

A VISION FOR THE HILL COUNTRY

HCA Leadership Summit
September 24th, 2015 | Admiral Nimitz Museum Ballroom | Fredericksburg, TX

- 8:30am Registration. Coffee and a light breakfast will be served
- 9:00am Opening Remarks – **Leo Tynan**, President of the Hill Country Alliance.
- 9:15am **State Representative Andrew Murr**. *Rising to leadership in the Hill Country*
Growing up in a rural Hill Country community, Andy knows the rivers, landscapes and people of our region. Learn about his vision and the steps we must take to ensure the same quality of life will be available for future generations.
- 9:45am **Roel Lopez**, Director of Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources, Texas Land Trends. *What's happening on the land in the Texas Hill Country and where are we headed?*
Roel has 20 years of natural resource experience with Texas A&M University and will review some of the drivers in land conversion and fragmentation in the state and Texas Hill Country.
- 10:30am **Robert Mace**, Deputy Executive Administrator for Water Science and Conservation, Texas Water Development Board. *Water for the Hill Country: Who, What, and When?*
With 16 years at the Texas Water Development Board, Robert will talk about where our water comes from and the complicated issues facing us as our population explodes along the I-35 corridor.
- 11:15am **Ken Kattner**, Landowner, Putman Mountain Observatory. *Hill Country Dark Sky Reserve: A place for all of us under the starry night skies of the Texas Hill Country.*
Did you know the Hill Country is on the edge of night? Austin to San Antonio is bathed in artificial light, but the Hill Country has been embracing a movement to protect the starry night skies.
- 11:45am **Patrick Bixler**, Research Scientist, Texas A&M Institute for Renewable Natural Resources, *Enhancing our collective ability to scale the impact of land and water resource protection in the Texas Hill Country.*
Patrick is leading a Hill Country Network Research Project to evaluate opportunities for greater collaboration and to examine lessons we can learn from successful "Networks" in other areas.
- 12:00pm **Christy Muse**, Executive Director, Hill Country Alliance. *Morning wrap-up: HCA teams and programs pointing towards a vision for the Hill Country.*
- Lunch on the Patio**
- 1:00pm **Con Mims**, Executive Director of the Nueces River Authority. *Incredible Hill Country Rivers: What makes these rivers uniquely "ecologically significant?"*
Con will walk us through the state of our rivers and challenges to river health. With the threats these precious resources face, what are the most important actions we should be taking to protect them?
- 1:30pm **Joe Lessard**, Senior Planning Director, Knudson LP. *Lone Star Rail: Changing the way Central Texas lives and moves!*
The LSTAR regional commuter rail project is on track for final design and construction in 3 to 4 years. The project will truly be a game-changer for our region, and will enhance the way we move and develop.
- 2:15pm **Robert Yaro**, Potter Rose Visting Professor, UT School of Architecture. *Investigating the full range of the land and resource conservation tools to protect the Hill Country's most important resources.*
Bob is President Emeritus and Senior Advisor at Regional Plan Association in New York, and has extensive experience in regional planning and conservation efforts from around the country. He is leading a graduate level course focused on Hill Country planning this fall.
- 3:15 – 5:30pm **Table Topics & Networking Reception.** *(Topics: Protecting the Night Sky, Groundwater Management, Healthy Water Catchments, Land Conservation, Land Trends & Stewardship, Regional Vision, Network Collaboration)*

Speaker Bios



State Representative Andy Murr. Elected to the Texas House of Representatives 2014, Andrew Murr's district includes much of the Hill Country region including Bandera, Crockett, Edwards, Kerr, Kimble, Llano, Mason, Medina, Menard, Real, Schleicher and Sutton Counties. An eighth generation Texan, he was raised on a ranch in Kimble County, and attended school in Junction. He attended Texas A&M University, receiving a bachelor degree, summa cum laude, in Agricultural Development with an emphasis in economics and policy. He subsequently graduated with highest honors from Texas Tech University School of Law. In 2008, Representative Murr was elected Kimble County Attorney. However, he was appointed to the position of County Judge, due to a vacancy, before he was sworn in. He is a past president of the Kimble-Edwards Farm Bureau Board of Directors and Junction Rotary Club. He serves as a member of the Kimble County of Historical Commission and the Kimble County Youth Show. He is also a proud member of the State Bar of Texas, Texas Sheep and Goat Raisers Association, the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, and the National Rifle Association.



Roel Lopez, *Director of Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources*. Dr. Roel Lopez is Director of the Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources and Professor in the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences at Texas A&M University. He has over 20 years of experience in natural resource and land management with academia, federal and private industry. As a researcher and teacher, he has authored >100 journal articles and book chapters and has chaired over 60 graduate students. He served as Special Assistant to the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense-Installation and Environment and continues to work with the Department of Defense on various national and regional natural resource and environmental issues. His research focuses on endangered and fragmented wildlife populations, wildlife populations in urban settings, and sustainability of military lands.



Robert Mace, *Deputy Executive Administrator for Water Science and Conservation, Texas Water Development Board*. Dr. Robert E. Mace joined the Texas Water Development Board in 1999 to manage the Groundwater Availability Modeling Program. Since then, he has served as a unit leader and director for the Groundwater Resources Division and currently serves as the Deputy Executive Administrator for Water Science & Conservation, a department of 64 scientists, engineers, and specialists dedicated to better understanding groundwater and surface water resources in Texas and advancing water conservation and innovative water technologies such as desalination, aquifer storage and recovery, reuse, and rainwater harvesting. Prior to joining the Texas Water Development Board, Robert worked for almost nine years at the Bureau of Economic Geology at The University of Texas at Austin as a hydrologist and research scientist. Robert has a B.S. in Geophysics and an M.S. in Hydrology from the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology and a Ph.D. in Hydrogeology from The University of Texas at Austin. His residential consumption of water is less than 30 gallons per person per day (and would be lower if his wife was more cooperative).



Ken Kattner, *Landowner, Putman Mountain Observatory*. Ken Kattner is a business attorney by day and an amateur astronomer by night. From his Putman Mountain Observatory located in the Texas Hill Country, he looks deep into the universe recording images of far-away supernova and galaxies. Gaining insight from spending time under the dark, pristine skies of the Hill Country, Ken has learned that preserving the beauty of our night skies is a significant natural resource important to each of us. That insight has led Ken to help a number of Hill Country cities design and implement lighting codes to promote more efficient, dark sky friendly outdoor lighting. Recently he assisted Enchanted Rock State Natural Area obtain a gold tier designation as a Dark Sky Park by the International Dark Sky Association. Ken is now working with a number of cities, businesses, individuals, and the Hill Country Alliance in order to establish a Hill Country Dark Sky Reserve.



Patrick Bixler, *Research Scientist, Texas A&M Institute for Renewable Natural Resources*. Patrick, a native Texan and new resident of the Hill Country, focuses his work on the intersection of ecology, economy and governance and is particularly interested in the role of relationships and networks that link local actions to landscape-level outcomes. He is a Research Scientist for Conservation Policy at Texas A&M Institute for Renewable Natural Resources where he contributes a human dimensions perspective to the Institute's work. Patrick received his PhD from Colorado State University and completed a post-doctoral fellowship at the Pinchot Institute for Conservation in Washington, D.C.

Thank you to the Hill Country Land Trust and Pedernales Brewing Company for their generous contributions to this event!



Con Mims, *Executive Director of the Nueces River Authority*. Con is a graduate of Texas A&M University, Class of 1965, and has worked for nearly 50 years in the fields of water resource protection, planning, and development. He began his career with the San Antonio River Authority in 1966 and joined the Nueces River Authority in 1976. He was appointed Executive Director in 1978. The Authority has offices in Uvalde and Corpus Christi. Con currently serves as the Chairman of the South Central Texas Regional Water Planning Group (Region L) and Chairman of the Texas Instream Flows Program, Nueces River and Corpus Christi Bay and Baffin Bay Area. He was former Chair of the Edwards aquifer Recovery Implementation Program Steering Committee and Past President of the Texas Water Conservation Association. He is active in leadership roles in numerous organizations including Director, Texas Wildlife Association.



Joe Lessard, *Consultant to the Lone Star Rail Project*. Mr. Joseph L. Lessard is Senior Planning Director for Knudson LP, a firm specializing in urban planning, landscape architecture, public participation, economic development and construction management consultancy. Joe specializes in providing intergovernmental relations/outreach, economic development, strategic project management and organizational alignment services. Previously he was head of Land Development Services for Kucera Management and prior to that he was Assistant City Manager with the City of Austin. Joe held oversight responsibilities at one time or another for sixteen of the City's department or functional areas. He holds Bachelor of Arts degrees in business administration and political science from Washington State University and a Master of Public Affairs degree from the Indiana University School of Public and Environmental Affairs. Mr. Lessard is a member of the International City Management Association, the Urban Land Institute and the Congress for the New Urbanism. He previously served on the Envision Central Texas Board of Directors and on the Citizen Advisory Committee for the Balcones Canyonland Conservation Plan.



Special Keynote Speaker: Bob Yaro, *Potter Rose Visting Professor, UT School of Architecture Professor of Practice in City and Regional Planning at the University of Pennsylvania, President Emeritus and Senior Advisor at Regional Plan Association in New York*. For more than 40 years Yaro has been a thought leader in urban, transportation and environmental planning, in both the US and around the world. Until his retirement as RPA's President and CEO in December, 2014, he led the Association's research and advocacy efforts for more than a quarter century. Before coming to RPA in 1989 he served as a planner and public sector executive for the City of Boston and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, where he led urban park and land conservation programs, including creation of the Boston Harbor Islands, Lowell and Blackstone Valley state and national parks. Bob has also taught planning at the graduate level since 1984, at Penn, Harvard, Columbia and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. At UMass he established and led the Center for Rural Massachusetts, where he initiated the nation's first smart growth program, Growing Smart in Massachusetts. He has also led efforts in New York and New England to manage growth and preserve natural resource systems for several large landscapes containing important ecological, scenic and water resources. Bob lives with his wife, Susan in Guilford, CT.



A special recognition for HCA's fabulous Board of Directors! From left to right:

back row: Garry Merritt, Paul Sumrall (former board member), Sky Lewey, David Baker (former board member), Ira Yates, Pete Dwyer.
middle row: Sheila Holt (staff), Sharlene Leurig, Chris Hale, Kathleen Tobin Krueger, Carolyn Chipman Evans, Charlie Flatten (staff).
front row seated: Christy Muse (staff), Milan J. Michalec, Katherine Romans (staff), Bill Neiman, Karen Ford, Leo Tynan, Sarah Schlessinger.
Not pictured: Karen Huber, Matt Lara