

## **Barton Creek Watershed**

### **Notable Resources**

- Barton Springs Pool
- Zilker Park
- Barton Creek Greenbelt
- Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (multiple sites)
- Water Quality Protection Lands (multiple sites)
- Violet Crown Trail

### **Historic Management Summary**

- While the upper watershed still retains the characteristics of a rural watershed, the lower portions—which lie over the sensitive Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone—are beginning to show the effects of suburban development. However, the impacts of urbanization on creek flooding, erosion, and water quality are still limited and isolated when compared to other, more central watersheds.
- Preventative regulatory and land preservation approaches are the most effective solution since much of the land is yet to be developed.
- Site development is restricted through the Save Our Springs Ordinance, adopted by the citizens of Austin in 1992. The ordinance restricts impervious cover to 15 - 20 percent in Barton Creek and requires a non-degradation standard for stormwater discharge.
- Land preservation efforts in this watershed include both the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (e.g., Barton Creek Habitat Preserve) and the Water Quality Protection Lands (e.g., Shield Ranch).
- Some of the older neighborhoods along Ben White are identified as high priorities for both creek and localized flooding. Some are being flooded by the Gaines Tributary of Barton Creek. Other homes experience “local flooding,” which is not associated with the creek. Local flooding occurs because there is no drainage system or it is not adequate to handle Austin’s torrential rainfalls. Watershed Protection is in the planning stages for a project to reduce flooding in these subdivisions.