

education
conservation
cooperation



Media Contact:

Christy Muse, Executive Director
Hill Country Alliance (christy@hillcountryalliance.org)
www.HillCountryAlliance.org
512.560.3135

For Immediate Release

February 23, 2011

5th Annual HCA Photo Contest Kicks off March 1st

Lasting Treasures of the Hill Country

The Texas Hill Country region is full of magical, irreplaceable places — a photographer’s paradise any time of year. The 5th annual Hill Country Alliance (HCA) photo contest call for entries opens March 1st and runs through May 31st. Everyone is welcome to participate, young and old, amateurs, professionals, landowners, residents and visitors. The Hill Country is a place we all share.



2010 Winner – “Sunrise on Cypress Creek” by Charles McClure

We are looking for photography that captures the beauty, spirit, and unique places and qualities that need to be preserved for future generations to experience. This might include a favorite swimming hole, scenic vista, bend in the river, historic dance hall, state or local park, stretch of roadway, working ranch, rugged landscape, delicate wildflowers, roaming wildlife, or even something as simple as a favorite sprawling tree. The soul of the Hill Country speaks to each of us in special ways – capture what’s most meaningful to you.



2010 Winner – “Valley of Peaches” by Carolyn Whiteside

Winners receive not only cash prizes, but will be featured in the popular Hill Country calendar produced each fall by HCA. The “Grand Prize” winner will receive \$300 and the cover spot on the 2012 calendar. A prestigious team of judges have been invited including State Representative Doug Miller, singer songwriter Eliza Gilkyson, photographer Bill Kennedy, and designer Mike Reese.

Entering the contest is easy. Contestants can enter up to four photos online by visiting www.hillcountryalliance.org.

“The contest helps raise awareness about how fragile this region is,” says Sky Lewey, 2011 HCA board president and resource protection and education director for the Nueces River Authority in Uvalde. “There is so much passion for conservation in the Hill Country, HCA’s photo contest gives people a creative way to express their love for the heritage and natural beauty only found here. We’re seeing a wave of energy for holding on to what’s special about the Hill Country. People are thinking beyond self and profit and seeking instead to hold on to the natural values of this region for our children and grand children to enjoy.”



2010 Winner “Misty Morning” by Mindee Poldrack

Hill Country landowners value their land and are good stewards of their land. Nevertheless, historic ranch lands are diminishing daily because of development pressure and insufficient incentives for conservation. Development sprawl has cascading effects and hidden costs on this rugged-appearing, but fragile region.

Lands that are predominantly kept in a natural state provide for what’s known as “ecosystem services” that benefit everyone. By valuing and protecting our landscapes we enhance water quality, water supply, air quality, and quality of life for future generations.

Ninety percent of the land in the 17 county Hill Country region is unincorporated, outside of municipal jurisdiction, where unregulated development is the norm because no local entity has planning authority. The consequence is irreversible damage that ultimately degrades property values, depletes our natural resources, and hinders economic stability throughout the region.

The Hill Country Alliance (HCA) is a non-profit organization creating educational resources and events about growth-related issues and strategies for conservation.

Please see the Hill Country Alliance website (www.hillcountryalliance.org) for the latest news and events and to learn more about our initiatives and how you can contribute toward our goals.

###