



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:
Carolyn Stephens
Hill Country Conservancy
(512) 461-2063

SCOTT SHANNON RANCH CONSERVES CRITICAL NATURAL AREA IN HILL COUNTRY

New Conservation Easement of 367 acres in Blanco County donated to Hill Country Conservancy

AUSTIN, TEXAS—March 30, 2023— Hill Country Conservancy (HCC) announces the donation of a conservation easement from Scott Shannon of Scott Shannon Ranch in Blanco County. This conservation easement will permanently protect 367 acres of land—roughly the size of Zilker Park at 351 acres—located along the heavily trafficked U.S. Highway 290 between Johnson City and Fredericksburg. The conservation easement transaction on Scott Shannon Ranch furthers HCC’s mission by permanently protecting working land and open space within the Middle Trinity Aquifer recharge zone and Pedernales River watersheds.

Scott Shannon Ranch contains 1.4 miles of Towhead Creek, which drains into Flat Creek three-quarters of a mile above its confluence with the Pedernales River. Given its location and the protections resulting from the conservation easement, this acquisition will further expand watershed protection efforts to date and increase habitat connectivity and long-term agricultural viability. As the City of Austin gets approximately 23% of its water from the Pedernales River, this area is in vital need of conservation.

Additionally, Scott Shannon Ranch contains prime farmland soil, critical for long-term agricultural viability for Texas and increasingly rare within the Edwards Plateau. The HCC-held easement will protect and preserve the biological diversity of the many plant and animal species dependent on the nesting habitat and food sources found on Scott Shannon Ranch. It also hosts several Species of Greatest Conservation Need and is within the southern migration route for the rapidly declining Monarch butterfly—providing Monarchs and other pollinators with abundant milkweed and other nectar plants.

Landowner Scott Shannon is committed to conducting activities aimed at enhancing soil and native plants for the benefit of water and wildlife on the ranch. “My hope is that the second phase of our work will begin at some point soon and I’ll be giving this property to Hill Country Conservancy when I pass on,” said Shannon. “That’s my real dream for the property to build a center on the property and use Scott Shannon Ranch as a headquarters to host Hill Country Conservancy star parties and educational programs.”

The conservation values include several which are fundamental to HCC’s mission, including water resources, agricultural viability, wildlife habitat, and scenic views. “In Texas, we owe a lot to private landowners like Scott Shannon who voluntarily protect their land’s water and wildlife for generations to come,” said Frank Davis, Hill Country Conservancy’s Chief Conservation Officer. “Thanks to him and the assistance of the Texas Farm and Ranch Lands Conservation Program, these 367 acres will remain a wondrous example of the glory of the Texas Hill Country for many generations to come.”



ABOUT HILL COUNTRY CONSERVANCY

Hill Country Conservancy is a nonprofit land trust committed to preserving open spaces in the Texas Hill Country. Preserving vital natural resources through conservation, community collaboration, and engagement, HCC works to sustain our region now and forever. For more information, visit www.HillCountryConservancy.org

###