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NATURAL RESOURCE USES (NRU) SUBCOMMITTEE

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GALVESTON BAY COUNCIL  
SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

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13 December 2022

<b>SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIR</b> Philip Smith, GBF	<b>SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIR</b> Scott Alford, USDA-NRCS
<b>NRU COORDINATOR</b> Lindsey Lippert, GBEP	

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**Members/Participants Present**

Philip Smith (GBF), Scott Alford (USDA-NRCS), Grant Moss (BPA), Cassidy Kempf (HPARD), Matt Singer (GBF), Savannah Horton (TPWD), Lindsey Savage (TPWD), Suzanne Simpson (GBF), Evelyn Merz (UH)

GBEP Staff: Lindsey Lippert, Lisa Marshall, Matt Abernathy, Christian Rines

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**Members/Participants via TEAMS**

Charrish Stevens (NOAA-NMFS), Haille Leija (GBF), Allison Buchtien (GLO), Marissa Llosa (Houston Parks Board), Lisa Rickards (EPA), Kirstin Vernin (HARC), Bill Rodney (TPWD), Erin Kinney (HARC), Richard Gibbons (ABC), Stephanie Piper (HARC), David Villareal (TDA), Alexis Baldera (Audubon Texas).

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**Updates from the Estuary Program**

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**Staff Updates**

Lindsey announced that GBEP was still searching for the PPE and M&R Coordinators. The Technical Programs Coordinator was filled and will be starting in January 2023.

Lisa announced there are major executive management changes at TCEQ, including the departure of the Executive Director and Office of Water Deputy Director.

Lindsey also announced that GBEP, along with the Galveston Bay Council and partners would be pursuing changes to the direct award process for nonprofits internally through the Office of Legal Services and statutory changes during the legislative session.

**NRU Project Updates**

\*Spreadsheet available on request.

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**Year-end Roundtable**

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The focus of the meeting was to have a year-end roundtable to discuss any needs or issues of concern identified by subcommittee members.

Haille Leija (GBF) reached out to the subcommittee to track down planting sites for next year's Marsh Mania events. GBF's current projects have limited planting access for volunteers. Please reach out to Haille if you have any sites.

Lindsey mentioned the need to update the Habitat Conservation Blueprint as a performance measure of the Galveston Bay Plan, Second Edition. The subcommittee selected a project with HARC in partnership with Black Cat GIS to revise the project into an interactive GIS-based database to provide information on GBEP projects and

partner projects. The scope is currently being developed so if subcommittee members have any requests for additional functionality, not is the time to bring it forward.

Some parameters identified include:

- Story maps
- Fiscal/investment information
- Statistics and context
- Public lands and land-cover layers

The general topic of the last round of Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding and the process by which the projects were selected was discussed. Staff noted that because of the involvement of so many subcommittee members in projects, new standards were going to be developed by the Budget and Priorities subcommittee for the next round of funding to have a less biased procedure for these projects. Lindsey also gave a brief update on the EPA EJScreen tool and the upcoming GBEP Equity Strategy which will help inform these projects eligibility under the Justice 40 initiative BIL guidance.

Other topics\* discussed included:

- Intertidal marsh die-off (or top kill) during summer
- SAV issues in West Bay (die-off, mapping, and restoration)
- Storm impacts on West Bay Bird Island
- NRDA Oyster Restoration Engineering Project
- Prescribed fire activities
- Regional habitat maintenance
- Black rail
- Unintended mortality from aerial pesticide application

\*Video recording of the meeting is available upon request.

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## **Other**

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### **Selection of A Presenter for Next Meeting - Deferred**

**Roundtable** - Regular meeting dates for NRU were set for the next year:

- March 22, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.
- June 21, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.
- September 20, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.
- December 6, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.

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## **Adjourn**

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### **Future Meetings**

Quarterly NRU Meeting - March 2023

Invasive Species Workgroup Meeting - TBD

Oyster Restoration Workgroup Meeting - TBD