



For Immediate Release:
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Mobility Authority Preserving Declining Bee Population

(Austin, Texas) – The Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority recently began a weeks-long effort to relocate an estimated 30,000 to 40,000 honeybees from a large hive along US 183 in the Bergstrom Expressway Environmental Study corridor. Bees pollinate plants and trees and are a critical part of the agricultural industry and our food supply. In recent years, the worldwide bee population has been declining at an alarming rate. Given that decline, the Mobility Authority felt it was critical to move the hive to a safer location, so that environmental study work could take place in the area without disturbing the bees or risking injury to nearby workers.

“Keeping people moving is a core mission of the Mobility Authority, a mission that usually involves wheels,” said Mike Heiligenstein, Executive Director of the Mobility Authority. “But we are also committed to preserving and protecting the environment whenever feasible, and we’re excited to be part of a mobility project that involves not wheels but wings – about 30,000 pairs of them.”

The Mobility Authority hired Oakley Family Apiaries to safely and humanely relocate the bees 80 miles north to an apiary near Robinson, Texas. There the bees will be cared for and be able to continue their work of producing honey and pollination. The hive is located approximately 12 feet above the ground in a Live Oak tree along US 183, not far from the Montopolis Bridge. It is estimated that the hive has been in that location for several years.

To move the hive, Oakley placed a one-way trap door on its only entrance and set up a “decoy hive” nearby. Bees leave the original hive, but when they return, they can’t get back in and

instead head for the decoy. It will take about four weeks to transition all of the bees to the decoy hive.

Once the bees are removed, testing for the Bergstrom Expressway Environmental Study will continue. Environmental clearance is anticipated to occur in early 2015.

About the Bergstrom Expressway Project

The Bergstrom Expressway is a combined effort of the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority, Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Capital Area Metropolitan Organization (CAMPO), City of Austin, Capital Metro and other local government agencies to develop a reasonable and feasible approach to improve mobility in the US 183 corridor from US 290 to SH 71. A new Environmental Study was launched in August 2012 and is expected to take three years to complete. For more information about the Bergstrom Expressway Project, visit www.BergstromExpressway.com.

About the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority

The Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority is a local, independent government agency created to improve the regional transportation system. Our mission is to implement innovative solutions that reduce congestion and create transportation choices that enhance quality of life and economic vitality. The Mobility Authority is the state's first Regional Mobility Authority, created in October 2002 to serve Travis and Williamson counties. The Mobility Authority operates the 183A toll road in Williamson County, is constructing the Manor Expressway and plans to start work in 2013 to construct Express Lanes on north on MoPac.

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