

**What's your view of Hill Country Stewardship?**  
*The Hill Country Alliance Photo Contest kicks off March 1<sup>st</sup>*



2013 Grand Prize Winner: Tim Huchton

(February 25, 2014) - The Hill Country Alliance (HCA) is seeking photographs that tell the story of our region's stewardship ethic for publication in its 2015 calendar. The Texas Hill Country is a cherished place, yet it is threatened by land fragmentation, over-allocated rivers and aquifers, incompatible land development practices and a lack of understanding about appropriate stewardship.

The contest opens March 1 and runs through May 31. Winners receive cash prizes and appear in the popular HCA

calendar and in various HCA educational products. Entering the contest is done easily online through the Hill Country Alliance website ([www.hillcountryalliance.org](http://www.hillcountryalliance.org)).

Each year HCA produces a calendar featuring stunning photographs taken by amateurs and professionals – photos that target those special places that attract people to the Hill Country to visit and to live. “This year we are encouraging images that illustrate responsible stewardship choices, including native landscapes, riparian habitats and vistas created by local land conservation initiatives,” said HCA President Milan J. Michalec. “We will also consider photographic illustrations of a Hill Country that is stressed and not well stewarded. Such images can be a reality check about what's happening on the ground. Our intention is to create a calendar that is a beautiful and educational reminder of all that the Hill Country is now, and the need for all of us to take care of it for the future.”

Too often we try to change the landscape we love to fit an image of what we perceive makes it even more beautiful. “In a way we are loving the Hill Country to death,” says Sky Jones-Lewey, HCA board member and past-president, “Unfortunately it can be a consumptive kind of love, love for sculpted and landscaped river banks, love for reflecting ponds filled with precious groundwater, love for hill top vistas and roads to get us there, and love for big green thirsty lawns. But there are better ways and we want to illustrate these better choices so Hill Country citizens can see them and be empowered to alter our course.”

HCA is a collaboration of diverse people and organizations whose purpose is to raise public awareness and build community support around the need to protect the natural resources and heritage of the Texas Hill Country. According to Michalec, “Our goal is a Texas Hill Country whose charm is sustainable into the future for all to enjoy.”