

COUNTY-TO-COUNTY COALITION



Bringing together Hill Country county leaders to highlight local applications of tools for managing growth

Across the Hill Country, different counties use their authority in very different ways, presenting an opportunity for leaders to draw inspiration from neighbors across the region. **Workshops hosted by this coalition have brought together over 90 officials and key staff from eleven counties to discuss topics from impervious cover to floodplain management, and from platting to groundwater availability studies.** In addition to learning directly from one another and from issue area experts in our region, participants engage with state legislative officials and staff. This program is guided by a steering committee of Host Commissioners and non-profit partners (listed below) that recognize the need for counties to make effective use of the tools available to them, while strategically engaging the legislature to round out and preserve existing tools in the toolkit.

About the Coalition

Host Commissioners:

Jen Crownover and Kevin Webb of Comal County, Stephen Germann of Guadalupe County, Andra Wisian of Kendall County, Lon Shell of Hays County (*former*)

Nonprofit Partners:

Hill Country Alliance, Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance, the National Wildlife Federation, Comal Conservation, the Environmental Defense Fund, Heart of Texas Conservancy

Attendees:

90+ Central Texas county commissioners and key staff

County-to-County Priorities



Spotlight effective uses of county tools for managing growth in our region.



Address natural resource challenges such as water supply, wastewater and stormwater quality and management, and land use - including ETJs and industrial activity in unincorporated areas.



Connect leaders to a network extending across multiple jurisdictions for coordination and peer-to-peer learning.



Act as a conduit to the Texas Legislature for Central Texas officials by providing bill updates & supporting participants in navigating the legislative process on behalf of their constituents.

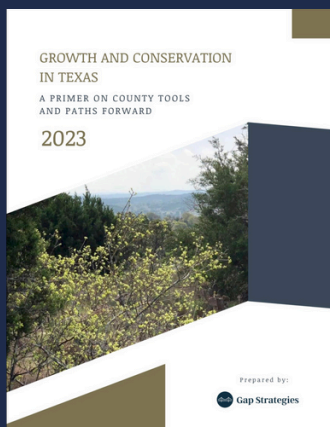
"If we continue on our current course, my granddaughter will be 25 when the Hill Country runs out of water. That's unacceptable. That's why it's valuable to gather with other Hill Country leaders who are all thinking about what we need to do to create a Hill Country we can be proud to pass on to our kids and grandkids."

- Commissioner Stephen Germann, Guadalupe County



Case Studies Covered in Previous County-to-County Workshops:

- **Kendall County Stream Protections** - Troy Dorman, *Water Sustainability Leader at Half*
- **Hays County Bonds for Transportation & Conservation** - Lon Shell, *Former Hays County Commissioner*
- **Burnet County Groundwater Availability Studies** - Burnet County Commissioner Damon Beierle and Mitchell Sodek, *Central Texas Groundwater Conservation District General Manager*
- **Kerr County Aggregate Production Operation (APO) Community Advisory Council**, Jill Shackelford, *Former coordinator for the Kerr County APO Advisory Council*, and Kerr County Commissioner Rich Paces, *Chair of the Advisory Council*
- **Travis County Impervious Cover Limits**, Tom Nuckols, *Former County Attorney*, and Jon White, *Travis County Natural Resources/Environmental Quality Division Director*



Additional Resource: County Tools for Managing Growth

The Texas Hill Country is one of the fastest growing regions in the country. Much of the region's growth is happening in unincorporated areas, where there are fewer tools to manage the negative impacts associated with rapid growth and conventional development. To address these challenges, counties must weave together a patchwork of authorities granted to them by the Texas Legislature. This 2023 report surveys those tools, their statutory foundations, and some of the creative applications of these tools that are available to counties in our state.

Learn more at hillcountryalliance.org/county-tools-report/

