
NATURAL RESOURCE USES (NRU) SUBCOMMITTEE

**GALVESTON BAY COUNCIL
SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY**

18 September 2024

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

Members/Participants Present

Amanda Hackney (Black Cat GIS), Bryar Johnson (USFWS), Christian Rines (GBEP), Evelyn Merz (UH Coastal Center), Jenelle Estrada (GBEP), Kevin Hartke (Ducks Unlimited), Kevin De Santiago (Texas Water Trade), Lindsey Lippert (GBEP), Lisa Marshall (GBEP), Marty Cornell (FOBWR), Matthew Abernathy (GBEP), Michael Niebuhr (AgriLife), Morgan Zander (GBEP), Philip Smith (GBF), Richard Gibbons (Audubon Texas), Sandra Metoyer, Ph.D. (UHCL), Savannah Horton (TPWD), Scott Alford (USDA-NRCS), Suzanne Simpson (GBF), Theresa Morris (TAMUG), Zoe Gapayao (GBEP)

Members/Participants via TEAMS

Adrianna Leiva (USFWS), Alexis Baldera (Audubon Texas), Anna Deichmann (ABC), Bridgett M. vonHoldt, Ph.D. (Princeton University), Charrish Stevens (NOAA-NMFS), Christopher Marshall (TAMUG), David Villareal (TDA), Dianna Ramirez (GLO), Erin Kinney, Ph.D. (HARC/GTRI), Grant Moss (BPA), Hope Cole (GCHD), Jan Culbertson (USFWS), Katie Wilson (GCHD), Kristin E. Brzeski, Ph.D. (Michigan Technological University), Linda Shead (Texas Coastal Partners), Moriah Johnson (Moriah Lynn Consulting), Pete Deichmann (Houston Audubon), Ryan Bare (HARC/GTRI), Wendy Reistle (UHCL)

State of the Bay, 5th ed. & Regional Monitoring Database - Erin Kinney, Ph.D., Ryan Bare, Ph.D., Houston Advanced Research Center

Erin Kinney and Ryan Bare provided a presentation on upcoming projects for the State of the Bay, 5th Edition and the Regional Monitoring Database.

*Stream recording of the presentation is available upon request.

FY 26 Project Proposal Presentations - Various

The following projects were presented for consideration for FY 26 funding:

1. Salt Lake Native Marsh Shoreline Protection Project: Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
2. FY 2024-2025 Conservation Assistance Program: Galveston Bay Foundation
3. North Deer Island - Habitat Restoration & Enhancement (Phase 1): National Audubon Society
4. The 10th Addition to the Coastal Heritage Preserve through a 4th Acquisition at Middle Tract, Galveston Island, Texas: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
5. The 11th Addition to the Coastal Heritage Preserve through a 4th Acquisition at Middle Tract, Galveston Island, Texas: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
6. Informing ongoing management of environmental water transactions to preserve or enhance tidal bayou function in East Bay: Texas Water Trade
7. From Scat to Conservation: Community-based research of Galveston Bay's ghost wolves (from PPE): Michigan Technological University

8. Developing Molecular Tools for Demographics and Distribution of Galveston Bay Estuary System Sea Turtles (from M&R): Texas A&M University at Galveston

*Stream recording and PDF of the presentations are available upon request.

FY 26 Project Proposal Discussion and Recommendations

The subcommittee spent time discussing the project recommendations for the FY 2026 Section 320 and state funding. The following projects were selected for recommendation. Projects in gray and italicized were not selected in the final projects approved by the Galveston Bay Council (GBC):

Project	Grantee	FY 26 NRU Recommendation	FY 26 GBC Approved
Monitoring and Managing the Threatened Eastern Black Rails in the Galveston Bay Area (<i>Approved in Fiscal 2025</i>)	TAMU (Butler)	\$174,235	\$15,847 (\$320)
FY 2025-2026 Conservation Assistance Program (Also funded in Fiscal 2025 - \$130,000)	GBF	\$115,000	\$100,000 (\$320) ¹
North Deer Island - Habitat Restoration & Enhancement (Phase 1)	NAS	\$107,905	\$100,000 (State)
The 10th/11th Additions to the Coastal Heritage Preserve	TPWD	\$100,000	\$100,000 (State)
<i>Salt Lake Native Marsh Shoreline Protection Project</i>	<i>FOBWR</i>	<i>\$30,000</i>	<i>\$0</i>
Developing Molecular Tools for Demographics and Distribution of Galveston Bay Estuary System Sea Turtles	TAMUG (Marshall)	Alternative #1	Funded thru M&R
<i>Informing ongoing management of environmental water transactions to preserve or enhance tidal bayou function in East Bay.</i>	<i>TWT</i>	<i>Alternative #2</i>	<i>\$0</i>
From Scat to Conservation: Community-based Research of Galveston Bay's Ghost Wolves	MTU (Brzeski)	Alternative #3	\$12,600.00 (\$320)
Totals		\$368,752	\$328,447

Should additional funding become available, projects not selected for funding by the GBC will be explored.

*Stream recording of the discussion is available upon request.

Updates from the Estuary Program

Staff Updates

National Estuaries Week starts Saturday, September 21, 2024.

The Oyster Restoration workgroup is having their annual meeting October, 15, 2024.

NRU Project Updates

*Spreadsheet available on request.

¹ \$15,000 was identified in FY 25 federal funding to make up difference.

Other

Selection of A Presenter for Next Meeting - Deferred

Roundtable

Philip Smith asked for feedback on doing an Oyster Blueprint outlining concerns, issues, and action plans.

Theresa Morris announced that the Gulf Center for Sea Turtle Research is actively recruiting for their Rescue and Recovery Team for sea turtle strandings, especially for the Christmas Bay area. Please reach out.

Adjourn

Future Meetings

Quarterly NRU Meeting(s)

- December 4, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.

Invasive Species Workgroup Meeting - Hiatus

Oyster Restoration Workgroup Meeting - October 15, 2024 at 1:00 p.m.