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Hill Country Leaders Convene at the Capitol to Discuss Flood Mitigation Strategies and 2027 Goals

Austin, TX – On October 22, 40 county officials and staff from across the Texas Hill Country gathered for the tenth County-to-County Coalition workshop focused on nature-based solutions, low-impact development, and regional legislative priorities. Hosted by five Hill Country county commissioners, the workshop brought together county leaders, conservation experts, development professionals, state legislators, and staff to discuss strategies for protecting water resources, managing stormwater, and addressing the challenges of rapid growth throughout the region.

“The people we serve expect us to understand the challenges of rapid growth, use the tools we have, and pursue solutions when those tools fall short. Working together has helped us do that with greater focus and a stronger shared voice,” said Kendall County Commissioner Andra Wisian.

The workshop began with a presentation on nature-based solutions, including available resources, funding opportunities, and case studies from across the Hill Country. Justin Kozak of The Nature Conservancy and Deborah Reid, Technical Director of the Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance, shared insights on approaches that can help communities manage stormwater, protect water quality, and strengthen natural systems while accommodating continued development.

Following lunch, sponsored by the Texas Association of Counties, participants heard from members of the Hill Country legislative delegation and their staff about natural resource priorities and opportunities to advance county interests during upcoming legislative sessions. Sen. Pete Flores, Sen. José Menéndez, and Rep. Erin Zwiener addressed the group and answered questions about their natural resource priorities for the 2027 legislative session. Staff from Sen. Donna Campbell, Sen. Judith Zaffirini, and Sen. Sarah Eckhardt also shared their expertise with the group.

The afternoon focused on identifying and advancing shared legislative priorities through facilitated workshops and group discussions. Participants examined policy recommendations related to clarifying and enhancing county authority over groundwater availability certifications and regulations; increasing funding for the Flood Infrastructure Fund; ensuring counties receive mandatory notification of extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) disannexations alongside cities; and strengthening county authority to manage impervious cover, particularly in flood-prone areas.

Participants emphasized the importance of giving counties effective tools to address the impacts of rapid growth while protecting groundwater supplies, reducing flood risks, and preserving the natural resources that sustain Hill Country communities.

The County-to-County Coalition is led by a group of Hill Country county commissioners who have hosted ten workshops since 2024 to bring county leaders together to discuss natural resource management and regional policy challenges. Previous workshops have addressed water supply, wastewater and stormwater quality and management, land use and extraterritorial jurisdiction, the aggregate industry, and other issues associated with population growth throughout the region.

About the Hill Country Alliance: The Hill Country Alliance is a nonprofit organization bringing together a diverse coalition of partners to preserve the open spaces, starry night skies, clean and abundant waters, and unique character of the Texas Hill Country. Learn more at hillcountryalliance.org.

[Graphics available for use here.](#)