

# **MONITORING AND RESEARCH SUBCOMMITTEE GALVESTON BAY COUNCIL**

**Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, March 12, 2025  
9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

Subcommittee Chair: George Guillen, Environmental Institute of Houston-University of Houston Clear Lake (EIH-UHCL)

Subcommittee Vice Chair: Mike Lee, United States Geological Survey (USGS)

GBEP Representative: Jenelle Estrada

## **Call to Order, Introductions (Via Microsoft Teams)**

Attendees: Anna Armitage (TAMUG), Shannon Batte (GBF), Jessica Casillas (H-GAC), Sally Clark (GBF), Jim Dobberstine (LC), Jeffrey Fato (GBF), Vivienne Foroughirad (TAMUG), Jessica Geiskopf (TPWD), Amanda Hackney (Black Cat GIS), Vanessa Hulse (HARC), Mike Lee (USGS), Hui Liu (TAMUG), Yina Liu (TAMU), Chris Marshall (TAMUG), Vanessa Mintzer (GBF), Theresa Morris (TAMUG), Alyssa Quackenbush (GBF), Thushara Ranatunga (H-GAC), Hanadi Rifai (UH), Bill Rodney (TPWD), Michael Shields (TAMU), Chloe Stifler (ABNC), Casey Taylor (Citizen), Huy Vu (USEPA), Katie Wilson (GCHD), Matthew Abernathy (GBEP), Zoe Gapayao (GBEP), Lindsey Lippert (GBEP), Lisa Marshall (GBEP), Christian Rines (GBEP).

**Approval of December 11, 2024 meeting minutes** – Motion to approve by Sally Clark and a second by Jessica Casillas.

## **Presentations:**

### **Member Spotlight: Coastal Fisheries Long-Term Monitoring Programs – Jessica Geiskopf**

Jessica Geiskopf presented on the long-term monitoring programs with Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD). The monitoring efforts include fishery-independent monitoring, fishery-dependent monitoring, and targeted oyster sampling. Then the data is analyzed and summarized by TPWD for policy and management consideration.

### **Member Spotlight: H-GAC's Geospatial and Data and Analytics Solutions - Thushara Ranatunga**

Dr. Thushara Ranatunga presented on the Data Analytics and Research department at the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). The department covers data creation, data analysis, data visualization, data sharing, and data modeling and forecasting in the greater Houston and Galveston area. Data type examples include ecological land cover and land use data from both aerial imagery and light detection and ranging (LiDAR) imagery. There are many dashboards on H-GAC's website for regional information such as flooding maps and they host a geographic data workgroup.

## **BIL Priorities Discussion**

Subcommittee members discussed the BIL funds and agreed on three priority recommendations that are important to M&R to present to the B&P Subcommittee:

- Monitoring and research that produces data applicable and transferable to multiple programs.
- Projects that produce meaningful data that can be used for future implementation and management decisions.
- Long-term monitoring of basic environmental parameters.

## **M&R Subcommittee Bylaws Discussion and Vote**

Jenelle Estrada asked the subcommittee to evaluate potential changes to the M&R Bylaws discussed in the December subcommittee meeting. General changes addressed were related to formatting to be consistent with Galveston Bay Council Bylaws, clarification on voting qualifications, and updates to the “Workgroup” section (specifically related to the formation of workgroups and documenting existing workgroups) of the M&R Bylaws. Motion to approve by Jim Dobberstine and a second by Mike Lee. The bylaws were approved by the subcommittee with a unanimous vote.

## **Project Updates:**

- Regional Monitoring Database – HARC (Ryan Bare)
  - The Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) annual certification has been approved and the RMD is in the annual update process.
- Long Term Monitoring of Living Shorelines – Lee College (Jim Dobberstine)
  - Data analysis and final report drafting is underway.
- Monitoring Ecosystem Indicators for Science-Based Restoration and Enhancement – TAMUG (Hui Liu)
  - Sampling cruises are ongoing, and a manuscript is being drafted.
- The Distribution and Fate of Highly Toxic Tire Rubber-Derived Chemicals in Galveston Bay – TAMU (Michael Shields)
  - Photooxidation experiments are wrapped up and sediment analysis is ongoing.
- Evaluating Galveston Bay’s Resilience to Ocean and Coastal Acidification – HARC (Stephanie Glenn)
  - Communication with subcontractors is ongoing to develop the QAPP.
- Establishment of an Oyster Sentinel Program for Tracking *Perkinsus marinus* (Dermo) in Oysters of Galveston Bay – UHCL (Mandi Gordon)
  - Work is underway on drafting the QAPP.
- Tracking *Perkinsus Marinus* (Dermo) Infection in Sun-Cured Oysters - UHCL (Mandi Gordon)
  - Work is underway on finalizing the QAPP and drafting communications with participants.
- Monitoring to Assess Long-term Restoration Success in Galveston Bay Wetlands - TAMUG (Anna Armitage)
  - The QAPP has been approved, and field sampling preparation has begun.

## **Announcements/Path Forward Items:**

- WSQ Subcommittee meeting: Wednesday, March 12, 2025, 1:30 p.m.– 3:30 p.m.
- B&P Subcommittee meeting: Wednesday, April 2, 2025, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

- GBC meeting: Wednesday, April 16, 2025, 9:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.
- M&R 2025 Subcommittee Meetings
  - June 11, 2025 (9:30-11:30am)
  - September 10, 2025 (9:30-11:30am)
  - December 10, 2025 (9:30-11:30am)

**Adjourn**