

MONITORING AND RESEARCH SUBCOMMITTEE GALVESTON BAY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 10, 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), Sarah Belles (ABC), Jessie Casillas (HGAC), Kaylei Chau (UHCL), Guilherme Conte (TAMUG), Jan Culbertson (Citizen), Meri Davalasheridze (TAMUG), Kevin De Santiago (TWT), Kristi Fazioli (CMC), Vivienne Foroughirad (TAMUG), Mandi Gordon (UHCL), George Guillen (UHCL), Amanda Hackney (Black Cat GIS), Jen Irving (HARC), Karl Kaiser (TAMUG), Erin Kinney (HARC), Mike Lee (USGS), Hui Liu (TAMUG), Yina Liu (TAMU), Zulimar Lucena (USGS), Chris Marshall (TAMUG), Sherah Ann McDaniels (UHCL), Brittany McWhorter (TIRN), Vanessa Mintzer (GBF), Theresa Morris (TAMUG), Jenny Oakley (HGAC), Alyssa Quackenbush (GBF), Hanadi Rifai (UH), Melanie Rogers (UHCL), Michael Shields (TAMU), Brandon Smith (UHCL), Chloe Stifler (ABNC), Luke Travis (USGS), Katie Wilson (GCHD), Natasha Zarnstorff (GBF), Matthew Abernathy (GBEP), Hope Cole (GBEP), Zoe Gapayao (GBEP), Lindsey Lippert (GBEP), Lisa Marshall (GBEP), Christian Rines (GBEP).

Approval of June 11, 2025 meeting minutes – Motion to approve by Amanda Hackney and a second by George Guillen.

FY 2027 Funding M&R Project Presentations

Presenters had seven minutes to present their projects followed by four minutes of questions and discussion

- Mercury accumulation in bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*), a sentinel species for estuarine and human health
- Evaluating Economic and Ecosystems services of Galveston Bay Estuarine Wetlands
- Enumeration Methods Comparison and Evaluation of Nature-Based Stormwater Infrastructure to Reduce Microplastic Pollution in Galveston Bay
- Advancing monitoring estuarine ecosystems through development of automatic sampling framework
- Sea Aggie Sea Turtle Patrol- Gulf Center for Sea Turtle Research
- Developing a Tool to Assess Black Mangrove Distribution: A Pilot Study in Galveston Bay

- Coastal Ocean Acidification Monitoring Program in Galveston Bay

M&R Updated Ranking Guideline and Timeline Overview

Jenelle Estrada gave an overview on the ranking process timeline. Organizations eligible to rank have one week to submit their rankings. Each organization has one ranking which they can develop as a group, or they can send them individually to be averaged together by the subcommittee coordinator. In terms of the subcommittee, an “organization” is defined as an overarching entity, and does not distinguish between divisions, sections or laboratories.

A list of current member organizations was displayed. Each member organization gets one ranking and must have attended (personally or by proxy) a minimum of two subcommittee meetings in the year prior. Dr. Erin Kinney asked how the subcommittee wanted to handle non-financial conflict of interest with projects that are being ranked. There was discussion until a consensus was reached that organizations can rank a project provided, they are not financially involved in the current proposed funding. They are required to have a signed conflict of interest form on file for any non-financial involvement.

Project Updates:

- Regional Monitoring Database - HARC (Ryan Bare)
 - The contract has ended, and the final invoice is expected to be submitted on time.
- Monitoring Ecosystem Indicators for Science-Based Restoration and Enhancement - TAMUG (Hui Liu)
 - Sampling cruises are ongoing, and a recent manuscript on this ongoing research was published.
- The Distribution and Fate of Highly Toxic Tire Rubber-Derived Chemicals in Galveston Bay - TAMU (Michael Shields)
 - Data and statistical analysis is ongoing for water and sediment 6PPD and 6PPD-Q concentrations.
- Evaluating Galveston Bay’s Resilience to Ocean and Coastal Acidification - HARC (Erin Kinney)
 - 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)
 - The QAPP has been approved and staff training for Dermo evaluation completed.
- Tracking *Perkinsus Marinus* (Dermo) Infection in Sun-Cured Oysters - UHCL (Mandi Gordon)
 - The QAPP has been approved, and field experiment operations are underway for testing Dermo prevalence and severity.
- Monitoring to Assess Long-term Restoration Success in Galveston Bay Wetlands - TAMUG (Anna Armitage)
 - The QAPP has been approved, and field sampling preparation is underway.

Announcements/Path Forward Items:

- WSQ Subcommittee meeting: Wednesday, September 10, 2025, 1:30 p.m.- 3:30 p.m.
- B&P Subcommittee meeting: Wednesday, October 1, 2025, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

- GBC meeting: Wednesday, October 15, 2025, 9:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.
- M&R 2025 Subcommittee Meetings
 - December 10, 2025 (9:30-11:30am)

Adjourn