



WATER AND SEDIMENT QUALITY SUBCOMMITTEE GALVESTON BAY COUNCIL



Meeting Minutes Wednesday, September 10, 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 Rines

Call to Order

Attendees: Brian Koch (TSSWCB), Ryan Bare (HARC), Christian Rines (GBEP), Steven Johnston (H-GAC), Mandi Gordon (EIH/UHCL), Sam Hill (TAMFS), Natasha Zarnstorff (GBF), Luke Travis (USGS), Jenny Oakley (H-GAC), Schyler Rhea (WHD), Kaylei Chau (EIH/UHCL), Michael LaMontagne (UHCL), Michael Roberts (TCT), Christie Taylor (TX A&M AgriLife), Lisa Marshall (GBEP), Lindsey Lippert (GBEP), Hope Cole (GBEP), Jenelle Estrada (GBEP), Matthew Abernathy (GBEP), Zoe Gapayao (GBEP), Habib Ahmari (UTA), Brittany McWhorter (TIRN), Cornell Evans (H-GAC), Zuli Lucena (USGS), Rachel Windham (H-GAC), Huy Vu (EPA), Kendall Guidroz (H-GAC), Mark Steuer (White Oak Bayou Association), Samantha Haritos (GCCDD), Sarah McCaffrey (TCEQ), David Villarreal (TDA), and Katie Wilson (GCHD).

Approval of the June 11, 2025 minutes – Ms. Rines opened the meeting with approval of the minutes. Mr. Bare motioned to approve the minutes and Mr. Johnston seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with no changes.

A Conflict-of-Interest statement was provided to in-person attendees and emailed to those attending online. Subcommittee members were asked to sign the statement and disclose any interest with a proposed project prior to or during the project nomination discussion. All possible conflicts of interest were captured in the meeting's recording and chat feature.

New Business

Fiscal 2027 Project Proposals and Discussion

Project proposals were sent out in advance of the meeting for review. Members were asked to keep the subcommittee priorities in mind while reviewing. Priorities selected by the WSQ Subcommittee for the Fiscal 2027 funding cycle were as follows:

- 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

Each person presenting a proposal was given a total of five minutes to explain their project followed by a few minutes for Q&A. Guidelines for presenting proposals were as follows:

- Due to time constraints, presentations were limited to a few slides;
- Proposals were presented in the order of the distributed project proposal packet;
- If a connection to a proposal was not obvious, the relationship to the project was disclosed; and,
- If a vote was necessary, only one person from each entity could vote and represent their entity.

Once all proposals had been presented to the group, the subcommittee discussed which projects should take priority. Shovel-ready projects requiring solely state funds were noted as eligible to receive Fiscal 2026 State funds. These were additional State rider funds that GBEP was awarded after the regular Fiscal 2026 project planning cycle. The top pick to recommend to the Budget and Priorities (B&P) Subcommittee for full funding (no preference on funding source) in Fiscal 2027 was H-GAC's *How's the Water - Public Health Risk Awareness Outreach Campaign*. The second nomination for full funding (required state funds as match) was HARC's *Native Channel Restoration and Habitat Restoration within the Double Bayou Watershed*, followed by EIH/UHCL's *Effect of Native Plants on Soils of Constructed Stormwater Drainages: Pilot Study Expansion*, which was also recommended to receive full funding (no preference on funding source). A fourth project, EIH/UHCL's *Feasibility Study for a Bioretention Demonstration Site*, was recommended for full funding contingent on EIH/UHCL obtaining a letter of commitment from the university by September 23, 2025. A fifth and sixth project were recommended as alternatives if any funding becomes available or if B&P sees an alternative project as a better fit for the Program's balanced budget. Projects selected by the B&P Subcommittee are presented to the GBC at the October Council meeting for approval. The following project proposals were recommended by WSQ Subcommittee members:

Project Name	Grantee	Funding Request	WSQ Subcommittee Recommendation	Notes
How's the Water - Public Health Risk Awareness Outreach Campaign	H-GAC	\$99,303.53 Year 1: \$40,945.58 Year 2: \$58,357.97	\$99,303.53	Recommended for full funding by Subcommittee.
Native Channel Revegetation and Habitat Restoration within the Double Bayou Watershed	GTRI/HARC	\$123,847.45 Year 1: \$65,405.51 Year 2: \$58,441.94	\$123,847.45	Recommended for full funding by Subcommittee.
Effect of Native Plants on Soils of Constructed Stormwater Drainages: Pilot Study Expansion	UHCL	\$108,957.94 Year 1: \$108,957.94	\$108,957.94	Recommended for full funding by Subcommittee.
Feasibility Study for a Bioretention Wetland Demonstration Site	UHCL	\$39,273.75 Year 1: \$39,273.75	*\$39,273.75	*Recommended for full funding by Subcommittee, contingent on grantee obtaining Letter of Commitment from UHCL by 9/23.
<i>Health and Performance Monitoring of Green Infrastructure BMPs: A Pathway for High School Intern Career Exploration</i>	Texas A&M AgriLife	\$241,966.00 Year 1: \$103,787.00 Year 2: \$138,179.00	Alternate 1	<i>Recommended for funding if additional funds become available.</i>
<i>Improving Contact Recreation for Galveston Bay</i>	GBF	\$110,883.00 Year 1: \$57,282.00 Year 2: \$53,601.00	Alternate 2	<i>Recommended for funding if additional funds become available.</i>
<i>Enumeration Methods Comparison and Evaluation of Nature-Based Stormwater Infrastructure to Reduce Microplastic Pollution in Galveston Bay</i>	H-GAC	\$191,351.66 Year 1: \$96,984.34 Year 2: \$94,367.32	Alternate 3 or \$5,500	*Consider amending current contract to allow collection/storage of field duplicate and triplicate samples in support of potential future analysis for a Microplastics identification and enumeration study at \$5,500.00
WSQ Funding Totals:		\$1,588,382.18	\$376,882.67	

Old Business

Project Updates from WSQ Project Managers:

**Time did not allow for project updates.*

Watershed Partnership Updates/Roundtable:

**Time did not allow for partner updates.*

Galveston Bay Estuary Program, Council, and Subcommittee updates:

**Time did not allow for GBEP updates.*

Upcoming GBEP meetings:

- B&P Meeting - Wednesday, October 1, 2025 (1:00pm -4:00pm)
- GBC Meeting - Wednesday, October 15, 2025 (9:30am -12:30pm)
- Next WSQ Subcommittee Meeting - Wednesday, December 10, 2025 (1:30-3:30pm)

Adjourn