



Lower Galveston Bay Watershed

You're more connected to Galveston Bay than you think.

A watershed is an area of land that drains to a particular water body—a ditch, bayou, creek, river, lake or bay. Water running off the land ends up in that water body along with any pollutants the water picked up as it drained such as fertilizers, pesticides, oil, animal waste, and litter. This type of pollution is called "nonpoint source pollution." What you do at your home or business can directly impact a water body.

A watershed is usually named for the water body into which it drains. The entire Galveston Bay watershed—shown on the inset map—covers approximately 24,000 square miles (62,000 square kilometers). It extends on either side of the Trinity River past Dallas/Fort Worth! All of this land drains into Galveston Bay.

The Galveston Bay watershed is divided into two portions. The upper Galveston Bay watershed covers about 20,000 square miles (52,000 square kilometers) upstream of the Lake Livingston Dam on the Trinity River and the Lake Houston Dam on the San Jacinto River. The upper watershed is critical because of its contribution of freshwater to Galveston Bay. This is because Galveston Bay is an estuary, a place where freshwater and saltwater mix. Without these inflows of freshwater, the estuary would cease to exist.

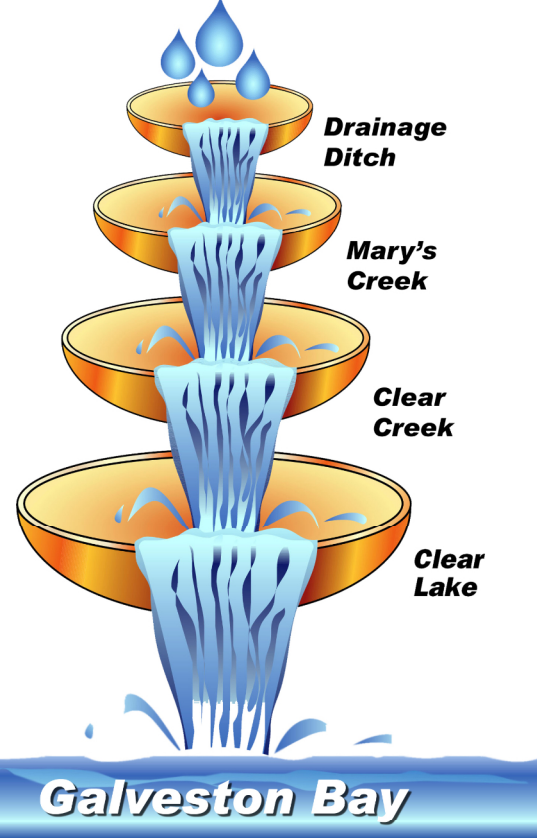
The lower Galveston Bay watershed—the portion of the watershed downstream of Lake Livingston and Lake Houston—covers approximately 4,000 square miles (10,000 square kilometers) in the highlighted areas of Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Hardin, Harris, Jefferson, Liberty, Polk, San Jacinto, and Waller counties. The lower watershed more directly contributes runoff pollution to the bay and is the focus of the Galveston Bay Estuary Program.

The lower Galveston Bay watershed is in turn made up of even smaller watersheds—technically called "subwatersheds"—that drain to our local water bodies. You will find 21 watersheds on this map, depicted in different colors. For example, the Clear Creek watershed includes all of the land that drains into Clear Creek. The Clear Creek watershed in turn is made up of even smaller watersheds such as tributary creeks and drainage ditches that are too small to show on this map. The figure to the right shows how each watershed can be thought of as a bowl that drains into the next larger bowl and eventually into Galveston Bay.

If you live, work, or play in the Galveston Bay watershed—and whether you like to hunt, fish, boat, or swim in the waterways—it's important to help protect and preserve it for generations to come. Please remember that the rain falling on your home or business—if not absorbed into the ground or taken up by plants—eventually can reach Galveston Bay. So please do your part by keeping your yard, driveway, and streets clean, and by educating others.

To learn more about watersheds and the bay, visit the Galveston Bay Estuary Program website at www.gbep.texas.gov. To learn tips on how to preserve Galveston Bay, visit BacktheBay.org.

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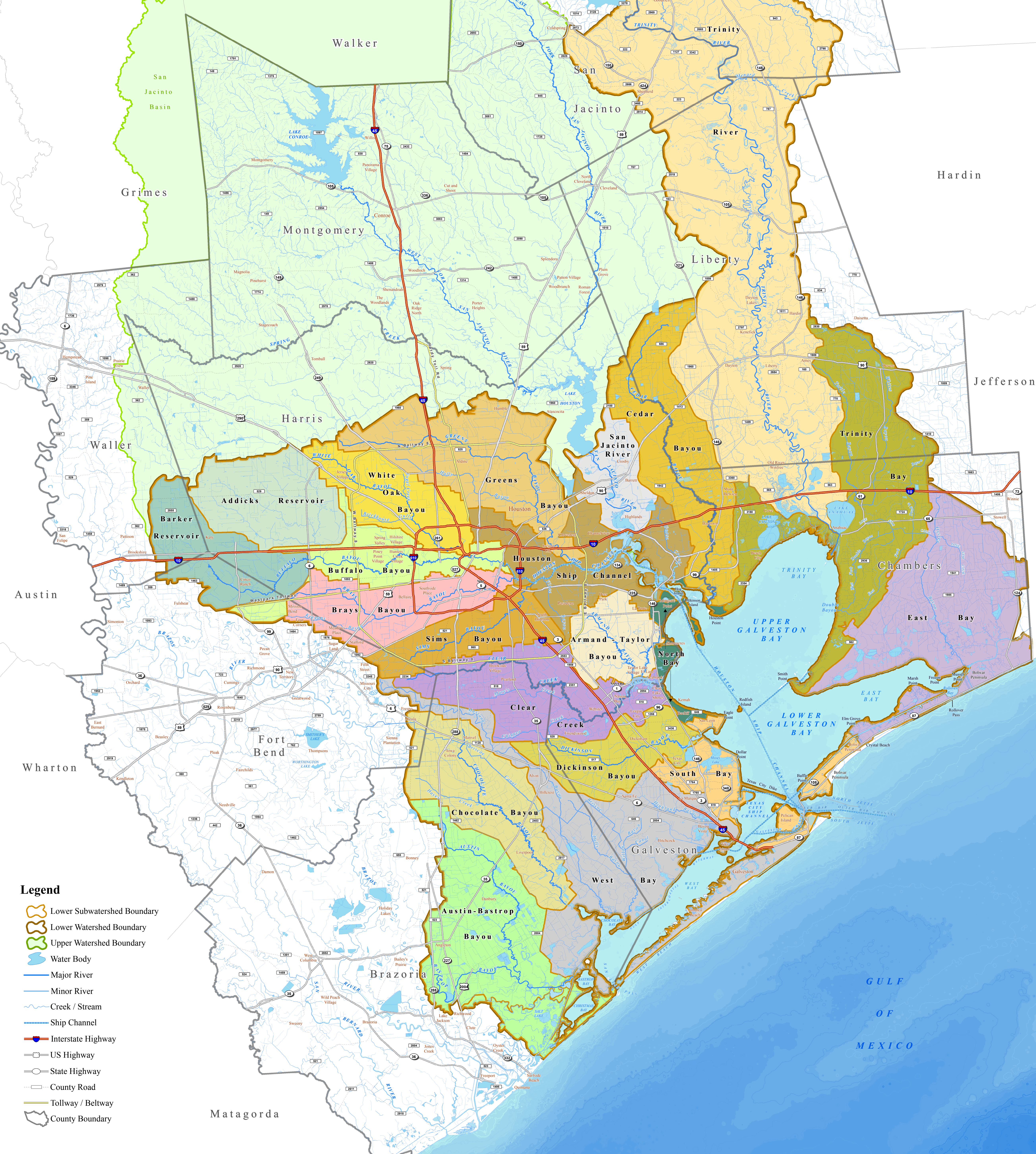
The graphic above is adapted from John Jacob of the Texas Coastal Watershed Program, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension.

Tyler

Hardin

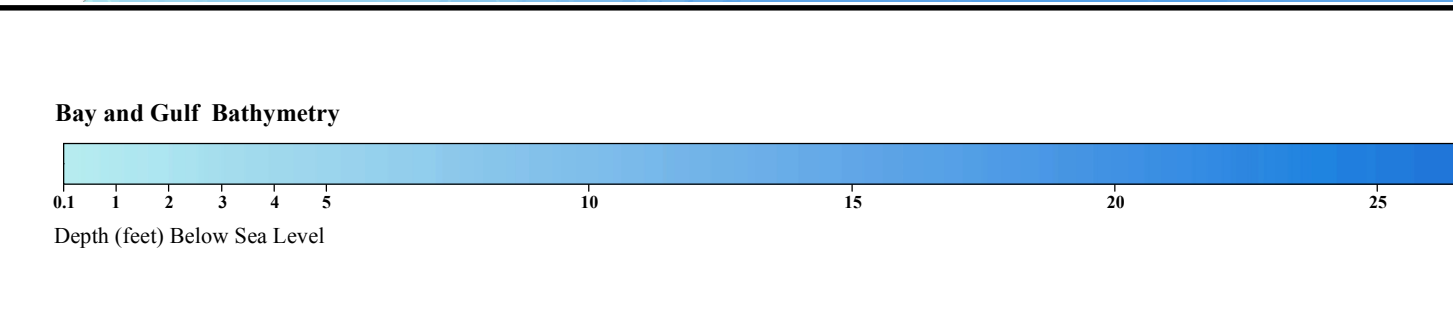
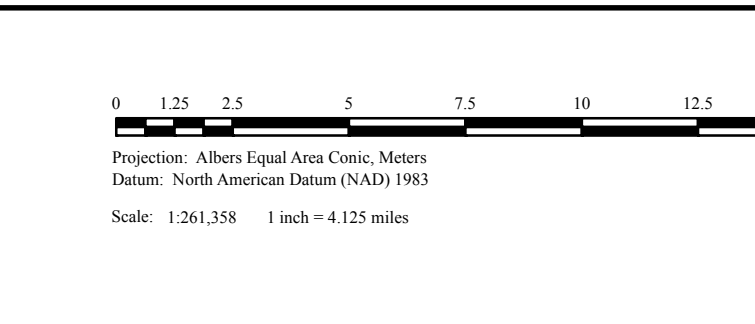
Jefferson

GULF OF MEXICO



- Legend**
- Lower Subwatershed Boundary
 - Lower Watershed Boundary
 - Upper Watershed Boundary
 - Water Body
 - Major River
 - Minor River
 - Creek / Stream
 - Ship Channel
 - Interstate Highway
 - US Highway
 - State Highway
 - County Road
 - Tollway / Beltway
 - County Boundary

Protecting Texas by Reducing and Preventing Pollution
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TCEQ Work Order: 030902
December 17, 2015