned giving resources, trainings and professional development budgets for our staff, bringing on additional accounting and bookkeeping support, and undertaking a comprehensive strategic planning process in 2026, to ensure a clear path for the road ahead.



Learn more about Roots & Reach initiatives!  
[www.hillcountryalliance.org/rootsandreach](http://www.hillcountryalliance.org/rootsandreach)

