

## Draft Agenda for the 12<sup>th</sup> State of the Bay Symposium: February 24-25, 2026

Day 1				
7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.	Registration			
8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	<b>Day One Opening Plenary Session (Exhibit Hall A)</b> - Welcome by Galveston Bay Estuary Program, Lisa M. Marshall, Program Manager - Welcome Address by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Troy Hill, Water Division Director - Address by Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Catarina Gonzales, Commissioner - Panel: Water Rights (National Wildlife Federation, Texas Water Trade, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Tributary Consulting)			
10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	<b>Morning Break - Opportunity to network and visit the exhibits and poster presentations (Exhibit Hall B)</b>			
10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	<b>Concurrent Session I</b>			
Floral Ballroom A1	Floral Ballroom A2	Room 3	Room 4	
<b>State of the Bay: Multiple Stressor Challenges and their Impacts on Galveston Bay Region and its Ecosystems</b> <i>Hanadi Rifai, University of Houston</i>	<b>Legacy, Emerging Chemical and Biological Contaminants in Aquatic Ecosystems Part I</b> <i>Bryan Gahn, Texas A&amp;M University Galveston</i>	<b>Creating and Maintaining Strong Partnerships for Education and Engagement</b> <i>Cindy Wilems, Galveston Bay Foundation</i>	<b>Building Bird Habitats</b> <i>Pete Deichmann, Houston Audubon</i>	
<b>Impacts on Water and Sediment Quality</b> <i>Hanadi Rifai, University of Houston</i>	<b>Nano- and Microplastics in Marine Ecosystems: Sediment to Seafood</b> <i>Bryan Gahn, Texas A&amp;M University Galveston</i>	<b>Creating and Maintaining Strong Partnerships</b> <i>Cindy Wilems, Galveston Bay Foundation</i>	<b>High Island Rookery Resilience and Enhancement: 7 Years</b> <i>Alicia Mein-Johnson, Harris County Precinct 3</i>	<b>Later Pete Deichmann, Houston Audubon</b>
<b>Ecosystem Protection and Preservation</b> <i>Bob Stokes, Galveston Bay Foundation</i>	<b>Current State and Historic Trends in Persistent (PAHs, PCBs) and Emerging Pollutant (Nano)plastics of NMPs) Body-Burdens in Oysters and Fish from Galveston Bay</b> <i>Astif Mortuza, Texas A&amp;M University Galveston</i>	<b>Tools of Engagement Research-Based Strategies for Community Messaging, Outreach, and Engagement</b> <i>Andrea Tantillo, Houston-Galveston Area Council</i>	<b>Restoration and Community Engagement: The Wulfert Bird Nesting Habitat Project</b> <i>Elise Cormier, TetraTech</i>	<b>Building Resilience for Rookery Islands: Long-Term Waterbird Population Trends on North Deer Island</b> <i>Tim Forrester, Audubon Texas</i>
<b>Impacts on Ecosystems</b> <i>Antoinetta Quigg or alternate, Texas A&amp;M University Galveston</i>	<b>Opportunities for Ecosystem Resilience to Extreme Heat</b> <i>Meredith Jennings or alternate, Houston Advanced Research Center</i>	<b>Establishing a Research Framework and Baseline Conditions to Support Assessments of Cumulative Effects from Multiple Stressors in Galveston Bay</b> <i>Dolphins Vanessa Mintzer, Galveston Bay Foundation</i>	<b>Enhancing Eastern Black Rail Habitat in Gulf Coast Marshes: The Role of Vegetation Management</b> <i>Trevor Markwood, Texas A&amp;M University</i>	
<b>Flood and Flood Resilience</b> <i>Jonathan Holley, Harris County Flood Control District</i>	<b>Ecosystem Service Provisioning in Restored Salt Marshes: Changes Over Time</b> <i>Anna Armitage, Texas A&amp;M University Galveston</i>			
<b>12:00 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.</b>	<b>Luncheon (Exhibit Hall A), Keynote Speaker - Marcus Eriksen</b>			
<b>1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Concurrent Session II</b>			
Floral Ballroom A1	Floral Ballroom A2	Room 3	Room 4	
<b>Collaborative Conservation Through Natural Resource Damage Assessments</b>	<b>Improving Water Quality in Galveston Bay with Healthy Soil and Green Infrastructure</b>	<b>Community Engagement with Birds</b>	<b>Oysters</b>	

<p><b>Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration in Galveston Bay</b> <i>Michael Cave, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality</i></p> <p><b>NRDA Sea Turtle Restoration on the Upper Texas Coast: Sea Turtle Nest Monitoring, Sea Turtle Rescue, Recovery, Rehabilitation, and Marine Debris Removal</b> <i>Chris Marshall, Texas A&amp;M University Galveston</i></p> <p><b>Construction and Monitoring of Dickinson Bay Bird Island 2</b> <i>Jeffrey Fato, Galveston Bay Foundation</i></p> <p><b>Continued Placement of Beneficial Use Material at Pierce Marsh</b> <i>Sally Clark, Galveston Bay Foundation</i></p>	<p><b>Improving Water Quality in Galveston Bay with Healthy Soil and Green Infrastructure</b></p> <p><i>Charriss York, Texas A&amp;M AgriLife</i></p> <p><b>Brian Koch, Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board</b></p> <p><b>Kelli Ondracek, City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department</b></p> <p><b>Brittani Flowers, Bayou Preservation Association</b></p> <p><b>Texas-Based Ecosystem Service Valuation for Benefit-Cost Analysis of Nature-Based Solutions</b> <i>Michael Niebuhr, AgriLife</i></p>	<p><b>How we Help the Birds: A Look at Bird-Friendly Actions Taken by Community Members</b></p> <p><i>Schyler Brown, Houston Audubon</i></p> <p><b>Filling in the Gaps: Using Houston Audubon Urban Bird Surveys to Improve the Quality of Community Science Datasets</b> <i>Schyler Brown, Houston Audubon</i></p> <p><b>Where Birds Thrive, People Prosper: Creating Resilient Communities Through Bird City Texas Certification</b> <i>Chloe Crumley, Audubon Texas</i></p> <p><b>Beach Nesting Bird Conservation on the Upper Texas Coast: Stabilizing and Increasing Populations Through Habitat Protection, Population Monitoring, and Public Outreach</b></p> <p><i>Sarah Belles, American Bird Conservancy</i></p>	<p><b>Management Strategies for Oyster Recovery and Fishery Sustainability in Galveston Bay</b> <i>Christine Jensen, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department</i></p> <p><b>Lessons Learned from Adaptively Managing an Oyster Reef Impacted by Sedimentation</b> <i>Kathy Sweezey, The Nature Conservancy</i></p> <p><b>The Galveston Bay Foundation's Oyster Shell Recycling Program: 14 Years of Growth and Future Goals</b> <i>Shannon Batte, Galveston Bay Foundation</i></p> <p><b>Sentinel Program to Track <i>Perkinsus marinus</i> in Oysters of Galveston Bay</b> <i>George Guillen, University of Houston Clear Lake</i></p>	
3:00 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.	<b>Dedicated Poster Presentation Session and Afternoon Break (Exhibit Hall B)</b>			
3:45 - 5:00 p.m.	<b>Concurrent Session III</b>			
	<b>Floral Ballroom A1</b> Panel: Caring for Trinity Bay: Building an Interagency Partnership to Evaluate and Remove Aging Oil & Gas Infrastructure	<b>Floral Ballroom A2</b> Land Conservation	<b>Room 3</b> Exploration Green: A Nature-Based Solution for Stormwater Management in Houston, TX	<b>Room 4</b> Wetland Connections Workshop
	D'Anne Stites, Texas General Land Office  Brent Koza, Texas General Land Office  Ryan Lytle, Texas General Land Office  Texas Railroad Commission Representative, Texas Railroad Commission	<b>Land Protection Efforts in the Galveston Bay Watershed</b> <i>Matt Singer, Galveston Bay Foundation</i>  <b>Land Acquisition for Habitat Conservation and Environmental Education</b> <i>Lindsey Savage, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department</i>  <b>Armand Bayou Nature Center – Urban Acquisition and Conservation</b> <i>Timothy Pylate, Armand Bayou Nature Center</i>	<i>Christie Taylor, Texas A&amp;M AgriLife and Exploration Green Conservancy</i>  <i>Jennifer Morrow, Clear Lake City Water Authority</i>  <i>Matt Forster, Clear Lake City Water Authority</i>  <i>Representative from the LAN engineering team</i>  <i>Rich Sommer, Exploration Green Conservancy</i>	<i>Cindy Wilems, Galveston Bay Foundation</i>  <i>Emily Billin, Galveston Bay Foundation</i>  <i>Rachel Sunshine, Galveston Bay Foundation</i>

		<b>Increasing the Pace of Conservation in Southeast Texas: Challenges and Opportunities</b> <i>Mary Anne Piacentini, Coastal Prairie Conservancy</i>	
5:00 p.m.	<b>Evening Reception (Room A4)</b>		

<b>Day 2</b>				
7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.	<b>Morning Networking</b>			
8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	<b>Day Two Opening Plenary Session (Exhibit Hall A)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Welcome by Galveston Bay Council, Vance Darr, Chair</li> <li>- Address by City of Galveston, Craig Brown, Mayor</li> <li>- Address by Galveston Bay Foundation, Bob Stokes, President</li> <li>- Presentation: Paul Montagna (Harte Research Institute)</li> </ul>			
10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	<b>Morning Break - Opportunity to network and visit the exhibits and poster presentations (Exhibit Hall B)</b>			
10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	<b>Concurrent Session IV</b>			
	Floral Ballroom A1	Floral Ballroom A2	Room 3	Room 4
	<b>Living Shorelines in the Galveston Bay System: Status, Considerations, and Long-Term Results</b> <i>Jim Dobberstine, Lee College</i> <i>Cindy Howard, University of Houston Clear Lake</i> <i>Jeffrey Fato, Galveston Bay Foundation</i> <b>Evaluating Saltmarshes as a Nature-Based Solution to Microplastic Pollution</b> <i>Lydia Thurman, University of Houston Clear Lake</i>	<b>Panel: Watershed-Based Planning and Implementation</b> <i>Steven Johnston, Houston-Galveston Area Council</i> <i>Rachel Windham, Houston-Galveston Area Council</i> <i>Celina Gauthier Lowry, Texas A&amp;M AgriLife</i> <i>Lucas F. Gregory, Texas Water Resources Institute</i> <i>Natasha Zarnstorff, Galveston Bay Foundation</i> <i>Nicole Hall, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality</i>	<b>eDNA Biomonitoring in Galveston Bay</b> <i>Yasmina Shah Esmaeili, Texas A&amp;M University Galveston</i> <i>Guilherme Corte, Texas A&amp;M University Galveston</i> <i>Jaelyn Rodriguez, Texas A&amp;M University Galveston</i>	<b>Flora and Fauna of Galveston Bay</b> <b>Morphometrics, Population Structure, and Spatial Distribution of Diamondback Terrapin in Texas Estuaries</b> <i>Mandi Gordon, University of Houston Clear Lake</i> <b>Seagrass Community in West Bay and Christmas Bay: 2016 - 2024</b> <i>Laura Ryckman, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality</i> <b>Evaluation of Microplastic Loading in Marsh Habitats Associated with Texas Diamondback Terrapins (<i>Malaclemys terrapin littoralis</i>)</b> <i>Gabrielle Hammerbach, University of Houston Clear Lake</i> <b>Movement and Habitat Use of Green Sea Turtles in the Galveston Bay Estuary System</b> <i>Madelyn Rupp, Texas A&amp;M University Galveston</i>
12:00 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.	<b>Luncheon (Exhibit Hall A), Keynote Speaker - Matt Aeberhard</b>			

1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Concurrent Session V			
	Floral Ballroom A1	Floral Ballroom A2	Room 3	Room 4
	Water and Sediment Quality Monitoring and Management	Community-Based Water Quality Initiatives	Data/Modeling	Historic and Future Bird Trends
	<p><b>Coastal Groundwater Dynamics in Galveston Bay</b> <i>Dini Adyasari, Texas A&amp;M University Galveston</i></p> <p><b>Application of Matrix-Assisted Laser Desorption/Ionization Time-of-Flight Mass Spec to Detect the Source of Enterococcus Contamination of Mustang Bayou</b> <i>Chris Howard, University of Houston Clear Lake</i></p> <p><b>Targeted Bacteria Monitoring: A Holistic Overview of the Houston-Galveston Area Council's Projects</b> <i>Cornell Evans, Houston-Galveston Area Council</i></p> <p><b>Developing a TMDL for a Stormwater-dominated Recreational Beach</b> <i>Sam Bickley, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality</i></p>	<p><b>Clean Coast Texas: Providing Coastal Communities with Technical Assistance to Protect and Restore Water Quality</b> <i>Scott Jones, Texas A&amp;M AgriLife</i></p> <p><b>Enhancing On-Site Sewage Facility Outreach and Improvements on a Community Level with GIS-Based Tools and Local Partners</b> <i>Kendall Guidroz, Houston-Galveston Area Council</i></p> <p><b>Public Awareness of Waterborne Pathogen Risk from Recreational Exposure: Insights from Galveston Beach Survey</b> <i>Ashley Ross, Texas A&amp;M University Galveston</i></p> <p><b>Water Quality, Debris, and Citizen Scientists in Galveston Bay</b> <i>Natasha Zarnstorff, Galveston Bay Foundation</i></p>	<p><b>Texas Clean Rivers Program Regional Water Resources Information Map</b> <i>Jenny Oakley, Houston-Galveston Area Council</i></p> <p><b>Galveston Bay Regional Monitoring Database: What Can It Do For You?</b> <i>Ryan Bare, Houston Advanced Research Center</i></p> <p><b>Next Steps in Estuarine Habitat Suitability Modeling in Galveston Bay: Integrating Process-Based and Data Driven Approaches</b> <i>Ryan Hostak, TetraTech</i></p> <p><b>Land Cover Forecasting for the HGAC Region using TerrSet</b> <i>Megha Shrestha, Houston-Galveston Area Council</i></p> <p><b>Leveraging the Texas Litter Database for Citizen Science and Watershed Stewardship</b> <i>Kirsten Sorensen, Keep Texas Beautiful</i></p>	<p><b>Enhancing Habitat and Birdlife on the Bolivar Peninsula: A Historical Perspective</b> <i>Wyatt Egelhoff, Houston Audubon</i></p> <p><b>Avian Conservation Initiatives at the Houston Zoo: Building for a Sustainable Future in Zoological Aviculture Programs and Global Conservation</b> <i>Ric Urban, Houston Zoo</i></p> <p><b>60 Years of Avian Surveillance Within Harris County Mosquito and Vector Control</b> <i>Elise Nishikawa, Harris County Mosquito and Vector Control</i></p> <p><b>Roseate Spoonbill in Galveston Bay: Apparent Trends in Breeding Population</b> <i>Wyatt Egelhoff, Houston Audubon</i></p> <p><b>The State of the Attwater's Prairie Chicken (Tympanuchus cupido attwateri) in Texas and the AZA SAFE Conservation Initiative</b> <i>Kyle McAuliffe, Houston Zoo</i></p>
3:00 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.	Afternoon Break - Opportunity to network and visit the exhibits and poster presentations (Exhibit Hall B)			
3:45 - 5:00 p.m.	Concurrent Session VI			
	Floral Ballroom A1	Floral Ballroom A2	Room 3	Room 4
	Habitat Restoration and Enhancement	Legacy, Emerging Chemical and Biological Contaminants in Aquatic Ecosystems Part II	Connecting Communities Through Environmental Education and Outreach	Dolphins

<p><b>Native Plant Program for Lower Galveston Bay Watershed</b> <i>Ricci Simmons, Galveston Bay Foundation</i></p> <p><b>Construction and Monitoring of Dollar Bay-Moses Lake Marsh Terraces</b> <i>Jeffrey Fato, Galveston Bay Foundation</i></p> <p><b>An Upstream Piece of Galveston Bay's Ecosystem: Findings from an Urban Park's Native Habitat Restoration</b> <i>Courtney Hall, Memorial Park Conservancy</i></p> <p><b>Building Ecological Resilience Through Urban Restoration and Community Science at the Houston Arboretum &amp; Nature Center</b> <i>Nova Morales, Houston Arboretum &amp; Nature Center</i></p>	<p><b>A Five-Year Observation on the Spatial and Temporal Distributions of PFAS in Galveston Bay, TX, USA</b> <i>Yina Liu, Texas A&amp;M University Galveston</i></p> <p><b>PFAS in Texas and Galveston Bay Waters: Where are we Now?</b> <i>Vanessa Hulse, Houston Advanced Research Center</i></p> <p><b>Applied Time Series Analyses (2000–2017) Of <i>Vibrio Vulnificus</i> And <i>Vibrio Parahaemolyticus</i> (Pathogenic and Non-Pathogenic Strains) In the Eastern Oyster, <i>Crassostrea Virginica</i></b> <i>Antoinetta Quigg, Texas A&amp;M University Galveston</i></p> <p><b>Dioxin and Polychlorinated Biphenyls: Lessons Learned from two Decades of Monitoring, Data Analytics, and Modeling</b> <i>Hanadi Rifai</i></p>	<p><i>Wendy Reistle, University of Houston Clear Lake</i></p> <p><i>Debbie Bush, University of Houston Clear Lake</i></p>	<p><b>From Flood to Lesion: Bottlenose Dolphins as Early Indicators of Estuarine Change</b> <i>Lola Renauer, University of South Carolina</i></p> <p><b>Galveston Bay's Urban Bottlenose Dolphins: Updates on Residency and Threat Evaluation</b> <i>Melanie Rogers, University of Houston Clear Lake</i></p> <p><b>Common Bottlenose Dolphins (<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>) as Bioindicators of Inorganic Chemical Pollution Along the Galveston Coast</b> <i>Madison Hallmark, Texas A&amp;M University Corpus Christi</i></p> <p><b>Land-Based Dolphin Surveys Conducted by Citizen Scientists: What we have Learned about Dolphin-Fisher Interactions at Seawolf Park</b> <i>Alyssa Quackenbush, Galveston Bay Foundation</i></p>
<b>5:15 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.</b> <b>Post-Symposium Sessions</b>			
<b>Floral Ballroom A1</b>			
<b>NRDA Public Meeting</b>			