

**Federal Emergency Management Agency
PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Assessments for the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project, Travis County, Texas
HMGP-DR-1999-TX PROJECT #18

Interested persons are hereby notified that Travis County has applied to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), through the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding under Section 404 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program provides grants to states and local governments to implement long-term hazard mitigation measures that reduce the loss of life and property due to natural disasters and to enable mitigation measures to be implemented during the immediate recovery from a disaster.

FEMA proposes to provide funding to Travis County to implement a hazardous fuels reduction program to reduce potential wildfire hazards along the boundaries of Balcones Canyonlands Preserve by removing surface fuels, increasing the distance between the forest floor and the canopy, and thinning the canopy. The proposed treatment would be conducted on approximately 36 segments located along the edges of the preserve in north central Travis County. The segments range from 30 to 100 feet in width and are located on preserve land in areas adjacent to roads and existing developments.

A draft Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to assess the potential impacts of the proposed action and alternatives on the human and natural environment in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), the Council for Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500 – 1508), the National Historic Preservation Act, Executive Order 11988, Executive Order 11990, and the implementing regulations of FEMA (44 CFR Parts 9 and 10). The draft EA evaluates alternatives that provide for compliance with applicable environmental laws. The alternatives evaluated include (1) no action; (2) the proposed action described above. Portions of the proposed action will be carried out in the regulatory floodplain of an unnamed tributary to Bull Creek, Bee Creek, and an unnamed tributary to the Colorado River. Potential alternatives and impacts on floodplains are described in the draft EA.

The draft EA is available for review and comment at the Travis County Administration Building, 700 Lavaca Street, 5th floor, Austin, Texas 78701, from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Monday through Friday from July 13, to August 13, 2015. An electronic version of the draft EA can be requested from Dorothy Weir, FEMA Region 6, at dorothy.weir@fema.dhs.gov or viewed on FEMA's website at <http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents>.

The comment period will end 30 days from the initial notice publication date. Written comments on the draft EA can be mailed, emailed, or faxed to Dorothy Weir, Environmental Specialist, FEMA Region 6, 800 N Loop 288, Denton, TX 76209, Fax: 940-297-0152; dorothy.weir@fema.dhs.gov. If no substantive comments are received, the draft EA will become final and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be issued for the project. Substantive comments will be addressed as appropriate in the final documents.