

**BALCONES CANYONLANDS PRESERVE
LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

TIER II-C

PEDERNALES RIVER MACROSITE



August 2007

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Of the 10 macrosites in the regional permit area (Figure 1), the Pedernales River macrosite is one of the seven macrosites that contain Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (BCP) land established under the Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan (BCCP), a regional permit issued to Travis County and the City of Austin in 1996 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS 1996).

1.1 Macrosite Description

The Pedernales River macrosite (Figure 1) occurs in the extreme western portion of the permit area and is separated geographically from the rest of the potential preserve system. It is located south of SH 71, east of the Blanco County line, north of the Hays County line, and west of a line which is west of Bee Creek. The Pedernales macrosite has 259 acres that are proposed for protection and currently protected in the BCP. It is the least well-known macrosite, and little of it has been surveyed by biologists. Review of aerial photos indicates it apparently contains relatively little habitat for the birds of concern (USFWS 1996).

Golden-cheeked warblers are known to occur at Hamilton Pool Preserve, Westcave Preserve, and in scattered habitat in protected canyons along the Pedernales River. The Pedernales River macrosite includes the only undisturbed riparian habitat in the BCCP permit area. All other riparian habitat in the permit area (i.e., along the Colorado River) was impacted many years ago by the construction and operation of Lake Travis and Lake Austin (USFWS 1996).

1.2 Current Preserve Land

The two BCP tracts in the Pedernales River macrosite are Westcave Preserve and Hamilton Pool Preserve summarized in Table 1. Westcave Preserve is owned by the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) and managed by the Westcave Preserve Corporation. Hamilton Pool is owned by Travis County (TC) and managed by the Parks and Natural Resources Department. Both preserves are located on the Pedernales River, with Hamilton Pool on the east side and Westcave Preserve on the west. There are Tier III reports for both preserves.

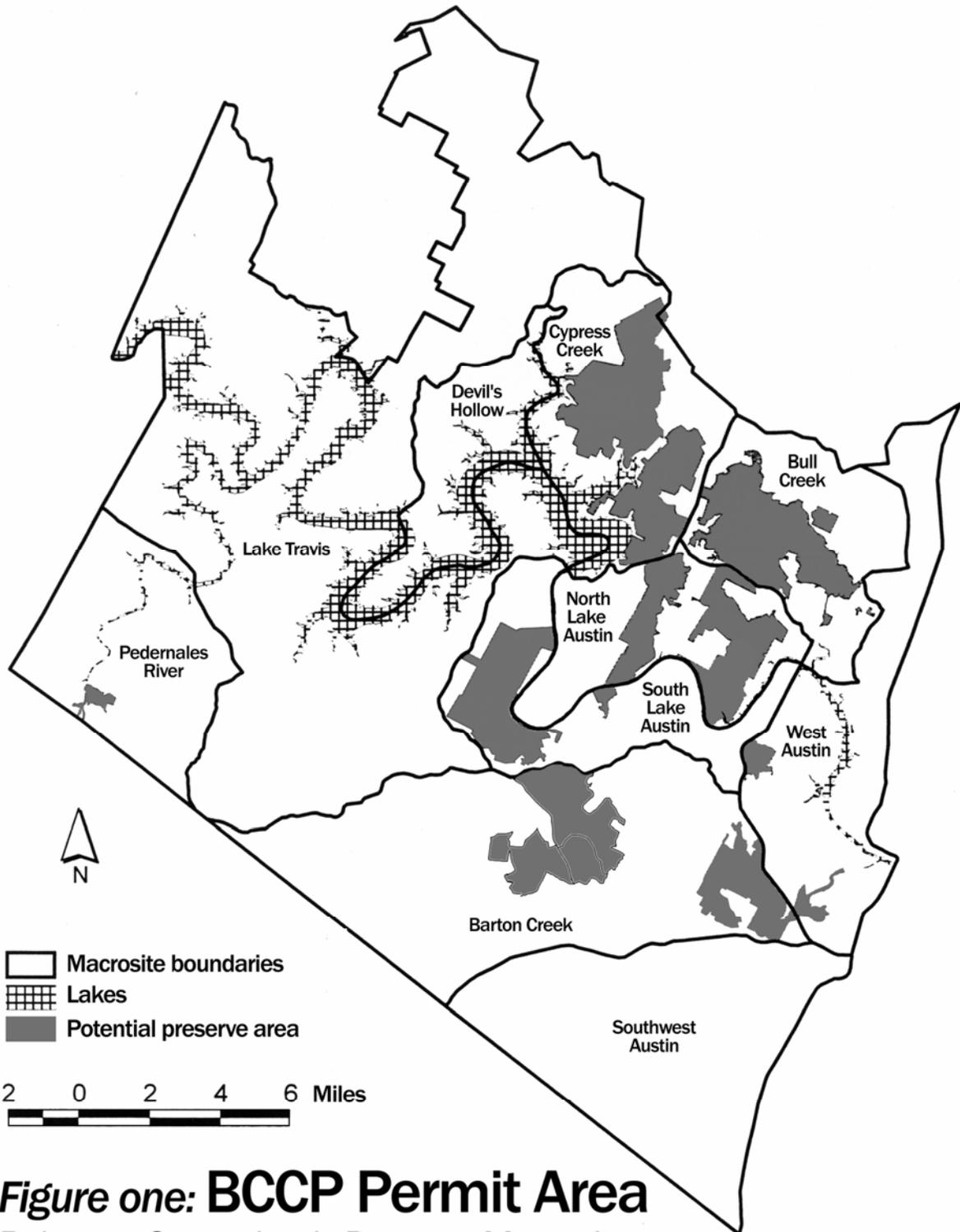


Figure one: BCCP Permit Area
Balcones Canyonlands Preserve Macrosites

Table 1. BCP Land in the Pedernales River Macrosite

Tract	Land Manager	Acreage
Hamilton Pool Preserve	Travis County	232
Westcave Preserve	LCRA	27
Perdenales Macrosite total acreage		259
<i>Target preserve size</i>		259
<i>Remaining acres to manage</i>		0

2.0 MACROSITE GOALS

2.1 Minimum Specifications for Acquisition/Protection

Acquisition in this macrosite is considered a low priority relative to other proposed preserve units. Other than the existing 232 acres at Hamilton Pool Preserve and 27 acres at Westcave Preserve, no acquisitions or designations are recommended at this time (Figure 1) (Butler/EH&A Team 1992, USFWS 1996).

2.2 Justification of Preserve Location

Other preserve options are possible in this area, particularly in the canyons associated with the Pedernales River and Cypress Creek, which offer potential habitat for the canyon mock-orange and other rare flora, the black-capped vireo, and the golden-cheeked warbler, and the land adjacent to Westcave Preserve and Hamilton Pool Preserve. Additional research is needed to determine the actual distribution of canyon mock-orange in this area. If other occurrences of this species are identified, a revision of preservation measures may be appropriate. The addition of buffer areas around Westcave Preserve and Hamilton Pool Preserve would be beneficial, but is precluded by funding limitations (Butler/EH&A Team 1992, USFWS 1996).

2.3 Acquisition/Protection Goals

Acres currently protected	259
Remaining acres to be protected	<u>0</u>
Total needed in this macrosite	259

There are no current plans for additional preserve acquisitions in this macrosite.

3.0 LITERATURE CITED

Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan Annual Report 2003

Butler/EH&A Team. 1992. Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan, Final Draft EH&A Doc. No. 920043. Prepared for the Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan Executive Committee.

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1996. Final Environmental Impact Statement/Habitat Conservation Plan for Proposed Issuance of a Permit to Allow Incidental Take of the Golden-cheeked Warbler, Black-capped Vireo, and Six Karst Invertebrates in Travis County, Texas. U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Albuquerque, N. M.

Travis County Natural Resource Program, Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan: GIS permit area and habitat map, 1996.