

HERITAGE
PROJECT

FROM THE ALAMO TO THE CAPITOL

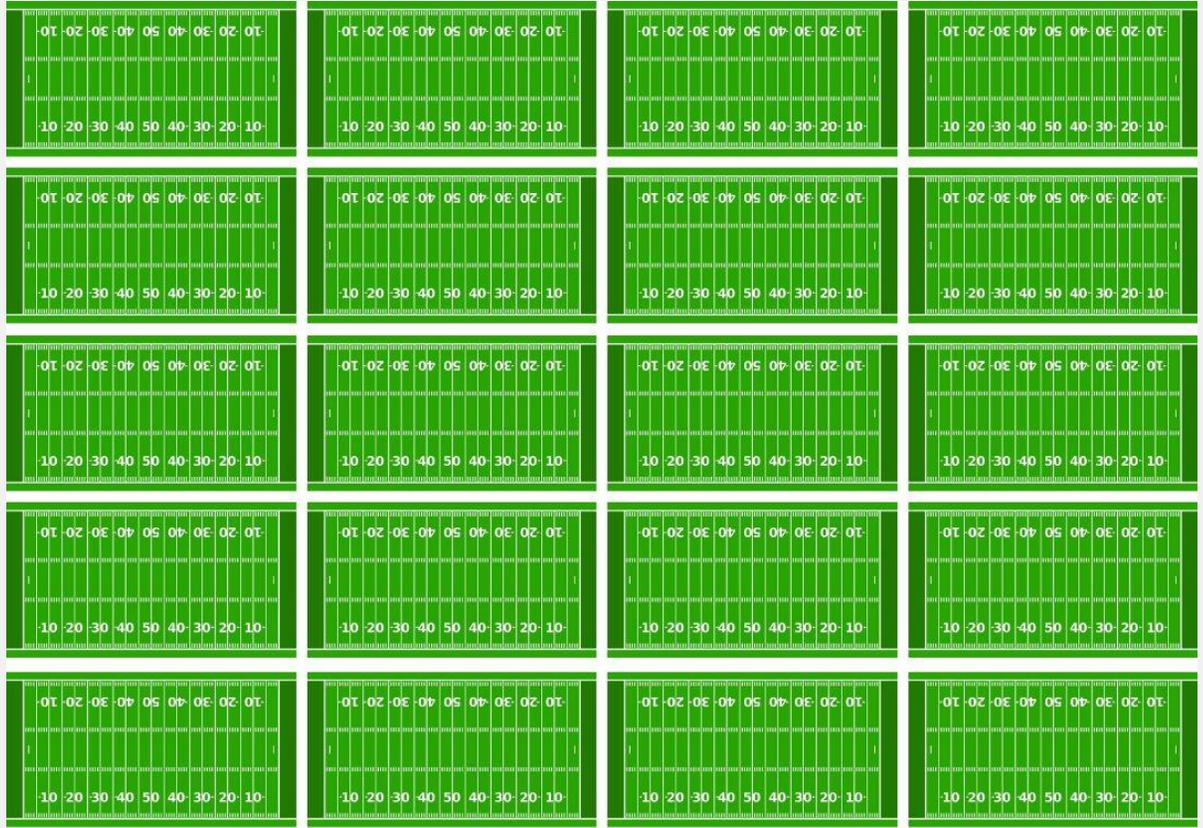
A Legacy Project For All of Texas



UNRELENTING DEVELOPMENT

In Texas, we are losing open space at the rate of 20 football fields per hour.

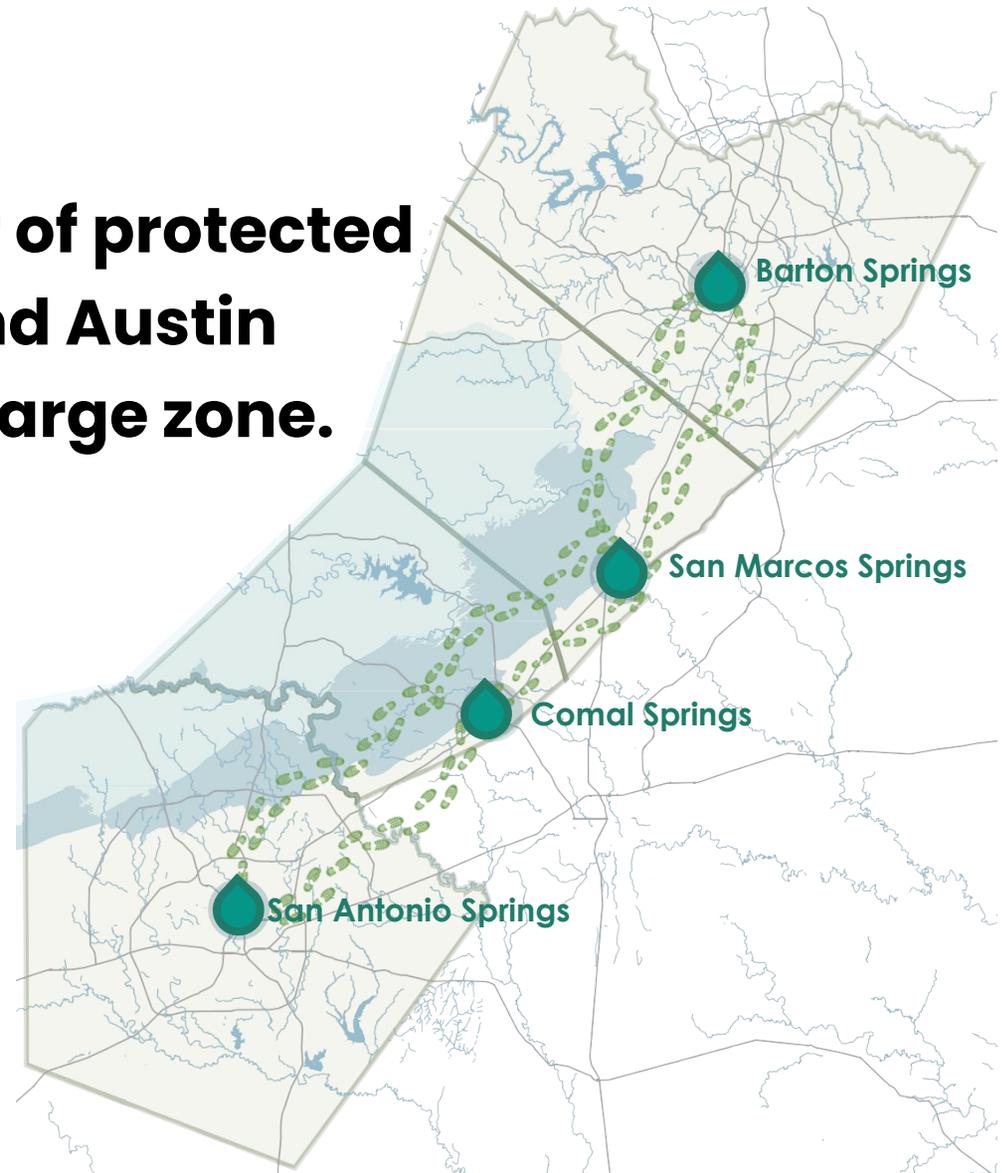
20 football fields/hour = losing the size of San Marcos every month

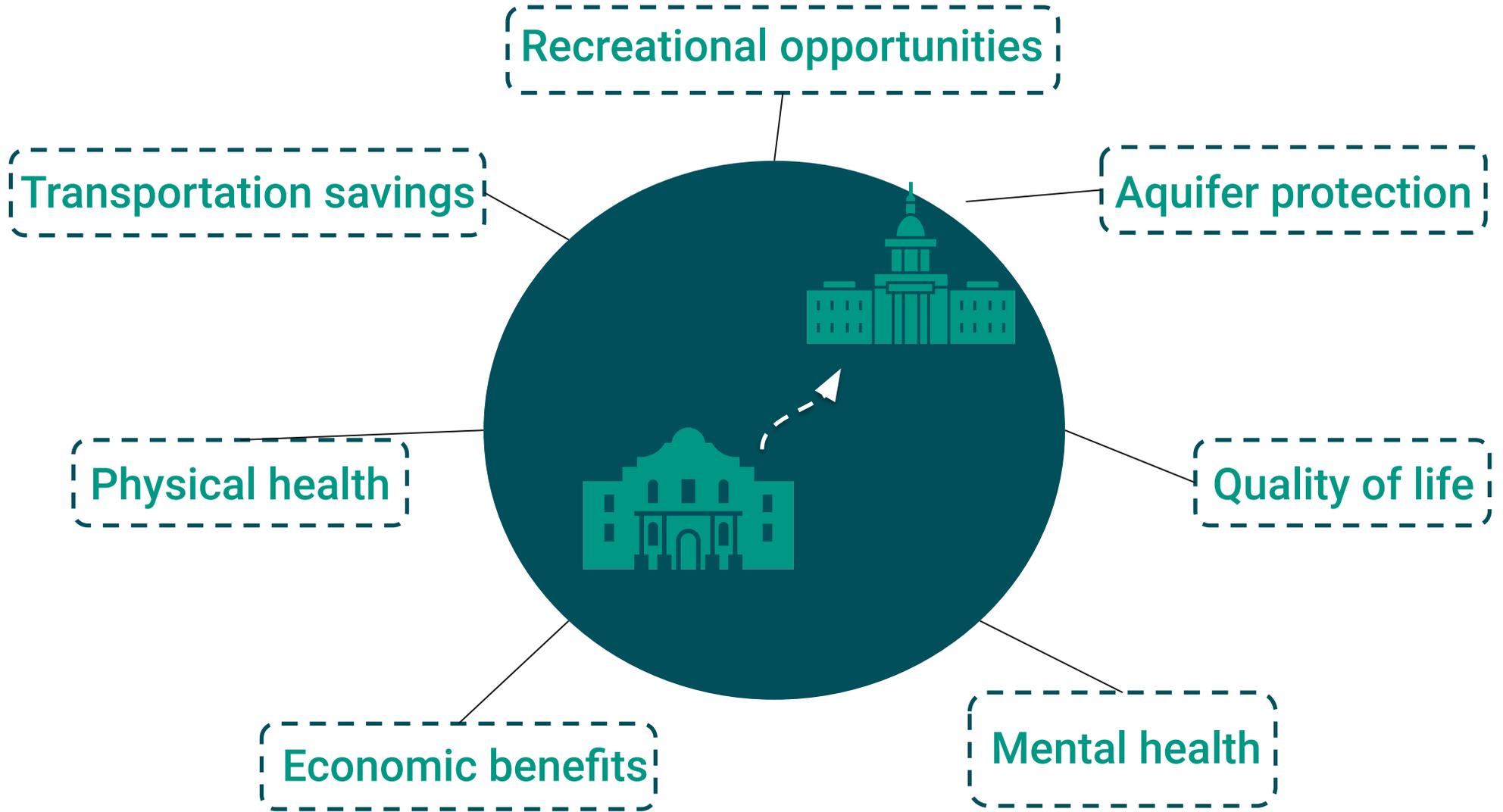


MISSION: CONNECTING FOUR GREAT SPRINGS

A national park-sized corridor of protected lands between San Antonio and Austin over the Edwards Aquifer recharge zone.

- **100+ mile trail network**
- **50,000 acres of additional protected lands**





HISTORY & HERITAGE PRESERVATION

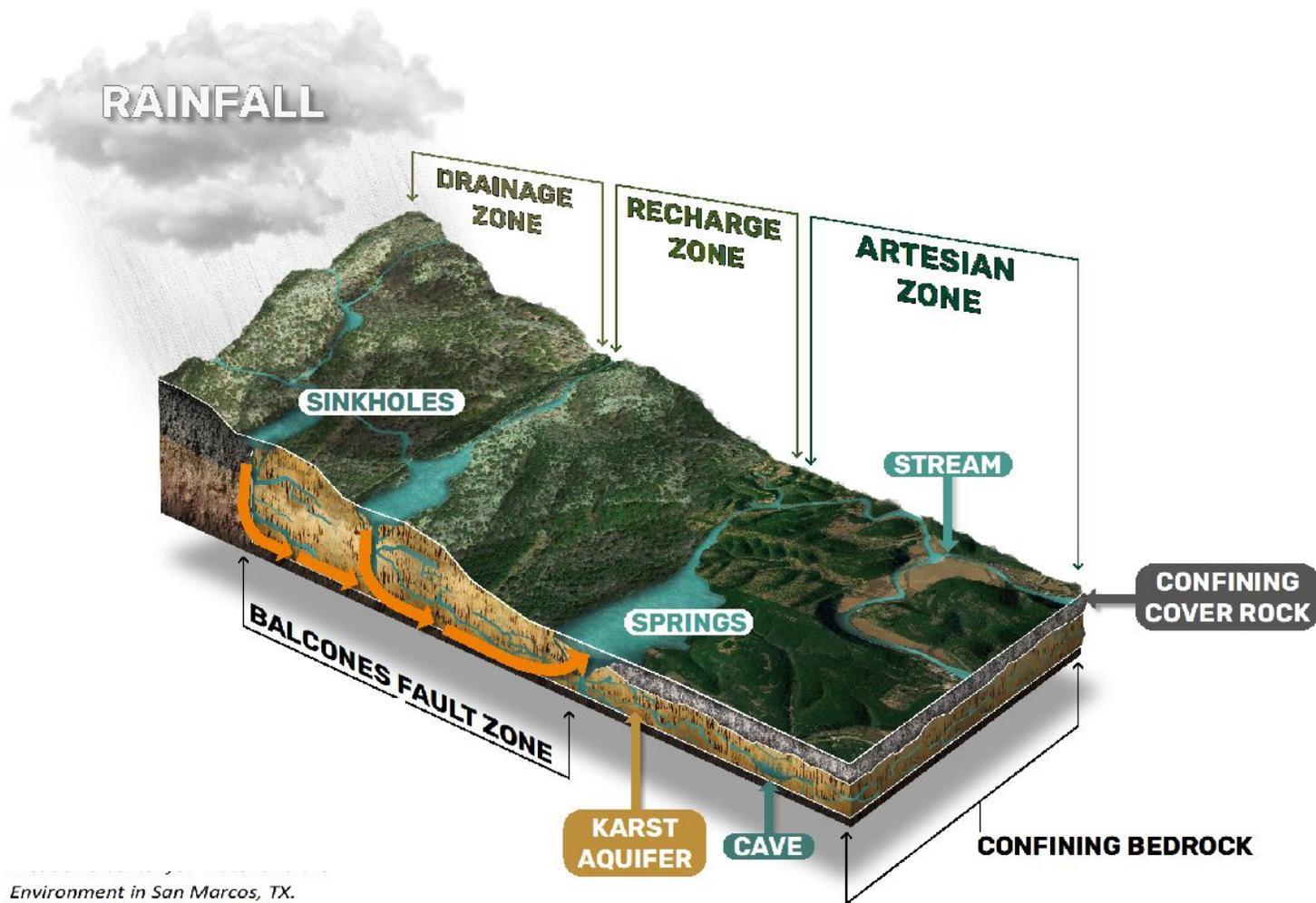


“Remember above all else that the land and waters are sacred, that we are all related, and that the time has come to renew our ancestral covenant with Mother Earth.”

- Dr. Mario Garza, Miakan-Garza tribe of the Coahuiltecan people



EDWARDS AQUIFER PROTECTION



Environment in San Marcos, TX.

What's the latest on the 100-mile trail connecting Austin to San Antonio?

by: [Kelsey Thompson](#)

Posted: Jul 26, 2023 / 01:52 PM CDT

Updated: Jul 26, 2023 / 02:30 PM CDT

Videos show portions of 100-mile hiking trail expected to connect San Antonio and Austin

Matthew McConaughey, Manu Ginóbili lend their voices to Great Springs Project

KXAN

What's the latest on the 100-mile trail connecting Austin to San Antonio?

The Great Springs Project will create a 100-mile trail system by 2036 that will link the two cities together, along with four springs...

1 hour ago

San Antonio Express-News

Great Springs Project would be transformative | Editorial

We are big fans of the planned hike-and-bike trail connecting San Antonio to Austin and urge the communities and landowners along the way to...

2 days ago

Pounding The Rock

Manu Ginobili narrates a video for Great Springs Project

Great Springs Project has been established to design greenway between Austin and San Antonio connecting a network of spring-to-spring trails...

6 days ago

KSAT

Videos show portions of 100-mile trail connecting San Antonio and Austin

SAN ANTONIO – What might have once been a reality as the Great Springs Project...

Feb 24, 2023

San Antonio Express-News

Great Springs Project: The Austin trail is moving ahead

Manu Ginobili narrates a video for Great Springs Project

A greenway from Austin to San Antonio is in the works

By Jeph Duarte | @jeph_duarte | Jul 20, 2023, 6:00am CDT | 0 Comments / 0 New

OPINION // EDITORIAL

Editorial: Great Springs project would connect San Antonio to Austin

Express-News Editorial Board

July 24, 2023 | Updated: July 25, 2023 5:21 a.m.

The Great Springs Project Aims to Build a 100-Mile Hike-and-Bike Trail From Austin to San Antonio

The nonprofit effort will cost hundreds of millions and preserve 50,000 acres over the fragile Edwards Aquifer. Can it be done?

By Megan Kimble | April 11, 2022 | 3



Environment

'Like Texas' Appalachian Trail' – Great Springs Project working to connect Austin and San Antonio

Texas Public Radio | By Jack Morgan

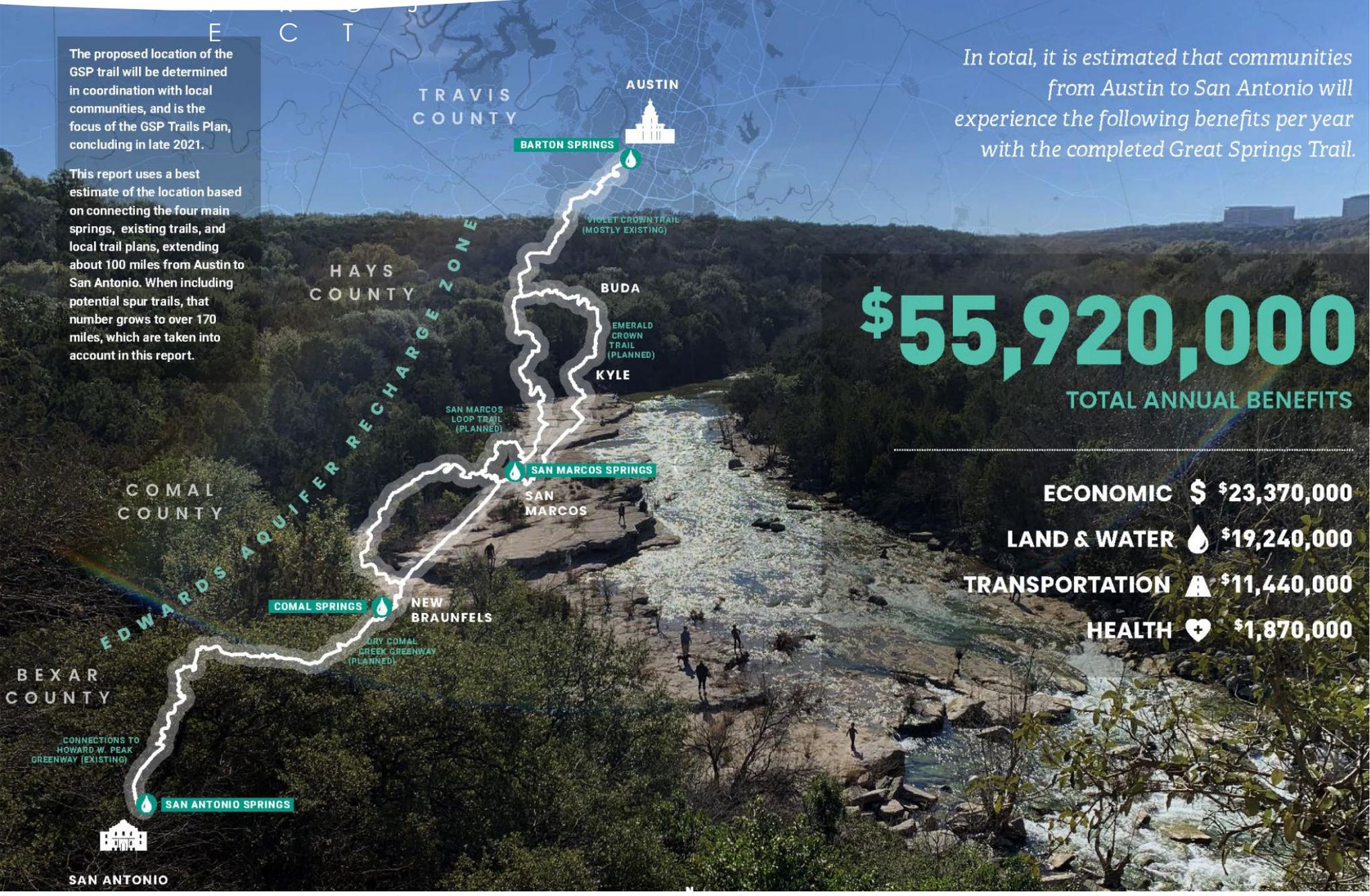
Published July 30, 2023 at 9:21 PM CDT



The proposed location of the GSP trail will be determined in coordination with local communities, and is the focus of the GSP Trails Plan, concluding in late 2021.

This report uses a best estimate of the location based on connecting the four main springs, existing trails, and local trail plans, extending about 100 miles from Austin to San Antonio. When including potential spur trails, that number grows to over 170 miles, which are taken into account in this report.

In total, it is estimated that communities from Austin to San Antonio will experience the following benefits per year with the completed Great Springs Trail.



\$55,920,000
TOTAL ANNUAL BENEFITS

| | | |
|----------------|----|--------------|
| ECONOMIC | \$ | \$23,370,000 |
| LAND & WATER | 💧 | \$19,240,000 |
| TRANSPORTATION | ⚠️ | \$11,440,000 |
| HEALTH | ❤️ | \$1,870,000 |

LEVERAGING FUNDS

Local Funds

- Parks, Transportation, and Drainage Municipal Bonds
- Flood Mitigation
- Water quality protection
- TWDB Clean Water State Revolving Fund
- Habitat Conservation Plans
- Edwards Aquifer Authority
- Emergency Management Plans

Federal Funds

- Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
- Transportation Alternatives Funding through MPOs
- RAISE Discretionary Grants
- INFRA Discretionary Grants
- Great American Outdoors Act
- Land and Water Conservation Funds
- 30x30/America the Beautiful

State Funds

- TXDOT
 - Statewide Transportation Alternatives
 - Highway Safety Improvement Program
 - Traffic Safety General Grants
- TWDB for green infrastructure
- TDA & GLO for flood mitigation
- TDEM for emergency management
- TPWD Recreational Trails Grants
- Texas Farm and Ranch Lands Conservation Program



Salado Creek Greenway/ Wurzbach Parkway – San Antonio

EQUITY TASK FORCE

To ensure our work provides access to nature for all people of all abilities

- Melissa Ayala, Waterloo Greenway
- Monica Borrego, New Braunfels Food Bank
- David Buggs, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Mariana Espinoza, City of Kyle
- Arnold Garcia (late), Former Editorial Page Editor, Austin American Statesman
- Dr. Ana Gonzalez, City of Austin
- Angelica Holmes, Black Outside, Inc.
- Jeanette Honermann, REI, Inc.
- Reverend Addae Kraba, Unitarian Universalists of New Braunfels
- Pablo Montes, Indigenous Cultures Institute
- Maria Rocha, Indigenous Cultures Institute
- Sister Cindy Stacy, Headwaters at Incarnate Word
- Dr. Marla Torrado, Community Powered Workshop
- Joshua Tuck, National Park Service
- Rocío Villalobos, City of Austin
- Dr. Skyller Walkes, University of Texas



“GSP’s mission to protect and connect Texas’ beautiful natural surroundings is underpinned by the fundamental requirement of equity and inclusion in public access to this beauty.”

— Equity Task Force

TRAIL STEERING COMMITTEE

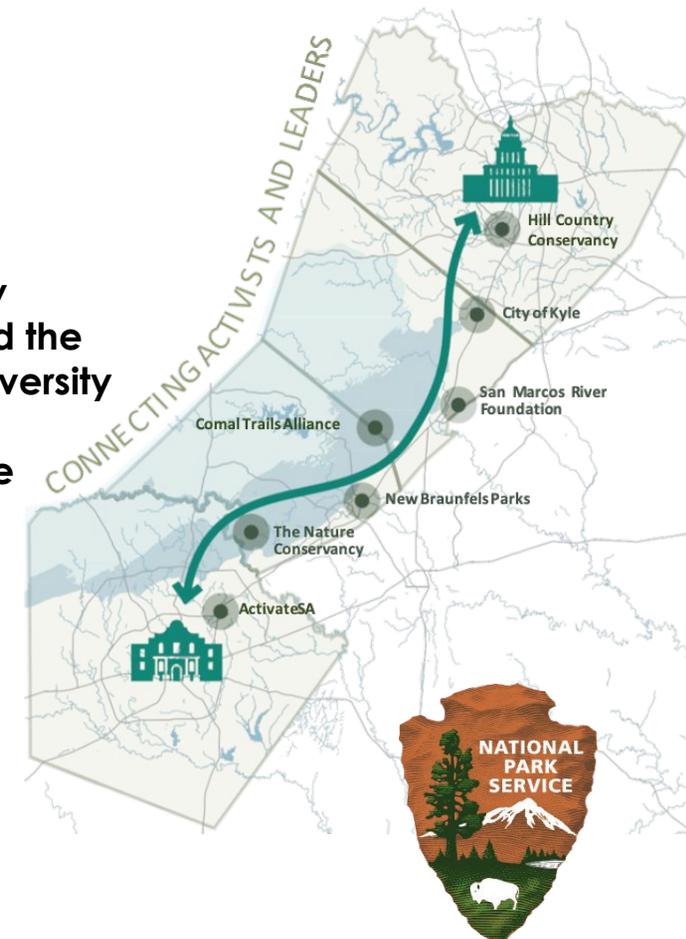
- **Jim Bailey, ActivateSA**
- **Sherwood Bishop, San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance**
- **Tony Canez, Bexar County**
- **Jamie Lee Case, City of San Marcos Parks and Recreation**
- **George Cofer, Hill Country Conservancy**
- **Janet Coles, Travis County Parks**
- **Mariana Espinoza, Kyle Parks and Recreation**
- **Garry Ford, City of New Braunfels**
- **Tyler Frost, City of Buda**
- **Steven Gonzales, El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail**
- **Steve Graham, San Antonio River Authority**
- **Jerry Hendrix, City of Kyle**
- **Aaron Mahr, National Park Service - National Trails**
- **Nancy Pappas, Headwaters at the Comal**
- **Nathan Pence, Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority**
- **Margo Richards, Lower Colorado River Authority**
- **Maria Rocha, Indigenous Cultures Institute**
- **Brandon Ross, City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation**
- **Lauren Shrum, City of Schertz Parks and Recreation**
- **Robin Stallings, Bike Texas**
- **Mark Taylor, Emerald Crown Regional Trail Work Group**
- **Alexandra Thompson, Hays County Natural Resources**
- **Joshua Tuck, National Park Service**



LAND & TRAIL PARTNERS

Connecting community leaders, stakeholders and interest groups throughout the corridor:

- Audubon Texas
- Austin Outside
- Budaful Hiker
- Camp Bullis Sentinel Landscape
- City of San Marcos
- City of Kyle
- City of Buda
- Hays County
- City of New Braunfels
- City of Schertz
- Comal County
- City of San Antonio
- City of Austin
- Bexar County
- Colorado River Alliance
- Colorado River land Trust
- Comal County Conservation Association
- Comal Trails Alliance
- Conservation Fund
- Green Spaces Alliance
- Guadalupe Blanco River Authority
- Guadalupe Blanco River Trust
- Headwaters at the Comal
- Hill Country Alliance
- Hill Country Conservancy
- Hill Country Land Trust
- Lower Colorado River Authority
- Meadows Center for Water and the Environment at Texas State University
- San Antonio River Authority
- San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance
- San Marcos River Foundation
- Shoal Creek Conservancy
- Texas Land Conservancy
- Texas Water Foundation
- Texas Water Trade
- Texas Wildlife Association
- The Nature Conservancy
- Travis Audubon
- Travis County Parks
- Trust for Public Land
- Wimberley Valley Watershed Association



OUR TEAM

Board

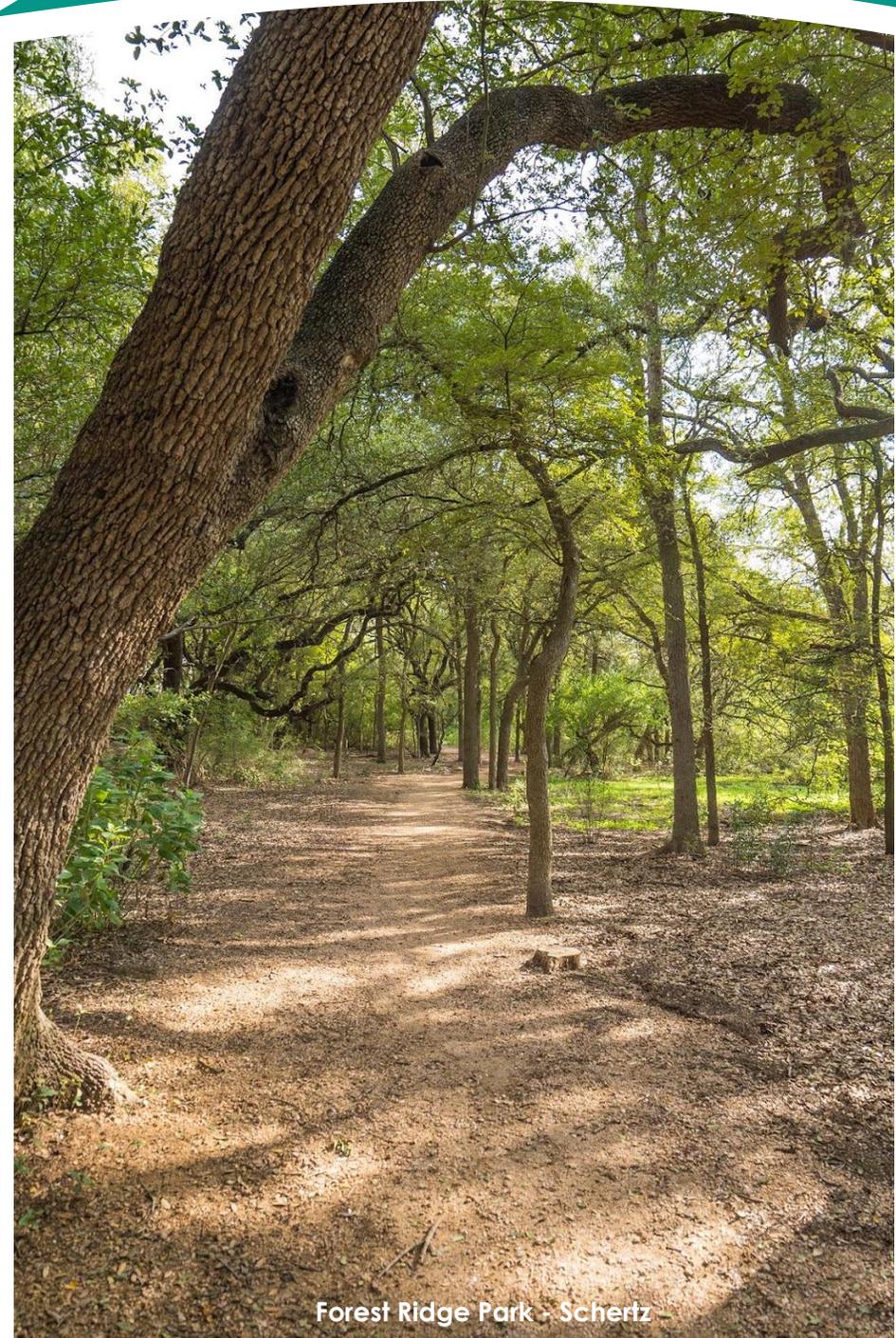
- Deborah Morin, Chair
- April Ancira
- Hope Andrade
- Tom Bacon
- Kyndel Bennett
- Cindy Matula
- Andy Sansom
- Dianne Wassenich

Senior Staff

- Garry Merritt, CEO
- Emma Lindrose-Siegel
- Bill Barker
- Scott Parker
- Sara Villarreal
- Marjesca Brown

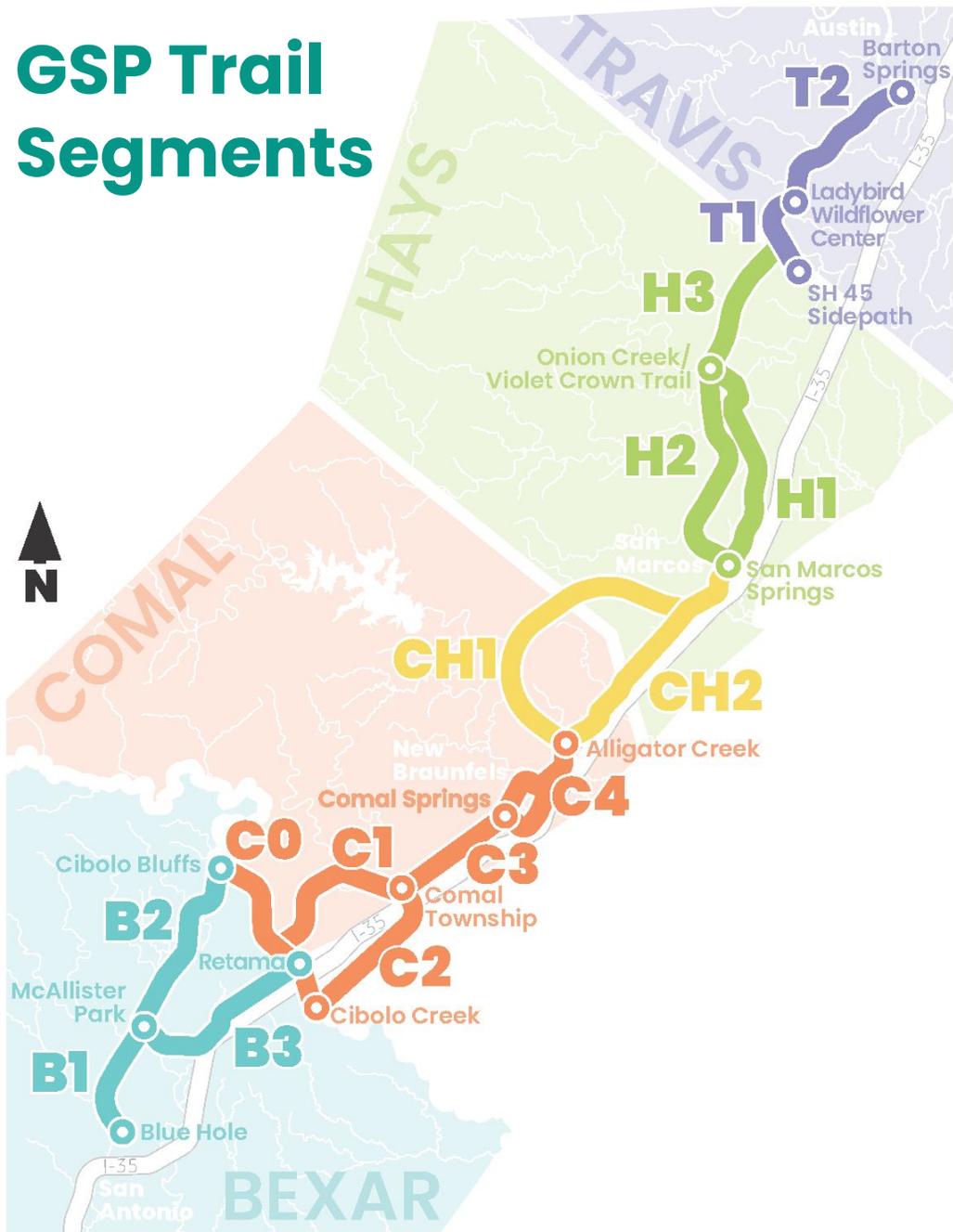
Advisory Board

- Anne Ashmun
- Ray Brimble
- Mike Burke
- Ted Flato
- Bill Johnson
- Phil Hardberger
- John Mackey
- Lee Walker



Forest Ridge Park - Schertz

GSP Trail Segments



Bexar County Trail Segments:

BEXAR 1: Spirit Reach + The Flyway

The Blue Hole to McAllister Park

BEXAR 2: Bracken Path

McAllister Park through Mud Creek to Cibolo Bluffs Nature Preserve

BEXAR 3: Beitel Creek Greenway

LBJ Park through Beitel Creek to Retama Park



Comal County Trail Segments:

COMAL 0: Cibolo Creek Greenway

Selma, Schertz, Cibolo

COMAL 1: Comal Run

Cibolo Bluffs Nature Preserve to Comal Community Historic Site

COMAL 2: Great Northern Trail

Schertz to Great Northern Trail to Dry Comal Creek

COMAL 3: Dry Comal Creek Greenway

Solms Park To Landa Park and Comal Springs

COMAL 4: Alligator Creek

Landa Park to Alligator Creek to Pantermuehl Pocket Park



Comal/Hays Trail Segments:

COMAL/HAYS 1: Western Swing

Pantermuehl to La Cima to San Marcos Springs

COMAL/HAYS 2: Hunter Road

Alligator Creek to Kissing Tree to La Cima to San Marcos Springs



Hays County Trail Segments:

HAYS 1: Emerald Crown Trail

San Marcos Springs to connection with Violet Crown Trail

HAYS 2: Blanco River

Presa to Blanco Bend to Emerald Crown Trail to Violet Crown Trail

HAYS 3: Hays County Violet Crown Trail

Onion Creek to SH45



Travis County Trail Segments:

TRAVIS 1: Violet Crown to Lady Bird

SH45 to Ladybird Wildflower Center

TRAVIS 2: Violet Crown to Barton Springs

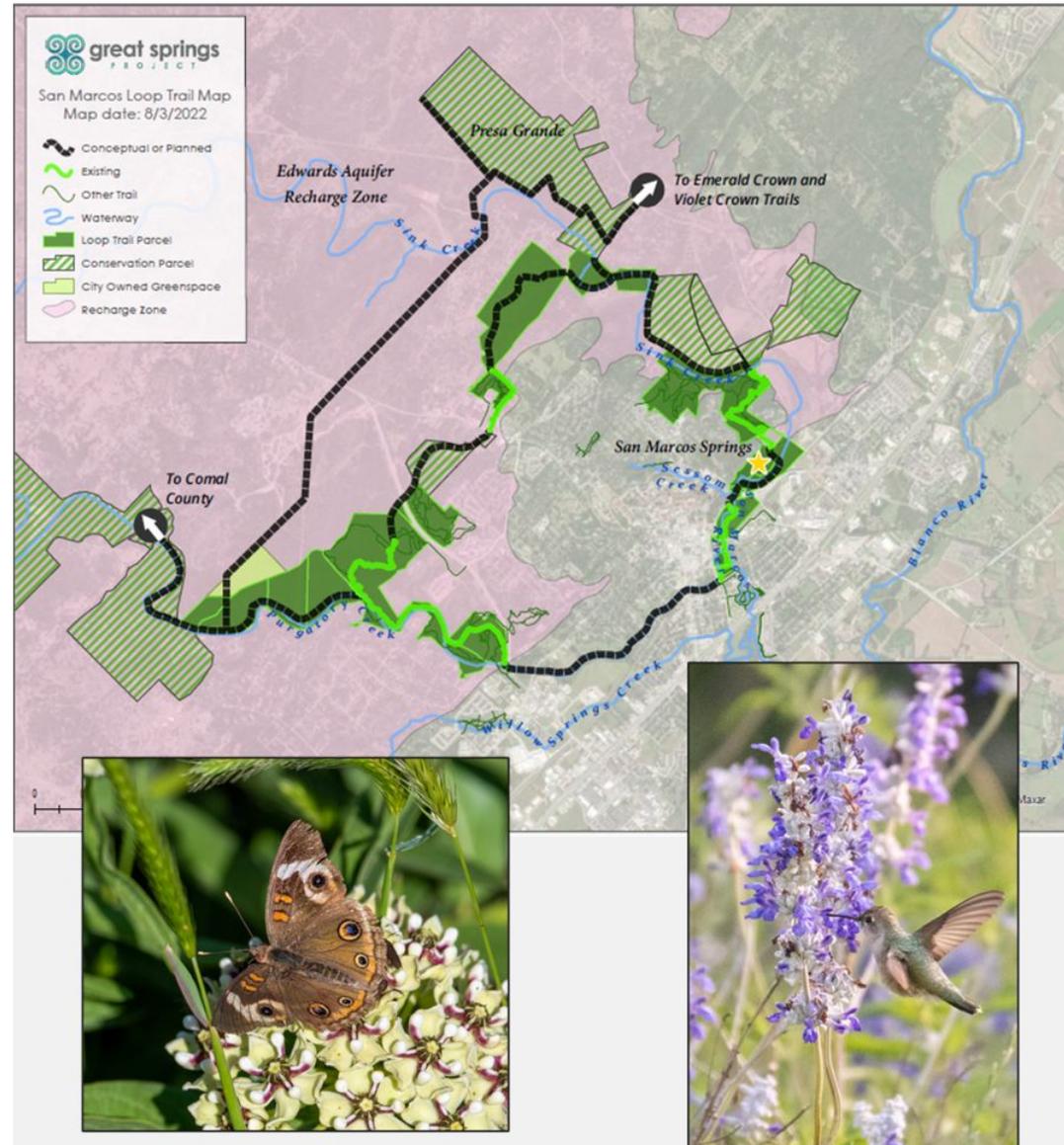
Ladybird Wildflower Center to Barton Springs



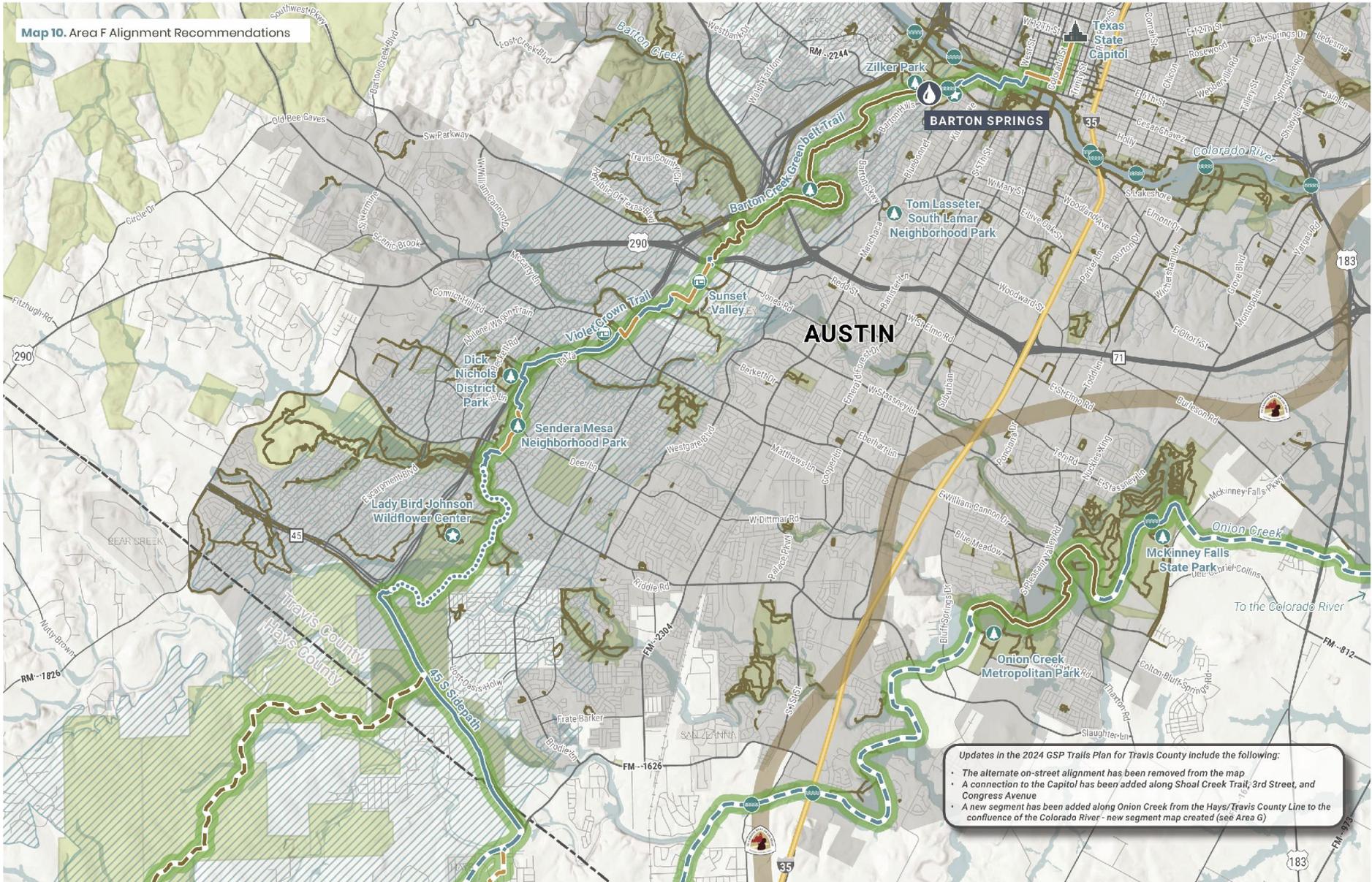
HAYS COUNTY

Limestone Link (H2)

- **Crucial connector of trail between River Recharge Natural Area and Ringtail Ridge Natural Area**
- **102 acres of land over the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone**
- **Hays County agreed to have trail on the ground within 18 months as part of the transfer- March 2025**
- **GSP is currently working with SMGA and Hays County to plan for the future trail and trailhead improvements to the property**

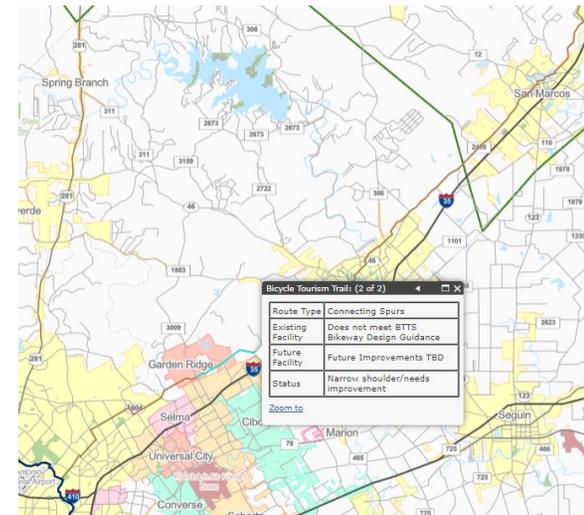
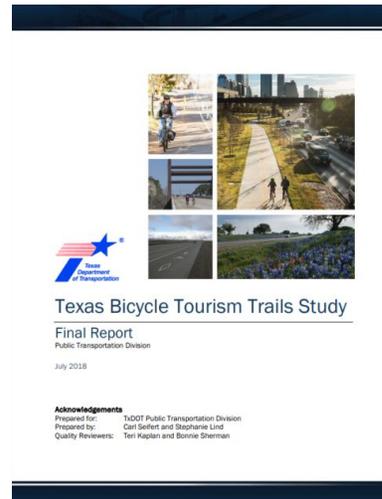


TRAVIS COUNTY (H3, T1, T2)

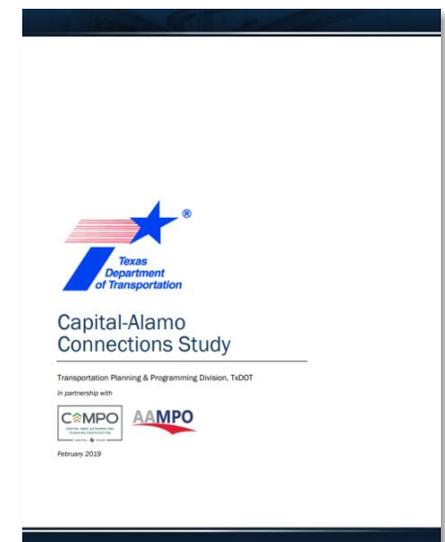
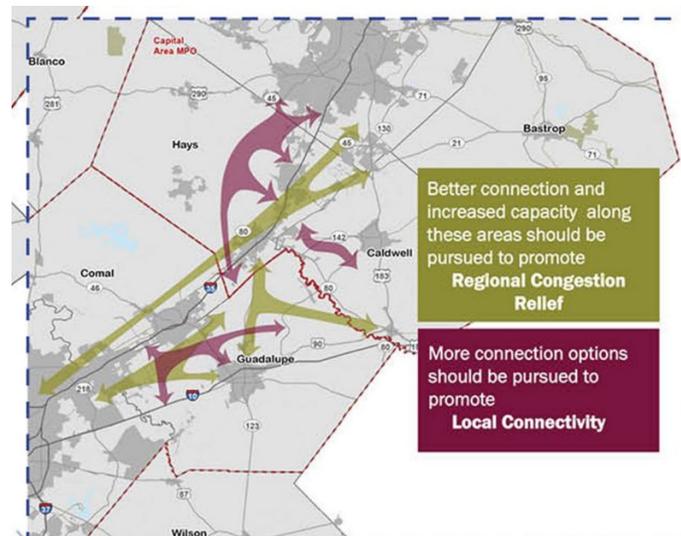


REGIONAL PLANNING EFFORTS

2018 Texas Bicycle Tourism Trails Route



2019 Capital-Alamo Connections Study



The trail may look different in these varying contexts.



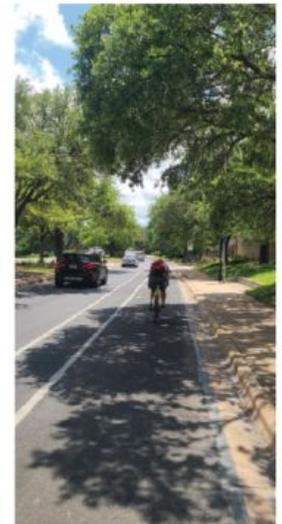
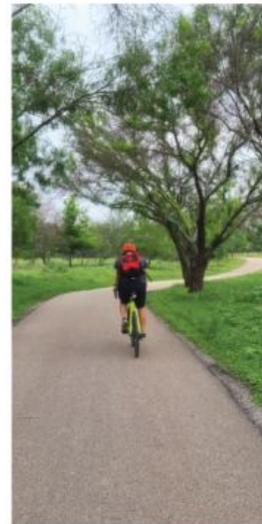
HILL COUNTRY RURAL

RANCHLAND RURAL

SMALL TOWN

SUBURBAN

URBAN



5 BENEFITS OF PLANTING TREES

TREES HELP...



1 COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE

Trees absorb carbon-dioxide and convert it to oxygen.



2 PROVIDE SHADE & SHELTER

Trees provide shelter and shade from the heat and cold.



3 CLEAN THE AIR

Through photosynthesis, trees produce oxygen. They remove particulate matter, reducing overall air pollution.



4 PREVENT FLOODING

Trees along river banks help soak up excess water and keep soil in place.



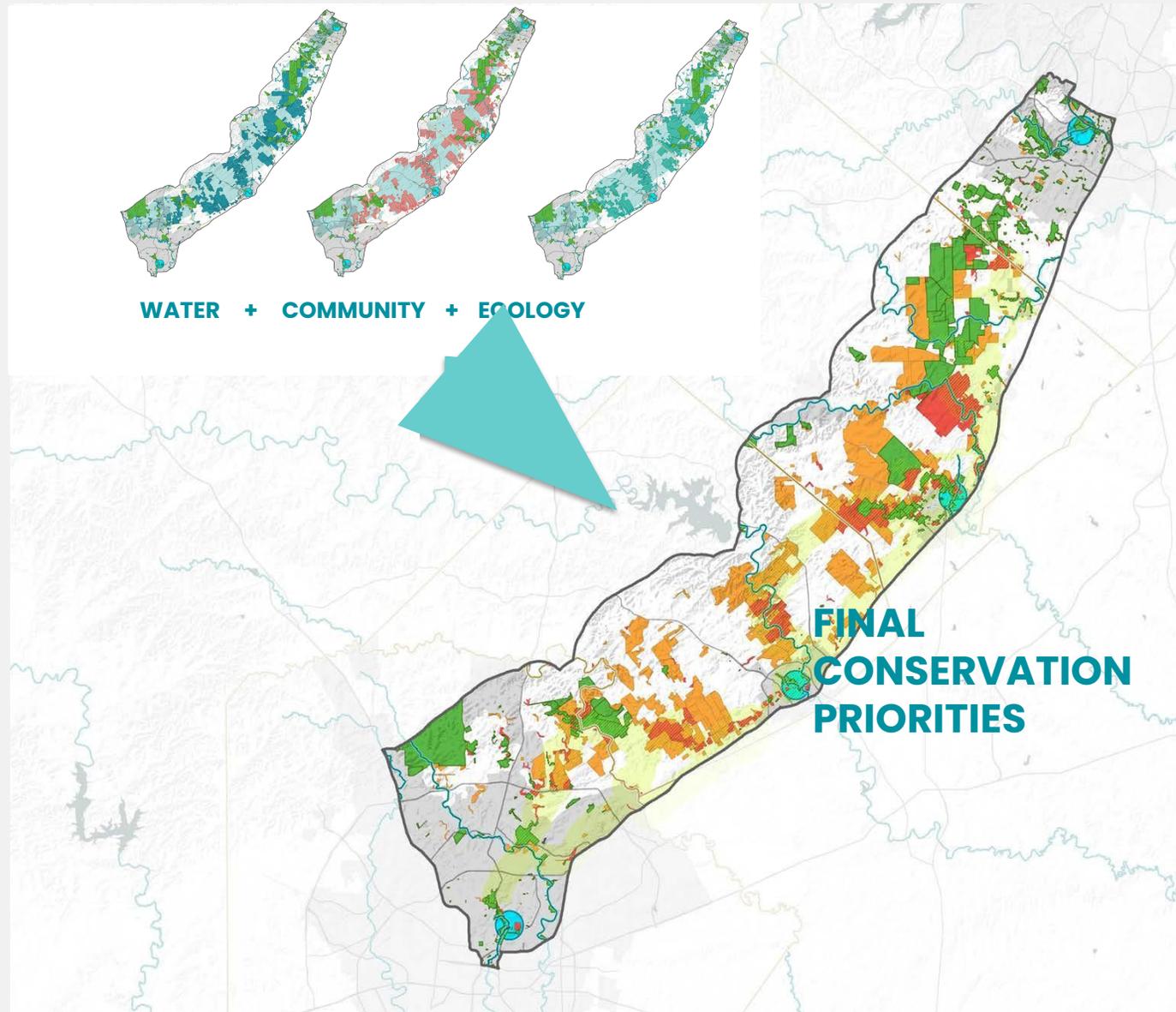
5 IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH

Studies show being near trees can reduce stress levels by decreasing your blood pressure and slowing your heart rate.



PRIORITIZATION

- **Edwards Aquifer recharge zone San Antonio to Austin**
- **Meadows Center Watershed Prioritization Reports**
- **Siglo Group Strategic Conservation Prioritization Study**



Landowner Outreach Initiative

A laser-focused and novel approach to moving land into conservation.

24 Months

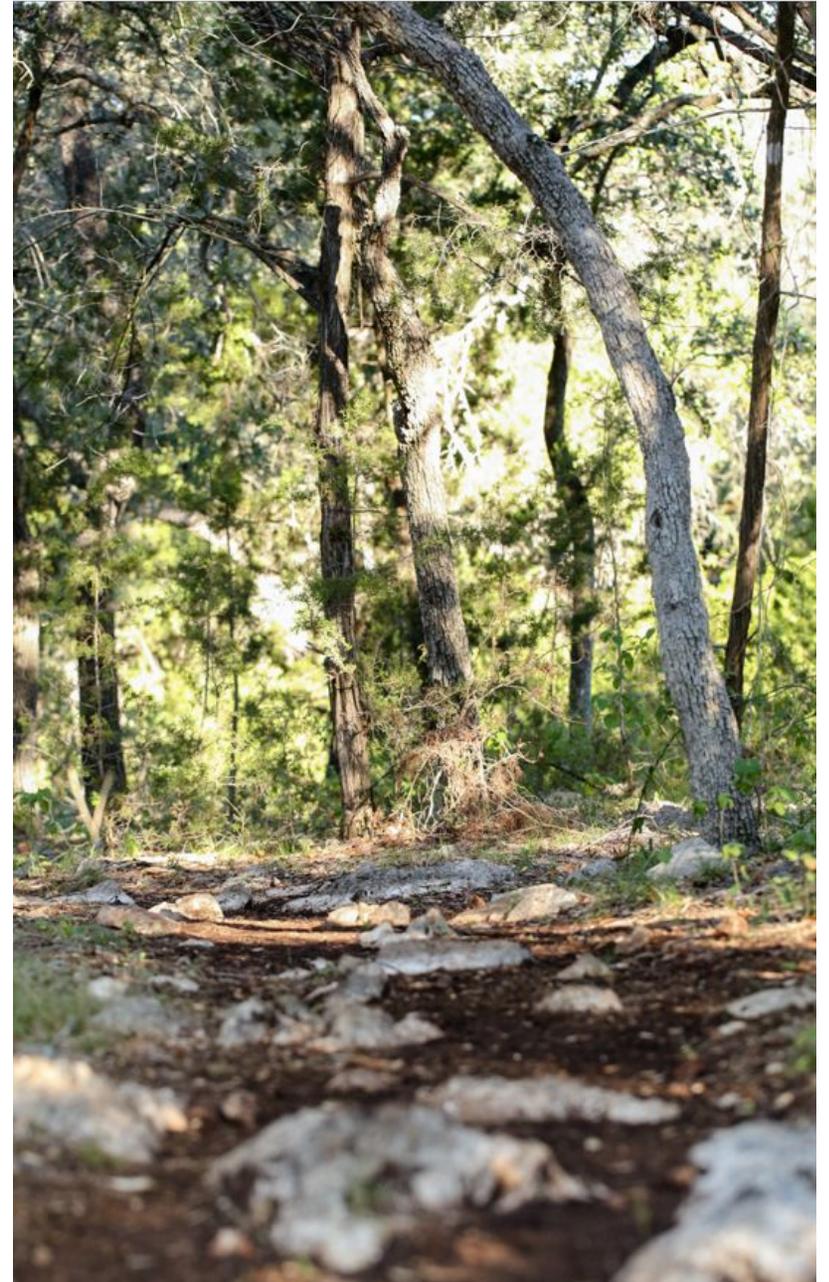
1,583 Parcels of land

829 Landowners

PROGRESS TO DATE

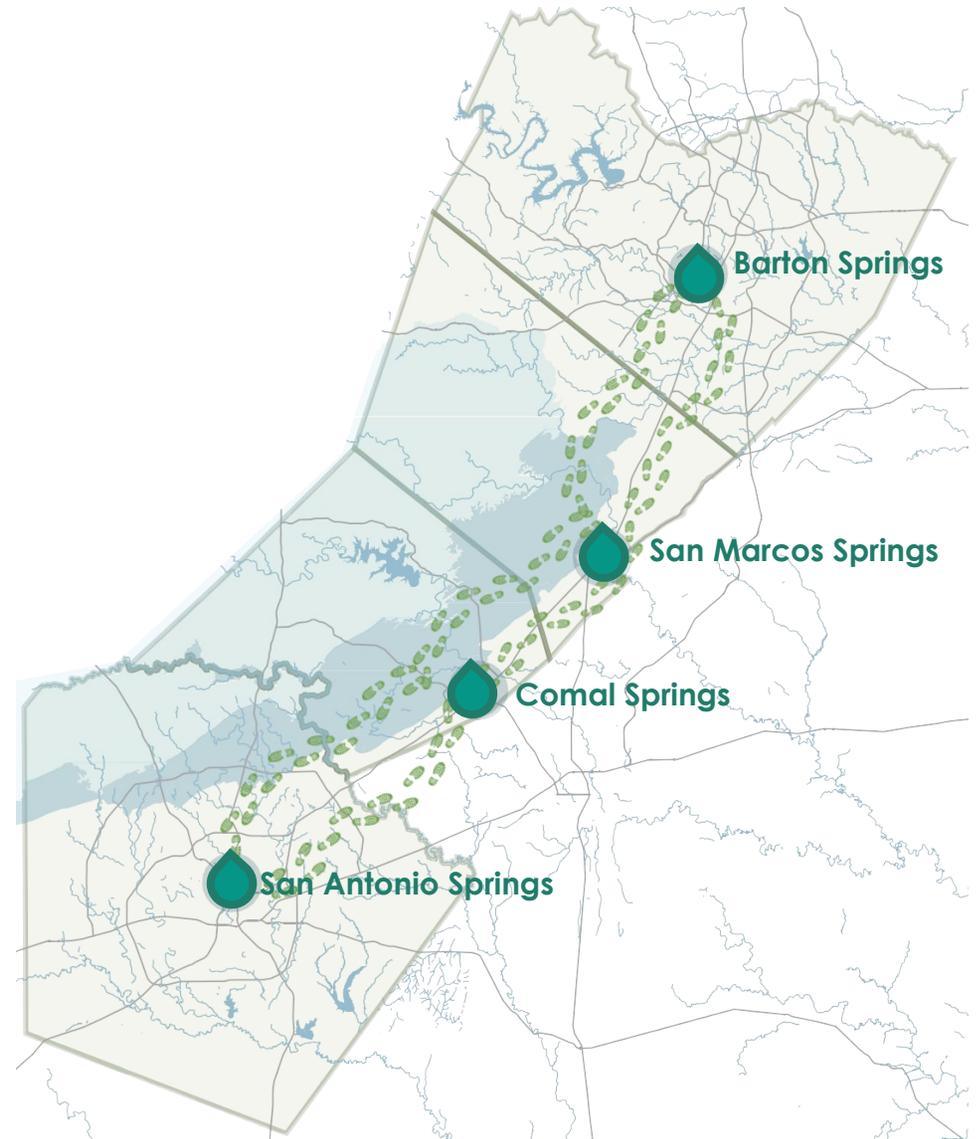
Organizational Capacity with Tangible Results

- 4,627 Acres of Land Conserved
- Over 1/3 of trail in alignment already constructed
- Updates to the GSP Trails Plan and Publication of the Economic Benefits Report
- Increased Public and Private Support
- Extensive Landowner Engagement Initiative



GSP Strategic Plan:

- Get Trail On The Ground.
- Get Land Into Conservation.





Thank you!

Garry Merritt
Chief Executive Officer
garry@greatspringsproject.org
(210) 260-9839

Emma Lindrose-Siegel
Chief Development Officer
emma@greatspringsproject.org
(940) 594-8482