

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2026 PPE Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **August 5, 2024**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for FY2026 (FY2026 Priority Area Actions) that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for fiscal 2026 at the June 2024 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY2026 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Subcommittee:

PPE

Project Name:

Reclaim the Drain Day

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes No

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

- Federal, State, or Local Government Council of Government Public ISDs or Universities
 Nonprofit Other*

Bayou Preservation Association

Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:

AND:

[Please input.]

VIN or Tax ID:

YVU6BNQ9HGT5

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Brittani Flowers
Project Representative Phone	713-529-6443
Project Representative Email	Bflowers@bayoupreservation.org

Amount Requested from GBEP:

\$27,000

Federal State No Preference

Is the project scalable?

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2026 (09/01/2025-08/31/2026)	\$22,000.00
FY 2027 (09/01/2026-05/31/2027)	\$5,000.00
FY 2028 (09/01/2027-05/31/2028)	\$0.00
Total	\$0.00

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2025 - ending no later than May 31, 2028) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

September 1, 2025 - December 31, 2026

Project Urgency:

This project will aid in the targeting of well-known non-point source pollution for litter, sediment, and waste from roadways and help prevent said NPSP from making entering Houston's bayous and waterways through the storm drainage system. Street and residential flooding are a growing concerns in Houston with ever intensifying rain events. This initiative will provide a much needed preventive action to abate street flooding in heavily affected neighborhoods. The city of Houston manages and extensive drainage network and has over 250,000 drains in it's jurisdiction. Bayou Preservation Association's Reclaim the Drain Day initiative will provide civic action, education, resources, and tools to members of our community who wish to take an active role in maintaining and stewarding both our build environment and natural drainage infrastructure through participation in the project. While this project may not should immediate impacts to street and residential flooding, it's mid and long term impacts will aid in targeting well-known non-point sources of pollution.

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

\$27,000

Is this an estimate?

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

[Please indicate source, amount, and status (secured, potential, etc.)]

N/A

Partners* and Their Roles:

City of Houston Public Works Department manages the city's Adopt-a-Drain program. Project activities will focus on increasing outreach and participation in the program to provide both data and community stewardship of the city's drainage system. They will also have the opportunity to participate in outreach and volunteer events through providing labor or supplies.

Neighborhood associations, management districts, civic clubs, corporate groups, and other non-profits will be targeted as partners to help recruit volunteers, plan for the event, and coordination of project sites.

Bayou Preservation Association provides administrative/management oversight, logistics, and implementation of project activities. BPA has secured a partnership and MOU with the City of Houston Public Works department, who manages the online drain adoption portal and additional supplies support.

***If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted under the application.**

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY2026 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

The FY2026 Priority Area Actions are found at:

- <https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

SPO-1 Stewardship Programs and Volunteer Opportunities: Reclaim the Drain Day is an opportunity for communities to take part in local stewardship and volunteer programs. The initiative will take place in communities within Houston and Harris County. This would bolster volunteer participation by bringing the cleanup to participants’ neighborhoods and communities. This will help to build a sense of responsibility within the community on drain maintenance, reporting, and litter abatement. Reclaim the Drain Day sites are proposed using several factors. Drain availability, street safety and speed limits, and walkability would also be factors in determining locations. BPA identified communities using the EPA EJ screen, COH Public Works Adopt-a-Drain portal.

SPO-2 Workshops and Events: Preliminary, BPA will engage local communities through local events marketing and volunteer recruitment for BPA's Reclaim the Drain day. This could be accomplished in drain priority communities or anywhere active communities have an interest; and where safety factors allow project activities. This will not only provide information regarding pollution, flooding, and the city’s drainage system but also provide fun opportunities for residents to become active stewards of their communities

SPO-3 Support Regional Initiatives: Reclaim the Drain Day will work with the COH Adopt-a-Drain program to bolster the community commitment to keeping drains clean, free of trash and debris, and working to reduce drainage and pollution issues in the drainage network. This would also complement regional initiatives such as the annual Trash Bash Event which draws many volunteers and support around the region, providing an excellent opportunity for organizations and residents to become active stewards of their communities.

PEA-1 Key Issue Engagement: BPA’s Reclaim the Drain Day is an innovative opportunity for engaging the public on litter, infrastructure issues, 311 reporting, illegal dumping, plastic pollution, and non-point sources of pollution. Engagement occurs through the one-day Reclaim the Drain event as well as including the community in both marking drains to educate residents on their connection to our waterways, and training them to report infrastructure issues in need of repair so they can be properly addressed by City staff.

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

- SPO-1 SPO-2 SPO-3 SPO-4
- PEA-1 PEA-2 PEA-3

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

SPO-1 Stewardship Programs and Volunteer Opportunities: Reclaim the Drain Day is an opportunity for communities to take part in local stewardship and volunteer programs.

SPO-2 Workshops and Events: BPA's Reclaim the Drain Day will engage local communities through local events in local communities.

SPO-3 Support Regional Initiatives: Reclaim the Drain Day would work with the COH Adopt-a-Drain program to bolster the community commitment to keeping drains clean.

PEA-1 Key Issue Engagement: BPA's Reclaim the Drain Day is an innovative opportunity for engaging the public on litter, infrastructure issues, 311 reporting, illegal dumping, plastic pollution, and non-point sources of pollution

Does the project implement any other *Galveston Bay Plan 2nd Edition* Priority Area Actions, or the other Subcommittee priorities?

- NRU (Protect and Sustain Living Resources)
- WSQ (Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use)
- M&R (Inform Science-Based Decision Making)

Other Subcommittee Detail:

NPS-2: This project will support nonpoint source education through connecting participants to the City of Houston's Adopt-a-Drain program while also highlighting the connection these storm drains have to our local waterways and the importance of keeping them free of litter and other pollutants.

Other Plans Implemented:

While these project activities in the target areas are not currently covered under a watershed based plan, they are identified as targeted actions in nearby watershed protection plans for Armond Bayou, Cypress Creek, and Clear Creek. Due to their inclusion in nearby watershed protection plans, and the absence of such plans in most of central Houston, we believe such actions are justified and likely to be recommended in future WPP efforts in the targeted areas.

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

PPE Subcommittee Identified Priorities

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- Continuation or expansion of established education, outreach, or engagement programs.
- Partnering with new local entities or smaller NGOs to reach new communities.
- Connecting new audiences to existing/completed projects or the natural habitat.
- Opportunities for GBEP and partners to host workshops/networking opportunities for stakeholders on key topics.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

Reclaim the Drain Day will be a neighborhood/city event that is more than just a standard litter cleanup, but will tie into, promote, and recruit for the City of Houston’s ongoing Adopt-a-Drain program. Bayou Preservation Association plans to select sites, provide supplies, coordinate cleanup, safety protocols, sanitation stations, and waste disposal for each site. Site selection and coordination is a year-long process, with significant time dedicated to creating a safe event. BPA will also work toward increasing long-term participation in the Adopt-a-Drain program beyond the initial community cleanups and will connect participants with the resources to adopt and maintain their local drains year-round. Many of Houston’s areas with drainage problems occur in low-income areas, as well as areas with a large Spanish speaking majority, Reclaim the Drain Day would work to prioritize these areas first as potential Reclaim the Drain Day event sites to assist those most affected by drainage issues.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

- Yes
- No

While BPA does not have any specific new partnerships identified at this time, much of the project’s planning efforts will be in outreach and coordination with many local community focused groups interested in participating and recruiting for the event. Concerted efforts will be made to include new partners and to focus on areas that are hardest hit by drainage issues.

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

Bayou Preservation Association Reclaim the Drain Day proposal aims to address issue of litter, debris, and other waste entering our waterways and marine environments by addressing the issue at the source, Houston's storm drainage system. This event would also work to address street flooding and infrastructure issues that come with storm drains. The project will provide outreach on litter and drainage issues, provide volunteer opportunities for community based organizations and the public, and tie into the City of Houston's existing Adopt-a-Drain program.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

Houston's storm drainage systems, which encompass over 250,000 drains, directly channel stormwater—and any pollutants it contains—into our waterways and bay system. This process contributes to the accumulation of marine debris and exacerbates street flooding issues. City of Houston (COH) drainage management faces capacity challenges in maintaining these drains, highlighting the need and benefit of community involvement and ongoing civic engagement to enhance their efforts. The Bayou Preservation Association (BPA) introduces the Reclaim the Drain Day, a targeted program designed to address non-point source pollution from litter, sediment, and waste originating from roadways. This program aims to prevent these pollutants from entering Houston's bayous and waterways through the storm drainage system. Reclaim the Drain Day would also provide a much-needed preventive action to mitigate street flooding in heavily affected neighborhoods by empowering residents to keep their drains clean. With the increasing intensity of rain events, street and home flooding have become significant concerns in Houston and are exacerbated by litter and debris clogging the drains.

Reclaim the Drain Day aims to: reduce non-point source pollution by preventing litter, sediment, and waste from entering storm drains and, subsequently, Houston's bayous and Galveston Bay; Mitigate street and home flooding through preventive actions particularly in areas vulnerable to intense rain events; Support COH drainage management by offering a community-driven boost to the city's drainage maintenance efforts through participation in their Adopt-a-Drain program; educating residents on drain stewardship as well as the reporting of needed infrastructure repairs; enhancing community engagement by empowering residents to take active roles in maintaining their local storm drains.

The Reclaim the Drain Day initiative will be executed through a coordinated effort involving community volunteers, local organizations, and BPA staff. Key components of the initiative include:

BPA will handle a variety of tasks to implement Reclaim the Drain Day. Early project efforts will focus strongly on planning, maintenance and coordination tasks including selecting sites and organizations to become partners/site coordinators, coordinating supplies and details for the event date to properly dispose of waste and collect data, outreach to participants about the issues of pollutants entering our waterways through the storm drains as well as drainage issues, and increase participation in the City of Houston's adopt a drain program to continue project outcomes past the project timeline. Drains will be marked in project areas to let residents know their direct connection to our local waterways and the importance of keeping them clear of debris and pollutants.

The Reclaim the Drain Day initiative is expected to achieve several positive outcomes. Reduced Marine Debris by preventing trash and waste from entering storm drains, lowering the amount of debris reaching Houston's waterways and Galveston Bay. Improved Water Quality from cleaner storm drains resulting in less pollution entering the bayous, contributing to healthier aquatic ecosystems. Reduced impacts from rain events through regular cleaning of storm drains by residents will help mitigate street flooding. Enhanced Community Involvement through increased community engagement in environmental stewardship through active participation in drain maintenance and education.

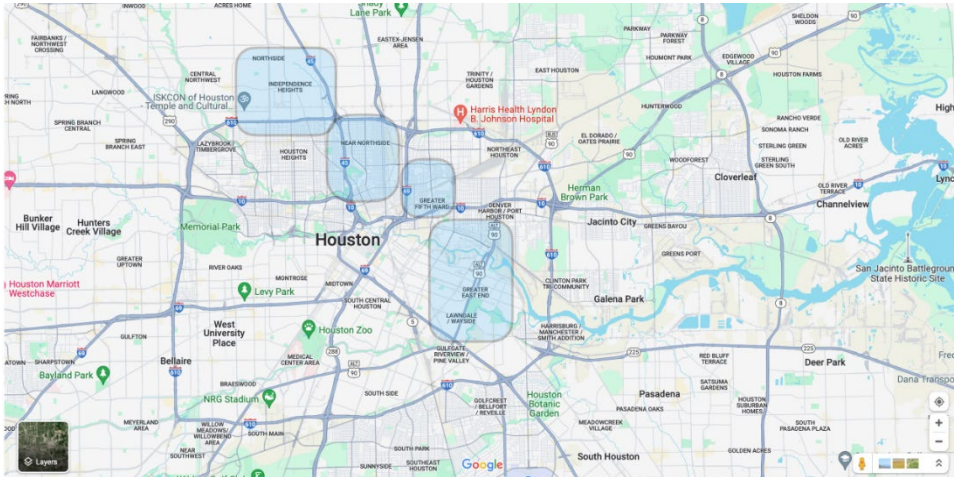
Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

[degrees, minutes, and seconds format]

Location:

While exact project locations have not yet been selected, areas of interest include Fifth Ward, the East End, Greater Northside, and Independence Heights

Projects Map



Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):

[Insert Here or Attach as an Appendix]

SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$14,500.00
Fringe Benefits (##%) ¹	\$0.00
Travel	\$0.00
Supplies	\$8,000.00
Equipment	\$0.00
Contractual	\$0.00
Construction	\$0.00
Other	\$4,500.00
Total Direct Cost	\$0.00
Indirect Costs	\$0.00
Total	\$27,000.00

Indirect Cost Agreement

Please note: If using a rate different from your entity Indirect Cost Agreement; a letter of exemption from the appropriate authority must be provided with the application, or a statement must be included certifying that the recipient has elected to be reimbursed for an amount less than its total indirect costs, that unreimbursed indirect costs are part of the recipient’s contribution to the success of the project, and that the recipient will pay for all unreimbursed indirect costs using funds available to it for that purpose.

[\[Insert Indirect Cost Agreement or Attach as an Appendix if Applicable\]](#)

Indirect Cost Reimbursable Rate. The reimbursable rate for this Contract is ##% of (check one):

- Salary and fringe benefits
- Modified total direct costs
- Other direct costs base

If other direct cost base, identify:

This rate is less than or equal to (check one):

- Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.
- De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of ten percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

¹ If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

Provisional Rate— an experienced-based rate agreed to by Performing Party and TCEQ in the absence of a NICRA rate negotiated with the applicable federal cognizant agency.

Partial Reimbursement Rate— a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

Other:

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of total Contract budget, identify the main constituents:

[Description of costs associated with “Other” budget category.]

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will notify you of the meeting’s time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by August 5, 2024 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:

WSQ Subcommittee

Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov

NRU Subcommittee

Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov

PPE Subcommittee

Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov and Matthew.Abernathy@tceq.texas.gov

M&R Subcommittee

Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2026 PPE Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **August 5, 2024**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for FY2026 (FY2026 Priority Area Actions) that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for fiscal 2026 at the June 2024 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY2026 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Subcommittee:

PPE

Project Name:

Texas Envirothon

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes No

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

- Federal, State, or Local Government Council of Government Public ISDs or Universities
 Nonprofit Other*

University of Houston Clear Lake – Environmental Institute of Houston

Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:

AND:

RD74AUNCTZJ1

VIN or Tax ID:

74-60001399

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Wendy Reistle
Project Representative Phone	281-283-3045
Project Representative Email	reistle@uhcl.edu

Amount Requested from GBEP:

\$90,972

Federal State No Preference

Is the project scalable?

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2026 (09/01/2025-08/31/2026)	\$50,862
FY 2027 (09/01/2026-05/31/2027)	\$43,662
FY 2028 (09/01/2027-05/31/2028)	\$0.00
Total	\$94,524

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2025 - ending no later than May 31, 2028) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

September 1, 2025- December 31, 2027

Project Urgency:

The Texas Envirothon program is a unique environmental education competition for 9th - 12th grade high-school students. The program prioritizes critical thinking and problem solving and is focused on producing environmentally literate community members and leaders. Texas Envirothon has faced funding challenges for this successful program since the pandemic, and additional funding would allow the continuation of the program as well as increased support for both teachers and students through in-person teacher workshops, tutorial videos, and equipment supplied directly to schools.

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

Total Cost for 2 Years:	
Salary/Wages:	\$27,500
Fringe:	\$9,900
Supplies:	\$19,120
Other/Teacher Stipends/Video contract/ GBF Workshop	\$21,904
Total Direct Cost	\$78,424
Indirect Cost @ 16%	\$12,548
Total Cost for 2 years:	\$90,972
We request funding for two years including project planning, recruitment and implementation. We plan to provide stipends and supplies for participating teachers each year.	

Is this an estimate?

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

[Please indicate source, amount, and status (secured, potential, etc.)]

CASH:

Texas Association of Environmental Professionals \$1000 (potential)
Harris County Soil and Water Conservation District \$500 (potential)

In-Kind:

Presentation and test writing professionals from the Texas A&M Forest Service, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), State Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Texas General Land Office, etc., volunteer their time and expertise to help with the state Envirothon competition.

The University of Houston-Clear Lake provides facilities and sponsorship of the program on an annual basis.

Texas Parks and Wildlife frequently host the state field test portion of Texas Envirothon. TPWD Sites that have hosted include Sheldon Lake State Park, Galveston Island State Park, South Llano River State Park and Caddo Lake State Park.

Armand Bayou Nature Center, Houston Arboretum, King Ranch, Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge and Bear Creek Park have also served to host the field test portion of the Texas Envirothon.

Master Naturalist and other community members volunteer approximately 100 hours each year for the program.

Texas Association for Environmental Education serves as an in-kind partner to promote participation in the Texas Envirothon.

Partners* and Their Roles:**Teachers and School Administrators:**

Participating teachers and school administrators who support students participating in this non-UIL program, make Texas Envirothon possible. Teachers will receive a \$200 stipend for attending the teacher workshops.

Professional Volunteers:

Environmental scientists from UHCL, Texas A&M Forest Service, TPWD, NRCS, as well as representatives from Soil and Water Conservation Districts and local industry, volunteer their time to present at the teacher workshops as well as at the three-day event for students. These volunteers will also help create and grade the student field tests, and help judge the oral presentations.

Other Professional Partners:

A representative from the Galveston Bay Foundation will present on water quality and estuarine health at the teacher workshop. They will be a partner on this proposal.

Community Partners:

Other volunteers from interested groups are important to ensure the program runs smoothly. We depend heavily on the Master Naturalist group as dedicated volunteers each year.

***If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted under the application.**

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY2026 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

The FY2026 Priority Area Actions are found at:

- <https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

Engage Communities:

Stewardship programs and volunteer opportunities (SPO):

We will hold in-person teacher workshops each year to educate teachers on the fundamentals that students are required to know to take part in Envirothon. The three-day event also includes a day of presentations and field trips to supplement and support student understanding of the topics.

The Texas Envirothon program engages the community by offering opportunities to volunteer during the field test and the oral presentations. Students are encouraged to take their learning and make informed decisions as well as taking-action on a school or community environmental project.

Public Education and Awareness Initiatives (PEA):

The Texas Envirothon program covers key environmental issues that are important to the Galveston Bay watershed as well as the entire state of Texas. This program is aimed at teaching high-school students, how to think critically about environmental issues that are facing our world today. Teacher workshops are key to bringing this program opportunity to high school students.

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

- SPO-1 SPO-2 SPO-3 SPO-4
PEA-1 PEA-2 PEA-3

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

SPO-1: Stewardship Programs and Volunteer Opportunities: The project supports SPO-1 by providing volunteer opportunities for community members and college students. Program participants are encouraged to undertake school or community projects that reflect their learning, although this is not compulsory.

SPO-2: Workshops and Events: The project supports SPO-2 by providing workshops for teachers, and a three-day program for students in 9th - 12th grade.

PEA-3: K-12 Education efforts: This project will support K-12 education by providing an environmentally based STEM curriculum for 9th-12th grade students, and teacher workshops. Educational videos will be produced and housed on the UHCL/EIH Texas Envirothon website/YouTube channel and available to the public.

PEA-3: Support existing relationships with teachers as well as develop new ones by providing support and equipment.

The curriculum is supported by our publicly available YouTube channel, on which recorded presentations and tutorials are available. Additionally, we will produce a series of 10-minute videos to equip students with the essential technical skills needed for the field test.

Approximately 100 students and 16 teachers take part in this program annually. The curriculum includes aquatic science, forestry, soil health, and wildlife. Students develop a good knowledge of non-point source

pollution; physical and chemical factors that affect stream and estuary health, habitat protection, and species conservation among other topics. Students' understanding of these topics is tested via a written field test; and an oral presentation on a real-life environmental scenario. Students learn not just about environmental problems, but also how to include all stakeholders when suggesting a solution. The program incorporates problem-based learning; and encourages critical thinking. Students are introduced to environmental career options and professionals working in the field, but our focus is to foster environmental literacy in future community leaders.

Does the project implement any other *Galveston Bay Plan 2nd Edition* Priority Area Actions, or the other Subcommittee priorities?

- NRU (Protect and Sustain Living Resources)
- WSQ (Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use)
- M&R (Inform Science-Based Decision Making)

Other Subcommittee Detail:

NPS-2: Support Non-point Source Education
PS-1: Support Stormwater Education Programs
FWI-1: Water Conservation and Education

The Aquatics portion of the Texas Envirothon includes the following Learning Objectives:

1. Understand how education programs and enforcement agencies are working together to protect aquatic habitats and preventing those who use our waterways from inadvertently transporting Aquatic Nuisance Species from one river to another.
2. Interpret major provincial and/or federal laws and methods used to protect water quality (i.e., surface and groundwater). Utilize this information to propose management decisions that would improve the quality of water in a given situation.
3. Be familiar with the Federal, Provincial, and State agencies that provide oversight of water resources, and understand that Geographic Information Systems (GIS) is a useful and important tool in the management of water resources.
4. Identify global and local sources of point and non-point source pollution and be able to discuss methods to reduce point and non-point source pollution.
5. Understand the interaction of competing uses of water for water supply, hydropower, navigation, wildlife, recreation, waste assimilation, irrigation, and industry.
6. Know the meaning of water conservation, and understand why it is important every time you turn on a faucet.

The students are required to demonstrate a good working knowledge of these principles.

Other Plans Implemented:

- North American Association for Environmental Education Guidelines of Excellence.
- Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills: Aquatic Science, Environmental Science, Environmental Systems.
- 2021 - 2040 NOAA Education Strategic Plan:
Goal 1: Science informed society
Goal 3: Ready, Responsive, Resilient
Goal 4: Future Workforce

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

PPE Subcommittee Identified Priorities

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- Continuation or expansion of established education, outreach, or engagement programs.
- Partnering with new local entities or smaller NGOs to reach new communities.
- Connecting new audiences to existing/completed projects or the natural habitat.
- Opportunities for GBEP and partners to host workshops/networking opportunities for stakeholders on key topics.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

EIH has a dedicated environmental education (EE) team that is committed to providing engaging and relevant programming on a number of environmental topics to the UHCL staff and students, community members, and K-12 students. EIH has facilitated Texas Envirothon since 2001. Although corporate sponsorship for our program has been limited, we are committed to continuing this program and expanding into new schools.

Many schools return to take part in the Texas Envirothon program year after year. In addition to those schools, we plan to reach out to new schools in the greater Houston/Galveston area who have been identified as having the greatest need for EE programs by using the data supplied by EcoRise in a previously funded grant project. Texas Envirothon staff will attend teacher conferences and local meetings to reach out and encourage teacher and school participation in the program.

Our workshops will offer opportunities for GBEP and partners to participate in our teacher workshop as well as in the state Envirothon program. GBF will work closely with us on the teacher workshops each year.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

- Yes
 No

EIH was part of the previous grant utilizing resources of EcoRise which identified underrepresented schools lacking in environmental education resources. We will now use these results as a reference guide to approach ISD administrators about participation in Texas Envirothon.

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

Objectives:

1. To assist in the recruitment and support of 16 classroom science teachers representing diverse communities and to sponsor the participation of these 16 classroom science teachers in two one-day workshops to be held in-person at EIH.
2. To further the knowledge and skills of classroom science teachers to teach environmental science effectively using field methods, hands-on learning, and inquiry-based teaching strategies and to promote the participation of students in the Texas Envirothon program.
3. To supply equipment such as a Munsell Soils Book, and a clinometer to schools which otherwise could not afford them.
4. To host the three -day Texas Envirothon program which comprises a day of field trips, presentations and hands on learning, a field test, and a 20-minute oral presentation in response to a real-life environmental scenario.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

[In 1,000 words or less, please provide a summary of the scope of your proposal.]

The mission of the Texas Envirothon is to develop knowledgeable, skilled, and dedicated citizens who are willing and prepared to work toward achieving a balance between the quality of life and the quality of the environment. The Texas Envirothon has been inspiring environmental stewardship in young people since 2001 and is organized by the University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL) Environmental Institute of Houston (EIH).

The Envirothon uses a team approach to learning. Teachers attend the training workshop and then assist their students with mastering the Envirothon learning objectives. Teachers will attend two workshops offered in November/December and in January/ February of each year. EIH will work to identify and recruit schools in the greater Houston/Galveston area who are identified as underrepresented from the EcoRise data set. EIH will partner with Galveston Bay Foundation (GBF) to deliver teacher workshops. Teachers will share the knowledge and skills with all their students/classes during the spring term and invite students to participate as part of the Texas Envirothon program. The student teams, mentored by the trained teacher, study with natural resource professionals and educators to learn about the five areas of study (aquatics, soils and land use, wildlife, forestry and a current issue which changes annually). EIH, as part of the support provided to teachers, connects the classroom teachers to natural resource professionals in their area. The students are also provided with reference materials to enhance their knowledge about the environmental key concepts. Student teams will then be encouraged to compete in the Texas Envirothon in April of each year.

During the workshops, teachers will receive training, provided by resource professionals from the local community, in the five areas of study addressed by the competition (aquatics, soils, forestry, wildlife and the current environmental issue. Teacher participants will receive individual support and guidance on how to prepare students for the oral presentation component. They will also receive field equipment for their schools with training that they use with their own students/classes. Up to 10 education videos will be produced and housed on the Texas Envirothon’s YouTube channel for use by all teachers.

Anticipated project period is September 2025 – December 2027.

Anticipated timeline:

Fall 2025	Workshop Planning, Outreach, and Recruitment
November/Dec 2025 and 2026	One-Day Workshop
January/Feb 2026 and 2027	One-Day Workshop
Spring 2026–2027	Teachers implement training and skills into their classes. Teachers invite students to participate in Texas Envirothon. Envirothon student teams learn, practice, and train for Texas Envirothon.

Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

n/a

Location:

Participating schools come from across Texas, mostly from Houston, Galveston and Baytown. The competition will be hosted in the Greater Houston Area in 2025 and 2027.

Projects Map

[\[Insert Map Here or Attach as an Appendix if Applicable\]](#)

Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):

[\[Insert Here or Attach as an Appendix\]](#)



Figure 1: Students participating in the field test at Galveston Island State Park



Figure 2: Students Identifying freshwater fish species



Figure 3: Student using a compass for field test questions at Galveston Island State Park



Figure 4: NRCS resource professional teaching about soil color and texture

SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$27,500.00
Fringe Benefits (36%) ¹	\$9,900.00
Travel	\$0.00
Supplies	\$19,120.00
Equipment	\$0.00
Contractual	\$0.00
Construction	\$0.00
Other	\$21,904.00
Total Direct Cost	\$78,424.00
Indirect Costs	\$12,548.00
Total	\$90,972.00

Indirect Cost Agreement

Please note: If using a rate different from your entity Indirect Cost Agreement; a letter of exemption from the appropriate authority must be provided with the application, or a statement must be included certifying that the recipient has elected to be reimbursed for an amount less than its total indirect costs, that unreimbursed indirect costs are part of the recipient’s contribution to the success of the project, and that the recipient will pay for all unreimbursed indirect costs using funds available to it for that purpose.

UHCL’s federally-negotiated institutional off-campus indirect cost reimbursement is 16% of modified total direct costs. The MTDC base includes all salaries, fringe benefits, materials, supplies, services, travel and subcontracts up to the first \$25,000 of each subgrant or subcontract. The agreement is effective 09/01/2024 – 08/31/2028. The cognizant federal agency DHHS contact is Olulola Oluborode (214) 767-3261.

[\[Insert Indirect Cost Agreement or Attach as an Appendix if Applicable\]](#)

Indirect Cost Reimbursable Rate. The reimbursable rate for this Contract is 16% of (check one):

- Salary and fringe benefits
- Modified total direct costs
- Other direct costs base

If other direct cost base, identify:

This rate is less than or equal to (check one):

- Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.

¹ If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

De Minimis Rate— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of ten percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

Provisional Rate— an experienced-based rate agreed to by Performing Party and TCEQ in the absence of a NICRA rate negotiated with the applicable federal cognizant agency.

Partial Reimbursement Rate— a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

Other:

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of total Contract budget, identify the main constituents:

Teacher stipends, Video contract, GBF contract

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will notify you of the meeting’s time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.
-

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.

- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by August 5, 2024 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:

WSQ Subcommittee

Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov

NRU Subcommittee

Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov

PPE Subcommittee

Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov and Matthew.Abernathy@tceq.texas.gov

M&R Subcommittee

Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2026 PPE Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **August 5, 2024**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for FY2026 (FY2026 Priority Area Actions) that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for fiscal 2026 at the June 2024 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY2026 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Subcommittee:

PPE – Public Participation and Education

Project Name:

Public Engagement through Native Tree Planting and STEM Education

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes No

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

- Federal, State, or Local Government Council of Government Public ISDs or Universities
 Nonprofit Other*

[Please also indicate entity category (state, local, public university, nonprofit, etc.).]

Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:

AND:

C121SN8YNMG6

VIN or Tax ID:

46-4607075

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	David Sharp
Project Representative Phone	281-745-7880
Project Representative Email	Chairman@explorationgreen.org

Amount Requested from GBEP:

\$65,500

Federal State No Preference

Is the project scalable?

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2026 (09/01/2025-08/31/2026)	\$32,750.00
FY 2027 (09/01/2026-08/31/2027)	\$32,750.00
FY 2028 (09/01/2027-05/31/2028)	\$0.00
Total	\$65,5000.00

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2025 - ending no later than May 31, 2028) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

Sept 1, 2025 - August 31, 2027

Project Urgency:

For public engagement, urgency is to get people involved while Exploration Green is still new and topmost in people's minds. It is important to get trees planted to start the growth process to maintain tree cover and receive associated benefits in wildlife food/habitat, air and water quality improvement, temperature reduction and carbon sequestration.

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

\$90,000

Is this an estimate?

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

[Please indicate source, amount, and status (secured, potential, etc.)]

Funds requested under this grant will be leveraged and supplemented by financial grants and donations from foundations and businesses. While the grant cycle for the project timeframe has not yet begun for these entities, Exploration Green Conservancy has been successful in obtaining grant funds in the past for similar projects. Previous grantors have included: Environmental Fund for Texas, H-E-B, Phillips 66, Port Houston, State Farm, Dow, and ExxonMobil.

This project proposal includes in-kind support from the Clear Lake City Water Authority (CLCWA), which provides re-use water for irrigation; the project site for tree planting and STEM education activities; site maintenance services; portable toilets, removal services for large dead trees and heavy equipment as needed.

In-kind services are also provided by the Galveston Bay Chapter of Texas Master Naturalists, which provides volunteers knowledgeable in tree planting methods, and volunteers that can teach students (at all grade levels) and adults about the benefits of native trees, shrubs, grasses and wetland plants in the landscape.

Trees for Houston also provides in-kind services in the form of tree donation, use of a bobcat with auger and operator to dig holes prior to planting events and supplies for tree planting (soil, mulch, stakes and tree ties).

Partners* and Their Roles:

Clear Lake City Water Authority has been a partner with Exploration Green Conservancy since the earliest days of Exploration Green. CLCWA was responsible for formation of Exploration Green Conservancy to provide an organization for fundraising and volunteer recruiting and management. There are no reimbursable items in this proposal to be paid to CLCWA.

Galveston Bay Chapter of Texas Master Naturalists provides volunteers to carry out the in-kind support detailed in the previous section. There are no reimbursable items in this proposal to be paid to the Texas Master Naturalists.

***If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted under the application.**

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY2026 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

The FY2026 Priority Area Actions are found at:

- <https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

Exploration Green implements the *Engage Communities* Action Plans by fostering engagement of the local community through several mechanisms:

- As area residents hear from their friends and neighbors about what’s available, they tend to become regular visitors, which provides an audience for educational opportunities that are built-in to Exploration Green (such as the virtual scavenger hunt on Phase 1).
- Community events are offered several times per year to draw residents to EG for hands-on experiences. Annual events such as Wetland Walkabout (with participation of GBF, GBEP, ABNC, NPSOT, Agrilife and other organizations), Squawk Walk (with Houston Audubon) and Glow the Green (with multiple community organizations) provide fun family activities with an introduction to environmental issues.
- Monthly events providing educational content are Bird Walks and Moth Nights.
- Native tree and shrub planting events provide a way for residents to get directly involved in habitat improvement. Many participants return for subsequent planting events, and some become volunteers in other areas as their sense of commitment increases.

This project will build on all these areas to increase community engagement. We are also targeting to increase participation by students to begin fostering environmental awareness at an early age.

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

- SPO-1 SPO-2 SPO-3 SPO-4
PEA-1 PEA-2 PEA-3

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

[Please state the action and output addressed and how the project contributes to implementing the output.]

The project addresses the following priorities for engaging communities in conservation:

- *SPO-1 - Develop new and support existing stewardship programs and volunteer opportunities for stakeholders; Support and promote workshops and events that facilitate stakeholder and partner involvement:* Exploration Green Conservancy is a 100% volunteer organization. The project provides opportunities for previous and new volunteers to be engaged in creating natural habitat in the middle of a suburban environment. Over 1000 volunteers of all ages have been involved in creating natural habitat at Exploration Green over the last 7 years. Experience has shown that first-time volunteers often become repeat volunteers for future planting events, other events at Exploration Green, or activities with other volunteer organizations in the area. This directly addresses the goal of Increasing a Sense of Responsibility in the Health of Galveston Bay.
- *PEA-1 - Develop new and support existing programs in Galveston Bay to engage the public in a dialog about key issues; PEA-2 - Develop new and support existing programs in Galveston Bay that change behaviors and attitudes in Galveston Bay with a focus on adult education:* All community planting events provide an opportunity for adults to work alongside Texas Master Naturalists to learn about stormwater management, the connection of Exploration Green to Galveston Bay, the benefits of native species and other environmental issues. As new volunteers become introduced to environmental concepts and experienced volunteers, they often become “lifelong students” and advocates of environmental issues.
- *PEA-3 - Develop new and support existing K-12 Galveston Bay estuary-related curricular material for regional use:* The inclusion of K-12 students in seasonal planting events provides a hands-on, living laboratory experience where students can learn about watershed issues under the guidance of Texas Master Naturalists. Additionally, interpretive signage enabled by QR code markers will provide self-paced instruction at multiple grade levels and in multiple languages to help students learn more

about environmental issues affecting Galveston Bay. Introducing students to environmental concepts during their formative years allows them to bring environmental issues home to inform other family members and become lifelong advocates of environmental causes.

Does the project implement any other *Galveston Bay Plan 2nd Edition* Priority Area Actions, or the other Subcommittee priorities?

- NRU (Protect and Sustain Living Resources)
- WSQ (Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use)
- M&R (Inform Science-Based Decision Making)

Other Subcommittee Detail:

Yes, this project supports the following priority action under NRU (Protect and Sustain Living Resources): *HC-3 - Enhance existing habitats to increase overall function and productivity.* Exploration Green is built on the site of a former golf course. Areas that were excavated for construction of stormwater detention ponds had topsoil replaced as part of the construction contract, but these require addition of native trees and shrubs to provide food and habitat for native fauna. Areas that were not excavated still contain trees that were planted when the site was a golf course in the 1960's. As these trees die off due to old age, drought or storm damage, they need to be replaced with native trees to maintain suitable habitat. While dead trees also provide wildlife values, it is not always possible to leave them in place due to proximity to homes, trails or other features.

Revegetation of Exploration Green is already showing results in increasing species diversity. When the area was a golf course, about 40 species of birds were documented on e-Bird. That number has increased every year as different sections of Exploration Green were completed and now stands at 215 as of June 2024. Likewise, we began tracking total species recorded on iNaturalist, and species count has increased from 721 to 1746.

It is impossible to say how much of the increase in each metric is due to underlying increase in species and how much is due to more citizens being involved in observing, but both are indicators of positive trends due to the habitat enhancement of Exploration Green and citizen involvement with the facility.

Other Plans Implemented:

N/A

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

PPE Subcommittee Identified Priorities

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- Continuation or expansion of established education, outreach, or engagement programs.
- Partnering with new local entities or smaller NGOs to reach new communities.
- Connecting new audiences to existing/completed projects or the natural habitat.
- Opportunities for GBEP and partners to host workshops/networking opportunities for stakeholders on key topics.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

This project meets the following PPE Subcommittee Identified Priorities:

1) Continuation or expansion of established education, outreach or engagement programs and 3) Connecting new audiences to existing/completed projects or the natural habitat:

Exploration Green has held tree and shrub planting events since 2018. These events routinely attract 60-100 volunteers for each planting day and there are typically 3-4 planting days each year. Volunteers work side-by-side with Texas Master Naturalists and learn about proper tree planting technique, benefits of native trees, watershed issues, the connection of Exploration Green to Galveston Bay and other environmental topics. This project continues that opportunity for engagement and volunteerism.

We will be reaching out to Title 1 schools close to Exploration Green to encourage participation of students and their families in tree planting and other community events. This effort will be piloted at Clear Lake City Elementary in the 2024-2025 school year and we expect to expand to additional schools in subsequent years.

The project will also be adding interpretive content along one phase of Exploration Green that can be accessed via QR codes to provide on-demand learning opportunities in multiple languages. This expands the range of environmental topics to those already available via the QR code enabled "Scavenger Hunt" in Phase 1. The apartments adjacent to Diana Lane provide housing for many immigrant families. Providing interpretive content in multiple languages has the potential to engage these residents where they live and bring environmental awareness to a new demographic.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

Yes

No

[TBD.]

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

This project continues to engage the public in revegetation activities on the Exploration Green site; ensures inclusion of stakeholders of all ages in restoration activities; and provides accessible interpretive content via QR code access in multiple languages.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

Since 2017, Exploration Green has invited area residents to participate in planting native trees and shrubs on the former Clear Lake City Golf Course property. Response has been good, with over 1000 volunteers of all ages pitching in to help create this thriving green space in the heart of the Clear Lake community. Participants come from the Clear Lake community and adjacent communities (Seabrook, Laporte, Pasadena, Webster, Friendswood, League City, Dickenson) as well as more distant communities including Katy, Tomball and the Woodlands. This project builds on and extends citizen engagement.

First, by continuing tree and shrub “Planting Days” we allow local residents to literally get their hands dirty while planting native trees and shrubs to implement nature-based solutions to multiple environmental issues: soil erosion, stormwater mitigation, air and water quality, wildlife habitat/diversity, watershed protection, urban heat reduction and carbon capture. During these events, Texas Master Naturalists will lead teams of inexperienced volunteers. This ensures that (1) trees are planted properly, and (2) there is opportunity to discuss the importance of native plants in the ecosystem and what ecosystem services are provided by the tree species being planted. Trees will be planted during the fall/winter months to minimize stress and provide best chances for survival. A mix of tree species and sizes will be planted to provide habitat diversity.

Planting days have always attracted a range of ages, and future planting will involve targeted outreach through local schools, including Title 1 schools, to encourage more students and their families to participate.

The majority of funds requested under this proposal will pay for irrigation. All trees will have drip irrigation installed by a professional irrigation firm after planting to ensure best chances of survival through the first 2-3 years. Irrigation uses re-use water (municipal wastewater that has been fully treated but not chlorinated) to efficiently manage water demand.

Some of the funds requested under this proposal will go toward purchase of larger trees. These will be supplemented with smaller trees received via in-kind donations from Apache or Trees for Houston. A mix of tree sizes and species provide more diversity of habitat and greater chances of long-term survival while controlling initial costs

A second aspect of this project is addition of interpretive content around features of Exploration Green. Content will address a variety of environmental topics, e.g., stormwater management, protection of Galveston Bay, the importance of native species, and unique features of selected plants and animals. Interpretive content will be accessed via QR codes posted at selected locations around Exploration Green. Scanning the QR code will take the visitor to content which can be customized to specific age groups and available in multiple languages. This provides a new level of accessibility consistent with current technology.

A minor amount of funds requested under the proposal will support this interpretive content, such as expenses for durable QR code markers and programming costs.

Once demonstrated by this pilot, the concept can be extended more broadly within Exploration Green and even extended to other nature education facilities in the region.

Measurable Outcomes: For this project, we will be tracking the following measures to gauge performance against key objectives:

Objective: Ongoing community involvement

Measures: Total number of volunteers and their hours contributed to complete this project

Timeframe: Annual

Objective: Increase student engagement

Measures: Number of students (including students at Title 1 Schools) introduced to STEM topics through volunteer activities or structured educational opportunities

Timeframe: Annual

Objective: Increase wildlife habitat
Measures: Number of native trees and shrubs planted; one-year survival rate.
Timeframe: Trees planted to be measured 1Q of each year; survival rate measured one year later

Objective: Increase wildlife diversity
Measures: Number of bird species and total number of species reported via eBird and i-Naturalist
Timeframe: Annual

Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

29° 34 '21.54" N/ 95° 7' 5.808" W

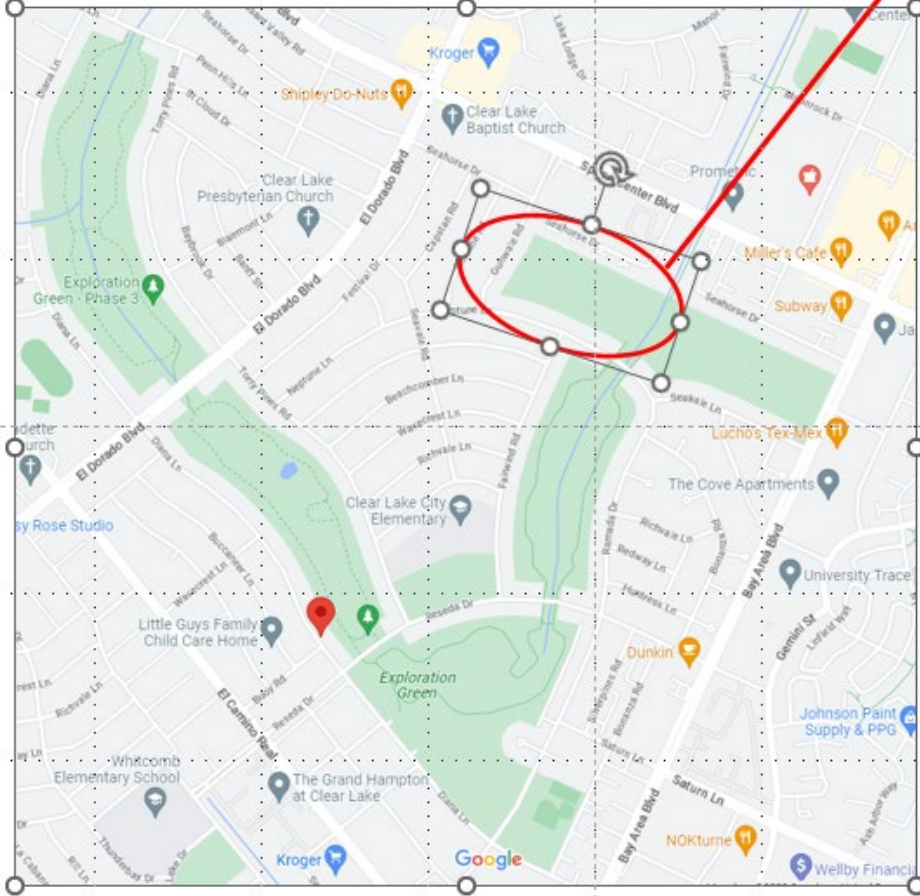
Location:

Horsepen Bayou watershed (tributary to Armand Bayou/Lake Mark Kramer/Clear Lake)

Projects Map

Project Location

Project Location:
Phase 5 West + other misc.
locations on Exploration
Green



Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):





SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$0.00
Fringe Benefits (##%) ¹	\$0.00
Travel	\$0.00
Supplies	\$30,000.00
Equipment	\$0.00
Contractual	\$30,000.00
Construction	\$0.00
Other	\$0.00
Total Direct Cost	\$60,000.00
Indirect Costs	\$5,500.00
Total	\$65,500.00

Indirect Cost Agreement

Please note: If using a rate different from your entity Indirect Cost Agreement; a letter of exemption from the appropriate authority must be provided with the application, or a statement must be included certifying that the recipient has elected to be reimbursed for an amount less than its total indirect costs, that unreimbursed indirect costs are part of the recipient’s contribution to the success of the project, and that the recipient will pay for all unreimbursed indirect costs using funds available to it for that purpose.

[\[Insert Indirect Cost Agreement or Attach as an Appendix if Applicable\]](#)

Indirect Cost Reimbursable Rate. The reimbursable rate for this Contract is 10% of (check one):

- Salary and fringe benefits
- Modified total direct costs
- Other direct costs base

If other direct cost base, identify:

This rate is less than or equal to (check one):

- Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.
- De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of ten percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

¹ If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

Provisional Rate— an experienced-based rate agreed to by Performing Party and TCEQ in the absence of a NICRA rate negotiated with the applicable federal cognizant agency.

Partial Reimbursement Rate— a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

Other:

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of total Contract budget, identify the main constituents:

[Description of costs associated with “Other” budget category.]

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will notify you of the meeting’s time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by August 5, 2024 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:

WSQ Subcommittee

Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov

NRU Subcommittee

Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov

PPE Subcommittee

Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov and Matthew.Abernathy@tceq.texas.gov

M&R Subcommittee

Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2026 PPE Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **August 5, 2024**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for FY2026 (FY2026 Priority Area Actions) that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for fiscal 2026 at the June 2024 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY2026 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Subcommittee:

PPE

Project Name:

New voices for the next decade: updating the Galveston Bay Report Card for new and under-represented communities

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes No

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

- Federal, State, or Local Government Council of Government Public ISDs or Universities
 Nonprofit Other*

[Please also indicate entity category (state, local, public university, nonprofit, etc.).]

Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:

AND:

MLKKJ9MNDN63

EIN or Tax ID:

76-0038315

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Erin Kinney
Project Representative Phone	281-364-6040
Project Representative Email	ekinney@harcresearch.org

Amount Requested from GBEP:

\$234,190

Federal State No Preference

Is the project scalable?

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2026 (09/01/2025-08/31/2026)	\$152,746.00
FY 2027 (09/01/2026-05/31/2027)	\$84,444.00
FY 2028 (09/01/2027-05/31/2028)	\$0.00
Total	\$234,190.00

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2025 - ending no later than May 31, 2028) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

September 1, 2025 - August 31, 2027

Project Urgency:

The Galveston Bay Report Card will be completely unfunded as of March 31, 2025. The GBRC has been updated annually since 2015 and outreach has continued throughout that time. It has won awards and been celebrated locally and is also cited several times in the Galveston Bay Plan. Without funding, updating the GBRC will need to stop.

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

Total project cost: \$254,311. HARC has voluntarily reduced our federally approved indirect rate to 40% from 53% in order to allow more funds available for project work. The uncaptured IDC = \$20,121

Is this an estimate?

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

HARC has voluntarily reduced our federally approved indirect rate to 40% from 53% in order to allow more funds available for project work. The uncaptured IDC = \$20,121.
HARC is also seeking additional funds from foundations to support the GBRC longer term. This grant would give us the community feedback to bolster those proposals with proof of community support and need for the project.

Partners* and Their Roles:

Galveston Bay Foundation (GBF) has been an outreach and engagement partner on GBRC since its creation. They will continue to promote the GBRC and reach out to new and existing audiences through their network.

***If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted under the application.**

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY2026 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

The FY2026 Priority Area Actions are found at:

- <https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

[Please state how the project implements actions of the Engage Communities Action Plans selected. Please cite other specific action items, if applicable.]

This project will ~~develop new indicators supporting and~~continue promoting workshops and events that facilitate stakeholder and partner involvement in under resourced communities who have not provided input to this project previously. Through their input, the GBRC will continue to provide links and resources in support of existing stewardship programs and volunteer opportunities for stakeholders.

The workshops will be to continue to expand the GBRC and support local organizations and regional initiatives like the Back the Bay campaign and will be planned in collaboration with community based organizations and resilience hubs in the lower Galveston Bay area.

This funding will support the existing Galveston Bay Report Card to engage the public in a dialogue about key issues, and work towards changing behaviors and attitudes in Galveston Bay's watershed with a focus on adult education.

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

- SPO-1 SPO-2 SPO-3 SPO-4
- PEA-1 PEA-2 PEA-3

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

[Please state the action and output addressed and how the project contributes to implementing the output.]

SPO-1: Stewardship Programs and Volunteer Opportunities Objective: Develop new and support existing stewardship programs and volunteer opportunities for stakeholders. This project will support new and existing stewardship programs and volunteer opportunities through the What You Can Do Tool and outreach, along with collaborations with GBF, Citizens Environmental Coalition, and other community based organizations.

SPO-2: Workshops and Events - HARC will host workshops to gather input from communities who are currently under-represented in the current GBRC input. GBF will attend and host events to reach lower Galveston Bay watershed communities.

SP-3: Support Regional Initiatives - continue to support regional initiatives like Back the Bay, the Galveston Bay Plan, regional water quality programs, freshwater inflow education and outreach and education programs through GBF and other community based organizations.

PEA -1: Key Issue Engagement - The GBRC covers many key issues that are specifically targeted by the Galveston Bay Plan, including water quality, seafood consumption safety, bacteria contamination of recreational waters, freshwater inflows, commercial and recreational fish and shellfish species, coastal birds, invasive species, oyster reef, wetland, and seagrass habitat loss and restoration, legacy pollutants,

litter and trash (including microplastics). It also covers coastal change issues covered by the Galveston Bay Estuary Resilience Action Plan: sea level rise, water temperature and pH.

PEA-2: Adult Education - Workshops will be targeted at adults in the lower Galveston Bay watershed

Does the project implement any other *Galveston Bay Plan 2nd Edition* Priority Area Actions, or the other Subcommittee priorities?

- NRU (Protect and Sustain Living Resources)
- WSQ (Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use)
- M&R (Inform Science-Based Decision Making)

Other Subcommittee Detail:

[Please explain in detail how project addresses other Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions (be specific; NPS-1, SPO-3, etc.) or subcommittee priorities.]

PHA-2 Improve Regional Contact Recreation Risk Awareness - The GBRC indicator Recreation under the Human Health Risk category specifically addresses contact recreation in Galveston Bay and its tributaries,

FWI-3 Freshwater Inflows Water Conservation and Education - The GBRC indicator Fresh Water Inflows specifically seeks to explain the ecological impacts of too little (and too much) freshwater in Galveston Bay.

RES 1-5 Supporting monitoring efforts by using monitoring data to create grades and educating the public about monitoring programs.

Other Plans Implemented:

[Texas Coastal Management Plan, Texas Coastal Resiliency Master Plan, Texas Wetland Conservation Plan, GCJV Conservation Plans, etc.]

NA

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

PPE Subcommittee Identified Priorities

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- Continuation or expansion of established education, outreach, or engagement programs.
- Partnering with new local entities or smaller NGOs to reach new communities.
- Connecting new audiences to existing/completed projects or the natural habitat.
- Opportunities for GBEP and partners to host workshops/networking opportunities for stakeholders on key topics.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

[Please explain in detail how project addresses priorities selected. Attachments may be submitted via email in conjunction with this application.]

The GBRC is a well-established outreach, engagement, and education tool that has been supported by GBEP in the past. Unfortunately, the current funding will end March 31, 2025, and without additional funds, the GBRC will not be able to continue.

To launch its second decade of providing access to monitoring data results and resources to the public, we propose to seek out new partners in community based organizations who are integrated into their communities and have earned their trust, to facilitate workshops to identify issues, barriers, and benefits to information about the GBRC can inform and empower communities to learn more about Galveston Bay its watershed and its tributaries.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

- Yes
 No

Working with new, smaller communities and community based organizations is one of the goals of the project. Which communities will have the capacity and interest to participate will be determined if/when there is funding. HARC will reach out to its network of community based organizations to determine while communities are interested.

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

Through HARC and GBF's network of community based organization partners, we propose to broaden the impact of the Galveston Bay Report Card by seeking out new under-represented communities and collaborating with them to improve the GBRC. The proposal will cover 2 years to hold workshops to receive stakeholder input on the GBRC and then to develop indicators (as needed) based on their input.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

[In 1,000 words or less, please provide a summary of the scope of your proposal.]

The Galveston Bay Report Card was created in 2014, with its first release in 2015. Each year, the GBRC is updated using state, regional, and citizen scientist datasets by HARC and outreach is mostly performed by Galveston Bay Foundation (GBF). The GBRC was the first of its kind, community-driven assessment of the health of Galveston Bay and its watershed. HARC and GBF met with community groups, fishing and boating groups, commercial fishermen, residents, etc. and asked them what they wanted to know/what they were most concerned about for Galveston Bay. From their questions, we developed over 20 different indicators of bay health in 6 categories.

Each year, we collaborate with communities and use monitoring datasets to shape the report and provide specific information-to-action pathways. The GBRC is available as a website (galvbaygrade.org) in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

In ten years, the GBRC has reported annual assessments of the conditions of more than 20 indicators of Galveston Bay's ecological conditions. Through droughts, multiple annual floods, Hurricane Harvey, record-breaking heat waves, and record-breaking freezes, and in three languages, the GBRC has answered the public's questions about their watershed and the bay overall and offered calls to action.

In those ten years, Houston, Galveston and the communities of the lower Galveston Bay watershed have ~~been~~ also been through a lot of changes. It is time to incorporate voices and concerns from communities who are under-represented by the current GBRC. Through HARC and GBF's network of community based organization partners, we propose to broaden the impact of the GBRC by seeking out new under-represented communities and collaborating with them to improve the GBRC.

The GBRC was created by first talking with folks who live in the region, getting input from different groups via surveys, presentations, and workshops. Before we acquired a single dataset, we talked with communities about how they understand their waterways and how they wanted to get information. Nothing is created for the GBRC in a vacuum; we always want to be acting on input from communities. We have ideas for flooding indicators, health-related indicators, and new ways to share existing tools and projects with communities around the region - but we don't want to do any of it without support and input from communities. We are planning to work with community based organizations like Bayou City Water Keeper and Vision Galveston to help us connect to communities and other organizations who might be interested in sharing their opinions and experiences.

The proposal will cover 2 years: to hold workshops to receive stakeholder input on the GBRC and then to develop indicators (as needed) based on their input. HARC would organize 4 workshops in year one, with pre- and post-workshop surveys. As feasible, HARC would also attend stakeholder meetings organized by community based organizations in the lower Galveston Bay watershed to get input on the GBRC. Galveston Bay Foundation would distribute surveys at events and present at 2-3 stakeholder meetings each year. The goal of the workshops and surveys is to identify what is working and what is not working with the current GBRC and what questions and needs it is not answering for communities. HARC would also seek to partner with some of the new Resilience Hubs in Houston to talk with folks about how environmental resilience is connected with human resilience and how folks want to learn more about flood risk, sea level rise, heat risk, and other stressors that matter to them.

In year two, HARC would then work on creating 1-3 new indicators (as requested by communities) and updating the current website to include them. HARC will also be exploring reducing the data analysis schedule to every 3 years from annually. In addition, there are a lot of tools already out there (like City of Houston's Nature Based Solutions database, [Environmental Defense Fund](http://EnvironmentalDefenseFund.org) and [Texas A&M University](http://TexasA&MUniversity.com)'s toxic flooding vulnerability map (createNBS.org), and many others). We don't want to reinvent what's working well, but we would like to find out from people if they are currently using them or if there are barriers that the GBRC can help address. Finally, we would return to the communities who provided their input to report back on the progress we made with their collaboration.

Over the last 10 years, the GBRC has shown how resilient Galveston Bay is. In order to continue to protect and serve its watershed for the next 10 years, we need forge new partnerships and incorporate more communities into its mission and its message.

Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

[degrees, minutes, and seconds format]

Location:

Lower Galveston Bay Watershed

Projects Map

[Insert Map Here or Attach as an Appendix if Applicable]

Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):

[Insert Here or Attach as an Appendix]

SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$53,198.00
Fringe Benefits (48%) ¹	\$25,535.00
Travel	\$1,045.00
Supplies	\$25,000.00
Equipment	\$0.00
Contractual	\$60,000.00
Construction	\$0.00
Other	\$7,500.00
Total Direct Cost	\$162,278.00
Indirect Costs	\$61,911.00
Total	\$234,190.00

Indirect Cost Agreement

Please note: If using a rate different from your entity Indirect Cost Agreement; a letter of exemption from the appropriate authority must be provided with the application, or a statement must be included certifying that the recipient has elected to be reimbursed for an amount less than its total indirect costs, that unreimbursed indirect costs are part of the recipient’s contribution to the success of the project, and that the recipient will pay for all unreimbursed indirect costs using funds available to it for that purpose.

[Attachment A: IDC rate agreement](#)

Indirect Cost Reimbursable Rate. The reimbursable rate for this Contract is 40% of (check one):

- Salary and fringe benefits
- Modified total direct costs
- Other direct costs base

If other direct cost base, identify:

This rate is less than or equal to (check one):

Predetermined Rate— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.

De Minimis Rate— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of ten percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

¹ If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

Provisional Rate— an experienced-based rate agreed to by Performing Party and TCEQ in the absence of a NICRA rate negotiated with the applicable federal cognizant agency.

Partial Reimbursement Rate— a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

Other:

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of total Contract budget, identify the main constituents:

It & Facilities fee, calculated as \$7.50/manhour.

GTRI/HARC maintains an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency, U.S. Department of Energy. Our current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA) extends through 2026 and provides for a predetermined IDC rate of 53% of modified total direct costs (MTDC). A copy of that agreement will be supplied with this proposal. For this project, however, GTRI/HARC has proposed to voluntarily limit its indirect cost reimbursement to 40% of MTDC in order to maximize the amount of funds available for direct costs. We reserve the right to propose our full approved IDC rate for future applications.

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
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SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.
-

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.

- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by August 5, 2024 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:

WSQ Subcommittee

Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov

NRU Subcommittee

Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov

PPE Subcommittee

Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov and Matthew.Abernathy@tceq.texas.gov

M&R Subcommittee

Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2026 PPE Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **August 5, 2024**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for FY2026 (FY2026 Priority Area Actions) that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for fiscal 2026 at the June 2024 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY2026 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Subcommittee:

PPE

Project Name:

City of Houston Nature Trails Master Plan

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes No

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

- Federal, State, or Local Government Council of Government Public ISDs or Universities
 Nonprofit Other*

Local - City of Houston

Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:

AND:

LZLQKKNBLN3

VIN or Tax ID:

74-6001164

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Kelli Ondracek
Project Representative Phone	832-942-3740
Project Representative Email	Kelli.ondracek@houstontx.gov

Amount Requested from GBEP:

\$90,000.00

Federal State No Preference

Is the project scalable?

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2026 (09/01/2025-08/31/2026)	\$90,000
FY 2027 (09/01/2026-05/31/2027)	\$0.00
FY 2028 (09/01/2027-05/31/2028)	\$0.00
Total	\$90,000

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2025 - ending no later than May 31, 2028) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

2 years

Project Urgency:

Lack of access or incomplete and low-quality access erodes the community's knowledge of and investment in our natural areas. This plan is urgently needed as a foundation to expand and improve visitation to gain support for the city's Nature Preserves.

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

\$120,000

Is this an estimate?

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

In-kind staff time will be provided by Houston Parks and Recreation Department (HPARD) employees along with other relevant staff from city departments and outside partners. A planning committee that meets monthly throughout the grant period will provide in-kind services totaling approximately \$30,000 toward the development of the plan.

Partners* and Their Roles:

Partners for this project include city departments, such as the City of Houston Planning Department, and outside organizations that have an interest in nature trails throughout Houston. HPARD will reach out to non-profit and community partners to join in the planning committee to work with consultants in the development of the Nature Trails Master Plan.

***If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted under the application.**

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY2026 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

The FY2026 Priority Area Actions are found at:

- <https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

[Please state how the project implements actions of the Engage Communities Action Plans selected. Please cite other specific action items, if applicable.]

HPARD's Natural Resources Division is currently implementing numerous initiatives that support the Galveston Bay Plan, including preserving land, enhancing natural habitat, implementing green stormwater projects to improve water quality in the bayous, and engaging communities in restoration events. However, the City of Houston has over 7,400 acres of Nature Preserves within 26 parks and most of them lack ongoing, active community engagement. The existing nature trails within parks have inadequate or non-existent signage, preventing users from having any information about the habitat and often no information on the accessibility, direction, or length of the trails they are trying to navigate.

The City of Houston Nature Trails Master Plan will include information on engaging the communities in trails maintenance, which will develop new programs and support existing stewardship programs and volunteer opportunities for stakeholders. Local communities will provide input on the challenges of utilizing nature trails within parks and will provide information on how HPARD can improve nature trails to make them more accessible and enjoyable for the users.

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

- SPO-1 SPO-2 SPO-3 SPO-4
- PEA-1 PEA-2 PEA-3

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

[Please state the action and output addressed and how the project contributes to implementing the output.]

SPO- 1: Stewardship and volunteer programs

This project will allow HPARD to extend more volunteer and stewardship opportunities into our Nature Preserves and the resulting trail systems through events, ongoing stewardship programs, and adoption programs.

PEA-1: Public Education and Awareness

This project will provide a plan on implementing new programs to connect communities to the natural habitat throughout Houston. The plan will include information about ongoing community partnerships and trail volunteer programs that will provide lasting environmental stewardship in watersheds across Houston.

Does the project implement any other *Galveston Bay Plan 2nd Edition* Priority Area Actions, or the other Subcommittee priorities?

- NRU (Protect and Sustain Living Resources)
- WSQ (Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use)
- M&R (Inform Science-Based Decision Making)

Other Subcommittee Detail:

[Please explain in detail how project addresses other Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions (be specific; NPS-1, SPO-3, etc.) or subcommittee priorities.]

Other Plans Implemented:

Texas Costal Resiliency Master Plan, Resilient Houston, Houston Climate Action Plan

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

PPE Subcommittee Identified Priorities

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- Continuation or expansion of established education, outreach, or engagement programs.
- Partnering with new local entities or smaller NGOs to reach new communities.
- Connecting new audiences to existing/completed projects or the natural habitat.
- Opportunities for GBEP and partners to host workshops/networking opportunities for stakeholders on key topics.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

Connecting new audiences to existing/completed projects or the natural habitat:

This project will enable HPARD to identify and establish a cohesive network of trails within existing and future Nature Preserves, offering improved access and engagement to the natural habitat. Proximity and accessibility to nature is a crucial component in helping people develop a connection with the environment and foster understanding of how urban areas impact local ecosystems within the Galveston Bay Watershed. HPARD has 26 Nature Preserves within the City of Houston, undeveloped and ecologically diverse habitats that provide ecosystem services to residents and help ensure communities throughout the city have access to the benefits of nature. However, many of these areas lack adequate signage and information to allow visitors to safely navigate them. Creating standards for well-marked and maintained trails, as well as wayfinding and interpretive materials, will help to educate visitors and foster connection to the existing natural habitat in their communities.

The City of Houston Nature Trails Master Plan will be a guiding document for HPARD to improve and create access to Nature Preserves. The process of developing the plan will engage groups and individuals in the creation of the plan and the execution and long-term maintenance of the resulting trail system.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

- Yes
- No

Development of the City of Houston Nature Trails Master Plan will involve individuals and organizations local to the Nature Preserves, including civic groups, volunteer organizations, and representatives from historically under-resourced areas. Input from these communities will be vital components of the planning process.

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

The City of Houston Nature Trails Master Plan will provide guidance and strategies for developing and enhancing a well-maintained and utilized nature trail system throughout Houston's Nature Preserves. The plan will be developed with local communities and partners with a focus on minimal impacts to natural habitats and wildlife found within the city's natural areas. It will guide standards and practices that can be implemented throughout Houston to improve and encourage access to natural habitat, enhance visitor experience, and promote the unique ecological diversity found throughout the city.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

The City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department (HPARD) owns and/or manages 382 parks throughout Houston with a footprint of over 25,000 acres. The parks fall within numerous watersheds and over 70 are immediately adjacent to a major bayou or tributary that flows into Galveston Bay.

HPARD's Natural Resources Division manages 26 nature preserves within the parks. The preserves are distributed widely across the city, offering habitat, environmental services, and public health benefits to many communities. Currently many of the preserves have informal or aging trails, while some do not yet have trail access. HPARD has approximately 50 miles of trails throughout Nature Preserves and adjacent to natural areas. With a population of 2.3 million within City of Houston limits, HPARD has an opportunity to engage with many people in the land preservation and habitat enhancement efforts happening within the city and throughout the region. Well-maintained, clearly marked trails with interpretive signage and wayfinding features are a critical foundation to expanding engagement with the public and improving their understanding of and investment in these critical habitat areas.

In order to support community engagement and accessibility in natural areas throughout Houston's park system, HPARD has identified the need for a Nature Trails Master Plan to establish policies and guidelines for trail creation and maintenance throughout the park system in Houston.

City of Houston Nature Trails Master Plan Goals:

Understand the Existing Trail Systems

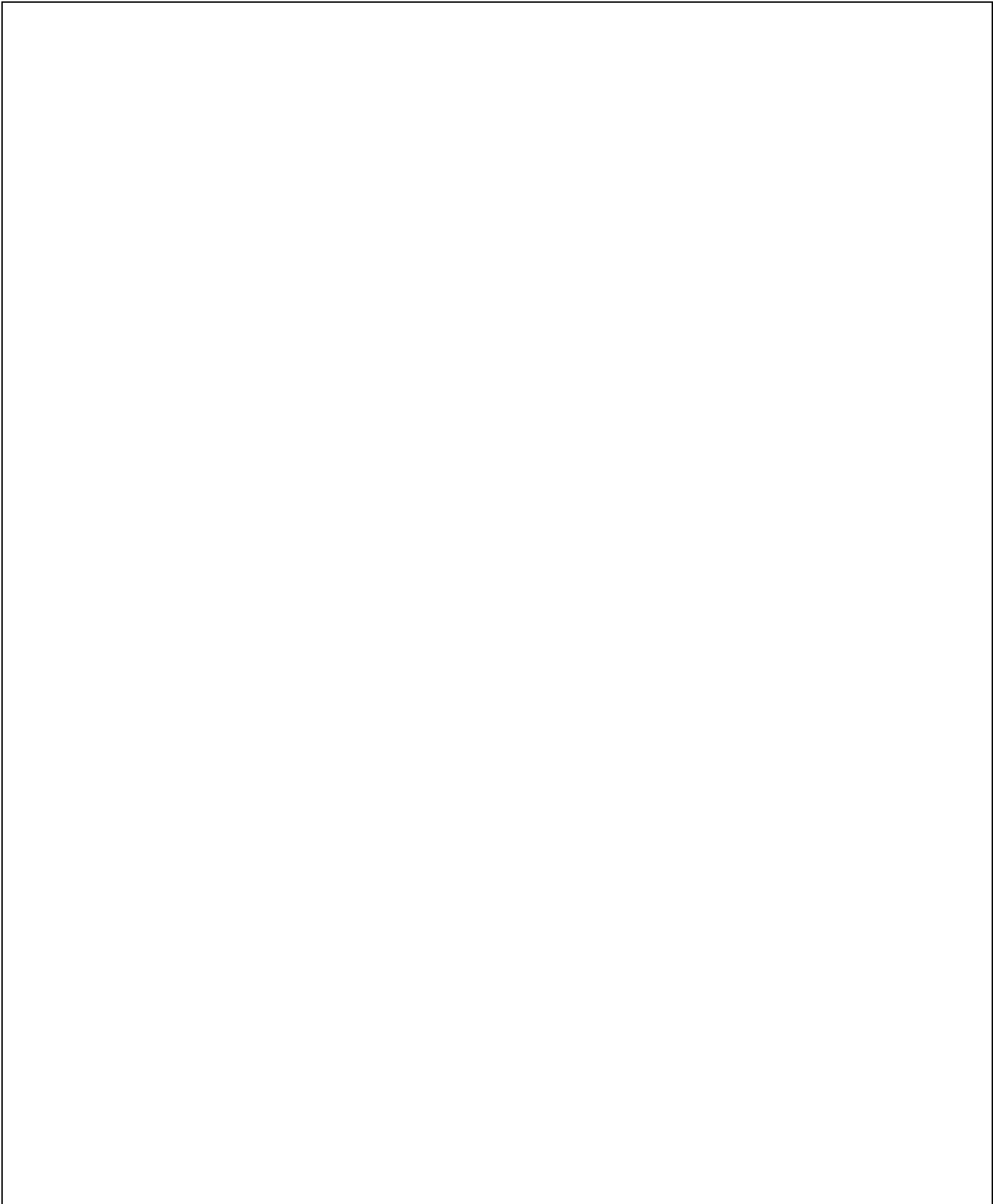
1. Undergo a full mapping of the existing trails system that includes information on length, sizes, and materials of each trail segment.
2. Identify non-formal trails and methods to formalize or remove those that impact sensitive habitats.
3. Determine existing trail usage and condition and identify areas where future trails may be needed to provide access.
4. Coordinate with community groups to determine gaps or problems in existing trail systems.

Develop Consistent Approaches to Design, Construction, and Maintenance of Nature Trails

1. Create standards for nature trails and associated amenities (bird-friendly lighting, benches), prioritizing protection of the natural habitat.
2. Develop trailhead and wayfinding design and placement standards to support utilization and safety within the nature trail system.
3. Develop designs for interpretive signage throughout nature trails to engage visitors and provide information about the natural habitat within the preserves.
4. Include trail standards to increase access for people with all abilities.
5. Establish maintenance plans for nature trails that support their ongoing usage and functionality.

Develop a Pathway for Stewardship Groups to Partner with HPARD for Ongoing Maintenance and Engagement

1. Create a framework for engaging and leveraging volunteer, corporate, public, and non-profit organizations in the ongoing maintenance and improvement of the trails through training, organized workdays, and adoptions.
2. Encourage community groups and schools to utilize the nature trails for ongoing environmental programming throughout the parks.



Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

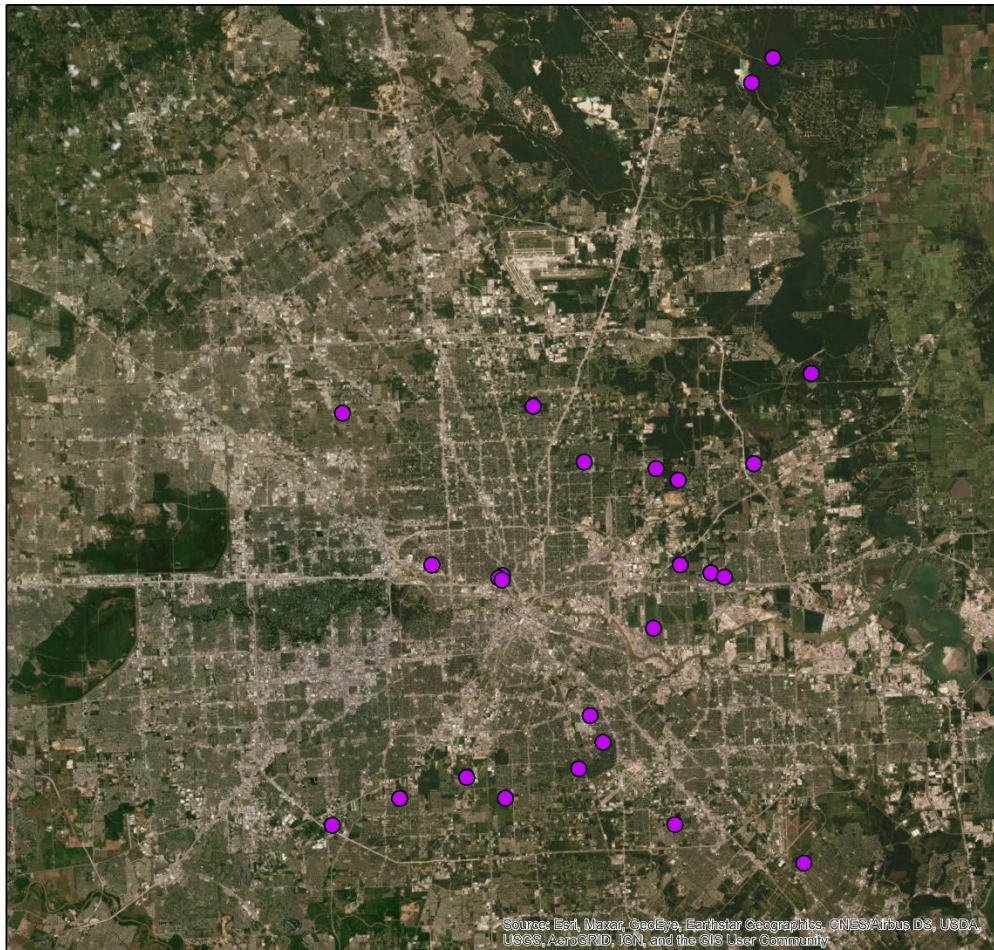
[degrees, minutes, and seconds format]

Location:

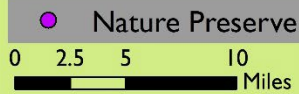
City of Houston

Projects Map

HOUSTON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT NATURE PRESERVE SYSTEM



Source: Esri, Maxar, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community



Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):

Lake Houston Wilderness Park Trail Map



SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$0.00
Fringe Benefits (##%) ¹	\$0.00
Travel	\$0.00
Supplies	\$0.00
Equipment	\$0.00
Contractual	\$90,000.00
Construction	\$0.00
Other	\$0.00
Total Direct Cost	\$90,000.00
Indirect Costs	\$0.00
Total	\$90,000.00

Indirect Cost Agreement

Please note: If using a rate different from your entity Indirect Cost Agreement; a letter of exemption from the appropriate authority must be provided with the application, or a statement must be included certifying that the recipient has elected to be reimbursed for an amount less than its total indirect costs, that unreimbursed indirect costs are part of the recipient’s contribution to the success of the project, and that the recipient will pay for all unreimbursed indirect costs using funds available to it for that purpose.

[\[Insert Indirect Cost Agreement or Attach as an Appendix if Applicable\]](#)

Indirect Cost Reimbursable Rate. The reimbursable rate for this Contract is ##% of (check one):

- Salary and fringe benefits
- Modified total direct costs
- Other direct costs base

If other direct cost base, identify:

This rate is less than or equal to (check one):

- Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.
- De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of ten percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

¹ If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

Provisional Rate— an experienced-based rate agreed to by Performing Party and TCEQ in the absence of a NICRA rate negotiated with the applicable federal cognizant agency.

Partial Reimbursement Rate— a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

Other:

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of total Contract budget, identify the main constituents:

[Description of costs associated with “Other” budget category.]

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will notify you of the meeting’s time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by August 5, 2024 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:

WSQ Subcommittee

Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov

NRU Subcommittee

Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov

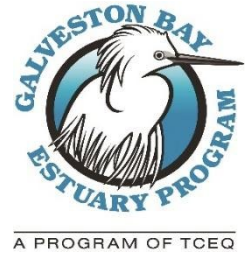
PPE Subcommittee

Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov and Matthew.Abernathy@tceq.texas.gov

M&R Subcommittee

Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2026 PPE Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **August 5, 2024**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for FY2026 (FY2026 Priority Area Actions) that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for fiscal 2026 at the June 2024 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY2026 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Subcommittee:

Public Participation and Education (PPE) (primary); NRU and M&R (considerations)

Project Name:

From Scat to Conservation: Community-based research of Galveston Bay's ghost wolves

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes No

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

Michigan Technological University (a public, higher-educational institution)

Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:

38-6005955

AND:

VIN or Tax ID:

38-6006309

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Kristin Brzeski
Project Representative Phone	(262)844-5946
Project Representative Email	kbrzeski@mtu.edu

Amount Requested from GBEP:

\$ 12,600

Federal State No Preference
Is the project scalable?

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2026 (09/01/2025-08/31/2026)	\$ 6,000.00
FY 2027 (09/01/2026-05/31/2027)	\$ 6,000.00
FY 2028 (09/01/2027-05/31/2028)	\$ 0.00
Total	\$ 12,000.00

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2025 - ending no later than May 31, 2028) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

09/01/2025-05/31/2027

Project Urgency:

The urgency of sampling scat from the unique coyotes that live on Galveston Island and surrounding mainland is heightened by the rapid ongoing development in the area. Implementing community-based education and science integration is essential to involve residents in conservation efforts to seed and foster a collective responsibility for preserving biodiversity. This approach will enhance data collection, raise awareness, develop ways for engagement and community contribution, and ensure sustainable conservation practices across the bay.

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

In total, this community engagement program is estimated to need \$ 50,000 of financial support, for which we have secured funding for the genetic processing of noninvasive (scat) samples. In this proposal, we request funding from the GBEP PPE program to assist with the outreach and educational component of the project, including travel for in-person events, cost to develop educational material, and recruitment workshops.

Is this an estimate?

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

We have secured \$ 40,000 in donations earmarked to implement our community-based program of collecting noninvasive genetic samples and serve as the basis for the educational component of this proposed program. These donations include gifts from the 1) Foundation For The Carolinas and the 2) California Community Foundation.

Partners* and Their Roles:

Dr. Bridgett vonHoldt (not a subgrantee), Professor at Princeton University is an active, ongoing partner and collaborator in this research program. Her role will be to assist in the genetic component (e.g., DNA sequencing, analysis), where her partnership is integral for completing this proposed study. She will further assist with developing the educational and outreach materials for this proposal's success.

Further, we are developing a wonderful relationship with Artist Boat's Executive Director (Karla Klay) where we wish to keep finding ways in which we can collaborate and partner for this PPE to be successful on Galveston Island. Although not formally discussed with respect to this proposal, our interactions with Artist Boat have been amazing and we plan to keep building our relationship.

***If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted under the application.**

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY2026 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

The FY2026 Priority Area Actions are found at:

- <https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

This proposal will build a new opportunity for volunteers (residents of communities) and students (enrolled in local high schools and colleges). The latter will be a result of new partnerships developed with local educational institutes such as TAMU Galveston campus. This program will thus be the foundation for connecting this proposal to two additional FY2026 Priority Area Actions of “Protect and Sustain Living Resources” (Species Conservation Acton Plan SC-1) and “Inform Science-based Decision Making” (Monitoring and Research Action Plan RES-1). As my collaborative team already has built a history of public engagement and science-based discussions for species and habitat conservation, we will continue to share our findings in educational sessions with local City Officials to build a dialogue regarding habitat preservation and wildlife conservation which stem from this proposed noninvasive community engagement program. We envision this program’s infrastructure is easily implemented in other Texas coastal communities (or even nation-wide) to assist in raising awareness for nature-based solutions that help increase the resiliency of coastal habitats and communities in a time that climate change and coastal development are enhancing the erosion of critically important coastal ecosystems. This proposal will be highly accessible across all educational and student levels, from building experiential learning programs for K-12, college (2- and 4-year institutions), and continuing education options. In thinking more nationally for a geographically broader impact and inclusivity, the Galveston Bay region will serve as a role model for this innovative focus on science-based community engagement programs. As a professor, I will integrate this program into my undergraduate course at MTU (Conservation Genetics, FW4128). Experiential learning activities significantly enhance learning outcomes and retention, allowing student to apply theoretical concepts to real-world situations. It is well established that participation in citizen science leads to broader understanding, acceptance, and advocacy.

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

- SPO-1 SPO-2 SPO-3 SPO-4
- PEA-1 PEA-2 PEA-3

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

This proposed program will directly and immediately engage communities who wish to help protect and preserve the coastal ecosystems of Galveston Bay. Further, given our ongoing relationships with local City Officials (**SPO-4**), we will also provide crucial information regarding science-based options for nature-based solutions regarding resilience to climate change. As such, we focus on **SPO-1** and **SPO-2** through the building of citizen science based experiential learning and research contributions. These events are to directly recruit community members and students to be trained and collect coyote scat, data on location and quality of the biomaterials, learn about the biological systems, and interact with the research team directly. Workshops and educational materials will bridge the relationship between science and conservation action/recommendations. We envision that such would be one of many foundational activities that contribute towards a regional or state-wide initiative (**SPO-3**) for coastal ecosystem preservation. This proposal has the central mission that concomitant with experiential learning for various communities, we also will educate program participants directly through 1) exhibits at the Chamber of Commerce and hopefully the East End Lagoon on Galveston Island (**PEA-1**) as well as recruit volunteers from continued (**PEA-2**) and primary educational school programs (**PEA-3**). This proposal will also make available educational materials (e.g., from my MTU course Conservation Genetics, FW4128 and other material generated in this effort) for any teacher to incorporate into their own course development.

Does the project implement any other *Galveston Bay Plan 2nd Edition* Priority Area Actions, or the other Subcommittee priorities?

- NRU (Protect and Sustain Living Resources)
- WSQ (Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use)
- M&R (Inform Science-Based Decision Making)

Other Subcommittee Detail:

Our proposal overlaps with the Natural Resource Uses subcommittee’s priority area of “Native Species Management” (SC-1) that aims to 1) protect/sustain living resources, 2) engage communities (this proposal), and 3) provide information for science-based decisions with respect to native species. Galveston’s coyotes (i.e., ghost wolves) are unique in that they thrive in coastal habitats on barrier islands and mainland coastal prairies. These coyotes carry a substantial amount of genetic ancestry from the critically endangered and endemic Red wolf. With the loss of their habitat (both through urban development and climate change) threatening their persistence, our proposal will work to include community members to conduct science that will provide significant suggestions for any future economic growth on Galveston Island as it pertains to natural spaces, corridors, and intact ecosystems. This proposal will inform us about where ghost wolves thrive, where they move to when disturbed or their territory is destroyed, and how to mitigate human-wildlife interactions by protecting or building natural spaces for wildlife. Results of this effort will be immediate while developing long-term efforts as an ongoing commitment as the region grows. We hope to contribute towards a conversation that will equally value natural spaces alongside economic goals. We already collaborate with the Galveston Island Humane Society, Artist Boat, the Galveston Bay Foundation, and the Texas Conservation Alliance on these such goals but without funding to realize them. Our proposed work will also overlap with monitoring biological stressors (RES-1) as it pertains to the life history traits of ghost wolves, which includes reproduction, survival, diet, and movement. When disturbances occur (inclement weather, habitat conversion, etc.), we will have the temporal data to understand immediate responses to such environmental stressors and match with life history responses (territory shifts, diet changes, compensatory litter size or lifespan changes, etc.).

Other Plans Implemented:

We do not have an active Plan connected to this proposal yet. We continue to be in communication with Galveston City Officials and work with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (Urban Wildlife/Ecology Program) to consider how wildlife and urban ecology research will contribute towards a larger initiative of preserving coastal habitat.

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

PPE Subcommittee Identified Priorities

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- Continuation or expansion of established education, outreach, or engagement programs.
- Partnering with new local entities or smaller NGOs to reach new communities.
- Connecting new audiences to existing/completed projects or the natural habitat.
- Opportunities for GBEP and partners to host workshops/networking opportunities for stakeholders on key topics.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

We recently launched our program called **Scat-Track: Canine Conservation through Citizen Science**, which is a community-based engagement program that utilizes www.citsci.org, a global NSF-funded platform for implementing citizen science research. This initiative includes a web platform and phone application for streamlined data collection and database management. Our Scat-Track project has already been shared with eight pilot test participants that has resulted in the collection of >130 scat samples since January 2024 (see map below). The program will have an associated website with detailed instructions for sample identification, collection, and safety protocols. This proposal aims to support the ongoing development of Scat-Track with three primary educational goals: 1) integrate Scat-Track data into 2- or 4-year undergraduate college curriculum, 2) improve community learning of canine ecology and conservation through dissemination of research results, and 3) expand participant recruitment across the Gulf coast (the historic red wolf range) to establish a long-term education and data collection mechanism. Citizen science projects have a well-vetted history of engaging the public in scientific data collection, effectively gathering extensive data across different habitats and regions while simultaneously educating participants about the science to which they are contributing. Indeed, the rediscovery of red wolf ancestry in Galveston coyotes was largely due to a citizen scientist who noticed the distinct appearance of local coyotes. This observation led to the emergence of our Galveston coyote research program and the many townhalls and outreach events that have followed, spurring the development of Scat-Track, which aims to reach a broad audience to collect data for long-term research objectives while providing educational content. This will be achieved through the www.citsci.org application and my associated Scat-Track website that is focused on data collection and data dissemination paired with educational content. I will continue to hold regular regional public presentations with my team and local partners to maintain a presence in our long-term study sites along the Texas coast. My team will also develop educational materials for dissemination to a diverse set of educational programs and educational centers for residents, visitors, and tourists. Scat-Track aims to positively impact views of coyote and wolves by sharing research and educational content through web-based and in-person methods. I will develop educational modules on canine ecology and conservation, incorporating videos, expert interviews, non-technical text, and interactive content.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

- Yes
- No

We have an active, ongoing collaboration with Bayou City Waterkeeper, Galveston Bay Foundation, Galveston Island Humane Society, Moore-Odom Foundation, Texas Conservation Alliance, Artist Boat, and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (Urban Wildlife/Ecology Program). We are developing the dialogue with other stakeholders (Houston Zoo, Moody Gardens, Texas Audubon, and Texas Master Naturalist Program Galveston Chapter) to find ways that build community engagement and educational opportunities for ecosystem preservation.

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

Our proposal aims to couple citizen science with novel noninvasive genomic tools to determine how environmental conditions preserve the endangered red wolf DNA found in coyotes (locally called Ghost Wolves) in the Galveston Bay ecosystem. We will build upon our previous work with the Galveston area coyotes to gain deeper insights into how ghost genetic red wolf ancestry influences both individual organisms and the broader ecosystem.

As part of the **Education Plan**, our proposed project will develop a community-based program for collecting noninvasive genetic data. This program will feature online portals for reporting results and interactive learning, which will also support classroom education. We have funding and ongoing efforts to establish the genetic methodologies and analyze data to answers question such as how many coyotes persist in the region, how much red wolf ancestry they carry in their genomes, what they eat, and what habitats they use.

We are requesting funding and working to establish partnerships in this proposal to continue developing educational materials for citizen science recruitment and outreach. This includes travel support, workshop development, and generating educational materials about Galveston Bay's 'Ghost Wolves.'

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

Successful citizen science can radically advance scientific and conservation goals. For instance, eBird, an open access platform for reporting bird observations, has contributed to hundreds of journals articles and impacted management of birds across the western hemisphere, while engaging more people in nature. Similarly, we previously worked with a regional river otter program in northern California that incorporated citizen art to fund scholarships and watershed restoration. Given the dual benefits of impacting community involvement in science while advance conservation and research goals, we are dedicated to growing and sustaining Scat-Track: Canine Conservation through Citizen Science. Scat-Track is designed to engage the public to noninvasively collect wild canine genetic material from scat across coastal Texas ecosystems. These data will be used to learn about the red wolf DNA that persists in coastal coyotes. Specifically, these results will determine: (1) if red wolf genetic material persists in small pockets or is widespread throughout coyotes of coastal Texas, (2) what they eat across seasons and landscapes, (3) how many individuals persist, (4) where they move and how they are impacted by stressors, such as development and extreme weather. While the broader research aims to understand the processes that maintain red wolf DNA in coastal Texas, here we are requesting **support to continue developing and implementing Scat-Track across Galveston Bay.**

To date, we have developed a simple and exportable protocol that allows citizen scientists to collect meaningful biomaterial for genetic analysis. The goal is to host online material with regularly updates and educational opportunities for volunteers, and the curious, to learn about ecology and conservation. Basic management involves working with teachers or students for daily operations, such as mailing sampling kits and contacting contributors, and periodically adding new education modules and updating the website with the latest information. Our roadmap for expanding participation is as follows. **1) Enhance and continue in-person and field efforts across the Gulf Coast coastal ecosystems with established partners.** We will support this strong participant base with specific educational materials, such as the Galveston Island ghost wolf research page. **2) Expand participant recruitment through field interactions, seminars, webinars, and classroom visits.** Current partners supporting this effort include Baylor University, Saint Mary's University, Audubon Delta, University of Louisiana Lafayette, Mississippi State University, Oklahoma State University, Arkansas State University, Red Wolf Coalition, and Princeton University. Academic partners will also introduce Scat-Track to undergraduate students. **3) Leverage social and public media to galvanize additional participants throughout the historic red wolf range.** The combined social media presence among current partners exceeds 8 million followers across platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and X. This will grow with a sustained social media campaign, supported by MTU News and Media Relations department. Based on previous national media attention for our Galveston coyote work, including features in the New York Times, PBS docuseries EcoSense for Living and Chasing the Tide, ABC News, CNN, CBS News, and the Atlantic, I am confident Scat-Track will reach millions and become an institutionalized program, like eBird or the River Otter Project.

We are requesting funds to support the expansion of Scat-Track throughout Galveston Bay. This includes funds for in-person travel, recruitment workshops, and public presentations, as well as funds for developing and printing educational materials for the public and partner with organizations, and hosting recruitment events that support Scat-Track efforts.

Scat-Track aims to contribute towards **building a scientifically literate public**, which fosters a culture of curiosity and can drive progress in conservation and sustainability. We have the potential to reach millions of people through online material and engage hundreds in scat collection, impacting science literacy and perceptions of canines across the country, and specifically across coastal Texas. **Science communication** has the power to build trust in science through translating complex scientific concepts in understandable ways. We are dedicated to impactful science communication through public speaking and online content, utilizing best practices for framing a strong, clearly articulated conservation science message for town halls, podcasts, educational material, and webinars.

Scat-Track Program strives to be inclusive by working to provide information in multiple languages to ensure accessibility for diverse communities, specifically Spanish and to engage individuals from different backgrounds, fostering a more representative participant group. We will continue to work with or develop new partnerships with the following groups to boost community engagement and educational opportunities: Bayou City Waterkeeper, Galveston Bay Foundation, Galveston Island Human Society, Houston Zoo, Moody Gardens, Moore-Odom Foundation, Texas Audubon, Texas Conservation Alliance, Texas Master Naturalist Program Galveston Chapter, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD Urban Wildlife/Ecology Program), and Artist Boat.

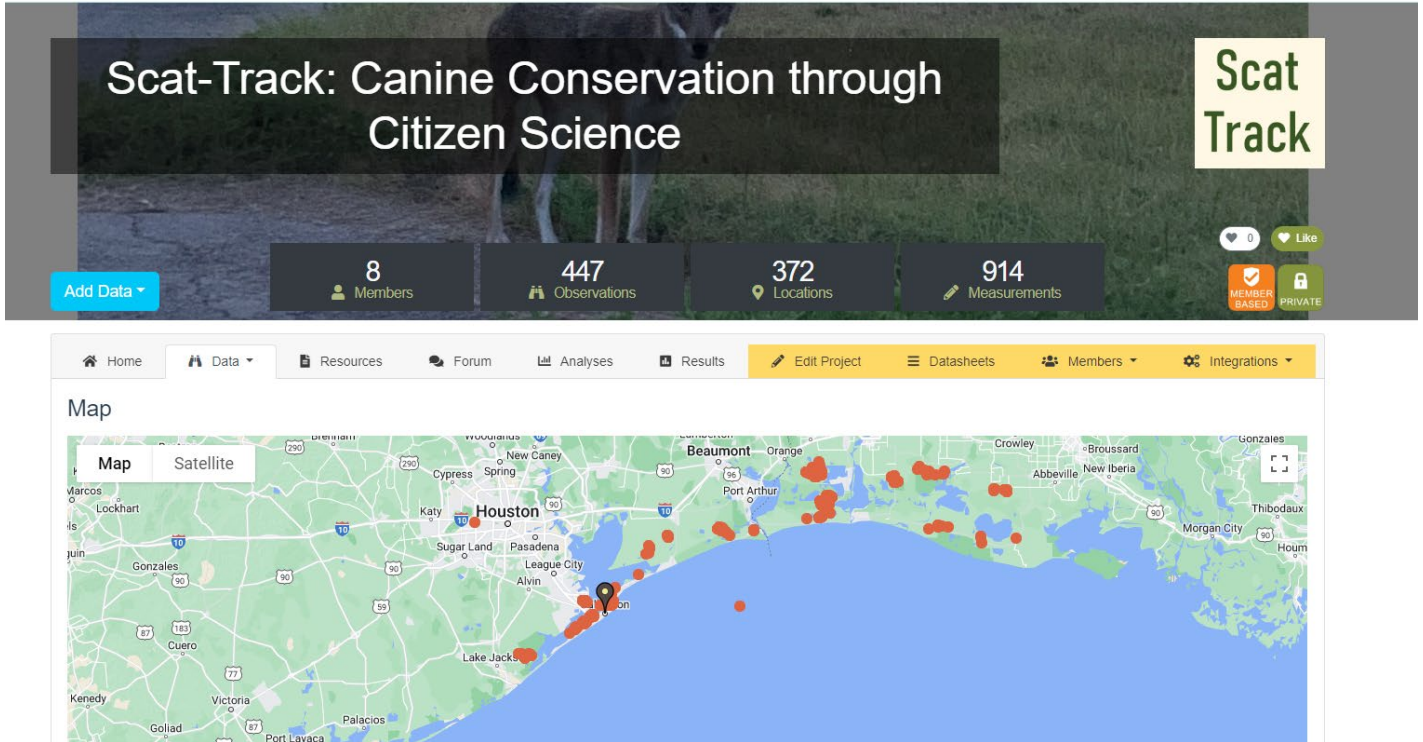
Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

Latitude: 29°16'45" N
Longitude: 94°49'33" W

Location:

Galveston Island and any community on coastal Galveston Bay

Projects Map



Map of locations of current scat samples and contributors from Scat-Track. Through this project, where we are proposing to develop educational material to share with partners and our extensive network, we aim to expand and enhance both science data collection and biodiversity education.

Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):

SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$0.00
Fringe Benefits (##%) ¹	\$0.00
Travel	\$3,500
Supplies	\$4,000
Equipment	\$0.00
Contractual	\$2,500
Construction	\$0.00
Other	\$0.00
Total Direct Cost	\$10,000.00
Indirect Costs	\$2,600.00
Total	\$ 12,600.00

Indirect Cost Agreement

Please note: If using a rate different from your entity Indirect Cost Agreement; a letter of exemption from the appropriate authority must be provided with the application, or a statement must be included certifying that the recipient has elected to be reimbursed for an amount less than its total indirect costs, that unreimbursed indirect costs are part of the recipient’s contribution to the success of the project, and that the recipient will pay for all unreimbursed indirect costs using funds available to it for that purpose.

Indirect Cost Reimbursable Rate. The reimbursable rate for this Contract is 26% of (check one):

- Salary and fringe benefits
- Modified total direct costs
- Other direct costs base

If other direct cost base, identify: Off campus education project. 26%

This rate is less than or equal to (check one):

Predetermined Rate— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.

De Minimis Rate— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of ten percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

¹ If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

Provisional Rate— an experienced-based rate agreed to by Performing Party and TCEQ in the absence of a NICRA rate negotiated with the applicable federal cognizant agency.

Partial Reimbursement Rate— a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

Other:

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of total Contract budget, identify the main constituents:

[Description of costs associated with “Other” budget category.]

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will notify you of the meeting’s time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by August 5, 2024 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:

WSQ Subcommittee

Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov

NRU Subcommittee

Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov

PPE Subcommittee

Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov and Matthew.Abernathy@tceq.texas.gov

M&R Subcommittee

Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2026 PPE Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **August 5, 2024**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for FY2026 (FY2026 Priority Area Actions) that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for fiscal 2026 at the June 2024 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY2026 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Subcommittee:

PPE

Project Name:

K-12 Rain Barrels to Schools Program: Pilot District Alvin ISD

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes No

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

- Federal, State, or Local Government Council of Government Public ISDs or Universities
 Nonprofit Other*

Public University

Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:

AND:

DM2CDWR8LAG3

VIN or Tax ID:

3555555552049

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Christie Taylor
Project Representative Phone	979-399-4009
Project Representative Email	Christina.taylor@ag.tamu.edu

Amount Requested from GBEP:

\$129,785

Federal State No Preference

Is the project scalable?

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2026 (09/01/2025-08/31/2026)	\$64,581
FY 2027 (09/01/2026-05/31/2027)	\$65,204
FY 2028 (09/01/2027-05/31/2028)	\$0.00
Total	\$129,785

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2025 - ending no later than May 31, 2028) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

2 years September 1, 2025 - May 31, 2027

Project Urgency:

We're working with two existing Galveston Bay Foundation Programs (Rain Barrel Workshops and Bay to Schools Program) and the AgriLife Extension Green Infrastructure High School Intern Program. This new program would build capacity for these three existing programs and reach a previously unengaged school district that has the potential to affect these four sub-watersheds of the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed Clear Creek, Dickinson, West Bay (Mustang Bayou), and Chocolate Bayou.

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

[\$]

Is this an estimate?

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

[Please indicate source, amount, and status (secured, potential, etc.)]

Partners* and Their Roles:

Alvin ISD schools and the Alvin ISD Education Foundation. We have interest from Fairview Junior High and Alvin High School and contacts at Bel Naefgar Sanchez Elementary and Bob and Betty Nelson Elementary.

Galveston Bay Foundation (GBF) is a subrecipient partner organization.

Scope of Work:

Galveston Bay Foundation (GBF) will collaborate with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service's K-12 Rain Barrels to Schools Program 2-year pilot. Specifically, GBF will:

- Collaborate on creating and implementing K-12 Rain Barrel Workshop lessons
- Implement up to nine Bay to Schools classroom STEM workshops
- Implement a Rain Barrel workshop in one of the proposed communities
- Provide up to 54 rain barrels and kits to the program
- Attend proposed community outreach events
- Provide grant reports as required

***If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted under the application.**



July 29, 2024

To Whom it May Concern:

The Galveston Bay Foundation (GBF) is excited to partner with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service on the K-12 Rain Barrels to Schools Program 2-year pilot project for the GBEP 320 funding opportunity. This project aligns well with GBF's work to ensure a healthy future for Galveston Bay and extends our current Rain Barrel program into schools and communities we do not yet serve.

As a contractual partner on this proposal, GBF will provide the following over the 2-yr grant period:

1. Collaborate on creating and implementing K-12 Rain Barrel Workshop lessons
2. Implement up to nine Bay to Schools classroom STEM workshops
3. Implement a Rain Barrel workshop in one of the proposed communities
4. Provide up to 54 rain barrels and kits to the program
5. Attend proposed community outreach events
6. Provide grant reports as required

GBF's education, volunteer, and advocacy programs are all focused on the health and resilience of Houston's watersheds and Galveston Bay. We take pride in our ongoing successful partnership efforts with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, and we look forward to collaborating with them in local schools. This project will be a rewarding and engaging experience for all those involved. Please feel free to contact me should you have any additional questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bob Stokes
President
Galveston Bay Foundation
bstokes@galvbay.org

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY2026 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

The FY2026 Priority Area Actions are found at:

- <https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

The purpose of this program is to implement the Galveston Bay Plan through engaging communities in the Alvin Independent School District through K-12 Rain Barrel Program with included outreach to the local community through student led rain barrel distribution events, where the students donate decorated rain barrels to community members and businesses. We will also give presentations to local elected officials at the School Board on the benefits of the program.

We will also implements components of ensuring safe human and aquatic life uses by reducing NPS through the distribution of multiple rain barrels in multiple sub-watersheds of the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed at student led rain barrel distribution workshop events.

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

- SPO-1 SPO-2 SPO-3 SPO-4
- PEA-1 PEA-2 PEA-3

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

Stakeholder and Partner Outreach (SPO):

The proposal prioritizes this plan by developing and supporting existing stewardship programs for a new group of stakeholders (SPO1). We will promote workshops and distribution events facilitating stakeholder and community involvement in water quality programs (SPO2). Finally, we will present the program's benefits to the Alvin ISD School Board and inform them about how participation benefits the watershed as a whole (SPO4).

Public Education and Awareness:

We are developing a new program to engage the public in discussions about the benefits of water harvesting for reducing NPS in their respective locations (PEA-1). The program is targeting K-12 educational materials for rainwater harvesting through rain barrel distribution in their communities and implementing another STEM workshop of their choice. We will leave materials and train the educators to complete the rain barrel creation after the workshop and follow up with them for a community distribution event. We specifically chose the Alvin ISD because of their limited engagement in other GBP programming.

Does the project implement any other *Galveston Bay Plan 2nd Edition* Priority Area Actions, or the other Subcommittee priorities?

- NRU (Protect and Sustain Living Resources)
- WSQ (Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use)
- M&R (Inform Science-Based Decision Making)

Other Subcommittee Detail:

We are supporting NPS Action Implementation plan NPS-2 supporting NPS education and outreach and NPS-4 hosting workshops through the on-campus workshops and STEM workshops and community outreach at the distribution events.

Other Plans Implemented:

EPA green infrastructure education priority, Clean Coast Texas,

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

PPE Subcommittee Identified Priorities

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- Continuation or expansion of established education, outreach, or engagement programs.
- Partnering with new local entities or smaller NGOs to reach new communities.
- Connecting new audiences to existing/completed projects or the natural habitat.
- Opportunities for GBEP and partners to host workshops/networking opportunities for stakeholders on key topics.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

Through this proposal we will continue and build capacity for the GBF Rain Barrel Workshops, Bay to Schools Workshops and the AgriLife Extension Green Infrastructure High School Intern Program by reaching out to K012 students and community members in the Alvin ISD. Alvin ISD and the Alvin Education Foundation are new local entities for each of our programs and we would like to build the relationship with these entities to continue this program in the future. Through participation in these workshops at the schools we would like to introduce students to other projects and opportunities in their watersheds and get them to enjoy the natural habitat around them.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

- Yes
- No

Alvin ISD is an under-reached district that encompasses parts of four sub-watersheds of the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed. We hope to partner with the Alvin ISD Education Foundation to coordinate our outreach events in the community.

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

The goal of this project is for AgriLife and Galveston Bay Foundation to engage up to nine campuses in Alvin ISD in 1-2 campus workshops including one rain barrel workshop and one Bays to Schools module. After completion of the rain barrel workshop campuses will be given up to six rain barrels to decorate and install on campus or distribute to their local community at a presentation where the students can demonstrate what they have learned in the program.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

This project will support the development of K-12 rain barrel workshops to be held on participating campuses in the Alvin ISD. We are planning to reach approximately 100 students per campus. We have two schools that have expressed interest in the program. The goal of the program is to host up to three workshops per semester starting in the spring semester of FY26. Each campus will receive 1-6 rain barrels during the workshop. Then the students will be given approximately 4 weeks to paint and decorate the rain barrels. The decorated barrels will be either installed on campus or distributed through a community distribution event. The community distribution event will be part of the school campus or district STEM showcase, where students can demonstrate what they have learned through the workshops. Each participating campus will also be offered one Bays to Schools module of their choice. Interested High School and Junior High students will be introduced to the AgriLife Extension Green Infrastructure for Texas Internship Program.

Project Scope:**Quarter 1:**

- Develop age-appropriate K-12 Rain Barrel Workshop Materials (include language translations in Spanish and possibly Cambodian)
- Begin campus outreach and scheduling workshops.
- Purchase supplies for upcoming workshops

Quarter 2:

- Host 1-3 rain barrel workshops
- Provide 1-3 Bays to Schools Modules

Quarter 3:

- Schedule and support community distribution at STEM Showcase event
- Schedule workshops for the FY27 school semesters

Quarter 4:

- Provide follow up survey to community members from the distribution event.
- Provide follow up surveys to the participating schools
- Purchase supplies for FY27 semesters

Quarter 5:

- Host 1-3 rain barrel workshops
- Provide 1-3 Bays to Schools Modules

Quarter 6:

- Host 1-3 rain barrel workshops
- Provide 1-3 Bays to Schools Modules
- Schedule and support community distribution at STEM Showcase event
- Schedule workshops for the FY27 school semesters

Quarter 7:

- Provide follow up survey to community members from the distribution event.
- Provide follow up surveys to the participating schools.

Quarter 8:

- Survey Analysis
- Final Report and Presentation

Projected Outcomes:

- Approximately 900 students reached through workshops.
- Up to 54 rain barrels distributed and installed.
- Three community outreach events held in the Alvin, Manvel, Pearland area. Potential benefits to the Dickinson Bayou, Chocolate Bay (Mustang and Chocolate Bayous), and Clear Creek watershed-based plans.

Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

[degrees, minutes, and seconds format]

Location:

Brazoria County cities of Alvin, Manvel, Iowa Colony, Pearland, Liverpool, Hilcrest Village

Projects Map

[High_School_Attendance_Zones_effective_Fall_2022_.pdf \(core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com\)](#)

Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):



SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$53,860.00
Fringe Benefits (18.9% fringe rate + insurance at \$950)	\$21,579.00
Travel	\$0.00
Supplies	\$2,840.00
Equipment	\$0.00
Contractual	\$24,000.00
Construction	\$0.00
Other	\$725.00
Total Direct Cost	\$103,004.00
Indirect Costs	\$26,781.00
Total	\$129,785.00

Indirect Cost Agreement

Please note: If using a rate different from your entity Indirect Cost Agreement; a letter of exemption from the appropriate authority must be provided with the application, or a statement must be included certifying that the recipient has elected to be reimbursed for an amount less than its total indirect costs, that unreimbursed indirect costs are part of the recipient's contribution to the success of the project, and that the recipient will pay for all unreimbursed indirect costs using funds available to it for that purpose.

Provisional Rate— an experienced-based rate agreed to by Performing Party and TCEQ in the absence of a NICRA rate negotiated with the applicable federal cognizant agency.

Partial Reimbursement Rate— a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

Other:

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of total Contract budget, identify the main constituents:

[Description of costs associated with “Other” budget category.]

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will notify you of the meeting’s time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by August 5, 2024 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:

WSQ Subcommittee

Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov

NRU Subcommittee

Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov

PPE Subcommittee

Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov and Matthew.Abernathy@tceq.texas.gov

M&R Subcommittee

Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2026 PPE Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **August 5, 2024**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for FY2026 (FY2026 Priority Area Actions) that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for fiscal 2026 at the June 2024 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY2026 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC Ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Subcommittee:

Public Participation and Education Subcommittee (PPE)

Project Name:

Watershed Awareness and Teaching for Environmental Responsibility (W.A.T.E.R)

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes No

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

- Federal, State, or Local Government Council of Government Public ISDs or Universities
 Nonprofit Other*

Turtle Island Restoration Network, Nonprofit

Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:

AND:

Z6LNBNGE3C5

91-1818080

VIN or Tax ID:

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Maggie Sager
Project Representative Phone	(409) 795-8426
Project Representative Email	msager@tirn.net

Amount Requested from GBEP:

\$131,715

Federal State No Preference

Is the project scalable?

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2026 (09/01/2025-08/31/2026)	\$52,385
FY 2027 (09/01/2026-05/31/2027)	\$39,665
FY 2028 (09/01/2027-05/31/2028)	\$39,665
Total	\$131,715

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2025 - ending no later than May 31, 2028) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

9/1/2025- 5/31/2028

Project Urgency:

Our educational program is experiencing unprecedented demand, and we are struggling to keep pace. Critical needs include operating funds and support for our intern program, both of which are challenging to secure within our service area. A significant funding loss exacerbates this issue: our GBEP grant with the University of Houston-Clear Lake's Environmental Institute of Houston (EIH) for the "Microplastics in Galveston Bay Watershed: The Big Impacts of Tiny Pollution" project, amounting to \$53,351, ended in May 2024. To meet the growing demand and expand to more schools and districts, we must increase our program funding. Securing this grant is vital to avoid program interruptions and to continue our essential work in environmental education and conservation.

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information were indicated below):

\$150,000

Is this an estimate?

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

We leverage several contributions to support our programming costs. Our direct mail fundraising campaign is a significant source of funding, with our most recent campaign raising approximately \$12,500. Over the course of 2025-2028, we plan to conduct additional direct mail campaign drives to further support our initiatives. Additionally, we will implement an in-kind equipment donation campaign to assist with equipment and marketing needs. These contributions, both secured and potential, are crucial for maintaining and expanding our educational and outreach programs, enabling us to reach a broader audience and ensure the sustainability of our initiatives.

Partners* and Their Roles:

Our project is supported by several key partners who play crucial roles in its implementation. We are continuing our partnership with the Surfrider Foundation Galveston Chapter through the promotion of our "Bring the Bag" campaign, aimed at reducing plastic bag use, and the "Hold onto Your Butt" (HOTYB) cigarette butt litter prevention and recycling program. Additionally, we have long-term partnerships with schools in the Galveston Independent School District (GISD), where we are part of their Powerful Learning Innovators (PLI) Program, enhancing environmental education within the district. Our partnerships extend to schools in Houston ISD, Fort Bend ISD, Humble ISD, Clear Creek ISD, Cypress Fairbanks ISD, Aldine ISD, Friendswood ISD, Katy ISD, Pearland ISD, and many other school districts, as well as numerous private and charter schools in the Galveston Bay area, where we provide tailored educational programs. We also collaborate with many scout groups and church volunteer groups across the Houston-Galveston area, engaging them in beach cleanups and other conservation activities to expand community involvement and foster environmental stewardship.

***If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted under the application.**

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY2026 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

The FY2026 Priority Area Actions are found at:

<https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

Implementation of Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition

TIRN's project is designed to align with and implement the key actions outlined in the Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition, with a particular focus on the FY2026 Priority Area Actions. Our project will address the following priority areas:

Engage Communities

Objective: Our project aims to enhance community engagement and stewardship within the Galveston Bay Watershed through targeted education and outreach activities.

Implementation:

- **Educational Programs:** Expanding workshops and in-class presentations in up to 30 schools, focusing on watershed science, marine debris, microplastics, and environmental justice. These sessions will foster environmental awareness and stewardship among K-12 students.
- **Public Outreach Events:** Participating in over 15 public events annually to raise awareness about watershed conservation. These events will include interactive booths, educational materials, and hands-on activities, connecting the community with TIRN's conservation efforts.
- **Beach Cleanups:** Organizing up to 100 beach cleanups, involving local communities in practical conservation work and educating participants on the impacts of marine debris.

Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

Objective: Our project will contribute to the reduction of pollutants and the promotion of safe recreational and aquatic life use in the Galveston Bay.

Implementation:

- **Marine Debris Prevention:** Regular beach cleanups will remove harmful debris from the shoreline, improving water quality and reducing risks to human and aquatic life.
- **Public Education:** Educating the community about the sources and impacts of pollution through workshops and outreach events, encouraging behaviors that reduce pollution and promote safe use of the bay.

Protect and Sustain Living Resources

Objective: Our project will support the conservation and sustainability of living resources in the Galveston Bay.

Implementation:

- **Habitat Conservation:** Educational activities will highlight the importance of preserving local habitats and the role they play in the ecosystem. Participants will learn about the impact of their actions on living resources and how they can contribute to conservation efforts.
- **Litter Prevention Programs:** Promoting TIRN's litter prevention initiatives such as the Final Straw Campaign Bring the Bag, Hold on to Your Butt partnership, Nurdle Patrol, Monthly NOAA Marine Debris Surveys, and the city wide Reusable Foodware System. These programs aim to reduce plastic and cigarette butt pollution, protecting wildlife and their habitats.

Inform Science-Based Decision Making

Objective: Our project will support the generation and dissemination of scientific data to inform decision-making processes.

Implementation:

- **Microplastics Research:** Engaging students and community members in microplastics sampling and processing at our 6 established sites. The data collected will contribute to a broader understanding

of pollution sources and inform strategies to mitigate their impact. Participants will see first-hand the microplastics present in water and sand samples. The data collected will be added to our continued research of sampling sites.

- **Monitoring and Reporting:** Regular reporting on the outcomes of our activities, including the amount of litter collected during cleanups and changes in community awareness, reported through our use of the NOAA Marine Debris Tracker app. This information will be shared with stakeholders to support informed decision-making and adaptive management strategies.

Conclusion

TIRN's expanded education and outreach program in the Galveston Bay Watershed is strategically designed to implement the key actions of the Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition. By engaging communities, promoting safe use of the bay, protecting living resources, and informing science-based decision-making, our project will make a significant contribution to the health and sustainability of the Galveston Bay ecosystem.

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

SPO-1 SPO-2 SPO-3 SPO-4
PEA-1 PEA-2 PEA-3

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

- **SPO-1: Increase public awareness and knowledge of the Galveston Bay ecosystem and its value.**
 - **Action and Output Addressed:** Our project will enhance public awareness through workshops, in-class presentations, and public outreach events. The output will include educational materials distributed to schools and communities, increasing knowledge about the Galveston Bay ecosystem and its importance.
 - **Contribution to Output:** By conducting up to 30 educational sessions and participating in over 15 public events annually, we will reach a diverse audience, fostering a greater appreciation and understanding of the bay's value.
- **SPO-2: Foster stewardship of the Galveston Bay ecosystem.**
 - **Action and Output Addressed:** Our project will foster stewardship by involving the community in up to 100 beach cleanups and promoting TIRN's litter prevention programs. We will track weight of marine debris collected, cigarette butts, balloons, and nurdles.
 - **Contribution to Output:** Engaging volunteers in hands-on conservation activities will instill a sense of responsibility and stewardship, leading to long-term behavioral changes that benefit the Galveston Bay ecosystem.
- **SPO-3: Promote community involvement in conservation efforts.**
 - **Action and Output Addressed:** The project will promote community involvement by partnering with local entities and smaller NGOs to reach new communities and involve them in conservation efforts.
 - **Contribution to Output:** These partnerships will enable us to host joint initiatives, expanding our reach and involving more community members in conservation activities, thereby strengthening community ties to environmental stewardship.
- **SPO-4: Develop and support educational programs focused on the Galveston Bay ecosystem.**
 - **Action and Output Addressed:** Our project will develop and support educational programs through tailored workshops and presentations in up to 30 schools, focusing on various aspects of the Galveston Bay ecosystem.
 - **Contribution to Output:** By providing these educational opportunities, we will support the development of a well-informed community that is knowledgeable about the ecosystem and its conservation needs.

Public Education and Awareness (PEA)

- **PEA-1: Enhance public education on the significance of the Galveston Bay watershed.**
 - **Action and Output Addressed:** Enhancing public education through workshops, presentations, and outreach events.
 - **Contribution to Output:** Disseminating educational materials and conducting interactive sessions will ensure that community members understand the significance of the watershed.
- **PEA-2: Increase community engagement in Galveston Bay protection activities.**
 - **Action and Output Addressed:** Increasing engagement by organizing beach cleanups and partnering with local NGOs.
 - **Contribution to Output:** Active participation in cleanups and collaborative efforts will deepen community involvement in protection activities.
- **PEA-3: Provide platforms for stakeholders to collaborate on watershed issues.**
 - **Action and Output Addressed:** Providing platforms through workshops and networking events.
 - **Contribution to Output:** These platforms will facilitate the exchange of knowledge and collaborative efforts among stakeholders, leading to more effective conservation strategies.

By addressing these priority actions, TIRN's expanded education and outreach program will significantly contribute to the implementation of the Galveston Bay Plan, fostering a well-informed and engaged community dedicated to the conservation of the Galveston Bay ecosystem.

Does the project implement any other *Galveston Bay Plan 2nd Edition* Priority Area Actions, or the other Subcommittee priorities?

- ☒ NRU (Protect and Sustain Living Resources)
- ☒ WSQ (Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use)
- ☒ M&R (Inform Science-Based Decision Making)

Other Subcommittee Detail:

NRU (Protect and Sustain Living Resources)

NRU Actions Addressed:

- **Enhancement of Existing Conservation Efforts (NRU-2):**
 - **Implementation:** Our project enhances ongoing conservation efforts by conducting up to 100 beach cleanups. These cleanups remove harmful debris, protecting habitats and benefiting local wildlife.
 - **Contribution to Output:** The removal of marine debris directly improves the habitat quality for native species, including those listed as federal and state conservation priorities.
- **Benefit to Native Fish and Wildlife (NRU-3):**
 - **Implementation:** Through litter prevention programs such as Bring the Bag, the Final Straw Campaign, and Hold on to Your Butt partnership, our project aims to reduce plastic and cigarette butt pollution, which significantly impacts local marine life.
 - **Contribution to Output:** By reducing pollution, we improve the living conditions for native fish and wildlife, supporting their survival and health.

WSQ (Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use)

WSQ Actions Addressed:

- **Evaluation of Water and Sediment Quality (WSQ-3):**
 - **Implementation:** Engaging community members in water and sediment sampling activities to assess the presence of pollutants, particularly microplastics.
 - **Contribution to Output:** These activities provide valuable baseline data on water and sediment quality, contributing to a broader understanding of environmental health in the Galveston Bay.

M&R (Inform Science-Based Decision Making)

M&R Actions Addressed:

- **Baseline Assessments for Large-Scale Changes (M&R-2):**
 - **Implementation:** Our project includes baseline assessments of microplastic levels in various locations within the Galveston Bay and both bay and Gulf side of Galveston Island.
 - **Contribution to Output:** This data will serve as a reference point for future studies and help in evaluating the impact of environmental changes on the bay.
- **Assessment of Stressors (M&R-3):**
 - **Implementation:** Our research focuses on the exposure and response to microplastic pollution, an emerging contaminant of concern.
 - **Contribution to Output:** The findings will help in understanding the effects of microplastics on marine life and human health, informing regulatory decisions and mitigation strategies.

Conclusion

TIRN's expanded education and outreach program not only addresses the Engage Communities priority but also aligns with other subcommittee priorities under the Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition. By enhancing existing conservation efforts, benefiting native species, monitoring green infrastructure, and contributing to baseline assessments and stressor evaluations, our project supports a comprehensive approach to watershed conservation and environmental stewardship.

Other Plans Implemented:

In addition to aligning with the Galveston Bay Plan, our project also implements aspects of the Texas Coastal Resiliency Master Plan and the Texas Wetlands Conservation Plan.

Texas Coastal Resiliency Master Plan: Our project supports the goals of the Texas Coastal Resiliency Master Plan by enhancing coastal resilience through educational programs focused on marine debris reduction and habitat preservation. By conducting beach cleanups and promoting litter prevention campaigns, we contribute to the plan's objectives of maintaining healthy coastal ecosystems and protecting coastal resources from the impacts of pollution.

Texas Wetlands Conservation Plan: We also align with the Texas Wetlands Conservation Plan by engaging in activities that benefit wetland ecosystems. Our educational programs emphasize the importance of wetland conservation, and our hands-on activities, such as water and sediment sampling, help raise awareness about the critical role wetlands play in maintaining water quality and supporting biodiversity. By educating the public and fostering stewardship, we contribute to the long-term conservation and restoration of wetland habitats.

Through these integrations, our project not only addresses local environmental challenges but also contributes to broader state-wide conservation and resilience efforts, reinforcing the interconnectedness of our initiatives with larger environmental strategies.

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

PPE Subcommittee Identified Priorities

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- Continuation or expansion of established education, outreach, or engagement programs.
- Partnering with new local entities or smaller NGOs to reach new communities.
- Connecting new audiences to existing/completed projects or the natural habitat.
- Opportunities for GBEP and partners to host workshops/networking opportunities for stakeholders on key topics.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

Turtle Island Restoration Network (TIRN) is committed to implementing the PPE subcommittee priorities through our expanded education and outreach program in the Galveston Bay Watershed. Our project will address these priorities as follows:

Continuation or Expansion of Established Programs

Objective: Our project will expand upon TIRN's current successful programs focused on watershed science education, marine debris education, microplastic education, and environmental justice education.

Implementation:

- **Workshops and In-Class Presentations:** By increasing the number of workshops and in-class presentations in up to 30 schools, we will broaden our educational reach. These sessions will build on our existing curriculum, providing students with a deeper understanding of watershed health and conservation practices.
- **Beach Cleanups:** Organizing up to 100 beach cleanups will enhance our current marine debris initiatives. Each cleanup will educate participants about the environmental impact of litter and promote sustainable practices to prevent pollution, by including presentations on microplastics and by participating in a Nurdle Patrol.

- **Public Outreach Events:** Participating in over 15 public outreach events per year will extend our engagement with the community. These events will highlight the importance of ongoing projects and provide updates on their progress, fostering a continuous dialogue with the public about watershed conservation.

Partnering with New Local Entities or Smaller NGOs

Objective: Our project aims to forge new partnerships with local entities and smaller NGOs to reach underserved communities and broaden the impact of our programs.

Implementation:

- **Collaboration:** We will collaborate with local schools, community organizations, and smaller NGOs to co-host workshops, presentations, and cleanups. These partnerships will enable us to leverage local knowledge and resources, ensuring our programs are tailored to the specific needs of different communities within the Galveston Bay Watershed.
- **Joint Initiatives:** Working with these new partners, we will design joint initiatives that address local environmental issues and engage community members in hands-on conservation activities. This collaborative approach will help us reach new audiences and enhance the overall effectiveness of our outreach efforts.

Connecting New Audiences to Existing Projects or Natural Habitat

Objective: Our project will connect new audiences to TIRN's existing projects and the natural habitats within the Galveston Bay Watershed.

Implementation:

- **Educational Outreach:** Through our expanded educational outreach, we will introduce new audiences to the importance of watershed conservation and the specific initiatives TIRN is undertaking to protect the Galveston Bay. This includes our work on microplastic research, marine debris prevention, and habitat restoration.
- **Interactive Experiences:** By involving new audiences in beach cleanups and other hands-on activities, we will provide them with direct experiences of the natural habitat. This approach will foster a personal connection to the environment and motivate participants to become active stewards of the watershed.

Opportunities for GBEP and Partners to Host Workshops/Networking Opportunities for Stakeholders on Key Topics

Objective: Our project will create opportunities for the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP) and its partners to host workshops and networking events focused on key environmental topics.

Implementation:

- **Stakeholder Workshops:** We will organize workshops that bring together stakeholders from various sectors, including education, conservation, and community development. These workshops will facilitate the exchange of knowledge, best practices, and innovative solutions for watershed conservation.

Conclusion

TIRN's expanded education and outreach program in the Galveston Bay Watershed is designed to fully implement the PPE subcommittee priorities. Through the continuation and expansion of our established programs, new partnerships, engaging new audiences, and providing opportunities for stakeholder collaboration, our project will make significant strides in promoting environmental stewardship and improving the health of the Galveston Bay Watershed. We are committed to leveraging this grant to enhance our impact and foster a sustainable future for the watershed and its communities.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

Yes

No

With the funding for this project, we aim to establish new partnerships and expand our reach significantly. We plan to engage more school districts, particularly those that we have not previously worked with, to extend the benefits of our environmental education programs. Additionally, we are committed to engaging BIPOC communities more effectively, ensuring our program expansion is inclusive and diverse. By fostering these new partnerships, we hope to create a broader, more inclusive network of environmental stewards dedicated to the conservation and health of the Galveston Bay ecosystem.

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

Turtle Island Restoration Network aims to expand its education and outreach program in the Galveston Bay Watershed through workshops, in-class presentations, public events, and hands-on activities. This initiative will enhance environmental awareness, promote community engagement, and support ongoing efforts to reduce single-use plastics and litter, ultimately contributing to the health and sustainability of the watershed.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

Turtle Island Restoration Network (TIRN) proposes to expand its existing education and outreach program in the Galveston Bay Watershed. This expansion will involve a multifaceted approach, including workshops, in-class presentations, public events, outreach activities, and hands-on experiences.

Project Objectives

1. **Expand Established Programs:**
 - Continue and broaden our current educational and outreach initiatives, reaching new schools and communities within the Galveston Bay Watershed.
 - Collaborate with new local entities and smaller NGOs to extend our reach and impact, ensuring our programs are accessible to a wider demographic.
2. **Enhance Community Engagement:**
 - Conduct workshops and in-class presentations in up to 30 schools, targeting K-12 students. These sessions will be tailored to different age groups and educational levels to maximize engagement and learning outcomes.
 - Organize up to 100 beach cleanups across various locations within the Galveston Bay Watershed. These events will involve local communities, schools, and partner organizations, fostering a sense of collective responsibility for maintaining clean and healthy beaches. During 2023, we conducted 51 beach cleanups, with hundreds of volunteers, removing over 2,054 pounds of trash, 15,007 cigarette butts, 121 balloons, 247 macroplastics and 1,445 nurdles from the Texas beaches. We hope to expand this programming in the outlined years of this funding opportunity.
 - Participate in over 15 public outreach events per year, increasing awareness and engagement in watershed protection. These events, such as local fairs, community gatherings, and environmental expos, will help us connect with a broader audience through informational booths, educational material distribution, and interactive demonstrations.
3. **Support Public Outreach Initiatives:**
 - Promote TIRN's other programs aimed at reducing single-use plastics and litter, including the Final Straw Campaign, Bring the Bag Campaign, Hold on to Your Butt cigarette butt litter prevention partnership, Monofilament Fishing Line Collection Program, the 1-866-TURTLE-5 Sea Turtle Rescue Hotline outreach and the iSeaTurtle App. Our expanded outreach efforts will ensure these programs receive greater visibility and participation.

Project Activities

1. **Workshops and In-Class Presentations:**
 - TIRN will design and deliver interactive workshops and presentations covering key topics such as watershed science, marine debris, microplastics, and environmental justice. By partnering with new local entities and smaller NGOs, we aim to reach new communities and enhance our impact.
 - These educational sessions will not only provide theoretical knowledge but also engage students in practical activities such as water and sand sampling for microplastics, analyzing local pollution sources, and developing community action plans for watershed protection.
2. **Beach Cleanups:**
 - TIRN will organize up to 100 beach cleanups across various locations within the Galveston Bay Watershed. These events will involve local volunteers, schools, and partner organizations, fostering a sense of collective responsibility for maintaining clean and healthy beaches.
 - Each cleanup will be coupled with educational briefings on the impact of marine debris on local wildlife and ecosystems, promoting an understanding of how individual actions contribute to broader environmental outcomes.
3. **Public Outreach Events:**
 - Participation in public outreach events will help us connect with a broader audience. We will set up informational booths, distribute educational materials, and conduct interactive demonstrations to raise awareness about watershed conservation.
 - These activities will provide opportunities for networking and knowledge exchange among stakeholders on key environmental topics, fostering collaborative efforts for the protection and conservation of the Galveston Bay.
4. **Support for Existing Programs:**

- Our expanded outreach efforts will also promote TIRN’s ongoing programs addressing single-use plastics and litter prevention. These include:
 - **Final Straw Campaign:** Encouraging the reduction and elimination of single-use plastic straws through education and advocacy.
 - **Bring the Bag Campaign:** Promoting the use of reusable bags to reduce plastic bag pollution.
 - **Hold On to Your Butt Partnership:** Addressing cigarette butt litter through public education and collection initiatives. We partner with the Surfrider Foundation on a campaign called Hold on To Your Butt, that focuses on collecting and recycling cigarette butts. In 2023, we collected 254,850 cigarette butts.
 - **Monofilament Fishing Line Collection Program:** Installing and maintaining collection bins for fishing line to prevent marine life entanglement. TIRN has collected and recycled over 1,000 pounds of fishing line.
 - **1-866-TURTLE-5 Sea Turtle Rescue Hotline:** Raising awareness and providing resources for reporting injured, stranded and nesting sea turtles.

Expected Outcomes

1. **Increased Environmental Awareness:**
 - Through targeted education and outreach activities, we anticipate a significant increase in environmental awareness and stewardship among residents of the Galveston Bay Watershed.
2. **Improved Watershed Health:**
 - Regular beach cleanups and litter prevention programs will directly contribute to the health and cleanliness of the watershed, reducing pollution and enhancing the habitat for local wildlife.
3. **Stronger Community Engagement:**
 - By involving diverse communities and stakeholders in our activities, we aim to foster a sense of collective responsibility and community-driven action towards watershed conservation.

Evaluation and Reporting

We will implement a robust evaluation framework to monitor and assess the impact of our project activities. Key performance indicators will include:

1. **Number of Participants:**
 - Tracking the number of individuals participating in workshops, presentations, cleanups, and outreach events.
2. **Environmental Impact:**
 - Measuring the amount of litter collected during cleanups and the reduction in single-use plastic items within the community, through collecting totals of weight of marine debris, tracking item materials using Marine Debris Tracker App, counting totals of cigarette butt counts, balloons, and nurdles at every event.

Regular reports will be submitted to the grant committee, detailing our progress, challenges, and successes. These reports will include quantitative and qualitative data to demonstrate the effectiveness and impact of our project.

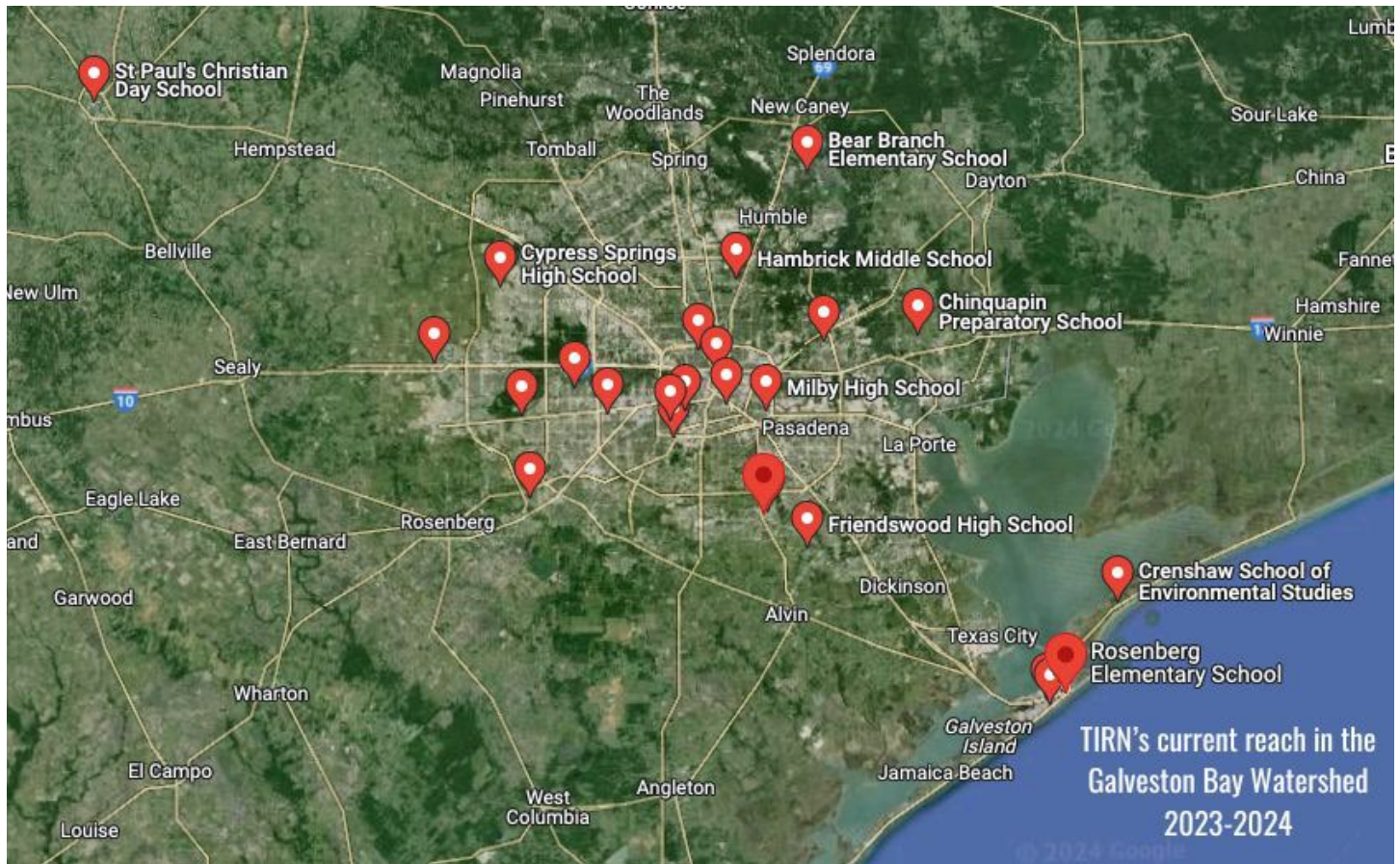
Conclusion

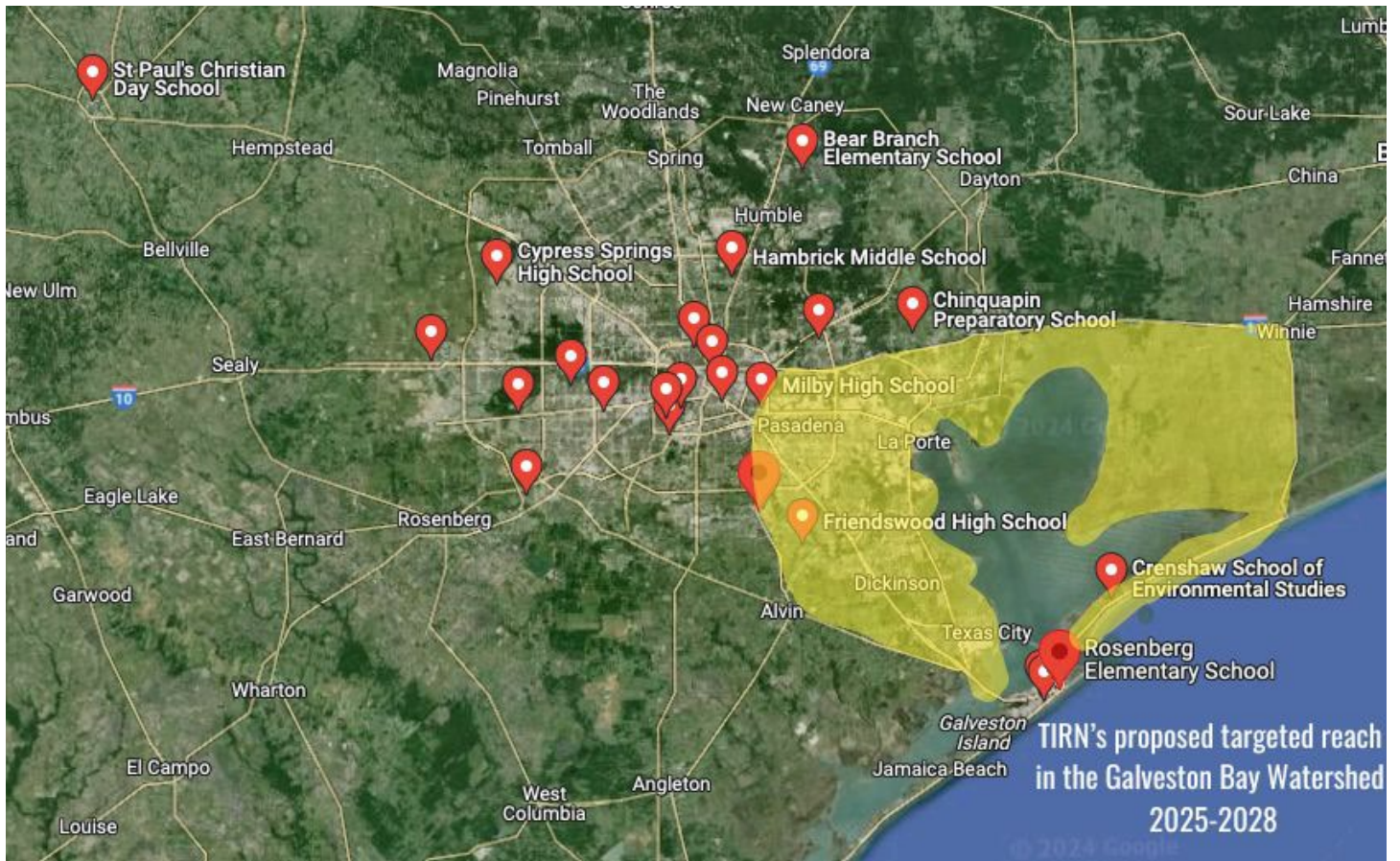
By expanding Turtle Island Restoration Network’s education and outreach program, we aim to create a lasting positive impact on the Galveston Bay Watershed. Our comprehensive approach, which includes workshops, in-class presentations, public events, and hands-on activities, will engage diverse communities and foster a culture of environmental stewardship. This project not only addresses the pressing environmental issues identified in the Galveston Bay Plan but also promotes sustainable practices that will benefit the bay's ecosystem for generations to come.

Location:

Our proposal aims to address multiple areas within the Galveston Bay watershed, specifically targeting BIPOC communities and those with lower socioeconomic opportunities. While we already have a broad reach across Houston and Galveston, we plan to maintain this coverage and expand further. We seek to extend our free programming to additional school districts, including Texas City ISD, Pasadena ISD, Dickinson ISD, Santa Fe ISD, Hitchcock ISD, La Porte ISD, Deer Park ISD, Galena Park ISD, Goose Creek ISD, Barbers Hill ISD, and Anahuac ISD. By doing so, we aim to foster environmental awareness and stewardship in these communities, ensuring inclusive access to our educational and conservation initiatives.

Projects Map





Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):



Photo from Beach Cleanup Program 4/18/2024 with Briarwood School



Photo from GISD Powerful Learning Innovators Educational Program with TIRN



Photo from TIRN Microplastic Project of TIRN Interns counting and collecting data from microplastic sample

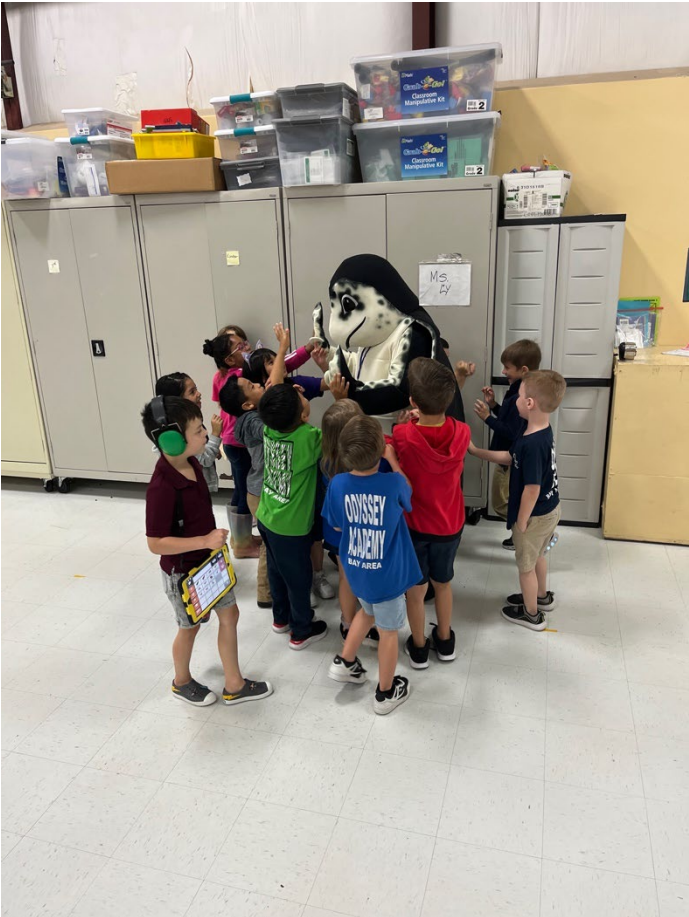


Photo from Educational Program at Odyssey Academy 4/21/2023



Photo of TIRN interns with TIRN Outreach Booth at an event

SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$111,650.00
Fringe Benefits (27%)	\$15,565.00
Travel	\$3,000.00
Supplies	\$1,500.00
Equipment	\$0.00
Contractual	\$0.00

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Construction	\$0.00
Other	\$0.00
Total Direct Cost	\$131,715.00
Indirect Costs	\$0.00
Total	\$131,715.00

Indirect Cost Agreement

Please note: If using a rate different from your entity Indirect Cost Agreement; a letter of exemption from the appropriate authority must be provided with the application, or a statement must be included certifying that the recipient has elected to be reimbursed for an amount less than its total indirect costs, that unreimbursed indirect costs are part of the recipient’s contribution to the success of the project, and that the recipient will pay for all unreimbursed indirect costs using funds available to it for that purpose.

N/A

Indirect Cost Reimbursable Rate. The reimbursable rate for this Contract is ##% of (check one):

- Salary and fringe benefits
- Modified total direct costs
- Other direct costs base

If other direct cost base, identify:

This rate is less than or equal to (check one):

- Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.
- De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of ten percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.
- Provisional Rate**— an experienced-based rate agreed to by Performing Party and TCEQ in the absence of a NICRA rate negotiated with the applicable federal cognizant agency.
- Partial Reimbursement Rate**— a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.
- Other:**

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of total Contract budget, identify the main constituents:

N/A

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will notify you of the meeting's time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.
-

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by August 5, 2024 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:

WSQ Subcommittee

Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov

NRU Subcommittee

Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov

PPE Subcommittee

Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov and Matthew.Abernathy@tceq.texas.gov

M&R Subcommittee

Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2026 PPE Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **August 5, 2024**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for FY2026 (FY2026 Priority Area Actions) that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for fiscal 2026 at the June 2024 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY2026 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Subcommittee:

Public Participation and Education (PPE)

Project Name:

Regional Coordination of River, Lakes, Bays 'N Bayous Trash Bash®

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes No

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

- Federal, State, or Local Government Council of Government Public ISDs or Universities
 Nonprofit Other*

[Please also indicate entity category (state, local, public university, nonprofit, etc.).]

Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:

AND:

VZFJDZCKG8C7

1-74-155-7575

VIN or Tax ID:

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Kendall Guidroz
Project Representative Phone	713-993-2469
Project Representative Email	Kendall.guidroz@h-gac.com

Amount Requested from GBEP:

\$10,000.00

Federal State No Preference

Is the project scalable?

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2026 (09/01/2025-08/31/2026)	\$10,000.00
FY 2027 (09/01/2026-05/31/2027)	\$0.00
FY 2028 (09/01/2027-05/31/2028)	\$0.00
Total	\$10,000.00

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2025 - ending no later than May 31, 2028) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

One year request for Trash Bash®2026

Project Urgency:

Having funding dedicated to helping offset the year-round coordination of Trash Bash® is vital to the continuity of the event, and maintenance and expansion of event education and outreach. While Texas Conservation Fund works annually to secure funding for the event, most of the funds go directly into the events costs and logistics, and the sources are heavily dependent on the state of the economy. The requested funds are the primary source of funding for educational efforts and materials. In addition, this funding request would coincide with the Watershed Protection Plan efforts in the Brays and Sims Bayous watersheds and additional outreach and education efforts would focus on those watersheds, which have seen declining Trash Bash® participation.

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

\$10,000.00 for project coordination assistance; leveraging information for full event/effort below.

Is this an estimate?

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash-):

Trash Bash® has multiple funding streams, including a TCEQ SEP, and cash and in-kind donations from individuals, businesses, corporations, and organizations, through the Texas Conservation Fund, combining to make the event possible each year. The amount of funding raised each year is dependent upon the state of the economy - especially the oil/gas and chemical industries. The Houston-Galveston Area Council also provides some additional logistical personnel support through water quality and solid waste projects. In 2024, 16 sponsors donated at least \$5,000 in cash or in-kind donations.

In addition to the leverage of the cleanup event itself, this project seeks to coordinate with upcoming watershed protection plan efforts in the Brays and Sims Bayous watersheds and will leverage that project's \$331,800 in federal 319 dollars, potentially providing match for the 319 project.

Partners* and Their Roles:

Regional Coordination for this project will be completed by the Houston-Galveston Area Council.

However, the overall event is only possibly thanks to a variety of partners. The Gulf Coast Authority provides administrative/management oversight, the Texas Conservation Fund handles the fundraising function, and the Houston-Galveston Area Council provides regional coordination for Trash Bash®.

Event partners include the Galveston Bay Foundation, Bayou Preservation Association, Gulf Coast Authority, City of Houston Health Department Bureau of Pollution Control and Prevention, Greater Northside Management District, Harris County Flood Control District, Sam Houston Area Council of Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council, several Keep Texas Beautiful affiliates, local governments, civic organizations, and nearly four dozen businesses and corporations.

***If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted under the application.**

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY2026 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

The FY2026 Priority Area Actions are found at:

- <https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>
- <https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

The River, Lakes, Bays ‘N Bayous Trash Bash® is a long-running annual waterways cleanup event that draws thousands of volunteers from different communities and receives local coordination help from nonprofits, local governments, and industry (SPO-1 and SPO-2). In addition to the indirect education on litter that comes from the cleanup itself, Trash Bash® strives to educate event volunteers on other simple ways that they can reduce nonpoint sources of pollution and improve the quality of local waterways and Galveston Bay. Each cleanup site has site volunteers who engage volunteers with four educational displays on the topics of pet waste disposal, fats, oils, and grease disposal, low-impact development, and litter prevention and recycling right (PEA-1). These educational displays are available for community use during the rest of the year, and this project seeks to coordinate with an upcoming watershed protection plan effort to hold trainings for stakeholders to learn more about the topics and how to use the displays to engage their own communities (PEA-2).

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

- SPO-1 SPO-2 SPO-3 SPO-4
- PEA-1 PEA-2 PEA-3

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

SPO-1 Stewardship Programs and Volunteer Opportunities: Trash Bash is one of the oldest and most well-known stewardship and volunteer programs in the region. When new Trash Bash® sites are proposed, several factors are considered before approval, including if the site would serve a new or underserved community.

SPO-2 Workshops and Events: GBEP has been a supporter of Trash Bash for at least the past 10 years, getting big returns in outreach and education for a minimal investment.

SPO-3 Support Regional Initiatives: Trash Bash GBEP funding includes maintenance of educational materials about nonpoint source pollution – used at Trash Bash and outreach events throughout the rest of the year, and available for loan out to local governments, schools, nonprofits and other entities. These materials identify and support other regional campaigns and have been translated into Spanish and Vietnamese. An instructional guide is available, and since 2017 these materials have been part of more than 120 events tracked by H-GAC and partners.

PEA-1 Key Issue Engagement: Trash Bash is an excellent resource for engaging the public on litter and illegal dumping, plastic pollution, and non-point sources of pollution. Engagement occurs through the cleanup as well as the interactive exhibits on pet waste, FOG, low-impact development, and litter prevention. The goal is to have the cleanup, combined with the education, better instill the information about how small actions can have a positive impact on the health of local waterways and Galveston Bay.

PEA-2 Adult Education: Proposed activities for the 2026 Trash Bash coordination also include collaborating with Watershed Protection Plan efforts in the Brays and Sims Bayous watersheds. Collaboration will include presenting at stakeholder meetings and hosting trainings on how to use and check-out the developed Trash Bash educational materials. Most materials have already been translated into Spanish and Vietnamese, but additional translations may be developed as needed.

Does the project implement any other *Galveston Bay Plan 2nd Edition* Priority Area Actions, or the other Subcommittee priorities?

- NRU (Protect and Sustain Living Resources)
- WSQ (Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use)
- M&R (Inform Science-Based Decision Making)

Other Subcommittee Detail:

This project will support Galveston Bay Plan 2nd Edition Action Item NPS-1 and FY2026 WSQ Subcommittee Priority “supporting management measures and watershed-based plans” by coordinating with upcoming Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) development and implementation efforts in the Brays Bayou and Sims Bayou watersheds to highlight NPS educational displays created for Trash Bash that are available for loan-out to community partners and holding trainings on how to effectively use them. This project may also contribute match to the 319 Brays/Sims Bayous WPP Project.

Other Plans Implemented:

Trash Bash[®] sites are written into the scope of work for a number of Houston-Galveston Area Council and partner watershed-based plans in the Galveston Bay watershed. As it is possible for additional sites to be created where there is need and community interest, this can continue to be true for future plans. Trash Bash[®] is also an integral part of the removal goal of the Partners in Litter Prevention Action Plan for litter and marine debris.

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

PPE Subcommittee Identified Priorities

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- Continuation or expansion of established education, outreach, or engagement programs.
- Partnering with new local entities or smaller NGOs to reach new communities.
- Connecting new audiences to existing/completed projects or the natural habitat.
- Opportunities for GBEP and partners to host workshops/networking opportunities for stakeholders on key topics.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

The 2026 River, Lakes, Bays ‘N Bayous Trash Bash® will mark the 32nd annual cleanup event at multiple locations across the Galveston Bay watershed. The event is more than just a standard litter cleanup - individual sites are coordinated by local groups, with Trash Bash® providing or coordinating cleanup and safety supplies, lunch and t-shirts for participants, educational exhibits, transportation if needed, sanitation stations, and waste disposal for each site. The positive impact of the event resonates with volunteers and sponsors and has led to ongoing support and partnerships. However, most of the sponsorship and other funding goes directly into the event. Regional coordination is a year-long process, with significant time dedicated to the event each year, and additional funding is necessary to help maintain these efforts and continue the educational components. Besides maintaining the event, Trash Bash® would like to increase the community members who are aware of the educational resources that are available for check-out the rest of the year. This proposal seeks to work specifically with community members in the Brays and Sims Bayous watersheds to hold trainings for stakeholders and partners who want to learn how to effectively use the materials to engage their residents throughout the year. Trainings in these watersheds would also encourage more participation in the Trash Bash sites in these watersheds which have seen reduced volunteer numbers in recent years.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

- Yes
- No

This project will coordinate with Brays/Sims Bayous Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) efforts to attempt reach new audiences and partners in those watersheds, but until the WPP efforts begin we are not sure of the exact communities and organizations we may be able to work with.

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

The River, Lakes, Bays ‘N Bayous Trash Bash® - the largest, single day volunteer-based waterway cleanup - is set to celebrate its 32nd annual event in 2026. This proposal seeks support for coordination of the event to allow for continuation of its award-winning cleanup efforts in the lower Galveston Bay watershed and its efforts to introduce educational resources to more stakeholders.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

The River, Lakes, Bays 'N Bayous Trash Bash® will celebrate its 32nd annual litter cleanup event in March 2026. Consistent and responsive coordination and organizational support has been vital to the event's longevity and growth. There are a lot of moving parts to both the coordination and implementation of the event. The Texas Conservation Fund manages Trash Bash® and the Gulf Coast Authority provides leadership and financial management. A steering committee made up of volunteers representing industries and corporations, nonprofit and civic organizations, local government and school districts, and private citizens interested in cleaner waterways helps to make decisions and manage individual sites. Thousands of volunteers of all ages come out each year (some of them every year) to donate their time and effort to removing trash from the Galveston Bay watershed. The Houston-Galveston Area Council helps to bring all of these efforts together by providing regional coordination and planning for all aspects of Trash Bash®.

The H-GAC regional coordinator handles a variety of tasks to implement Trash Bash® and although the peak planning time is September through April, the coordination of the event is a year-round process. The ongoing planning, maintenance and coordination tasks include (percentages indicate an estimation of the time required for each category):

- Working with site coordinators - 20%
- Outreach, public relations, and volunteer retention - 20%
- Working with vendors, ordering supplies, and researching options - 20%
- Planning and executing event and committee meetings - 10%
- Miscellaneous administrative duties - 10%
- Working with sponsors - 10%
- Program inventory and maintenance, including educational displays - 10%

Supporting the personnel costs of the H-GAC regional coordinator for Trash Bash® helps ensure continuity in the coordination process and consistency from year to year for the fun, family-friendly, and meaningful litter cleanup event that volunteers are used to. However, Trash Bash® is more than just a litter cleanup event. The mission of Trash Bash® is "to promote environmental stewardship of our watershed through public education by utilizing hands-on educational tools and by developing partnerships between environmental, government, and private organizations." Promoting environmental stewardship goes beyond a single-day event and requires behavior changes beyond not littering or illegal dumping to help protect a clean water future. To foster these behaviors, Trash Bash® has expanded over the years to include education and interactive exhibits, posters, and pledges at every cleanup site. The educational items promote everyday changes volunteers can make at home to improve water quality: picking up pet waste; disposal of fats, oils, and grease; preventing common sources of pollution and reducing runoff; and proper disposal for commonly littered items. The educational signage and give away items also highlight other regional campaigns like Cease the Grease and use of the Galveston Bay Action Network.

Previous TCEQ.GBEP funding has allowed Trash Bash® to expand these efforts further by translating the educational posters and brochures used at events into Spanish and Vietnamese and creating a streamlined user guide for the educational materials. This proposal would assist with the maintenance or repair of these items as necessary.

In addition to maintaining the educational materials and coordinating the event, with this proposal H-GAC seeks to coordinate with and support Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) efforts in the Brays Bayou and Sims Bayou watersheds by presenting to stakeholders and hosting trainings on the Trash Bash® educational materials. H-GAC received a 319 grant from the TCEQ to develop the WPP and the process is expected to kick off in Fall 2024 with stakeholder engagement expected to start in 2025. Trainings (1-2 in each watershed) would support the 319 project's stakeholder education efforts, introduce key nonpoint source topics to adult residents and community groups, and provide resources for participants to later engage their community members on these topics. The four Trash Bash educational displays cover the topics of 1) proper pet waste disposal, 2) proper fats, oils, and grease disposal, 3) low impact development / turning your yard into a sponge, and 4) preventing litter and recycling right. Each display has an informational poster and a pledge for participants to take. As noted above, the informational posters have previously been translated into Spanish and Vietnamese, and an interactive training on the materials was developed in FY 2024. Depending on the stakeholder needs in the two focus watersheds, this proposal would build on that progress and translate additional materials for the trainings to increase the audience that can be reached with the Trash Bash® educational resources.

Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

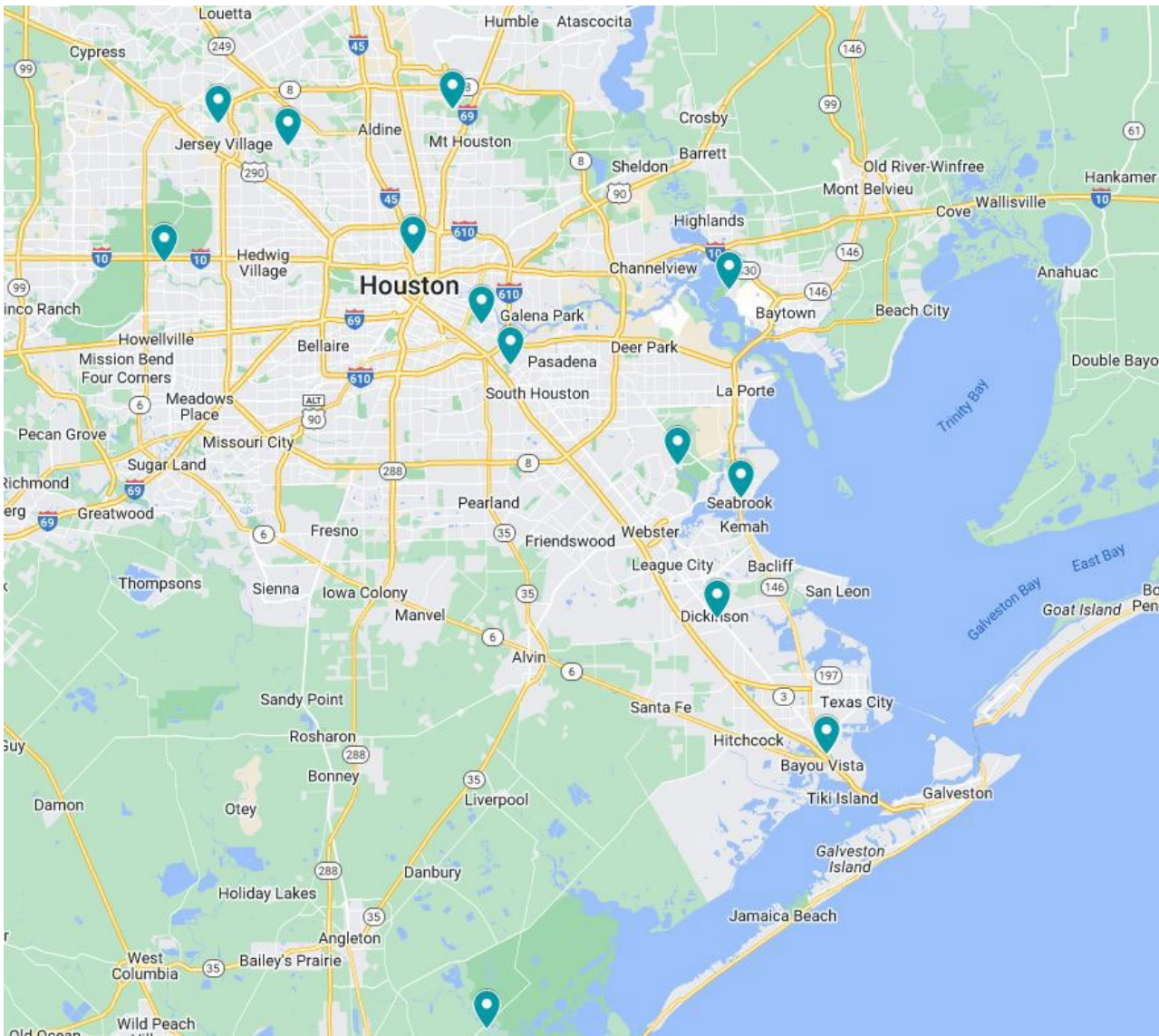
[degrees, minutes, and seconds format]

Location:

Trash Bash® has multiple cleanup locations across the region. In 2024 there were 14 locations (see map below). The sites range from urban, to suburban, to rural, drawing volunteers from six counties. Sites are located along bayous, rivers, bays, and lakes. The only areas Trash Bash® does not clean are beaches. Many sites have satellite locations that are not shown on the map. Attendance and trash volume trends at each site are evaluated yearly to determine if new locations are required or if it is possible to clean different locations from existing sites using satellite locations.

The focus for education training efforts is expected to be in the Brays Bayou and Sims Bayou watersheds in coordination with WPP development efforts.

Projects Map



Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):

[\[Insert Here or Attach as an Appendix\]](#)

SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$4,186.00
Fringe Benefits (46.27%) ¹	\$1,937.00
Travel	\$325.00
Supplies	\$500.00
Equipment	\$0.00
Contractual	\$0.00
Construction	\$0.00
Other	\$2,236.00
Total Direct Cost	\$9,184.00
Indirect Costs	\$816.00
Total	\$10,000.00

Indirect Cost Agreement

Please note: If using a rate different from your entity Indirect Cost Agreement; a letter of exemption from the appropriate authority must be provided with the application, or a statement must be included certifying that the recipient has elected to be reimbursed for an amount less than its total indirect costs, that unreimbursed indirect costs are part of the recipient’s contribution to the success of the project, and that the recipient will pay for all unreimbursed indirect costs using funds available to it for that purpose.

[\[Insert Indirect Cost Agreement or Attach as an Appendix if Applicable\]](#)

Indirect Cost Reimbursable Rate. The reimbursable rate for this Contract is 13.32% of (check one):

- Salary and fringe benefits
- Modified total direct costs
- Other direct costs base

If other direct cost base, identify:

This rate is less than or equal to (check one):

- Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.
- De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of ten percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

¹ If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

Provisional Rate— an experienced-based rate agreed to by Performing Party and TCEQ in the absence of a NICRA rate negotiated with the applicable federal cognizant agency.

Partial Reimbursement Rate— a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

Other:

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of total Contract budget, identify the main constituents:

[Description of costs associated with “Other” budget category.]

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will notify you of the meeting’s time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by August 5, 2024 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:

WSQ Subcommittee

Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov

NRU Subcommittee

Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov

PPE Subcommittee

Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov and Matthew.Abernathy@tceq.texas.gov

M&R Subcommittee

Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2026 M&R Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **August 5, 2024**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for FY2026 (FY2026 Priority Area Actions) that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for fiscal 2026 at the June 2024 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY2026 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Subcommittee:

This proposal is submitted for consideration under both the M&R and PPE subcommittees, per recommendations made by sub-committee leads to the Project Representative on 07/19/24.

Project Representative's Note: the proposal has been completed using the M&R Project Proposal form, but if additional information is needed for consideration by the PPE subcommittee, please do not hesitate to reach out. I have copy-pasted some relevant sections from the PPE project proposal template in order to facilitate both committees with project review. These specific subcommittee sections are noted in **BOLD RED** font when applicable.

Project Name:

Contaminant Accumulation in a Sentinel Species: Are Terrapin What They Eat?

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes No

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

Federal, State, or Local Government Council of Government Public ISDs or Universities

Nonprofit

Other*

Public university (University of Houston-Clear Lake; Environmental Institute of Houston)

Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:

AND:

VIN or Tax ID:

RD74AUNCTZJ1

3-75975-9759-2

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Mandi Gordon
Project Representative Phone	281-283-3794
Project Representative Email	gordon@uhcl.edu

Amount Requested from GBEP:

\$263,382.00

Federal State No Preference

Is the project scalable?

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2026 (09/01/2025-08/31/2026)	\$120,745.40
FY 2027 (09/01/2026-08/31/2027)	\$146,636.60
FY 2028 (09/01/2027-08/31/2028)	N/A
Total	\$263,382.00

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2025 - ending no later than May 31, 2028) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

24 months (2 years), beginning September 1, 2025 and ending August 31, 2027

Project Urgency:

The proposed project will serve as an expansion of two ongoing (UHCL and USGS) studies being conducted during a period which overlaps the first year of the proposed project (September 1, 2025 through August 31, 2026). Pilot studies and preliminary data analyses for both of these studies conducted prior to the proposed project start date will lend valuable information to improving efficacies and efficiencies for protocols implemented in the proposed project.

The proposed study will also serve to expand previous outreach and education programs established by Galveston Bay Foundation.

Finally, the proposed study may also synergize with another project proposal submitted to the Gulf of Mexico Alliance (GOMA) during the same project period (September 1, 2025 through August 31, 2027).

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

Requested project costs:	\$ 263,385.78
Existing leverage/in-kind funds:	\$ 597,500.00
Potential additional leverage:	\$ 100,000.00 *from pending proposals submitted to other agencies
Total costs (including leverage):	\$ 960,885.78

(see Leveraging section for explanation of leverage/in-kind funds)

Is this an estimate?

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

In-kind funds were calculated using estimated costs for: 1) salary (based on estimated time) supported by internal and external project partners; 2) sample processing costs supported by internal and external project partners; and 3) estimated costs for outreach materials or programs already in place to support the proposed project. Below is a breakdown by each participating agency of contributed costs used to calculate these leverage funds. Please note: no time will be tracked or reported as part of the proposed study; all estimated costs detailed below are anticipated should the proposed study be selected for funding at the requested amount.

In-Kind funds provided by UHCL: \$ 60,000.00
In-Kind funds provided by USGS: \$ 30,000.00
In-Kind funds provided by GBF: \$ 7,500.00

In addition to in-kind funds provided by external partners, this project leverages funds and resources from other projects funded (or potentially funded) by external agencies. One project was funded by the Matagorda Bay Mitigation Trust (MBMT). This project started in September 2024 and extends through the first year of the currently proposed project period. The other project has been submitted to the Gulf of Mexico Alliance (GOMA) and is pending approval as of the submission of this project proposal. Below is a breakdown of estimated leverage funds from each of these external agencies:

Leverage funds from the ongoing study with the Matagorda Bay Mitigation Trust: \$ 500,000.00
Leverage funds from the proposed study with the Gulf of Mexico Alliance: \$ 100,000.00

Total Leverage/In-Kind funds included in calculation of Total Project Cost: \$ 697,500.00

In addition to the leverage and in-kind funds noted above, the USGS may support expenses for per- and polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) sample analyses at a cost of \$350 per sample. The final amount for sample analyses will vary depending on the total number of samples collected through the proposed study, but should we be successful in collecting the number of samples anticipated in the study (~30), additional funds from this type of leverage/in-kind work could increase the total project amount by an additional \$10,500 (or more) from the total noted above.

Partners* and Their Roles:

Project Lead:

Mandi Gordon (gordon@uhcl.edu), Environmental Institute of Houston (EIH), University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL), Senior Biologist - Mandi will serve as the principal investigator on the project. She will also serve as a committee member for an M.S. graduate student funded through the project and will be responsible for coordination between project partners, completion of contract deliverables, and communications with GBEP project management.

Project Collaborators (funded through proposed study):

Natasha Zarnstorff (nzarnstoff@galvbay.org), Galveston Bay Foundation (GBF), Water Quality Programs Manager - Natasha currently coordinates the GBF water quality program, including volunteer and participatory science-based monitoring. She also the primary caretaker of Pear, GBF's ambassador Diamondback Terrapin. Her role will be to assist with field activities, coordinate with Galveston Bay Foundation's volunteer base, and support education and outreach efforts.

Cindy Wilems (cwilems@galvbay.org), Galveston Bay Foundation (GBF), Director of Education - Cindy currently manages the education programs at GBF. Her role will be to oversee implementation of K-12 educational curricula and programming focused on estuarine organisms such as Diamondback Terrapins.

Lisa Scobel (lscobel@galvbay.org), Galveston Bay Foundation (GBF), Marine Debris Programs Manager - Lisa currently coordinates the marine debris program at GBF, including efforts for microplastic and Nurdle Patrol surveys. Her role will be to expand education and outreach of marine debris and contaminant bioaccumulation in coastal organisms.

Additional External Project Partners:

David Lee Haskins (dhaskins@eaest.com), E.A. Engineering, Science, and Technology (EAEST), Scientist IV, Water and Natural Resources - Dr. Haskins is an expert in evaluating contaminant bioaccumulation in herpetofauna from the southeastern U.S. His role will be to serve as expert consult for analyses of contaminants of interest. Dr. Haskins may also serve as an outside committee member for a M.S. graduate student funded through this project and provide expert training to project personnel.

Natalie Karouna (nkarouna@usgs.gov), U.S. Geological Survey's (USGS) Eastern Ecological Science Center, Research Ecologist - Dr. Karouna is the acting lead principal investigator on a concurrent USGS study evaluating PFAS contamination in Diamondback Terrapin populations along the Atlantic coast of the United States. Her role will be to facilitate data integration and sharing between the proposed study and ongoing USGS assessment. Dr. Karouna may also serve as an outside committee member for a M.S. graduate student funded through this project.

Additional Internal Project Partners:

Cindy Howard (howard@uhcl.edu); College of Science and Engineering, University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL), Professor - Dr. Howard is an expert in ecotoxicology and ecology. She will be serving as a topical expert and may participate as a graduate committee member for a M.S. graduate student funded through this project.

Ruaa Al Mezrakchi (almezrakchi@uhcl.edu); College of Science and Engineering, University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL), Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering - Dr. Al Mezrakchi is an expert in microplastic and nanoplastic analyses. Her role will be to serve as expert counsel and assist with laboratory analyses of samples collected as part of the proposed project. Dr. Al Mezrakchi may also serve as a committee member for an M.S. graduate student funded through this project.

TBD, College of Science and Engineering, University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL), M.S. Graduate Student - funds provided through this opportunity will support one graduate student in the M.S. in Environmental Science program through the UHCL College of Science and Engineering.

TBD, College of Science and Engineering, University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL), Undergraduate Researcher - funds provided through this opportunity may support one or more undergraduate researchers in Environmental Biology, Biology, or Engineering programs through the UHCL College of Science and Engineering.

***If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted under the application.**

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY2026 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

The FY2026 Priority Area Actions are found at:

<https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

For consideration by the M&R Subcommittee (Galveston Bay Plan Priority Four Actions): The proposed study supports or supplements multiple components of the Galveston Bay Plan. Specific to the Research and Monitoring (RES) Actions, we propose a collaborative inter-agency study between multiple institutions for applied research and monitoring by evaluating the effects of biological stressors (RES-1), geochemical stressors (RES-2), and physical stressors (RES-3) on terrapin and their associated prey items. Additionally, we propose to increase access to Galveston Bay ecosystem information (ACS Actions) through data-sharing and interagency collaboration (e) and dissemination of monitoring and research results to a range of audiences, including local communities (ACS-2).

For consideration by the PPE Subcommittee (Galveston Bay Plan Priority Three Actions): The proposed study supports or supplements multiple components of the Galveston Bay Plan. Specific to the Stakeholder and Partner Outreach (SPO) Actions, we propose a collaborative study between applied research and educational outreach experts to support stewardship programs and volunteer opportunities for stakeholders (SPO-1) and provide workshops or events related to sharing information about contaminant bioaccumulation from applied research with Galveston Bay stakeholders (e). Additionally, we propose to support and expand on existing programs in Galveston Bay to engage the public in a dialog about key issues related to longevity and emerging contaminant bioaccumulation (PEA-1), support existing programs in Galveston Bay that change behaviors and attitudes in Galveston Bay with a focus on adult education (PEA-2), and support existing K-12 Galveston Bay estuary-related curricular materials for regional use (PEA-3). All education and outreach support will use results of the applied research to guide information provided and shared with communities at all levels.

For consideration by all GBEP Subcommittees: To the best of our knowledge, no project focused on trophic accumulation of contaminants in Diamondback Terrapin has been funded by GBEP to date. The proposed study offers a unique opportunity for GBEP to support research related to a coastal, estuarine-dwelling Species of Greatest Conservation Need as well as a species which represents the “next-step” in contaminant bioaccumulation analyses for shoreline-dependent species. Terrapin serve as a sentinel species for accumulation of contaminants in larger and longer-lived vertebrates than those species previously studied through GBEP funds and dissemination of information related to the effects of contaminant accumulation is imperative for local communities to better understand the coastal environment. In addition to the subcommittee-specific Actions addressed above, below we note additional Galveston Bay Plan Actions addressed by the proposed study and indicate which proposed project objective (outlined in the Project Summary section of this document) addresses these Actions.

Plan Priority One: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

The proposed study addresses the following priorities for ensuring safe human and aquatic life use:

- Support nonpoint source education and outreach campaigns (NPS-2; proposed study objective 2)
- Improve regional contact recreation risk awareness (e; proposed study objective 2)

Plan Priority Two: Protect and Sustain Living Resources

While the proposed study does not directly address current Plan priorities for protection and sustainability of living resources, we provide the opportunity to examine contaminant effects to a species currently ignored by the Galveston Bay Plan’s Species Conservation (SC) action items (**supplemental to SC-1**). We also provide the opportunity to evaluate contaminant effects on a group of organisms (herpetofauna) historically underrepresented in ecotoxicology research. Evaluation of contaminants in terrapin allows for baseline data compilation which can be related to living resources by examining the effects of persistent contaminants in terrapin and how they accumulate in organisms residing in their essential habitat (*Spartina* dominated saltmarshes).

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

M&R SUBCOMMITTEE Plan Priority 4: Inform Science-based Decision Making

- RES-1 RES-2 RES-3 RES-4
RES-5 RES-6 RES-7 RES-8
ACS-1 ACS-2 ACS-3

M&R SUBCOMMITTEE Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

RES-1: Conduct biological stressor monitoring and research

We address concerns about biological stressors by evaluating the overall effects of contaminants on terrapin health. By evaluating contaminant levels in prey sources (*Littorina* snails and *Spartina* grasses), we aim to better understand the implications of contaminant loading in organisms consumed by terrapin.

RES-2: Conduct geochemical stressor monitoring and research

We address concerns about geochemical stressors by evaluating the trophic bioaccumulation and potential biomagnification of contaminants in terrapin from Galveston Bay.

RES-3: Conduct physical stressor monitoring and research

We address concerns about physical stressors by evaluating the level of and potential effects of contaminant bioaccumulation in terrapin from Galveston Bay. By determining the amount of accumulation observed in terrapin, we will compile baseline information important to our understanding of the overarching effects of these compounds.

ACS-1: Tracking ecosystem health indicators

We aim to aid in tracking ecosystem health indicators by providing data related to contaminant bioaccumulation and trophic interactions to the Galveston Bay Regional Monitoring Database and by supporting regional monitoring and data reporting efforts. We plan to coordinate with GBEP to develop ways in which data collected through the proposed study will be used in this capacity, as needed.

ACS-2: Access to monitoring and research data

We aim to support activities from ACS-2 by providing information and data relevant to the State of the Bay Symposia, the Galveston Bay Regional Monitoring Database, and the State of the Bay Report. We plan to coordinate with GBEP to develop ways in which data collected through the proposed study will be used in this capacity, as needed.

For all Plan Priority Area Actions, results will be presented at the State of the Bay Symposia. Data will be shared for inclusion on the GBEP website, the UHCL website, and other locations, as applicable. Public dissemination of the data will be done through development of a technical report that will be made publicly available, presentation at a regional professional conference, development of a white paper (if applicable and valid), and other avenues as opportunities arise. We also plan to coordinate with GBEP to develop ways in which data collected through the proposed study will be incorporated into the State of the Bay Report, as needed. Finally, results for this and subsequent Plan Priority Area Actions will be incorporated into education and outreach programs supported by the proposed project in order to inform local Galveston Bay communities about the accumulation and impacts of these contaminants.

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

PPE SUBCOMMITTEE Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

SPO-1 SPO-2 SPO-3 SPO-4

PEA-1 PEA-2 PEA-3

PPE SUBCOMMITTEE Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

SPO-1: Stewardship programs and volunteer opportunities

Utilizing volunteer programs coordinated by partners included in the proposed study, we aim to support existing programs by providing opportunities to assist with field work and data collection. Volunteers will be allowed to participate in field activities and assist with outreach events, as needed.

SPO-2: Workshops and events

Utilizing events or programs coordinated by partners included in the proposed study, we aim to share information about effects of contaminant accumulation in coastal habitats. Using results of the applied research to guide development of or inclusion of information in outreach and events, local communities may be engaged through hands-on or person-to-person interactions.

PEA-1: Key issue engagement

Accumulation and dispersion of long-term, persistent compounds, such as microplastics and PFAS, is an evolving issue for many communities in the Galveston Bay area. Through the proposed study, we aim to support ongoing awareness and education programs or campaigns in the region using results of the applied research to support development of curricula or program content.

PEA-2: Adult education

Through volunteer programs, Master Naturalist groups, university programs, and other potential outreach groups, we aim to support ongoing adult education efforts in communities surrounding Galveston Bay. As opportunities arise, we intend to disseminate information about terrapin and contaminant analyses using results of the applied research to support development of curricula or program content.

PEA-3: Kindergarten to 12th grade (K-12) education efforts

Through Galveston Bay Foundation's Education Department, we plan to support ongoing K-12 education efforts. This includes implementation and expansion of existing programs teaching topics such as trophic interactions, animal adaptations, and conservation efforts using results of the applied research to support development of program content.

For all Plan Priority Area Actions, results will be presented at the State of the Bay Symposia. Data will be shared for inclusion on the GBEP website, the UHCL website, and other locations, as applicable. Public dissemination of the data will be done through development of a technical report that will be made publicly available, presentation at a regional professional conference, development of a white paper (if applicable and valid), and other avenues as opportunities arise. We also plan to coordinate with GBEP to develop ways in which data collected through the proposed study will be incorporated into the State of the Bay Report, as needed. Finally, results for this and subsequent Plan Priority Area Actions will be incorporated into education and outreach programs supported by the proposed project in order to inform local Galveston Bay communities about the accumulation and impacts of these contaminants.

Does the project implement any other *Galveston Bay Plan 2nd Edition* Priority Area Actions, or the other Subcommittee priorities?

- NRU (Protect and Sustain Living Resources)
- WSQ (Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use)
- PPE (Engage Communities)

Other Subcommittee Detail:

If funds through the M&R subcommittee are limited or the following proposal is deemed better suited for another subcommittee, we would like to be considered by the other subcommittees. Though not as extensively addressed as in the M&R and PPE subcommittees, below are details specific to the WSQ and NRU committees that may warrant funding through these other groups.

Water and Sediment Quality (WSQ) Subcommittee

NPS-2: Support non-point source education and outreach campaigns

We aim to supplement this Action by supporting continued outreach and education efforts to a wide range of audiences. Efforts will be focused on terrapin in Galveston Bay, though data related to contaminant analyses resulting from the study will be incorporated into existing programs to increase awareness about non-point sources of contaminants.

PHA-2: Improve regional contact recreation risk awareness

Should the opportunity arise, we can supplement this Action by supporting continued outreach and education efforts related to persistent contaminant accumulation in coastal habitats and the organisms residing within these living shorelines. While terrapin are no longer a primary source of food for humans (though they once were), education about how contaminants accumulate and potentially bio-magnify in higher order vertebrates may serve to increase public awareness.

Natural Resource Uses (NRU) Subcommittee

SC-1: Native species management

While terrapin are not specifically addressed in the Galveston Bay Plan, they are recognized by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) as a species of Greatest Conservation Need (TPWD 2020). Additionally, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature classifies terrapin as “Vulnerable” with observed population declines range-wide (<https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/12695/507698>). Data collected will be provided to TPWD to support native species management in Texas.

Other Plans Implemented:

In addition to Actions addressed in the Galveston Bay Plan, the proposed study also addresses aspects of other state and gulf-wide plans and strategies.

The proposed study addresses concerns and data deficiencies outlined in the [Gulf of Mexico Diamondback Terrapin Conservation Action Plan](#) developed by The Nature Conservancy and partnering Gulf states (including members from the proposed project team). Specifically, pollution and marine debris were listed as some of the highest-ranking threats Gulf-wide.

As part of the [Texas Conservation Action Plan](#), terrapin are recognized as a Species of Greatest Conservation Need and resulting data from the proposed study will be provided to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for inclusion in their species status reviews and ongoing monitoring database (the Texas Natural Diversity Database).

Goals of the Gulf of Mexico Alliance’s Water Resources and Wildlife and Fisheries Teams (outlined in the [Gulf of Mexico Alliance’s Governor’s Action Plan](#)) include multiple actions related to interagency collaborative efforts to prioritize research on threats to species of conservation need, with multiple studies focused on impacts to terrapin already funded Gulf-wide through different incentive programs.

M&R SUBCOMMITTEE SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

M&R Subcommittee Identified Priorities

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- Meaningful and effective monitoring of existing, past, and new projects (NRU: especially species of concern, WSQ, PPE).
- Baseline assessments for large-scale, man-made changes to Galveston Bay.
- Assessment, exposure, and response to stressors, including **but not limited to**:
 - Species of greatest conservation need;
 - Contact recreation standards;
 - Environmental parameters;
 - Emerging contaminants; and
 - Legacy contaminants.

M&R Subcommittee Priority Detail:

The proposed project directly addresses the “Assessment, exposure and response to stressors” priority by evaluating effects of bioaccumulation of emerging and legacy contaminants in a species of greatest conservation need. Legacy contaminants of interest that may be evaluated in the project include per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and mercury or other heavy metals. Emerging contaminants of interest include microplastics, though should newly recognized contaminants of interest be identified as the project progresses (if funded), they may be considered for additional analyses as funding allows. Contaminant levels will be evaluated in terrapin, as well as two prey sources – *Spartina* grasses and *Littorina* snails. Contaminant loading in terrapin will be compared to health panel analyses (e.g., comprehensive blood chemistry [CBC], hematocrit, etc.) to elucidate correlations with loading amounts and effects on general health parameters.

In addition to legacy and emerging contaminants of interest, environmental parameters will be recorded during all applied research field sampling events and the effects of these environmental parameters may be extrapolated if data are applicable and robust enough for analyses. These parameters include, but may not be limited to, water temperature, air temperature, water clarity, salinity, conductivity, dissolved oxygen, pH, precipitation rates, etc.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

- Yes
- No

While the proposed study does not initially involve work with new or smaller communities and partnerships, the Galveston Bay Foundation Education Team continually assesses the need to facilitate new partnerships and offer K-12 curriculum throughout the Greater Houston-Galveston area. Should an opportunity arise during this project period to facilitate existing terrapin educational programming to new schools/programs, Galveston Bay Foundation staff will work to foster these partnerships for future expansion of terrapin education and outreach.

PPE SUBCOMMITTEE SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

PPE Subcommittee Identified Priorities

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- Continuation or expansion of established education, outreach, or engagement programs.
- Partnering with new local entities or smaller NGOs to reach new communities.
- Connecting new audiences to existing/completed projects or the natural habitat.
- Opportunities for GBEP and partners to host workshops/networking opportunities for stakeholders on key topics.

PPE Subcommittee Priority Detail:

Continuation or expansion of established education, outreach, or engagement programs:

Galveston Bay Foundation (GBF) has conducted environmental education programs in various forms since 1987. In 2018, GBF's Classroom STEM Workshop program was expanded to include a variety of watershed and bay-related topics that are relevant to K-12 classrooms across the region (now titled the "Bay to Schools" program). Since this expansion, the workshops have reached over 11,000 students and are garnering so much interest that GBF requires additional staff and resources to accommodate school needs. Via current GBEP funding for the "Bay to Schools" program, GBF has been able to provide these workshops for free to all public schools, reaching over 3,700 students from January to July 2024 (compared to reaching 1,800 students within the same timeframe in 2023). This increase shows the importance of the program and encourages GBF to find additional funding to continue to offer the program for free. This funding will also be used to host community clean ups and nurdling event to provide hands on education about the effects of microplastics on the environment. These clean up events will also include information about local species and how they are impacted, such as the terrapin. With this funding GBF will be able to incorporate nurdling into existing water quality monitoring training workshops. This will provide volunteers with additional citizen science training and allow for a larger network of stakeholders to understand microplastics impacts on the environment. Presentation will also be hosted with the Texas Master Naturalist or other local interest groups about terrapin and the implications of this study.

Connecting new audiences to existing/completed projects or the natural habitat:

With funding, GBF will be able to promote Bay to Schools with new schools as well as incorporate new terrapin-related research and information into current workshops.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

- Yes
- No

While the proposed study does not initially involve work with new or smaller communities and partnerships, the Galveston Bay Foundation Education Team continually assesses the need to facilitate new partnerships and offer K-12 curriculum throughout the Greater Houston-Galveston area. Should an opportunity arise during this project period to facilitate existing terrapin educational programming to new schools/programs, Galveston Bay Foundation staff will work to foster these partnerships for future expansion of terrapin education and outreach.

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

This project aims to evaluate and inform researchers, conservation managers, and the general public about contaminant accumulation in a sentinel species (Diamondback Terrapin) in Galveston Bay. Our primary goal is to evaluate trophic bioaccumulation of longevity and emerging contaminants of concern in terrapin and their primary prey sources. Using results of applied research, we will expand education and outreach efforts about this Species of Greatest Conservation Need, including details about how contaminants accumulate across trophic levels.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

Background Information

While inshore and nearshore coastal habitats face many issues globally, accumulation of anthropogenic contaminants is an ongoing concern. Estuaries represent transitional and depositional zones between freshwater and marine environments. Additionally, along the Gulf coast, estuaries represent areas of significant cultural and socioeconomic impact. Emerging and longevity contaminants of concern, such as microplastics (plastic particles < 5-mm diameter), per- or polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), mercury, and heavy metals are filtered through estuarine marshes and shoreline habitats. Contaminant “sinks” or depositional areas may affect the habitat and wildlife in these communities, resulting in trickle-up socioeconomic impacts.

Increased accumulation of contaminants in shoreline habitats is especially concerning, as many organisms consumed by humans utilize these areas. Previous, recent, and ongoing contaminant studies have focused on contaminant accumulation in sediments, concentrations at differing depths within the water column, and accumulation in tissues of migrant species (e.g., birds) or specimen from open water habitats (e.g., fish and shellfish). Sentinel species can be used to model potential risk to humans, especially in regards to contaminant accumulation. Use of shoreline-dependent sentinel wildlife species aids humans in understanding the potential effects of contaminant accumulation and biomagnification where humans recreate and live.

In general, herpetofauna remain under-represented in ecotoxicology research. The Diamondback Terrapin (*Malaclemys terrapin*, “terrapin”) is a semi-aquatic estuarine turtle which serves as an ideal candidate sentinel species for evaluating contaminant bioaccumulation in shoreline dwelling wildlife. Terrapin represent a transitional species between fully-aquatic and fully terrestrial organisms, are long-lived, reside in low-lying marshes that serve as primary filtration areas for anthropogenic contaminants, and are consumers of organisms which may harbor contaminants (e.g., *Littorina* snails and *Spartina* grasses). As a species of conservation concern, an understanding of how contaminants accumulate through terrapin and their prey is essential for understanding how these compounds may affect this long-lived species.

An important component of disseminating results of scientific research involves public education and outreach. Sharing information across a wide range of individuals can lead to increased participation and interest by local citizens, recreational enthusiasts, students, and public educators. Providing hands-on experiences for K-12 students to learn about estuarine animals, such as the Diamondback Terrapin, is integral in fostering awareness, appreciation, and eventual stewardship for the Galveston Bay ecosystem. Such experiences are strengthened when connected to current research data and practices.

Study Goals and Objectives

The proposed project aims to fill knowledge gaps related to contaminant bioaccumulation and biomagnification through a multi-faceted, interdisciplinary approach. Our **primary goal** is to evaluate baseline concentrations of contaminants of concern (e.g., microplastics, PFAS, mercury, heavy metals) in *Spartina* grasses (primary producer), *Littorina* snails (primary consumer), and terrapin (apex consumer) from Galveston Bay. Our **secondary goal** is to support existing and ongoing outreach and education efforts within shoreline communities by incorporating research-driven results into educational programs. Our **final goal** is to make data resulting from this study publicly available for use by researchers, students, educators, and professionals for future assessments of contaminants in estuarine habitats and communities.

General Project Methods

To address our goal of establishing baseline concentrations of contaminants of concerns, we will use tissue samples collected during previous and ongoing surveys to evaluate contaminant accumulation and potential amplification across three trophic levels within a shoreline community: 1) *Spartina* grasses, 2) *Littorina* snails, and 3) terrapin. Tissue samples (whole tissue or blood) will be analyzed for microplastics using a combination of organic digestion, phosphorescent staining, scanning electron microscope (SEM), energy dispersive x-ray spectrometry (EDS), or similar. Tissue samples will be analyzed for PFAS contaminants using established protocols by partners at the U.S. Geological Survey. Tissue samples will be analyzed for mercury contaminants by partners at E.A. Engineering, Science, and Technology using standardized procedures. Finally, tissue samples will be analyzed for heavy metal contaminants using standardized laboratory procedures developed by current UHCL Faculty.

Funding will also allow our partnering agency, the Galveston Bay Foundation, to increase capacity and amplify their fundamental classroom-based Bay to Schools STEM workshops. These workshops focus on the importance of estuaries and how seemingly vastly different habitats are intertwined, interconnected, and impact neighboring bays. These workshops are tailored to fit individual K-12th grade classroom needs and include topics such as importance and function of wetlands, trophic interaction, estuarine animal adaptations, climate change and coastal resiliency, environmental careers, and how to implement real change via environmental leadership skill-building. Results from contaminant analyses will be incorporated into existing and previously established Environmental STEM Education Programs as reasonable and feasible, and GBF's animal ambassador program.

Anticipated Outputs and Outcomes:

- Final report with summary of data and findings (may also result in an open-access peer-reviewed scientific publication)
- Publicly accessible and shareable scientific dataset related to microplastic and PFAS contaminant levels in *Spartina* grasses, *Littorina* snails, and terrapin
- Implementation of Classroom STEM Workshops in Galveston Bay Area Schools
- Funding for graduate students and Student Conservation Associate interns to assist with field surveys, data analyses, report development, and STEM programs

Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

See Location section below for general coordinates of survey areas. A map of proposed survey areas is also included in the Projects Map section.

Location:

As part of our long-term Texas Diamondback Terrapin Monitoring Program, the University of Houston-Clear Lake has identified four priority (e.g., "primary") locations of known Texas Diamondback Terrapin populations in West Galveston Bay:

- Green's Lake: N29° 16' 13.4538", W94° 59' 23.8236" (WGS84)
- South Deer Island: N29° 16' 21.5256", W94° 54' 42.2778" (WGS84)
- Sportsman's Marsh: N29° 15' 21.0990", W94° 56' 25.5084" (WGS84)
- Sweetwater Preserve: N29° 16' 3.9144", W94° 53' 22.5486" (WGS84)

In addition to these long-term monitoring locations, samples may be collected from terrapin in other (e.g., "secondary") regions of Galveston Bay, including but not limited to:

- Mud Island: N29° 4' 56.5680", W95° 8' 51.885" (WGS84)
- Halls Lake: N29° 11' 23.7690", W95° 6' 23.0538" (WGS84)
- Shell Island: N29° 27' 3.4740", W94° 55' 40.6740" (WGS84)
- Goat Island Complex: N29° 28' 8.0904", W94° 38' 47.4612" and N29° 30' 57.603", W94° 32' 21.1884" (WGS84)

See Figure 1 in Projects Map section below for distribution of potential survey areas.

Projects Map

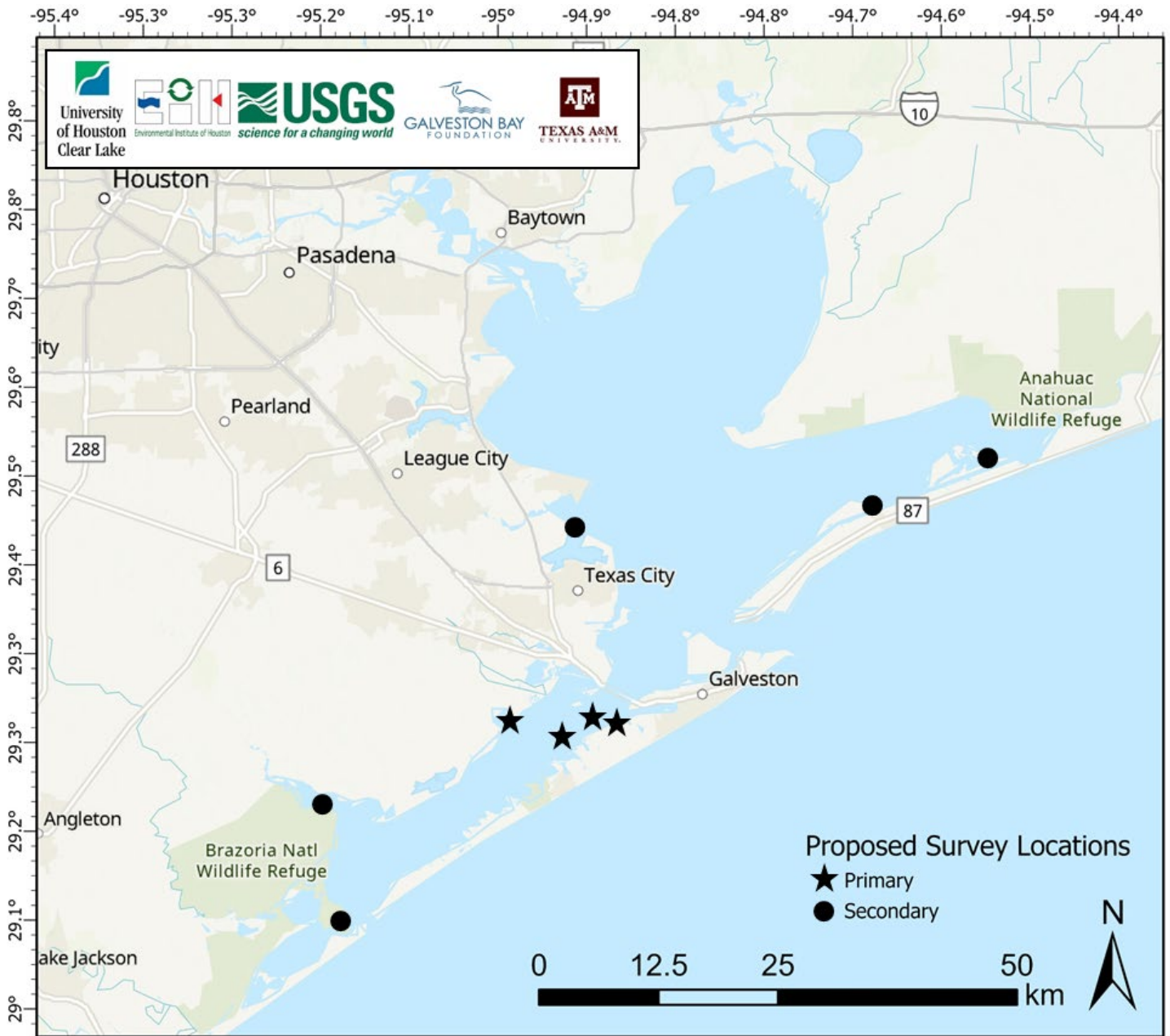


Figure 1 Map of Galveston Bay with primary and secondary proposed terrapin survey locations noted. Samples will be collected from portions of the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed, representative of the Implementation Location for all Action items to be addressed by the proposed study.

Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):

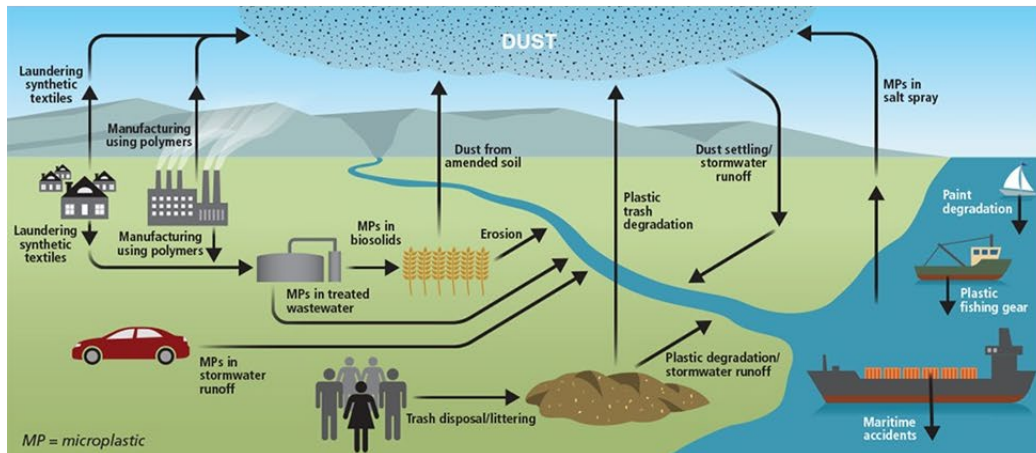
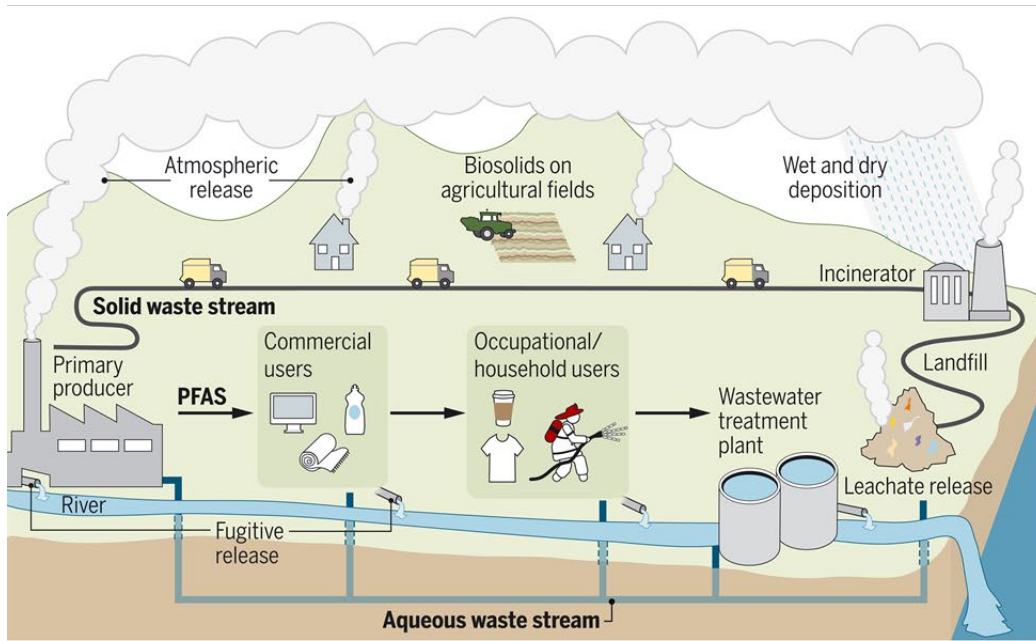


Figure 2 Examples of pathways for contaminant bioaccumulation in higher order vertebrates. Adapted from Yirka (2022; <https://phys.org/news/2022-02-impact-pfas-containing-products-environment.html>), Peters et al. (2021; <https://www.haleyaldrich.com/resources/articles/microplastics-legislation-is-imminent-why-should-you-care/>), and The Nature Conservancy (<https://www.nature.org/en-us/get-involved/how-to-help/places-we-protect/clive-runnells-family-mad-island-marsh-preserve/>).

SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$ 117,455.75
Fringe Benefits (15% for students, 36% for staff; averages to ~22.07%)¹	\$ 25,920.22
Travel	\$ 8,530.00
Supplies	\$ 17,780.00
Equipment	\$ 0.00
Contractual	\$ 49,999.26
Construction	\$ 0.00
Other	\$ 7,923.20
Total Direct Cost	\$ 227,608.43
Indirect Costs	\$ 35,777.35
Total	\$ 263,385.78

Indirect Cost Agreement

Please note: If using a rate different from your entity Indirect Cost Agreement; a letter of exemption from the appropriate authority must be provided with the application, or a statement must be included certifying that the recipient has elected to be reimbursed for an amount less than its total indirect costs, that unreimbursed indirect costs are part of the recipient’s contribution to the success of the project, and that the recipient will pay for all unreimbursed indirect costs using funds available to it for that purpose.

[\[Insert Indirect Cost Agreement or Attach as an Appendix if Applicable\]](#)

Indirect Cost Reimbursable Rate. The reimbursable rate for this Contract is **16%** of (check one):

- Salary and fringe benefits
- Modified total direct costs
- Other direct costs base

If other direct cost base, identify:

This rate is less than or equal to (check one):

- Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.
- De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of ten percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining

¹ If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

Provisional Rate— an experienced-based rate agreed to by Performing Party and TCEQ in the absence of a NICRA rate negotiated with the applicable federal cognizant agency.

Partial Reimbursement Rate— a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

Other:

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of total Contract budget, identify the main constituents:

[Description of costs associated with “Other” budget category.]

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will notify you of the meeting’s time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.
-

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.

- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by August 5, 2024 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:

WSQ Subcommittee

Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov

NRU Subcommittee

Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov

PPE Subcommittee

Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov and Matthew.Abernathy@tceq.texas.gov

M&R Subcommittee

Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov