

Section 6 (Texas Non-traditional) Report Review

Attachment to letter dated (mm/dd/yyyy): JAN 05 2011

TPWD signature date on report: 11/22/10

Project Title: Cibolo Canyonlands GCW Land Acquisition Over The Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone In Comal County, Texas

Final or Interim Report? Final

Nontraditional Program (check one):

Grant #: TX E-86-HL

☐ Recovery Land Acquisition

☒ HCP Land Acquisition

Reviewer Station: Austin ESFO

☐ HCP Planning Assistance

Lead station was contacted and concurs with the following comments:

☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Not applicable (reviewer is from lead station)

Interim Report (check one):

☐ Acceptable (no comments)

☐ Needs revision prior to final report
(see comments below)

☐ Incomplete (see comments below)

Final Report (check one):

☐ Acceptable (no comments)

☒ Needs revision (see comments below)

☐ Incomplete (see comments below)

Comments:

The report is titled a final report; however, the final paragraph states The Nature Conservancy is still pursuing conservation for large portions of the Galo Property. Are there plans to use this grant for that conservation? If so, then this wouldn't be the final report. If another source of funding is going to be used, then please state that.

FINAL REPORT

As Required by

THE ENDANGERED SPECIES PROGRAM

TEXAS

Grant No. TX E-86-HL-1

Endangered and Threatened Species Conservation

**Cibolo Canyonlands GCW Land Acquisition Over the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone in
Comal County, Texas**



Carter Smith
Executive Director

Clayton Wolf
Director, Wildlife Division

22 November 2010

FINAL Report

State: Texas

Grant Number: E-86-HL-1

Grant Title: Cibolo Canyonlands GCW Land Acquisition Over the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone in Comal County, Texas

Grant Program: Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation

Reporting Period: 15 Nov 2006 to 31 Aug 2010

Objective: To acquire 750 acres of golden cheeked warbler habitat in Comal County, Texas over the Edwards Aquifer recharge zone.

Summary Of Progress: Please see Attachment A.

Significant Deviations: See above.

Location: Comal County, Texas.

Cost: available upon completion of grant.

Prepared by: Craig Farquhar

Date: 22 November 2010

Approved by: 

Date: 22 November 2010

ATTACHMENT A

Summarized by Jeff Francel, The Nature Conservancy

Property History

In June of 2007, the Nature Conservancy was awarded a grant from the US Fish and Wildlife Service to purchase, in fee-simple or through a conservation easement, 750 acres from the subject tract for the purposes of protecting the golden-cheeked warbler. The grant is a matching grant in which federal funds totaling \$3.5 million (or 38% of the total projected cost) would be provided if the remaining 62% in matching funds were raised.

Edwards Aquifer Propositions Funds Unavailable

The principle source of match funding was anticipated to be the City of San Antonio's Edwards Aquifer sales tax initiative. Due to recent evaluations of the flow path of water within the southern segment of the Edwards Aquifer, most of the water recharging on the Galo property is thought to feed Comal and San Marcos Springs, not San Antonio's drinking water. With a limited benefit to San Antonio's drinking water, the City has only committed \$900,000 towards the acquisition, not the nearly \$5 million estimated in the Conservancy's Section 6 proposal.

Bargain Sale Insufficient

The Conservancy worked with the owner of the property to agree to a "bargain" or below fair market sale of 750 acres of their larger property for the purposes outlined in the Section 6 proposal. Unfortunately the fair market value of the property has declined since Galo purchased the land in 2006 and we were unable to meet the landowner's capital needs in a bargain sale transaction.

Current condition

As the current Section 6 Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant is to expire soon, the City of San Antonio, The Nature Conservancy and others are still pursuing a conservation outcome for large portions of the 2800 acre Galo property. Given its significant to the Edwards Aquifer, golden-cheeked warbler habitat and its adjacency to the largest mammal concentration in the world at neighboring Bracken Cave, both the City and the Conservancy are investigating all options to acquire the most environmentally sensitive portions of the land. The City of San Antonio is contemplating submitting a new Section 6 Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition grant in January 2011 utilizing its \$900,000 in matching funds and \$250,000 from the Edwards Aquifer Authority.