



## HILL COUNTRY CONSERVANCY PERMANENTLY PRESERVES 1,014 ACRES OF PICTURESQUE HILL COUNTRY RANGLAND TO PROTECT DRINKING WATER, WILDLIFE AND FAVORITE SWIMMING HOLES

**Wimberley, TX** – The future of the Texas Hill Country, and its night skies, are brighter this week as Jenny Carloye and her family, owners of Inspiring Oaks Ranch in Wimberley, and Hill Country Conservancy (HCC) established a conservation easement on 1,014 acres of breathtaking Hill Country ranchland strategically situated over area aquifers.

Ms. Carloye and her family fell in love with and purchased Inspiring Oaks Ranch in 1999. Recognizing the property's valuable natural assets, they have since consistently engaged in land stewardship practices to improve the condition of the property. Recently, the family officially solidified their commitment to the land's integrity by conveying a conservation easement to HCC. The family's decision to preserve the property with a conservation easement guarantees that the breathtaking vistas, abundant water resources and diverse wildlife found on Inspiring Oaks will contribute to the vitality of the Texas Hill Country forever.

Ms. Carloye said, "Today, in this day and age of rapid change and unbridled consumption, I find comfort in the idea of preserving land, in its natural state, in perpetuity. I am excited to hope that this land will bring comfort, adventure, and sense of place for future generations."

The conservation easement on Inspiring Oaks Ranch will help safeguard the region's beauty, drinking water for hundreds of thousands of Central Texans and area wildlife, and some of the region's most iconic swimming holes. The conservation easement also contains guidelines that align with Wimberley Valley's designation of an [International Dark Sky Community](#) to extend these protections to the sky above. Inspiring Oaks Ranch falls within the renowned Devil's Backbone Scenic Loop, offering sweeping panoramic views ranging from gently tilting fields to dramatic canyons and ravines. The land is rich with water sources that recharge three sensitive area aquifers. Numerous springs flow from rock faces on the northern end of the ranch and converge to create Wanslow Creek, a pristine stream that feeds the Blanco River. The Blanco River serves as a critical recharge source for both the southern segment of the Edwards Aquifer, on which over a million people depend for drinking water, and the Barton Springs segment of the Edwards Aquifer (BSEA), which provides water to approximately 60,000 area residents, local ranches and wildlife populations. Moreover, the BSEA is the primary water source for Austin's beloved Barton Springs Pool. In addition to Wanslow Creek, the ranch hosts 4.8 miles of smaller creeks and streams that feed the Middle Trinity Aquifer. Water from the Middle Trinity Aquifer bubbles back to the surface in two significant springs – Pleasant Valley Spring and the famous swimming hole, Jacob's Well. Jacob's Well then gives rise to Cypress Creek, home of another popular attraction, Wimberley's Blue Hole.

The abundant water sources found on Inspiring Oaks Ranch combine with diverse grasslands to provide generous amounts of food, water, and protective habitat for numerous wildlife, including several imperiled species. A few of the

notable species that inhabit the area include: Fern Bank Salamander (globally imperiled and locally endemic), Wild Turkey, Red-shouldered Hawk, Chick-will's-widow, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Painted Bunting, Dickcissel, Orchard Oriole, and the federally-protected Golden-cheeked Warbler.

HCC is widely acknowledged as a leader in regional conservation efforts, partnering with private landowners, and in some cases leveraging limited public dollars in order to protect key land, water and wildlife resources. Inspiring Oaks Ranch ranked highly in their strategic conservation plan; therefore, HCC is thrilled to join Ms. Carloye in her efforts to preserve this invaluable tract of land. HCC collaborated with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Land Trust Council to bring this easement to life. As with other conservation easements, the property owner retains the ability to use the land for traditional activities such as agriculture, ranching, hunting and residency, while preserving water, wildlife, scenic views and night skies. The newly formed partnership between Ms. Carloye and Hill Country Conservancy will ensure that this beautiful and indispensable tract of land will remain—**Here Forever**.

“We are grateful to our many partners who saw that protecting Inspiring Oaks Ranch is key to preserving the long-term beauty, health, and economic vitality of the Texas Hill Country”, said HCC Chief Conservation Officer, Frank Davis. “We are especially grateful to Ms. Carloye and her family for their dedication to conservation and their faith in Hill Country Conservancy’s mission.”

### **More about Hill Country Conservancy**

Hill Country Conservancy:

- Protects large, strategic tracts of open space that conserve critical water features,
- Provides much needed access to the outdoors via the Violet Crown Trail, and
- Promotes a conservation ethic by cultivating awareness and transforming our community.

HCC’s philosophy is simple: Once Hill Country land is gone, it’s gone for good. When HCC preserves it, it’s here forever.

For more information, or to support HCC, please contact Adrienne Longenecker at (512) 328-2481 or [Adrienne@hillcountryconservancy.org](mailto:Adrienne@hillcountryconservancy.org).

More information is also available at [www.hillcountryconservancy.org](http://www.hillcountryconservancy.org).

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