



WATER AND SEDIMENT QUALITY SUBCOMMITTEE GALVESTON BAY COUNCIL



Meeting Minutes Wednesday, June 11, 2025 1:30PM – 3:30PM

Subcommittee Chair: Brian Koch, Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB)

Subcommittee Vice Chair: Ryan Bare, Houston Advanced Research Center (HARC)

GBEP Representative: Christian N. Rines

Call to Order

Attendees: Brian Koch (TSSWCB), Christian Rines (GBEP), Mandi Gordon (UHCL EIH), Jenny Oakley (UHCL), Michael Roberts (The Coastal Trust), Matthew Abernathy (GBEP), Michael LaMontagne (UHCL), Lindsey Lippert (GBEP), Jenelle Estrada (GBEP), Zoe Gapayao (GBEP), Hope Cole (GBEP), Lisa Marshall (GBEP), Rachel Thorne (GBF), Luke Travis (USGS), Sandra Metoyer (UHCL EIH), Celina Gauthier Lowry (TX A&M AgriLife), Katie Wilson (GCHD), Steven Johnston (H-GAC), David Villarreal (TDA), Erin Hague (Tetra Tech), Shane Simpson (SJRA), Sam Hill (TFS), Erin Kinney (HARC), Rachel Windham (H-GAC), Roberto Vega (TCEQ), Kendall Guidroz (H-GAC), Vanessa Hulse (HARC), Haille Leija (GBF), Fouad H. Jaber (TX A&M AgriLife), Huy Vu (EPA), Laura Ryckman (TCEQ), Kelli Ondracek (HPARD), Grant Moss (HPARD), Brittany McWhorter (TIRN), Zulimar Lucena (USGS), Anna Weiss (Vision Galveston), and Brittany Flowers (BPA).

Approval of the March 12, 2025 minutes – Ms. Rines opened the meeting with approval of the minutes. Mr. Koch motioned to approve the minutes and Ms. Oakley seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with no changes.

New Business

Member Spotlight Presentation: Michael Roberts, The Coastal Trust

FY 2027 Section 320 and State Funding Planning and Priorities:

- Ms. Rines announced that the FY27 Section 320 and State project proposal submission will begin June 23, 2025, and will close on July 25, 2025. A link to the proposal form and additional information will be sent out by subcommittee coordinators in the official call for proposals on June 23, 2025. Submitted proposals will then be sent back out to subcommittee members on August 13, 2025, for review prior to the September meeting. Projects recommended to receive FY27 Section 320 and State funding will be chosen at the WSQ Subcommittee meeting on September 10, 2025. Ms. Rines reminded everyone that the proposal solicitation for the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding for FFY 26 will also be sent out June 23, 2025, but won't be due until August 8, 2025. Those proposals will be sent to the subcommittees for review on September 2, 2025 and will be presented to and selected by the B&P Subcommittee on October 1, 2025.
- Ms. Rines also announced that there will be an additional \$700,000 in FY26 State funds available for those projects ready to start September 1, 2025. These funds were originally a rider but are now a line item.
- Ms. Rines also reminded everyone that anonymous comments on any proposals may be submitted via email and will be asked of presenters during the meeting by the subcommittee coordinator.
- Actions and Outputs of the Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition - Ms. Rines provided a spreadsheet that listed the three Actions Plans of Priority One of the Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition, Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use. Subcommittee members will be asked to indicate which actions and outputs of the Plan their project implements when submitting proposals.
- Past and current WSQ projects and narrowing of priorities for FY27 project development - A listing of WSQ projects completed or ongoing since 2012 was provided to subcommittee members. The spreadsheet also identified actions of the Plan implemented by each of these projects. These priorities previously identified by the subcommittee in past meetings were revisited in order to narrow down the list to three priorities. These three priorities will then be used to help the subcommittee decide which projects to fund in the fall. Those needs and gaps not identified as a priority for this project planning cycle will remain on the list and will be revisited by the subcommittee the following year. The following three priorities were identified:
 - Supporting management measures and watershed-based plans
 - Implementation and/or evaluation of best management practices that address point and nonpoint source pollution
 - Public health risk awareness outreach campaigns related to contact recreation and/or seafood consumption

Project Updates from WSQ Project Mangers:

- Houston Parks and Recreation Department Water Management Plan (HPARD) – Ms. Ondracek announced that HPARD has completed the Water Management Plan, and it will be going up on their website in the next couple of weeks.
- Clear Creek Watershed Protection Plan (H-GAC) – Ms. Windham announced that the project is wrapping up and expressed thanks to all who attended the NPS workshop in Pearland on May 20.
- Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) Demonstration Site Development for Greenspace Education in the Galveston Bay Watershed (TX A&M AgriLife) – Mr. Jaber announced that the team has constructed two rain gardens at the Houston Community College (HCC) Katy Campus, but the project still has a lot of funds remaining, so the team is working with HCC to install a rain cistern system. Any remaining funds beyond that will be used for supplemental rain garden planting and seeds for an existing bare detention pond shoreline.
- Strategic Implementation of Green Infrastructure Best Management Practices in the Double Bayou Watershed (HARC) – Mr. Koch announced that the stakeholder on June 3 was not as well attended as the previous meeting but there was some great discussion moving forward on green infrastructure and implementation. The group will also be receiving new 319 funding for implementation starting in the fall.
- Digging Deeper: Addressing Soil Health to Improve Water Quality in the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed (TX A&M AgriLife) – Ms. Gauthier Lowry announced that the team has completed all its events and provided the subcommittee with an overview of the workshops and field day held over the course of the project. Over 45 different organizations were in attendance across all three events, and the team received some great feedback from attendees.
- Supporting Permeable Alternatives to Conventional Pavement in the Lower Galveston (TX A&M AgriLife) – Ms. Gauthier Lowry announced that the team is just starting to ramp up efforts on this project with the recent completion of all soil health project events.
- Targeted Microplastics Monitoring in the Waters of Galveston Bay and its Tributaries (USGS) – Mr. Travis announced the team is awaiting final approval of the QAPP and will begin sampling once approved.
- Repair and Replacement of Failing On-Site Sewage Facilities (OSSFs) for Homeowners in Disadvantaged Communities with Vulnerable Populations (H-GAC) – Ms. Guidroz announced that the team has drafted a community priority list and will hopefully be finalizing that this week. From there, the team will begin reaching out to these communities to confirm a need for OSSF repairs in low-income locations. The team is also working on outreach materials and hopes to make quite a bit of headway in the next quarter.

- Watershed Protection Plan Development for Greens Bayou (H-GAC) – Ms. Windham announced that the team will be reaching out to those interested in workgroup meetings to check availability to convene on the week of June 23. The next public meeting (hybrid) is scheduled for July 16 from 5:00-7:00 p.m. Invitations will go out later this week.
- Enhancing Clear Creek Watershed Protection and Galveston Bay Plan through Community Engagement and Monitoring (BPA) – Ms. Flowers announced that BPA continues to engage with Homeowners Associations, traditional neighborhoods, and educational institutions to provide information related to the Clear Creek WPP, bacteria, and fats, oils, and grease. The team plans to host the first of two trainings in August and are seeking support to identify communities to install pet waste stations. If anyone has recommendations, please reach out to BPA at info@bayoupreservation.org.
- Application of Rapid Methods of Microbial Source Tracking to Assess the Source of Fecal Contamination to Western Galveston Bay (UHCL) – Update provided during member spotlight presentation.
- West Lake Houston Basin (H-GAC) – Ms. Windham announced that the team is coordinating with stakeholders to distribute more pet waste stations; coordinating with Texas A&M Forest Service on a tree planting in Conroe tentatively planned for fall 2025; and will be conducting field surveys in each segment next month.
- East Fork Watershed Protection Plan (H-GAC) – Ms. Windham announced that this project is wrapping up and can be removed from the project updates list.
- Cotton Bayou TMDL (H-GAC) – Mr. Johnston announced that there will be an implementation meeting June 18, from 4:00-6:00 p.m. at Sam and Carmina Goss Memorial Library, Mont Belvieu. The meeting will focus on a TMDL Addendum and kick-off implementation.
- Chocolate Bayou I-Plan Development (H-GAC) – Mr. Johnston announced that there will be a stakeholder meeting on August 7, from 4:00-6:00 p.m. at the Alvin Library. The meeting will initiate review of the draft plan covering Chocolate Bayou, Mustang Bayou, and Halls Bayou.
- Bacteria Implementation Group (H-GAC) – Mr. Johnston announced that they have completed targeted monitoring of Halls Bayou and are sharing the results. They are also working on the 2025 Annual Report.

Roundtable/Partner Announcements and Updates:

Ms. Rines announced that all subcommittee agendas will now be available on the GBEP website prior to the meetings if your curious what any of the other subcommittees have going on.

Ms. Rines reminded everyone that GBEP's State of the Bay Symposium will be February 24-25, 2026. Abstracts will be due June 20.

Old Business

Upcoming GBEP meetings:

B&P Meeting – Wednesday, July 9, 2025 (1:00-3:00pm)

GBC Meeting – Wednesday, July 16, 2025 (9:30am -12:30pm)

WSQ Subcommittee Meetings

- Wednesday, September 10, 2025 (1:30-3:30pm)
- Wednesday, December 10, 2025 (1:30-3:30pm)

Adjourn