
NATURAL RESOURCE USES (NRU) SUBCOMMITTEE

**GALVESTON BAY COUNCIL
SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY**

21 June 2023

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

Members/Participants Present

Philip Smith (GBF), Scott Alford (USDA-NRCS), Dianna Ramirez (GLO), Cassidy Kempf (HPARD), Savannah Horton (TPWD), Suzanne Simpson (GBF), Evelyn Merz (UH), Grant Moss (BPA), Kelli Ondracek (HPARD), Karla Klay (Artist Boat), Charlotte Nash (TNC), Amanda Hackney (Black Cat GIS)

GBEP Staff: Lindsey Lippert, Lisa Marshall, Ellen Creecy, Matt Abernathy, Christian Rines, Kari Howard, Cassandra Taylor

Members/Participants via TEAMS

Adriana Leiva (USFWS), Celina Gauthier-Lowry (AgriLife), Christopher Marshall (TAMUG), Liz Rebstad (Houston Parks Board), Michelle Havens (USFWS), Kevin Hartke (Ducks Unlimited), Madelyn Rupp (TAMU), Todd Merendino (Ducks Unlimited), Sabraya Knight (NWF), Charrish Stevens (NOAA-NMFS), Erin Kinney (HARC), Derek Thompson (ABNC), Matt Singer (GBF)

NRU Priority Recommendations for FY 25 Section 320 and State Funding

The majority of the meeting was spent discussing the priorities that we would like to see as a subcommittee FY 2025 Section 320 and state funding. The following priorities were selected:

- Habitat Acquisition
- Enhancement of Existing or Ongoing Restoration/Conservation Efforts
 - Special emphasis on projects addressing geotubes failing across West Bay through design and/or construction
- Benefit to Native Fish and Wildlife, including Federal and State Listed Species, Species of Greatest Conservation Need, or Nongame Wildlife
 - Special emphasis on projects addressing seagrasses, intertidal reef/shell hash, and benthics
- Brings Funding, Work Leverage, or Multiple Goal Benefits to the Subcommittee
- Project Urgency: Project must be completed in next 24 months or opportunity is lost

*Video recording of the meeting is available upon request.

Monitoring and Research Needs for NRU

The remainder of the meeting was spent discussing monitoring and research needs from the NRU subcommittee. The following needs were discussed:

- Seagrass (surveys and mapping for restoration)
- Benthic communities

- Preconstruction monitoring (baselines)
- Erosion control structures (habitat productivity after construction, fish passages between breakwater sections, etc.)
- Grassland bird communities
- Acoustic effects on wildlife in the bay
- Species inventory on birds
- Carbon sequestration

*Video recording of the meeting is available upon request.

Updates from the Estuary Program

Staff Updates

The expected timeline for Section 320 and state funding is as follows:

- June 26: Request for proposals out
- July 28: Proposals due to GBEP
- August 14: Proposals sent to subcommittee members for review
- September 20: Proposals presented at NRU subcommittee meeting

NRU Project Updates

*Spreadsheet available on request.

Other

Selection of A Presenter for Next Meeting - Deferred

Roundtable

Dianna Ramirez announced that the Coastal Texas through USACE is anticipating receiving funding to begin implementing the ecosystem restoration components of the plan, but the infrastructure components still need to undergo further studies and processes.

Matt Abernathy announced there will be a short form sent out to ambassadors to fill out for the Back the Bay website.

Adjourn

Future Meetings

Quarterly NRU Meeting(s)

- September 20, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.
- December 6, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.

Invasive Species Workgroup Meeting - TBD

Oyster Restoration Workgroup Meeting - TBD