

From: "Kemble White"
To:
cc: "Gary Boyd"

Date: Friday, September 09, 2011 03:00PM
Subject: RE: Cobbs Spring and Shadow Canyon access

History:  This message has been replied to.

Hi Josh,

I'm happy to help. For Cobb Spring the guy to talk to is Gary Boyd with whom you're already in contact with. The land is owned by the Lyda Family Trust, but the WCCF has been in continual communication with them for the last few years in the interest of expanding the conservation easement currently held by the county for Cobbs Cavern. We are hopeful that recently awarded Sec 6 grant money may be used to expand the easement to include the spring and about 25-30% of its drainage area. To that end Gary and I took Tanya Sommers and Cyndee Watson to the spring last week. We are waiting for some comments back from the Austin ESFO on a report I did on the Cobbs Cavern / Cobbs Spring system. You might find it useful so if you'd like I can send you a copy of the final version.

Regarding Shadow Canyon, our access to that site was coordinated by Gary as well. It is owned by developers (I've forgotten their name) who were looking to unload part of their preserve area to the County a couple of years ago. That site is covered by an HCP, so I don't think it would be too difficult for FWS to track them down. That site is pretty blitzed, but with potential for restoration. When I was there cattle had trampled most of the spring run and the habitat seemed confined to a brick and mortar spring box a couple of feet in diameter. The open space on top was only big enough for a couple of ferns to poke through. We brushed the fronds aside to find a single salamander basking in the one ray of filtered sunlight. Get rid of the cattle and break up that box and it would be a nice site.

Let me know how else I can help,

kw

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From: Joshua_Booker@fws.gov [mailto:Joshua_Booker@fws.gov]
Sent: Friday, September 09, 2011 1:52 PM
To: Kemble White
Subject: Cobbs Spring and Shadow Canyon access

Dear Kemble White,

We will soon be sending out a formal notification letter to SWCA that explains this more thoroughly, but basically, USFWS has initiated the process of developing a proposed listing and critical habitat rule for the Georgetown, Salado, Austin blind, and Jollyville Plateau salamanders. We are gathering as much information as we can on these species to use in the proposal. Part of the information gathering includes visits to the sites to see the species' habitat in person. I have the responsibility of organizing site visits to a few select Georgetown salamander sites for the members of our proposed listing team. I'm interested in visiting both Cobbs Spring and Shadow Canyon, and I understand that you have surveyed these sites in the past. Do you have contact information for the landowners of these sites, or if you prefer not to disclose that information, would you be willing to ask for permission for USFWS staff to access their land? If you do get landowner permission for a site, I'll need written or e-mail confirmation from you that the landowner has given permission for USFWS staff to be on their land. We are trying to avoid any misunderstandings later down the road by leaving a clear paper trail.

For the site visits, I anticipate a group of 5-7 biologists during the morning of Sept. 28 or 30th.

Feel free to give me a call at the number below if you want to discuss this more.

Thanks!
Josh

Joshua Booker

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