

Galveston Bay Estuary Program

Public Participation and Education (PPE) Subcommittee Fiscal 2028 Section 320/State Proposals

Project	Lead Implementer
1. Connecting Galveston Bay Communities to Conservation Through Birds and Stewardship	American Bird Conservancy
2. Exploring Environmental Health with STYLE (Sustained Training for Youth Leadership)	Artist Boat
3. Roadside Swale Capacity Building Initiative	Bayou Preservation Association
4. Ingraham Gully Community Watershed Stewardship Project	Bayou City Waterkeeper
5. Bay Ambassadors' Toolkit: Communications Capacity Building	Friends of Flower Garden Banks
6. Connecting Watersheds to Well-Being: A One Health Education Initiative for Galveston Bay	Houston Advanced Research Center
7. Bayou Greenways Conservation Academy	Houston Parks Board
8. Resilient Schools and Communities: Stewardship of the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed	National Wildlife Federation
9. Watershed Galveston Bay: Educator Professional Development for Watershed Stewardship	Texas A&M AgriLife Research, Texas Water Resources Institute
10. Nature-based Stormwater Infrastructure Capacity Building Workshops for Lower Galveston Bay Region	Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
11. Coordination of the River, Lakes, Bays 'N Bayous Trash Bash	Houston-Galveston Area Council
12. Community Outreach on KPRC Take 2	University of Houston-Clear Lake
13. Galveston Bay Social Studies Teachers Empowering Wetland Awareness and Responsible Decisions and Solutions (Galveston Bay STEWARDS)	University of Houston-Clear Lake
14. Texas Envirothon Teacher Capacity Building Project	University of Houston-Clear Lake
15. <i>Avian Bioacoustic Assessment Across Armand Bayou Nature Center</i>	<i>Sent to M&R, NRU</i>
16. <i>Building a Baseline for Sandy Beach Ecosystem Health: Monitoring the Ecological Effects of Beach Nourishment and Contaminant Exposure in Galveston Bay</i>	<i>Sent to M&R, NRU</i>

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2028 Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **July 24, 2026**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for fiscal 2028 (FY 2028) Priority Area Actions that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for FY 2028 at the June 2026 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

Timeline of Proposals:

Task	Date Due
Release of Request for Proposals	June 22, 2026
Proposals Due	July 24, 2026
Send Proposals to Subcommittees Members for Review	August 12, 2026
Present Proposals to Subcommittees for Council Recommendation	September 2, 2026 (NRU and PPE) September 9, 2026 (M&R and WSQ)
Present Proposals to B&P Subcommittee for Final Recommendation	September 30, 2026
Present Proposals to Galveston Bay Council for Approval	October 14, 2026

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Primary Subcommittee: Public Participation and Education (PPE)
Secondary Subcommittee (if applicable): Monitoring and Research (M&R)
Tertiary Subcommittee (if applicable): Choose an item.

Project Name:

Connecting Galveston Bay Communities to Conservation Through Birds and Stewardship
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Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes ☐ No ☒

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

American Bird Conservancy

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

- ☐ Federal, State, or Local Government ☐ Council of Government ☐ Public ISDs or Universities
☒ Nonprofit ☐ Other*

[If other, please identify pass-through partner.]

Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:	WMLKDK8WBKR9
Vendor Identification Number (VIN) or Tax ID:	52-1501259

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Anna Deichmann
Project Representative Phone	(409) 932-2699
Project Representative Email	adeichmann@abcbirds.org

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2027 – ending no later than May 31, 2030) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

September 1, 2027 – May 31, 2030

Amount Requested from GBEP:

[\$] 445,438

Federal ☐ State ☒ No Preference ☐

Is the project scalable? ☒

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2028 (09/01/2027-08/31/2028)	\$173,988.00
FY 2029 (09/01/2028-08/31/2029)	\$176,537.00
FY 2030 (09/01/2029-05/31/2030)	\$94,913.00
Total	\$445,438.00

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

\$ 463,508

Is this an estimate? ☒

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

In-kind Volunteer Hours: 500 hours at \$36.14 Independent Sector rate totaling \$18,070.
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SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Subcommittee Priorities (Section Four) will be considered above others. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

The *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* Action Plans are found at:
<https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 1: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

NPS-1 ☐ NPS-2 ☒ NPS-3 ☐ NPS-4 ☐
PS-1 ☐ PS-2 ☐ PS-3 ☐
PHA-1 ☐ PHA-2 ☐ PHA-3 ☐ PHA-4 ☐ PHA-5 ☐

Plan Priority 2: Protect and Sustain Living Resources

HC-1 ☐ HC-2 ☒ HC-3 ☐
SC-1 ☐ SC-2 ☐
FWI-1 ☐ FWI-2 ☐ FWI-3 ☐

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

SPO-1 ☒ SPO-2 ☒ SPO-3 ☒ SPO-4 ☐
PEA-1 ☒ PEA-2 ☒ PEA-3 ☒

Plan Priority 4: Inform Science-based Decision Making

RES-1 ☐ RES-2 ☐ RES-3 ☒ RES-4 ☐
RES-5 ☐ RES-6 ☐ RES-7 ☐ RES-8 ☐
ACS-1 ☐ ACS-2 ☒ ACS-3 ☐

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

NPS-2: Support Nonpoint Source Education and Outreach Campaigns

- The project will expand SPLASH's education program through the Gulf Advocates (GA) Program, a TEKS-aligned, environmental literacy curricula aimed at developing deep connections to the birds that call Galveston Bay and the Upper Texas Coast home. Through interactive lessons, field experiences, and action projects students will better understand the value of their local habitats, impacts of nonpoint source pollution, and develop effective solutions and sustainable mindsets that benefit their communities and natural spaces beyond the program.
- SPLASH educates the public on the impacts of trash pollution through various outreach strategies including community engagement at public events, presentations, volunteer opportunities, and implementing awareness and action campaigns on social media platforms such as highlighting Plastic Free July and America Recycles Day.

NPS Outputs: Over the span of the project, SPLASH will partner with up to six schools within the Region 4 Education Service Center area to implement the Gulf Advocates Program. Project outputs will include the number of schools participating, students and educators engaged, and community members engaged through outreach activities. SPLASH will collect student behavior change assessments and educator evaluations and interviews to evaluate program effectiveness and measure changes in environmental knowledge, stewardship, and pollution-reducing behaviors. Outreach activities will engage community members in stewardship action and bird conservation while assessing impact through behavior change assessments and participation in the One Less Plastic Pledge. SPLASH will report the number of students, educators, and community members reached, as well as findings from assessment efforts.

HC-2: Habitat Restoration

- With a proven track record of success, SPLASH has removed more than 85,000 pounds of trash from Houston-Galveston area waterways and shorelines since 2020. This project will build upon these efforts by further enhancing and restoring freshwater and estuarine habitats within the Lower

Galveston Bay Watershed (LGBW), reducing harmful pollutants that threaten ecosystem health through chemical leaching, wildlife ingestion, and entanglement.

- SPLASH will conduct quarterly monitoring at up to four locations within the LGBW. The monitoring cleanups will include trash data collection and trash removal. These monitoring cleanups will improve the environmental health of each site, reduce the amount of trash available for downstream transport, and provide important data to better understand the patterns of trash pollution and flow.

HC Outputs: SPLASH will host quarterly monitoring cleanups at up to four locations within the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed over the project's duration. SPLASH will report pounds of trash removed, average pounds of trash removed per site, and enter all data into the Texas Litter Database, an open-access statewide trash monitoring database.

SPO-1: Stewardship Program & Volunteer Opportunities

- The SPLASH Program has engaged more than 6,000 volunteers since 2020 in efforts to remove pollution, restore habitats, and collect standardized trash data. This project will continue to engage community members through volunteer cleanup and monitoring opportunities, outreach to local organizations and community groups, and collaboration with our extensive partner network. These efforts will increase awareness of Texas' trash pollution challenges while providing meaningful opportunities for residents to participate in long-term pollution reduction and prevention efforts, including specialized trash data collection training.
- American Bird Conservancy (ABC) and Keep Texas Beautiful (KTB) will train committed volunteers in the STOP (Study, Track, Remove, Prevent) trash data collection protocol, expanding community capacity to collect standardized environmental data. By providing volunteers with specialized skills and meaningful roles in community science efforts, the project will strengthen volunteer engagement, encourage continued participation, and enhance the long-term impact of cleanup and monitoring activities.

SPO-2: Workshops & Events

- To date, SPLASH has engaged with Houston-Galveston region communities and organizations at 135 outreach events including festivals, markets, organizational meetings, virtual presentations, and other outreach functions. ABC and project partners will continue outreach throughout the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed to increase awareness of trash pollution, promote sustainable behaviors, and encourage participation in stewardship activities such as cleanup and trash monitoring events.
- ABC will partner with KTB to train volunteers on STOP data protocol expanding community capacity to collect standardized trash data. Training will also deepen volunteers' connection and sense of responsibility to protect the LGBW. Multiple training sessions will be scheduled and reported on throughout the project period. These opportunities will provide volunteers with specialized skills and strengthen their role in long-term trash mitigation efforts within the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed.
- The GA Program will include educator training focused on environmental education best practices and data collection methodologies, including bird surveys and trash monitoring protocols. Participating educators will receive hands-on training and earn Continuing Professional Education (CPE) credits to support their ability to incorporate conservation-based learning and community science opportunities into their classrooms.

SPO-3: Support Regional Initiatives

- ABC will support regional outreach initiatives by expanding and improving SPLASH educational and outreach resources to better engage diverse communities throughout the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed. Existing materials will be reviewed and updated to improve accessibility, including Spanish-language translations and additional language translations, such as Vietnamese, as funding allows. New educational resources will be developed as needed to support regional trash reduction and stewardship efforts.

SPO Outputs: The project will expand community capacity for long-term trash mitigation through volunteer engagement, specialized training, educational programming, and accessible outreach resources. Outputs will include community members engaged, volunteers trained in the STOP (Study, Track, Remove, Prevent) trash data collection protocol, educators trained, and sharing of new or updated educational and outreach materials developed to increase accessibility and engagement throughout the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed.

PEA-1: Key Issue Engagement

- ABC, in partnership with Gulf Coast Bird Observatory (GCBO), will engage communities throughout the LGBW through outreach activities designed to increase awareness of trash pollution impacts on wildlife, habitats, and community health. Through outreach events, educational materials, and engagement with community partners, SPLASH will connect residents with knowledge and actionable opportunities to reduce pollution, protect wildlife, and support long-term stewardship of the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed.

PEA-2: Adult Education

- ABC and GCBO offer educational presentations to local community groups and members covering trash pollution impacts on ecosystems, wildlife, and communities of Galveston Bay. Through this action, the project will increase public awareness of regional pollution challenges while connecting community members with opportunities to participate in stewardship activities, including volunteer cleanups and data training.
- SPLASH and KTB will provide trash data training for members of the community who want to increase their understanding of standardized trash monitoring methods and become dedicated volunteers. This will build capacity for community science data collection throughout the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed. SPLASH will host teacher workshops, preparing educators to implement place-based conservation education while providing training in community science methodologies, including trash and wildlife data collection. These workshops will increase educator capacity to engage students in local environmental issues and stewardship actions.

PEA-3: K-12 Education Efforts

- ABC and GCBO will expand the SPLASH education program through implementation of the Gulf Advocates Program, a year-long educational partnership with select schools designed to engage youth in environmental stewardship through the lens of bird conservation and plastic pollution mitigation. The program will directly engage up to six Region 4 schools (grades 9–12) throughout the project period by providing students and educators with place-based educational resources, hands-on learning experiences, and opportunities to participate in community science and conservation actions that address local environmental challenges within the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed.
- To evaluate program effectiveness and measure change in environmental knowledge, stewardship perspectives, and pollution-reducing behaviors, SPLASH will administer student behavior change assessments, educator evaluations, and educator interviews throughout the project period. Evaluation results will be used to assess program impact and inform future improvements to the Gulf Advocates Program.

PEA Outputs: SPLASH will report the number of community members reached through public education and outreach efforts, volunteers trained, students and schools engaged through the Gulf Advocates Program, and evaluation data collected through student assessments and educator feedback.

RES-3: Conduct Physical Stressor Monitoring and Research

- The project will establish a targeted trash monitoring program at up to four sites within the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed where trash pollution impacts wildlife habitat and recreational areas. Monitoring sites will represent key locations along the watershed, from urban bayous upstream to downstream estuarine environments near Galveston Bay, to better understand patterns of trash movement, accumulation, and material composition. SPLASH has successfully collected trash pollution data through 269 cleanups and 103 trash transect surveys from Houston-Galveston area waterways, bays, and coastlines. This project will expand these efforts by implementing consistent monitoring at targeted locations throughout the project period to generate comparable data over time.
- SPLASH will utilize the Texas Litter Database to document and share all collected trash monitoring data. The Texas Litter Database is a statewide, open-access resource that enables organizations, community members, researchers, and decision-makers to better understand trash pollution trends and inform targeted pollution prevention and mitigation strategies. Data collected through this project will contribute to a broader understanding of trash movement within the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed and support regionally relevant solutions.

RES Outputs: SPLASH will implement standardized trash monitoring at up to four sites within the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed, collecting data on trash quantities, types, and trends over the project period. Monitoring data will be entered into the Texas Litter Database to contribute to statewide trash pollution database. SPLASH will report monitoring locations, pounds of trash removed, and top five items found at each site.

ACS-2: Provide Access to Monitoring and Research Data

- SPLASh utilizes a customized Story Map to increase public access to trash pollution data and visualize monitoring results throughout the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed. The interactive map provides information on trash types collected, quantities removed, and site-specific monitoring details, allowing community members, educators, stakeholders, and decision-makers to better understand local trash pollution trends and impacts.
- SPLASh also contributes standardized trash monitoring data to the Texas Litter Database, a statewide open-access resource that supports improved understanding of trash pollution patterns and informs reduction, prevention, and removal strategies throughout Texas.

ACS Outputs: SPLASh will continue to share our data on our StoryMap and Texas Litter Database so stakeholders, educators, students, and members of the public can better understand the trash pollution problem in their region.

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

Subcommittee Identified Priorities:

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- ☐ WSQ: Supporting management measures and watershed-based plans through adaptive management, workforce development, and technical assistance.
- ☐ WSQ: Improve knowledge and accessibility of pollution reporting tools to empower the community.
- ☐ WSQ: Implementation and/or evaluation of best management practices that address point and nonpoint source pollution.
- ☐ NRU: Habitat Acquisition.
- ☐ NRU: Enhancement of existing or ongoing restoration-conservation efforts. Special emphasis on:
 - ☐ Adaptive management for previously completed projects; and
 - ☐ Projects that may have lost/delayed funding from other federal sources.
- ☐ NRU: Benefit to native fish and wildlife, including federal and state listed species, Species of Greatest Conservation Need, or nongame wildlife.
- ☐ NRU: Project urgency: Project must be completed in next 24 months or opportunity is lost.
- ☒ PPE: Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed.
- ☒ PPE: Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects.
- ☒ PPE: Opportunities to host workshops/networking events to provide technical assistance for local leadership (local governments, MUDs, schoolboards, the public) on key topics.
- ☒ PPE: Conservation and environmental workforce development.
- ☒ M&R: Meaningful and effective monitoring of existing, past, and new projects (NRU: especially research and monitoring for diamondback terrapin and best management projects, WSQ, PPE).
- ☐ M&R: Baseline assessments for large-scale, man-made changes to Galveston Bay at an adequate timeline and spatial range to provide useful information.
- ☐ M&R: Assessment, Exposure, and Response to stressors, including but not limited to:
 - ☐ Species of greatest conservation need;
 - ☐ Contact recreation standards;
 - ☐ Environmental parameters;
 - ☐ Emerging contaminants; and
 - ☐ Legacy contaminants.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

The project directly supports the selected Public Participation and Engagement (PPE) and Monitoring & Research (M&R) priorities by connecting communities to local conservation efforts, increasing environmental literacy, building technical skills, and generating valuable watershed data. Project partners will connect new audiences to existing conservation efforts throughout the LGBW through volunteer cleanups, outreach events, community science trainings, and the Gulf Advocates Program. Building on more than 269 cleanups, 103 trash surveys, and over 85,000 pounds of trash removed since 2020, the project will engage students, educators, and community members in meaningful stewardship activities.

Through the Gulf Advocates Program and volunteer training opportunities, SPLASh will empower youth and adults to positively impact their local environment by increasing scientific literacy and providing hands-on experiences in bird conservation, plastic pollution mitigation, and community science monitoring. Educators will receive training in environmental education and data collection while volunteers receive training in STOP (Study, Track, Remove, Prevent) trash monitoring protocol. These outputs support workforce development while creating a sustainable regional network of STOP-certified volunteers that partner organizations can leverage for standardized monitoring and community science efforts.

The project will expand community capacity by equipping volunteers with the skills needed to monitor and address pollution within the watershed. Trained volunteers will also become a shared resource for the

region, with opportunities to support additional cleanup events hosted by community organizations and contribute standardized trash data collection efforts beyond the project's monitoring sites. This approach strengthens collaboration among local partners and increases long-term capacity for watershed-wide trash mitigation.

To support Monitoring & Research priorities, SPLASh will conduct standardized trash monitoring at up to four locations throughout the LGBW to better understand trash trends, material composition, and movement through the watershed. Data collected will be entered into the Texas Litter Database and shared through SPLASh's Story Map, increasing access to environmental information and supporting science-informed decision-making.

Does the Project align with any EPA Areas of Special Interest?

- ☐ Reduce Nutrient Pollution to Protect Water Quality and Public Health
- ☐ Make Investments that Address Coastal Resiliency
- ☒ Reduce Trash

The project aligns directly with the EPA's Area of Special Interest to prevent and reduce trash, particularly plastic waste, entering inland and coastal waterways. The project uses a community-based approach to address trash pollution within the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed through coordinated monitoring, pollution prevention, education, outreach, and stewardship activities.

The project will conduct trash monitoring at up to four locations within the project period of performance to better understand trash trends within the region. Monitoring locations will follow the flow of water from the Houston Ship Channel to the mouth of the Gulf, providing valuable insight into how trash accumulates and moves through connected freshwater and estuarine systems. Through the Gulf Advocates Program, community outreach, and volunteer training, the project will increase environmental literacy and build community capacity to address trash pollution. Participants will gain the knowledge and skills needed to reduce plastic use, partake in stewardship activities, and support long-term solutions to prevent trash from entering waterways.

The project also advances the goals of EPA's Trash Free Waters program by supporting data-driven approaches to reducing aquatic debris. SPLASh will collect standardized trash data using the STOP (Study, Track, Remove, Prevent) protocol and contribute findings to the Texas Litter Database. This data can support informed decision-making and collaborative efforts to reduce trash pollution throughout the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed.

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

SPLASh will address trash pollution in the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed through environmental education, cleanup events, standardized monitoring, and community training opportunities. By implementing SPLASh's Gulf Advocates Program, establishing a long-term trash monitoring framework, and training volunteers and educators in community science methods, the project will increase stewardship, build regional capacity, and support data-informed solutions to protect birds, wildlife, habitats, and communities.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

Texas faces a trash problem that impacts ecosystem quality for wildlife and millions of people throughout the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed (LGBW). According to a report from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Ocean Conservancy, Texas has the highest average weight of trash per mile surveyed of any state in the nation.¹ The project area is home to about 5.4 million people who live within the five counties surrounding Galveston Bay.² Due to the high amounts of litter in the state and the population density, this area faces a significant trash pollution problem as waste flows downstream and accumulates along the diverse habitats of the watershed. As plastics persist in these habitats chemical leaching degrades the air, soil, and water quality, and trash generated from household, construction, and recreational activities threatens wildlife, including many bird species, through ingestion and entanglement. Using bird conservation as a gateway to environmental stewardship, the Stopping Plastics and Litter Along Shorelines Program (SPLASh) engages communities throughout the LGBW and schools within Region 4—the seven-county education service area encompassing Waller, Harris, Liberty, Chambers, Fort Bend, Brazoria, and Galveston counties—in trash pollution mitigation and habitat conservation.

The founding partners of SPLASh, American Bird Conservancy (ABC), Gulf Coast Bird Observatory (GCBO), and Black Cat GIS are partnering with Keep Texas Beautiful (KTB) to expand SPLASh's impact in the LGBW through education, trash monitoring, and workforce development. Project activities include piloting the Gulf Advocates Program and trash monitoring project, and certifying volunteers in the STOP trash data collection method. Collectively, the project will strengthen regional capacity for long-term pollution prevention and monitoring, improve workforce skills, and restore habitat throughout the LGBW.

The Gulf Advocates (GA) Program: The year-long Gulf Advocates Program engages students through interactive lessons, field experiences, and action projects focused on bird conservation and plastic pollution. Using birds as a unique entry point to local conservation issues, the program helps students develop an appreciation for nature while building the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to become environmental stewards within their communities. The program includes TEKS-aligned lessons and field experiences designed to immerse students in their local habitats while learning about a significant environmental challenge and building an identity in environmental stewardship. Field experiences reinforce classroom lessons and demonstrate how everyday actions influence watershed health.

A key component of the program is educator professional development. Educators will participate in summer professional development covering outdoor education, place-based learning, bird conservation, and community science, including bird surveys and trash monitoring. Participants will earn Continuing Professional Education (CPE) credits and receive curriculum resources and ongoing support.

During the first six months of the project, ABC and GCBO will finalize curriculum and program logistics, recruit participating schools from Region 4, and conduct educator outreach. The pilot cohort will launch in August 2028, with educators completing an application, onboarding process, and summer workshop prior to the start of the school year. Student behavior assessments, educator evaluations, and interviews will measure program effectiveness and guide future improvements. Two annual cohorts of the Gulf Advocates Program will be implemented during the project period.

Trash Monitoring: The project will establish a standardized trash monitoring program to improve understanding of trash movement, accumulation, and composition throughout the LGBW. As Phase 1 of a long-term monitoring strategy, the project will establish up to four monitoring sites extending from north of the Houston Ship Channel to the Gulf. Quarterly monitoring will generate consistent data to identify pollution trends and inform watershed management. Selected monitoring events will include public

cleanups and community science opportunities, while Gulf Advocate students will participate in age-appropriate monitoring field experiences. All data will be submitted to the Texas Litter Database. Monitoring activities will be conducted by trained staff and volunteers certified in the STOP (Study, Track, Remove, Prevent) data collection method to ensure consistent, high-quality data collection across monitoring locations. Through the development of standardized methods and trained community capacity, this project will establish the foundation needed for long-term monitoring and evidence-based strategies to reduce trash pollution within the LGBW.

Black Cat GIS will develop a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) during the first six months to ensure standardized data collection, quality control, and data management. American Bird Conservancy will coordinate quarterly monitoring with volunteers and partners.

Volunteer Training & Skill Building: KTB will collaborate with ABC to train and certify Houston-Galveston region volunteers in the Texas Litter Database's standardized trash data collection protocol, STOP (Study, Track, Remove, Prevent). This training will equip volunteers with the skills needed to systematically monitor, identify, and assess debris types and quantities using a consistent scientific framework. Trainings will be conducted at monitoring sites prior to and throughout the monitoring period to ensure volunteers are prepared to support standardized data collection efforts.

STOP-certified volunteers will gain practical skills in environmental monitoring and data collection while contributing to community science and the Texas Litter Database. This training program builds a sustainable network of certified volunteers that strengthens regional monitoring capacity and supports ongoing conservation efforts beyond the life of the grant.

SPLASH will report on pounds of trash removed, trained volunteers and volunteer participants, students and community members reached, schools and educators reached, and behavior change assessments. (See Appendix B). Expected outcomes include increased environmental literacy, stewardship, and community capacity to address trash pollution throughout the LGBW. Through the Gulf Advocates (GA) Program, STOP volunteer trainings, and outreach activities, students, educators, and community members will gain the knowledge and skills needed to participate in long-term conservation efforts. STOP-certified volunteers will become a shared regional resource, supporting partner organizations with standardized data collection and monitoring while strengthening the long-term capacity for community science and watershed stewardship beyond the grant period.

Project Urgency:

Funding during this cycle is critical to initiate the next phase of SPLASH's long-term strategy to address trash pollution within the LGBW. Without timely funding, the project would face delays in launching the Gulf Advocates Program, limiting opportunities to engage students and educators in environmental stewardship and community science. Additionally, this funding is essential to establish Phase 1 of a trash monitoring program, including development of monitoring protocols, volunteer training, and baseline data collection needed to understand trash movement and inform future mitigation strategies. Delaying implementation would result in a missed opportunity to establish long-term datasets and build regional capacity for addressing trash pollution through coordinated education, monitoring, and community action.

Other Plans Implemented:

This project advances goals outlined in the Texas Coastal Resiliency Master Plan, the Texas Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program, and the EPA's Trash Free Waters Program by reducing trash pollution and restoring riparian, wetland, and estuarine habitats within the LGBW. Through trash monitoring and cleanups, the Gulf Advocates Program, and volunteer training in standardized data collection protocols, SPLASH fosters environmental stewardship, mitigates nonpoint source pollution, and improves water quality in vulnerable coastal ecosystems. By generating community-science data of trash, the project supports data-driven management decisions and long-term behavior change, aligning with these plans' priorities for habitat restoration, pollution prevention, community engagement, and resilience.

Partners¹ and Their Roles:

Gulf Coast Bird Observatory

¹ If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted as an appendix with the application.

Gulf Coast Bird Observatory (GCBO) is an independent nonprofit dedicated to the protection of birds and their habitats along the Gulf Coast and beyond. As a founding member of SPLASH, GCBO aims to protect bird species and others from consuming or becoming entangled in trash. As a committed project partner, Gulf Coast Bird Observatory will support the goals and objectives of this project through aiding in school visits, field trips, general program management, and outreach.

Black Cat GIS

Black Cat GIS is a founding member of SPLASH with a mission to provide logical, fact-based, biology-driven solutions to enable efficient and innovative conservation programs. They focus on delivering high-quality GIS analyses, endangered species monitoring, and marine debris modeling to businesses, non-profits, and government agencies. Black Cat will assist with QAPP writing and editing and as a consult to ensure data collection is scientifically sound. In later phases of the project (outside the scope of this proposal) Black Cat will complete statistical and spatial analysis on collected data.

Keep Texas Beautiful

Keep Texas Beautiful (KTB) was founded in 1967, with a mission to inspire and empower Texans to keep our communities clean and beautiful. KTB maintains the Texas Litter Database, launched in 2021. It is a public data source for litter data that can be leveraged by communities for decision-making, policy implementation, and research. It is the first statewide litter repository of its kind.

KTB will provide a targeted volunteer training program focused on equipping actively engaged participants with the skills needed to conduct litter monitoring at project sites. Through a combination of virtual training sessions and in-person litter sample demonstrations, volunteers would receive instruction on standardized litter data collection methods, sampling protocols, and best practices for collecting consistent, high-quality data. This blended training approach would provide volunteers with both foundational knowledge and hands-on experience, ensuring they are prepared to effectively support site-monitoring efforts throughout the project period.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

☒ Yes

☐ No

The project, in part, will target new locations within Greens or Halls Bayou to conduct quarterly monitoring cleanups where SPLASH has not conducted cleanups or worked with community members before. By collaborating with known partners in the area, such as Keep2Clean and the Greater Northside Management District, the project will make connections, conduct outreach, and invite local groups and individuals to partake in cleanups, data training, and school programming.

Is the project subject to Title VI requirements?

To meet federal nondiscrimination guidance and laws (Title VI), TCEQ requires information and services to be provided in languages other than English when significant numbers of beneficiaries are of limited English-speaking ability (LEP). If 5% or more of the population within your project area is LEP and share a common language, then you are required to provide outreach in the alternative language. For statewide projects, Spanish language outreach is required. As Title VI compliance could impact the project budget, please reach out to the primary subcommittee coordinator for this application with questions on determining applicability.

☒ Yes

☐ No

The SPLASH Program offers resources, materials, and lessons in English and Spanish. We will request funding to translate our Gulf Advocates Program curriculum and new outreach materials to Spanish to ensure all SPLASH materials meet Title VI requirements. If funding is available, we will also translate materials to Vietnamese.

Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

[degrees, minutes, and seconds format]

Location:

This project focuses on the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed (LGBW), encompassing the tributaries and shorelines that drain into the lower portion of Galveston Bay. The watershed includes a diverse mix of densely developed urban landscapes, industrial corridors, suburban communities, and agricultural areas, all

of which contribute varying sources of trash and debris to local waterways. Project activities will take place at representative sites across the watershed, including up to two locations along Halls or Greens Bayou, Monument Inn Beach at the confluence of the Houston Ship Channel and Galveston Bay, Texas City Dike or a nearby shoreline south of the Houston Ship Channel, and East End Lagoon, a bayside beach near the mouth of Galveston Bay before waters enter the Gulf of Mexico. Additional sites within Houston-area bayous and bays may be selected for educator field experiences to accommodate school travel requirements while expanding geographic coverage and community science data collection throughout the watershed.

Projects Map

[\[Insert Map Here or Attach as an Appendix if Applicable\]](#)

See Appendices

Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):

[\[Insert Here or Attach as an Appendix\]](#)

See Appendices

SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

a. Direct Costs

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$183,072.00
Fringe Benefits (38.85%) ²	\$71,123.00
Travel	\$5,365.00
Supplies	\$5,085.00
Equipment	\$0.00
Contractual	\$3,910.00
Construction	\$0.00
Other	\$92,855.00
Total Direct Cost	\$361,410.00

b. Indirect Costs³

Distribution Base Amount (<i>identify Base type below</i>)	\$ 361,410
Indirect Cost Rate for Reimbursement	% 23.25
Total Indirect Costs	\$ 84,028

c. Maximum Authorized Reimbursement

Maximum Authorized Reimbursement (Direct and Indirect Costs)	\$ 445,438
--	------------

Indirect Cost Distribution Base. The Distribution Base above is (check one):

☐ direct salary/wages and fringe benefits

² If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

³ Please attach Indirect Cost Agreement as an appendix if applicable

☒ modified total direct costs

☐ other direct cost Base

If other direct cost Base, identify:

The indirect cost rate is (check one):

☐ **Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.

☐ **De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of 15 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

☐ **Partial Reimbursement Rate** — a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

☒ **Other: Provisional Rate.** [Examples: De Minimis Rate with a base of direct salary and wages (less than or equal to actual indirect costs) or Provisional Rate. If this is a Provisional Rate, include the following language: Provisional Rate: **The subsequent adjustment of the indirect cost rate is subject to the requirements of Article 9 of this (Cost Budget) section.**]

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of budget total, identify the main constituents:

The “Other” category consists of two subawards to partners: \$21,921 for Keep Texas Beautiful, and \$50,571 for Gulf Coast Bird Observatory to deliver their elements of the project. It also includes funds for subscriptions, translation service, teacher honoraria, and advertising, for a total amount of \$20,363.

Travel. In order to be reimbursable, travel costs must be specifically authorized in advance of the travel. Travel costs will be reimbursed only in the amount of actual costs, up to the maximum allowed by law for employees of the State of Texas at the time the cost is incurred.

Budget Categories. The Budget Categories above are representative of the items of cost found in TxGMS and 2 CFR Part 200, and have the definitions, requirements, and limitations found therein. Construction costs are not reimbursable without prior, specific written authorization from TCEQ.

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will post notification of the meeting's time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by **July 24, 2026 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:**

WSQ Subcommittee: Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov
NRU Subcommittee: Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov
PPE Subcommittee: Zoe.Gapayao@tceq.texas.gov
M&R Subcommittee: Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov
Programmatic Projects: Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov

Appendices

Appendix A: Project Maps

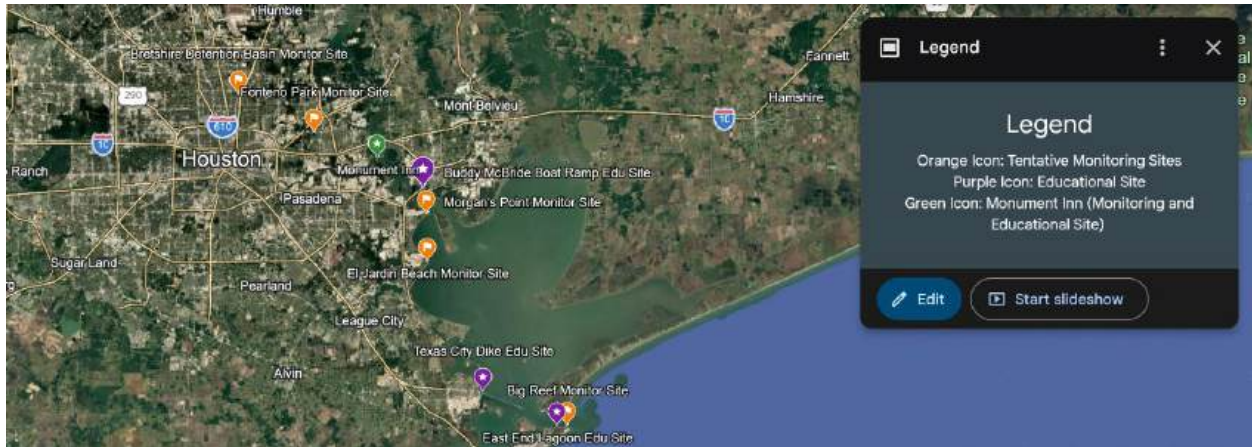


Figure 1. Tentative project sites within the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed. Orange markers indicate proposed trash monitoring locations that follow the watershed flow from north of the Houston Ship Channel to the mouth of the Gulf. Purple markers represent potential education field trip sites, while green markers indicate locations where both trash monitoring and educational field trips will occur.



Figure 2. District map of Region 4 Education Service Center which covers seven counties including Harris, Liberty, Chambers, Galveston, Brazoria, Fort Bend, and Waller.³

Appendix B: Project Deliverables

Deliverable	Target	Organization Implementor
Number of Students Reached	120	ABC, GCBO
Number of Schools	6	ABC, GCBO
Number of Teachers who attended Workshop	6	ABC, GCBO
Number of Volunteers at Cleanup Events	250	ABC, GCBO
Number of STOP-Trained Volunteers	50	KTB
Number of Community Members Engaged	500	ABC, GCBO
Total Pounds of Trash Removed	9,000	ABC, GCBO
Report Average Pounds of Trash Removed per Site	N/A	ABC, GCBO
Share Responses from Behavior Change Assessments	N/A	ABC, GCBO

Table 1. Project deliverables and target outcomes to be reported throughout the project. Target values represent anticipated goals for this pilot project and may be adjusted based on implementation and findings.

Appendix C: Supplemental Photos



Caption 1. SPLASH volunteers cleaning up Monument Inn Beach in La Porte, Texas in May 2026. Monument Inn Beach sits at the confluence of the Houston Ship Channel and Galveston Bay where trash and debris accumulate.



Caption 2. American Bird Conservancy and Houston Zoo partnered to host Presbyterian School students at Texas City Dike for an interactive, beach cleanup field trip. Students removed plastics, trash, and a large net from the habitat. Debris such as these pose ingestion and entanglement threats to shorebirds, dolphins, and other wildlife.

Works Cited

1. Report: An Analysis of Marine Debris in the US, NOAA & Ocean Conservancy. <https://marinedebris.noaa.gov/reports/analysis-marine-debris-us>
2. "Houston, TX | Data USA." *Datausa.io*, datausa.io/profile/geo/houston-tx.
3. *TSNO Region IV - Districts*. (2026). Tsnoregion4.Org. <https://tsnoregion4.org/districts>



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

Nonprofit Organization Indirect Cost Negotiation Agreement

EIN: 52-1501259

Date: 06/30/2026

Organization:

American Bird Conservancy
PO Box 249
The Plains, VA 20198

Report Number: 2026-0102

Filing Ref.:
Last Negotiation Agreement
dated: 08/11/2025

The indirect cost rates contained herein are for use on grants, contracts, and other agreements with the Federal Government to which 2 CFR Part 200 apply subject to the limitations contained in Section II.A. of this agreement. The rates were negotiated by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Interior Business Center, and the subject organization in accordance with the authority contained in applicable regulations.

Section I: Rate

Start Date	End Date	Rate Type	Rate Details				
01/01/2024	12/31/2024	Final	Name	Rate	Base	Location	Applicable To
			Indirect	26.27 %	(A)	All	All Programs
01/01/2026	12/31/2026	Provisional	Name	Rate	Base	Location	Applicable To
			Indirect	23.25 %	(B)	All	All Programs

(A) Base: Modified total direct costs (MTDC) - All direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance). MTDC excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs, and the portion of each subaward in excess of \$25,000.

(B) Base: Modified total direct costs (MTDC) - All direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first \$50,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance). MTDC excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs, and the portion of each subaward in excess of \$50,000.

Treatment of fringe benefits: Fringe benefits applicable to direct salaries and wages are treated as direct costs; fringe benefits applicable to indirect salaries and wages are treated as indirect costs.

Treatment of paid absences: Vacation, holiday, sick leave, and other paid absences are included in salaries and wages and are claimed on grants, contracts, and other agreements as part of the normal cost for the salaries and wages. Separate claims for the costs of these paid absences are not made.

Section II: General

- A. **Limitations:** Use of the rate(s) contained in this agreement is subject to any applicable statutory limitations. Acceptance of the rate(s) agreed to herein is predicated upon these conditions: (1) no costs other than those incurred by the subject organization were included in its indirect cost rate proposal, (2) all such costs are the legal obligations of the grantee/contractor, (3) similar types of costs have been accorded consistent treatment, and (4) the same costs that have been treated as indirect costs have not been claimed as direct costs (for example, supplies can be charged directly to a program or activity as long as these costs are not part of the supply costs included in the indirect cost pool for central administration).
- B. **Audit:** All costs (direct and indirect, federal and non-federal) are subject to audit. Adjustments to amounts resulting from audit of the cost allocation plan or indirect cost rate proposal upon which the negotiation of this agreement was based will be compensated for in a subsequent negotiation.
- C. **Changes:** The rate(s) contained in this agreement are based on the accounting system in effect at the time the proposal was submitted. Changes in the method of accounting for costs which affect the amount of reimbursement resulting from use of the rate(s) in this agreement may require the prior approval of the cognizant agency. Failure to obtain such approval may result in subsequent audit disallowance.
- D. **Rate Type:**
 - 1. **Fixed Carryforward Rate:** The fixed carryforward rate is based on an estimate of the costs that will be incurred during the period for which the rate applies. When the actual costs for such period have been determined, an adjustment will be made to the rate for a future period, if necessary, to compensate for the difference between the costs used to establish the fixed rate and the actual costs.
 - 2. **Provisional/Final Rate:** Within six (6) months after year end, a final indirect cost rate proposal must be submitted based on actual costs. Billings and charges to contracts and grants must be adjusted if the final rate varies from the provisional rate. If the final rate is greater than the provisional rate and there are no funds available to cover the additional indirect costs, the organization may not recover all indirect costs. Conversely, if the final rate is less than the provisional rate, the organization will be required to pay back the difference to the funding agency.
 - 3. **Predetermined Rate:** A predetermined rate is an indirect cost rate applicable to a specified current or future period, usually the organization's fiscal year. The rate is based on an estimate of the costs to be incurred during the period. A predetermined rate is not subject to adjustment.
- E. **Rate Extension:** Only final and predetermined rates may be eligible for consideration of rate extensions. Requests for rate extensions of a current rate will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. If an extension is granted, the non-Federal entity may not request a rate review until the extension period ends. In the last year of a rate extension period, the non-Federal entity must submit a new rate proposal for the next fiscal period.
- F. **Agency Notification:** Copies of this document may be provided to other federal offices as a means of notifying them of the agreement contained herein.
- G. **Record Keeping:** Organizations must maintain accounting records that demonstrate that each type of cost has been treated consistently either as a direct cost or an indirect cost. Records pertaining to the costs of program administration, such as salaries, travel, and related costs, should be kept on an annual basis.
- H. **Reimbursement Ceilings:** Grantee/contractor program agreements providing for ceilings on indirect cost rates or reimbursement amounts are subject to the ceilings stipulated in the contract or grant agreements. If the ceiling rate is higher than the negotiated rate in Section I of this agreement, the negotiated rate will be used to determine the maximum allowable indirect cost.
- I. **Use of Other Rates:** If any federal programs are reimbursing indirect costs to this grantee/contractor by a measure other than the approved rate(s) in this agreement, the grantee/contractor should credit such costs to the

Section II: General (continued)

affected programs, and the approved rate(s) should be used to identify the maximum amount of indirect cost allocable to these programs.

J. Other:

1. The purpose of an indirect cost rate is to facilitate the allocation and billing of indirect costs. Approval of the indirect cost rate does not mean that an organization can recover more than the actual costs of a particular program or activity.
2. Programs received or initiated by the organization subsequent to the negotiation of this agreement are subject to the approved indirect cost rate(s) if the programs receive administrative support from the indirect cost pool. It should be noted that this could result in an adjustment to a future rate.
3. This Negotiation Agreement is entered into under the terms of an Interagency Agreement between the U.S. Department of the Interior and the cognizant agency. No presumption of federal cognizance over audits or indirect cost negotiations arises as a result of this Agreement.
4. Organizations that have previously established indirect cost rates—exclusive of the *de minimis* rate—must submit a new indirect cost proposal to the cognizant agency for indirect costs within six (6) months after the close of each fiscal year.

Section III: Acceptance

Listed below are the signatures of acceptance for this agreement:

By the Nonprofit Organization

By the Cognizant Federal Government Agency

American Bird Conservancy

US Department of the Interior

Signed by:
Angela Modrick
B1B1B2601A8A9401...

Craig Wills

Signature

Signature

Angela Modrick

Craig Wills

Name:

Name:

Division Chief

Indirect Cost & Contract Audit Division

Interior Business Center

VP of Finance

Title:

Title:

7/8/2026

7/1/2026

Date

Date

Negotiated by: Melissa Mittman

Telephone: (916) 930-3811

Email: melissa_mittman@ibc.doi.gov

Next Proposal Due Date: 06/30/2026



299 Hwy 332 West Lake Jackson Texas 77566
979-480-0999 WWW.GCBO.ORG

7/17/26

Galveston Bay Estuary Program
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

Dear Galveston Bay Estuary Program Review Committee:

On behalf of Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, we would like to express our commitment to partnering with American Bird Conservancy in implementing the Stopping Plastics and Litter Along Shorelines (SPLASH) Program and advancing efforts to address trash pollution and promote environmental stewardship throughout the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed (LGBW).

Gulf Coast Bird Observatory is an independent nonprofit dedicated to the protection of birds and their habitats along the Gulf Coast and beyond. Many of the species that we are concerned with live in or migrate through the LGBW. With the SPLASH program, we aim to protect those species and others from consuming or becoming entangled in trash. We also hope to increase awareness and stewardship of birds in our community. As a committed project partner, Gulf Coast Bird Observatory will support the goals and objectives of this project through aiding in school visits, field trips, general program management, and outreach.

Gulf Coast Bird Observatory is committed to working alongside ABC and partners to improve habitat quality, increase environmental stewardship and sustainable mindsets, and support healthier ecosystems for birds, wildlife, and communities throughout the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed. We appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this important initiative and look forward to supporting the continued success and impact of the SPLASH Program.

Sincerely,

Celeste Silling

Education and Outreach Director
Gulf Coast Bird Observatory
csilling@gcbo.org

Black Cat GIS and Biological LLC

Amanda Hackney

Owner/ Consultant
3907 Spring Circle Dr E
Pearland, TX 77584
(936)554-9033
a.hackney@blackcatgis.com

7/17/2026

Dear Galveston Bay Estuary Program Proposal Review Committee,

On behalf of Black Cat GIS and Biological, we express our commitment to partnering with American Bird Conservancy to support the implementation of the Stopping Plastics and Litter Along Shorelines (SPLASH) Program and advance efforts to address trash pollution and promote environmental stewardship throughout the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed (LGBW).

The LGBW is a vital ecological and community resource that supports diverse wildlife while providing essential benefits to millions of residents throughout the Houston-Galveston region. Litter and plastic pollution threaten water quality, wildlife health, and the overall resilience of these ecosystems, however. Through education, workforce training, monitoring, and outreach, [the project] provides a comprehensive approach to reducing trash pollution while building community capacity for long-term environmental stewardship.

As a founding member of SPLASH, Black Cat has supported this group since the very beginning. We believe strongly in the work completed by SPLASH and will continue to be a part of the organization's ongoing project proposed. Black Cat will assist the group with QAPP writing and editing and as a consult to ensure data collection is scientifically sound. In later phases of the project (outside the scope of this proposal) Black Cat will complete statistical and spatial analysis on collected data. SPLASH does an excellent job of organizing public events and conducting citizen science led data collection. Black Cat is committed to taking the next step and using analyses to find patterns and draw conclusions that can be used to guide future management actions.

Black Cat is committed to working alongside ABC and partners to improve habitat quality, increase environmental stewardship and sustainable mindsets, and support healthier ecosystems for birds, wildlife, and communities throughout the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed. We appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this important initiative and look forward to supporting the continued success and impact of the SPLASH Program.

Sincerely,



Amanda Hackney

Owner, Black Cat GIS and Biological LLC
a.hackney@blackcatgis.com





July 16, 2026

Galveston Bay Estuary Program
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

Dear Galveston Bay Estuary Program Review Committee:

On behalf of Keep Texas Beautiful, we express our commitment to partnering with American Bird Conservancy to support the implementation of the Stopping Plastics and Litter Along Shorelines (SPLASh) Program and advance efforts to address trash pollution and promote environmental stewardship throughout the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed (LGBW).

Keep Texas Beautiful's mission is to inspire and empower Texans to keep their communities clean and beautiful. However, litter and plastic pollution threaten water quality, wildlife health, and the overall resilience of these ecosystems, especially in the LGBW. Participating in this collaborative effort allows Keep Texas Beautiful to combine community engagement with science-based data collection to address a critical environmental challenge.

As a committed project partner, Keep Texas Beautiful will support the goals and objectives of this project by providing expertise in litter data collection, volunteer engagement, and data management. Through the Texas Litter Database—the state's first publicly accessible repository for litter data—we will provide a centralized platform for storing, managing, and sharing project data to support informed decision-making and long-term conservation efforts. Keep Texas Beautiful will train project volunteers using our standardized litter sampling methodology through a combination of virtual and in-person training, equipping participants with the skills needed to collect high-quality, consistent data. We will also leverage our statewide network of affiliates and partners to recruit volunteers, promote participation, and encourage long-term engagement throughout the project. In collaboration with American Bird Conservancy and other project partners, we will support quality assurance efforts to maintain the integrity, consistency, and usefulness of the data collected.

Keep Texas Beautiful is committed to working alongside ABC and partners to improve habitat quality, increase environmental stewardship and sustainable mindsets, and support healthier ecosystems for birds, wildlife, and communities throughout the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed. We appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this important



initiative and look forward to supporting the continued success and impact of the SPLASh Program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Sara Walters'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Sara' being more prominent than the last name 'Walters'.

Sara Walters
Executive Director
Keep Texas Beautiful
Tel: 512-961-5262
swalters@ktb.org

Galveston Bay Estuary Program

Fiscal 2028 Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **July 24, 2026**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for fiscal 2028 (FY 2028) Priority Area Actions that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for FY 2028 at the June 2026 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

Timeline of Proposals:

Task	Date Due
Release of Request for Proposals	June 22, 2026
Proposals Due	July 24, 2026
Send Proposals to Subcommittees Members for Review	August 12, 2026
Present Proposals to Subcommittees for Council Recommendation	September 2, 2026 (NRU and PPE) September 9, 2026 (M&R and WSQ)
Present Proposals to B&P Subcommittee for Final Recommendation	September 30, 2026
Present Proposals to Galveston Bay Council for Approval	October 14, 2026

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Primary Subcommittee: Public Participation and Education (PPE)
Secondary Subcommittee (if applicable): Choose an item.
Tertiary Subcommittee (if applicable): Choose an item.

Project Name:

Exploring Environmental Health with STYLE (Sustained Training for Youth Leadership)

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes ☐ No ☒

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

Artist Boat

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

☐ Federal, State, or Local Government ☐ Council of Government ☐ Public ISDs or Universities
☒ Nonprofit ☐ Other*

[If other, please identify pass-through partner.]

Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:	UJKSG7AG1PK5
Vendor Identification Number (VIN) or Tax ID:	56-2394277

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Amy Neblett
Project Representative Phone	409-632-0388
Project Representative Email	Operations.director@artistboat.org

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2027 – ending no later than May 31, 2030) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

24 months

Amount Requested from GBEP:

[\$]150,000

Federal ☐ State ☐ No Preference ☒

Is the project scalable? ☒

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2028 (09/01/2027-08/31/2028)	\$82,775
FY 2029 (09/01/2028-08/31/2029)	\$67,225
FY 2030 (09/01/2029-05/31/2030)	\$0.00
Total	\$150,000

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

\$200,000

Is this an estimate? ☒

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

UTMB has committed to providing the Mobi COACH, Mobi coach supplies (including portable and stationary air monitors, a Torion gas chromatography mass spectrometer and other environmental measuring devices), the Mobi COACH manager/driver time, a co-leader from the Sealy Center for Translational Sciences for

mentorship days, mentors from UTMB Medical School (professors, researchers, students), a meeting space for mentorship days (the UTMB STUDIO), and filling in some of our mentor gaps in funding. This is estimated at \$20,978.

Artist Boat will provide in kind time for the Executive Director and Financial Manager. A portion of the Habitat and Stewardship Manager's time will be covered under other secured land management grants (\$1000). This same grant will provide all habitat restoration tools. Artist Boat will provide Survey Monkey software for pre and post surveys, 1 year of general liability insurance, erosion and sea level rise assessment supplies used during Eco-Art Kayak Adventures, Pelikan brand watercolor sets and watercolor brushes and a kayak fleet including all personal safety and boat supplies. Artist Boat will provide first aid and ACA kayak certification for staff participating in this program. Artist Boat's contribution is estimated at \$29,022 plus the kayak fleet (insured for \$80,000).

School Districts will provide substitutes for teachers that are on field adventures with the students and busses/bus drivers for all field adventures. The cost of a substitute in Galveston County averages at \$100 per day and the price for a school bus and driver will average at \$150 per trip. The cost for the subs and busses is paid for by the school district that is participating and is confirmed in the letter of support Artist Boat collects from each participating school district.

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Subcommittee Priorities (Section Four) will be considered above others. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

The *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* Action Plans are found at:

<https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 1: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

NPS-1 ☐ NPS-2 ☒ NPS-3 ☐ NPS-4 ☐
PS-1 ☐ PS-2 ☐ PS-3 ☐
PHA-1 ☐ PHA-2 ☐ PHA-3 ☐ PHA-4 ☐ PHA-5 ☐

Plan Priority 2: Protect and Sustain Living Resources

HC-1 ☐ HC-2 ☒ HC-3 ☒
SC-1 ☐ SC-2 ☐
FWI-1 ☐ FWI-2 ☐ FWI-3 ☐

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

SPO-1 ☒ SPO-2 ☒ SPO-3 ☐ SPO-4 ☐
PEA-1 ☐ PEA-2 ☐ PEA-3 ☒

Plan Priority 4: Inform Science-based Decision Making

RES-1 ☐ RES-2 ☐ RES-3 ☐ RES-4 ☐
RES-5 ☐ RES-6 ☐ RES-7 ☐ RES-8 ☐
ACS-1 ☐ ACS-2 ☐ ACS-3 ☐

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

[Please identify action items and state how the project implements actions of the *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* Action Plans.]

PEA3, NPS 2

Climate Resiliency Workshop: This workshop facilitates the students' understanding of where they live in relationship to Galveston Bay; the anthropogenic contributors to climate change (causes and impacts of sea level rise, ocean acidification, and extreme weather); how non-point/point source pollution travels through watersheds and how that affects water quality, air quality, CO2 emissions and heat, and what measures may be taken to reduce these impacts; how to utilize NOAA data tools to investigate the physical and socio-economic impacts of climate change. This will ensure students and teachers receive the knowledge necessary to protect and preserve Galveston Bay and empower students to change attitude and behavior that can positively influence the protection and preservation of Galveston Bay. This grant application continues work done in some of the schools and expands to others to create a long term, lasting success in environmental stewardship.

PEA3, NPS 2

Eco-Art Kayak Adventure: This adventure will connect students to the watershed they live in and them to the Bay. Students have a transformative experience by learning to paddle tandem kayaks and become empowered by their ability to navigate a human powered vessel through restored and natural marshes, blue carbon wetlands, and bulkheaded developments. This workshop will ensure students and teachers receive the knowledge necessary to protect and preserve Galveston Bay and empower students to have changes in attitude and behavior that can positively influence the protection and preservation of Galveston Bay. This grant application continues work done in some of the schools and expands to others to create a long term, lasting success in environmental stewardship.

Students use scientific equipment and tools to collect data on salinity, dissolved oxygen, temperature, biomass and turbidity to further explain sea level rise and ocean acidification. Students reflect on how each recorded measurement relates to human impacts on Galveston Bay and how they would change due to sea level rise or ocean acidification.

HC2, PEA3

Habitat Restoration Workshop: Artist Boat Eco-Art educators will introduce students to coastal prairie and wetland ecosystem functions, native and non-native plants, how restoration helps increase biodiversity, how coastal habitats mitigate the impacts of climate change through serving as carbon sinks and sponges for extreme flooding, invasive species removal and control and how restoration helps fight invasive species encroachment. This workshop will introduce students to the need for restoring habitat form and function to prepare them for the in the field work they will do. This workshop will ensure students and teachers in schools in the Galveston Bay watershed receive the knowledge necessary to protect and preserve Galveston Bay. Through the workshop and adventure students are empowered to make attitude and behavior changes that positively influence protection and preservation of Galveston Bay.

HC2, PEA3, SPO1

Habitat Restoration Adventure at the historical coastal prairies of the Coastal Heritage Preserve (CHP). Students will explore, discover, and restore coastal prairies while learning how stewardship of living things can result in environmental benefits to larger systems. They will tour the preserve to see how restoration helps increase biodiversity. They will look at plant roots to see how coastal habitats mitigate the impacts of climate change through serving as blue carbon sinks and sponges for extreme flooding. Students will follow the Artist Boat Habitat Management Plan and plant Eastern Gama, Big Blue Stem, Yellow Indian Grass, Switchgrass, and wildflowers appropriate to the site across 10+ acres with each class planting on average 400 plants or through physical removal of invasive species. This adventure will ensure students and teachers in schools in the Galveston Bay watershed receive the knowledge and skills necessary to protect and preserve Galveston Bay. Through the workshop and adventure students are empowered to make attitude and behavior changes that positively influence protection and preservation of Galveston Bay as well as build a sense of responsibility for the habitat surrounding Galveston Bay.

PEA3, SPO1, SPO2

Paid Field Mentorship: This mentorship will ensure students receive the knowledge necessary to protect and preserve Galveston Bay and empower students to have changes in attitude and behavior that can positively influence the protection and preservation of Galveston Bay. This grant application continues work done in some of the schools and expands to others to create a long term, lasting success in environmental stewardship. Participating in the paid field mentorship increases the sense of responsibility for the health of and ownership of the Galveston Bay by creating a hands-on link to data investigation and stewardship. The participants and the mentors will investigate and understand the effects of environmental hazards on the health and resiliency of their local communities within the watershed while the students gain scientific skills from people working in the environmental health fields. The paid field mentorship brings students together with partners and stakeholders such as UTMB Environmental Health Researchers, Eco Art Educators, Habitat and Land Stewardship specialists and community experts about sea level rise, storm flooding, elevation maps, local infrastructure, and nature areas involved with the air, water, soil, flora and fauna health of our coastal margins. The students will present their scientific data, create their own posters and will then present their Three-Minute Thesis at UTMB or other community events.

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

Subcommittee Identified Priorities:

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- ☐ WSQ: Supporting management measures and watershed-based plans through adaptive management, workforce development, and technical assistance.
- ☐ WSQ: Improve knowledge and accessibility of pollution reporting tools to empower the community.
- ☐ WSQ: Implementation and/or evaluation of best management practices that address point and nonpoint source pollution.
- ☐ NRU: Habitat Acquisition.
- ☒ NRU: Enhancement of existing or ongoing restoration-conservation efforts. Special emphasis on:
 - ☐ Adaptive management for previously completed projects; and
 - ☐ Projects that may have lost/delayed funding from other federal sources.
- ☒ NRU: Benefit to native fish and wildlife, including federal and state listed species, Species of Greatest Conservation Need, or nongame wildlife.
- ☐ NRU: Project urgency: Project must be completed in next 24 months or opportunity is lost.
- ☒ PPE: Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed.
- ☒ PPE: Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects.
- ☐ PPE: Opportunities to host workshops/networking events to provide technical assistance for local leadership (local governments, MUDs, schoolboards, the public) on key topics.
- ☒ PPE: Conservation and environmental workforce development.
- ☐ M&R: Meaningful and effective monitoring of existing, past, and new projects (NRU: especially research and monitoring for diamondback terrapin and best management projects, WSQ, PPE).
- ☐ M&R: Baseline assessments for large-scale, man-made changes to Galveston Bay at an adequate timeline and spatial range to provide useful information.
- ☐ M&R: Assessment, Exposure, and Response to stressors, including but not limited to:
 - ☐ Species of greatest conservation need;
 - ☐ Contact recreation standards;
 - ☐ Environmental parameters;
 - ☐ Emerging contaminants; and
 - ☐ Legacy contaminants.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

[Please explain in detail how project addresses priorities selected. Attachments may be submitted via email in conjunction with this application.]

NRU: Enhancement of existing or ongoing restoration-conservation efforts.

NRU: Benefit to native fish and wildlife, including federal and state listed species, Species of Greatest Conservation Need, or nongame wildlife.

Habitat Restoration Adventure will enhance the restoration and conservation efforts that are ongoing at the Coastal Heritage Preserve. Students will assist with growth of seeds to plants and planting them in the ground in areas of disturbed land where invasive species have been removed. The land where this is happening is known to be a home for black rails. All Habitat Restoration Adventure programming will be conducted following the Habitat Management Plan and will be led by the Habitat Manager to be sure all activities are beneficial.

PPE: Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed.

PPE: Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects.

PPE: Conservation and environmental workforce development.

The STYLE program has already been piloted at Galveston ISD and Texas City ISD but will expand to other Galveston County high schools. Artist Boat will target schools where they have previously had middle school programming but will open the high school programming.

Paid Field Mentorship will provide students with skills for data collection and analysis as well as presentation skills. The original STYLE program external evaluation showed significant gains in scientific literacy, positive impacts and empowerment of students. Students will be exposed to many different jobs in the environmental work fields to allow them to see themselves in those positions and know the process and education needed to get those jobs.

Habitat Restoration Adventure will provide on the ground experience and skills in plant restoration throughout the growth cycle from seed to planting in the ground.

Does the Project align with any EPA Areas of Special Interest?

- ☐ Reduce Nutrient Pollution to Protect Water Quality and Public Health
- ☒ Make Investments that Address Coastal Resiliency
- ☐ Reduce Trash

[If yes, please summarize how the proposal addresses EPA Areas of Special Interest.] The STYLE program teaches students facts and analytical skills to apply those facts to their lives living near the coastline. Through this process the students become more resilient.

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

A mentoring and field-based experience where high school youth work with environmental health mentors and Artist Boat scientists and artists to study local environmental challenges, build personal and community resilience, learn workforce skills and are empowered to follow a science path into further education. Programming will be provided for 600 students in 24 classes and 60 mentorship participants.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

[Please explain in detail how project addresses priorities selected. Attachments may be submitted via email in conjunction with this application.]

Exploring Environmental Health Hazards with STYLE (Sustained Training for Youth Leadership in the Environment) will engage High Schools in Galveston County bordering Galveston Bay. These schools (Public, Private, charter) are within 20 miles of the coastline and are within view of the results of Climate Change. Wetland mitigation, and house raising is already actively occurring along the shorelines of these communities.

The program will provide a focus on student-led decision making, demonstration and application of the skills used for inquiry by scientists and artists, and a place-based investigation approach to build student capabilities and resiliency. The program sequence will be:

1) Climate Resiliency Workshop: a 2-HOUR IN CLASSROOM workshop engaging students in hands-on activities, models, mapping, and watercolor techniques integrating science and art. The science portion facilitates the students' understanding of where they live in relationship to Galveston Bay; the anthropogenic contributors to climate change (causes and impacts of sea level rise, ocean acidification, and extreme weather); how non-point/point source pollution travels through watersheds and how that effects water quality, air quality, CO2 emissions and heat, and what measures may be taken to reduce these impacts; how to utilize NOAA data tools to investigate the physical and socio-economic impacts of climate change. Students will assess their own climate resiliency and that of their families. The art portion teaches basic watercolor techniques and allows for student-driven decision as students create their own conceptual/interpretive watercolor art piece using their selected images, graphs, and symbols to communicate and translate their knowledge about climate change.

2) Eco-Art Kayak Adventure: a 4HOUR FIELD ADVENTURE in the naturally significant **Galveston Bay launching from Artist Boat's Coastal Heritage Preserve**. During this Adventure, students witness first-hand the major features on and around the Bay (Texas City Petrochemical Plants, Geo-tubes, oyster beds, restored and natural marshes, blue carbon wetlands, bulk-headed developments, marine vessels, and bird communities). Students use scientific equipment and tools to collect data on salinity, dissolved oxygen, temperature, biomass and turbidity to further explain sea level rise and ocean acidification. Students reflect on how each recorded measurement relates to human impacts on Galveston Bay and how they would change due to sea level rise or ocean acidification. Students use watercolor skills from the previous workshop to create their own plein-air watercolor painting from their kayak while looking over the blue carbon ecosystem and design their composition of choice to share the current functions of the wetlands. This adventure will connect them to the watershed they live in and them to the Bay. Students have a transformative experience by learning to paddle tandem kayaks and become empowered by their ability to navigate a human powered vessel.

3) Habitat Restoration Workshop- a **2 HOUR IN CLASSROOM** science and art workshop. Artist Boat Eco Art educators will introduce students to prairie ecosystem functions, native and non-native plants, how restoration helps increase biodiversity, coastal habitat migration, how coastal habitats mitigate the impacts of climate change through serving as carbon sinks and sponges for extreme flooding, invasive species removal and control and how restoration helps fight invasive species encroachment. The art portion facilitates the watercolor techniques used in previous workshops as students paint a portrait of a student-selected species native to the coastal prairies and wetlands of Galveston Bay. This facilitates student-driven decision making as they choose species, habitat context, and composition.

4) Habitat Restoration Adventure a 4-hour outdoor field experience at the historical prairies of the Coastal Heritage Preserve. Students will explore, discover, and restore coastal prairies while learning how stewardship of living things can result in environmental benefits to larger systems. They will tour the preserve to see how restoration helps increase biodiversity. They will look at plant roots to see how coastal habitats mitigate the impacts of climate change through serving as blue carbon sinks and sponges for extreme flooding. Students will plant Eastern Gama, Big Blue Stem, Yellow Indian Grass, Switchgrass, and wildflowers appropriate to the site across 10+ acres with each class

planting on average 400 plants. To create a safe working environment for students the area will be mown short (providing high visibility of 3-foot center patterns and potential hazards of snakes or fire ants) and flagged and prepared with all restoration supplies. Students will also witness areas of invasive species removal and control and see how restoration helps fight invasive species encroachment. During the Habitat Restoration Adventure students will create a fourth watercolor painting of a new landscape, increasing their ability to observe the nature around them and to create works of art about nature.

5) Paid Field Mentorship program- a **FIVE DAY OPTIONAL FIELD program** for 4 cohorts of 15 students. Students that have gone through the classroom workshops and adventures will be invited to join the paid Field Mentorship program to investigate and understand the effects of environmental hazards on the health and resiliency of their local communities while gaining scientific skills from people working in the environmental health fields. These investigation locations will vary with the cohort's making the decisions. Students will spend four days learning from UTMB Environmental Health Researchers, Eco Art Educators, Habitat and Land Stewardship personnel and community experts about sea level rise, storm flooding, elevation maps, local infrastructure, and nature areas. They will identify low lying neighborhoods and create hypothesis about where to place greenspaces, where flooding occurs and why, where soil pollution might be found based on that flooding and air pollution that is found near the coastal areas. They will learn to take and analyze samples using the UTMB Mobi-COACH that is equipped with a portable Torion Gas Chromatograph/ mass spectrophotometer, centrifuge, personal air monitors to test for particulates, nitrogen dioxide, and VOCs and other portable diagnostic equipment. They will learn to draw conclusions based on their data and other data collected by the local scientists. On Day 5 students will tour UTMB to learn about presenting scientific data and creating their own posters. They will then present their Three Minute Thesis at UTMB, Artist Boat or other community events.

Project Urgency:

Galveston County faces a convergence of environmental, health and educational challenges that directly affect Texas Gulf Coast youth. The county includes a low-lying barrier island and mainland communities adjacent to Galveston Bay, where flooding risk is high due to sea-level rise, subsidence, hurricanes and extreme rainfall. FEMA flood maps, NOAA sea-level data and Texas Coastal Resiliency Master Plan document increasing frequency and severity of flood events across the region. Repeated evacuations, property damage, and recovery cycles and the emotional and environmental health burdens due to these cycles are a lived reality for families. These climate risks intersect with long-standing industrial and land-use pressures. Galveston Bay is bordered by one of the nation's largest petrochemical corridors and a high concentration of state and federally designated contaminated sites. During storm events, floodwaters bring sediments and debris from industrial, residential and marine environments, increasing uncertainty about air, soil and water quality during recovery periods. At the same time, rapid urban expansion on the mainland and intensified development on the island continue to strain natural systems that buffer flooding and protect water quality.

Students in Galveston County experience these conditions while attending schools where **over 70% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch**, reflecting economic vulnerability and limited access to enrichment opportunities. Research from Cole (2005) shows low-level baseline understanding of pollution pathways and health impacts among American adults, regardless of age, income, or level of education. Local data from Artist Boat's prior STEMM programming confirm this gap. An external evaluation of the first year of *Exploring Environmental Health Hazards with STYLE* found 71% of students increasing knowledge related to climate change, sea-level rise and ocean acidification. National Academy of Science funding for that project was revoked in October 2025 due to changes at the federal level.

For older teens in underserved communities, participation must be paid; UTMB workforce research shows that unpaid programs exclude students who must work to support themselves or their families. Without this stipend, many potential students must make the financial decision to not participate.

This project addresses a county-wide need for climate, environmental health, and workforce-relevant STEMM education grounded in local conditions. By linking science, art and field investigation, the program equips students with knowledge, agency, and pathways into careers that directly serve community and environmental well-being.

Other Plans Implemented:

[Please identify any third-party conservation plans this project implements, such as the Texas Coastal Management Plan, Texas Coastal Resiliency Master Plan, watershed-based plans, etc.]
Artist Boat's Coastal Heritage Preserve is a GLO tier 1 coastal resiliency master plan project. It is also listed as a GBEP potential mitigation partner. All education programming will the Texas Natural Resource and Environmental Literacy plan, the NOAA Ocean Literacy Essential Principals and the NOAA Climate literacy Essential Principals.

Partners¹ and Their Roles:

[Please identify project partners and detail what roles they will play in project implementation.]

1. Artist Boat

Artist Boat Eco-Art Educators are degreed environmental scientists, marine biologists and artists. These Eco-Art Educators will deliver the program in the classrooms and co-deliver the mentorship program. Throughout these programs the Eco-Art Educators share educational pathways and skill attainment with students.

Artist Boat Habitat staff will co-deliver mentorship programming that is delivered on the Coastal Heritage Preserve to teach coastal prairie and wetlands stewardship and management practices.

2. University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB)

Artist Boat has partnered with UTMB for over two decades, working closely with the Sealy Institute for Translational Sciences and the Sealy Center for Environmental Health and Medicine. Together, we co-designed *Exploring Environmental Health Hazards with STYLE*, linking environmental quality to human health. UTMB researchers co-teach with Artist Boat educators, mentor students, and deploy the Mobi-COACH mobile research lab for real-world air and soil investigations. This partnership brings clinical-grade science into community education and creates paid mentorship pathways for high-school students interested in STEMM careers. Dr. Lance Halberg and Cynthia Claire Hallmark will partner with Artist Boat Eco-Art Educators to co-lead the mentorship portion of the program. UTMB will also recruit researchers to mentor students through the .

3. Galveston Independent School District (GISD)

GISD has been a core partner since 2003. Artist Boat collaborates with teachers and administrators to deliver Eco-Art Workshops, field adventures, habitat restoration, and residencies aligned with district curriculum and magnet program goals at Oppe and Crenshaw schools. GISD provides consistent student access and instructional alignment, while Artist Boat supplies field sites, educators, and curriculum. This partnership ensures sustained, equitable access to coastal science and arts education for entire grade levels. GISD Ball High School, AIM High School and DAEP High School students and teachers will be eligible to participate.

4. Galveston County School Districts

Artist Boat has worked with Texas City, LaMarque, Hitchcock, High Island, Dickinson, Santa Fe, Friendswood and Clear Creek Public High Schools in addition to private and charter schools in the county. Artist Boat will recruit to include teachers and students from these school districts.

5. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

NOAA has supported Artist Boat since 2005 through the Bay and Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) program. In addition to funding, NOAA scientists from fisheries, habitat restoration, and Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary collaborate on student field experiences, Island STYLE lesson plans, and Student-Selected Field Adventures. This partnership connects students directly with federal scientists and current coastal research, allowing Artist Boat to leverage national expertise for local learning. As part of this program, mentorship students may explore the local coral lab and the weather station to learn about different jobs and the skills needed to conduct them.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

¹ If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted as an appendix with the application.

- ☒ Yes
☒ No

Recent Artist Boat programing has been focused on middle school grades. The Exploring Environmental Health with STYLE program brings high school aged programming to students that are interested in science, but do not have the means to participate in extracurricular programming due to jobs and other family commitments.

For older teens in underserved communities, participation must be paid; UTMB workforce research shows that unpaid programs exclude students who must work to support themselves or their families. Without this mentorship stipend, many potential students must make the financial decision to not participate.

Is the project subject to Title VI requirements?

To meet federal nondiscrimination guidance and laws (Title VI), TCEQ requires information and services to be provided in languages other than English when significant numbers of beneficiaries are of limited English-speaking ability (LEP). If 5% or more of the population within your project area is LEP and share a common language, then you are required to provide outreach in the alternative language. For statewide projects, Spanish language outreach is required. As Title VI compliance could impact the project budget, please reach out to the primary subcommittee coordinator for this application with questions on determining applicability.

- ☒ Yes
☐ No

Artist Boat provides all “parent documents” such as waivers and program logistics in English and Spanish. These documents were translated by Spanish speaking partners. Classroom programming is translated if requested by the school using audio to text software such as google translate. Student worksheets and documents can be provided in English or Spanish as requested by the school.

Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

[degrees, minutes, and seconds format]

Location:

[Description of area(s) of Galveston Bay watershed addressed by proposal]

Galveston County

-All public, private and charter high schools will be invited to participate.

-Classroom portion of the project will occur at the school in the classroom.

-Adventure portion of the project will occur in the coastal wetlands and coastal prairies of the Coastal Heritage Preserve, a 1039 acre preserve on the west end of Galveston Island.

-Mentorship portion of the project will occur at UTMB Sealy Center for Translational Science, Artist Boat Headquarters, the Coastal Heritage Preserve and locations around Galveston County where students decide they would like to take data and learn more about. Areas such as Galveston Island Seawall, the Texas City industrial complex, Texas City Dike, Jack Brooks Park, Buc-ees parking lots, and the Coastal Heritage Preserve might be included.

Projects Map

[\[Insert Map Here or Attach as an Appendix if Applicable\]](#)

Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):

Detailed budget- attached

Photos and explanation - attached

NAS STEMM Executive Summary- attached

Timeline for Program

2027	Fall	September- December	Recruit schools to fill 12 classroom spots. Plan mentorship dates, recruit mentors, adjust lesson delivery based on dates and mentor specialties Teach Artist Boat Eco-Art Educators the classroom and mentorship rogram
2028 spring	January - May		Deliver classroom program and recruit mentorship students Deliver mentorship cohort 1 on Saturdays
summer	June- July		Deliver mentorship cohort 2 in summer
fall	September- December		Deliver classroom program and recruit mentorship students
2029 spring	Jan- May		Deliver classroom program and recruit mentorship students Deliver mentorship cohort 3 on Saturdays
summer	June- July		Deliver mentorship cohort 4 in summer
Blue= fiscal year 1		orange = fiscal year 2	

SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

a. Direct Costs

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$81,580
Fringe Benefits (20%) ²	\$16,316
Travel	\$5,928
Supplies	\$6,316
Equipment- none	\$0.00
Contractual	\$6,160
Construction- none	\$0.00
Other- stipends	\$33,700
Total Direct Cost	\$150,000

b. Indirect Costs³

Distribution Base Amount (identify Base type below)	\$ 0
Indirect Cost Rate for Reimbursement	% 0
Total Indirect Costs	\$ 0

c. Maximum Authorized Reimbursement

² If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

³ Please attach Indirect Cost Agreement as an appendix if applicable

Maximum Authorized Reimbursement (Direct and Indirect Costs)	\$ 150,000
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Indirect Cost Distribution Base. The Distribution Base above is (check one):

- ☐ direct salary/wages and fringe benefits
- ☐ modified total direct costs
- ☒ other direct cost Base

If other direct cost Base, identify: Artist Boat is not claiming indirect as part of this grant application.

The indirect cost rate is (check one):

☐ **Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.

☐ **De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of 15 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

☐ **Partial Reimbursement Rate** — a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

☒ **Other:** [Examples: De Minimis Rate with a base of direct salary and wages (less than or equal to actual indirect costs) or Provisional Rate. If this is a Provisional Rate, include the following language: Provisional Rate: The subsequent adjustment of the indirect cost rate is subject to the requirements of Article 9 of this (Cost Budget) section.]

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of budget total, identify the main constituents:

[Description of costs associated with “Other” budget category.] Artist Boat is not claiming indirect as part of this grant application.

Travel. In order to be reimbursable, travel costs must be specifically authorized in advance of the travel. Travel costs will be reimbursed only in the amount of actual costs, up to the maximum allowed by law for employees of the State of Texas at the time the cost is incurred.

Budget Categories. The Budget Categories above are representative of the items of cost found in TxGMS and 2 CFR Part 200, and have the definitions, requirements, and limitations found therein. Construction costs are not reimbursable without prior, specific written authorization from TCEQ.

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will post notification of the meeting's time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by **July 24, 2026 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:**

WSQ Subcommittee: Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov
NRU Subcommittee: Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov
PPE Subcommittee: Zoe.Gapayao@tceq.texas.gov
M&R Subcommittee: Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov
Programmatic Projects: Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov

**Artist Boat Exploring
Environmental Health with
STYLE for GBEP PPE application
Program Budget**

Description	Item	Cost per unit	Quantity	GBEP y1	GBEP y2	AB/ UTMB	Total
Executive Director- Overall approvals of direction, curriculum, and financials.	5% of time Y1 and 5% Y2 for \$150,000 annual salary	\$ 72	208.00			\$ 14,976	
Financial Manager - financial tracking monthly, preparation of financial reports, assisting program manager with financial management and planning, and submission financial reimbursement requests	6% of \$67,500 annual salary,	\$ 33	250.00			\$ 8,250	\$ 8,250
Project Director. Editor and Co-Author of Workshop Curriculum, Adventure Curriculum and Field Mentorship curriculum. Alignment of Standards. Author of Evaluation tools and evaluator of survey results. Review and Approve all expenses and reports prior to submission. Teach all Educators the curriculum and adventures. Lead administrative meetings with partners and monthly program management meetings. Teacher and school recruitment for schools within Galveston County	7% of time Y1 and 7% Y2 for \$92,000 annual salary	\$ 47	256.00	\$ 6,016	\$ 6,016	\$ -	\$ 12,032
Habitat Manager: lead mentorship cohort students during events on the Coastal Heritage Preserve. Prepare the CHP for Habitat adventures	5% of time Y1 and 3% Y2 for \$60,000 annual salary	\$ 29	148.00	\$ 2,668	\$ 624	\$ 1,000	\$ 4,292
Eco-Art Program Coordinator: Coordination and delivery of Day to Day project. Implementing design and delivery. Assuring all components of the program are conducted daily. Sending out surveys. Assuring tools conducted and completed. Assure high standard of program delivery. Order and prep supplies. Participate in school events/fairs/PTA presentations/School district presentations. Safety and Training. Primary contact with all students and teachers in all classes	23% of time Y1 and 20% Y2 for \$54000 annual salary	\$ 26	900.00	\$ 12,324	\$ 11,076		\$ 23,400
Lead Eco-Art Educator (arts specialist) - Co-Delivery of Workshops / Adventures / Field Mentorship.	51% of time Y1 and 41% Y2 for \$43,000 annual salary	\$ 22	1948.00	\$ 23,276	\$ 19,580		\$ 42,856
Mobi-COACH manager- will manage all scheduling of UTMB personnel and bus, restocking of supplies, co-delivery of mentorship. \$200 per day x (6 days of use + 24 teaching days leading up to Mobi Coach use)	Inkind donation	\$ 200	30.00			\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000
Sub total salary				\$ 44,284	\$ 37,296	\$ 15,250	\$ 96,830
Fringe - Includes Health Care, Federal Taxes, Disability and life Insurance, IRA, and PTO accrual and holiday pay	.20 of the total salaries			\$ 8,857	\$ 7,459		\$ 16,316
Total Salaries				\$ 53,141	\$ 44,755	\$ 15,250	\$ 113,146
Survey Monkey (Utilized by Artist Boat for evaluation instruments for teachers to send to students, entry of collected data, and tool to share data)	Annual Fee is \$750	\$ 750	1.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 750	\$ 750

General Liability and Inland Marine Insurance - General Liability Policy required for youth programs (\$2 million dollar policy), Inland Marine (Covers equipment being insured for kayaks and associated required gear for paddlers and safety), Auto Insurance (Covers Auto Accident and Liability for all travel to schools and sites). This program is expected to use 22% of Artist Boat program time	22% of 28,000 per year	\$ 6,160	1.00	\$ 6,160		\$ 6,160	\$ 12,320
Sub total Contractual				\$ 6,160	\$ -	\$ 6,910	\$ 13,070
VHF waterproof marine radios - These are required communication tools between guides on the water (lead and sweep boats), with US Coast Guard, other vessel traffic, and for weather updates from NOAA Marine Station	2 radios for communication on the water	\$ 200	2.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 400	\$ 400
First Aid Supplies and dry bag (required safety and first aid if there were minor accidents that First Aid and CPR course allows the guides/educators to address for stings, allergic reactions, dressing and cleaning wounds, and hypo or hyper thermia)	replace every year for safety	\$ 125	2.00	\$ 125	\$ -	\$ 125	\$ 250
Personal Floatation Devices (Each participant, teacher and guide/educator requires a PFD). This is to provide an assortment of Type 3 US Coast Guard Approved Marine Life Vests for a full class size from XS (80lbs) to XXL (240lbs). These degrade in UV light and require annual replacement	Replacements for 26 students	\$ 110	26.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,860	\$ 2,860
Paddles (Kayak paddles for each participant)	Replacements for 26 students	\$ 95	26.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,470	\$ 2,470
Water Quality Supplies (For science component of eco art kayak adventures so students can work in teams) including chemistry kits, turbidity tubes and refractometer replaced annually	Chemistry kits with refills (dissolved oxygen, nitrate, pH, turbidity tubes, refractometers)	\$ 1,016	1.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,016	\$ 1,016
Erosion and Sea Level Assessment kits; Biotic Factors data collection tools for eco art kayak adventures (to determine biodiversity or other ecological inquiry questions)	benthic grabs, sieves, seine net, quadrats, and other items	\$ 1,604	1.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,604	\$ 1,604
Torion gas Chromatography mass spectrometer and other Mobi coach supplies	use fee	\$ 1,200	4.00			\$ 4,800	\$ 4,800
science supplies for Climate resiliency workshop	Watershed model and sea level rise supplies	\$ 50	8.00	\$ 200	\$ 400		\$ 600
Pelikan brand watercolor sets, fine arts quality (For Art Component of the program) replaced annually	Pelikan water colors x 2 class set	\$ 28	60.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,680	\$ 1,680
Watercolor brushes , fine art quality (For Art Component of the program) replaced annually	#8 Rounds x 2 class sets	\$ 3	60.00	\$ 79		\$ 101	\$ 180

Watercolor Paper pads	1/2 sheet per student 4 times, one full sheet per student 1 time = 3 sheets per student x 800 students / 50 sheets to a pad = 24 pads annually	\$ 19	48.00	\$ 456	\$ 456		\$ 912
100 laminated images of animals, symbols of chemistry, blue carbon cycle diagrams, and other pertinent images/symbols for workshops	color prints and laminating 100 items for workshops/field	\$ 1	100.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 145	\$ 145
Bins for Kayak Adventures to house watercolor supplies. 13 needed per kayak fleet, degrade in the UV light and salt water and replaced annually	12 x10 x 8 inches water tight plastic bins	\$ 17	13.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 221	\$ 221
Field Mentorship class supplies (clipboards, large scale maps of area, protective gear for data collection, jump drives, water color paper, presentation posters) \$150 per cohort	Field mentorship supplies	\$ 150	4.00	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ -	\$ 600
Field Mentorship class Mobi- COACH use and supplies for 1 day per cohort x 4 cohorts	Mobi-COACH daily use fee	\$ 1,457	4.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,828	\$ 5,828
Field Mentorship class lunches 20 people x 5 days x \$10 = \$1000 per cohort x 4 cohorts	lunches	\$ 1,000	4.00	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000		\$ 4,000
Air Quality monitors, travel backpack flow monitors (6), stationary outdoor with solar (2), stationary indoor with plug (2)	air quality monitors	\$ 335	10.00			\$ 3,350	\$ 3,350
Office Supplies (manilla folders, labels, sharpies, office paper, copies)	12 classes each year / estimate 5.00 per class	\$ 5	24.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 120	\$ 120
Sub total Supplies / Food				\$ 3,160	\$ 3,156	\$ 24,720	\$ 31,036
MENTOR STIPEND to participating UTMB mentors, speakers and students	Stipend to UTMB mentors	\$ 500	4.00	\$ 1,000		\$ 1,000	\$ 2,000
Hurricane Hal- island resiliency tour on day 1 of cohort	Community Stipend	\$ 300	4.00	\$ 600	\$ 600		\$ 1,200
Field Mentorship class STUDENT STIPENDS \$15 per hour x 7 hours x 5 days= \$525 per student x 15 students per cohort = \$7,875 x 4 cohorts	Student Stipends	\$ 7,875	4.00	\$ 15,750	\$ 15,750	\$ -	\$ 31,500
Sub Total Stipends				\$ 17,350	\$ 16,350	\$ 1,000	\$ 34,700
School Site visits by Program Manager (12 campuses); Two meetings a year with administrators and teachers to review and plan program and assure evaluation is undertaken, Mentorship Site and Partner visits = 24 trips x average 42 miles x .655	mileage for program assurance	\$ 28	24.00	\$ 336	\$ 336	\$ -	\$ 672
Mileage to schools for classroom workshops. avg roundtrip 42 miles x .655 = \$27.51, 4 days of workshops x 12 schools = 48 days of travel	mileage classroom Workshops	\$ 28	48.00	\$ 660	\$ 660	\$ -	\$ 1,320

Mileage for Kayak Adventure & Habitat Restoration adventure x 48 trips = total trips x 4 miles round trip from headquarters to the Coastal Heritage Preserve boat launch x .655	mileage field adventures	\$ 3	48.00			\$ 144	\$ 144
mileage to Field Mentorship planning with UTMB = 4 cohorts 1 planning day x average 26 miles round trip x .655=	mileage for field mentorship days	\$ 17	4.00	\$ 34	\$ 34	\$ -	\$ 68
mileage to Field Mentorship days at UTMB = 4 cohorts x 5 days x average 26 miles round trip x .655=	mileage for field mentorship days	\$ 17	20.00	\$ 170	\$ 170	\$ -	\$ 340
Field Mentorship small bus rental for moving about the Galveston County area based on student choice of investigation sites 4 cohorts x 3 days of field adventures x \$350 per day	short bus rental	\$ 350	12.00	\$ 2,100	\$ 2,100	\$ -	\$ 4,200
sub total Travel				\$ 2,964	\$ 2,964	\$ 144	\$ 6,072
ACA Certification course (Required level 2 American Canoe Association Instructor Certification for educators)	2 Eco Art Kayak Adventure staff	\$ 800	2.00			\$ 1,600	\$ 1,600
First Aid / CPR/ AED/ Safety (Required Safety Certifications for educators)	2 educators plus program coordinator	\$ 125	3.00			\$ 375	\$ 375
subtotal services / certifications				\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,975	\$ 1,975
Subtotal				\$ 82,775	\$ 67,225	\$ 50,000	\$ 200,000

total ask from GBEP

\$ 150,000

Artist Boat's

Exploring Environmental Health Hazards with STYLE

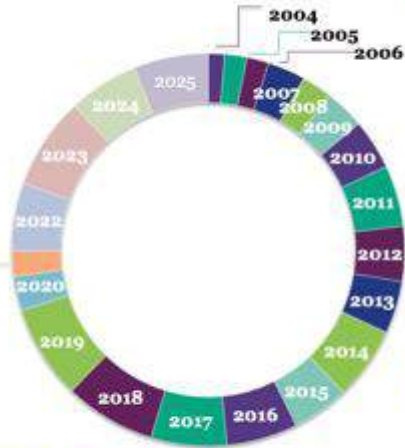


Karla Klay - Executive Director

Amy Neblett - Operations Director

Landsey A. Ware
Habitat & Stewardship Program Manager

Total Participants, 2004-2025



\$24.5 million INVESTED

in preserving endangered environments and saving 1,039 acres

118,894 YOUTH REACHED

through our workshop and adventure programs

25,456 PUBLIC ADVENTURE PARTICIPANTS

28,968 BUCKET BRIGADE PARTICIPANTS

218,284

participants in our programs since 2003

22 years of Artist Boat

1,039 ACRES
of coastal prairie saved from development & 200 acres in progress

697 TRASH BARRELS
painted and installed on Galveston beaches

1,646 PUBLIC ARTWORKS
including 70 benches on the Seawall Interpretive Trail

6 EDUCATION ACCESS STRUCTURES
1 outdoor classroom built on the Crenshaw campus,
3 built on our Coastal Heritage Preserve, and our Eco-Art Barn & Treehouse

1 PERMANENT HEADQUARTERS

22 YEARS OF ACHIEVING GREAT THINGS FOR WILDLIFE AND PEOPLE!



Inspiration and education through unique coastal experiences



What does Artist Boat Do?



Our Mission

Artist Boat is a 501(c)(3) whose mission is to promote awareness and preservation of coastal margins and the marine environment through the disciplines of the sciences and the arts.

Connect people to Gulf Coast environments through mind-opening experiences.



Educate and inspire people to action and to preserve and protect coastal and marine habitats.

Our 5 Goals

Expand engagement in existing programming to inform and inspire people of all ages.

Preserve and restore 1,400 contiguous acres from beach to bay on West Galveston Island.



Establish the first nationally significant environmental education center on the Gulf Coast.

Inspiration and education through unique coastal experiences



Request

PROJECT TITLE: Exploring Environmental Health Hazards with STYLE

LOCATIONS: **Public, Private and Charter High Schools within Galveston County**

GRANT request: **\$150,000**

CLASSROOM PORTION INCLUDES: Climate Resiliency Workshop, Eco-Art Kayak Adventure, Habitat Restoration Workshop, Habitat Restoration Adventure. **600 students (24 classes)**

MENTORSHIP PORTION INCLUDES: **Paid five-day mentorship for 60 students** to explore environmental justice through the lens of air quality, water quality and sea level rise. Students will work with Artist Boat Eco-Art Educators, UTMB researchers, and Community Experts to collect and present data.



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Exploring Environmental Health Hazards with STYLE Climate Resiliency Workshop



- 600 Students, 24 classes
- Learn about global warming, air quality, sea level rise, ocean acidification and extreme weather through graph discussions, map projections and hands on demonstrations and experiments.
- Translate their knowledge visually using oil pastels to explain their learning



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Exploring Environmental Health Hazards with STYLE Eco-Art Kayaking Adventure



24 kayak trips of 25 students each

- Learn **safety and paddling** techniques for powering a tandem kayak
- Learn about the **functions of the wetlands.**

- Create **plein air paintings** while sitting in nature.



Inspiration and education through unique coastal experiences

Exploring Environmental Health Hazards with STYLE Habitat Restoration Workshop



600 students learn about **coastal prairies**, why they are important and the threats to them.

*85.4% of students said the program made them feel a sense of **connectedness** and **admiration** of the native species on Galveston Island*



Inspiration and education through unique coastal experiences

Exploring Environmental Health Hazards with STYLE

Habitat Restoration Adventure



Students become stewards of the land by **planting native grasses and wildflowers** as they help restore 10 acres of native habitat. They learn about the **careers and skills** needed for land management, explore on a walking adventure and translate their new knowledge into art through **plein air landscape paintings**.



Following program participation, students expressed a **newfound understanding** of environmental issues and showed an interest in **taking tangible actions** from **volunteering** to **scientific advocacy**. They showed a clear **emotional investment** in the environment's well-being.



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Exploring Environmental Health Hazards with STYLE PAID mentorship



60 Students learn about storm surge and the resiliency of Galveston Island and then create Underwater HOA signs to depict how far above sea level they sleep while learning predictions for when their place might be underwater. *82.4% felt they could take a science topic and create a piece of art to explain it.*



Students work with UTMB researchers to use air quality meters and create air quality maps of where they live and work. They take water quality samples from homes, schools and businesses and test them with a mass spectrometer and then build two prototype water purification systems. *84.5% can have dialog about data collected and compare it to overall climate science data.*

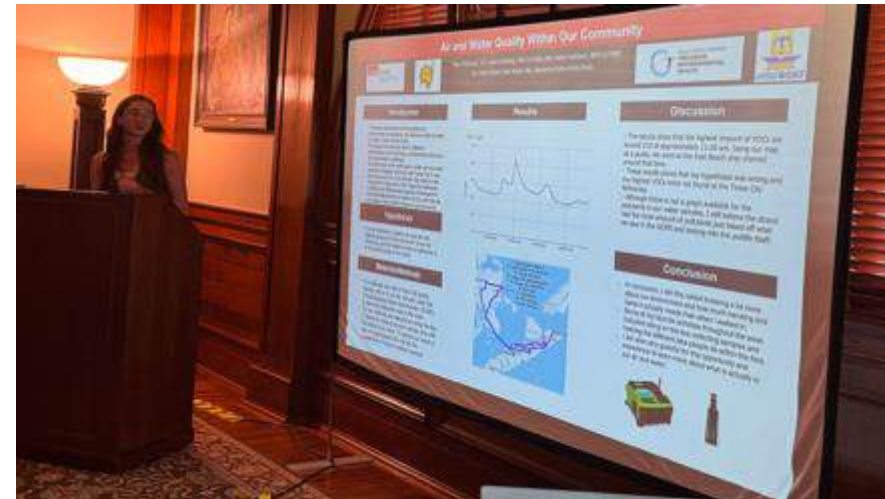
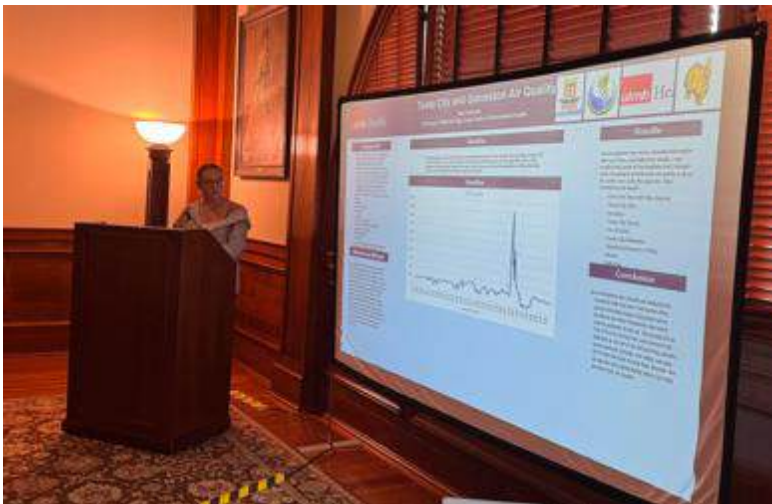
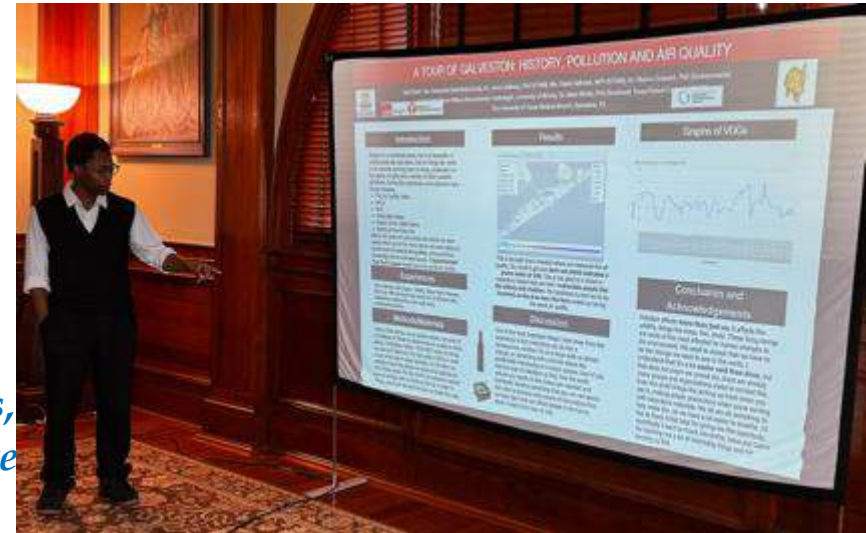
Inspiration and education through unique coastal experiences

Exploring Environmental Health Hazards with STYLE PAID Mentorship- Three Minute Thesis Day

82.6% felt *empowered to speak in front of a group to share their ideas.*

82.2% felt they could *work as scientists* to explore and pose questions about an environmental issue.

88.0% felt they *gained the ability to design questions, pose solutions, investigate, and share the knowledge* they gained with their peers and community.



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GULF RESEARCH PROGRAM
NATIONAL
ACADEMIES

Sciences
Engineering
Medicine



PROGRAM EVALUATION

EXPLORING ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH HAZARDS WITH STYLE:

Sustained Training for Youth Leadership in the Environment

Year 1: 2024-2025

Submitted to:

**Karla Klay
Executive Director & Founder
www.artistboat.org**

Prepared by:

MNA Evaluation & Assessment, LLC

July, 2025

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 2003, Artist Boat, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in Galveston, Texas, has been serving the environmental needs of the Galveston community. Artist Boat prides itself on promoting awareness and preservation of the coastal margins and marine environment through the disciplines of the arts and sciences. The STYLE (Sustained Training for Youth Leadership in the Environment) program, funded by National Academies of Science (NAS), is intended to increase awareness and alter attitudes and behaviors that will lead to a more sustainable future by exposing students to scientists and resources in their communities.

This place-based and experiential program focuses on the use of science and art to understand climate change, sea level rise, extreme storm flooding and the pollution left behind after these events, along with addressing the stress and anxiety of living in a place where these environmental hazards are a present concern by participating in various events: Climate Resiliency workshop, Eco Art Kayak Adventure launched from the Coastal Heritage Preserve into West Galveston Bay, Habitat Restoration workshop, and Habitat Restoration Adventure on the Coastal Heritage Preserve.

Additionally, students were given the option to participate in a paid Field Mentorship program where they will work with Artist Boat Eco Art educators and UTMB Environmental Health researchers to investigate and understand the effects of environmental hazards on the health and resiliency of their local communities. Students in the Field Mentorship program gain the scientific skills needed to pose a testable question, collect and analyze data, make conclusions and present findings to their community.

The following summary of findings spans Year 1 of the external program evaluation of Artist Boat's STYLE program. Overall, Artist Boat's STYLE program positively impacted the students.

Goal 1: To what extent does participating in the program increase knowledge of environmental literacy?

- Student test scores increased 28.9% from prior to participating in the program ($M_{Pre} = 40.4\%$) to the completion of the program ($M_{Post} = 69.3\%$) suggesting student participation in the program increased their knowledge of the Galveston Bay, climate change, sea level rise, and ocean acidification (71.5% increase).
- Following program participation, greater than 80.0% of the students were knowledgeable about climate change (96.6%), sea level rise (92.1%), and thermal expansion (87.5%).

Goal 2. To what extent does participating in the program increase student engagement in environmental science?

- Greater than 80.0% of students agreed that the program made them feel a sense of connectedness with admiration of the native species on Galveston Island (85.4%), awareness of the seafood that they eat comes out of the Galveston Bay (94.4%), and

awareness that the Galveston Bay Ship Channel is important for the transportation of goods that they use in their everyday lives (91.0%).

Goal 3. To what extent does participating in community/real-world projects impact attitudinal and behavioral changes toward environmental issues?

- 82.6% of the students claim to be empowered to speak in front of a group to share their ideas.
- 82.2% working as scientists to explore and pose questions about an environmental issue.
- 84.5% having a dialog about data collected and comparing it to overall climate science data due to participation in the program.
- 82.4% taking a science topic and creating a piece of art to explain it.
- 93.4% making decisions about what you wanted to ask, explore, learn, and interpret.
- 88.0% feel they have the ability to design questions, pose solutions, investigate if the solutions worked, and share the knowledge they gained with their peers and community.

Goal 4. How does participating in the program impact attitudinal and behavioral changes so to create the next generation of environmental stewards?

- Students gained a greater awareness of environmental science and the importance of caring for their surroundings. Following program participation, students were asked to provide responses to the following question - *As a member of a coastal community, how can you use the knowledge and skills you gained during this program?* Four primary themes emerged from the analysis: (a) environmental awareness, (b) behavioral change, (c) community engagement, and (d) advocacy.
- Environmental Awareness - Many participants expressed a newfound understanding of environmental issues, such as pollution, ecosystems, and climate change.
- Behavioral Change - Many participants expressed a newfound understanding of environmental issues, such as pollution, ecosystems, and climate change.
- Community Engagement - A strong theme was the intention to influence or educate others in their community. Many felt responsible not just for their own actions, but also for spreading awareness and prompting collective action.
- Advocacy - Respondents showed interest in taking tangible action, from volunteering to scientific involvement. Some expressed interest in advocating for change or contributing to broader environmental efforts and preserving natural habitats, wildlife, and specific areas like Galveston Bay. There's a clear emotional investment in the environment's well-being.

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2028 Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **July 24, 2026**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for fiscal 2028 (FY 2028) Priority Area Actions that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for FY 2028 at the June 2026 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

Timeline of Proposals:

Task	Date Due
Release of Request for Proposals	June 22, 2026
Proposals Due	July 24, 2026
Send Proposals to Subcommittees Members for Review	August 12, 2026
Present Proposals to Subcommittees for Council Recommendation	September 2, 2026 (NRU and PPE) September 9, 2026 (M&R and WSQ)
Present Proposals to B&P Subcommittee for Final Recommendation	September 30, 2026
Present Proposals to Galveston Bay Council for Approval	October 14, 2026

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Primary Subcommittee: Public Participation and Education (PPE)
Secondary Subcommittee (if applicable): Water and Sediment Quality (WSQ)
Tertiary Subcommittee (if applicable): Choose an item.

Project Name:

Roadside Swale Capacity Building Initiative

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes ☐ No ☒

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

Bayou Preservation Association, Incorporated

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

☐ Federal, State, or Local Government ☐ Council of Government ☐ Public ISDs or Universities
☒ Nonprofit ☐ Other*

[If other, please identify pass-through partner.]

<u>Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:</u>	YVU6BNQ9HGT5
<u>Vendor Identification Number (VIN) or Tax ID:</u>	74-6075031

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Brittani Flowers
Project Representative Phone	713-529-6443
Project Representative Email	bflowers@bayoupreservation.org

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2027 – ending no later than May 31, 2030) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

September 1, 2027-May 31, 2030

Amount Requested from GBEP:

\$141,220.00

Federal ☐ State ☐ No Preference ☒

Is the project scalable? ☒

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2028 (09/01/2027-08/31/2028)	\$50,000.00
FY 2029 (09/01/2028-08/31/2029)	\$56,220.00
FY 2030 (09/01/2029-05/31/2030)	\$35,000.00
Total	\$141,220.00

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

\$141,220.00

Is this an estimate? ☐

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Subcommittee Priorities (Section Four) will be considered above others. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

The *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* Action Plans are found at:
<https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 1: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

NPS-1 ☒ NPS-2 ☐ NPS-3 ☒ NPS-4 ☒
PS-1 ☐ PS-2 ☐ PS-3 ☐
PHA-1 ☐ PHA-2 ☐ PHA-3 ☐ PHA-4 ☐ PHA-5 ☐

Plan Priority 2: Protect and Sustain Living Resources

HC-1 ☐ HC-2 ☐ HC-3 ☐
SC-1 ☐ SC-2 ☐
FWI-1 ☐ FWI-2 ☐ FWI-3 ☐

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

SPO-1 ☐ SPO-2 ☒ SPO-3 ☒ SPO-4 ☒
PEA-1 ☐ PEA-2 ☒ PEA-3 ☐

Plan Priority 4: Inform Science-based Decision Making

RES-1 ☐ RES-2 ☐ RES-3 ☐ RES-4 ☐
RES-5 ☐ RES-6 ☐ RES-7 ☐ RES-8 ☐
ACS-1 ☐ ACS-2 ☐ ACS-3 ☐

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

Subcommittee Identified Priorities:

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- ☒ WSO: Supporting management measures and watershed-based plans through adaptive management, workforce development, and technical assistance.
- ☐ WSO: Improve knowledge and accessibility of pollution reporting tools to empower the community.
- ☒ WSO: Implementation and/or evaluation of best management practices that address point and nonpoint source pollution.
- ☐ NRU: Habitat Acquisition.
- ☐ NRU: Enhancement of existing or ongoing restoration-conservation efforts. Special emphasis on:
 - ☐ Adaptive management for previously completed projects; and
 - ☐ Projects that may have lost/delayed funding from other federal sources.
- ☐ NRU: Benefit to native fish and wildlife, including federal and state listed species, Species of Greatest Conservation Need, or nongame wildlife.
- ☐ NRU: Project urgency: Project must be completed in next 24 months or opportunity is lost.
- ☒ PPE: Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed.

- ☒ PPE: Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects.
- ☒ PPE: Opportunities to host workshops/networking events to provide technical assistance for local leadership (local governments, MUDs, schoolboards, the public) on key topics.
- ☐ PPE: Conservation and environmental workforce development.
- ☐ M&R: Meaningful and effective monitoring of existing, past, and new projects (NRU: especially research and monitoring for diamondback terrapin and best management projects, WSQ, PPE).
- ☐ M&R: Baseline assessments for large-scale, man-made changes to Galveston Bay at an adequate timeline and spatial range to provide useful information.
- ☐ M&R: Assessment, Exposure, and Response to stressors, including but not limited to:
 - ☐ Species of greatest conservation need;
 - ☐ Contact recreation standards;
 - ☐ Environmental parameters;
 - ☐ Emerging contaminants; and
 - ☐ Legacy contaminants.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

The Roadside Swale Capacity Building Initiative addresses the PPE Subcommittee priorities by providing field-based technical assistance and hands-on workshops for municipal public works departments, parks departments, municipal utility districts (MUDs), drainage districts, elected officials, and other local leaders responsible for stormwater infrastructure and maintenance. Participants will visit completed GBEP-funded projects to observe practical implementation and maintenance techniques while building the knowledge and confidence to identify, evaluate, and advance future roadside swale projects using nature-based stormwater practices.

Does the Project align with any EPA Areas of Special Interest?

- ☐ Reduce Nutrient Pollution to Protect Water Quality and Public Health
- ☐ Make Investments that Address Coastal Resiliency
- ☐ Reduce Trash

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

The Roadside Swale Capacity Building Initiative will provide technical assistance and field-based education to help local governments identify and advance roadside swales as nature-based stormwater management practices. Through workshops, site visits to completed GBEP-funded projects, collaborative roadside swale assessments, and partner-specific implementation memoranda, the project will build local capacity to expand roadside swale projects throughout the Galveston Bay watershed.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

Existing roadside swales represent one of the most widespread and underutilized opportunities to improve stormwater management through nature-based practices in the Galveston Bay watershed. Through more than 20 years of convening watershed partnerships, workshops, and technical forums, Bayou Preservation Association (BPA) has identified a recurring need for practical, field-based technical assistance that helps local government staff and decision-makers move from understanding roadside swales to identifying and advancing future implementation opportunities. The Roadside Swale Capacity Building Initiative addresses this need by providing technical assistance, adult education, and practical planning support that builds local capacity to incorporate roadside swales into future stormwater improvement efforts.

Task 1. Recruit Participating Communities and Coordinate Project Activities

BPA will recruit two to three participating communities to receive individualized technical assistance throughout the project. BPA will coordinate project activities, establish project goals with each participating community, and develop a schedule for workshops, site visits, and technical assistance. Workshops will also be open to local government staff and decision-makers from coastal communities throughout the Galveston Bay watershed.

Deliverables

- Recruit 2-3 participating communities.
- Conduct kickoff meetings with each participating community.
- Develop and distribute a three-year project schedule.
- Recruit workshop participants from coastal communities throughout the Galveston Bay watershed.

Task 2. Technical Assistance and Knowledge Exchange

BPA will provide field-based technical assistance through workshops and site visits to completed GBEP-funded projects. Activities will focus on roadside swale planning, maintenance, adaptive management, lessons learned, and opportunities to incorporate nature-based stormwater practices into existing roadside swales and routine maintenance programs.

Deliverables

- Conduct 8-12 field-based workshops.
- Conduct 4-6 site visits to completed GBEP-funded projects.
- Engage 15-25 local governments, organizations, or entities through workshops and technical assistance.
- Reach approximately 100-200 local government staff and decision-makers over the project period.

Task 3. Roadside Swale Opportunity Assessments

Working alongside each participating community, BPA will evaluate existing roadside swales to identify locations with future implementation potential. Assessments will consider existing conditions, maintenance practices, site suitability, and future implementation opportunities.

Deliverables

- Complete one roadside swale assessment for each participating community.
- Identify and document potential roadside swale opportunities within each participating community.
- Meet with each participating community to review assessment findings and discuss implementation considerations.

Task 4. Partner Implementation Memoranda and Project Closeout

BPA will prepare a partner-specific implementation memorandum for each participating community summarizing project findings and identifying potential roadside swale opportunities, available government resources and funding programs, technical references, implementation considerations, maintenance recommendations, and practical next steps for future implementation. BPA will also prepare the final project report documenting project accomplishments and recommendations.

Deliverables

- Prepare one implementation memorandum for each participating community.
- Each memorandum will include:
 - potential roadside swale opportunities;
 - available government resources and funding programs;
 - technical references and tools;
 - implementation considerations;
 - maintenance considerations; and recommended next steps.

Project Urgency:

Local governments and other public entities routinely maintain roadside swales as part of their existing stormwater infrastructure; however, opportunities to incorporate nature-based practices are often missed because staff lack practical, field-based technical assistance. Funding during this cycle will allow BPA to build local capacity before routine maintenance and future capital improvement projects are planned, positioning participating communities to pursue future implementation opportunities using available funding programs and technical resources.

Other Plans Implemented:

The project supports implementation of the Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition by advancing Public Participation and Education (PPE) priorities related to technical assistance, adult education, and connecting new audiences to completed on-the-ground projects. The project also supports implementation of the Texas Coastal Management Program, Watershed Protection Plans (WPPs), municipal stormwater management programs, and other local watershed and resilience planning efforts by helping participating communities identify opportunities to incorporate nature-based stormwater practices into existing roadside swales.

Partners¹ and Their Roles:

Bayou Preservation Association (Lead Applicant): Project management, partner coordination, technical assistance, workshop development and delivery, roadside swale assessments, implementation memoranda, reporting, and grant administration.

Participating Communities (2-3): Collaborate with BPA to identify roadside swale opportunities, participate in technical assistance activities, provide local knowledge, and assist with site visits and project coordination.

Workshop Participants: Local government staff and decision-makers from coastal communities throughout the Galveston Bay watershed will participate in workshops, technical assistance activities, and knowledge exchange.

Galveston Bay Estuary Program: Completed GBEP-funded projects will serve as examples during project workshops and site visits to support technical discussions and knowledge exchange.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

☒ Yes

☐ No

The project is intended to engage new and smaller communities by recruiting two to three participating communities and inviting local government staff and decision-makers from coastal communities throughout the Galveston Bay watershed to participate in workshops and technical assistance activities. The project is designed to build local capacity among communities that may have limited experience implementing nature-based stormwater practices.

¹ If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted as an appendix with the application.

Is the project subject to Title VI requirements?

To meet federal nondiscrimination guidance and laws (Title VI), TCEQ requires information and services to be provided in languages other than English when significant numbers of beneficiaries are of limited English-speaking ability (LEP). If 5% or more of the population within your project area is LEP and share a common language, then you are required to provide outreach in the alternative language. For statewide projects, Spanish language outreach is required. As Title VI compliance could impact the project budget, please reach out to the primary subcommittee coordinator for this application with questions on determining applicability.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Project activities will include Spanish-language outreach and educational materials, as appropriate, to support meaningful participation by limited English proficient populations in accordance with Title VI requirements.

Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

[degrees, minutes, and seconds format]

Location:

The project will focus on coastal communities within the Galveston Bay watershed, emphasizing communities whose stormwater systems directly influence the health of Galveston Bay and its tributaries.

Projects Map

Roadside Swale Capacity Building Initiative Boundary



Figure 1. The boundary above specifies the area in which the Roadside Swale Capacity Building Initiative will occur.

Purpose. This project location map shows the proposed project area within the Galveston Bay watershed along with all encompassed local communities, two to three of which will join in partnership as participating communities for the longevity of this initiative.

Key Takeaway. This area is of interest due to the abundance of drainage ditches that influence the water quality within the Galveston Bay watershed.

Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):
[\[Insert Here or Attach as an Appendix\]](#)

SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

a. Direct Costs

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$82,000.00
Fringe Benefits (15%) ²	\$12,300.00
Travel	\$7,300.00
Supplies	\$5,700.00
Equipment	\$0.00
Contractual	\$12,000.00
Construction	\$0.00
Other	\$3,500.00
Total Direct Cost	\$122,800.00

b. Indirect Costs³

Distribution Base Amount (<i>identify Base type below</i>)	\$ 122,800
Indirect Cost Rate for Reimbursement	% 15
Total Indirect Costs	\$ 18,420.00

c. Maximum Authorized Reimbursement

Maximum Authorized Reimbursement (Direct and Indirect Costs)	\$ 141,220.00
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Indirect Cost Distribution Base. The Distribution Base above is (check one):

- ☐ direct salary/wages and fringe benefits
☐ modified total direct costs
☒ other direct cost Base

If other direct cost Base, identify:

The indirect cost rate is (check one):

☐ **Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.

☒ **De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of 15 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

☐ **Partial Reimbursement Rate** — a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes

² If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

³ Please attach Indirect Cost Agreement as an appendix if applicable

all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

☐ **Other:** [Examples: De Minimis Rate with a base of direct salary and wages (less than or equal to actual indirect costs) or Provisional Rate. If this is a Provisional Rate, include the following language: Provisional Rate: The subsequent adjustment of the indirect cost rate is subject to the requirements of Article 9 of this (Cost Budget) section.]

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of budget total, identify the main constituents:

[Description of costs associated with “Other” budget category.]

Travel. In order to be reimbursable, travel costs must be specifically authorized in advance of the travel. Travel costs will be reimbursed only in the amount of actual costs, up to the maximum allowed by law for employees of the State of Texas at the time the cost is incurred.

Budget Categories. The Budget Categories above are representative of the items of cost found in TxGMS and 2 CFR Part 200, and have the definitions, requirements, and limitations found therein. Construction costs are not reimbursable without prior, specific written authorization from TCEQ.

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will post notification of the meeting's time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by **July 24, 2026 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:**

WSQ Subcommittee: Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov
NRU Subcommittee: Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov
PPE Subcommittee: Zoe.Gapayao@tceq.texas.gov
M&R Subcommittee: Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov
Programmatic Projects: Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2028 Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **July 24, 2026**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for fiscal 2028 (FY 2028) Priority Area Actions that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for FY 2028 at the June 2026 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

Timeline of Proposals:

Task	Date Due
Release of Request for Proposals	June 22, 2026
Proposals Due	July 24, 2026
Send Proposals to Subcommittees Members for Review	August 12, 2026
Present Proposals to Subcommittees for Council Recommendation	September 2, 2026 (NRU and PPE) September 9, 2026 (M&R and WSQ)
Present Proposals to B&P Subcommittee for Final Recommendation	September 30, 2026
Present Proposals to Galveston Bay Council for Approval	October 14, 2026

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Primary Subcommittee: Public Participation and Education (PPE)

Project Name:

Ingraham Gully Community Watershed Stewardship Project

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes ☐ No ☒

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

Bayou City Waterkeeper (BCWK)

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

☐ Federal, State, or Local Government

☒ Nonprofit

☐ Council of Government

☐ Other*

☐ Public ISDs or Universities

 [If other, please identify pass-through partner.]

Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:
Vendor Identification Number (VIN) or Tax ID:

26-0187498

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Kristen Schlemmer
Project Representative Phone	713-364-6323
Project Representative Email	kristen@bayoucitywaterkeeper.org

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2027 – ending no later than May 31, 2030) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

September 1, 2027 to August 31, 2029

Amount Requested from GBEP:

\$150,000

Federal ☐State ☐No Preference ☒Is the project scalable? ☒**Amount Requested per year (if applicable):**

FY 2028 (09/01/2027-08/31/2028)	\$75,000.00
FY 2029 (09/01/2028-08/31/2029)	\$75,000.00
FY 2030 (09/01/2029-05/31/2030)	\$0.00
Total	\$150,000.00

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

\$200,000.00

Is this an estimate? ☒**Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):**

BCWK is currently leveraging its existing operating resources and staff capacity to support the initial phases of the Ingraham Gully project. This contribution is secured, although its precise value is still being calculated.

BCWK has also submitted a request to the Ozarka Environmental Stewardship Fund for support for an earlier phase of the project. If awarded, the Ozarka grant would partially support initial community engagement and stewardship activities, while GBEP funding would allow BCWK and its partners to continue and expand similar work over the subsequent two-year grant period. The Ozarka request is currently pending; the amount requested is \$50,000.00.

Additional potential in-kind support may be provided by community partners and technical collaborators, including volunteer or pro bono participation in site stewardship, community engagement, wetland delineation, hydrological

analysis, and resident training. The value and status of these contributions will be confirmed as partner roles and scopes of work are finalized.

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Subcommittee Priorities (Section Four) will be considered above others. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

The *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* Action Plans are found at:

<https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 1: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

NPS-1 ☐ **NPS-2 ☒** NPS-3 ☐ NPS-4 ☐
PS-1 ☐ PS-2 ☐ PS-3 ☐
PHA-1 ☐ PHA-2 ☐ PHA-3 ☐ PHA-4 ☐ PHA-5 ☐

Plan Priority 2: Protect and Sustain Living Resources

HC-1 ☐ HC-2 ☐ HC-3 ☐
SC-1 ☐ SC-2 ☐
FWI-1 ☐ FWI-2 ☐ FWI-3 ☐

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

SPO-1 ☒ **SPO-2 ☒** SPO-3 ☐ SPO-4 ☐
PEA-1 ☒ **PEA-2 ☒** PEA-3 ☐

Plan Priority 4: Inform Science-based Decision Making

RES-1 ☐ RES-2 ☐ RES-3 ☐ RES-4 ☐
RES-5 ☐ RES-6 ☐ RES-7 ☐ RES-8 ☐
ACS-1 ☐ ACS-2 ☐ ACS-3 ☐

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

Plan Priority 1: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

☒ NPS-2 — Support Nonpoint Source Education and Outreach Campaigns

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

☒ SPO-1 — Stewardship Programs and Volunteer Opportunities
☒ SPO-2 — Workshops and Events
☒ PEA-1 — Key Issue Engagement
☒ PEA-2 — Adult Education

The Ingraham Gully Community Watershed Stewardship Project will implement **NPS-2** by providing accessible education and outreach on the effects of litter, illegal dumping, stormwater runoff, legacy pollution, and degraded natural drainage systems on water quality in Buffalo Bayou and the broader Galveston Bay watershed. Through community meetings, educational materials, clean -up events and ongoing stewardship, and experiential Watershed Walks, adult residents will increase their understanding of how neighborhood conditions affect downstream water quality, flood resilience, habitat, and public health. Hydrological and other technical analysis and training will enhance community understanding and long -term stewardship.

The project will implement **SPO-1** by creating hands-on stewardship and volunteer opportunities through community cleanup activities, identification of litter and dumping hotspots, observation and documentation of site conditions, and

participation in longer-term stewardship planning for Ingraham Gully. It will implement **SPO-2** through the Watershed Walk, public education activities, community meetings, and a culminating community event that connects residents with environmental information, local expertise, and opportunities for action.

The project will implement **PEA-1** by engaging Fifth Ward residents around key watershed issues, including trash, illegal dumping, stormwater management, flooding, water quality, habitat, and the value of natural drainage systems. It will implement **PEA-2** by providing adult environmental education that translates technical information into practical, locally relevant knowledge and equips residents to participate in stewardship, communicate environmental concerns, and advocate for the long-term protection of Ingraham Gully.

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

Subcommittee Identified Priorities:

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- ☒ **PPE: Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed.**
- ☒ **PPE: Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects.**
- ☒ **PPE: Opportunities to host workshops/networking events to provide technical assistance for local leadership (local governments, MUDs, schoolboards, the public) on key topics.**
- ☐ **PPE: Conservation and environmental workforce development.**

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

The Ingraham Gully Community Watershed Stewardship Project addresses three FY 2028 Public Participation and Education priorities: connecting new audiences to existing on-the-ground watershed work; empowering adults to positively affect their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects; and providing workshops, networking, and technical assistance to residents, community leaders, and public decision-makers.

Ingraham Gully is a historic natural drainage feature in Houston's Greater Fifth Ward that flows toward Buffalo Bayou and remains important to the neighborhood's stormwater system. Portions of the gully have experienced prolonged neglect, litter, illegal dumping, infrastructure impacts, and limited public recognition of their ecological and flood-resilience value. The project will help residents and local decision-makers better understand how the gully functions, the threats it faces, and the opportunities available for its long-term protection, restoration, and community stewardship.

Connecting new audiences to existing and completed on-the-ground watershed work

The project will build upon prior community action at Ingraham Gully, including an October 2025 cleanup and subsequent BCWK site visits, outreach, research, and planning. Rather than treating cleanup as a one-time activity, this project will connect new audiences to an emerging, long-term stewardship effort. The project will engage Fifth Ward residents who have not previously participated, neighborhood associations, local churches, community-based organizations, health and environmental partners, public-agency representatives, elected officials, volunteers, and participants from BCWK's Community Research Action Network and Design Lab.

Outreach will include neighborhood -based communication, bilingual materials, community meetings, partner networks, social media, and direct engagement through Friends of Ingraham Gully and the Progressive Fifth Ward Association. These activities will introduce new participants to Ingraham Gully as part of the larger Buffalo Bayou and Galveston Bay watershed and help them recognize the site as a neighborhood and environmental asset rather than an abandoned drainage channel. The project will also create pathways for residents to remain involved through future stewardship, monitoring, reporting, advocacy, and conservation planning.

Empowering adults through scientific literacy and community action

The project will empower adult residents of the Fifth Ward to positively affect their local environment by combining water and environmental education rooted in technical analysis with hands-on community stewardship. Scientific and environmental literacy activities will address stormwater drainage, hydrology, wetland and riparian functions, water quality, flood mitigation, wildlife habitat, green infrastructure, and the relationship between Ingraham Gully, Buffalo Bayou, and Galveston Bay.

BCWK and its technical partners will translate research and site findings into accessible educational materials, interpretive content, workshops, community discussions, and an experiential Watershed Walk. Residents will learn how natural and modified drainage systems absorb and convey stormwater; how litter, illegal dumping, erosion, and infrastructure conditions can affect drainage and downstream water quality; and how monitoring, maintenance, restoration, reporting, and public advocacy can strengthen neighborhood resilience.

Education will be directly connected to action. Residents and volunteers will participate in interviews, surveys, community meetings, a Watershed Walk, and stewardship activities that may include litter removal, documentation of dumping hotspots and site conditions, identification of community concerns, and—as technically appropriate and properly authorized—native planting, invasive-species management, water-quality monitoring, and other conservation activities. Interpretive or watershed signage may explain the gully’s role in managing stormwater, absorbing rainfall, supporting habitat, and connecting to downstream waterways.

Participants will not simply receive information. They will help document current conditions, identify threats and opportunities, establish community priorities, interpret technical findings, and communicate the need for public protection and investment to agencies and decision-makers. Stipends or other participation support will reduce barriers for community leaders involved in interviews, surveys, educational activities, the Watershed Walk, and the culminating event.

Workshops, networking, and technical assistance for residents and local leadership

The project will provide workshops and technical-assistance opportunities for residents, community organizations, public officials, and agencies with authority or influence over drainage, stormwater management, solid-waste removal, infrastructure investment, and conservation. Technical findings related to hydrology, wetland characteristics, flood benefits, restoration potential, water quality, legal protections, public jurisdiction, and historic underinvestment will be translated into practical information that nontechnical audiences can use.

Community workshops and the culminating event will create opportunities for residents to learn how to observe and document waterway conditions, report illegal dumping or drainage concerns, use public reporting systems, understand relevant agency responsibilities, and participate in decisions affecting the site. These gatherings will also provide a venue for local leadership—including municipal and county representatives, public agencies, civic organizations, and neighborhood leaders—to hear directly from residents, review project findings, and discuss feasible next steps.

The Watershed Walk and culminating community event will function as both educational and networking opportunities, bringing community knowledge, scientific analysis, and public decision-making into the same space. BCWK will prepare accessible technical explanations, talking points, visual materials, and recommendations to support informed dialogue. Findings will ultimately inform a community-centered framework for future conservation, restoration, monitoring, public investment, and agency coordination.

This project builds on BCWK’s broader community-science and green-infrastructure work, including its multi-year collaboration with Stanford University in Northeast Houston, Community Research Action Network, Design Lab,

wetland education, and partnership with Fifth Ward resident -leaders. Through this integrated approach, scientific literacy becomes a pathway to stewardship and public participation. The project is expected to produce immediate benefits—including increased awareness, reduced litter, stronger relationships, and improved stewardship—while building the long-term community and institutional capacity needed to protect Ingraham Gully and strengthen water quality, habitat, flood resilience, and accountability in the Fifth Ward.

Does the Project align with any EPA Areas of Special Interest?

☐ Reduce Nutrient Pollution to Protect Water Quality and Public Health

☒ **Make Investments that Address Coastal Resiliency**

☒ **Reduce Trash**

The project supports coastal resiliency by helping Fifth Ward residents understand and protect Ingraham Gully as part of the larger Buffalo Bayou and Galveston Bay watershed. Through adult environmental education, community stewardship, and hands-on activities, participants will learn how natural drainage features, wetlands, and riparian areas help manage stormwater, reduce flood risk, improve water quality, and strengthen the resilience of downstream communities and ecosystems. The project will also build community capacity to identify threats, participate in stewardship, and advocate for longer-term conservation and restoration of the gully.

The project also directly addresses trash reduction. Ingraham Gully has experienced litter, illegal dumping, and accumulated debris, as well as the impacts of legacy pollution, that can obstruct drainage, degrade habitat, and carry pollutants downstream into Buffalo Bayou and ultimately Galveston Bay. Community activities will include identifying dumping and litter hotspots, documenting site conditions, supporting cleanup and stewardship efforts, and educating residents about the relationship between neighborhood waste, stormwater, and watershed health. By connecting environmental education with direct community action, the project will reduce trash while building sustained local stewardship of the gully.

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

The Ingraham Gully Community Watershed Stewardship Project will increase adult residents' understanding of the gully's role in stormwater management, flood resilience, water quality, and habitat while engaging them in hands-on stewardship and trash-reduction activities. Through education, community science, and direct action, the project will build local capacity to protect Ingraham Gully and the broader Buffalo Bayou–Galveston Bay watershed.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

The Ingraham Gully Community Watershed Stewardship Project will empower adult residents of Houston's Fifth Ward to understand, protect, and steward Ingraham Gully as an important neighborhood waterway and part of the larger Buffalo Bayou–Galveston Bay watershed. Through accessible environmental education, hands-on community activities, and resident-led stewardship, Bayou City Waterkeeper will help participants build scientific literacy, reduce trash and illegal dumping, and strengthen local capacity to advocate for the long-term health and resilience of the gully.

Ingraham Gully is a historic natural drainage feature that conveys stormwater toward Buffalo Bayou. Like many urban waterways in historically underinvested communities, it has often been treated as an abandoned drainage ditch rather than recognized as environmental and community infrastructure. Accumulated litter, illegal dumping, overgrown vegetation, and limited public awareness have reduced its ecological value, contributed to neighborhood concerns, and obscured its role in managing stormwater and protecting downstream water quality. At the same time, Fifth Ward residents have longstanding knowledge of the site and a strong interest in improving and protecting it.

The project will address the FY2028 Public Participation and Education priority of empowering adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects. BCWK will translate technical information about watersheds, stormwater, wetlands, riparian systems, water quality, flooding, and habitat into practical, locally relevant education. Rather than presenting these issues abstractly, the project will connect them directly to conditions residents see and experience at Ingraham Gully.

Participants will learn how the gully functions within the broader watershed; how rainwater, litter, sediment, and other pollutants move through local drainage systems; and how neighborhood conditions can affect Buffalo Bayou and Galveston Bay downstream. Educational activities will also explore how healthy riparian and wetland areas can slow and absorb stormwater, reduce erosion, filter pollutants, provide wildlife habitat, and contribute to community resilience.

A central project activity will be two experiential Ingraham Gully Watershed Walks. Led by BCWK staff, community leaders, and technical experts, the walk will allow residents to observe site conditions, identify environmental concerns, discuss the gully's history and function, and learn how to recognize indicators of watershed health. The walk will create an accessible entry point for adults who may not have participated previously in formal environmental education or conservation programs.

Education will be paired with direct community action. Residents and volunteers will have opportunities to participate in cleanup and stewardship activities, document litter and illegal-dumping hotspots, observe drainage and habitat conditions, and identify areas where future conservation or restoration may be possible. Community input will be gathered through meetings, interviews, surveys, and on-site activities so that residents help shape stewardship priorities rather than simply receive information developed by outside experts.

The project will implement **NPS-2** by conducting education and outreach on nonpoint -source pollution. Participants will learn how trash, illegal dumping, sediment, and pollutants carried by stormwater can enter Ingraham Gully, move into Buffalo Bayou, and ultimately affect the Galveston Bay watershed. Educational materials and community discussions will connect individual and neighborhood actions to broader water -quality outcomes.

The project will implement **SPO-1** by creating meaningful stewardship and volunteer opportunities. Community members will participate in site observation, litter identification, cleanup activities, documentation of environmental conditions, and conversations about long -term stewardship. These activities will provide immediate opportunities for residents to improve the site while building a foundation for continued community involvement.

The project will implement **SPO-2** through the Watershed Walk, community meetings, educational sessions, and a culminating community event. These activities will bring together residents, community organizations, environmental professionals, and other partners to share knowledge, identify priorities, and strengthen relationships around the protection of Ingraham Gully.

The project will implement **PEA-1** by engaging residents around key watershed issues, including trash, illegal dumping, stormwater management, flooding, water quality, habitat, and the protection of natural drainage systems. The project will make these issues understandable and actionable by grounding them in a specific place with direct relevance to residents' daily lives.

The project will implement **PEA-2** by providing adult environmental education designed to increase knowledge, confidence, and readiness to act. Participants will gain a clearer understanding of how local water systems function, how to identify environmental threats, how to report concerns, and how to engage with public agencies and decision -makers. BCWK will use plain-language and culturally responsive materials to reduce barriers to participation and make technical information accessible.

The project also advances the EPA Areas of Special Interest related to coastal resiliency and trash reduction. Protecting and improving urban drainage features such as Ingraham Gully contributes to watershed resilience by supporting stormwater management, reducing pollution, and strengthening community awareness of nature -based systems. Trash-reduction activities will address visible litter and illegal dumping while also helping residents understand how debris can obstruct drainage, degrade habitat, and carry pollutants downstream.

By the end of the grant period, the project is expected to produce increased resident knowledge of watershed systems, stronger community participation in stewardship, improved awareness of trash and dumping impacts, documented site conditions, and clearer community priorities for the future protection of Ingraham Gully. Most importantly, the project will help residents see the gully not as an overlooked drainage channel, but as a shared environmental asset that supports neighborhood resilience, water quality, habitat, and the health of the broader Galveston Bay watershed.

Project Urgency:

This request responds to an immediate community-identified need in Houston's Fifth Ward, an area that has experienced longstanding underinvestment in environmental infrastructure, watershed stewardship, and access to technical resources. Ingraham Gully is a neglected water body with important implications for neighborhood water quality, drainage, habitat, and community well-being, yet no other funding has been secured to carry out the assessment, community engagement, education, monitoring, and conservation activities proposed through this grant.

Funding during this cycle is necessary to move the project from community concern and preliminary planning into coordinated action. Without GBEP support, Bayou City Waterkeeper and its community partners would be unable to undertake the full scope of technical analysis, resident engagement, watershed education, and stewardship planning needed to establish a foundation for the gully's long-term conservation. A delay would prolong the absence of dedicated attention and resources for the watershed, allow existing pollution, trash, and other environmental pressures to remain insufficiently documented and addressed, and risk losing momentum among residents and partners prepared to participate.

Although the project is not responding to the expiration of a prior grant or a formal breach, its urgency lies in the lack of alternative funding and the time-sensitive opportunity to build on current community readiness. GBEP funding would enable BCWK to respond while local interest and partnership capacity are active, create actionable information for residents and decision-makers, and establish a durable framework for continued stewardship and protection of Ingraham Gully.

Other Plans Implemented:

Not applicable.

Partners¹ and Their Roles:

BCWK will serve as the lead implementer and will be responsible for overall project management, grant administration, coordination among partners, legal and policy research, technical project oversight, community education and outreach, stewardship activities, evaluation, and reporting. BCWK will integrate the project's community-engagement, wetland, water-quality, and policy components and translate the resulting research and community priorities into recommendations for long-term protection and investment in Ingraham Gully.

Friends of Ingraham Gully, a project of the Progressive Fifth Ward Association and led by residents local to the Ingraham Gully area, will serve as the project's primary community partner and local liaison. The organization will help ensure that project activities reflect the priorities, knowledge, and lived experiences of Fifth Ward residents. Its anticipated responsibilities include identifying and engaging residents and community stakeholders; advising BCWK on outreach methods, meeting and event design, and community concerns; supporting resident interviews, surveys, workshops, watershed walks, and stewardship activities; and helping connect the project with neighborhood leaders and local decision-makers. Friends of Ingraham Gully will also help build local participation in the long-term stewardship of the site and may support community-based water monitoring after appropriate methods, training, and partnerships are established. The project materials emphasize that improvements should be shaped with residents rather than imposed upon the community and contemplate an ongoing community role beyond a single cleanup or event.

¹ If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted as an appendix with the application.

Dr. Matthew Berg of Simfero Consultants will serve as the project's hydrology and technical consultant. Dr. Berg will advise BCWK on the hydrologic conditions and functions of Ingraham Gully, review available information and site conditions, and help assess the gully's relationship to stormwater management, flood resilience, wetland functions, restoration potential, and water quality. His analysis will inform the project's technical basis for conservation and help BCWK identify appropriate next steps for additional field investigation, monitoring, restoration planning, and engagement with responsible public agencies. He will also assist BCWK in translating technical findings into practical recommendations that can be communicated to residents, partners, and decision-makers. The current scope specifically anticipates an initial consultation with Dr. Berg that will guide subsequent technical work.

Letters of support from both Friends of Ingraham Gully/Progressive Fifth Ward Association and Dr. Matthew Berg of Simfero Consultants are included in the appendix.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Yes. The project works with both a smaller, highly localized waterway and an emerging community partnership that has not traditionally received sustained watershed investment.

Ingraham Gully is a compact urban drainage channel in Houston's Greater Fifth Ward, rather than a large river, bayou, or broadly defined natural basin. Although it ultimately contributes to the Buffalo Bayou and Lower Galveston Bay watershed systems, the gully's scale, infrastructure modifications, and neighborhood setting require a place-based approach centered on the residents who experience its drainage, flooding, litter, illegal dumping, and environmental conditions most directly. Community partners describe it as a historic waterway that remains important to neighborhood drainage but has experienced prolonged neglect.

For BCWK, this project represents the expansion of a relatively new and developing body of work in the Fifth Ward. BCWK and local partners previously participated in an October 2025 community cleanup, and BCWK's current scope moves the relationship beyond a single event toward coordinated technical analysis, environmental education, community organizing, watershed stewardship, and long-term conservation planning. The proposed work will deepen BCWK's partnership with Friends of Ingraham Gully and the Progressive Fifth Ward Association while engaging residents, neighborhood leaders, technical experts, and public decision-makers in shaping the gully's future.

The project also appears to represent a new geographic and partnership focus for GBEP. Based on a review of GBEP's publicly available current-project listings, no project specifically dedicated to Ingraham Gully was identified. This proposal would therefore extend GBEP-supported watershed work to a smaller urban waterway and a neighborhood-based partnership that are not presently represented as a distinct initiative in GBEP's listed project portfolio.

Is the project subject to Title VI requirements?

To meet federal nondiscrimination guidance and laws (Title VI), TCEQ requires information and services to be provided in languages other than English when significant numbers of beneficiaries are of limited English-speaking ability (LEP). If 5% or more of the population within your project area is LEP and share a common language, then you are required to provide outreach in the alternative language. For statewide projects, Spanish language outreach is required. As Title VI compliance could impact the project budget, please reach out to the primary subcommittee coordinator for this application with questions on determining applicability.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Yes. The project is subject to Title VI language-access requirements because the Greater Fifth Ward includes a significant population of residents with limited English proficiency, exceeding the 5% threshold identified by TCEQ. Approximately 46% of neighborhood residents are Hispanic, and Spanish is the primary non-English language spoken in many households.

To ensure meaningful access and participation, BCWK will provide key project information and outreach materials in Spanish. This will include, as appropriate, translated flyers and educational materials, bilingual community outreach, and Spanish-language interpretation for meetings, workshops, watershed walks, and other public-facing activities. These measures will help ensure that Spanish-speaking residents can fully participate in the project and help shape decisions affecting Ingraham Gully and the surrounding community.

Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

29°46'17.9"N 95°19'56.3"W

Location:

The project will focus on Ingraham Gully in Houston's Fifth Ward, within the Buffalo Bayou subwatershed of the larger Galveston Bay watershed. Ingraham Gully is a historic natural drainage feature that conveys stormwater from the neighborhood toward Buffalo Bayou and ultimately Galveston Bay. The project area includes the gully and surrounding Fifth Ward communities affected by litter, illegal dumping, drainage challenges, flooding, habitat degradation, and limited access to watershed education and stewardship opportunities. Through place-based education and community action, the project will connect neighborhood conditions at Ingraham Gully to downstream water quality, flood resilience, habitat, and the health of the broader Galveston Bay system.

Project Map is: attached in the Appendix.

Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional): Not applicable.

SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

a. Direct Costs

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$44,000.000
Fringe Benefits (15%) ²	\$6,600.00
Travel	\$3,000.00
Supplies	\$10,000.00
Equipment	-
Contractual	\$42,000.00
Construction	-
Other	\$27,900.00
Total Direct Cost	\$133,500.00

b. Indirect Costs³

Distribution Base Amount (<i>identify Base type below</i>)	\$110,000.00
Indirect Cost Rate for Reimbursement	15%
Total Indirect Costs	\$16,500.00

² If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

³ Please attach Indirect Cost Agreement as an appendix if applicable

c. Maximum Authorized Reimbursement

Maximum Authorized Reimbursement (Direct and Indirect Costs)	\$150,000.00
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Indirect Cost Distribution Base. The Distribution Base above is (check one):

☐ direct salary/wages and fringe benefits

☒ modified total direct costs

☐ other direct cost Base

If other direct cost Base, identify:

The indirect cost rate is (check one):

☐ **Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.

☒ **De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of 15 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

☐ **Partial Reimbursement Rate** — a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

☐ **Other:** [Examples: De Minimis Rate with a base of direct salary and wages (less than or equal to actual indirect costs) or Provisional Rate. If this is a Provisional Rate, include the following language: Provisional Rate: The subsequent adjustment of the indirect cost rate is subject to the requirements of Article 9 of this (Cost Budget) section.]

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of budget total, identify the main constituents:

The \$27,900 Other category consists of \$23,500 in participant support costs, \$2,000 in marketing/outreach/communications, \$1,000 in facility and space costs, and \$1,400 in technology and software. Participant support costs are excluded from the MTDC base.
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Travel. In order to be reimbursable, travel costs must be specifically authorized in advance of the travel. Travel costs will be reimbursed only in the amount of actual costs, up to the maximum allowed by law for employees of the State of Texas at the time the cost is incurred.

Budget Categories. The Budget Categories above are representative of the items of cost found in TxGMS and 2 CFR Part 200, and have the definitions, requirements, and limitations found therein. Construction costs are not reimbursable without prior, specific written authorization from TCEQ.

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will post notification of the meeting's time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by **July 24, 2026 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:**

WSQ Subcommittee: Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov
NRU Subcommittee: Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov
PPE Subcommittee: Zoe.Gapayao@tceq.texas.gov
M&R Subcommittee: Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov
Programmatic Projects: Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov

Ingraham Gully Community Watershed Stewardship Project Bayou City Waterkeeper

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2028 Project
Proposal Appendix

Project Map:

Ingraham Gully Maps & Site Visit (4 pages)

Letters of Support:

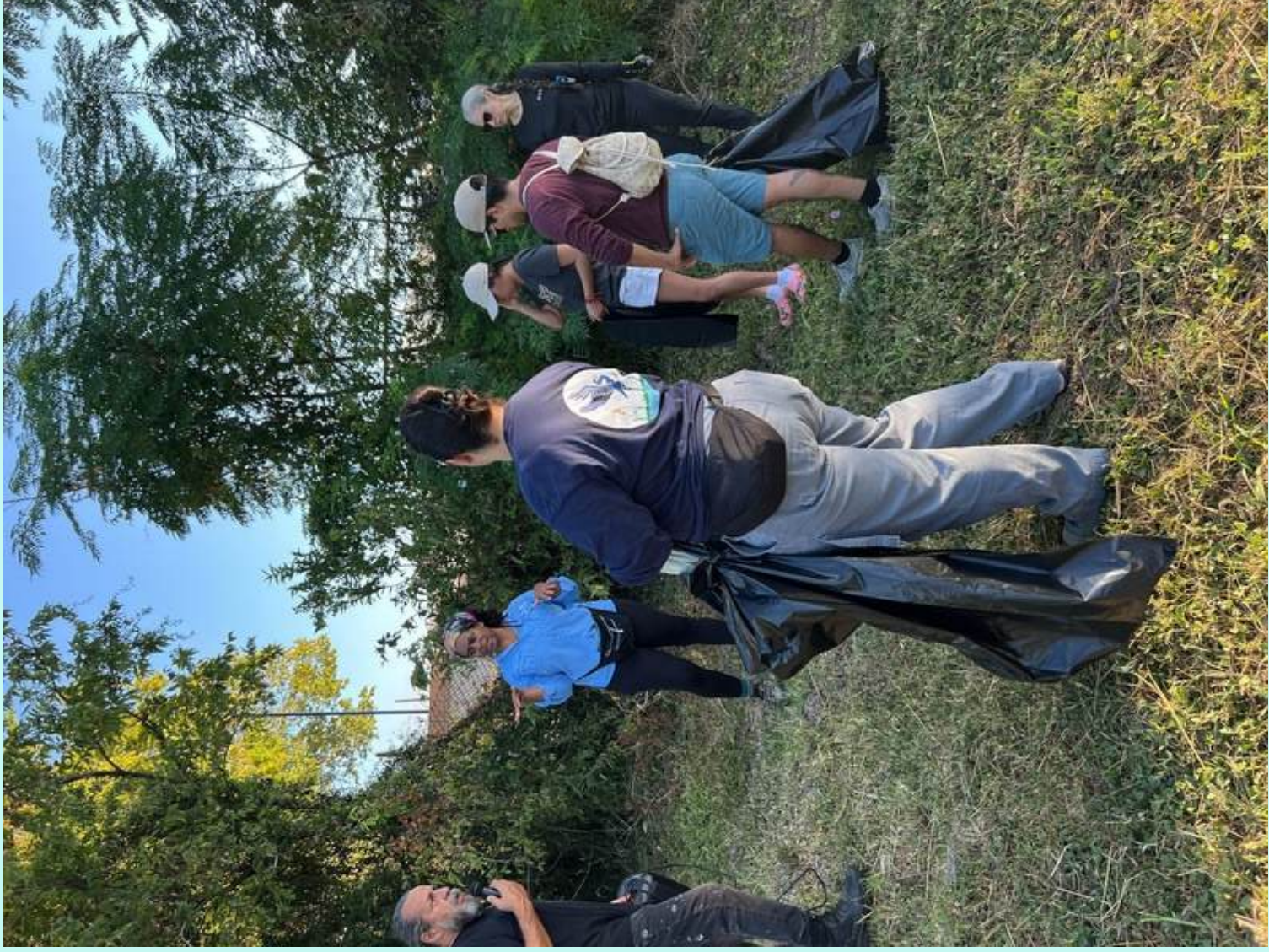
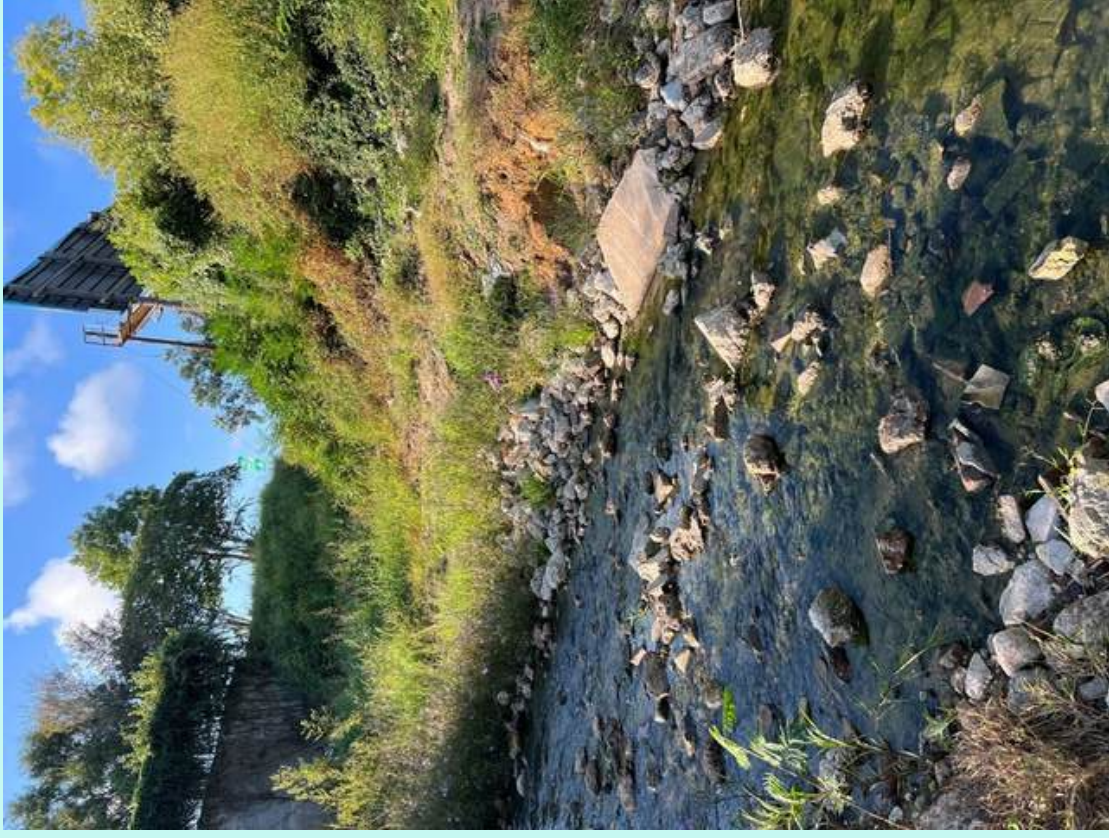
- Progressive Fifth Ward Community Association (1 page)
- Dr. Matthew Berg of Simfero Consultants (1 page)

Ingraham Gully Maps & Site Visit



Ingraham Gully Cleanups & Walks

Led by Erica Hubbard
at Friends of Ingraham
Gully
Fall 2025



Ingraham Gully Site Visits

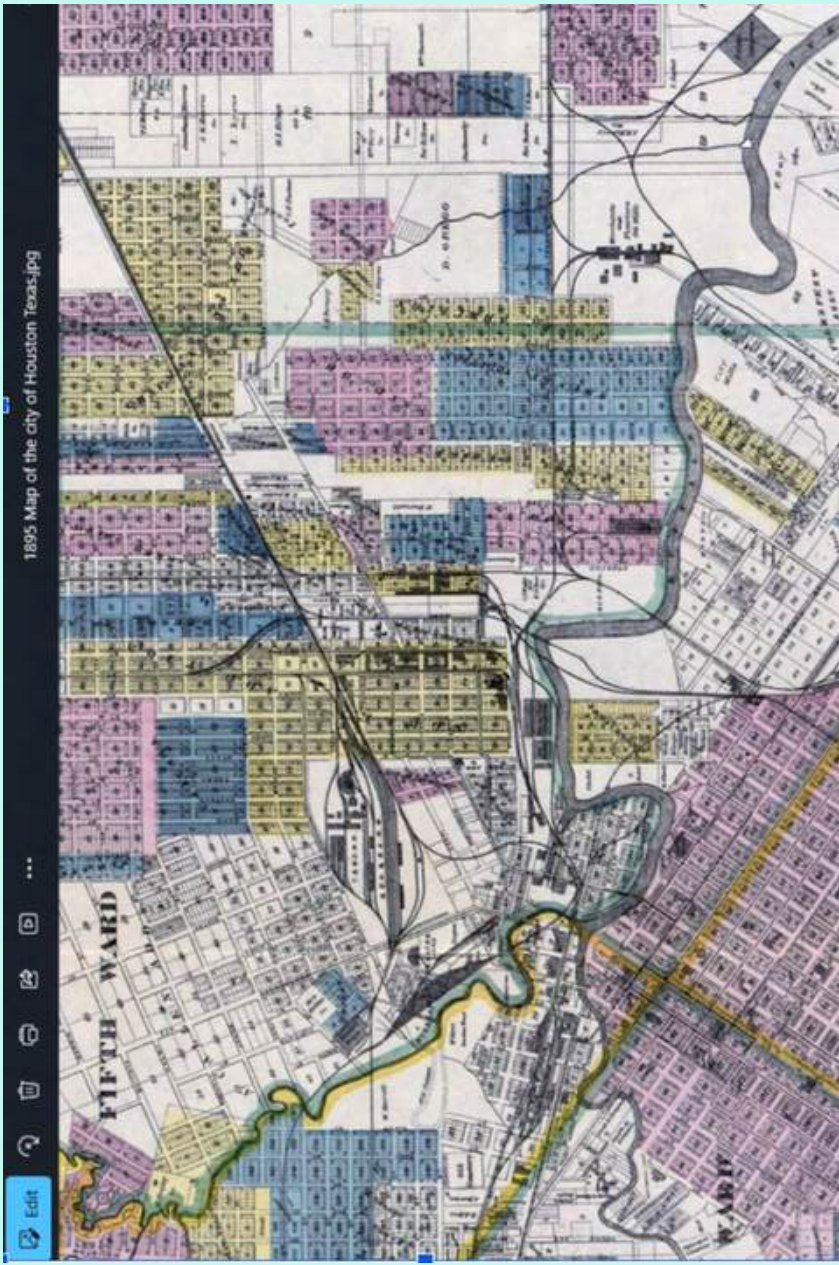
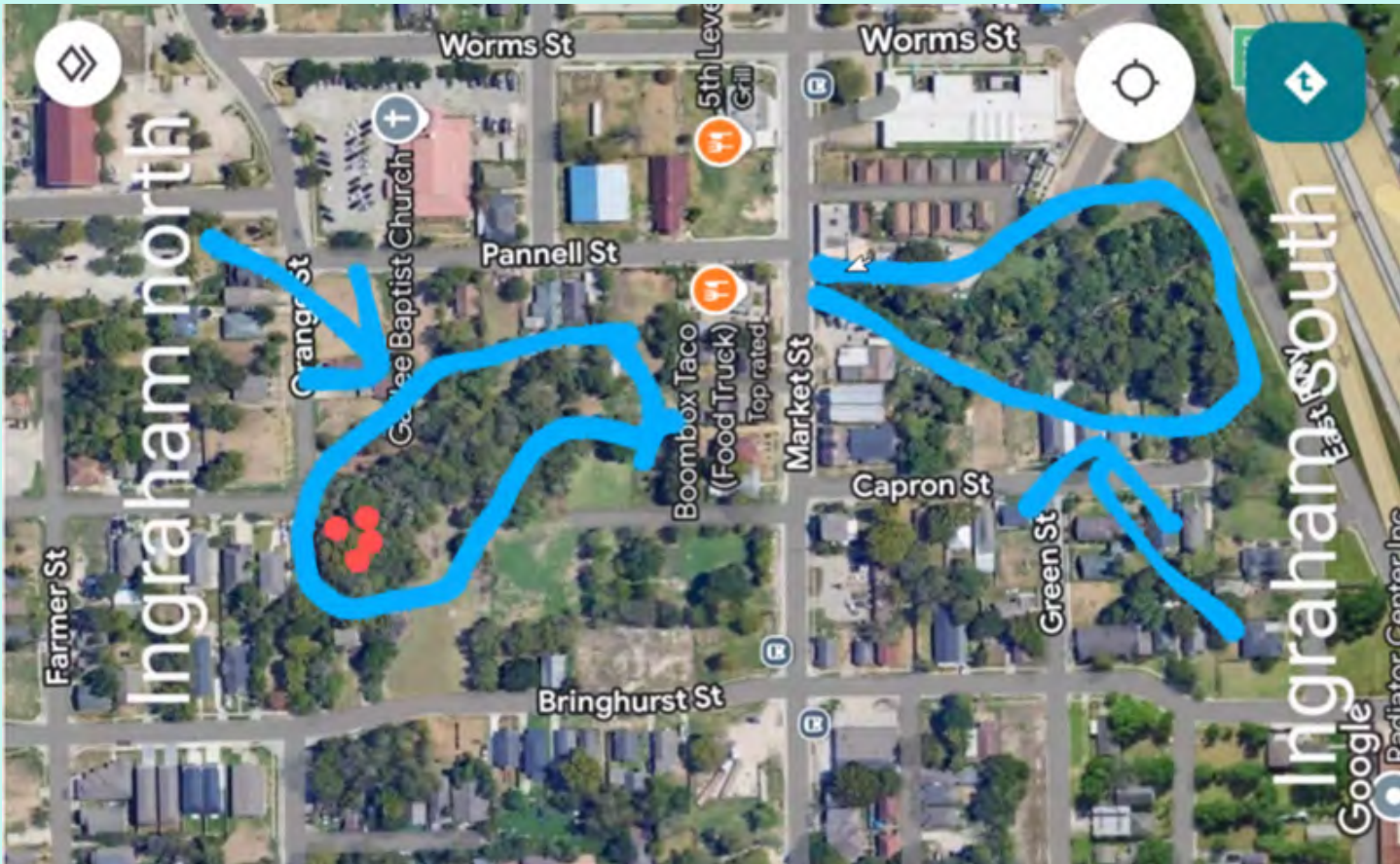
Bayou City Waterkeeper
staff site visits to

Ingraham Gully with
scientist Dr. John Jacob
Spring 2026 & with
scientist Dr. Matthew
Berg, community leader
Huey Wilson, and U.S.
Water Alliance staff



Ingraham Gully

Maps & Research





1705 Yates St.
Houston, TX 77020

July 22, 2026

Re: Letter of Support

To: Galveston Bay Estuary Program Selection Committee,

Progressive Fifth Ward Community Association is pleased to offer our strongest support for Bayou City Waterkeeper's application to the Galveston Bay Estuary Program. We believe this partnership presents a unique opportunity to address one of Houston's overlooked urban waterways while protecting the health of nearby residents and restoring an important connection to Buffalo Bayou.

Ingraham Gully is a historic drainage channel in Houston's Fifth Ward with a documented history dating back to the late 1800s. Although much of the waterway has been altered, culverted, or filled during decades of urban development, portions of the gully remain open and continue to support urban wildlife, convey stormwater to Buffalo Bayou. Today, however, the watershed exists in a complex jurisdictional gap where no single public agency has assumed responsibility for its long-term stewardship, monitoring, or restoration.

Bayou City Waterkeeper is uniquely qualified to help the Fifth Ward community address concerns regarding water quality testing, community engagement, and science-based advocacy. Their expertise could help establish baseline water quality conditions, evaluate stormwater discharges reaching Buffalo Bayou, identify opportunities for ecological restoration, and provide credible data that informs future decision-making by public agencies. Their work would also empower residents with information about the health of their local watershed while helping build long-term community stewardship.

Support from Galveston Bay Estuary Program would allow Bayou City Waterkeeper to bring technical expertise and environmental leadership to a waterway that has received little coordinated attention despite its historical significance, ongoing flooding concerns, and proximity to known environmental contamination. The project aligns closely with the Fund's commitment to protecting Texas waterways through conservation, environmental education, scientific monitoring, and community partnerships.

We appreciate your consideration of this important proposal. Restoring awareness and stewardship of Ingraham Gully represents an investment not only in water quality and environmental resilience, but also in the health, history, and future of Houston's Fifth Ward.

Sincerely,

Brittany Delafosse

President, Progressive Fifth Ward Community Association
progressive5thward@gmail.com
832-534-3845

TO: GBEP Public Participation and Education Committee
FROM: Dr. Matthew Berg, Simfero
SUBJECT: Support for Bayou City Waterkeeper funding application
DATE: July 23, 2026

Dear Public Participation and Education Committee of the Galveston Bay Estuary Program,

I am writing to express my support for work by Bayou City Waterkeeper (BCWK) at Ingraham Gully.

For the past few years, I have participated as a member of BCWK's One Water Community Cohort. The cohort's core mission is to promote a "One Water" approach, which treats all water — drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, and water in watersheds and aquifers — as a single, interconnected, and valuable resource. The cohort is an independent coalition of water leaders and conservation champions advocating for sustainable, integrated water management in municipal planning.

Through this cohort, I participated with BCWK and U.S. Water Alliance staff in a tour of Ingraham Gully and other sites to discuss thoughtful ways to address flood, water supply, and clean water needs. As a community resilience professional, I recognized the immense opportunities for conservation and education at the site that fall right at the heart of BCWK's mission. BCWK continues to lead local efforts and aims to dramatically expand their impact.

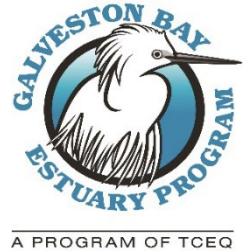
As an expert hydrologist and ecologist with a background in nature-based solutions, flood risk reduction, and water quality, I very much recognize the critical importance of rigorous science-based decision making and project assessment. I am committed to working with the project team as a consultant providing thoughtful hydrological analysis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Matthew Berg".

Dr. Matthew Berg
CEO & Principal Scientist
Simfero

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2028 Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **July 24, 2026**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for fiscal 2028 (FY 2028) Priority Area Actions that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for FY 2028 at the June 2026 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

Timeline of Proposals:

Task	Date Due
Release of Request for Proposals	June 22, 2026
Proposals Due	July 24, 2026
Send Proposals to Subcommittees Members for Review	August 12, 2026
Present Proposals to Subcommittees for Council Recommendation	September 2, 2026 (NRU and PPE) September 9, 2026 (M&R and WSQ)
Present Proposals to B&P Subcommittee for Final Recommendation	September 30, 2026
Present Proposals to Galveston Bay Council for Approval	October 14, 2026

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Primary Subcommittee: Public Participation and Education (PPE)
Secondary Subcommittee (if applicable): Choose an item.
Tertiary Subcommittee (if applicable): Choose an item.

Project Name:

Bay Ambassadors' Toolkit: Communications Capacity Building

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes ☐ No ☒

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

Friends of Flower Garden Banks (FoffGB)

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

☐ Federal, State, or Local Government ☐ Council of Government ☐ Public ISDs or Universities
☒ Nonprofit ☐ Other*

FoffGB, a nonprofit conservation community organization, will lead communications and grant administration. Calibrated Creative, a for-profit business, will conduct the work and create the deliverables.

Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:	
Vendor Identification Number (VIN) or Tax ID:	39-2488670

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Sandra Metoyer
Project Representative Phone	979-204-1147
Project Representative Email	Metoyer.FriendsofFGB@gmail.com

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2027 – ending no later than May 31, 2030) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

September 1, 2027 – December 31, 2028

Amount Requested from GBEP:

\$40,700.00

Federal ☐ State ☐ No Preference ☒

Is the project scalable? ☐

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2028 (09/01/2027-08/31/2028)	\$40,700.00
FY 2029 (09/01/2028-08/31/2029)	\$0.00 – 3 months at no cost to close-out the project/invoicing
FY 2030 (09/01/2029-05/31/2030)	\$0.00
Total	\$40,700.00

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

\$40,700.00

Is this an estimate? ☐

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

Not applicable.

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Subcommittee Priorities (Section Four) will be considered above others. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

The *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* Action Plans are found at:

<https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 1: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

NPS-1 ☐ NPS-2 ☐ NPS-3 ☐ NPS-4 ☐
PS-1 ☐ PS-2 ☐ PS-3 ☐
PHA-1 ☐ PHA-2 ☐ PHA-3 ☐ PHA-4 ☐ PHA-5 ☐

Plan Priority 2: Protect and Sustain Living Resources

HC-1 ☐ HC-2 ☐ HC-3 ☐
SC-1 ☐ SC-2 ☐
FWI-1 ☐ FWI-2 ☐ FWI-3 ☐

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

SPO-1 ☐ SPO-2 ☐ **SPO-3 ☒** SPO-4 ☐
PEA-1 ☒ **PEA-2 ☒** PEA-3 ☐

Plan Priority 4: Inform Science-based Decision Making

RES-1 ☐ RES-2 ☐ RES-3 ☐ RES-4 ☐
RES-5 ☐ RES-6 ☐ RES-7 ☐ RES-8 ☐
ACS-1 ☐ ACS-2 ☐ ACS-3 ☐

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

The proposed project supports GBEP priorities under Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities.

- **Preserve Galveston Bay through Stakeholder and Partner Outreach (SPO-3): *Support Regional Initiatives.*** The proposed PPE project will expand and support the Back the Bay campaign – specifically the 32 Back the Bay Ambassadors – with community capacity building support that will expand awareness, partnerships, and participation among the Bay Ambassadors' GBEP-funded regional initiatives and with GBEP itself.
- **Support Public Education & Awareness (PEA 1 & 2): *PEA-1 Key Issue Engagement & PEA-2 Adult Education.*** The proposed PPE project will engage the public in key issues currently being addressed by GBEP partners under GBEP-funded regional initiatives by highlighting projects in progress and completed among the 32 Back the Bay Ambassadors.

In addition, as argued in the NAAEE 2017 publication "Guidelines for Excellence: Community Engagement," the goal of this PPE project is not simply to put out content. The goal is to optimize creative use of visual communication in order to (1) ***promote GBEP initiatives*** built around community-defined needs, (2) ***increase public connection*** to the health and/or protection and preservation of Galveston Bay, and (3) ***expand the reach*** of the Back the Bay program to geographically isolated communities—including rural, remote, and under-resourced areas—while increasing engagement with diverse and historically underserved audiences.

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

Subcommittee Identified Priorities:

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- ☐ WSQ: Supporting management measures and watershed-based plans through adaptive management, workforce development, and technical assistance.
- ☐ WSQ: Improve knowledge and accessibility of pollution reporting tools to empower the community.
- ☐ WSQ: Implementation and/or evaluation of best management practices that address point and nonpoint source pollution.
- ☐ NRU: Habitat Acquisition.
- ☐ NRU: Enhancement of existing or ongoing restoration-conservation efforts. Special emphasis on:
 - ☐ Adaptive management for previously completed projects; and
 - ☐ Projects that may have lost/delayed funding from other federal sources.
- ☐ NRU: Benefit to native fish and wildlife, including federal and state listed species, Species of Greatest Conservation Need, or nongame wildlife.
- ☐ NRU: Project urgency: Project must be completed in next 24 months or opportunity is lost.
- ☒ **PPE: Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed.**
- ☐ PPE: Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects.
- ☐ PPE: Opportunities to host workshops/networking events to provide technical assistance for local leadership (local governments, MUDs, schoolboards, the public) on key topics.
- ☐ PPE: Conservation and environmental workforce development.
- ☐ M&R: Meaningful and effective monitoring of existing, past, and new projects (NRU: especially research and monitoring for diamondback terrapin and best management projects, WSQ, PPE).
- ☐ M&R: Baseline assessments for large-scale, man-made changes to Galveston Bay at an adequate timeline and spatial range to provide useful information.
- ☐ M&R: Assessment, Exposure, and Response to stressors, including but not limited to:
 - ☐ Species of greatest conservation need;
 - ☐ Contact recreation standards;
 - ☐ Environmental parameters;
 - ☐ Emerging contaminants; and
 - ☐ Legacy contaminants.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

The proposed project will connect new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed.

By leveraging the communications toolkit, most if not all the Back the Bay Ambassadors' GBEP partners will be highlighted throughout the project period. And the proposed project will expand the reach of the Back the Bay program to geographically isolated communities, including rural and remote areas, while increasing engagement with diverse and historically underserved audiences.

An additional subcommittees' priority, the project will **facilitate authentic collaboration** among GBEP, the subcommittees, and the Back the Bay Ambassador organizations to **achieve shared goals** - (1) collaboration to **connect new audiences** to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed and (2) collaboration to **increase public connection** to the health, protection, or preservation of Galveston Bay.

Does the Project align with any EPA Areas of Special Interest?

No. Not Applicable.

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

Strategic communications can connect existing restoration, monitoring, education, and partnership efforts to broader audiences, increasing environmental literacy, expanding public participation, and cultivating the next generation of environmental stewards and conservation professionals.

While Back the Bay Ambassador organizations are actively engaged in conservation, they have varying levels of communications capacity and staff resources. GBEP has developed valuable project information, research, and communications materials. The opportunity is to organize these existing resources and develop additional ready-to-use materials that ambassadors can adapt and share through their own communication channels.

Goal: Strengthen the communications capacity of Back the Bay Ambassadors so they can more effectively share GBEP-supported conservation work with their own audiences

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

The Friends of Flower Garden Banks will act as the facilitator for strategic communications among GBEP Back the Bay Ambassadors. Partnering with Calibrated Creative, a small locally owned business, and with GBEP, Back the Bay Ambassadors, and other regional conservation-based organizations; this project will promote, increase, and expand the reach of GBEP and its partner organizations through strategic visual communications via the communications toolkit.

We will expand on the work of the existing GBEP Communication Toolkit that will be used not only during the project period with the coaching of Calibrated Creative but also as a tool that may be scaled, generalized, or adopted/modified for future GBEP initiatives. In this way the deliverables of this project are not static or dated but rather the communication toolkit will inform future strategic communications in a significant and relevant way.

First Step:

AMBASSADOR COMMUNICATIONS NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Rather than developing a toolkit based on assumptions, the project will begin by listening to the organizations it is designed to support. A facilitated focus group with Back the Bay Ambassadors will identify the communications needs, barriers, audiences, and resources that would be most useful to participating organizations.

Second Step:

Working with the GBEP Project Manager, results from the needs assessment will inform changes, revisions, and or additions to the existing toolkit.

Third Step:

In collaboration with 2 to 3 Bay Ambassadors, the revised toolkit will be piloted using an iterative design for continuous evaluation and improvements.

Fourth Step: The revised Communication Toolkit will launch with full support provided to Bay Ambassador partners in how best to adopt or implement the toolkit resources.

Project Urgency:

Project urgency is directly related to Ambassador capacity. Many of the 32 Back the Bay Ambassadors may not have the organizational capacity to commit resources required to achieve the communication and outreach goals of the Back the Bay program.

Under a coordinated, strategic, and intentional collaborative effort, the communication strategy for the Back the Bay Initiative will be comprehensive, synergistic, and impactful.

Other Plans Implemented:

Not applicable.

Partners¹ and Their Roles:

Lead Organization: Friends of Flower Garden Banks (FofFGB) National Marine Sanctuary (nonprofit organization)

Project Director: Sandra Metoyer, PhD, Interim Executive Director of the FofFGB. Responsible for grant management, ensuring compliance, leading the communication plan & coordination, acting as direct liaison among GBEP, FofFGB, and Back the Bay Ambassador representatives, and finance/accounting tasks (e.g., invoicing and budget management).

Visual Communicator: Calibrated Creative CEO, Sydney Fanning. Responsible for project co-ordination (alongside the GBEP program manager), co-coordinating needs assessment, content creation, communication analytics, coaching/supporting ambassadors, modifications of communication toolkit, and providing data to GBEP and Metoyer for reporting and dissemination.

Note that although the FofFGB is a relatively new organization, Interim Executive Director and proposed Project Director, Sandra Metoyer, has substantial experience in sponsored programs, project management, TCEQ business processes. In addition, Sydney Fanning with Calibrated Creative has demonstrated success and expertise in leading creative development of visual communication strategies for many organizations (resume available upon request).

The proposed team has the experience, credentials, creative talent, and motivation to successfully execute this project.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

☒ Yes

☐ No

The ***Friends of Flower Garden Banks*** is a new, small, and community-led nonprofit organization and GBEP partner.

In addition to the FofFGB, ***Calibrated Creative*** is a new small locally owned business.

Funding this project encourages new small regional businesses to work with GBEP to further the Back the Bay Initiative and goals. We intend to use this project as a vehicle to reach out to and invite many new individuals and organizations to participate with GBEP, GBEP's Back the Bay initiative & Ambassador organizations, and with the Friends of Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary.

Is the project subject to Title VI requirements?

To meet federal nondiscrimination guidance and laws (Title VI), TCEQ requires information and services to be provided in languages other than English when significant numbers of beneficiaries are of limited English-speaking ability (LEP). If 5% or more of the population within your project area is LEP and share a common language, then you are required to provide outreach in the alternative language. For statewide projects, Spanish language outreach is required. As Title VI compliance could impact the project budget, please reach out to the primary subcommittee coordinator for this application with questions on determining applicability.

☐ Yes

☒ No

Not Applicable.

¹ If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted as an appendix with the application.

Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

Not Applicable.

Location:

Galveston Bay watershed.

Projects Map

None.

Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):

Figure 1: The Toolkit

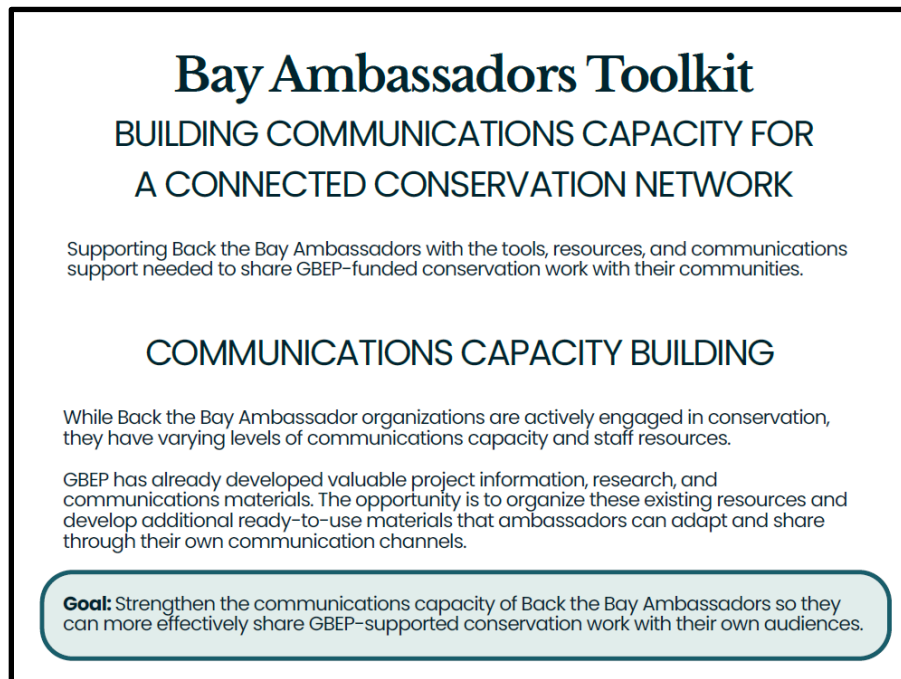


Figure 2: The Toolkit Components

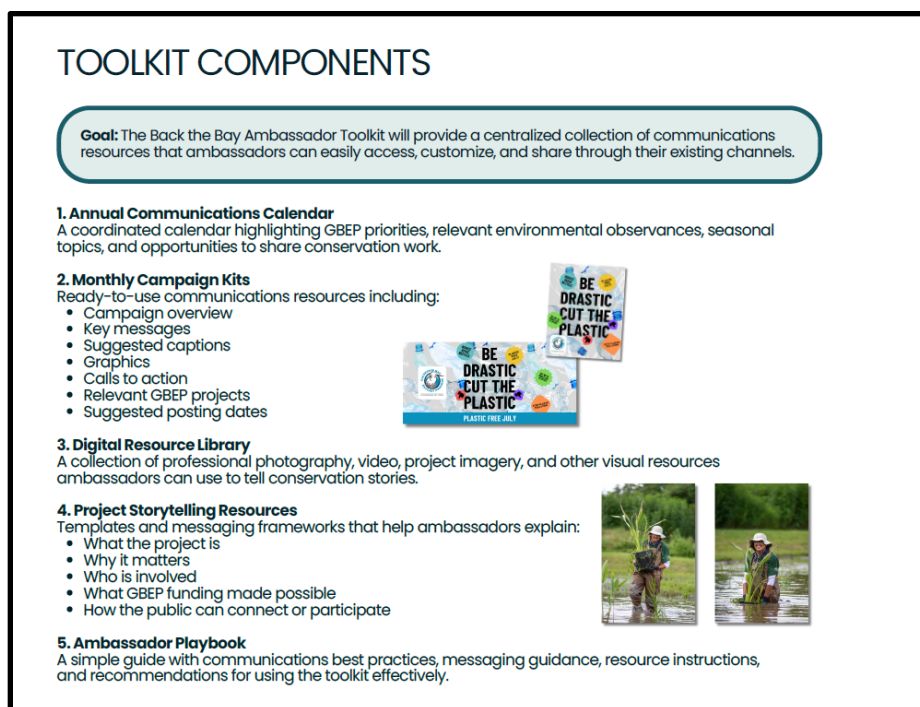


Figure 3: Project Timeline

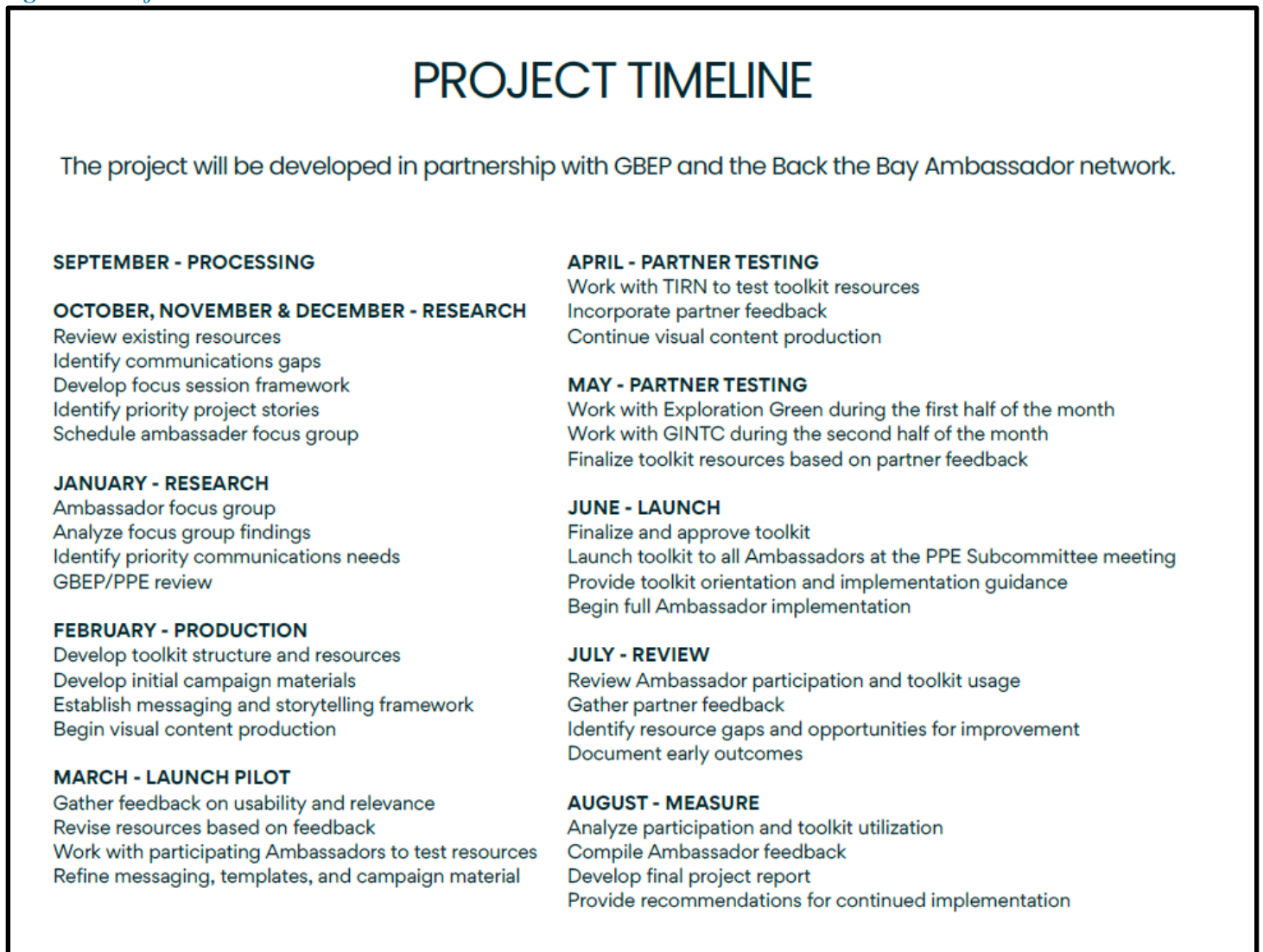


Figure 5: Project Budget

SOW Budget - 1 Year Project	
Category	Budget
Grant Administration	\$2,000
Project Strategy + Communications Needs Assessment	\$3,000
Professional Photography / Videography / Editing	\$10,000
Toolkit Development + Content Production	\$18,000
Ambassador Coordination + Facilitation	\$3,000
Analytics + Participation Report	\$1,000
IDC (10%)	\$3,700
TOTAL: \$40,700	

SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

a. Direct Costs

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$2,000
Fringe Benefits (25%)	\$0.00
Travel	\$0.00
Supplies	\$0.00
Equipment	\$0.00
Contractual (Calibrated Creative)	\$35,000.00
Construction	\$0.00
Other	\$0.00
Total Direct Cost	\$37,000.00

b. Indirect Costs²

Distribution Base Amount (<i>identify Base type below</i>)	\$ 37,000
Indirect Cost Rate for Reimbursement	% 10 of total Direct Cost
Total Indirect Costs	\$ 3,700

c. Maximum Authorized Reimbursement

Maximum Authorized Reimbursement (Direct and Indirect Costs)	\$ 40,700
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Indirect Cost Distribution Base. The Distribution Base above is (check one):

- ☐ direct salary/wages and fringe benefits
☒ modified total direct costs
☐ other direct cost Base

If other direct cost Base, identify:

The indirect cost rate is (check one):

☐ **Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.

☐ **De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of 15 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

² Please attach Indirect Cost Agreement as an appendix if applicable

☒ **Partial Reimbursement Rate** — a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

☐ **Other:** [Examples: De Minimis Rate with a base of direct salary and wages (less than or equal to actual indirect costs) or Provisional Rate. If this is a Provisional Rate, include the following language: Provisional Rate: The subsequent adjustment of the indirect cost rate is subject to the requirements of Article 9 of this (Cost Budget) section.]

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of budget total, identify the main constituents:

Not applicable.

Travel. In order to be reimbursable, travel costs must be specifically authorized in advance of the travel. Travel costs will be reimbursed only in the amount of actual costs, up to the maximum allowed by law for employees of the State of Texas at the time the cost is incurred.

Budget Categories. The Budget Categories above are representative of the items of cost found in TxGMS and 2 CFR Part 200, and have the definitions, requirements, and limitations found therein. Construction costs are not reimbursable without prior, specific written authorization from TCEQ.

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will post notification of the meeting's time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by **July 24, 2026 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:**

WSQ Subcommittee: Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov
NRU Subcommittee: Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov
PPE Subcommittee: Zoe.Gapayao@tceq.texas.gov
M&R Subcommittee: Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov
Programmatic Projects: Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2028 Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **July 24, 2026**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for fiscal 2028 (FY 2028) Priority Area Actions that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for FY 2028 at the June 2026 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

Timeline of Proposals:

Task	Date Due
Release of Request for Proposals	June 22, 2026
Proposals Due	July 24, 2026
Send Proposals to Subcommittees Members for Review	August 12, 2026
Present Proposals to Subcommittees for Council Recommendation	September 2, 2026 (NRU and PPE) September 9, 2026 (M&R and WSQ)
Present Proposals to B&P Subcommittee for Final Recommendation	September 30, 2026
Present Proposals to Galveston Bay Council for Approval	October 14, 2026

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Primary Subcommittee: Public Participation and Education (PPE)
Secondary Subcommittee (if applicable): Choose an item.
Tertiary Subcommittee (if applicable): Choose an item.

Project Name:

Connecting Watersheds to Well-Being: A One Health Education Initiative for Galveston Bay
--

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes ☐ No ☒

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

Houston Advanced Research Center/GTRI

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

☐ Federal, State, or Local Government ☐ Council of Government ☐ Public ISDs or Universities
☒ Nonprofit ☐ Other*

--

Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:	MLKKJ9MNDN6
Vendor Identification Number (VIN) or Tax ID:	17600383156

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Erin Kinney
Project Representative Phone	281-360-6040
Project Representative Email	Ekinney@harcresearch.org

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2027 – ending no later than May 31, 2030) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

September 1, 2027 – August 31, 2029

Amount Requested from GBEP:

\$161,003

Federal ☐ State ☐ No Preference ☐

Is the project scalable? ☐

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2028 (09/01/2027-08/31/2028)	\$70,267.00
FY 2029 (09/01/2028-08/31/2029)	\$90,736.00
Total	\$161,003.00

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

\$161,003

Is this an estimate? ☐

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

Dr. Coral Marie Lozada, Faculty Fellow in the Office of Sustainability at Houston Methodist Research Institute will be donating her time to the project.
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SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Subcommittee Priorities (Section Four) will be considered above others. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

The *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* Action Plans are found at:

<https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 1: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

NPS-1 ☐ NPS-2 ☐ NPS-3 ☐ NPS-4 ☐
PS-1 ☐ PS-2 ☐ PS-3 ☐
PHA-1 ☐ PHA-2 ☐ PHA-3 ☐ PHA-4 ☐ PHA-5 ☐

Plan Priority 2: Protect and Sustain Living Resources

HC-1 ☐ HC-2 ☐ HC-3 ☐
SC-1 ☐ SC-2 ☐
FWI-1 ☐ FWI-2 ☐ FWI-3 ☐

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

SPO-1 ☒ SPO-2 ☐ SPO-3 ☒ SPO-4 ☐
PEA-1 ☒ PEA-2 ☒ PEA-3 ☐

Plan Priority 4: Inform Science-based Decision Making

RES-1 ☐ RES-2 ☐ RES-3 ☐ RES-4 ☐
RES-5 ☐ RES-6 ☐ RES-7 ☐ RES-8 ☐
ACS-1 ☐ ACS-2 ☐ ACS-3 ☐

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

The ***Connecting Watersheds to Well-Being*** program will create a structured, watershed based One Health learning program that engages current and future health professionals (graduate and professional students in medicine, nursing, public health, physician assistant programs) in the science, partnerships, and stewardship efforts of the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP). One Health is an integrated approach that recognizes that the health of humans, animals, plants and ecosystems are deeply interconnected. To support the integration of environmental health and human health, program activities will include Grand Rounds presentations (educational seminars, commonly hosted by hospitals and academic health centers, that bring together healthcare professionals, trainees, researchers, and students to provide continuing education on topics relevant to clinical practice and public health), watershed partner seminars, field experiences, and mentored learning experiences that connect participants with GBEP partners, regional initiatives, and watershed resources. These activities advance the following Public Participation and Education Plan (PPE) Subcommittee priorities:

SPO-1 Stewardship Programs and Volunteer Opportunities - The Watershed Partner Seminar series will introduce participants to existing GBEP stewardship and volunteer opportunities, including programs such as Trash Bash, Texas Stream Team, SPLASH, and other partner-led initiatives, increasing awareness of opportunities to engage in long-term watershed stewardship.

SPO-2 Workshops and Events - Grand Rounds presentations and an in-person field workshop will support stakeholder and partner involvement by engaging healthcare professionals, students, and community partners in educational events focused on watershed science and community health. The field workshop, tentatively planned at the MD Anderson Prairie and Wetland Restoration Site, will provide hands-on learning opportunities while showcasing restoration, watershed stewardship, and civic science activities led by GBEP partners.

SPO-3 Support Regional Initiatives - During the second semester of the program, participant teams will develop applied projects on topics such as seafood safety, flood resilience, litter prevention, and legacy or emerging contaminants. By exploring the connections between watershed and community health, these projects support broader regional One Health efforts, including the Harris County One Health Initiative.

PEA-1 Key Issue Engagement - Grand Rounds presentations will raise awareness of key watershed and community health issues affecting Galveston Bay among a broad healthcare audience, while applied participant projects will engage participants in exploring those issues through a watershed-based One Health framework.

PEA-2 Adult Education - This project will establish a new watershed-based One Health education program for adult learners, increasing environmental literacy among future healthcare professionals while raising awareness of watershed and community health across the broader healthcare community.

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

Subcommittee Identified Priorities:

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- ☐ WSQ: Supporting management measures and watershed-based plans through adaptive management, workforce development, and technical assistance.
- ☐ WSQ: Improve knowledge and accessibility of pollution reporting tools to empower the community.
- ☐ WSQ: Implementation and/or evaluation of best management practices that address point and nonpoint source pollution.
- ☐ NRU: Habitat Acquisition.
- ☐ NRU: Enhancement of existing or ongoing restoration-conservation efforts. Special emphasis on:
 - ☐ Adaptive management for previously completed projects; and
 - ☐ Projects that may have lost/delayed funding from other federal sources.
- ☐ NRU: Benefit to native fish and wildlife, including federal and state listed species, Species of Greatest Conservation Need, or nongame wildlife.
- ☐ NRU: Project urgency: Project must be completed in next 24 months or opportunity is lost.
- ☒ PPE: Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed.
- ☒ PPE: Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects.
- ☒ PPE: Opportunities to host workshops/networking events to provide technical assistance for local leadership (local governments, MUDs, schoolboards, the public) on key topics.
- ☐ PPE: Conservation and environmental workforce development.
- ☐ M&R: Meaningful and effective monitoring of existing, past, and new projects (NRU: especially research and monitoring for diamondback terrapin and best management projects, WSQ, PPE).
- ☐ M&R: Baseline assessments for large-scale, man-made changes to Galveston Bay at an adequate timeline and spatial range to provide useful information.
- ☐ M&R: Assessment, Exposure, and Response to stressors, including but not limited to:
 - ☐ Species of greatest conservation need;
 - ☐ Contact recreation standards;
 - ☐ Environmental parameters;
 - ☐ Emerging contaminants; and
 - ☐ Legacy contaminants.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

One goal of the Connecting Watersheds to Well-Being program is to introduce doctors, nurses, public health professionals, and future healthcare professionals to GBEP, the watershed, and the work of GBEP partners through presentations and workshops highlighting current and past projects. According to Houston Methodist, healthcare professionals have been requesting evidence-based nature and environmental health activities and resources. This program would bridge that gap by hosting opportunities for technical instruction and explanation to resources on water quality (including contact recreation standards), sea food safety (including legacy contaminants), flood safety, air quality and heat risks. The program uses a watershed-based One Health framework that recognizes the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health, using watershed issues as a practical context for exploring these relationships.

Additional details describing how the ***Connecting Watersheds to Well-Being*** program addresses the PPE Subcommittee identified priorities are provided below:

Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed

The program will connect a new audience including healthcare professionals with existing watershed projects and initiatives through the Watershed Partner Seminar Series and a field workshop at the MD Anderson Prairie and Wetland Restoration Site.

Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects

The program increases scientific literacy among adult learners by connecting watershed science with human health and providing opportunities to apply that knowledge through independent projects.

Opportunities to host workshops/networking events to provide technical assistance for local leadership (local governments, MUDs, schoolboards, the public) on key topics

The Watershed Partner Seminar Series and field-based workshop will provide education on key watershed and community health topics while creating opportunities for networking, knowledge sharing, and dialogue among healthcare professionals, students, watershed practitioners, local leaders, and other interested stakeholders.

Does the Project align with any EPA Areas of Special Interest?

- ☐ Reduce Nutrient Pollution to Protect Water Quality and Public Health
- ☐ Make Investments that Address Coastal Resiliency
- ☒ Reduce Trash

One of the potential Watershed Partner seminars or workshop topic is a litter collection experience with American Bird Conservancy through their SPLASH program.

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

Connecting Watersheds to Well Being: A One Health Education Initiative for Galveston Bay will prepare healthcare professionals to understand the connections between watershed and community health through a One Health educational experience. The Houston Advanced Research Center (HARC) and Houston Methodist Research Institute (HMRI) will develop a one-year interdisciplinary program that includes a planning and curriculum development phase, followed by implementation of a cohort of approximately 15 to 20 participants from medicine, nursing, public health, community health, and related disciplines. Participants will engage in seminars, field experiences, partner led learning activities, and applied projects addressing One Health challenges from a watershed perspective. Grand Rounds style educational seminars for healthcare professionals will extend the program by engaging a broader audience of healthcare professionals, researchers, students, and community members. The project advances the Galveston Bay Plan by engaging a new audience of healthcare professionals, supporting interdisciplinary participant projects that address partner identified priorities, and strengthening connections between the environmental and health communities.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

Watershed and Community Health are Interconnected

Galveston Bay supports ecological, economic, and community well-being across one of the nation's largest and fastest-growing metropolitan regions. At the same time, population growth, continued development, increasing pressure on water and waste-management infrastructure, extreme weather, and changing seasonal conditions are creating new challenges for the estuary and the people who depend on it. Addressing these interconnected pressures requires not only strong science and on-the-ground conservation but also informed communities that understand the value of Galveston Bay, the threats it faces, and their role in protecting it.

Through Plan Priority Three, *Engage Communities*, GBEP has identified public awareness, environmental literacy, stewardship, and broader participation as essential components of long-term Plan implementation. This project advances those goals by engaging an important new audience, current and future health professionals, and equipping them with the environmental knowledge, partnerships, and watershed perspective needed to become informed advocates for the value of Galveston Bay watershed ecosystem.

Despite their critical role in protecting public health, health professionals remain a potential audience for GBEP. Throughout their careers, these professionals will encounter the health impacts of environmental conditions, including flooding, water quality, extreme heat, and other challenges that influence community health and quality of life. Yet opportunities to engage with watershed science, estuarine management, and the organizations working to preserve and protect Galveston Bay are rarely part of their professional development. GBEP and its network of scientists, resource managers, educators, and community partners represent a valuable resource for this type of interdisciplinary learning. Connecting health professionals with this network can expand their understanding of environmental context in which communities live, strengthen their ability to locate and communicate trusted information, and help build a future workforce prepared to address the interconnected environmental and human health challenges facing the Galveston Bay region.

This project is grounded in the One Health framework, which recognizes that the health of people, animals, and the environment are fundamentally interconnected, and that addressing today's complex health challenges requires collaboration across disciplines. The Houston region has begun embracing this approach through the Harris County One Health Initiative, which brings together partners from public health, conservation, academia, and environmental organizations to address shared challenges. While One Health encompasses many dimensions of health, this project focuses specifically on the watershed and coastal management dimensions most relevant to the Galveston Bay region.

The Galveston Bay watershed provides a practical, place-based learning environment where participants can explore how water quality, flooding, wastewater infrastructure, habitat, seafood safety, and other environmental conditions influence community health. Through decades of monitoring, restoration, education, and collaborative partnerships, GBEP and its stakeholders provide the expertise, real-world

examples, and interdisciplinary network needed to translate watershed science into meaningful learning experiences for health professionals.

A Watershed-Based One Health Learning Experience

HARC and HMRI will develop a year-long interdisciplinary learning cohort for students in medicine, nursing, public health, community health, and related disciplines. Participants will be recruited through HMRI's partnerships with the Gulf Coast Consortium, and collaborating institutions, including UTMB, the UT School of Public Health, Rice University, Texas Southern University, and UH-Clear Lake. Although proposed as a two-year project, the timeline intentionally includes an initial planning and curriculum development phase, followed by implementation during the 2028-2029 academic year and a final period for evaluation, synthesis, reporting, and dissemination.

During the first semester, cohort participants will build a shared foundation in watershed-based One Health through a combination of interdisciplinary seminars, partner-led presentations, field experiences, and collaborative discussions. Educational topics will introduce participants to the Galveston Bay watershed, water quality and wastewater infrastructure, flooding, habitat restoration, seafood safety, civic science, environmental health, and other issues. Throughout the semester, participants will engage directly with GBEP partners, scientists, resource managers, educators, and community organizations while exploring ongoing monitoring, restoration, and stewardship efforts. Selected presentations will be offered in a Grand Rounds-style format, extending participation beyond the cohort to healthcare professionals and other interested audiences while introducing new communities to GBEP.

During the second semester, interdisciplinary participant teams will work with faculty, postdoctoral researchers, HARC scientists, and GBEP partners to design and complete applied projects that address real-world watershed and coastal management challenges. Depending on partner needs and participant interests, projects may include analyses of environmental or public health data, qualitative research, science communication products, community-engaged assessments, or evaluations of existing watershed programs. Participants will receive mentoring and methods support throughout the project period and will share their work through presentations, conference participation, or other professional dissemination opportunities. By emphasizing interdisciplinary collaboration and partner engagement, the program prepares participants to translate watershed science into future professional practice while strengthening a regional community of practice.

Implementing the Galveston Bay Plan Through Capacity Building for Watershed and Community Health

This project advances the GBP by engaging future health professionals in watershed stewardship through a One Health framework. Consistent with FY 2028 PPE priorities, it connects a new audience with existing GBEP monitoring, research, restoration, outreach, and civic science initiatives, while increasing environmental literacy and awareness of watershed issues and the organizations working to preserve and protect Galveston Bay. Applied participant projects also create opportunities to address the M&R priority of Assessment, Exposure, and Response to Stressors through interdisciplinary, partner-informed investigations of watershed and environmental health challenges.

The Connecting Watersheds to Well-Being program will build a network of healthcare professionals who better understand the Galveston Bay watershed, know where to find trusted environmental information, and are prepared to incorporate a watershed and environmental health perspective into clinical care, public health, research, and community leadership. Beyond the initial cohort, the curriculum, partnerships, and educational framework developed through this project will provide a foundation for future cohorts and future collaborations within the Galveston Bay region. By strengthening connections among future healthcare professionals, academic institutions, scientists, resource managers, and community organizations, the project expands opportunities for long-term collaboration between the environmental and health communities on watershed and coastal resilience challenges.

Project Urgency:

N/A

Other Plans Implemented:

Harris County One Health for the Built Environment Toolkit and the Houston Climate Action Plan

Partners¹ and Their Roles:

HARC will manage the contract and subcontract, assist in planning, collaborate on designing the course, recruit presenters, host webinars, as well as attend and facilitate in-person workshops.

HARC and HMRI will leverage their collaborative networks (GBEP, One Health Action Hub, Gulf Coast Consortium, a collaborative between HMRI and UTMB, with their translational science cohorts from TSU, UH-Clear Lake, UTMB, UT School of Public Health, Texas A&M, and Rice) to lead recruitment.

HMRI Sustainability Faculty Fellow and Post-doc will also lead mentor recruitment and selection of participants. HMRI will collaborate on designing the course, recruit presenters, and attend all events.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

☒ Yes

☐ No

One of the goals of this project is to collaborate with new partners, including smaller non-profit organizations. Identifying those partners is part of the planning and course design stage.

Is the project subject to Title VI requirements?

To meet federal nondiscrimination guidance and laws (Title VI), TCEQ requires information and services to be provided in languages other than English when significant numbers of beneficiaries are of limited English-speaking ability (LEP). If 5% or more of the population within your project area is LEP and share a common language, then you are required to provide outreach in the alternative language. For statewide projects, Spanish language outreach is required. As Title VI compliance could impact the project budget, please reach out to the primary subcommittee coordinator for this application with questions on determining applicability.

☐ Yes

☒ No

Latitude/Longitude (Optional):**Location:**

All GBEP service area: Lower Galveston Bay Watershed, centered in the Texas Medical Center, Houston

Projects Map**Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):**

Figure 1. Timeline for the *Connecting Watersheds to Well Being: A One Health Education Initiative for Galveston Bay* program.

¹ If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted as an appendix with the application.

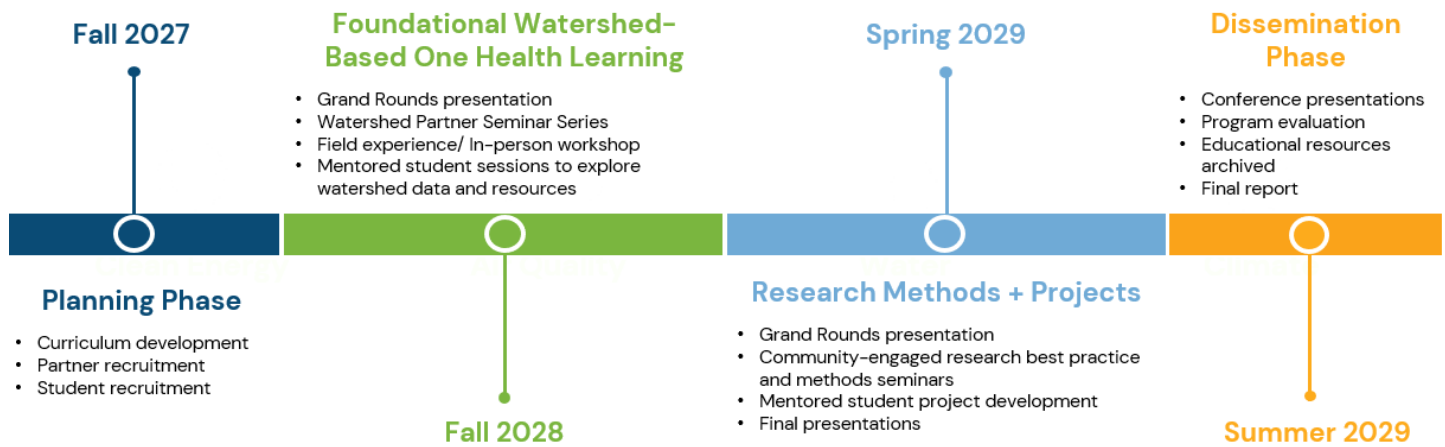
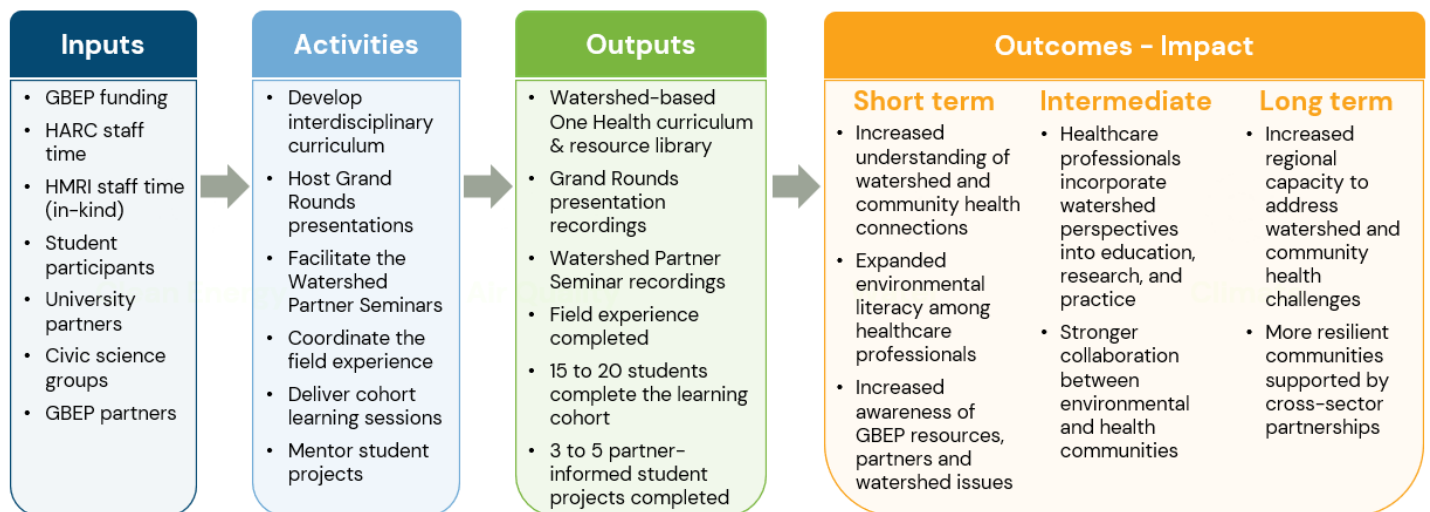


Figure 2. Logic model for the *Connecting Watersheds to Well Being: A One Health Education Initiative for Galveston Bay* program.



SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

a. Direct Costs

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$54,943.00
Fringe Benefits (48%) ²	\$26,372.00
Travel	\$296.00
Supplies	\$0.00
Equipment	\$0.00
Contractual	\$16,000.00
Construction	\$0.00
Other	\$7,620.00
Total Direct Cost	\$105,231.00

b. Indirect Costs³

Distribution Base Amount (<i>identify Base type below</i>)	\$ 105,231
Indirect Cost Rate for Reimbursement	53%
Total Indirect Costs	\$ 55,772

c. Maximum Authorized Reimbursement

Maximum Authorized Reimbursement (Direct and Indirect Costs)	\$ 161,003
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Indirect Cost Distribution Base. The Distribution Base above is (check one):

- ☐ direct salary/wages and fringe benefits
☒ modified total direct costs
☐ other direct cost Base

If other direct cost Base, identify:

The indirect cost rate is (check one):

☒ **Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.

☐ **De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of 15 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

☐ **Partial Reimbursement Rate** — a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes

² If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

³ Please attach Indirect Cost Agreement as an appendix if applicable

all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

☐ **Other:** [Examples: De Minimis Rate with a base of direct salary and wages (less than or equal to actual indirect costs) or Provisional Rate. If this is a Provisional Rate, include the following language: Provisional Rate: The subsequent adjustment of the indirect cost rate is subject to the requirements of Article 9 of this (Cost Budget) section.]

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of budget total, identify the main constituents:

--

Travel. In order to be reimbursable, travel costs must be specifically authorized in advance of the travel. Travel costs will be reimbursed only in the amount of actual costs, up to the maximum allowed by law for employees of the State of Texas at the time the cost is incurred.

Budget Categories. The Budget Categories above are representative of the items of cost found in TxGMS and 2 CFR Part 200, and have the definitions, requirements, and limitations found therein. Construction costs are not reimbursable without prior, specific written authorization from TCEQ.

July 24, 2026

Galveston Bay Estuary Program
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
Gemini Street, Suite 214
Houston, TX 77058

Dear Galveston Bay Estuary Program,

I am pleased to express my enthusiastic support of the proposed project Connecting Watersheds to Well-Being: A One Health Education Initiative for Galveston Bay led by Dr. Erin Kinney with the Houston Advanced Research Program (HARC) for the Public Participation and Education Subcommittee. This study aligns with Houston Methodist's Office of Sustainability's mission and commitment to responsibly use resources to protect the environment and support health and well-being. In its 3rd year, the Office of Sustainability has worked on quantifying system level emissions and educating our workforce on local and regional environmental hazards that are tied to sustainability and resilience themes.

Through strategic multisectoral partnerships with the Citizen's Environmental Coalition (CEC), Healthcare Plastics Recycling Council, and Practice Greenhealth our office has cultivated relationships and resources. Houston Methodist is also a partner of the Gulf Coast Consortium Translational Science training program that provides resources and mentoring to healthcare students. These existing networks allow a unique and untapped source for education and outreach that lead to tangible outcomes as healthcare practitioners learn to navigate climate induced health outcomes and share existing resources with their patients and communities of practice.

Using the CEC's website as the webinar and virtual networking space ensures that the lessons and networks built during this year long initiative can be accessed by the greater public. For the in-person meetings and trainings a conference space will be provided through our Houston Methodist Innovation Center residency at The Ion. The proposed project will provide much needed outreach and education to new audiences through healthcare providers. The opportunity to connect human health outcomes to environmental health in the Galveston Bay watershed supports the Galveston Bay Plan and the One Health initiative and will lead to healthier communities overall.

Sincerely,



Jason Fischer, MBA
Director, Office of Sustainability

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2028 Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **July 24, 2026**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for fiscal 2028 (FY 2028) Priority Area Actions that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for FY 2028 at the June 2026 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

Timeline of Proposals:

Task	Date Due
Release of Request for Proposals	June 22, 2026
Proposals Due	July 24, 2026
Send Proposals to Subcommittees Members for Review	August 12, 2026
Present Proposals to Subcommittees for Council Recommendation	September 2, 2026 (NRU and PPE) September 9, 2026 (M&R and WSQ)
Present Proposals to B&P Subcommittee for Final Recommendation	September 30, 2026
Present Proposals to Galveston Bay Council for Approval	October 14, 2026

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Primary Subcommittee: Public Participation and Education (PPE)
Secondary Subcommittee (if applicable): Choose an item.
Tertiary Subcommittee (if applicable): Choose an item.

Project Name:

Bayou Greenways Conservation Academy

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes ☐ No ☒

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

Houston Parks Board

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

- ☐ Federal, State, or Local Government ☐ Council of Government ☐ Public ISDs or Universities
☒ Nonprofit ☐ Other*

[If other, please identify pass-through partner.]

Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:	
Vendor Identification Number (VIN) or Tax ID:	74-1860046

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Karastin Katusin
Project Representative Phone	832-879-7373
Project Representative Email	KarastinKatusin@houstonparksboard.org

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2027 – ending no later than May 31, 2030) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

September 1, 2027 - August 31, 2028

Amount Requested from GBEP:

[\$]13,225

Federal ☐ State ☐ No Preference ☐

Is the project scalable? ☐

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2028 (09/01/2027-08/31/2028)	\$13,225
FY 2029 (09/01/2028-08/31/2029)	\$0.00
FY 2030 (09/01/2029-05/31/2030)	\$0.00
Total	\$13,225

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

[\$]28,255

Is this an estimate? ☒

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

Staff time will be in-kind to a total amount of \$15,000.

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Subcommittee Priorities (Section Four) will be considered above others. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

The *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* Action Plans are found at:

<https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 1: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

NPS-1 ☐ NPS-2 ☒ NPS-3 ☐ NPS-4 ☐
PS-1 ☐ PS-2 ☐ PS-3 ☐
PHA-1 ☐ PHA-2 ☐ PHA-3 ☐ PHA-4 ☐ PHA-5 ☐

Plan Priority 2: Protect and Sustain Living Resources

HC-1 ☐ HC-2 ☒ HC-3 ☒
SC-1 ☒ SC-2 ☐
FWI-1 ☐ FWI-2 ☐ FWI-3 ☒

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

SPO-1 ☒ SPO-2 ☐ SPO-3 ☐ SPO-4 ☐
PEA-1 ☒ PEA-2 ☒ PEA-3 ☐

Plan Priority 4: Inform Science-based Decision Making

RES-1 ☐ RES-2 ☐ RES-3 ☐ RES-4 ☐
RES-5 ☐ RES-6 ☐ RES-7 ☐ RES-8 ☐
ACS-1 ☐ ACS-2 ☒ ACS-3 ☐

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

NPS -2, Support Nonpoint Source Education and Outreach Campaigns + FWI-3, Water Conservation and Education

Bayou Greenways Conservation Academy (BGCA) is an adult education program happening along Houston's bayous, having a primary focus on watersheds, thus fostering public awareness and encouraging action for attendees. BGCA will highlight the value of freshwater, the Houston bayou systems, and Galveston Bay watershed as a system.

HC-2, Habitat Restoration + HC-3, Habitat Enhancement

The Academy attendees will assist with habitat restoration and enhancement by planting native species at conservation sites and providing hands-on assistance in the HPB Nursery. The plants propagated and grown in the nursery are used at HPB sites across the Bayou Greenways trail system. These habitats and restored areas provide wildlife resources to many native species.

SC-1, Native Species Management

This project includes planting natives across conservation sites and assisting with propagation and other native work at HPB's Nursery during BGCA. Participants will learn about various native species found in different habitats that HPB stewards.

SPO-1, Stewardship Programs and Volunteer Opportunities

BGCA is a field-based stewardship program that is targeted to return volunteers and engaged community members, where participants will play an active role in habitat restoration, while learning about HPB's broader stewardship efforts. Additional advanced training will highlight different aspects of stewardship work within conservation.

PEA-1, Key Issue Engagement + PEA-2, Adult Education

BGCA and additional advanced training will provide an open dialog and space to discuss key issues affecting Houston's waterways and watershed. Participants will be encouraged to share their experiences living in and around water, and how water has affected their lives. Additionally, participants will learn about the greenspaces around them and across the city - various habitats, bayous, and the wildlife found inside these ecosystems. Education will be the foundation for the long-term volunteerism and community build within BGCA.

ACS-2, Provide Access to Monitoring and Research Data

This project provides an opportunity for attendees of BGCA and advanced training experiences to learn about the research and monitoring efforts happening in our watershed. As many of the participants are general community members and volunteers, access to this data and resources will be an integral part in understanding their ecoregion and waterways.

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

Subcommittee Identified Priorities:

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- ☐ WSQ: Supporting management measures and watershed-based plans through adaptive management, workforce development, and technical assistance.
- ☐ WSQ: Improve knowledge and accessibility of pollution reporting tools to empower the community.
- ☐ WSQ: Implementation and/or evaluation of best management practices that address point and nonpoint source pollution.
- ☐ NRU: Habitat Acquisition.
- ☒ NRU: Enhancement of existing or ongoing restoration-conservation efforts. Special emphasis on:
 - ☐ Adaptive management for previously completed projects; and
 - ☐ Projects that may have lost/delayed funding from other federal sources.
- ☒ NRU: Benefit to native fish and wildlife, including federal and state listed species, Species of Greatest Conservation Need, or nongame wildlife.
- ☐ NRU: Project urgency: Project must be completed in next 24 months or opportunity is lost.
- ☒ PPE: Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed.
- ☒ PPE: Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects.
- ☐ PPE: Opportunities to host workshops/networking events to provide technical assistance for local leadership (local governments, MUDs, schoolboards, the public) on key topics.
- ☒ PPE: Conservation and environmental workforce development.
- ☐ M&R: Meaningful and effective monitoring of existing, past, and new projects (NRU: especially research and monitoring for diamondback terrapin and best management projects, WSQ, PPE).
- ☐ M&R: Baseline assessments for large-scale, man-made changes to Galveston Bay at an adequate timeline and spatial range to provide useful information.
- ☐ M&R: Assessment, Exposure, and Response to stressors, including but not limited to:
 - ☐ Species of greatest conservation need;
 - ☐ Contact recreation standards;
 - ☐ Environmental parameters;
 - ☐ Emerging contaminants; and
 - ☐ Legacy contaminants.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

NRU's priorities of wildlife benefits and enhancement of conservation efforts are directly correlated to this project. Volunteers will provide hands-on habitat improvement and restoration work within our watershed, thus improving habitat for wildlife. While there should be minimal invasive work at planting sites, volunteers will be encouraged to remove invasives while planting native species.

Does the Project align with any EPA Areas of Special Interest?

- ☒ Reduce Nutrient Pollution to Protect Water Quality and Public Health
- ☒ Make Investments that Address Coastal Resiliency
- ☐ Reduce Trash

This program will assist with habitat restoration around the bayous, which will help reduce nutrient pollution from nonpoint source pollution. Additionally, these volunteer events and hands-on applications will assist with nature-based solutions within varying habitats, thus assisting with floodwater mitigation, water quality, and wildlife habitat.

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

Bayou Greenways Conservation Academy provides hands-on education, restoration, and stewardship across Houston's Bayous. Conservation advanced training and education is a critical community need which will lift HPB's Conservation projects and benefit surrounding communities.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

Houston Parks Board (HPB) Conservation strives to engage stewardship through hands-on volunteer and education opportunities. Recently, HPB has restarted the monthly Green Team, adding more opportunities to volunteer across the city. Green Team events have seen an increase in volunteer return rate, which is in part due to the volunteer interest and skill-building, but also due to the community building and education gained at these events. With volunteers becoming repeat attendees, there has been an increase in demand for adult education and advanced training. To fulfill a community need, HPB has developed an adult education program, called Bayou Greenways Conservation Academy (BGCA).

Advanced training opportunities in conservation for the general public are rarely available without having additional background or experience prior to the training. BGCA invites people of all skills, knowledge, and experience to join this program. BGCA is one of few only adult-focused conservation education opportunities in the greater Houston area. Unlike Texas Master Naturalist, which has a high cost of entry and rigid long-term training requirement, BGCA's 5-day program is geared at providing hands-on educational opportunities to lift HPB's conservation efforts around the city, while strengthening the connection between local communities and the land.

In addition to the Academy classes, HPB aims to provide advanced training conservation opportunities - including bird walks, insect programs like "Mothing" and pollinator studies, and guided natural walks to discuss native plant ID and their benefits to people and wildlife. The goal of these advance trainings would be to empower these volunteers to help HPB collect critical wildlife and plant presence data in and around our conservation sites. In turn, this data would feed into publicly accessible HPB Conservation Storymaps and Dashboards.

These trained volunteers will be able to 1) assist HPB staff at volunteer events and HPB's Nursery, 2) lead programs and wildlife surveys, like bird walks and insect surveys and 3) collect data across our conservation areas. For volunteers that are in college, recent grads, or entry-level professions, ideally these classes would provide workforce development for the conservation field.

Project Urgency:

This project is in demand from our volunteers and community members. The project will support habitat restoration, provide skill-training, and help HPB collect meaningful wildlife data.

Other Plans Implemented:

Resilient Houston, Houston Climate Action Plan, Texas Coastal Management Plan, Texas Coastal Resiliency Master Plan

Partners¹ and Their Roles:

City of Houston, Flood Control, and Harris County Precincts are landowners of many potential restoration and advanced training sites.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

- ☒ Yes
☐ No

[TBD.]

Is the project subject to Title VI requirements?

¹ If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted as an appendix with the application.

To meet federal nondiscrimination guidance and laws (Title VI), TCEQ requires information and services to be provided in languages other than English when significant numbers of beneficiaries are of limited English-speaking ability (LEP). If 5% or more of the population within your project area is LEP and share a common language, then you are required to provide outreach in the alternative language. For statewide projects, Spanish language outreach is required. As Title VI compliance could impact the project budget, please reach out to the primary subcommittee coordinator for this application with questions on determining applicability.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

[TBD.]

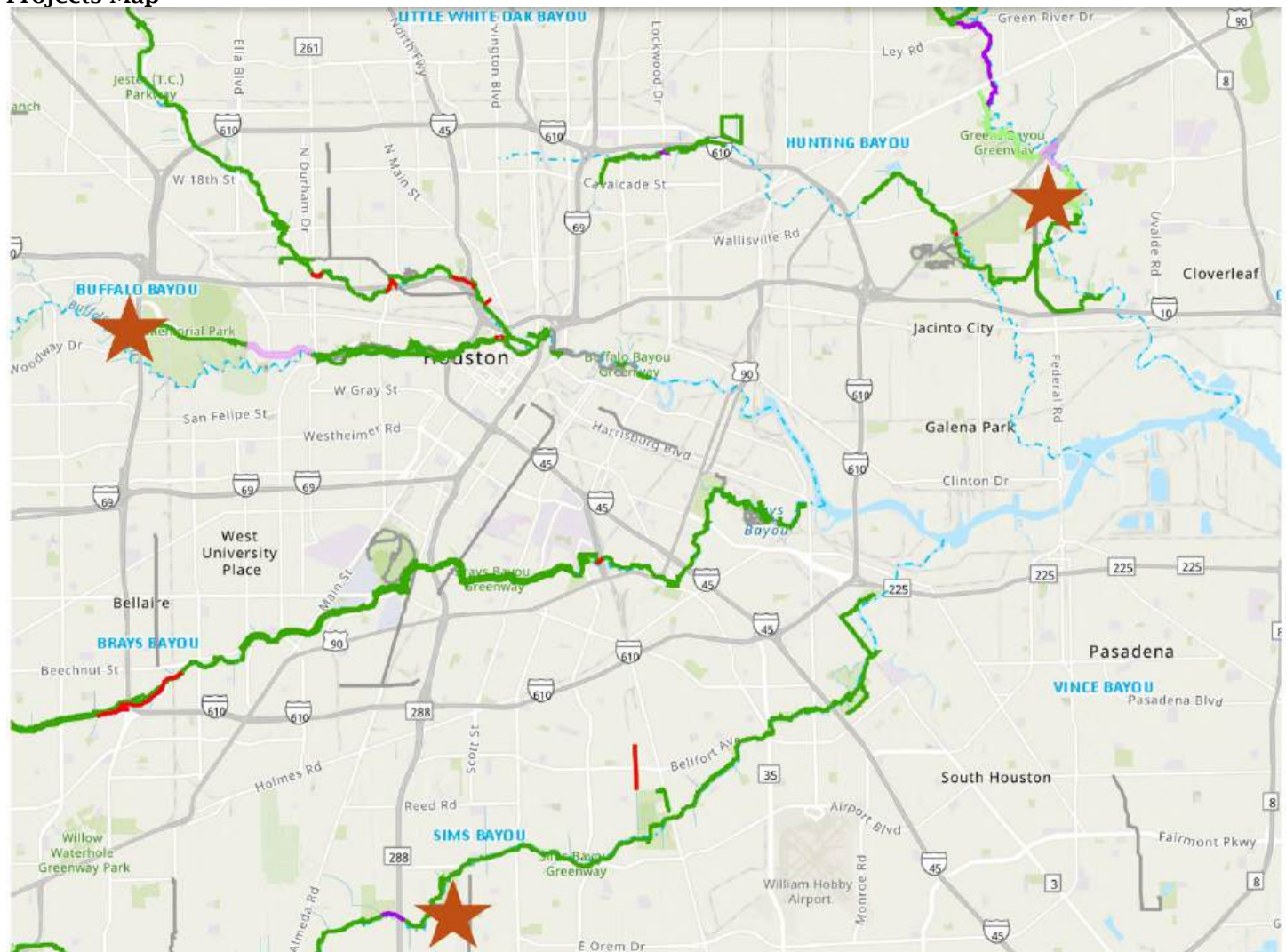
Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

[degrees, minutes, and seconds format]

Location:

This program will take place in various locations around the Bayou Greenways Trails, in the greater Houston area, with specific sites along Greens, White Oak and Sims bayou.
Primary locations for advanced training will be at Coolgreen Nursery (12800 Texaco Rd., 77013), Hill at Sims (11808 Scott St., 77047) and orientation for the Academy will be at HPB's Main Office (300 Post Oak Ln., 77024).

Projects Map



Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):





SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

a. Direct Costs

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$0.00
Fringe Benefits (###%) ²	\$0.00
Travel	\$0.00
Supplies	\$9,500.00
Equipment	\$0.00
Contractual	\$2,000.00
Construction	\$0.00
Other	\$0.00
Total Direct Cost	\$11,500.00

b. Indirect Costs³

Distribution Base Amount (<i>identify Base type below</i>)	\$ 11,500.00
Indirect Cost Rate for Reimbursement	%15
Total Indirect Costs	\$ 1,725.00

c. Maximum Authorized Reimbursement

Maximum Authorized Reimbursement (Direct and Indirect Costs)	\$ 13,225.00
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Indirect Cost Distribution Base. The Distribution Base above is (check one):

- ☐ direct salary/wages and fringe benefits
☒ **modified total direct costs**
☐ other direct cost Base

If other direct cost Base, identify:

The indirect cost rate is (check one):

☐ **Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.

☒ **De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of 15 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

☐ **Partial Reimbursement Rate** — a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes

² If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

³ Please attach Indirect Cost Agreement as an appendix if applicable

all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

☐ **Other:** [Examples: De Minimis Rate with a base of direct salary and wages (less than or equal to actual indirect costs) or Provisional Rate. If this is a Provisional Rate, include the following language: Provisional Rate: The subsequent adjustment of the indirect cost rate is subject to the requirements of Article 9 of this (Cost Budget) section.]

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of budget total, identify the main constituents:

[Description of costs associated with “Other” budget category.]

Travel. In order to be reimbursable, travel costs must be specifically authorized in advance of the travel. Travel costs will be reimbursed only in the amount of actual costs, up to the maximum allowed by law for employees of the State of Texas at the time the cost is incurred.

Budget Categories. The Budget Categories above are representative of the items of cost found in TxGMS and 2 CFR Part 200, and have the definitions, requirements, and limitations found therein. Construction costs are not reimbursable without prior, specific written authorization from TCEQ.

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will post notification of the meeting's time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by **July 24, 2026 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:**

WSQ Subcommittee: Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov
NRU Subcommittee: Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov
PPE Subcommittee: Zoe.Gapayao@tceq.texas.gov
M&R Subcommittee: Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov
Programmatic Projects: Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov

Galveston Bay Estuary Program

Fiscal 2028 Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **July 24, 2026**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for fiscal 2028 (FY 2028) Priority Area Actions that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for FY 2028 at the June 2026 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

Timeline of Proposals:

Task	Date Due
Release of Request for Proposals	June 22, 2026
Proposals Due	July 24, 2026
Send Proposals to Subcommittees Members for Review	August 12, 2026
Present Proposals to Subcommittees for Council Recommendation	September 2, 2026 (NRU and PPE) September 9, 2026 (M&R and WSQ)
Present Proposals to B&P Subcommittee for Final Recommendation	September 30, 2026
Present Proposals to Galveston Bay Council for Approval	October 14, 2026

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Primary Subcommittee: Public Participation and Education (PPE)
Secondary Subcommittee (if applicable): Natural Resource Uses (NRU)
Tertiary Subcommittee (if applicable): Choose an item.

Project Name:

Resilient Schools and Communities: Stewardship of the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes ☐ No ☒

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

National Wildlife Federation

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

☐ Federal, State, or Local Government ☐ Council of Government ☐ Public ISDs or Universities
☒ Nonprofit ☐ Other*

[If other, please identify pass-through partner.]

Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:	GEJMTLKRLVF4
Vendor Identification Number (VIN) or Tax ID:	53-0204616

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Marya Fowler
Project Representative Phone	512-577-3322
Project Representative Email	fowler@nwf.org

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2027 – ending no later than May 31, 2030) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

Sept 1, 2027 to Aug 31, 2029

Amount Requested from GBEP:

[\$]150,000.35

Federal ☐ State ☐ No Preference ☒

Is the project scalable? ☒

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2028 (09/01/2027-08/31/2028)	\$69,245.00
FY 2029 (09/01/2028-08/31/2029)	\$80,755.00
FY 2030 (09/01/2029-05/31/2030)	\$0.00
Total	\$150,000.00

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

\$706,375.44

Is this an estimate? ☐

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

National Wildlife Federation intends to leverage the following funding sources. 1. Powell Foundation \$300K three-year gift-in hand- \$40,000 for year 1 (FY28) and \$40,000 is for year 2 (FY29) 2. National Fish & Wildlife Foundation – pending - \$75,000 to be spent during year one (FY28) 3. NASEM – pending - \$400,000 to be spent in year 1 (FY28) and year 2 (FY29)

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Subcommittee Priorities (Section Four) will be considered above others. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

The *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* Action Plans are found at:
<https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 1: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

NPS-1 ☐ NPS-2 ☒ NPS-3 ☒ NPS-4 ☐
PS-1 ☒ PS-2 ☐ PS-3 ☐
PHA-1 ☐ PHA-2 ☐ PHA-3 ☐ PHA-4 ☐ PHA-5 ☐

Plan Priority 2: Protect and Sustain Living Resources

HC-1 ☐ HC-2 ☒ HC-3 ☒
SC-1 ☒ SC-2 ☒
FWI-1 ☐ FWI-2 ☐ FWI-3 ☒

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

SPO-1 ☒ SPO-2 ☒ SPO-3 ☐ SPO-4 ☐
PEA-1 ☒ PEA-2 ☒ PEA-3 ☒

Plan Priority 4: Inform Science-based Decision Making

RES-1 ☐ RES-2 ☐ RES-3 ☐ RES-4 ☐
RES-5 ☐ RES-6 ☐ RES-7 ☐ RES-8 ☐
ACS-1 ☐ ACS-2 ☐ ACS-3 ☐

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

[Please identify action items and state how the project implements actions of the *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* Action Plans.]

PRIORITY 1: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

NPS -2 Support Nonpoint Source Education and Outreach Campaigns. NWF's teacher professional development uses guided education to instruct teachers how to engage students in understanding watershed health and the consequence of nutrient flow into local bayous and ultimately to the Galveston Bay from stormwater runoff and how to take action by designing and implementing solutions to mitigate stormwater runoff. Community engagement workshops hosted by NWF and our partners and student led community forums focus on outreach through connecting urban residents to their waterways, increasing scientific literacy about storm water runoff and non-point source pollution, increasing awareness of how one's actions can contribute to non-point source pollution and understanding the role native plants play in nutrient reduction and the actions residents can take in their community to improve water quality.

NPS-3 Implement NPS Best Management Practices. NWF's RiSC program is designed to increase the coastal resiliency of the communities we work with through the design and implementation of scalable and replicable green infrastructure projects that help mitigate flooding and stormwater runoff. These projects use native plants to reduce nutrients from entering waterways and to improve water quality. Additionally, with the help of our partner - Channelview Health Improvement Coalition (C.H.I.C.) - the Channelview community specifically will work together (students, community members, and partners) to create their own community coastal resilience plan.

PS -1 Support Stormwater Education Programs. Student led community forums and NWF and partner-led community engagement sessions increase public awareness of stormwater issues and promote the use of green infrastructure to mitigate stormwater impacts.

PRIORITY 2: Protect and Sustain Living Resources

HC-2 Habitat Restoration. NWF works with each campus in our program to restore native plant habitat through nature-based solutions and green infrastructure projects such as pocket prairies and rain gardens which reduce stormwater runoff. We also partner with Houston Parks and Recreation Department (HPARD) to restore coastal prairie at Blackhawk Park and Galveston Bay Foundation (GBF) to restore Trinity Bay through marsh grass planting.

HC-3 Habitat Enhancement. In the second year of our program, students practice their watershed stewardship skills as they monitor and enhance the biodiversity of their existing campus projects. In partnership with the Coastal Prairie Conservancy (CPC) students help enhance the biodiversity of Indiangrass Preserve by adding native prairie plants where needed.

SC-1 Native Species Management. The RiSC program sustains native populations by using native plants to restore habitat on campuses and in larger community projects. Pocket prairies and rain gardens installed by RiSC students and community members primarily support native pollinators, monarch butterflies, and native songbirds.

SC-2 Invasive Species Control. RiSC students utilize best management practices (BMPs) when removing invasive species such as Bermuda grass, Johnson grass, Barnyard Grass, and Ligustrum, as well as invasive trees such as Chinese Tallow (when allowed) on campus projects. They also contribute to invasive species removal, particularly through the CPC prairie restoration and enhancement projects

FWI-3 water conservation and education. The RiSC program promotes water conservation and education both through the use of native plants in all nature-based solutions and green infrastructure projects and through outreach to the community about the importance of using native plants to help conserve water at both student-led campus community forums and end-of-year annual showcases. Student community outreach projects in the second year allow students to select implementing rainwater harvesting systems to existing community projects or as a stand-alone community project. Community education regarding the use of rainwater harvesting systems as a way to both conserve water and contribute to clean water by reducing stormwater runoff is built into the community outreach component through the creation of educational flyers and QR codes directing the public to further information regarding their watershed and the importance of water conservation in watershed health.

PRIORITY 3: Engage Communities

SPO 1- Develop new and support existing stewardship programs and volunteer opportunities for stakeholders. RiSC students implement multiple hands-on coastal resilience projects on school campuses, in the community, and in partnership with local partners such as HPARD, GBF, and CPC on existing prairie restoration sites and along bayous. All projects are designed to mitigate stormwater runoff and include pocket prairies, rain gardens, and bioswales. Community members are invited to help plant and maintain campus projects and implement and steward similar green infrastructure and nature-based solutions projects in the larger community.

SPO 2- Support workshops and events that facilitate stakeholder involvement. Recognizing that importance of building relationships with communities and community leaders is vital to foster sustainable behavior change. Students hold annual community forums on their campus to help build awareness in their neighboring school community about their watershed's connection to Galveston Bay and the benefits of green infrastructure as a means to mitigate flooding and improve water quality. With support from NWF and our local partners, students help facilitate community engagement sessions to learn of the community's interests, issues, and capacity to engage in coastal resilience work. RiSC also holds an annual student showcase at a public venue where teachers, students, community leaders, and decision makers are invited to learn about how students are helping to improve the health of their watershed and help ensure cleaner water flows to Galveston Bay by using native plants to mitigate stormwater runoff and reduce nutrients entering local bayous and creeks both on their campus and in their community. Additionally, our partner C.H.I.C. will help us facilitate community charrettes in Channelview specifically to ensure the community has a voice in the process. These charrettes, with the guidance of NWF, partners, and students will culminate in a community-wide and community-voiced coastal resilience plan.

PEA-1 - Develop new and support existing programs to engage the public in dialogue about key Galveston Bay issues. Integral to the RiSC program is intentional community engagement. Community members engage in student led campus community forums, end of year student showcases held at a public venue and community charettes designed to increase public awareness of coastal resilience solutions and actions they can take in their community. The RiSC program in Channelview, TX, which was launched in 2023 and is a model for this project, is a prime example. Ongoing public dialogue with the community over a period of 2 years (2023-2025) through a series of listening sessions and design charettes, laid the groundwork for a successful nature-based solution to flooding (pocket prairie) for the community at the Channelview Sports Complex. This work helped build the trust of the community and they are ready to engage in further dialogue with us regarding a coastal resilience plan for the community that will continue

to build on the needs for green infrastructure projects to keep nutrients from entering the waterways and ultimately impacting the Galveston Bay ecosystem.

PEA-2 – Develop new and support existing adult education programs that change behaviors and attitudes. Teachers who participate in NWF’s RiSC program receive Texas Education Agency approved continuing professional education credits for each workshop and field experience they participate in. These education credits encourage teachers to prioritize NWF professional development and help increase the scientific and environmental literacy of the conservation and education workforce. Teachers and community members become more aware of their connection to their watershed and impacts to Galveston Bay through professional development presentations from NWF Houston staff and our local partners, field experiences that help build their understanding of watershed health and the stewardship required to keep pollutants from entering the water supply, and the practice of designing and implementing solutions to nature-based solutions and green infrastructure to help mitigate in their community. These activities help teachers and community members see firsthand the difference they can make and their attitude changes from feeling “overwhelmed” to “we can be a part of the solution”. This is reinforced further when they see similar change in their students.

STUDENT QUOTE: “I really enjoyed learning how nature and city planning connect, especially seeing how green spaces can help contribute to coastal resilience and protect our communities.”

PEA-3 – Develop new and support existing K-12 Galveston Bay estuary-related curricular materials for regional use. Seek opportunities to provide educator training. NWF provides teachers 3 paid professional development opportunities each year of the 2-year program. Teachers receive resources such as NWF’s Texas Essential Knowledge & Skills (TEKS) aligned RiSC curriculum and NWF’s RiSC watershed audit. They learn how to engage their students in a study of the health of their watershed, help students understand the impact that different watershed development projects and conservation patterns have on a watershed, learn how watersheds are interconnected and how actions students take on their campus or in their community will ultimately affect those downstream of them including the habitat and wildlife in the Galveston Bay watershed and Galveston Bay itself. Teachers also learn how to use Place-Based Education and Project-Based Learning to assess the vulnerability of their campus to flooding and how to mitigate flooding on their campus and in their community using nature-based solutions to flooding. RiSC connects schools with community members and local NGOs to identify and solve real-world problems such as severe weather events and the associated flooding and stormwater runoff, develop community capacity, and sustain local natural resources for future generations. Teachers engage in paid field experiences with their students where they experience their watershed firsthand and engage with local partners such as Galveston Bay Foundation and their existing watershed education programs.

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

Subcommittee Identified Priorities:

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- ☐ WSQ: Supporting management measures and watershed-based plans through adaptive management, workforce development, and technical assistance.
- ☐ WSQ: Improve knowledge and accessibility of pollution reporting tools to empower the community.
- ☒ WSQ: Implementation and/or evaluation of best management practices that address point and nonpoint source pollution.
- ☐ NRU: Habitat Acquisition.
- ☒ NRU: Enhancement of existing or ongoing restoration-conservation efforts. Special emphasis on:
 - ☒ Adaptive management for previously completed projects; and
 - ☐ Projects that may have lost/delayed funding from other federal sources.
- ☒ NRU: Benefit to native fish and wildlife, including federal and state listed species, Species of Greatest Conservation Need, or nongame wildlife.
- ☐ NRU: Project urgency: Project must be completed in next 24 months or opportunity is lost.
- ☒ PPE: Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed.
- ☒ PPE: Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects.
- ☒ PPE: Opportunities to host workshops/networking events to provide technical assistance for local leadership (local governments, MUDs, schoolboards, the public) on key topics.
- ☒ PPE: Conservation and environmental workforce development.
- ☐ M&R: Meaningful and effective monitoring of existing, past, and new projects (NRU: especially research and monitoring for diamondback terrapin and best management projects, WSQ, PPE).
- ☐ M&R: Baseline assessments for large-scale, man-made changes to Galveston Bay at an adequate timeline and spatial range to provide useful information.
- ☐ M&R: Assessment, Exposure, and Response to stressors, including but not limited to:
 - ☐ Species of greatest conservation need;
 - ☐ Contact recreation standards;
 - ☐ Environmental parameters;
 - ☐ Emerging contaminants; and
 - ☐ Legacy contaminants.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

[Please explain in detail how project addresses priorities selected. Attachments may be submitted via email in conjunction with this application.]

WSQ: Implementation and/or evaluation of best management practices that address point and nonpoint source pollution. RiSC campus and community-based projects both use green infrastructure projects and nature-based solutions to flooding as a way to mitigate point and non-point pollution from entering the water supply. Students monitor the biodiversity and effectiveness of their campus projects each year, noting the system's effectiveness at capturing and filtering storm water run-off and the biodiversity of the site thrives. This involves removing invasive weeds and grasses, particularly in the first couple of years as the native plants mature and their roots take hold. It also involves removing debris and ensuring exposed soil is covered with mulch to reduce soil compaction. Students also perform water quality tests at three unique locations and compare them to understand why they may be different and what contributes to the differences.

NRU: Enhancement of existing or ongoing restoration-conservation efforts. Special emphasis on:

☒ **Adaptive management for previously completed projects.** RiSC students continue to monitor their campus projects after they have been installed. Once students graduate from the 2-year program, teachers recruit new students to help with project maintenance, and local project partners can be relied on to provide expertise as needed. Community projects are maintained and managed by community volunteers. In

Channelview, Channelview Health Improvement Coalition (C.H.I.C.) works with the Precinct and the Rotary club (Northshore Rotary) to ensure the pocket prairie is maintained and enhanced as necessary again, working to ensure native plants have the opportunity to thrive and are not overtaken by invasive grasses and weeds. The work students do in partnership with HPARD and CPC is a great example of managing previously completed projects as the students work alongside natural resource professionals to add plants and remove invasive grasses as needed. Opportunities with the GBF also include students planting marsh grasses to help protect the bay.

NRU: Benefit to native fish and wildlife, including federal and state listed species, Species of Greatest Conservation Need, or nongame wildlife.

All RiSC projects use native plants to restore and enhance habitat while building nature-based solutions to coastal flooding and stormwater runoff. These projects which range in size from 400sf-1000sf provide valuable habitat for pollinators and native songbirds such as Eastern Meadowlarks, Sparrows sp., and Common Nighthawks as well as the Monarch butterfly. Projects are maintained to ensure viable habitat for wildlife through the winter months, and they are mowed when necessary to optimize migration timeframe and nesting timeframes. For example, once pocket prairies are established, they are mowed late winter/early spring after plants have gone to seed and provided winter cover and food for wildlife including insects and small mammals.

PPE: Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed.

The RiSC program connects teachers and students to existing and completed on-the-ground projects through Field Experiences. Also, teachers, during our teacher professional development workshops do hands-on learning in these locations. These projects include completed community projects such as the Channelview Sports Complex Pocket Prairie, wetland restoration work at Sheldon Park, prairie restoration and enhancement work at Blackhawk Park through Houston Parks and Recreation Department, and Indiangrass Preserve). Teachers and community members are connected to existing rain gardens and pocket prairies on school campuses that were implemented by students who have graduated from the RiSC program.

PPE: Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects. RiSC is designed to run two full school years.

Engaging schools and communities for two years allows the program to build in complexity over time, empowering students, teachers, and community members to be watershed stewards by designing nature based solutions to flooding and green infrastructure projects (rain gardens, pocket prairies, bioswales, tree planting) that will reduce storm water run-off and associated pollutants from entering the water supply. RiSC intentionally increases scientific literacy, including understanding of Earth systems, ecological processes, watershed resilience, and local environmental challenges. Teachers are surveyed about their students and their own scientific literacy, as well as how the campus and community projects are a part of this learning. Community members are surveyed to get an understanding of their cultural and historical relationship to green space, what their needs are, their connection to Galveston Bay and their understanding of coastal resilience is an important first step in our community engagement process. Students build scientific literacy and learn environmental stewardship through outdoor & classroom educational experiences, and they learn how efforts to make their communities more resilient to real and increasing threats of flooding will also contribute to the health of their watershed and Galveston Bay. Teachers receive multiple professional development workshops and participate in hands-on learning opportunities to help them embed RiSC curriculum into their TX learning requirements, equipping them with the tools and knowledge needed to help students gain greater awareness and understanding of resilience to coastal environmental challenges. And community members participate in activities to increase their understanding of the causes of environmental challenges and their impact on their own lives now and in the future. These activities include student-led community forums, end of year student showcases, and volunteering to help plant and steward the campus and community projects. Students, teachers, and community members engage together, focusing on their watershed and the community as the context for learning. They take a solutions-oriented approach to address socio-environmental challenge issues, building hands-on nature-based and green infrastructure projects. RiSC on-the-ground projects specifically help the local environment be more resilient to flooding and improve watershed health. RiSC culminates annually in a student-led showcase, held at a public venue, allowing students to apply their leadership skills and show their increased confidence in contributing to coastal resilience-building efforts. After 8 years of RiSC, our evaluations clearly indicate increases in scientific literacy connected to watershed health, among other important environmental and conservation related topics.

PPE: Opportunities to host workshops/networking events to provide technical assistance for local leadership (local governments, MUDs, schoolboards, the public) on key topics

NWF engages the community and facilitates networking through student-led and NWF and partner-led initiatives. Annual student-led community forums in the first year of RiSC invite campus and school district administration as well as local leaders to learn about the coastal resilience projects they are planning for their campus. The second year of RiSC presents an opportunity for the same audience to return and tour the projects. Students share the findings of their research that helped inform the projects and they explain how the projects were implemented as well as their function and ecosystem benefits. Annual end of year student showcases held at public venues such as Houston Botanic Gardens and Mercer Botanic Gardens allow students the opportunity to engage a larger swath of the general public in coastal conservation. Students share their projects with the general public, local precincts, and project partners. They engage the audience in activities that help increase awareness regarding watersheds, their connection to Galveston Bay, the role of native plants in reducing nutrients from entering the water supply, and the need for nature-based infrastructure to mitigate storm water runoff.

PPE: Conservation and environmental workforce development. Teachers who participate in NWF's RiSC program receive Texas Education Agency approved continuing professional education credits for each workshop and field experience they participate in. These education credits encourage teachers to prioritize NWF professional development and help increase the scientific and environmental literacy of the conservation and education workforce. Also, our student participants work closely with our partners and in this way are introduced to unique fields in conservation. They are exposed to a variety of environmental/green careers through hands-on field experiences in which they work alongside staff to create tangible deliverables. Whether they are practicing water quality testing, ecosystem restoration, or designing a resilient landscape, students are given opportunities to discuss with staff how they can get involved with partner organizations during high school as well as after graduation.

Does the Project align with any EPA Areas of Special Interest?

- ☒ Reduce Nutrient Pollution to Protect Water Quality and Public Health
- ☒ Make Investments that Address Coastal Resiliency
- ☐ Reduce Trash

RiSC aligns with two EPA Areas of Special Interest.

1. Reduce Nutrient Pollution to Protect Water Quality and Public Health

The EPA works to combat nitrogen and phosphorus pollution by reducing their flow into the nation's waters. RiSC aligns with this Interest by connecting communities to their waterways and engaging students and the general public in designing and stewarding nature-based solutions and green infrastructure projects that help mitigate flooding. All projects use native plants that help reduce the nutrients from entering the water supply. The projects are intentionally at a scale that is both replicable and scalable.

2. Make Investments that Address Coastal Resiliency

The EPA strives to Make Investments that Address Coastal Resiliency. EPA's coastal community resilience research is addressing high-priority needs, including the growing need to clarify the impacts on coastal communities from the complex and interacting challenges of rising sea levels, storm surges, and a loss of coastal resources and habitats. RiSC aligns with this Interest by engaging students in a historical look at their community to get an understanding of land use overtime. Students learn how the greater Houston area was once wetlands and coastal prairies and how over time a growing population and dense development has paved over the greenspace that once served as a natural sponge to help mitigate flooding. Students learn how nature-based solutions to storm surge and sea level rise help mimic the natural buffers to storm surge and sea level rise that were once provided by coastal prairies, wetlands, and a healthy watershed. RiSC uses tools such as NOAA Coastal Flood Exposure Mapper to help students see the vulnerability of their community to sea level rise and storm surge.

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

[In 1-2 sentences, please describe the objective of your proposal.]

Resilient Schools & Communities (RiSC) will empower students, teachers, and community members in communities that have greater exposure to and fewer resources to deal with coastal resilience challenges to be watershed stewards by designing nature-based solutions to flooding that restore and enhance habitat while reducing storm water run-off and the associated pollutants from entering the water supply. They will build scientific literacy and environmental stewardship through lessons occurring both in the classroom and through field experiences that focus on how their hands-on efforts to make their community more resilient to real and increasing threats of flooding also contributes to the health of Galveston Bay and the watershed as a whole.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less): 991

[Please explain in detail how project addresses priorities selected. Attachments may be submitted via email in conjunction with this application.]

National Wildlife Federation launched Resilient Schools and Communities (RISC) in the greater Houston area in response to Hurricane Harvey in 2017. Through RiSC, students, teachers, and community members design nature-based solutions to reduce flooding and stormwater run-off. They learn how efforts to make their communities more resilient to increasing threats of flooding will also contribute to the health of their watershed and the Galveston Bay.

RiSC is a two-year program that engages students, teachers, and community members in place-based coastal resilience education using a watershed focus to connect urban audiences to local waterways and to foster a greater understanding of the implications of stormwater runoff to water quality. Focusing on those communities most in need, our long-term goals aim to 1. Create the next generation of environmental stewards and local leaders, ready to make informed decisions about coastal resilience; and 2. Position communities better to advance locally informed coastal resilience solutions that integrate scientific and community knowledge. By utilizing a full two years, RiSC builds in complexity over time, creating learning opportunities that grow with participants.

RiSC intentionally increases scientific literacy, including understanding of Earth systems, ecological processes, non-point source pollution, and coastal resilience challenges, and, by design, fits the selected Priorities as described in detail above. Specifically: **Priority 1: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use; Priority 2: Protect and Sustain Living Resources; Priority 3: Engage Communities.**

With funding from GBEP and others, NWF will expand RiSC in Harris County communities that have greater exposure to and fewer resources to deal with coastal resilience efforts. Between Sept 2027 – Aug 2029, NWF's on-the-ground Houston staff will work with our many local partners to engage 5 public middle/high schools in Houston, Channelview, and Sheldon ISDs, 450 middle/high school students (7th-12th grade), 15 teachers, and 50 community members.

Students build environmental literacy and learn environmental stewardship through outdoor field experiences & classroom educational experiences. Through hands-on activities, they will learn about watersheds, biodiversity, and water quality and practice meaningful STEM education as they use critical thinking and problem solving to plan, design, and implement coastal resilience projects on their school campuses (first year) and in the community (second year). **(Priority 1,3).**

Teachers receive multiple professional development workshops and participate in hands-on learning opportunities to increase their coastal resilience knowledge and help them embed RiSC curriculum into their TX learning requirements. These activities equip them with the tools and knowledge needed to help students gain greater awareness of the science behind and the understanding of building resilience to coastal environmental challenges **(Priority 1,3).**

Community members participate in activities to increase their understanding of the causes and implications of coastal flooding and storm water runoff to their own lives now and in the future (**Priority 1**). Activities include student-led community forums, annual student showcases, volunteering to help plant and steward campus projects, and participating in community listening sessions and charettes with the ultimate goal of implementing and stewarding a scalable and replicable coastal resilience project in their community and a community resilience plan (**Priority 3**).

Students, teachers, and community members engage together in a solutions-oriented approach to address socio-environmental challenge issues, restoring and enhancing both campus (first year) and community (second year) habitats through hands-on nature-based projects. RiSC on-the-ground habitat restoration and enhancement projects (pocket prairies, rain gardens, bioswales, tree planting, and rainwater harvesting) specifically help the local environment be more resilient to flooding, contribute to water conservation, improve watershed health and contribute to cleaner water entering Galveston Bay. To foster community involvement in watershed stewardship, RiSC culminates annually in a student-led resilience showcase, held at a public venue, allowing students to apply their leadership skills and demonstrate their increased confidence in contributing to coastal resilience-building efforts (**Priority 2**).

RESOURCES: NWF will use a variety of educational tools: NWF's RiSC project and place-based curriculum aligned with TEKS, RiSC watershed audits, NOAA Coastal Flood Exposure Mapper and Vulnerability Assessments, NOAA's Beat the Uncertainty: Planning Climate-Resilient Cities game, and RiSC campus site assessments that map the topography, existing vegetation, sun/shade exposure, hydrology, soil properties and permeability. All resources are scientifically based and culminate in several hands-on projects.

ACTIVITIES: Field Experiences; Watershed Audits & Water Quality Testing; Teacher Professional Development; Classroom Student Workshops; Vulnerability Assessment; Student Design, Implementation, & Presentations; Student Community Forums & Student Showcases; Community Charrettes.

Please see attachment for RiSC Activities Summary & Gantt Chart Timeline.

Key to our successful expansion starting in fall 2027 is the creation of a tiered mentoring system, supporting each ISD as they move towards their most relevant needs. As early RiSC participants, Houston and Channelview ISDs have already completed several small campus and site-based community projects. Also, Channelview community members have already shared their culturally relevant expertise to help us gain an understanding of the community needs (please see attached blog). Sheldon ISD is a new partner. We have thoughtfully designed our support system so that Channelview ISD can serve as a model for community projects and community engagement, Houston ISD can serve as a model for campus projects, and Sheldon ISD will receive the most peer support. Leveraging eight years of RiSC success, we will work with schools and the community to focus on campus projects initially and ultimately move towards a community facing project. Simultaneously, Channelview will move from smaller, site-focused projects to a broader, community-wide coastal resilience plan. (**Priority 3**).

Our end-of-year surveys indicate that RiSC helps create the next generation of scientifically literate, environmental leaders. NWF will meet bi-annually with partners to assess the success of community outreach and campus support and discuss solutions for any challenges and returns to participants. At the end of the project we will hold a focus group with partners and community volunteers to assess continued relationships with each of the campuses and continued outreach to the communities. Our selected restoration sites and partners have protection plans in place to avoid mowing/destruction and NWF and partners will continue our efforts to provide volunteers, when possible, to help schools with maintenance.

Project Urgency:

[Please indicate the need for receiving funding during this cycle; such as loss of other funding secured, loss of opportunity to implement project, potential of breach, etc.]

Although we have a \$750,000 grant pending from NASEM for Nov. 2026-Oct. 2029 and a \$75,000 grant pending with NFWF for March 2027-June 2028, we recognize that both NASEM and NFWF are highly competitive.

Two of RiSC's primary funders have been the EPA and the NOAA B-Wet program. Unfortunately, due to a requirement in the most recent EPA EE proposal to include AI education, NWF did not apply. AI is new as an educational tool, and school districts are still grappling with policies and how to implement or not

implement. NWF is deeply concerned about the environmental repercussions of data centers and is not in a position to endorse student use of AI in NWF education programming. Additionally, NOAA B-Wet did not have a call for proposals last year and has not had a call for proposals this year either. We are not 100% sure if and when a NOAA B-Wet RFP might drop.

Our project is vital because it supports multiple organizations outside of our own. We work closely with our partners and are so grateful for their years of collaboration. 30% of our NASEM award will go back out into the community in the form of partner awards, community leader stipends, and teacher stipends. A gap in funding when we have made so much momentum will be detrimental to the ongoing learning that RiSC provides. As we were finalizing our proposal, Houston was once again directly in the path of a tropical storm (Bertha) headed for the Texas coast. Thankfully, the storm lost punch before it reached Texas. Preparing our communities now for future cataclysmic storms is vital. Residents along Galveston Bay are still sorely in need of education on coastal resiliency and those efforts that can help reduce flooding. Student-led, professional-supported projects are the best way to spread this message. Our students take their learning home, and we hear time and again how their families begin their own journey to being an environmental steward and conservation leader.

Other Plans Implemented:

[Please identify any third-party conservation plans this project implements, such as the Texas Coastal Management Plan, Texas Coastal Resiliency Master Plan, watershed-based plans, etc.]

RiSC aligns with 1. Gulf of America Alliance -Wetland Restoration (R-1, R-2) via RiSC campus and community nature-based projects; Environmental Education (ED-1) via RiSC outdoor field experiences and classroom education, Reduction of Nutrient Inputs (N-2) via RiSC stormwater education and the addition of planting of native plants.

RiSC also aligns with 2. NOAA Education Strategic Plan 2025-2045 – Goal 1: *Teaching & Learning* - People everywhere are equipped to teach and learn about NOAA-related science and topics, (through RiSCs focus on the education of teachers, students, and community members). Goal 2: *Taking Action* - People everywhere take meaningful action to protect their lives, livelihoods, and the environment, (through RiSCs outdoor field experiences and nature-based projects). Goal 3: *Navigating Career Pathways* - Students navigate pathways and pursue opportunities that prepare them for careers in STEM and other NOAA-related fields, (through RiSC focus on STEM, scientific literacy, and introduction to unique environmental careers thanks to our partners). Goal 4: *Strengthening Foundations for NOAA Education by using NOAA educational tools and resources* - NOAA builds and sustains a portfolio of resources, activities, and networks, both internal and external, that serves as a foundation for our education programs, (through use of many NOAA resources).

RiSC also aligns with 3. the Houston Resilience Strategy. Chapter 1, Goal 1: We will support Houstonians to be prepared for an uncertain future; Chapter 2, Goal 6: We will ensure that all neighborhoods are healthy, safe and climate ready; Chapter 3, Goal 8: We will live safely with water and Goal 9: We will embrace the role of bayous as Houston's front yard.

RiSC also aligns with 4. 2026-2030 Texas Coastal Management Plan: Coastal hazards, which include flooding, coastal storms (and associated storm surge), and shoreline erosion (including bluff and dune erosion) are considered a high priority in their assessment. Wetlands are also considered a high priority due in part to reduced water quality and increased contamination due to runoff. RiSC helps support the reduction of coastal hazards and helps improve water quality and decrease nutrient pollution.

Partners¹ and Their Roles:

[Please identify project partners and detail what roles they will play in project implementation.]

Children's Environmental Literacy Foundation (CELf) will serve as NWF's primary partner helping to both plan and execute the project. Their on the ground staff in Houston will help NWF:

- Plan and lead all teacher professional development
- Plan and facilitate 4 Community Charettes in Channelview
- Lead 5 of the 10 field experiences Galveston Bay Foundation

¹ If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted as an appendix with the application.

- Lead 2 of the 5 field experiences with Houston Parks and Recreation Department
- Coordinate the installation of 5 campus habitat restoration and enhancement projects
- Lead the planning and coordination for the in-person student showcase
- Facilitate community outreach projects

Galveston Bay Foundation (GBF) will lend their expertise in watersheds, watershed health and the Galveston Bay to provide:

- **Presentations** at two NWF teacher professional developments to increase knowledge and understanding of the watershed, provide hands-on curriculum to use in their classes, and discuss the project components.
- **10 Classroom STEM workshops** that will increase students' knowledge and understanding of their watershed, their connection to Galveston Bay, and provide hands-on, inquiry-based, TEKS activities.
- **10 Student Field Experiences to Trinity Bay.** Students will gain an increased understanding about the Bay's varied ecosystems, its inhabitants, and how they are connected to it via inquiry-based activities. Students will engage in scientific investigations including water quality testing, seining, and pollinator sweep netting

Coastal Prairie Conservancy (CPC) will lend their expertise in prairie ecology and native plants to:

- **Conduct One field experience** to Indiangrass Preserve for the RiSC teacher cohort and community liaisons. Participants will learn about restoration efforts at the Katy Prairie Preserve, prairie ecology, native Texas prairie plants, the coastal prairie ecosystem, and the role of prairies in absorbing floodwaters while helping to protect water quality and quantity.
- **Conduct 5 field experiences** to Indiangrass Preserve where students will gain an increased understanding of prairie ecology, native Texas prairie plants, the coastal prairie ecosystem, and the role of prairies in absorbing floodwaters and protecting water quality and quantity. Experiences include learning about prairie stewardship through hands-on, inquiry-based activities, planting of native prairie plants, and/or the removal of invasive species.

TBG Partners (TBG) will lend their expertise in nature-based solutions and green infrastructure to increase student understanding of the need for NbS, the different types of NbS, and how to design NbS, and provide hands-on lessons that help students create an NbS model. Specifically, they will:

- **Present to teachers** at 1 professional development workshop
- **Provide student workshops and facilitate** campus vulnerability assessments at 5 schools
- **Facilitate the student site assessment and concept diagram** for a nature-based solution to flooding (rain garden, bioswale or pocket prairie) that will be installed at the Channelview Outdoor Learning Center in Channelview ISD

Houston Parks and Recreation Department (HPARD) will lend their expertise in watershed resilience strategies with the City of Houston. They will:

- Engage students/teachers in 5 community action days at Blackhawk Park, planting ~3,000 native prairie plants as part of its Prairie Restoration Initiative. Participants engage in a large-scale nature-based solution to flooding, learning the importance of native plants in absorbing flood waters and coastal prairie restoration, and working together with HPARD staff to understand how Blackhawk Park restoration fits into the City of Houston's Resilience Strategy.

Channelview ISD will help recruit schools and teachers and will provide the space for 1 campus and 1 community-based resilience project to address flooding and reduce stormwater runoff (rain gardens or pocket prairies). Given their experience with robust community engagement, they will serve as a model for Sheldon ISD, a neighboring school district, who will be joining the program for the first time.

Sheldon ISD will help recruit schools and teachers and will provide space for 1 campus resilience project to address flooding and reduce stormwater runoff (rain gardens or pocket prairies).

Houston, ISDs will help recruit schools and teachers and will provide space for 2 campus-based resilience projects totaling. HISD will also serve as a model to Sheldon ISD.

All 3 ISDs will participate in curriculum planning and ensuring the RiSC curriculum and activities align with required teaching standards.

Houston Audubon will provide their expertise in native plants and native plants for all the ISD resilience projects.

Channelview Health and Improvement (C.H.I.C) will lend their past experience collaborating with NWF and their cultural and historical community knowledge to:

- Establish relationships between new Channelview ISD campuses and their school community.
- Assist 2 new schools in Channelview with the site location, design and plant selection for their nature-based solution to flooding (pocket prairie or rain garden).
- Help to identify new local partners to assist with the drafting of a coastal resilience plan.
- Secure community engagement venues inclusive of AV equipment, tables and seating, notice to community members and local media via emails and flyers, sign-in and information materials.

- Facilitate 4 community conversations to assess community needs regarding a coastal resilient plan for Channelview and provide community awareness and education regarding nature-based solutions as a component of coastal resilience.
- Facilitate the beginning phases of a community resilient plan for Sheldon.
- Continue with the stewardship of the Channelview Sports Complex Pocket Prairie by arranging volunteer days for seasonal maintenance.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Yes, RiSC in 2027-2029 will work with new, smaller community partnerships. We are branching out to include Sheldon ISD, who will be new to RiSC.

Sheldon ISD is located north/northwest of the upper reaches of Galveston Bay and the San Jacinto-Houston tidal areas. The district is bounded on the east by the San Jacinto River, which flows directly down into Galveston Bay. Sheldon ISD is the neighboring school district directly north of Channelview, making their location perfect for peer mentoring and learning with Channelview ISD. Sheldon ISD serves roughly 11,000 students with a student body that is approximately 67% Hispanic, 26% African American, and 4% White. Located in Harris County, Texas, the suburban district reports that about 83% to 87% of its student population is economically disadvantaged.

We have enjoyed partnering with CELF in Houston ISD through NWF's EcoSchools U.S. Program for several years now, and we are delighted to be to be partnering with CELF on the RiSC program. Our work has complimented each other beautifully in Channelview ISD and this intentional partnership will strengthen the ability of both organizations to increase the depth and capacity of our resilience work in the lower Galveston Bay watershed.

Is the project subject to Title VI requirements?

To meet federal nondiscrimination guidance and laws (Title VI), TCEQ requires information and services to be provided in languages other than English when significant numbers of beneficiaries are of limited English-speaking ability (LEP). If 5% or more of the population within your project area is LEP and share a common language, then you are required to provide outreach in the alternative language. For statewide projects, Spanish language outreach is required. As Title VI compliance could impact the project budget, please reach out to the primary subcommittee coordinator for this application with questions on determining applicability.

☐ Yes

☒ No

[TBD.]

Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

[degrees, minutes, and seconds format]

Location:

[Description of area(s) of Galveston Bay watershed addressed by proposal]

Projects Map

Please see attached Maps

Appendix A: Contains - Channelview ISD Boundary Map, Houston ISD Boundary Map, Sheldon ISD Boundary Map, Outdoor Field Experience - Indiangrass Preserve, Outdoor Field Experience Blackhawk Prairie; Outdoor Field Experience Trinity Bay

Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):

Please see attached Supplementals

Appendix B: RiSC Photos and Info Graphs Contains - RiSC 2025-2026 End of Year Snapshot, Channelview Community Engagement Session, Channelview Community Project - Pocket Prairie

Appendix C: Channelview Community Engagement Blog <https://blog.nwf.org/2025/06/community-spotlight-a-pocket-prairie-for-channelview-tx/>

Appendix D: Letters of Support Contains – Galveston Bay Foundation, Coastal Prairie Conservancy, and Houston Audubon. (Letters from all three ISDs, CELF, HPARD, C.H.I.C., and TBG Partners available upon request).

SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

a. Direct Costs – Please see Appendix E for our fringe rate calculation

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$72,968.00
Fringe Benefits (31.5%) ²	\$22,746.00
Travel	\$3,798.00
Supplies	\$0.00
Equipment	\$0.00
Contractual	\$18,670.00
Construction	\$0.00
Other	\$13,015.35
Total Direct Cost	\$131,197.35

b. Indirect Costs³

Distribution Base Amount (<i>identify Base type below</i>)	\$ 125,352.35
Indirect Cost Rate for Reimbursement	% 15.0
Total Indirect Costs	\$ 18,802.65

c. Maximum Authorized Reimbursement

Maximum Authorized Reimbursement (Direct and Indirect Costs)	\$ 150,000.00
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Indirect Cost Distribution Base. The Distribution Base above is (check one):

- ☐ direct salary/wages and fringe benefits
☒ modified total direct costs
☐ other direct cost Base

If other direct cost Base, identify:

The indirect cost rate is (check one):

☐ **Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.

☒ **De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of 15 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

² If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

³ Please attach Indirect Cost Agreement as an appendix if applicable

☐ **Partial Reimbursement Rate** — a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

☐ **Other:** [Examples: De Minimis Rate with a base of direct salary and wages (less than or equal to actual indirect costs) or Provisional Rate. If this is a Provisional Rate, include the following language: Provisional Rate: The subsequent adjustment of the indirect cost rate is subject to the requirements of Article 9 of this (Cost Budget) section.]

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of budget total, identify the main constituents:

[Description of costs associated with “Other” budget category.]

Travel. In order to be reimbursable, travel costs must be specifically authorized in advance of the travel. Travel costs will be reimbursed only in the amount of actual costs, up to the maximum allowed by law for employees of the State of Texas at the time the cost is incurred.

Budget Categories. The Budget Categories above are representative of the items of cost found in TxGMS and 2 CFR Part 200, and have the definitions, requirements, and limitations found therein. Construction costs are not reimbursable without prior, specific written authorization from TCEQ.

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will post notification of the meeting’s time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.

- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by **July 24, 2026 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:**

WSQ Subcommittee: Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov
NRU Subcommittee: Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov
PPE Subcommittee: Zoe.Gapayao@tceq.texas.gov
M&R Subcommittee: Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov
Programmatic Projects: Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov

Channelview ISD School Map

	Barrett-Lee Early Childhood Center 911 Sheldon Road / (281) 860-3827 Emily Laird, Principal
	Harvey Brown Elementary School 16550 Wallisville Road / (281) 860-1400 Troy Michaud, Principal
	De Zavala Elementary School 16150 2nd Street / 281-452-6008 Ann Garza, Principal
	Crenshaw Elementary School 16204 Wood Drive / (281) 860-3827 Meikka Jackson, Principal
	McMullan Elementary School 1290 Dell Dale Drive / (281) 452-1154 Tihesha Porter, Principal
	McGhee Elementary School 1045 Sheldon Road / (281) 452-2880 Lizette Castelline, Principal
	Hamblen Elementary School 1019 Dell Dale Road / (281) 457-8720 Jose Lopez, Principal
	Alice Johnson Junior High 15726 Wallisville Road / (281) 860-3300 Neiman Owens, Principal
	Lance Corporal Anthony Aguirre Junior High 15726 Wallisville Road / (281) 860-3300 Dr. Doreen Martinez, Principal
	Endeavor High School 915 Sheldon Road / (281) 457-0086 Mark Sims, Principal
	Channelview High School / Kolarik 9th Grade 1100 Sheldon Road / (281) 452-1450 Emeterio Cruz, Principal
	Academics, Counseling, and Transition Academy 915 Sheldon Road / (281) 457-9054 Alan Smith, ACT Administrator
	Channelview ISD Administration 828 Sheldon Road / (281) 452-8002 Dr. Tory C. Hill, Superintendent of Schools

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Printed By:



HISD Boundary 2024-2025

Private Member ⓘ
Houston ISD

Summary

Houston Independent School District Boundary

[View Full Details](#)

Details



Map

Web Map



July 31, 2024

Date Updated



May 29, 2022

Published Date



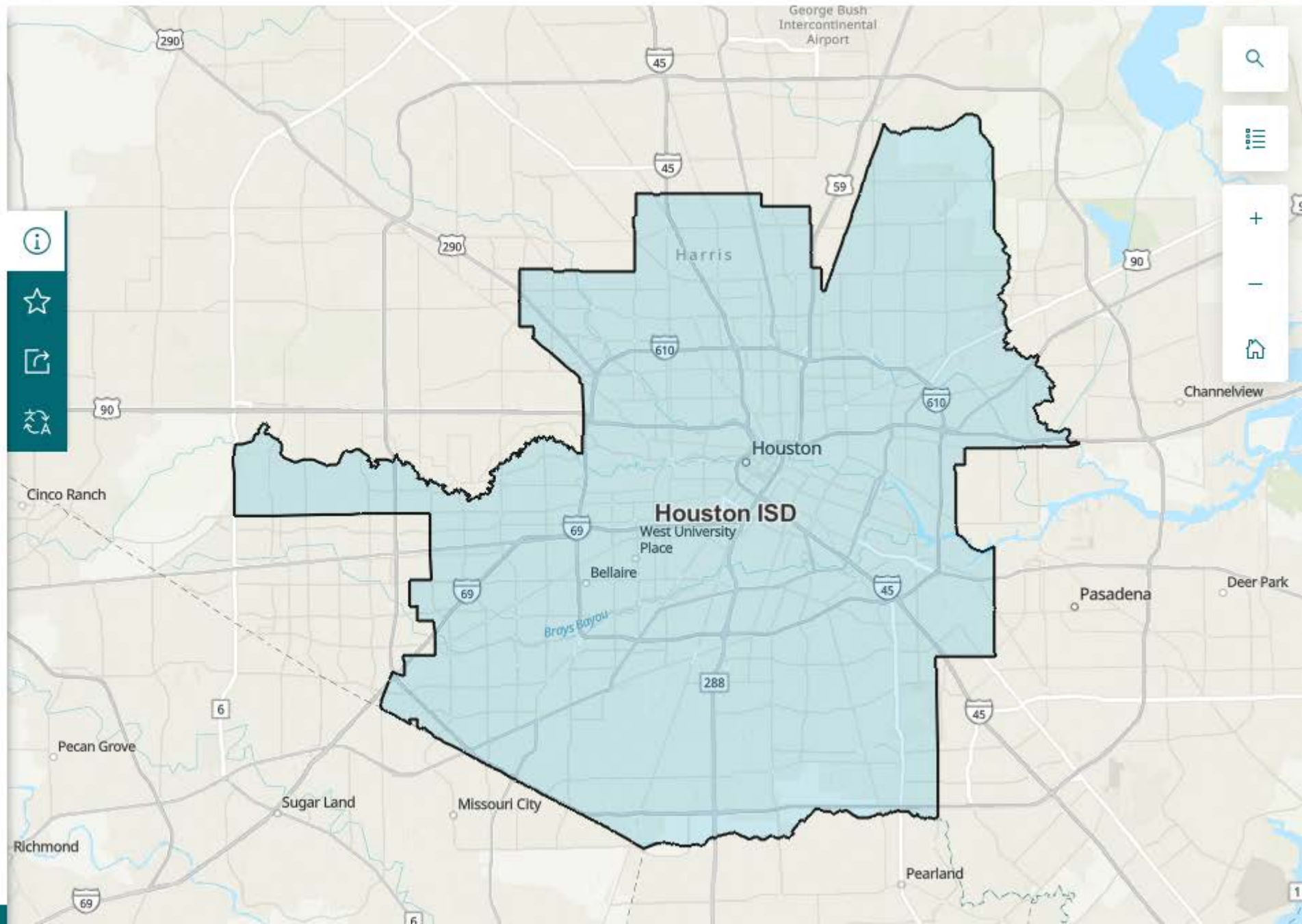
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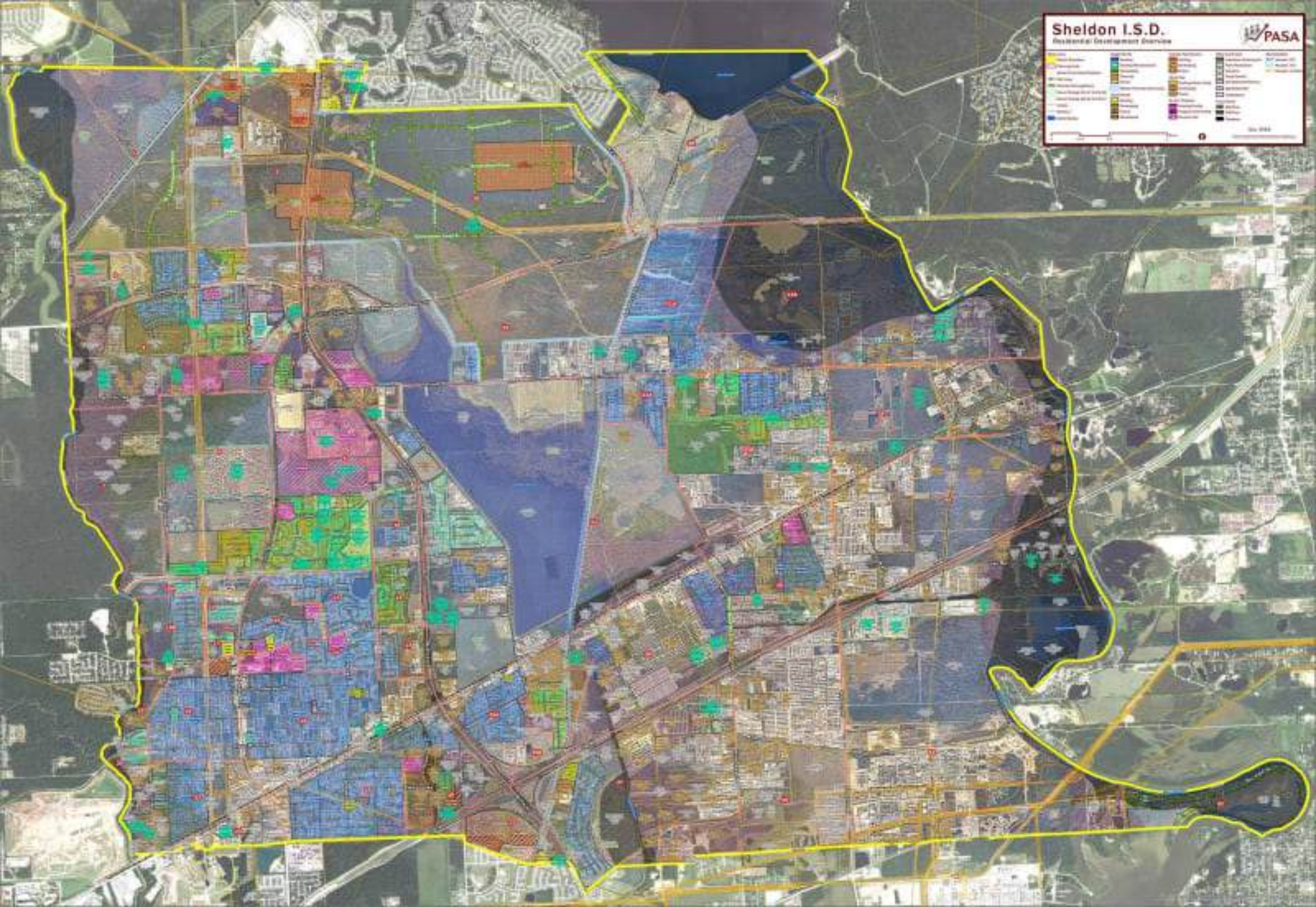
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Blackhawk Park



Address: 9401 Fuqua St, Houston, TX 77075

Acres: 43

Habitat Type: Coastal Prairie

Project Timeline: 2018- present

Partners: Student Conservation Association, Galveston Bay Estuary Program

Watershed: Clear Creek



Before the NRMP began restoration activities at Blackhawk Park, the 43-acre natural area consisted of mostly non-native woody vegetation such as Chinese Tallow and Privet species. This park was targeted for prairie restoration because it was a historic prairie site and still contained some of the original prairie vegetation in the groundcover layer.

The Blackhawk prairie restoration project started in 2018 with a habitat and community education grant from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's Galveston Bay Estuary Program. Through this grant, 10 acres of the natural area were cleared of invasive woody species and planted and seeded with prairie grasses and wildflowers. The local community was involved in the restoration process and participated in planting and invasive species removal events. The NRMP will continue to restore this park and expand the prairie area with future funding.





Trinity Bay Discovery Center

Coastal Prairie Conservancy

Since 1992, the Coastal Prairie Conservancy has been working to preserve diminishing prairie lands for people and wildlife. We are a leader in local land conservation and now protect more than 30,000 acres of prairie in Harris, Waller, Matagorda, and Fort Bend counties, most of which makes up the Katy Prairie Preserve just outside Houston. The Coastal Prairie Conservancy is also working to protect coastal prairie in other Texas counties and through conservation agreements protects an over 11,500 acres in Brazoria, Galveston, Matagorda, and Jackson Counties.

The Coastal Prairie Preserve does so much for our community by keeping land in agriculture for local farmers and ranchers and providing one of the last strongholds for wildlife in the region. Our education programs connect families with nature, and have earned local, statewide, and national awards. And timelier than ever, these protected lands aid with flood control, contribute to the protection of our watersheds, and create a resilient landscape from the prairie to the Gulf Coast.

The coastal prairie is threatened and once lost, it will never be replaced. The Coastal Prairie Conservancy is working to protect what remains while there is still time. Our vision for the future is to preserve an additional 10,000 to 30,000 acres on the Katy Prairie, which will ensure healthy communities, connect people with nature, and safeguard wildlife. You can help. Your generous financial gifts, your steadfast volunteer efforts, and your enthusiastic sharing of our story bring us success.

Learn more about land conservation, prairie restoration, upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, and sign up for our newsletter at coastalprairieconservancy.org. Check out the "Native Plants" page on our website with information on gardening with native plants, a "9 Natives for your Garden" brochure, and a video on Houston's urban pocket prairies. If you or someone you know owns land on the Texas coastal prairie, learn about ways to donate the land to the Coastal Prairie Conservancy as a trade land, protect the land through a conservation agreement, or sell the land to a land trust.

Thank you in advance for helping us preserve land for people and wildlife, today and tomorrow.

Stay in Touch!

Visit our website at coastalprairieconservancy.org
Email us at info@coastalprairieconservancy.org
Follow us on social media @coastalprairieconservancy
Use #coastalprairie to share your photos online!



Resilient Schools & Communities (RiSC) Houston: Jan 2026 - May 2026

NWF is engaging three Title 1 schools in the greater Houston area all in their first year of the RiSC program. These schools include: DeBakey High School from Houston ISD, Langham Creek High School from Cypress-Fairbanks ISD, and Sam Rayburn High School from Pasadena ISD.

These teacher teams have participated in a professional development workshop to introduce the program. Students have participated in both classroom workshops and field experiences with the Galveston Bay Foundation while working to identify resiliency priorities and potential project spaces on campus.

By the Numbers...

98 → 3

Total students
attending

Field
Experiences

351 → 9

Students engaged
through classes or clubs

Teachers
Involved

573 → 20

Total students
attending

Classroom
Workshops

250 → 3

Native Plants in
the Ground

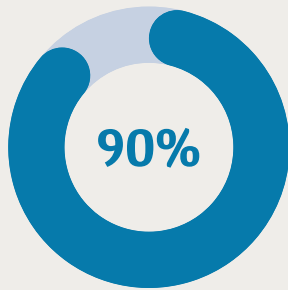
Field
Experiences

Langham Creek HS at Trinity Bay Discovery Center

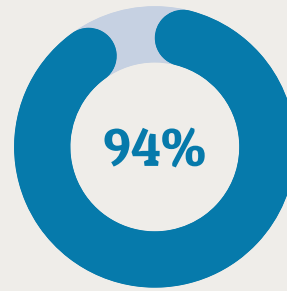


My favorite part of the field experience was being able to go outside and learn directly in nature, especially observing the water and wildlife in Galveston Bay. It helped me better understand how ecosystems work and why protecting them is important.
-student, Langham Creek HS

On a five star scale; students rate:

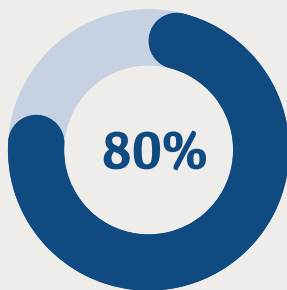


The Galveston Bay Foundation field experience as three stars or higher.

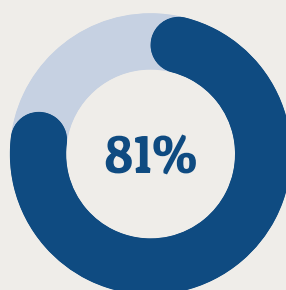


The Galveston Bay Foundation Watershed Classroom Workshop as three stars or higher.

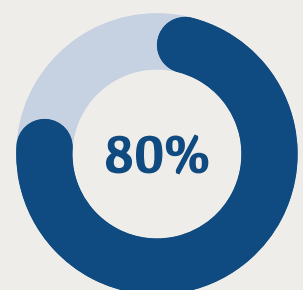
Students in year one of the program agree or strongly agree:



I have been provided a more hands-on approach to learning.



I understand what makes Houston susceptible to flooding.



I understand the function of a watershed.

Curriculum & Career Representation

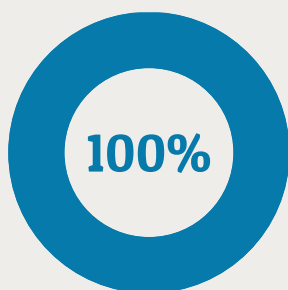


TOP: Langham Creek High School students building a model watershed with kinetic sand. RIGHT: Piecing together the full Galveston Bay Watershed with the Galveston Bay Foundation during a classroom workshop.

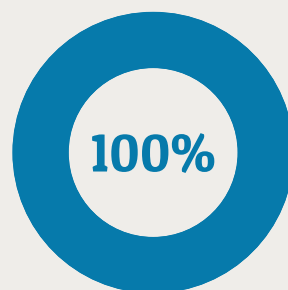


The GBF workshop helped visualize how watersheds actually work and how one little part can affect the whole watershed. - student, DeBakey HS

On a five star scale; teachers rate:



The Galveston Bay Foundation field experience as five stars.



The Galveston Bay Foundation Watershed Classroom Workshop as five stars.

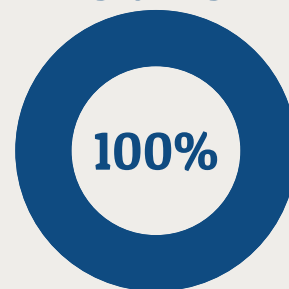
Teachers in year one of the program agree or strongly agree:



I am better able to facilitate student learning regarding how green infrastructure can help mitigate flooding in our region.



As a result of this program, I can see an increase in my students' engagement and motivation in science.



Participating in this program has increased my students' opportunities to connect to nature.

Teacher Professional Development Workshop



**TOP: Teacher teams touring the Tiger Prairie in January.
RIGHT: Working through the NOAA Beat the Uncertainty resiliency game during the professional development workshop hosted at Katy HS; a past RiSC school.**



This program has kept me motivated in my teaching, even to the end of the school year. It has also encouraged me to continue providing opportunities for my students to implement what they learn about environmental science in my class in their school/community and elsewhere. - Ms. Lee, teacher, Langham Creek HS

Field Experiences: Galveston Bay Foundation



LEFT: Field experience students planted 250 native plants to restore vegetation in a fresh water pond. **TOP:** Students participated in marine seining to discover fish, crabs, and other organisms in the environment.

My favorite part of the experience was actually being out in the wild and seeing nature. I got to experience a lot of animals and a lot of plants I've heard of but never been able to see.

- student, DeBakey HS



TOP: Students participated in multiple water quality testing stations and compared the difference between freshwater and saltwater ecosystems. **RIGHT:** Students use a refractometer to measure salinity in a sample of water.



I was most interested in learning how watersheds function and how pollution from our community can flow into rivers and bays. It made me realize how our everyday actions can affect the environment. - student, Langham Creek HS

Channelview Sports Complex Prairie Update



TOP: Newly installed signage at the Sports Complex in February, 2026. LEFT: Gulf Coast Penstemon in bloom during the same month.



TOP: Same view of the signage and prairie growth in May. Plentiful rains led to plentiful blooms. RIGHT: Lanceleaf Coreopsis in full bloom in May.



I loved learning about new ways to engage students about climate resiliency. It was a great way to start making these big connections that we may have talked about in the abstract.

- Ms. Crawford, teacher, Sam Rayburn HS

Watershed Audit and Classroom Workshops



Select Area

Explore mapped watersheds, soil, air, water, and land cover, and boundaries and observations, using the filter selector in the lower left of the map. See our documentation on filters.

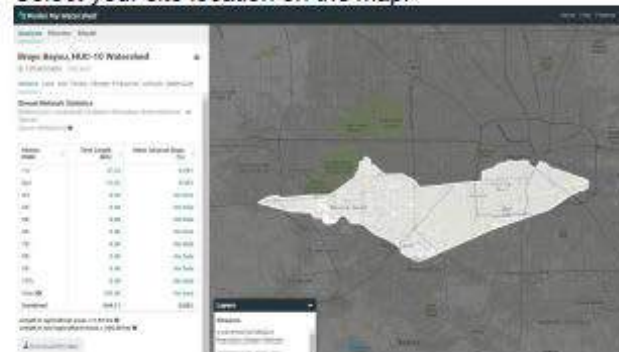
Select an area of interest in the continental United States, using the tools of this tool to explore the factors that impact water in your area and to begin to model different scenarios of human impacts. Different modeling options for using these tools are described in the technical documentation.

Select boundary

Choose a (predefined) boundary from several types:

- USGS Subwatershed (HUC-02)
- USGS Watershed Unit (HUC-10)**
- USGS Subwatershed Unit (HUC-12)
- County Lines
- Congressional Districts
- School Districts

8. Select your site location on the map.



9. Use the toggle buttons on the top left of the 'Analyze' box to navigate between sections.



10. What watershed is your site location in?

11. Click on toggle buttons to learn more! What is the area (size) of your watershed?

12. Under 'Land', what percentage of your watershed is categorized as:



Field Experience w Galveston Bay Fdn



Field Experience with Houston Parks and Recreation Dept

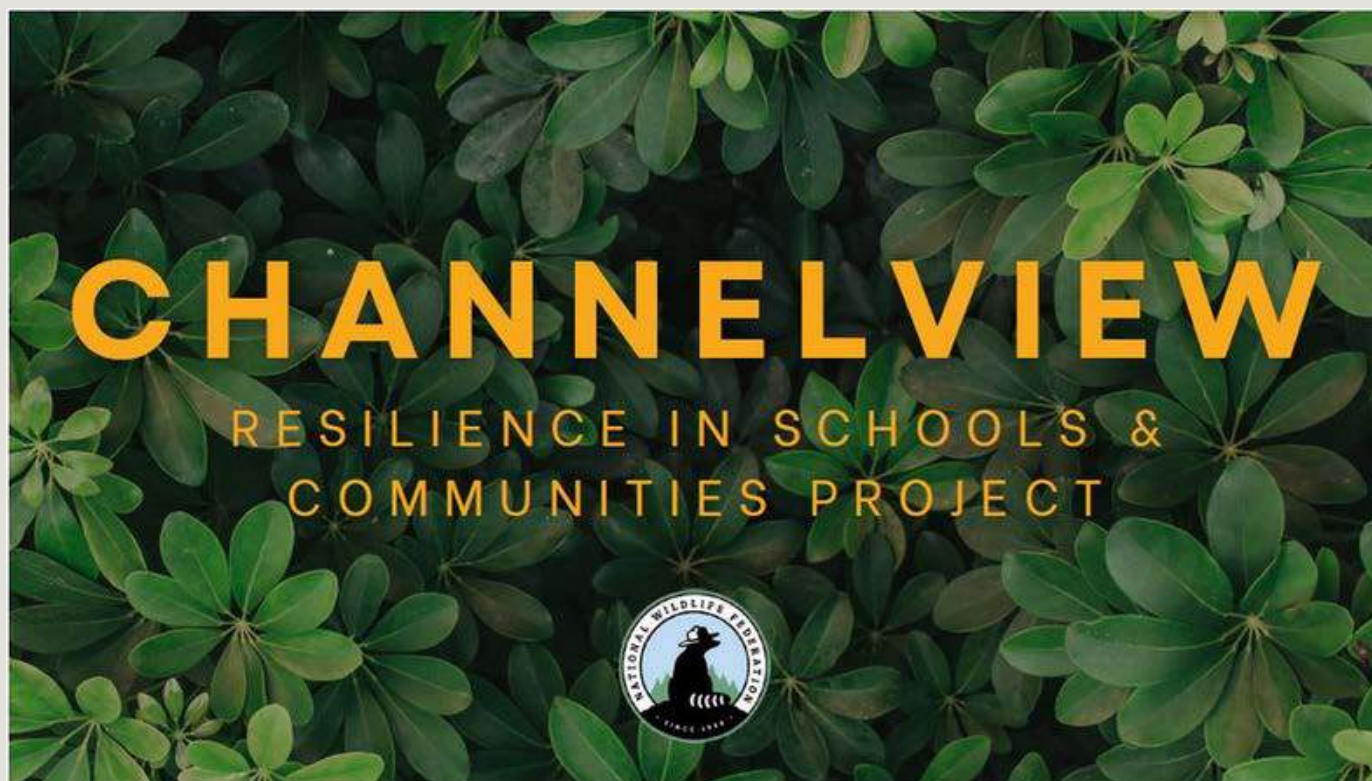
Blackhawk Park

Historic prairie site with some remnant prairie – 10 acres



Small Scalable Solutions

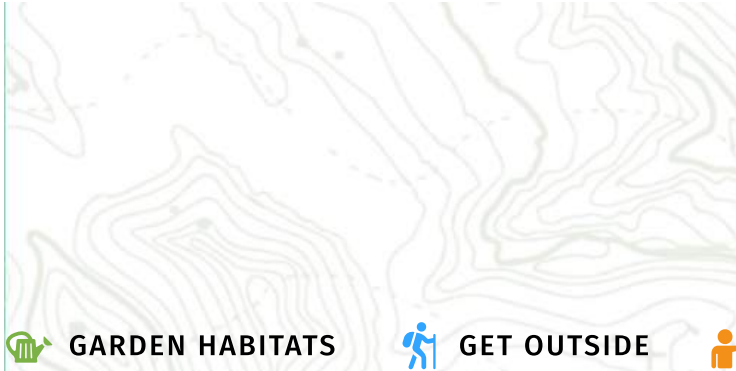






Channelview Pocket Prairie





 GARDEN HABITATS  GET OUTSIDE  STUDENTS AND NATURE

Community Spotlight: A Pocket Prairie for Channelview, TX

MARYA FOWLER | JUNE 13, 2025

In April of 2025, culminating two years of community engagement work and **NWF's Resilient Schools and Communities (RiSC)** program at Channelview High School, NWF and our local partners created a **Pocket Prairie** at the Channelview Sports Complex in Channelview, Texas. The beauty of this project lies in the collaboration. It was chosen, implemented and funded, in part, by the Channelview community and thoughtfully lead by 10th-12th grade teacher and Interact Club Sponsor, Ms. Erica Villareal and her students at Channelview High School.

Through teamwork, challenges, and a deep love for our community, our pocket prairie will demonstrate how larger environmental issues can be addressed through small scale projects which could be repeated in other community areas or at our homes to shape a more sustainable and hopeful future. This is more than a garden. It's a movement. It's Change for Channelview!

– Carolyn Stone, with Channelview Health and Improvement Coalition (C.H.I.C.)

The RiSC Program

The goal of the Resilient Schools and Communities (RiSC) program and curriculum is to increase the climate science and resilience knowledge, and critical thinking skills, of

middle and high school teachers and students, and to also empower them to build resilience in their communities.

Resilience can be thought of as adapting to changing conditions in a way that increases the well-being of communities and improves the health of the natural environment.

NWF launched **RiSC – Houston**, in 2018 in response to Hurricane Harvey as a two-year program for high school students in the greater Houston area. RiSC empowers students, teachers, and community members in marginalized communities to be watershed stewards.

Through a watershed study and vulnerability assessment of their community, students apply critical thinking skills to identify and design practical, nature-based solutions to mitigate flooding such as rain gardens and pocket prairies that will reduce storm water run-off and the associated pollutants from entering the water supply.

Students learn how efforts to make their communities more resilient to real and increasing threats of flooding also contributes to the health of Galveston Bay. First year projects are campus based and second year projects are community based.

What is a Pocket Prairie?

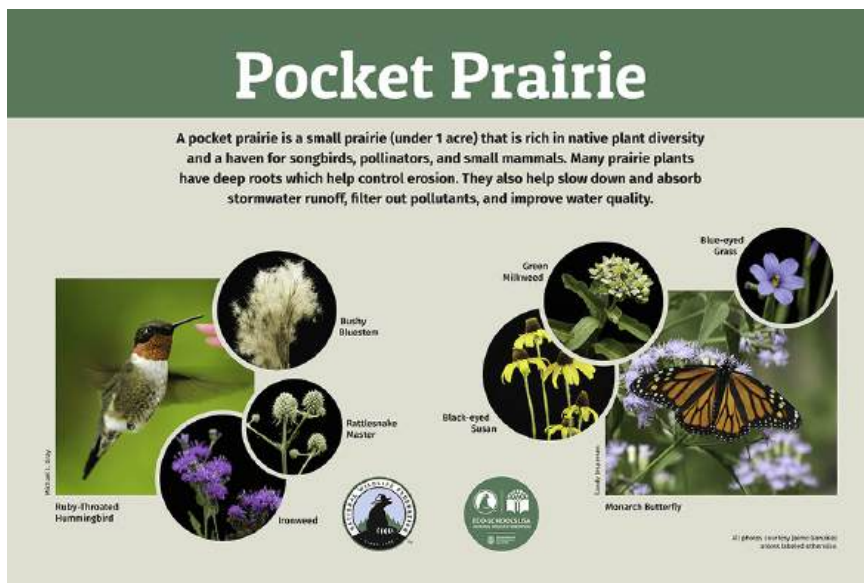
A pocket prairie is a small prairie (under one acre) that is rich in native plant diversity and a haven for songbirds, pollinators, and small mammals. Many prairie plants have deep roots which help control erosion. They also help slow down and absorb stormwater runoff, filter out pollutants, improve water quality, and sequester carbon. Once established, pocket prairies are highly resilient and drought tolerant.

Community Engagement in Channelview

NWF and our community-based partner, Channelview Health and Improvement Coalition (C.H.I.C.) spent two years laying the groundwork for a successful student-led community-based project. The first year was spent facilitating conversations and getting to know the community's needs through a series of community engagement sessions.

The sessions were designed to help NWF understand the environmental and cultural history of the city, how the community has been affected by flooding, what resilience projects are taking place in the community, what community green spaces exist, their relationship to those spaces and their top environmental concerns.

While air pollution is a huge concern in Channelview, it was agreed that given the parameters of this project, flooding and heat were the top issues the community could help address. At the final meeting, student leaders from Channelview High School presented to the community about the solution they chose to mitigate flooding on their campus—a rain garden.



1/2

During the 2024-2025 school year, with the help of TBG Partners (a landscape architecture firm), students practiced what they had learned during the previous school year, and

helped the community determine what type of resilience project would benefit the city and where they would like to locate it.

After four community meetings, it was agreed to implement a pocket prairie at the Channelview Sports Complex to help mitigate flooding and to serve as a community amenity that would add biodiversity and provide a place to relax and enjoy wildlife viewing opportunities.

What interested me about this project was that I get to be part of something that can change people's lives by taking care of the community and making sure we have a safe and healthy environment.

– Channelview High student

Why Channelview, TX?

A major concern about flooding in cities is that the residents who are most vulnerable, those who live in the lowest-lying areas or in neighborhoods without green space to absorb water, are often poor and members of minority groups. The Greater Houston region highlights a prime example of this.

Channelview, TX is a marginalized community and Channelview High School is a Title I High School serving predominantly students of color—where 79% of the student population is economically disadvantaged.

Communities like Channelview have been historically underrepresented. Nature-based solutions to a changing climate, such as those presented in the RiSC program, are scalable and easily replicable providing a more economical approach to flood mitigation and improved water quality.

Project Implementation

The community selected a highly visible 1,000 square foot area at the Channelview Sports Complex close to a pavilion and picnic tables. On April 10th our project partners removed sod from a 1,000 square foot site. The following day, 22 students from Channelview High School helped prepare the site for planting.

They dug post holes for a rope fence that would create the border of the prairie and help prevent mowing while the prairie establishes itself. These kids dug down 24" to place a total of 30 posts—wow! The students worked incredibly hard and were super focused on

the job. After setting all the posts, they spread the 10 yards of topsoil that were delivered to the site.



1/2

On Saturday morning, community volunteers and students spread the remaining soil, participated in a wildflower seed stomp, and then planted 305 native plants! In the afternoon, a wonderful group of students from Texas Southern University (TSU) helped water all of the plants. Next steps include creating interpretive signage and the occasional rain dance!

A huge shout out to our dedicated local project partners: Channelview High School, Channelview ISD Education Foundation, Channelview ISD, Channelview Health &

Improvement Coalition (C.H.I.C.), Harris County Precinct 3, LyondellBasell and the North Shore Rotary Club, and also to the Galveston Bay Foundation, Houston Parks and Recreation Department, Coastal Prairie Conservancy for the valuable field experiences they provided students and to TBG Partners for their guidance and technical knowledge.



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www.coastalprairieconservancy.org
info@coastalprairieconservancy.org



July 20th, 2026

Ms. Marya Fowler
Senior Director, Community Conservation
National Wildlife Federation
11100 Wildlife Center Dr.
Reston, VA 02190

Dear Ms. Fowler,

The Coastal Prairie Conservancy is pleased to partner with the National Wildlife Federation on its proposed project, *Resilient Schools and Communities: Stewardship of the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed*, which has been submitted for funding through the Galveston Bay Estuary Program.

This project closely aligns with the Coastal Prairie Conservancy's mission to conserve and restore the native coastal prairies, wetlands, farms, and ranches that sustain the health of our lands, waters, wildlife, and communities. Healthy prairies do far more than provide habitat. Their deep-rooted native grasses absorb and slow floodwaters, improve water quality, replenish groundwater, and store carbon, making them one of our region's most effective natural defenses against flooding while strengthening the long-term resilience of our coastal communities.

Through the RiSC program, students will have the opportunity to explore their local watershed and gain a deeper understanding of how healthy prairies contribute to the health of the entire ecosystem. By connecting classroom learning with firsthand experiences in the field, students will see how conservation benefits both people and nature.

As a partner in this project, the Coastal Prairie Conservancy will provide the following during the grant period:

- Spring 2029: Host five field experiences on the Katy Prairie where students will explore prairie ecology, native Texas grassland plants, and the ecological importance of the coastal prairie ecosystem. Through inquiry-based learning and hands-on stewardship activities- including planting native prairie species and removing invasive plants- students will experience how conservation actions improve habitat, protect water quality, and increase the landscape's ability to absorb and store floodwaters.

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GBF's education, volunteer, and advocacy programs are all focused on the health and resilience of Houston's watersheds and Galveston Bay. We take pride in our ongoing successful partnership efforts with NWF, and we look forward to working with NWF in local schools. This project will be a rewarding and engaging experience for all those involved. Please feel free to contact me should you have any additional questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bob Stokes".

Bob Stokes
President, Galveston Bay Foundation
bstokes@galvbay.org

We look forward to working with the National Wildlife Federation and local Houston-area schools to help cultivate a lifelong appreciation for the coastal prairie and a commitment to conserving the natural resources that sustain our communities.

Thank you for your including us in the RiSC project. If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (713) 523-6135.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Piacentini'.

Mary Anne Piacentini
President and CEO



Marya Fowler
Senior Director, Community Conservation
National Wildlife Federation
11100 Wildlife Center Drive
Reston, VA 20190

July 22, 2026

Dear Ms. Fowler,

The Galveston Bay Foundation (GBF) is excited to partner with the National Wildlife Federation's (NWF) proposed project, Resilient Schools and Communities: Stewardship of the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed, which would be funded by the Galveston Bay Estuary Program. NWF has a long history of working with Houston area schools on a wide variety of sustainability projects through their Eco-Schools U.S. Program and GBF has supported and collaborated with these efforts for over 6 years. The RiSC program aligns well with GBF's work to ensure a healthy future for Galveston Bay. As participating students study their local watershed, they will learn how their watershed functions, how watershed health can impact water quality, and how the actions they take on their local watershed can impact Galveston Bay.

Although GBF is not funded specifically through this proposal, GBF will provide the following via other NWF funding sources to support this project:

2027-2028 school year:

- 1) 1 presentation at the NWF RiSC professional development for participating teachers to increase knowledge and understanding of the watershed, provide hands-on curriculum to use in their classes, and discuss the project components.
- 2) 5 classroom STEM workshops where students will recognize the connection of their community to the Greater Galveston Bay watershed and how their actions in the watershed affect the health of the local ecosystem.
- 3) 5 field experiences to Trinity Bay where students will gain an increased understanding about the Bay's varied ecosystems, its inhabitants, and how they are connected to it via inquiry-based activities.

2028-2029 school year:

- 1) 1 presentation at the NWF RiSC professional development for participating teachers to increase knowledge and understanding of the watershed, provide hands-on curriculum to use in their classes, and discuss the project components.
- 2) 5 classroom STEM workshops, where students will recognize the connection of their actions in the watershed to the health of the local ecosystem and the Galveston Bay; study human impacts to the watershed and the effects to the Galveston Bay ecosystem; stewardship of the Bay and taking action through the Galveston Bay Action Network
- 3) Environmental Action Days with GBF - students conduct water quality testing and help protect the bay by planting marsh grass, creating oyster reefs, collecting nurdles, or picking up trash (TBD)



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President & CEO

Jed Aplaca

Marya Fowler
Director, Community Conservation
National Wildlife Federation
11100 Wildlife Center Drive
Reston, VA 20190

July 21, 2026

Dear Ms. Fowler,

Houston Audubon is excited to partner with the National Wildlife Federation's (NWF) proposed program, *Resilient Schools and Communities: Stewardship of the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed*, which would be funded by the Galveston Bay Estuary Program. NWF has a long history of working with Houston schools on a wide variety of sustainability projects through their Eco-Schools US Program and Houston Audubon has supported and collaborated with these efforts, particularly the Resilient School and Communities (RiSC) program for over 6 years.

The RiSC Program aligns well with **Houston Audubon's mission to advance the conservation of birds and their habitats in the Greater Houston Gulf Coast region.** This is accomplished through acquiring, maintaining and restoring critical habitat as bird sanctuaries, providing education programs and nature experiences. Our Natives Nursery at the Edith L. Moore Nature Sanctuary which specializes in local native prairie grasses and wildflowers has provided native plants for many of the schools participating NWF's RiSC program.

As a contractual partner of NWF's during the grant period, Houston Audubon will provide native plants for all schools and one outdoor learning center participating in NWF's RiSC program.

We take pride in our ongoing successful partnership efforts with NWF, and we look forward to working with NWF to advance the RiSC program in local schools and communities. This project will be a rewarding and engaging experience for all those involved. Please feel free to contact me should you have any additional questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jed Aplaca

NWF - Budgeted Fringe Benefits

	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Total</u>
Full Time Staff Salaries	34,199	34,883	69,082
Part Time Staff/Interns Salaries	1,924	1,962	3,886
Total Salaries			72,968

	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Total</u>
Full Time Fringe Rate: Year at 31.5%; Year 2 at 32.13% (2% inflation)	10,773	11,208	21,981
Part Time Fringe Rate: Year at 19.5%; Year 2 at 19.9% (2% inflation)	375	390	766
Total Fringe			22,746

National Wildlife Federation: Resilient Schools & Communities

Summary of RiSC Activities September 1, 2027 – Aug 31, 2029

FIELD EXPERIENCES

Field Experiences are designed to engage students in critical thinking as they become more intimate with their watershed, and the stewardship necessary to keep their watershed healthy.

In partnership with the Galveston Bay Foundation (GBF) students gain an increased understanding about the Bay's varied ecosystems, its inhabitants, and how they are connected to it via inquiry-based activities. Students engage in scientific investigations including water quality testing, seining, and pollinator sweep netting. **(Nov '27-Feb '28 and Nov '28 -Feb'29)** With Coastal Prairie Conservancy (CPC), they practice stewardship by planting native prairie plants to enhance coastal prairie restoration projects. Students and teachers gain an increased understanding of native Texas prairie plants, the coastal prairie ecosystem, and the role of prairies in absorbing floodwaters while helping to protect water quality and quantity. **(March'29-May'29)** With Houston Parks and Recreation Department (HPARD), students plant native prairie plants in riparian buffers working alongside natural resource professionals. These opportunities instill hope as students witness resilience projects on a larger scale and realize that their work is connected to a larger coastal resilience vision. **(March'28-May'28)**

WATERSHED AND BIODIVERSITY AUDITS; WATER QUALITY TESTING

Students conduct watershed **(Oct '27 and Oct '28)** and biodiversity audits **(Sept' 28)** as well as water quality testing on their campus **(Sept '27 and Sept '28)**, Galveston Bay **(Nov '27-Feb '28 and Nov '28 -Feb'29)** and a local bayou **(March '28 -May'28)**. Comparing different sites helps students connect the flow of water on their campus to the Bay. Students hypothesize as to why the results between sites might be different, what they tell us about the overall health of the ecosystem, and how this knowledge can be applied to a coastal resilience project that meets the needs of their community and contributes to the health of Galveston Bay.

TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD)

Year 1 Sept'27 and Oct '27 / Year 2 Aug' 28 and Sept' 28

Effective student learning happens through supported, confident teachers. NWF's paid PD engages teachers in RiSC Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) aligned lessons, presentations from local partners, and field investigation activities, resulting in increased science literacy and greater awareness of their watershed and impacts of stormwater runoff to water quality and to Galveston Bay. Teachers learn first-hand the ways their students can be agents of change in their communities. They engage in activities they will facilitate with their students such as watershed mapping, water quality testing, watershed and biodiversity audits and vulnerability assessments. The goal of the RiSC program and TEKS aligned curriculum is to increase scientific literacy, resilience knowledge, and critical thinking skills of middle and high school teachers and students and empower them to build coastal resilience in their communities.

National Wildlife Federation: Resilient Schools & Communities

Year 1 Nov '27 and April '28/ Year 2 Nov '28 and April '29

Bi-annual Teacher cohort meetings are designed to promote a scientifically sound community of learning. Teachers share best practices, knowledge gained, and resources and lessons learned that help strengthen their understanding and commitment to coastal resilience education.

CLASSROOM STUDENT WORKSHOPS

Classroom Workshops are designed to bring local expertise and conservation professionals into the classroom so that students can learn about the work they do and engage with them in some foundational knowledge-building work that will help set them up for success in the field.

The **Galveston Bay Foundation** will offer 5 STEM workshops per year designed to increase students' knowledge and understanding of their watershed, their connection to Galveston Bay, and provide hands-on, inquiry-based, TEKS activities. **(Nov' 27/Feb '28 and Oct '28/Nov '28)** **TBG Partners**, will provide 5 STEM workshops the first year designed to increase student understanding of the need for green infrastructure the different types of green infrastructure and nature-based solutions (NbS), and how to design NbS. They provide hands-on lessons that help students create an NbS model such as a rain garden. They will also facilitate a campus site and vulnerability assessment on each campus with the students. **(Oct '27)** and **NWF** Houston staff will present 3 classroom workshops that will engage students in campus water quality testing, building a budget for their project, design considerations, and how to plan a successful community outreach event.

VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT (Sept '27 and Sept 28) AND COMMUNITY SURVEYS (Nov/Dec '27). Mapping tools such as NOAA Coastal Flood Exposure Mapper and RiSC Vulnerability Assessments help students understand their communities' vulnerability to flooding and identify those areas most at risk. A student-generated community survey brings inter-generational knowledge, understanding of land use change and coastal resilience challenges. Survey findings are incorporated into student-led community forums, end-of-year student showcases, and Community Charettes.

STUDENT DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION, PRESENTATIONS: **Year 1:** students gather data using flood mapping tools, watershed audits, water quality testing, and site assessments. They analyze, think critically, and work collaboratively to identify the best location for a nature-based and/or green infrastructure solution to flooding. Students work in groups to design a project. Peer-to-peer student presentations help students select a design to implement. **(Feb/March '28)** **Year 2:** students use the results of their biodiversity audits to inform stewardship of and enhancements to their projects. **(Sept/Nov '28)** Students' coastal resilience work turns to helping restore habitat and enhance existing projects with RiSC partners Houston Parks and Recreation and Coastal Prairie Preserve. Hands-on community-based projects help students learn science through active community involvement, which can serve as an entry point into science careers

ANNUAL STUDENT COMMUNITY FORUMS AND STUDENT SHOWCASES: Students hold a campus community forum each year **(May'28 and May '29)** and they participate in an annual student resilience showcase **(April/May '28 and April/May '29)**. The experience of sharing their

National Wildlife Federation: Resilient Schools & Communities

learned knowledge with the community and encouraging youth to feel comfortable speaking in front of people, helps cultivate the next generation of informed citizens, scientists, engineers, and decision-makers.

COMMUNITY CHARRETTES – 4 Total. (Nov’27/May’28/Nov’28/June’29): NWF and our community-based partner Channelview Health and Improvement Coalition (C.H.I.C) will engage community members in a thoughtful and action-oriented process. Listening sessions allow NWF, our local partners and students to learn about the historical and cultural knowledge of the community that is necessary to address coastal resilience challenges using solutions that meet the community’s needs. Students will present their resilience work in Channelview to date, discuss their community resilience plan ideas, and gather initial thoughts. NWF and our local partners will engage community members in the process of identifying action steps and possible solutions for coastal resilience challenges. They will evaluate the costs, benefits, and the capacity to implement each potential solution before drafting coastal resilience plan for Channelview.

ACTIVITIES	LEAD	PARTICIPANTS
1. Program Check-ins		
Bi -Monthly Partner Check-ins	NWF	NWF and Partners
Bi-Weekly or monthly Teacher Check-ins (depending on time of year and project activities)	NWF	NWF and Teachers
NWF and CELF Site Vistis	NWF/CELF	Teachers
Teacher Focus Group	NWF/CELF	Teachers
Partner Focus Group	NWF/CELF	Partners
2. Planning		
Planning meeting with partners	NWF	NWF & All Partners
3. Community of Learning		
Community of Learning Gathering #1 Teachers share success, challenges, lessons learned, strategies moving forward	NWF	Teachers, CELF, Consultant
Community of Learning Gathering #2 Teachers share success, challenges, lessons learned, strategies moving forward	NWF	Teachers, CELF, Consultant
4. Community Focused Activities		
Community Survey	Students	Community Members
Community Charette #1: Students will present the resilience work in Channelview to date and their vulnerability assessment of the community; students will present the idea of a community resilience plan for Channelview and gather initial thoughts/ideas; community will identify additional stakeholders to come to the meetings	NWF/CELF/C.H.I.C.	Community Members, students
Community Charette #2 Based on student community vulnerability assessment community members will identify the focus areas for the plan	NWF/CELF/C.H.I.C.	Community Members, students
Community Charette #3 Community members, with the help of municipal leaders will identify action steps/solutions for each focus area	NWF/CELF/C.H.I.C.	Community Members, students, municipal leaders

Community Charette #4 Community members and municipal leaders will evaluate the costs, benefits, and the capacity to implement each potential solution.	NWF/CELF/C.H.I.C.	Community Members, students, municipal leaders
5. Year 1 Educational Timeline		
Teacher Professional Development #1 and #2 RiSC curriculum, Watersheds, Climate Resilience, cultural history of Houston, Green Infrastructure, Community Vulnerability Assessment (NOAA Coastal Flood Mapper/Harris County Flood Maps), native plants, design and installation (Aug/Sept)	NWF, CELF, GBF and TBG	Teachers, community liason
Community Vulnerability Assesment (Sept)	Teachers	Students
NWF Student Workshops #1 campus water quality testing; the cultural and natural history of Houston, setting context for the program in the first year (Sept)	NWF	Students & teachers
GBF Student Workshops watersheds, watershed health and human connection (Nov-April))	GBF	Students & Teacers
Watershed Audit (Oct)	Teachers	Students
TBG Student Workshops - campus site assessments, nature based solutions, design and implementation, rain garden models (Oct)	TBG Partners	Students, Teachers
Field Experience with Galveston Bay -ecosystem exploration, seining, and intro to H2O quality testing (Nov -Feb)	GBF/NWF/CELF	Students & Teachers
NWF Student Workshops #2 - design considerations and budgets (Jan)	NWF	Students, Teachers
Campus project design, review, and approval	NWF & Teachers	Students & Teachers

Community Action Day with Houston Parks and Recreation Department (HPARD) - Students conduct water quality testing, facilitated by SPLASH (2) and plant native prairie plants along a local bayou (Apr/May)	HPARD/NWF/	Students, Teachers & Community Members
Campus Rain Garden/Pocket Prairie Installation and Channelview ISD Outdoor Learning Center rain garden (Sept-Oct)	NWF, CELF, C.H.I.C, and Teachers	Students & Community Members
Student-Led Campus Community Forum (May)	NWF/Teachers/ Students	Students, campus staff, parents and community members
Virtual Resilience Showcase	NWF/CELF/Students	Students, teachers, campus staff, civic staff, parents and community members
6. Year 2 Educational Timeline		
Teacher Professional Development #1 Measuring biodiversity and using biodiversity audits to help with stewardship; socio-environmental understanding and biodiversity; community science and iNaturalist Collection Projects; maintenance (Sept)	NWF/CELF	Teachers
NWF Student Workshops - H2O water quality testing (1) of water taken from a water source close to campus; collecting biodiversity data using Seek/iNaturalist and setting up collection projects (Sept)	NWF	Students and Teachers

Teacher Professional Development #2 Socio environmental factors in a resilient Houston (Houston Resilience Strategy); municipal level resilience projects; creating an effective community survey; gathering intergenerational climate data; community outreach projects (Oct)	NWF/CELF	Teachers
Biodiversity Audit (Sept)	Teachers	Students
Resilience project enhancement designs and budget approval (Sept-Oct)	NWF	Students & Teachers
Resilience project enhancements (Sept-Nov)	Teachers	Students & Community Volunteers
GBF Student Workshops - Connectivity of watersheds; Human impacts; Taking action through the Galveston Bay Action Network; Stewardship and service projects to protect the Bay (Oct)	GBF	Students & Teachers
Watershed Audit (Oct)	Teachers	Students
Field Experience with Galveston Bay -ecosystem exploration and intro to H2O quality testing, sea grass planting (Nov)	NWF/GBF /CELF	Students & Teachers
Field Experience with Coastal Prairie Conservancy (CPC) - coastal prairie ecosystem, role of prairies in absorbing floodwaters while helping to protect water quality and quantity; hands-on, inquiry-based activities, prairie stewardship through the planting of native prairie plants and/or the removal of invasive species (April/May)	CPC/NWF	Students & Teachers
NWF student workshop #2 - planning a successful community outreach event (Feb)		
Student-led Community Outreach Projects (March-April)	NWF/CELF/Teachers/Students	Students & Community Members
Student Showcase (May)	NWF and CELF	Students, campus staff, civic staff, parents and community members

7. Evaluations		
Mid Year Teacher Surveys	NWF	Teachers
End of Year Interviews	NWF	Teachers, Project Leadership, Community Membes
End of Year Teacher Surveys	NWF	Teachers
End of Year Student Surveys	NWF	Students
Compile End of Year Survey Results		
Draft End of Year Report		

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2028 Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **July 24, 2026**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for fiscal 2028 (FY 2028) Priority Area Actions that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for FY 2028 at the June 2026 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

Timeline of Proposals:

Task	Date Due
Release of Request for Proposals	June 22, 2026
Proposals Due	July 24, 2026
Send Proposals to Subcommittees Members for Review	August 12, 2026
Present Proposals to Subcommittees for Council Recommendation	September 2, 2026 (NRU and PPE) September 9, 2026 (M&R and WSQ)
Present Proposals to B&P Subcommittee for Final Recommendation	September 30, 2026
Present Proposals to Galveston Bay Council for Approval	October 14, 2026

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Primary Subcommittee: Public Participation and Education (PPE)
Secondary Subcommittee (if applicable): Choose an item.
Tertiary Subcommittee (if applicable): Choose an item.

Project Name:

Watershed Galveston Bay: Educator Professional Development for Watershed Stewardship		
Project Previously Funded by GBEP?	Yes ☐	No ☒

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

Texas A&M AgriLife Research, Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI) – a unit of Texas A&M AgriLife Research, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Texas A&M University.
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The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

- ☐ Federal, State, or Local Government ☐ Council of Government ☒ Public ISDs or Universities
☐ Nonprofit ☐ Other*

<u>Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:</u>	KU3DCFJJTVN3
<u>Vendor Identification Number (VIN) or Tax ID:</u>	746000541

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Lucas Gregory
Project Representative Phone	979-314-2361
Project Representative Email	lfgregory@ag.tamu.edu

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2027 – ending no later than May 31, 2030) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

September 1, 2027 through May 31, 2030
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Amount Requested from GBEP:

\$192,212

Federal ☐ State ☐ No Preference ☒
Is the project scalable? ☒

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2028 (09/01/2027-08/31/2028)	\$67,652.00
FY 2029 (09/01/2028-08/31/2029)	\$61,577.00
FY 2030 (09/01/2029-05/31/2030)	\$62,983.00
Total	\$192,212.00

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

\$192,212

Is this an estimate? ☐

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

No leveraged funds are proposed.

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Subcommittee Priorities (Section Four) will be considered above others. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

The *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* Action Plans are found at:

<https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 1: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

NPS-1 ☐ NPS-2 ☐ NPS-3 ☐ NPS-4 ☐
PS-1 ☐ PS-2 ☐ PS-3 ☐
PHA-1 ☐ PHA-2 ☐ PHA-3 ☐ PHA-4 ☐ PHA-5 ☐

Plan Priority 2: Protect and Sustain Living Resources

HC-1 ☐ HC-2 ☐ HC-3 ☐
SC-1 ☐ SC-2 ☐
FWI-1 ☐ FWI-2 ☐ FWI-3 ☐

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

SPO-1 ☒ SPO-2 ☒ SPO-3 ☒ SPO-4 ☒
PEA-1 ☒ PEA-2 ☒ PEA-3 ☒

Plan Priority 4: Inform Science-based Decision Making

RES-1 ☐ RES-2 ☐ RES-3 ☐ RES-4 ☐
RES-5 ☐ RES-6 ☐ RES-7 ☐ RES-8 ☐
ACS-1 ☐ ACS-2 ☐ ACS-3 ☐

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

The proposed project supports implementation of actions under the *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition, Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities*, including stakeholder participation and outreach (SPO-1 through SPO-4) and public education and awareness (PEA-1 through PEA-3). Through educator professional development, Watershed Galveston Bay will increase educator capacity, environmental literacy, watershed stewardship, and community engagement while expanding opportunities for participation in conservation, restoration, monitoring, and citizen science initiatives throughout the Galveston Bay watershed.

Watershed Galveston Bay builds upon an established educator professional development model currently being implemented by the Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI) and is designed to be readily adapted to address region-specific watershed issues, conservation priorities, and stewardship opportunities. Initial implementation of the Watershed model generated strong interest, with registration reaching capacity and a waitlist forming prior to workshop delivery, demonstrating demand for watershed-focused educator training and locally relevant environmental education resources. The project will establish partnerships with local organizations, agencies, educational institutions, conservation groups, and community partners to support workshop delivery, expand access to watershed education resources, and connect participants with existing conservation, restoration, monitoring, and stewardship efforts occurring throughout the watershed. These partnerships will strengthen local capacity for environmental education and stewardship while introducing new audiences to ongoing environmental initiatives.

The project will provide regionally relevant professional development that equips formal and informal educators with the knowledge, instructional strategies, educational resources, and partner connections needed to incorporate watershed science, environmental stewardship, citizen science, and place-based learning into classrooms, informal education programs, extracurricular activities, service-learning projects, and community outreach efforts. Participants will receive practical tools and locally relevant examples that increase understanding of watershed processes, nonpoint source pollution, habitat conservation, and watershed protection practices while fostering meaningful stewardship experiences.

Workshops will also connect participants with environmental professionals and organizations working in water resources, conservation, restoration, environmental monitoring, and natural resource management. These connections will provide educators with access to local expertise, educational resources, stewardship opportunities, and community partnerships that can support classroom instruction, environmental clubs, campus gardens, citizen science activities, guest speakers, field experiences, service-learning projects, and other place-based learning opportunities.

Six workshops will be delivered during the project period, with two workshops hosted in each of three regions within the Galveston Bay watershed. Each workshop will serve a minimum of 35 participants, resulting in at least 210 educators receiving professional development training. Through classroom instruction, informal education programs, environmental clubs, stewardship projects, citizen science initiatives, service-learning activities, and community outreach efforts, participating educators are expected to extend project benefits to thousands of students and community members annually. By increasing environmental literacy, connecting new audiences to ongoing conservation and restoration efforts, strengthening educator capacity, and fostering meaningful stewardship experiences, the project will contribute to the long-term protection and resilience of Galveston Bay and its watershed.

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

Subcommittee Identified Priorities:

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- ☐ WSQ: Supporting management measures and watershed-based plans through adaptive management, workforce development, and technical assistance.
- ☐ WSQ: Improve knowledge and accessibility of pollution reporting tools to empower the community.
- ☐ WSQ: Implementation and/or evaluation of best management practices that address point and nonpoint source pollution.
- ☐ NRU: Habitat Acquisition.
- ☐ NRU: Enhancement of existing or ongoing restoration-conservation efforts. Special emphasis on:
 - ☐ Adaptive management for previously completed projects; and
 - ☐ Projects that may have lost/delayed funding from other federal sources.
- ☐ NRU: Benefit to native fish and wildlife, including federal and state listed species, Species of Greatest Conservation Need, or nongame wildlife.
- ☐ NRU: Project urgency: Project must be completed in next 24 months or opportunity is lost.
- ☒ PPE: Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed.
- ☒ PPE: Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects.
- ☒ PPE: Opportunities to host workshops/networking events to provide technical assistance for local leadership (local governments, MUDs, schoolboards, the public) on key topics.
- ☒ PPE: Conservation and environmental workforce development.
- ☐ M&R: Meaningful and effective monitoring of existing, past, and new projects (NRU: especially research and monitoring for diamondback terrapin and best management projects, WSQ, PPE).
- ☐ M&R: Baseline assessments for large-scale, man-made changes to Galveston Bay at an adequate timeline and spatial range to provide useful information.
- ☐ M&R: Assessment, Exposure, and Response to stressors, including but not limited to:
 - ☐ Species of greatest conservation need;
 - ☐ Contact recreation standards;
 - ☐ Environmental parameters;
 - ☐ Emerging contaminants; and
 - ☐ Legacy contaminants.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

Watershed Galveston Bay directly addresses multiple Public Participation and Education (PPE) subcommittee priorities by expanding environmental literacy, watershed stewardship, and community engagement through educator professional development. The initiative is designed to build the capacity of formal and informal educators to deliver high-quality, locally relevant environmental education that promotes stewardship of Galveston Bay and its contributing watersheds.

A key component of the program is connecting educators with existing conservation, restoration, monitoring, and stewardship initiatives occurring throughout the watershed. Workshop participants will engage with local partners, environmental professionals, and community organizations, increasing awareness of ongoing efforts and providing pathways for future involvement. By equipping educators with place-based examples, resources, and partner connections, existing conservation initiatives can reach students, families, and community members who may not otherwise be engaged in watershed protection activities.

Participants will increase their understanding of watershed processes, water quality issues, habitat conservation, nonpoint source pollution, and stewardship practices through hands-on learning experiences and watershed-focused professional development. Enhanced knowledge and confidence will enable educators to incorporate these concepts into classrooms, informal education settings, and community

outreach programs. As workshop content is shared with broader audiences, environmental literacy and stewardship actions will be promoted across communities throughout the watershed.

Six regional WatershED workshops will create opportunities for networking, collaboration, and technical assistance on key environmental topics. Educators, natural resource professionals, agency staff, nonprofit organizations, and community partners will come together to share knowledge, resources, and best practices related to watershed stewardship and environmental education. These interactions will strengthen professional networks while providing participants with technical expertise, educational tools, and locally relevant resources that can be incorporated into future educational and outreach efforts.

Conservation and environmental workforce development will be advanced by strengthening the knowledge, skills, and instructional capacity of formal and informal educators who serve as environmental education leaders within their communities. Professional development, access to educational resources, and engagement with conservation professionals will enhance participants' ability to deliver effective environmental education and stewardship programming. Training a minimum of 210 educators and community educators over the project period will build long-term capacity for environmental education throughout the Galveston Bay watershed and create a multiplier effect that extends benefits far beyond workshop participants. The resulting network of trained educators will help foster future generations of environmentally literate citizens, informed decision-makers, and community stewards who contribute to the long-term protection and resilience of Galveston Bay.

Does the Project align with any EPA Areas of Special Interest?

- ☐ Reduce Nutrient Pollution to Protect Water Quality and Public Health
- ☒ Make Investments that Address Coastal Resiliency
- ☐ Reduce Trash

WatershED Galveston Bay supports the EPA Area of Special Interest focused on coastal resiliency by strengthening the capacity of formal and informal educators to deliver place-based environmental education that fosters long-term stewardship of Galveston Bay and its contributing watersheds. Through professional development workshops, participants will increase their understanding of watershed processes, water quality, habitat conservation, nonpoint source pollution, and the connections between land-use decisions and the health and resilience of coastal ecosystems and communities.

As trusted educators and community leaders, workshop participants serve as multipliers who extend project impacts far beyond direct attendees. By providing educators with locally relevant resources, stewardship strategies, and connections to existing conservation and restoration initiatives, the project will enable them to engage students, families, and community members in understanding and addressing environmental challenges affecting Galveston Bay. This "train-the-trainer" approach will expand environmental literacy across the watershed and help cultivate future generations of informed citizens, community leaders, and environmental stewards capable of supporting resilient coastal communities and ecosystems.

By building long-term capacity for environmental education and community engagement, WatershED Galveston Bay will contribute to the sustained stewardship and resilience of Galveston Bay's natural resources, habitats, and coastal communities.

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

Watershed Galveston Bay will deliver six regionally adapted educator professional development workshops across the Galveston Bay watershed to strengthen educator capacity, increase environmental literacy, and promote watershed stewardship. Through hands-on, place-based learning experiences, participants will gain the knowledge, instructional strategies, educational resources, and partner connections needed to incorporate watershed science, citizen science, stewardship, and environmental career awareness into classrooms, informal education programs, extracurricular activities, and community engagement efforts. By combining a proven Watershed framework with locally relevant watershed issues, conservation priorities, restoration efforts, and stewardship opportunities, the project will connect new audiences to ongoing environmental initiatives while supporting long-term community engagement and environmental workforce development throughout the Galveston Bay watershed.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

Watershed Galveston Bay will expand an established educator professional development model to increase environmental literacy, watershed stewardship, and community engagement throughout the Galveston Bay watershed. The project is designed to build the capacity of formal and informal educators to deliver high-quality, locally relevant environmental education while connecting participants to existing conservation, restoration, monitoring, and stewardship initiatives occurring throughout the watershed. By equipping educators with the knowledge, resources, and professional networks needed to engage students and community members, the project will create a multiplier effect that extends project impacts far beyond direct participants and contributes to the long-term stewardship and resilience of Galveston Bay and its contributing watersheds.

The Galveston Bay watershed encompasses a diverse and rapidly growing region that includes highly urbanized areas, expanding suburban communities, agricultural landscapes, forested headwaters, coastal habitats, and one of the nation's most significant estuarine systems. Population growth, land use change, stormwater runoff, habitat loss, and other environmental pressures continue to affect water quality and ecosystem health throughout the watershed. Addressing these challenges requires not only on-the-ground conservation and restoration efforts, but also an informed and engaged public that understands the connections between human activities, watershed health, and the long-term sustainability of Galveston Bay's natural resources.

Educators represent a unique and effective audience for achieving long-term environmental outcomes because they serve as trusted sources of information within their schools and communities. Professional development investments in educators have impacts that extend beyond individual participants as workshop content is incorporated into classrooms, informal education programs, community outreach activities, stewardship projects, and extracurricular programs. Through this train-the-trainer approach, educators can reach students, families, and community members across multiple years, significantly expanding the impact of project investments while helping cultivate future generations of informed citizens, environmental stewards, and community leaders.

Watershed Galveston Bay builds upon a professional development framework currently being implemented by the Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI). Development of the Watershed model was informed by an educator needs assessment conducted through TWRI's ACCESS Water Education program. Survey responses identified strong interest in watershed science, water quality, environmental stewardship, place-based learning opportunities, and hands-on professional development experiences. Educators also expressed a desire for locally relevant resources and opportunities to connect with environmental professionals and community partners.

Initial implementation of the Watershed model generated strong interest, reaching participant capacity prior to workshop delivery and creating a waitlist, demonstrating demand for watershed-focused educator professional development. A Galveston Bay-focused educator needs assessment conducted during the planning phase will further inform regional examples, stewardship opportunities, and partner engagement.

. To improve accessibility and engage educators from across the watershed, workshops will be delivered in three representative regions selected to reflect the geographic diversity of the Galveston Bay watershed: the

upper watershed region (e.g., Conroe and Liberty), the greater Houston metropolitan region (e.g., Houston and Clear Lake), and the coastal Galveston Bay region (e.g., League City, Dickinson, and Galveston). These locations will provide opportunities to engage participants from communities throughout the watershed, including both urban centers and smaller municipalities. Delivering workshops across multiple regions will improve access to professional development opportunities while reinforcing the connections between upstream activities and downstream conditions in Galveston Bay.

A consistent WatershED framework will be used across all workshop locations, with core content focused on watershed processes, water quality, nonpoint source pollution, habitat conservation, stewardship practices, and the interconnected nature of the Galveston Bay watershed. Regional examples, local case studies, field experiences, and partner presentations will be incorporated to highlight environmental issues, conservation initiatives, and stewardship opportunities relevant to each location. Participants will explore how land use, stormwater runoff, habitat management, and community actions influence watershed health while developing a broader understanding of how individual communities contribute to the health and resilience of the larger Galveston Bay system.

A primary goal of the project is to help educators move beyond awareness-based environmental activities and create meaningful stewardship opportunities for students and community members. Workshops will provide practical strategies for connecting learners with citizen science programs, watershed monitoring activities, habitat projects, and community stewardship initiatives. Participants will be introduced to established programs such as Texas Stream Team and 4-H Water Ambassadors and provided with guidance for developing and sustaining extracurricular environmental science clubs and other student-led stewardship programs. These activities provide opportunities for students to participate in authentic environmental investigations and stewardship efforts that extend beyond traditional awareness-based activities, creating meaningful connections between classroom learning, community engagement, and watershed protection. By equipping educators with tools to create authentic environmental learning experiences, the project will expand participation in community-based conservation efforts while fostering environmental literacy, leadership skills, and long-term stewardship.

Six workshops will be delivered during the project period, with two workshops hosted in each region. Each workshop will serve a minimum of 35 participants, resulting in at least 210 educators and community educators receiving professional development training. Participants will leave with educational resources, partner connections, and practical tools that can be incorporated into classrooms, informal education programs, extracurricular activities, and community outreach efforts.

WatershED Galveston Bay directly supports Public Participation and Education priorities identified by the Galveston Bay Estuary Program by connecting new audiences to existing conservation, restoration, monitoring, and stewardship efforts; increasing scientific literacy; providing workshops and networking opportunities that connect participants with technical expertise and community partners; and strengthening the environmental education workforce. Through educator professional development and regional partnerships, the project will build long-term capacity for environmental education and stewardship while fostering a broader understanding of the actions needed to protect and sustain Galveston Bay for future generations.

Project Urgency:

WatershED Galveston Bay builds upon an established educator professional development model currently being implemented by the Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI) that has demonstrated strong interest and demand among educators. Initial workshop offerings reached participant capacity prior to delivery and generated a waitlist, indicating a need for additional watershed-focused professional development opportunities. Funding during this cycle will allow TWRI to capitalize on existing momentum, partnerships, educational resources, evaluation tools, and lessons learned while adapting the program for the Galveston Bay watershed.

Timely implementation will enable educators to access locally relevant training, instructional resources, and partnership opportunities needed to support environmental literacy, citizen science, stewardship, and environmental workforce development initiatives within their schools and communities. The project will also connect educators and learners with ongoing conservation, restoration, and monitoring efforts occurring throughout the watershed, expanding the reach and impact of existing investments. Delaying implementation would postpone opportunities to build educator capacity, engage new audiences in

watershed protection efforts, and strengthen community stewardship throughout the Galveston Bay watershed.

Other Plans Implemented:

The proposed project directly supports implementation of the *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition*, particularly priorities related to public participation and education, environmental literacy, stewardship, community engagement, citizen science, and environmental workforce development. Through educator professional development, the project will increase the capacity of formal and informal educators to engage students and community members in watershed science, stewardship, and conservation activities while connecting new audiences to ongoing restoration, monitoring, and conservation initiatives throughout the Galveston Bay watershed.

The project also complements the *Texas Coastal Resiliency Master Plan* and *Texas Coastal Management Program* by increasing awareness of coastal and watershed resources, promoting stewardship behaviors, and strengthening community capacity to support resilient coastal ecosystems and communities. Workshop content will highlight local watershed planning efforts, habitat restoration projects, conservation initiatives, water quality monitoring programs, and stewardship opportunities occurring throughout the watershed, providing participants with locally relevant examples that can be incorporated into classroom instruction, extracurricular programs, informal education activities, and community engagement efforts.

Partners¹ and Their Roles:

Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI) will serve as the lead organization and be responsible for project management, workshop planning, partner coordination, curriculum development, workshop delivery, participant evaluation, and reporting.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service personnel and county-based partners will assist with educator recruitment, local coordination, and outreach efforts. Regional partners may include Educational Service Centers, local governments, conservation organizations, watershed organizations, and state and local natural resource agencies. These partners will provide technical expertise, local environmental knowledge, educational resources, field experiences, stewardship opportunities, and connections to existing conservation, restoration, and monitoring initiatives within the Galveston Bay watershed.

Additional partners will be identified during project planning to ensure workshops reflect regional priorities and provide participants with meaningful opportunities for continued engagement in stewardship and environmental education activities.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Workshops will be delivered across multiple regions of the Galveston Bay watershed to engage educators and community partners from a diverse range of communities, including smaller and underserved communities that may have limited access to watershed-focused professional development opportunities.

The project will also foster new partnerships among educators, local organizations, agencies, and community groups while connecting participants to existing conservation, restoration, monitoring, and stewardship initiatives throughout the watershed.

Is the project subject to Title VI requirements?

¹ If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted as an appendix with the application.

To meet federal nondiscrimination guidance and laws (Title VI), TCEQ requires information and services to be provided in languages other than English when significant numbers of beneficiaries are of limited English-speaking ability (LEP). If 5% or more of the population within your project area is LEP and share a common language, then you are required to provide outreach in the alternative language. For statewide projects, Spanish language outreach is required. As Title VI compliance could impact the project budget, please reach out to the primary subcommittee coordinator for this application with questions on determining applicability.

☒ Yes

☐ No

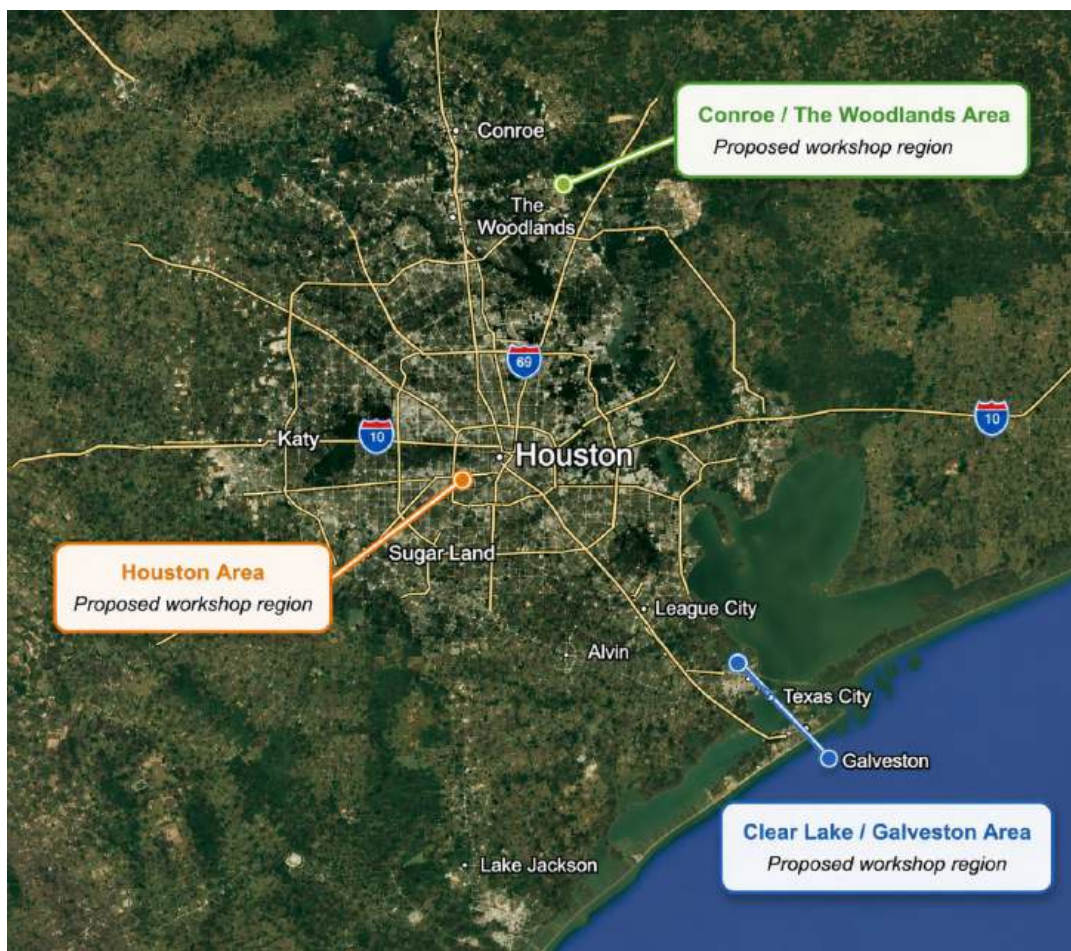
The project will serve educators and communities throughout the Galveston Bay watershed, which includes areas with significant Spanish-speaking populations. Outreach and recruitment materials will be developed in accordance with applicable Title VI requirements and TCEQ guidance to ensure equitable access to project information and participation opportunities.

Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

Location:

The project will serve the Galveston Bay watershed through educator professional development workshops delivered in three representative regions: the upper watershed, the greater Houston metropolitan area, and the coastal Galveston Bay region. Workshops will be designed to engage educators from communities throughout the watershed, including areas such as Liberty, Conroe, The Woodlands, Houston, Clear Lake, League City, Dickinson, Galveston, and surrounding communities. Regional delivery locations will improve accessibility while helping participants understand the connections between upstream activities, watershed health, and the long-term resilience of Galveston Bay and its coastal resources.

Projects Map



Source: Google Earth, accessed July 2026.

Figure 1. Proposed regional workshop delivery areas within the Galveston Bay watershed. Workshop locations are intended to provide accessible professional development opportunities for educators across northern, metropolitan, and coastal communities. Exact venues will be selected in coordination with project partners.

Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):

NA

SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

a. Direct Costs

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$70,699.00
Fringe Benefits (###%) ²	\$27,936.00
Travel	\$1,524.00
Supplies	\$7,000.00
Equipment	\$0.00

² If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Contractual	\$0.00
Construction	\$0.00
Other	\$18,180.00
Total Direct Cost	\$125,339.00

b. Indirect Costs³

Distribution Base Amount (<i>identify Base type below</i>)	\$ 123,839
Indirect Cost Rate for Reimbursement	54%
Total Indirect Costs	\$ 66,873.00

c. Maximum Authorized Reimbursement

Maximum Authorized Reimbursement (Direct and Indirect Costs)	\$ 192,212.00
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Indirect Cost Distribution Base. The Distribution Base above is (check one):

- ☐ direct salary/wages and fringe benefits
☒ modified total direct costs
☐ other direct cost Base

If other direct cost Base, identify:

The indirect cost rate is (check one):

☒ **Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.

☐ **De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of 15 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

☐ **Partial Reimbursement Rate** — a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

☐ **Other:** [Examples: De Minimis Rate with a base of direct salary and wages (less than or equal to actual indirect costs) or Provisional Rate. If this is a Provisional Rate, include the following language: Provisional Rate: The subsequent adjustment of the indirect cost rate is subject to the requirements of Article 9 of this (Cost Budget) section.]

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of budget total, identify the main constituents:

The Other category includes costs necessary to support workshop implementation, participant engagement, and project outreach. Expenses may include facility and meeting space rentals, printing and reproduction of educational materials, website hosting and maintenance, electronic communication and outreach services, workshop supplies, and instructional materials used during hands-on learning activities.

³ Please attach Indirect Cost Agreement as an appendix if applicable

Funds may also support the purchase of educational resources and demonstration equipment, such as watershed models and water quality monitoring supplies, to enhance participant learning and facilitate classroom and community-based stewardship activities.

Travel. In order to be reimbursable, travel costs must be specifically authorized in advance of the travel. Travel costs will be reimbursed only in the amount of actual costs, up to the maximum allowed by law for employees of the State of Texas at the time the cost is incurred.

Budget Categories. The Budget Categories above are representative of the items of cost found in TxGMS and 2 CFR Part 200, and have the definitions, requirements, and limitations found therein. Construction costs are not reimbursable without prior, specific written authorization from TCEQ.

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will post notification of the meeting's time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by **July 24, 2026 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:**

WSQ Subcommittee: Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov
NRU Subcommittee: Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov
PPE Subcommittee: Zoe.Gapayao@tceq.texas.gov
M&R Subcommittee: Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov
Programmatic Projects: Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov



System Office of Budgets and Accounting
THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

July 16, 2025

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chief Financial Officers
Academic Institutions and Service Agencies

FROM: Verna Fritsche, Director, Accounting *VF*

SUBJECT: FY2026 Budgeting for Fringe Benefits on Sponsored Agreements

For fiscal year 2026, please use the fringe benefit rates listed below when calculating fringe benefits for sponsored agreement budgeting purposes. This will not impact reimbursements from sponsored agreements, as fringe benefits will continue to be reimbursed at the actual dollar amount expensed, rather than the budgeted amount.

Beginning July 2000, the State is not required to pay Social Security and Medicare for students who meet certain criteria. For the purposes of fringe benefit budgeting, students that meet the criteria will be called FICA Exempt Students. For students who do not meet the criteria, choose the employee category that applies to them.

Fiscal Year 2026 Fringe Benefits for Budget Purposes

Employees Eligible for all Fringe Benefits	18.9% of direct salaries & wages PLUS A fixed monthly dollar amount for group insurance
Employees Not Eligible for Group Insurance & Retirement	10.7% of direct salaries & wages
FICA Exempt Students Eligible for Group Insurance	3.0% of direct salaries & wages PLUS A fixed monthly dollar amount for group insurance
But Not Eligible for Retirement	3.0% of direct salaries & wages
FICA Exempt Students Not Eligible for Group Insurance & Retirement	

Fiscal Year 2026 Fixed Monthly Dollar Amount for Group (Medical & Basic Life) Insurance

Classification of Employee	Fixed Monthly Insurance Amount
Faculty and Staff – Full Time (100%)	\$1,185
Faculty and Staff – Part Time (50% - 99.99%)	\$592
Insurance Eligible Student [b]	\$288
Combined (all employees) [a]	\$1,021



System Office of Budgets and Accounting
THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

- [a] If the classification of the employee who will be working on the sponsored agreement is known, use the above figure that applies to them. Otherwise, use the combined amount (\$1,021).
[b] The fixed monthly insurance amount (\$288) is based on half of the GIP state contributions.

Below are two tables, *for informational purposes only*. The first table is a breakdown of the fringe benefit percentages. The second table details State monthly contribution towards group (medical and basic life) insurance premiums for insurance eligible employees.

Breakdown of The Fringe Benefit Percentages

	TRS Eligible Employees[c]	ORP Eligible Employees [d]	Employees Not Eligible for a Retirement Plan	FICA Exempt Students
Social Security on first \$183,100 (employer portion) [e]	6.20%	6.20%	6.20%	NONE
Medicare [e]	1.45%	1.45%	1.45%	NONE
Workman's Comp. Ins. [g]	.48%	.48%	.48%	.48%
Unemployment Comp. Ins. [h]	.50%	.50%	.50%	.50%
Retirement Plan	8.25% [c]	8.50% [f]	NONE	NONE
Leave Termination [i]	2.05%	2.05%	2.05%	2.05%
TOTAL	18.93%	19.18%	10.68%	3.03%
Fringe Benefit Rate for Budgeting Purposes	18.9%	19.2%	10.7%	3.0%

- [c] Teacher Retirement System. The retirement contribution for employees participating in TRS will remain at 8.25% in FY2026.
[d] Optional Retirement Program.
[e] \$176,100 was effective 1/1/2025. Social Security is subject to change as determined by federal law. For calendar year 2026, employee wages subject to social security increased to an estimated \$183,100.
[f] Employees with an ORP start date on or before 8/31/1995 are provided the same contribution during FY2026 as they received during FY1995 (8.5%). The state contribution will remain at 6.6% in FY2026. Each member will supplement 1.9% to maintain the 8.5% contribution.
[g] WCI Member assessments range from .11% to .48% based on previous claim experience. See the assessment for each Member in the FY2026 budget instructions.
[h] UCI Member rates range from .01% to .50% based on previous claim experience. See the rate for each Member in the FY2026 budget instructions.
[i] Leave Termination Member assessments range from .20% to 2.05% based on previous years' experience. Each Member determines the rate to use for their institution/agency/health science center.



System Office of Budgets and Accounting

THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Texas AgriLife Extension Service Exception

If the employee has a civil service appointment and is in TRS, the rate is 18.47%

If the employee has a civil service appointment and is in ORP on or after 9/1/1995, the rate is 16.73%.

If the employee has a civil service appointment and was enrolled in ORP before 9/1/1995, the rate is 18.63%.

Monthly State Contributions to Group (Medical and Basic Life) Insurance Premiums

Coverage	Full Time (100%)	Part Time (75%-99.99%)	Part Time (50%-74.99%)
Employee Only	\$1,057.17	\$1,057.17	\$530.94
Employee and Spouse	\$1,338.21	\$1,338.21	\$671.46
Employee and Children	\$1,252.43	\$1,252.43	\$628.57
Employee and Family	\$1,452.67	\$1,452.67	\$728.69

These fringe benefit percentages and amounts listed in this letter are estimates derived from the average population of all Texas A&M members, if a member's values differ, the member could use the different amounts based upon their employee population. If different numbers are used, the methodology must be documented by the member.

Please call Verna Fritsche at (979) 458-6090 if you have any questions.



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Program Support Center
Financial Management Portfolio
Cost Allocation Services

1301 Young Street, Suite 1140
Dallas, TX 75202
PHONE: (214) 767-3261
FAX: (214) 767-3264
EMAIL: CAS-Dallas@psc.hhs.gov

September 2, 2022

Joseph Duron
Chief Administrative Officer
Texas A&M University – College Station
301 Tarrow, Suite 369
College Station, TX 77840-7896

Dear Mr. Duron:

A copy of an indirect cost rate agreement is being sent to you for signature. This provisional agreement reflects an understanding reached between your organization and a member of my staff concerning the rate(s) that may be used to support your claim for indirect costs on grants and contracts with the Federal Government.

Please have the agreement signed by an authorized representative of your organization and return to me by email, retaining the copy for your files. Our email address is CAS-Dallas@psc.hhs.gov. We will reproduce and distribute the agreement to the appropriate awarding organizations of the Federal Government for their use.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has requested that we reach an agreement with each institution on components for the published F&A cost rates. The attached form(s) are provided for that purpose. Please sign the form(s) and return them with an agreement.

An indirect cost proposal, together with the supporting information, is required to substantiate your claim for indirect cost under grants and contracts awarded by the Federal Government. Thus, your next proposal based on actual costs for the fiscal year ending 08/31/2025 is due in our office by 02/28/2026. Please submit your next proposal electronically via email to CAS-Dallas@psc.hhs.gov. ✓

Sincerely,

Arif M. Karim -S⁵
Digitally signed by Arif M. Karim -
Date: 2022.09.13 13:48:50 -05'00'

Arif Karim
Director
Division of Cost Allocation

Enclosures

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN A COPY via email to CAS-Dallas@psc.hhs.gov

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES RATE AGREEMENT

EIN: 1746000531A1

DATE:09/02/2022

ORGANIZATION:

Texas A & M University - College Station
200 Technology Way
A & M System Bldg, Suite 1281
College Station, TX 77845-3424

FILING REF.: The preceding
agreement was dated
08/07/2019

The rates approved in this agreement are for use on grants, contracts and other agreements with the Federal Government, subject to the conditions in Section III.

SECTION I: Facilities And Administrative Cost Rates

RATE TYPES: FIXED FINAL PROV. (PROVISIONAL) PRED. (PREDETERMINED)

EFFECTIVE PERIOD

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>	<u>RATE (%)</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>APPLICABLE TO</u>
PRED.	09/01/2022	08/31/2023	51.50	On Campus	Organized Research & Instruction
PRED.	09/01/2023	08/31/2025	52.50	On Campus	Organized Research & Instruction
PRED.	09/01/2025	08/31/2026	54.00	On Campus	Organized Research & Instruction
PRED.	09/01/2022	08/31/2026	32.00	On Campus	Other Sponsored Activities
PRED.	09/01/2022	08/31/2026	10.50	Off Campus	IPA Programs
PRED.	09/01/2022	08/31/2026	26.00	Off Campus	All Programs

ORGANIZATION: Texas A & M University - College Station

AGREEMENT DATE: 9/2/2022

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>	<u>RATE (%)</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>APPLICABLE TO</u>
PROV.	09/01/2026	Until Amended			Use same rates and conditions as those cited for fiscal year ending August 31, 2026.

*BASE

Modified total direct costs, consisting of all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel and up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards under the award). Modified total direct costs shall exclude equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs of off site facilities, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs and the portion of each subaward in excess of \$25,000. Other items may only be excluded when necessary to avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, and with the approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs.

ORGANIZATION: Texas A & M University - College Station

AGREEMENT DATE: 9/2/2022

SECTION II: SPECIAL REMARKS

TREATMENT OF FRINGE BENEFITS:

The fringe benefits are specifically identified to each employee and are charged individually as direct costs. The directly claimed fringe benefits are listed below.

TREATMENT OF PAID ABSENCES

Vacation, holiday, sick leave pay and other paid absences are included in salaries and wages and are claimed on grants, contracts and other agreements as part of the normal cost for salaries and wages. Separate claims are not made for the cost of these paid absences.

OFF-CAMPUS DEFINITION: OFF-CAMPUS DEFINITION: For all activities performed in facilities not owned by the institution and to which rent is directly allocated to the project(s) the off-campus rate will apply. Grants or contracts will not be subject to more than one F&A cost rate. If more than 50% of a project is performed off-campus, the off-campus rate will apply to the entire project.

FRINGE BENEFITS:

FICA, Retirement, Worker's Compensation, Life Insurance, Unemployment Insurance, Health Insurance, Accrued Compensated Absences

APPLICABILITY OF RATES: Texas A&M Research Foundation (EIN: 74-1238434), Texas Engineering Experiment Station (EIN: 74-1974733), Texas Engineering Extension Service (EIN: 74-2270626), Texas Agri-Life Research (FKA as Texas Agricultural Experiment Station) (EIN: 74-6000541), Texas Agri-Life Extension (FKA Texas cooperative Extension) (EIN: 74-6000537), Texas Transportation Institute, (EIN: 74-2270624), Texas A&M University at Galveston (EIN: 74-2125225), Texas A&M Health Science Center (EIN: 74-2907553), Texas Forest Service (EIN: 74-6014065), Texas A&M University System (EIN: 74-2648747), Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory (EIN: 26-3850570), Shared Services Center Commercialization (EIN: 74-2648747), Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), (EIN: 84-1876045).

Your next F&A proposal based on actual costs for the fiscal year ending 08/31/2025, is due in our office by 02/28/2026.

Equipment means tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds \$5,000.

ORGANIZATION: Texas A & M University - College Station

AGREEMENT DATE: 9/2/2022

SECTION III: GENERAL

A. LIMITATIONS:

The rates in this Agreement are subject to any statutory or administrative limitations and apply to a given grant, contract or other agreement only to the extent that funds are available. Acceptance of the rates is subject to the following conditions: (1) Only costs incurred by the organization were included in its facilities and administrative cost pools as finally accepted; such costs are legal obligations of the organization and are allowable under the governing cost principles; (2) The same costs that have been treated as facilities and administrative costs are not claimed as direct costs; (3) Similar types of costs have been accorded consistent accounting treatment; and (4) The information provided by the organization which was used to establish the rates is not later found to be materially incomplete or inaccurate by the Federal Government. In such situations the rate(s) would be subject to renegotiation at the discretion of the Federal Government.

B. ACCOUNTING CHANGES:

This Agreement is based on the accounting system purported by the organization to be in effect during the Agreement period. Changes to the method of accounting for costs which affect the amount of reimbursement resulting from the use of this Agreement require prior approval of the authorized representative of the cognizant agency. Such changes include, but are not limited to, changes in the charging of a particular type of cost from facilities and administrative to direct. Failure to obtain approval may result in cost disallowances.

C. FIXED RATES:

If a fixed rate is in this Agreement, it is based on an estimate of the costs for the period covered by the rate. When the actual costs for this period are determined, an adjustment will be made to a rate of a future year(s) to compensate for the difference between the costs used to establish the fixed rate and actual costs.

D. USE BY OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES:

The rates in this Agreement were approved in accordance with the authority in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 200 (2 CFR 200), and should be applied to grants, contracts and other agreements covered by 2 CFR 200, subject to any limitations in A above. The organization may provide copies of the Agreement to other Federal Agencies to give them early notification of the Agreement.

E. OTHER:

If any Federal contract, grant or other agreement is reimbursing facilities and administrative costs by a means other than the approved rate(s) in this Agreement, the organization should (1) credit such costs to the affected programs, and (2) apply the approved rate(s) to the appropriate base to identify the proper amount of facilities and administrative costs allocable to these programs.

BY THE INSTITUTION:

Texas A & M University - College Station

(INSTITUTION)

(SIGNATURE)

(NAME)

(TITLE)

(DATE)

ON BEHALF OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT:

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

(AGENCY)

(SIGNATURE)

Arif Karim

(NAME)

Director, Cost Allocation Services

(TITLE)

9/02/2022

(DATE) 6554

HHS REPRESENTATIVE:

Denise Shirlee

Telephone:

(214) 767-3261

COMPONENTS OF PUBLISHED F&A COST RATE

INSTITUTION: **Texas A&M University - College Station**

FY COVERED BY RATE: **September 1, 2022 - August 31, 2026**

APPLICABLE TO: **ORGANIZED RESEARCH**

<u>RATE COMPONENT:</u>	<u>ORGANIZED RESEARCH & INSTRUCTION FY 23 ON CAMPUS</u>	<u>ORGANIZED RESEARCH & INSTRUCTION FY 24-25 ON CAMPUS</u>	<u>ORGANIZED RESEARCH & INSTRUCTION FY 26 ON CAMPUS</u>	<u>OTHER SPONSORED ACTIVITIES FY 23-26 ON CAMPUS</u>	<u>ALL PROGRAMS FY 23-26 OFF CAMPUS</u>
Building Depreciation	6.6	6.9	7.3	1.0	
Equipment Depreciation	4.4	4.6	4.9	4.0	
Interest	2.7	2.8	3.0	0.1	
Operation & Maintenance	10.3	10.7	11.3	0.9	
Library	1.5	1.5	1.5		
Administration*	26.0	26.0	26.0	26.0	26.0
TOTAL	51.5	52.5	54.0	32.0	26.0

* Reflects provisions of Appendix III to Part 200 of Uniform Guidance—Indirect (F&A) Costs Identification and Assignment, and Rate Determination for Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs), C.B. dated December 26, 2013.

CONCURRENCE:

Texas A&M University - College Station
(Institution)

Joseph Duron
(Signature)

JOSEPH DURON
(Name)

Chief Administrative Officer
(Title)

9-14-2022
(Date)

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2028 Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **July 24, 2026**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for fiscal 2028 (FY 2028) Priority Area Actions that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for FY 2028 at the June 2026 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

Timeline of Proposals:

Task	Date Due
Release of Request for Proposals	June 22, 2026
Proposals Due	July 24, 2026
Send Proposals to Subcommittees Members for Review	August 12, 2026
Present Proposals to Subcommittees for Council Recommendation	September 2, 2026 (NRU and PPE) September 9, 2026 (M&R and WSQ)
Present Proposals to B&P Subcommittee for Final Recommendation	September 30, 2026
Present Proposals to Galveston Bay Council for Approval	October 14, 2026

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Primary Subcommittee: Public Participation and Education (PPE)
Secondary Subcommittee (if applicable): Water and Sediment Quality (WSQ)
Tertiary Subcommittee (if applicable): Choose an item.

Project Name:

Nature-based Stormwater Infrastructure Capacity Building Workshops for Lower Galveston Bay Region

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes ☒ No ☐

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

- ☐ Federal, State, or Local Government ☐ Council of Government ☒ Public ISDs or Universities
☐ Nonprofit ☐ Other*

[If other, please identify pass-through partner.]

Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:	DM2CDWR8LAG3
Vendor Identification Number (VIN) or Tax ID:	74-6000537

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Christie Taylor
Project Representative Phone	979-399-4009
Project Representative Email	Christina.taylor@ag.tamu.edu

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2027 – ending no later than May 31, 2030) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

September 1, 2027 – August 31, 2028

Amount Requested from GBEP:

[\$]88,031

Federal ☐ State ☐ No Preference ☒

Is the project scalable? ☐

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2028 (09/01/2027-08/31/2028)	\$88,031.00
FY 2029 (09/01/2028-08/31/2029)	\$0.00
FY 2030 (09/01/2029-05/31/2030)	\$0.00
Total	\$0.00

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

[\$]

Is this an estimate? ☐

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

[Please indicate source, amount, and status (secured, potential, etc.)]

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Subcommittee Priorities (Section Four) will be considered above others. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

The *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* Action Plans are found at:

<https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 1: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

NPS-1 ☒ NPS-2 ☒ NPS-3 ☒ NPS-4 ☒
PS-1 ☐ PS-2 ☐ PS-3 ☐
PHA-1 ☐ PHA-2 ☐ PHA-3 ☐ PHA-4 ☐ PHA-5 ☐

Plan Priority 2: Protect and Sustain Living Resources

HC-1 ☐ HC-2 ☐ HC-3 ☐
SC-1 ☐ SC-2 ☐
FWI-1 ☐ FWI-2 ☐ FWI-3 ☐

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

SPO-1 ☐ SPO-2 ☒ SPO-3 ☒ SPO-4 ☒
PEA-1 ☒ PEA-2 ☒ PEA-3 ☒

Plan Priority 4: Inform Science-based Decision Making

RES-1 ☐ RES-2 ☐ RES-3 ☐ RES-4 ☐
RES-5 ☐ RES-6 ☐ RES-7 ☐ RES-8 ☐
ACS-1 ☐ ACS-2 ☐ ACS-3 ☐

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

Workshops and Events (SPO2) is the priority item of the project. Working with subcommittee input to identify communities and areas in existing WBPs to host workshops that support implementation of nature -based stormwater infrastructure. Action areas SPO3 Support Regional Initiatives and SPO4 Local Government Outreach will be supported through the workshops by highlighting existing and new regional resources available for communities to begin implementation of BMPs.

Key Issues Engagement (PEA1) will be created by promoting nature-based stormwater infrastructure discussions in communities, identifying needs, and gaps in education and training in this area and providing an opportunity for training for both adults (PEA2) and high school students grades 9-12 (PEA3).

Supporting implementation of WBPs (NPS-1) and education on BMPs and their continued implementation and maintenance (NPS-3) will broadly support Plan Priority Two: Protect and Sustain Living Resources. Similarly, NPS education (NPS-2) requires coordination with the NRU and PPE subcommittees of the Council, specifically on Action SPO-3 Support Regional Initiatives included under Plan Priority Three: Engage Communities. Expanding understanding and use of BMPs in the region through workshops and speaking engagements (NPS-4) closely aligns with the Activities for Action SPO-2 Workshops and Events and will also be coordinated between the subcommittees.

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

Subcommittee Identified Priorities:

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- ☒ WSQ: Supporting management measures and watershed-based plans through adaptive management, workforce development, and technical assistance.
- ☐ WSQ: Improve knowledge and accessibility of pollution reporting tools to empower the community.
- ☐ WSQ: Implementation and/or evaluation of best management practices that address point and nonpoint source pollution.
- ☐ NRU: Habitat Acquisition.
- ☐ NRU: Enhancement of existing or ongoing restoration-conservation efforts. Special emphasis on:
 - ☐ Adaptive management for previously completed projects; and
 - ☐ Projects that may have lost/delayed funding from other federal sources.
- ☐ NRU: Benefit to native fish and wildlife, including federal and state listed species, Species of Greatest Conservation Need, or nongame wildlife.
- ☐ NRU: Project urgency: Project must be completed in next 24 months or opportunity is lost.
- ☒ PPE: Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed.
- ☒ PPE: Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects.
- ☒ PPE: Opportunities to host workshops/networking events to provide technical assistance for local leadership (local governments, MUDs, schoolboards, the public) on key topics.
- ☒ PPE: Conservation and environmental workforce development.
- ☐ M&R: Meaningful and effective monitoring of existing, past, and new projects (NRU: especially research and monitoring for diamondback terrapin and best management projects, WSQ, PPE).
- ☐ M&R: Baseline assessments for large-scale, man-made changes to Galveston Bay at an adequate timeline and spatial range to provide useful information.
- ☐ M&R: Assessment, Exposure, and Response to stressors, including but not limited to:
 - ☐ Species of greatest conservation need;
 - ☐ Contact recreation standards;
 - ☐ Environmental parameters;
 - ☐ Emerging contaminants; and
 - ☐ Legacy contaminants.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

The Workshop series will include multiple topics to support NPS education and implementations of watershed-based plans, the workshops included technical assistance on BMPs and workforce development for adults and 9-12 grade students in the area of nature-based stormwater infrastructure (NbSI). The field day component and youth education workshop will introduce new audiences to existing projects and practices while spotlight some of the work that has happened in the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed. Increased scientific literacy in this field will empower both adults and students make a lasting impact on the environment and their community. We need more people trained in how to design, install and maintenance all types of NbSI.

Does the Project align with any EPA Areas of Special Interest?

- ☐ Reduce Nutrient Pollution to Protect Water Quality and Public Health
- ☐ Make Investments that Address Coastal Resiliency
- ☐ Reduce Trash

[If yes, please summarize how the proposal addresses EPA Areas of Special Interest.]

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Disaster Assessment Recovery (DAR) Mitigation Branch Green Infrastructure for Texas (GIFT) program proposes hosting a minimum of 3 up to 5 workshops and events over the course of 12 months to increase knowledge and awareness of nature-based stormwater infrastructure practices for NPS reduction and community resilience.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

Target Locations: Counties and Communities in the Lower Galveston Bay Region to be determined with input from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program subcommittees.

Target Audience: Elected officials, decision makers, landowners (MUDs, school districts, hospitals, churches, parks departments, etc.), 9-12 grade youth development (students and teachers), and homeowners in the region.

Workshops may include a variety of topics including nonpoint source pollution abatement, nature-based stormwater infrastructure practices and design (including a new professional development training aligned with the National Green Infrastructure Certification Program (NGICP)), soil health, and career development. The goal of these workshops is to raise awareness of the importance of nature-based stormwater management in the region and build capacity by providing more career development opportunities. Field Day component will introduce new audiences to existing projects and practices in the region through in person visits to various project sites decided with input from Houston Galveston Area Council and other partners.

Scope of Work:

Task 1: Create new workshop material for NGICP PDH workshop presentation. Including presentation slides, handouts, agendas, professional development certificates, youth career development materials. Due December 2027

Task 2: Host a minimum of two (2) up to four (4) workshops in targeted region. Deliverables will include outreach materials, sign-in sheets, agendas, presentations, and photos of each event. Due July 2028

Task 3: Host 1-2 field day trips in the region to showcase demonstrate and introduce new stakeholders to existing practices and their functions in the community. Locations to be determined by subcommittees and WBP stakeholder groups interest. Due July 2028

Task 4: Reporting will be done on a quarterly basis starting in November 2027 and continuing through August 2028. Draft final report will be due end of July 2028 with the final report due August 31, 2028.

Project Urgency:

Building on momentum in the area. The youth career development workshops will be able to introduce more students to careers in the NbSI field than we can currently reach through the GIFT program extending our reach. Provide local PDH for NGICP professionals and promote more certified professionals in the field to better implement these types of BMPs.

Other Plans Implemented:

Workshops can include partners from other programs such as Clean Coast Texas to discuss projects in the areas and their services to local communities. Projects from the Coastal Resilience Master Plan that address NPS topics or implement nature based stormwater management can be included in the discussion of possible field day site visits.

Partners¹ and Their Roles:

TBD: We've talked to other organizations HGAC (to help promote workshops and help with the selection of field day locations) and UH Coastal Center as a possible host location site for workshops but we have not finalized any plans at this time.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

☐ Yes

☐ No

¹ If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted as an appendix with the application.

TBD by subcommittee and local partner discussions.

Is the project subject to Title VI requirements?

To meet federal nondiscrimination guidance and laws (Title VI), TCEQ requires information and services to be provided in languages other than English when significant numbers of beneficiaries are of limited English-speaking ability (LEP). If 5% or more of the population within your project area is LEP and share a common language, then you are required to provide outreach in the alternative language. For statewide projects, Spanish language outreach is required. As Title VI compliance could impact the project budget, please reach out to the primary subcommittee coordinator for this application with questions on determining applicability.

☐ Yes

☐ No

TBD once communities are selected.

Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

[degrees, minutes, and seconds format]

Location:

Target counties are Brazoria, Galveston, Harris, Fort Bend, Chambers, Montgomery locations to be determined.

Projects Map

[\[Insert Map Here or Attach as an Appendix if Applicable\]](#)

Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):

[\[Insert Here or Attach as an Appendix\]](#)

SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

a. Direct Costs

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$50,545.00
Fringe Benefits (18.9% plus 1272 ins.) ²	\$12,726.00
Travel	\$1,336.00
Supplies	\$1,665.00
Equipment	\$0.00
Contractual	\$0.00
Construction	\$0.00
Other	\$3,800.00
Total Direct Cost	\$0.00

b. Indirect Costs³

Distribution Base Amount (<i>identify Base type below</i>)	\$ 69,072
Indirect Cost Rate for Reimbursement	26%
Total Indirect Costs	\$ 17,959

c. Maximum Authorized Reimbursement

Maximum Authorized Reimbursement (Direct and Indirect Costs)	\$ 88,031
--	-----------

Indirect Cost Distribution Base. The Distribution Base above is (check one):

- ☐ direct salary/wages and fringe benefits
☒ modified total direct costs
☐ other direct cost Base

If other direct cost Base, identify:

The indirect cost rate is (check one):

☒ **Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.

☐ **De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of 15 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

☐ **Partial Reimbursement Rate** — a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes

² If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

³ Please attach Indirect Cost Agreement as an appendix if applicable

all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

☐ **Other:** [Examples: De Minimis Rate with a base of direct salary and wages (less than or equal to actual indirect costs) or Provisional Rate. If this is a Provisional Rate, include the following language: Provisional Rate: The subsequent adjustment of the indirect cost rate is subject to the requirements of Article 9 of this (Cost Budget) section.]

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of budget total, identify the main constituents:

[Description of costs associated with “Other” budget category.]

Travel. In order to be reimbursable, travel costs must be specifically authorized in advance of the travel. Travel costs will be reimbursed only in the amount of actual costs, up to the maximum allowed by law for employees of the State of Texas at the time the cost is incurred.

Budget Categories. The Budget Categories above are representative of the items of cost found in TxGMS and 2 CFR Part 200, and have the definitions, requirements, and limitations found therein. Construction costs are not reimbursable without prior, specific written authorization from TCEQ.

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will post notification of the meeting's time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by **July 24, 2026 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:**

WSQ Subcommittee: Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov
NRU Subcommittee: Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov
PPE Subcommittee: Zoe.Gapayao@tceq.texas.gov
M&R Subcommittee: Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov
Programmatic Projects: Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2028 Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **July 24, 2026**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for fiscal 2028 (FY 2028) Priority Area Actions that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for FY 2028 at the June 2026 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

Timeline of Proposals:

Task	Date Due
Release of Request for Proposals	June 22, 2026
Proposals Due	July 24, 2026
Send Proposals to Subcommittees Members for Review	August 12, 2026
Present Proposals to Subcommittees for Council Recommendation	September 2, 2026 (NRU and PPE) September 9, 2026 (M&R and WSQ)
Present Proposals to B&P Subcommittee for Final Recommendation	September 30, 2026
Present Proposals to Galveston Bay Council for Approval	October 14, 2026

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Primary Subcommittee: Public Participation and Education (PPE)
Secondary Subcommittee (if applicable): Choose an item.
Tertiary Subcommittee (if applicable): Choose an item.

Project Name:

Coordination of the River, Lakes, Bays 'N Bayous Trash Bash

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes ☒ No ☐

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

Houston-Galveston Area Council

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

☐ Federal, State, or Local Government ☒ Council of Government ☐ Public ISDs or Universities
☐ Nonprofit ☐ Other*

[If other, please identify pass-through partner.]

Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:	VZFJDZCKG8C7
Vendor Identification Number (VIN) or Tax ID:	1-74-155-7575

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Kendall Guidroz
Project Representative Phone	713-993-2469
Project Representative Email	Kendall.guidroz@h-gac.com

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2027 – ending no later than May 31, 2030) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

One year request for Trash Bash® 2028 (approximately September 1, 2027-August 31, 2028)

Amount Requested from GBEP:

\$15,011.40

Federal ☐ State ☐ No Preference ☒

Is the project scalable? ☐

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2028 (09/01/2027-08/31/2028)	\$15,011.40
FY 2029 (09/01/2028-08/31/2029)	\$0.00
FY 2030 (09/01/2029-05/31/2030)	\$0.00
Total	\$15,011.40

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

\$80,000.00+

Is this an estimate? ☒

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

Trash Bash® has multiple funding streams, including a TCEQ SEP, and cash and in-kind donations from individuals, businesses, and organizations, through the Texas Conservation Fund, combining to make the event possible each year. The amount of funding raised each year is dependent upon the state of the economy. The Houston-Galveston Area Council also provides additional logistical personnel support. In 2026, 16 sponsors donated \$5,000 in cash or in-kind donations.
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SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Subcommittee Priorities (Section Four) will be considered above others. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

The *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* Action Plans are found at:
<https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 1: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

NPS-1 ☐ NPS-2 ☒ NPS-3 ☐ NPS-4 ☐
PS-1 ☐ PS-2 ☐ PS-3 ☐
PHA-1 ☐ PHA-2 ☐ PHA-3 ☐ PHA-4 ☐ PHA-5 ☐

Plan Priority 2: Protect and Sustain Living Resources

HC-1 ☐ HC-2 ☐ HC-3 ☐
SC-1 ☐ SC-2 ☐
FWI-1 ☐ FWI-2 ☐ FWI-3 ☐

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

SPO-1 ☒ SPO-2 ☒ SPO-3 ☒ SPO-4 ☐
PEA-1 ☒ PEA-2 ☐ PEA-3 ☐

Plan Priority 4: Inform Science-based Decision Making

RES-1 ☐ RES-2 ☐ RES-3 ☐ RES-4 ☐
RES-5 ☐ RES-6 ☐ RES-7 ☐ RES-8 ☐
ACS-1 ☐ ACS-2 ☐ ACS-3 ☐

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

SPO-1 Stewardship Programs and Volunteer Opportunities: Trash Bash is one of the oldest and most well-known stewardship and volunteer programs in the region. When new Trash Bash® sites are proposed, several factors are considered before approval, including if the site would serve a new or underserved community.

SPO-2 Workshops and Events: GBEP has been a supporter of Trash Bash for at least the past 10 years, getting big returns in outreach and education for a minimal investment.

SPO-3 Support Regional Initiatives: Trash Bash GBEP funding includes maintenance of educational materials about nonpoint source pollution – used at Trash Bash and outreach events throughout the rest of the year, and available for loan out to local governments, schools, nonprofits and other entities. These materials identify and support other regional campaigns and have been translated into Spanish and Vietnamese. An instructional guide is available, and since 2017 these materials have been part of more than 120 events tracked by H-GAC and partners.

PEA-1 Key Issue Engagement: Trash Bash is an excellent resource for engaging the public on litter and illegal dumping, plastic pollution, and non-point sources of pollution. Engagement occurs through the cleanup as well as the interactive exhibits on pet waste, FOG, low-impact development, and litter prevention. The goal is to have the cleanup, combined with the education, better instill the information about how small actions can have a positive impact on the health of local waterways and Galveston Bay.

PEA-2 Adult Education and NPS-2 Nonpoint Source Education: Proposed activities for the 2028 Trash Bash coordination also include engaging volunteers in additional data gathering to generate event- and site-specific educational materials to share after the event with direct actions volunteers can take to reduce most common litter items removed at the event. This will expand on lessons provided at the event using the educational exhibits.

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

Subcommittee Identified Priorities:

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- ☐ WSO: Supporting management measures and watershed-based plans through adaptive management, workforce development, and technical assistance.
- ☐ WSO: Improve knowledge and accessibility of pollution reporting tools to empower the community.
- ☐ WSO: Implementation and/or evaluation of best management practices that address point and nonpoint source pollution.
- ☐ NRU: Habitat Acquisition.
- ☐ NRU: Enhancement of existing or ongoing restoration-conservation efforts. Special emphasis on:
 - ☐ Adaptive management for previously completed projects; and
 - ☐ Projects that may have lost/delayed funding from other federal sources.
- ☐ NRU: Benefit to native fish and wildlife, including federal and state listed species, Species of Greatest Conservation Need, or nongame wildlife.
- ☐ NRU: Project urgency: Project must be completed in next 24 months or opportunity is lost.
- ☐ PPE: Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed.
- ☒ PPE: Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects.
- ☐ PPE: Opportunities to host workshops/networking events to provide technical assistance for local leadership (local governments, MUDs, schoolboards, the public) on key topics.
- ☐ PPE: Conservation and environmental workforce development.
- ☐ M&R: Meaningful and effective monitoring of existing, past, and new projects (NRU: especially research and monitoring for diamondback terrapin and best management projects, WSO, PPE).
- ☐ M&R: Baseline assessments for large-scale, man-made changes to Galveston Bay at an adequate timeline and spatial range to provide useful information.
- ☐ M&R: Assessment, Exposure, and Response to stressors, including but not limited to:
 - ☐ Species of greatest conservation need;
 - ☐ Contact recreation standards;
 - ☐ Environmental parameters;
 - ☐ Emerging contaminants; and
 - ☐ Legacy contaminants.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

This proposal will help Trash Bash® 2028 provide better educational information for its volunteers and engage interested volunteers in more in-depth data collection at the event. Using the data collected, and building on the lessons provided by the already created educational exhibits, a digital report or resource will be generated and sent to all event registrants and shared on social media and the event website. The resource will highlight specific actions volunteers can take to address litter items found to be prevalent during the cleanup and local resources for action or further education.

Does the Project align with any EPA Areas of Special Interest?

- ☐ Reduce Nutrient Pollution to Protect Water Quality and Public Health
- ☐ Make Investments that Address Coastal Resiliency
- ☒ Reduce Trash

Trash Bash helps to reduce litter in two main ways. The first is the litter cleanup event itself which takes place usually at 14-16 sites across the lower Galveston Bay watershed. Thousands of volunteers help to remove trash from in and around local waterways, on average between 30-50 tons of trash each year. The second way the event helps to reduce trash is through education. One of the interactive games showcased at trash bash lets participants “fish” for common litter items and discuss how the litter could have been prevented. Key topics include recycling right and reducing and reusing items to reduce the generation of trash.

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

The River, Lakes, Bays 'N Bayous Trash Bash® - the largest, single day volunteer-based waterway cleanup - is set to celebrate its 34th annual event in 2028. This proposal seeks support for coordination of the event to allow for continuation of its award-winning cleanup efforts in the lower Galveston Bay watershed and its efforts to introduce educational resources to more stakeholders.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

The River, Lakes, Bays 'N Bayous Trash Bash® will celebrate its 34th annual litter cleanup event in March 2028. Consistent and responsive coordination and organizational support has been vital to the event's longevity and growth. There are a lot of moving parts to both the coordination and implementation of the event. The Texas Conservation Fund manages Trash Bash® and the Gulf Coast Authority provides leadership and financial management. A steering committee made up of volunteers representing industries and corporations, nonprofit and civic organizations, local government and school districts, and private citizens interested in cleaner waterways helps to make decisions and manage individual sites. Thousands of volunteers of all ages come out each year (some of them every year) to donate their time and effort to removing trash from the Galveston Bay watershed. The Houston-Galveston Area Council helps to bring all of these efforts together by providing regional coordination and planning for all aspects of Trash Bash®.

The H-GAC regional coordinator handles a variety of tasks to implement Trash Bash® and although the peak planning time is September through April, the coordination of the event is a year-round process. The ongoing planning, maintenance and coordination tasks include (percentages indicate an estimation of the time required for each category):

- Working with site coordinators - 20%
- Outreach, public relations, and volunteer retention - 20%
- Working with vendors, ordering supplies, and researching options - 20%
- Planning and executing event and committee meetings - 10%
- Miscellaneous administrative duties - 10%
- Working with sponsors - 10%
- Program inventory and maintenance, including educational displays - 10%

Supporting the personnel costs of the H-GAC regional coordinator for Trash Bash® helps ensure continuity in the coordination process and consistency from year to year for the fun, family-friendly, and meaningful litter cleanup event that volunteers are used to. However, Trash Bash® is more than just a litter cleanup event. The mission of Trash Bash® is "to promote environmental stewardship of our watershed through public education by utilizing hands-on educational tools and by developing partnerships between environmental, government, and private organizations." Promoting environmental stewardship goes beyond a single-day event and requires behavior changes beyond not littering or illegal dumping to help protect a clean water future. To foster these behaviors, Trash Bash® has expanded over the years to include education and interactive exhibits, posters, and pledges at every cleanup site. The educational items promote everyday changes volunteers can make at home to improve water quality: picking up pet waste; disposal of fats, oils, and grease; preventing common sources of pollution and reducing runoff; and proper disposal for commonly littered items. The educational signage and give away items also highlight other regional campaigns like Cease the Grease.

Previous TCEQ.GBEP funding has allowed Trash Bash® to expand these efforts further by translating the educational posters and brochures used at events into Spanish and Vietnamese and creating a streamlined user guide for the educational materials that is now available in English and Spanish. This proposal would assist with the maintenance or repair of these items as necessary.

In addition, to expand the educational engagement with Trash Bash® volunteers, H-GAC proposes to train interested volunteers in the STOP method utilized by the Keep Texas Beautiful Texas Litter Database and use the extra data collected to create a digital education report/resource to send to all registrants. The report will combine the overall event results and extra STOP data and expand on the lessons from the educational exhibits at Trash Bash® to highlight specific steps volunteers can take to reduce litter and waste generation.

Project Urgency:

Having funding dedicated to helping offset the year-round coordination of Trash Bash® is vital to the continuity of the event, and maintenance and expansion of event education and outreach. While Texas Conservation Fund works annually to secure funding for the event, most of the funds go directly into the events costs and logistics, and the sources are heavily dependent on the state of the economy. The requested funds are the primary source of funding for additional educational efforts and materials.

Other Plans Implemented:

N/A

Partners¹ and Their Roles:

Trash Bash coordination efforts under this project would be completed by the Houston-Galveston Area Council. However, the event itself has many partners who serve to provide cleanup site coordination and in-kind services. These partners include nonprofits, city and county governments, and industry staff.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

☐ Yes

☒ No

[TBD.]

Is the project subject to Title VI requirements?

To meet federal nondiscrimination guidance and laws (Title VI), TCEQ requires information and services to be provided in languages other than English when significant numbers of beneficiaries are of limited English-speaking ability (LEP). If 5% or more of the population within your project area is LEP and share a common language, then you are required to provide outreach in the alternative language. For statewide projects, Spanish language outreach is required. As Title VI compliance could impact the project budget, please reach out to the primary subcommittee coordinator for this application with questions on determining applicability.

☒ Yes

☐ No

The educational materials have previously been translated into both Spanish and Vietnamese, and the educational guide is also available in Spanish.

Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

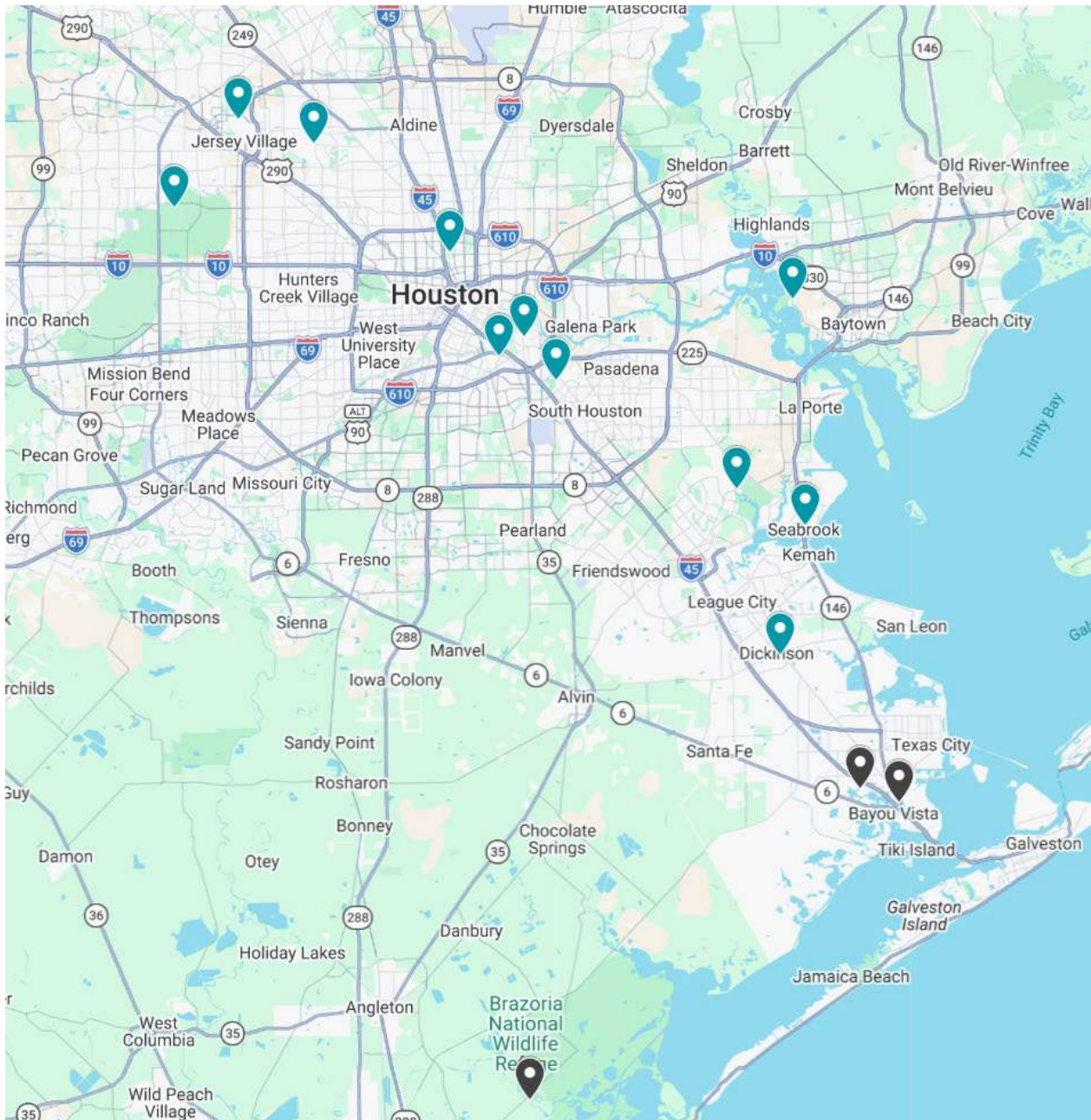
[degrees, minutes, and seconds format]

Location:

Trash Bash® has multiple cleanup locations across the Galveston Bay watershed. In 2026 there were 11 locations (see map below). The sites range from urban, to suburban, to rural, drawing volunteers from six counties. Sites are located along bayous, rivers, bays, and lakes. The only areas Trash Bash® does not clean are beaches. Many sites have satellite locations that are not shown on the map.

Projects Map

¹ If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted as an appendix with the application.



Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):

[\[Insert Here or Attach as an Appendix\]](#)

SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

a. Direct Costs

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$6,281.19
Fringe Benefits (46.94%) ²	\$2,948.39
Travel	\$325.00
Supplies	\$300.00
Equipment	\$0.00
Contractual	\$0.00
Construction	\$0.00
Other	\$2,319.65
Total Direct Cost	\$12,174.23

b. Indirect Costs³

Distribution Base Amount (<i>identify Base type below</i>)	\$9,229.58
Indirect Cost Rate for Reimbursement	30.74%
Total Indirect Costs	\$2,837.17

c. Maximum Authorized Reimbursement

Maximum Authorized Reimbursement (Direct and Indirect Costs)	\$15,011.40
--	-------------

Indirect Cost Distribution Base. The Distribution Base above is (check one):

- ☒ direct salary/wages and fringe benefits
☐ modified total direct costs
☐ other direct cost Base

If other direct cost Base, identify:

The indirect cost rate is (check one):

☒ **Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.

☐ **De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of 15 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

☐ **Partial Reimbursement Rate** — a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes

² If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

³ Please attach Indirect Cost Agreement as an appendix if applicable

all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

☐ **Other:** [Examples: De Minimis Rate with a base of direct salary and wages (less than or equal to actual indirect costs) or Provisional Rate. If this is a Provisional Rate, include the following language: Provisional Rate: The subsequent adjustment of the indirect cost rate is subject to the requirements of Article 9 of this (Cost Budget) section.]

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of budget total, identify the main constituents:

Other includes funding for maintenance on educational displays, as well as administrative costs like rent.
--

Travel. In order to be reimbursable, travel costs must be specifically authorized in advance of the travel. Travel costs will be reimbursed only in the amount of actual costs, up to the maximum allowed by law for employees of the State of Texas at the time the cost is incurred.

Budget Categories. The Budget Categories above are representative of the items of cost found in TxGMS and 2 CFR Part 200, and have the definitions, requirements, and limitations found therein. Construction costs are not reimbursable without prior, specific written authorization from TCEQ.

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will post notification of the meeting's time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by **July 24, 2026 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:**

WSQ Subcommittee: Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov
NRU Subcommittee: Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov
PPE Subcommittee: Zoe.Gapayao@tceq.texas.gov
M&R Subcommittee: Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov
Programmatic Projects: Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2028 Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **July 24, 2026**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for fiscal 2028 (FY 2028) Priority Area Actions that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for FY 2028 at the June 2026 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

Timeline of Proposals:

Task	Date Due
Release of Request for Proposals	June 22, 2026
Proposals Due	July 24, 2026
Send Proposals to Subcommittees Members for Review	August 12, 2026
Present Proposals to Subcommittees for Council Recommendation	September 2, 2026 (NRU and PPE) September 9, 2026 (M&R and WSQ)
Present Proposals to B&P Subcommittee for Final Recommendation	September 30, 2026
Present Proposals to Galveston Bay Council for Approval	October 14, 2026

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Primary Subcommittee: Public Participation and Education (PPE)
Secondary Subcommittee (if applicable): Choose an item.
Tertiary Subcommittee (if applicable): Choose an item.

Project Name:

Community Outreach on KPRC Take 2

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes ☒ No ☐

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

University of Houston-Clear Lake

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

- ☐ Federal, State, or Local Government ☐ Council of Government ☒ Public ISDs or Universities
☐ Nonprofit ☐ Other*

Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:	RD74AUNCTZJ1
Vendor Identification Number (VIN) or Tax ID:	State: 3-75975-9759-2; Federal: 74-6001399

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Wendy Reistle
Project Representative Phone	281-283-3045
Project Representative Email	reistle@uhcl.edu

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2027 – ending no later than May 31, 2030) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

September 1, 2027 – August 31, 2029

Amount Requested from GBEP:

Federal ☐ State ☐ No Preference ☒

Is the project scalable? ☒

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2028 (09/01/2027-08/31/2028)	\$129,252
FY 2029 (09/01/2028-08/31/2029)	\$0
FY 2030 (09/01/2029-05/31/2030)	\$0
Total	\$129,252

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

s275,907

Is this an estimate? ☐

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

The proposed project builds upon the experience gained during the original GBEP funded Outreach Campaign in FY25-FY26 (\$146,655). Costs for the proposed project have been minimized based on UHCL staff expertise and lessons learned in the first project.

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Subcommittee Priorities (Section Four) will be considered above others. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

The *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* Action Plans are found at:
<https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 1: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

NPS-1 ☐ NPS-2 ☐ NPS-3 ☐ NPS-4 ☐
PS-1 ☐ PS-2 ☐ PS-3 ☐
PHA-1 ☐ PHA-2 ☐ PHA-3 ☐ PHA-4 ☐ PHA-5 ☐

Plan Priority 2: Protect and Sustain Living Resources

HC-1 ☐ HC-2 ☐ HC-3 ☐
SC-1 ☐ SC-2 ☐
FWI-1 ☐ FWI-2 ☐ FWI-3 ☐

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

SPO-1 ☒ SPO-2 ☐ SPO-3 ☒ SPO-4 ☐
PEA-1 ☒ PEA-2 ☒ PEA-3 ☒

Plan Priority 4: Inform Science-based Decision Making

RES-1 ☐ RES-2 ☐ RES-3 ☐ RES-4 ☐
RES-5 ☐ RES-6 ☐ RES-7 ☐ RES-8 ☐
ACS-1 ☐ ACS-2 ☐ ACS-3 ☐

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

SPO-1 Stewardship Programs and Volunteer Opportunities:

- Promotes and supports stewardship activities and volunteer opportunities associated with featured GBEP projects.
- Directs audiences to organizations and events that support conservation of Galveston Bay resources.
- Increases participation in community-based environmental initiatives.

SPO-3 Support Regional Initiatives:

- Amplifies GBEP and partner project messaging across the Houston DMA.
- Highlight regional conservation priorities and successful restoration, education, research, and water quality projects.
- Supports coordinated outreach efforts among multiple stakeholders and project partners.

PEA-1 Key Issue Engagement:

- Increase public awareness and understanding of key environmental issues affecting the Galveston Bay watershed through targeted television, digital, streaming, and social media outreach.
- Highlight priority topics such as habitat conservation, water quality, freshwater inflows, marine debris, ecosystem restoration, climate resilience, and community stewardship through featured GBEP projects and related campaign messaging.
- Connect residents with reliable information, local resources, and opportunities to take action in support of Galveston Bay conservation efforts.
- Delivery of targeted messaging to underserved and underrepresented communities to broaden engagement and encourage participation in environmental decision-making and stewardship activities

PEA-2 Adult Education:

- Deliver conservation and stewardship messaging through television segments, digital content, commercials, and online resources targeted to adult audiences.
- Increase public understanding of Galveston Bay issues, conservation practices, and opportunities for involvement.

PEA-3 Kindergarten to 12th Grade (K-12) Education Efforts:

- Showcase projects and educational programs that provide learning opportunities for students and families.

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

Subcommittee Identified Priorities:

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- ☐ WSQ: Supporting management measures and watershed-based plans through adaptive management, workforce development, and technical assistance.
- ☐ WSQ: Improve knowledge and accessibility of pollution reporting tools to empower the community.
- ☐ WSQ: Implementation and/or evaluation of best management practices that address point and nonpoint source pollution.
- ☐ NRU: Habitat Acquisition.
- ☐ NRU: Enhancement of existing or ongoing restoration-conservation efforts. Special emphasis on:
 - ☐ Adaptive management for previously completed projects; and
 - ☐ Projects that may have lost/delayed funding from other federal sources.
- ☐ NRU: Benefit to native fish and wildlife, including federal and state listed species, Species of Greatest Conservation Need, or nongame wildlife.
- ☐ NRU: Project urgency: Project must be completed in next 24 months or opportunity is lost.
- ☒ PPE: Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed.
- ☒ PPE: Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects.
- ☐ PPE: Opportunities to host workshops/networking events to provide technical assistance for local leadership (local governments, MUDs, schoolboards, the public) on key topics.
- ☐ PPE: Conservation and environmental workforce development.
- ☐ M&R: Meaningful and effective monitoring of existing, past, and new projects (NRU: especially research and monitoring for diamondback terrapin and best management projects, WSQ, PPE).
- ☐ M&R: Baseline assessments for large-scale, man-made changes to Galveston Bay at an adequate timeline and spatial range to provide useful information.
- ☐ M&R: Assessment, Exposure, and Response to stressors, including but not limited to:
 - ☐ Species of greatest conservation need;
 - ☐ Contact recreation standards;
 - ☐ Environmental parameters;
 - ☐ Emerging contaminants; and
 - ☐ Legacy contaminants.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

PPE 1: Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed

This project directly supports the PPE priority of connecting new audiences to existing and completed watershed projects by leveraging KPRC-TV's extensive broadcast, streaming, digital, and social media platforms to showcase GBEP-funded conservation, restoration, research, and education initiatives. Through *Houston Life* segments, television commercials, digital advertising, and online content, the project will introduce residents throughout the Houston DMA, including underserved and underrepresented communities, to successful projects that have improved habitat, water quality, conservation awareness, and stewardship throughout the Galveston Bay watershed. By highlighting project outcomes, environmental benefits, and opportunities for public involvement, the campaign will increase awareness of GBEP investments and inspire greater community engagement in protecting Galveston Bay and its natural resources.

PPE 2: Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects.

This project supports the PPE priority of empowering K-12 students and adults to positively impact their local environment by increasing awareness, knowledge, and understanding of environmental issues affecting the Galveston Bay watershed. Through *Houston Life* segments, television commercials, digital advertising, and social media outreach, KPRC-TV and UHCL will showcase GBEP-funded projects that demonstrate science-based solutions to conservation, habitat restoration, water quality protection, and sustainability challenges. The campaign will translate complex environmental topics into accessible and engaging content, helping audiences better understand the connection between environmental stewardship and the health of their communities. By highlighting opportunities for volunteerism, citizen engagement, conservation activities, and educational programs, the project will encourage residents of all ages to apply their knowledge through community action and stewardship efforts that support the long-term protection of Galveston Bay.

Does the Project align with any EPA Areas of Special Interest?

- ☐ Reduce Nutrient Pollution to Protect Water Quality and Public Health
- ☐ Make Investments that Address Coastal Resiliency
- ☐ Reduce Trash

N/A

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

KPRC-TV, in partnership with the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), UHCL, and other stakeholders, proposes a comprehensive media campaign to increase public awareness, education, and stewardship of the Galveston Bay watershed. Using its broadcast, digital, streaming, social media, and targeted advertising platforms, KPRC-TV will highlight up to five GBEP-funded projects and deliver conservation messaging across the Houston region, including underserved communities. Each featured project will receive a *Houston Life* segment, a 30-second commercial, and digital banner advertising, with content distributed through television, streaming, web, and YouTube channels. UHCL will support the campaign through social media promotion, partner outreach, and performance tracking.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

KPRC-TV's more than 75-year history of service to the Houston area reflects a sustained commitment to addressing community needs through education, outreach, and public engagement. Building on this legacy, the proposed initiative seeks to leverage KPRC-TV's broad reach and trusted presence to advance environmental awareness and stewardship throughout the Galveston Bay watershed.

As an environmental communications partner, KPRC-TV has the capacity to amplify conservation, stewardship, and educational messaging across the entire Houston Designated Market Area (DMA). Leveraging its extensive audience reach and trusted community presence, KPRC-TV also creates tailored outreach campaigns designed to meet the specific objectives of environmental organizations, public agencies, and community partners.

In partnership with the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), the University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL), and other project partners, KPRC-TV will leverage the power and reach of its broadcast, digital, and social media platforms to elevate related project messaging throughout the Houston Designated Market Area (DMA). This comprehensive communications strategy will raise public awareness of Galveston Bay conservation issues while delivering targeted outreach to underserved and underrepresented communities within the watershed.

As an environmental communications partner, KPRC-TV offers both broad regional reach and the ability to develop customized outreach campaigns tailored to stakeholder needs and community priorities. Through a strategic mix of television programming, digital advertising, social media content, and other targeted media assets, KPRC-TV will educate and engage residents across Houston and the surrounding region on the importance of protecting and sustaining the bay's living resources. By increasing awareness, promoting stewardship behaviors, and connecting audiences with opportunities for involvement, the campaign will support Galveston Bay Plans, 2nd Edition goals and objectives. Long term goals for conservation, education, informed science-based decision making, and community engagement throughout the Galveston Bay watershed.

This project will identify up to five GBEP projects across all four subcommittees to feature on KPRC's broadcast platforms. Each of the five identified projects will consist of three components: a *Houston Life* segment (M-F 1-2 pm), a 30-second commercial, and banner ads. Segments re-air on KPRC 2+ at 10:35 pm. The segments will then be placed on the *Houston Life* page within the click2houston.com website. They will also be published on *Houston Life*'s YouTube channel.

Broadcast platforms include but are not limited to the main channel, KPRC-TV; KPRC 2+; the digital streaming channel; KPRC's YouTube channel; plus, targeted zip-code video delivered via live news streaming and pre-roll messaging.

UHCL will complement and amplify KPRC-TV's outreach efforts by promoting featured projects and campaign messaging across its social media platforms and partner networks. UHCL will track social media performance metrics, including reach, engagement, and audience interactions. Together, UHCL and KPRC-TV will broaden public awareness of conservation initiatives and encourage stewardship throughout the Galveston Bay watershed.

This proposal builds on the success of a previously funded initiative, Community Outreach on KPRC, which demonstrated the effectiveness of leveraging local media to increase public awareness of environmental conservation efforts within the Galveston Bay watershed. Through this partnership, KPRC-TV highlighted projects that advanced habitat conservation, environmental stewardship, and community engagement, reaching audiences throughout the Houston Designated Market Area.

In 2025, seven projects were featured on *Houston Life*, providing project partners with a valuable platform to showcase their work, communicate environmental benefits, and encourage public participation. These segments increased visibility for local conservation initiatives while helping residents better understand the importance of protecting Galveston Bay and its natural resources.

In 2025, the following seven projects were featured on *Houston Life*:

- Public Participation and Education (PPE)
 - *Trash Bash*[®]
 - *Drought and Water Conservation Outreach Campaign*
- Natural Resources Uses (NRU)
 - *The 9th Additions to the Coastal Heritage Preserve*
 - *White Oak Bayou Riparian Restoration Project*
- Monitoring and Research (M&R)
 - *Oyster Shell Recycling/Tracking Perkinsus Marinus (Dermo) Infection in Sun-Cured Oysters*
- Water and Sediment Quality (WSQ)
 - *Targeted Microplastics Monitoring in the Waters of Galveston Bay and its Tributaries*
- Federal Fiscal 2022 - 2023 Projects
 - *Stopping Plastic and Litter Along Shorelines (SPLASH)*

Building on these accomplishments, the proposed project will expand outreach efforts through enhanced broadcast, digital, and social media engagement. By continuing the successful collaboration among GBEP, UHCL, KPRC-TV, and project stakeholders, this initiative will further increase awareness of conservation priorities, highlight project successes, and foster stewardship throughout the Galveston Bay watershed.

Project Urgency:

Funding is needed to continue a proven outreach partnership that effectively connects the public with GBEP-funded projects and Galveston Bay conservation priorities. This project leverages KPRC-TV's unique regional reach to increase environmental awareness, promote stewardship opportunities, and engage new and underserved audiences across the watershed. Without continued funding, opportunities to highlight project successes, increase scientific literacy, and maximize the public impact of GBEP investments would be significantly reduced.

Other Plans Implemented:

This project supports the Texas Coastal Management Program by promoting public awareness, stewardship, and conservation of coastal resources within the Galveston Bay watershed.

Partners¹ and Their Roles:

University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL) - Lead implementer and project coordinator. UHCL will manage project administration, coordinate with GBEP and featured projects, promote campaign content through its social media and partner networks, and track outreach metrics.

KPRC-TV - Communications and media partner. KPRC-TV will develop and deliver the outreach campaign through broadcast, streaming, digital, and social media platforms, including *Houston Life* segments, television commercials, digital advertising, and targeted messaging to audiences throughout the Houston DMA.

Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP) - Program partner providing project guidance and coordination. GBEP will assist with identifying featured projects and ensuring campaign messaging supports Galveston Bay Plan priorities and conservation goals.

Featured GBEP Project Partners - Participating organizations representing PPE, NRU, M&R, and WSQ projects. Partners will provide project information, subject matter expertise, and participation in media features to help communicate project outcomes, environmental benefits, and stewardship opportunities to the public.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

☒ Yes

☐ No

The project reaches beyond traditional environmental audiences and gives visibility to a variety of GBEP-funded organizations, including smaller nonprofits, community groups, local governments, schools, and grassroots initiatives that may not otherwise have access to large-scale media outreach.

Is the project subject to Title VI requirements?

To meet federal nondiscrimination guidance and laws (Title VI), TCEQ requires information and services to be provided in languages other than English when significant numbers of beneficiaries are of limited English-speaking ability (LEP). If 5% or more of the population within your project area is LEP and share a common language, then you are required to provide outreach in the alternative language. For statewide projects, Spanish language outreach is required. As Title VI compliance could impact the project budget, please reach out to the primary subcommittee coordinator for this application with questions on determining applicability.

☐ Yes

☒ No

N/A

Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

N/A

Location:

KPRC-TV serves the greater Harris County and Houston Area. Projects selected for highlighting will represent funded projects through GBEP occurring within the lower Galveston Bay watershed.

¹ If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted as an appendix with the application.

Projects Map

Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):

[\[Insert Here or Attach as an Appendix\]](#)

SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

a. Direct Costs

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$19,229
Fringe Benefits (36%) ²	\$12,710
Travel	\$700
Supplies	\$0
Equipment	\$0
Contractual	\$93,500
Construction	\$0
Other	\$168
Total Direct Cost	\$120,873

b. Indirect Costs³

Distribution Base Amount (<i>identify Base type below</i>)	\$ 52,373
Indirect Cost Rate for Reimbursement	% 16
Total Indirect Costs	\$ 8,380

c. Maximum Authorized Reimbursement

Maximum Authorized Reimbursement (Direct and Indirect Costs)	\$ 129,252
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Indirect Cost Distribution Base. The Distribution Base above is (check one):

- ☐ direct salary/wages and fringe benefits
☒ modified total direct costs
☐ other direct cost Base

If other direct cost Base, identify:

The indirect cost rate is (check one):

☒ **Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.

² If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

³ Please attach Indirect Cost Agreement as an appendix if applicable

☐ **De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of 15 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

☐ **Partial Reimbursement Rate** — a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

☐ **Other:** [Examples: De Minimis Rate with a base of direct salary and wages (less than or equal to actual indirect costs) or Provisional Rate. If this is a Provisional Rate, include the following language: Provisional Rate: The subsequent adjustment of the indirect cost rate is subject to the requirements of Article 9 of this (Cost Budget) section.]

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of budget total, identify the main constituents:

N/A

Travel. In order to be reimbursable, travel costs must be specifically authorized in advance of the travel. Travel costs will be reimbursed only in the amount of actual costs, up to the maximum allowed by law for employees of the State of Texas at the time the cost is incurred.

Budget Categories. The Budget Categories above are representative of the items of cost found in TxGMS and 2 CFR Part 200, and have the definitions, requirements, and limitations found therein. Construction costs are not reimbursable without prior, specific written authorization from TCEQ.

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will post notification of the meeting’s time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by **July 24, 2026 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:**

WSQ Subcommittee: Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov
NRU Subcommittee: Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov
PPE Subcommittee: Zoe.Gapayao@tceq.texas.gov
M&R Subcommittee: Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov
Programmatic Projects: Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES RATE AGREEMENT

EIN: 1741792163

ORGANIZATION:

University of Houston at Clear Lake
2700 Bay Area Blvd.
Houston, TX 77058-1098

Date: 05/21/2024

FILING REF.: The preceding
agreement was dated
03/23/2021

The rates approved in this agreement are for use on grants, contracts and other agreements with the Federal Government, subject to the conditions in Section III.

SECTION I: Facilities And Administrative Cost Rates

RATE TYPES:		FIXED	FINAL	PROV. (PROVISIONAL)	PRED. (PREDETERMINED)
<u>EFFECTIVE PERIOD</u>					
<u>TYPE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>	<u>RATE(%)</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>APPLICABLE TO</u>
PRED.	09/01/2020	08/31/2024	48.00	On Campus	All Programs
PRED.	09/01/2020	08/31/2024	22.00	Off Campus	All Programs
PRED.	09/01/2024	08/31/2028	50.00	On Campus	All Programs
PRED.	09/01/2024	08/31/2028	16.00	Off Campus	All Programs
PROV.	09/01/2028	Until Amended			Use same rates and conditions as those cited for fiscal year ending August 31, 2028

***BASE**

Modified total direct costs, consisting of all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel and up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards under the award). Modified total direct costs shall exclude equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs and the portion of each subaward in excess of \$25,000. Other items may only be excluded when necessary to avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, and with the approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs.

SECTION II: SPECIAL REMARKS

TREATMENT OF FRINGE BENEFITS:

The fringe benefits are specifically identified to each employee and are charged individually as direct costs. The directly claimed fringe benefits are listed below.

TREATMENT OF PAID ABSENCES:

Vacation, holiday, sick leave pay and other paid absences are included in salaries and wages and are claimed on grants, contracts and other agreements as part of the normal cost for salaries and wages. Separate claims are not made for the cost of these paid absences.

OFF-CAMPUS DEFINITION: The off-campus rate will apply for all activities: a) Performed in facilities not owned by the institution and where these facility costs are not included in the F&A pools; or b) Where rent is directly allocated/charged to the project(s). Actual costs will be apportioned between on-campus and off-campus components. Each portion will bear the appropriate rate.

FRINGE BENEFITS:

FICA

Retirement

Worker's Compensation

Life Insurance

Unemployment Insurance

Health Insurance

DUE DATE:

The next indirect cost rate proposal based on actual costs for the fiscal year ending 08/31/2027 is due in our office by 02/28/2028.

Equipment means tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds \$5,000.

SECTION III: GENERAL

A. LIMITATIONS:

The rates in this Agreement are subject to any statutory or administrative limitations and apply to a given grant, contract or other agreement only to the extent that funds are available. Acceptance of the rates is subject to the following conditions: (1) Only costs incurred by the organization were included in its facilities and administrative cost pools as finally accepted: such costs are legal obligations of the organization and are allowable under the governing cost principles; (2) The same costs that have been treated as facilities and administrative costs are not claimed as direct costs; (3) Similar types of costs have been accorded consistent accounting treatment; and (4) The information provided by the organization which was used to establish the rates is not later found to be materially incomplete or inaccurate by the Federal Government. In such situations the rate(s) would be subject to renegotiation at the discretion of the Federal Government.

B. ACCOUNTING CHANGES:

This Agreement is based on the accounting system purported by the organization to be in effect during the Agreement period. Changes to the method of accounting for costs which affect the amount of reimbursement resulting from the use of this Agreement require prior approval of the authorized representative of the cognizant agency. Such changes include, but are not limited to, changes in the charging of a particular type of cost from facilities and administrative to direct. Failure to obtain approval may result in cost disallowances.

C. FIXED RATES:

If a fixed rate is in this Agreement, it is based on an estimate of the costs for the period covered by the rate. When the actual costs for this period are determined, an adjustment will be made to a rate of a future year(s) to compensate for the difference between the costs used to establish the fixed rate and actual costs.

D. USE BY OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES:

The rates in this Agreement were approved in accordance with the authority in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 200 (2 CFR 200), and should be applied to grants, contracts and other agreements covered by 2 CFR 200, subject to any limitations in A above. The organization may provide copies of the Agreement to other Federal Agencies to give them early notification of the Agreement.

E. OTHER:

If any Federal contract, grant or other agreement is reimbursing facilities and administrative costs by a means other than the approved rate(s) in this Agreement, the organization should (1) credit such costs to the affected programs, and (2) apply the approved rate(s) to the appropriate base to identify the proper amount of facilities and administrative costs allocable to these programs.

BY THE INSTITUTION:

University of Houston at Clear Lake

(INSTITUTION)


(SIGNATURE)

Dr. Sherry Hawn
(NAME)

Associate Vice President
(TITLE)

5/24/24
(DATE)

ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT:

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
(AGENCY)

Arif M. Karim -S Digitally signed by Arif M. Karim -S
Date: 2024.05.22 13:12:52 -05'00'

(SIGNATURE)

Arif Karim
(NAME)

Director, Cost Allocation Services
(TITLE)

05/21/2024
(DATE)

HHS REPRESENTATIVE: Olulola Oluborode

TELEPHONE: (214) 767-3261



July 24, 2026

Re: Letter of Partnership and Commitment
Galveston Bay Estuary Program FY2028 Grant Proposal

To Whom It May Concern,

KPRC 2 is pleased to confirm our commitment to partner with the University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL) and the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP) in support of the proposed Community Outreach on KPRC2 initiative for Fiscal Year 2028.

If the proposal is awarded funding, KPRC 2 commits to providing \$93,500 in media production, broadcast, streaming, digital advertising, and promotional support to help educate and engage residents throughout the Houston Designated Market Area about Galveston Bay conservation and stewardship.

As outlined in the proposal, KPRC 2 will provide communications support that includes:

- Production and broadcast of Houston Life feature segments highlighting selected GBEP projects;
- Development and airing of 30-second educational television commercials;
- Digital display and streaming advertising to expand awareness throughout the Houston region;
- Distribution of campaign content across Click2Houston.com, KPRC+ and other appropriate digital platforms.

This partnership builds upon the success of our previous collaboration with UHCL and GBEP and reflects our shared commitment to increasing public awareness of environmental conservation, promoting stewardship opportunities, and connecting residents with the important work taking place throughout the Galveston Bay watershed.

KPRC 2 is proud to support this initiative and looks forward to continuing our partnership with UHCL and GBEP to advance the goals of the Galveston Bay Plan through trusted, community-focused storytelling and public engagement.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Ness
Director of Sales
KPRC 2 | Graham Media Group

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2028 Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **July 24, 2026**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for fiscal 2028 (FY 2028) Priority Area Actions that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for FY 2028 at the June 2026 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

Timeline of Proposals:

Task	Date Due
Release of Request for Proposals	June 22, 2026
Proposals Due	July 24, 2026
Send Proposals to Subcommittees Members for Review	August 12, 2026
Present Proposals to Subcommittees for Council Recommendation	September 2, 2026 (NRU and PPE) September 9, 2026 (M&R and WSQ)
Present Proposals to B&P Subcommittee for Final Recommendation	September 30, 2026
Present Proposals to Galveston Bay Council for Approval	October 14, 2026

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Primary Subcommittee: Public Participation and Education (PPE)
Secondary Subcommittee (if applicable): Natural Resource Uses (NRU)
Tertiary Subcommittee (if applicable): Choose an item.

Project Name:

Galveston Bay Social Studies Teachers Empowering Wetland Awareness and Responsible Decisions and Solutions (Galveston Bay STEWARDS)

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes ☐ No ☒

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

Mary D. Curtis

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

☐ Federal, State, or Local Government ☐ Council of Government ☒ Public ISDs or Universities
☐ Nonprofit ☐ Other*

[If other, please identify pass-through partner.] N/A

Unique Entity ID (UED) Number:	RD74AUNCTZJ1
Vendor Identification Number (VIN) or Tax ID:	74-6001399

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Dr. Mary D. Curtis
Project Representative Phone	281-283-3607
Project Representative Email	curtism@uhcl.edu

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2027 – ending no later than May 31, 2030) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

September 1, 2027 – December 31, 2028

Amount Requested from GBEP:

[\$] 76,158

Federal ☐ State ☐ No Preference ☒

Is the project scalable? ☒

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2028 (09/01/2027-08/31/2028)	\$67,358
FY 2029 (09/01/2028-08/31/2029)	\$8,800
FY 2030 (09/01/2029-05/31/2030)	\$0.00
Total	\$0.00

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

[\$] 76,158

Is this an estimate? ☐

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

[Please indicate source, amount, and status (secured, potential, etc.)] None

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Subcommittee Priorities (Section Four) will be considered above others. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

The *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* Action Plans are found at:
<https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 1: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

NPS-1 ☐ NPS-2 ☐ NPS-3 ☐ NPS-4 ☐
 PS-1 ☐ PS-2 ☐ PS-3 ☐
 PHA-1 ☐ PHA-2 ☐ PHA-3 ☐ PHA-4 ☐ PHA-5 ☐

Plan Priority 2: Protect and Sustain Living Resources

HC-1 ☐ HC-2 ☐ HC-3 ☐
 SC-1 ☐ SC-2 ☐
 FWI-1 ☐ FWI-2 ☐ FWI-3 ☐

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

SPO-1 ☐ **SPO-2 ☒** **SPO-3 ☒** SPO-4 ☐
PEA-1 ☒ **PEA-2 ☒** **PEA-3 ☒**

Plan Priority 4: Inform Science-based Decision Making

RES-1 ☐ RES-2 ☐ RES-3 ☐ RES-4 ☐
 RES-5 ☐ RES-6 ☐ RES-7 ☐ RES-8 ☐
 ACS-1 ☐ ACS-2 ☐ ACS-3 ☐

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

The **Galveston Bay STEWARDS** project focuses on the **GBEP Priority Engage Communities in Conservation SPO-2, SPO-3, PEA-1, PEA-2, and PEA-3.**

Stakeholder and Partner Outreach (SPO)

SPO-2 Workshops and Events: The objective of SPO-2 is to support and promote workshops and events that facilitate stakeholder and partner involvement. Galveston Bay STEWARDS will host 3 one-hour workshops as part of the EC-6 social studies methods courses at the University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL) an introduction the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP) website and resources, specifically the NRU Galveston Bay Habitat Project database, located on the GBEP Interactive Conservation and Restoration Project Portal (galvbaydata.org). UHCL future elementary teachers (pre-service teachers) will be informed of the GBEP programs, investigate the data provided by the interactive, geographic information systems (GIS)-based tool, and learn how to integrate the database into social studies lessons. Additionally, pre-service teachers will design and present their lessons to their peers and mentoring teachers as well as to a broader audience at the local UHCL Greater Houston Area STEM Conference and nationally to either a state (the Texas Council for the Social Studies) or national (the National Council for Geographic Education) conference.

SPO-3 Support Regional Initiatives: The objective of SPO-3 is to continue to expand and support the Back the Bay campaign and other regional initiatives. The Galveston Bay STEWARDS project seeks to expose pre-service teachers to GBEP programs and Back the Bay campaign initiative. Specifically, it will **develop new K-12 Galveston Bay estuary-related curricular materials**. The pre-service teachers will be encouraged to develop and present inquiry-based activities that ask students to discuss what they discover on the NRU database and the GBEP website, thus encouraging public dialogue about key issues. These actions and the use of the NRU database will continue to support the Back the Bay campaign and other regional initiatives as well as foster greater stewardship in the community.

Public Education and Awareness Initiatives

PEA-1 Key Issues Engagement

PEA-2 Adult Education

PEA-3 Kindergarten to 12th Grade (K-12) Education Efforts

The Galveston Bay STEWARDS project targets PEAs 1-3 by exposing pre-service educators to key issues facing Galveston Bay using the NRU Galveston Bay Habitat Project database to develop relevant, interdisciplinary social studies elementary lessons. Inquiry-based investigations and activities will foster teacher and student curiosity and understanding of the connections among people, places, resources, public policy, and environmental stewardship while using evidence to understand challenges facing Galveston Bay. Through its design and deliverables, the Galveston Bay STEWARDS project specifically targets adult education by focusing on pre-service educators. The lessons leverage key issues in Galveston Bay. They will be designed for the elementary level but also presented in conferences to K-12 educators and stakeholders, thereby engaging local to national communities.

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

Subcommittee Identified Priorities:

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- ☐ WSQ: Supporting management measures and watershed-based plans through adaptive management, workforce development, and technical assistance.
- ☐ WSQ: Improve knowledge and accessibility of pollution reporting tools to empower the community.
- ☐ WSQ: Implementation and/or evaluation of best management practices that address point and nonpoint source pollution.
- ☐ NRU: Habitat Acquisition.
- ☐ NRU: Enhancement of existing or ongoing restoration-conservation efforts. Special emphasis on:
 - ☐ Adaptive management for previously completed projects; and
 - ☐ Projects that may have lost/delayed funding from other federal sources.
- ☐ NRU: Benefit to native fish and wildlife, including federal and state listed species, Species of Greatest Conservation Need, or nongame wildlife.
- ☐ NRU: Project urgency: Project must be completed in next 24 months or opportunity is lost.
- ☒ **PPE:** Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed.
- ☒ **PPE:** Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects.
- ☐ PPE: Opportunities to host workshops/networking events to provide technical assistance for local leadership (local governments, MUDs, schoolboards, the public) on key topics.
- ☐ PPE: Conservation and environmental workforce development.
- ☐ M&R: Meaningful and effective monitoring of existing, past, and new projects (NRU: especially research and monitoring for diamondback terrapin and best management projects, WSQ, PPE).
- ☐ M&R: Baseline assessments for large-scale, man-made changes to Galveston Bay at an adequate timeline and spatial range to provide useful information.
- ☐ M&R: Assessment, Exposure, and Response to stressors, including but not limited to:
 - ☐ Species of greatest conservation need;
 - ☐ Contact recreation standards;
 - ☐ Environmental parameters;
 - ☐ Emerging contaminants; and
 - ☐ Legacy contaminants.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

The **Galveston Bay STEWARDS project** focuses on two PPE subcommittee priorities:

- Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed.
- Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects.

The **Galveston Bay STEWARDS project** first and foremost **empowers EC-6 elementary teachers to positively impact their local environment** by preparing future elementary teachers to use authentic Galveston Bay environmental data, the NRU Galveston Bay Habitat Project database (NRU database), and inquiry-based learning experiences that build students' scientific literacy and understanding of local environmental challenges. Each pre-service teacher will potential impact up to 100 students in their first year of teaching. Through standards-aligned lessons and civic investigations, students will analyze evidence, evaluate environmental issues affecting the bay, and develop informed solutions that promote wetland conservation and ecosystem stewardship. The project also encourages community engagement by helping pre-service students connect classroom learning to real-world conservation efforts, fostering responsible citizenship and empowering them to take meaningful actions that positively impact their local environment.

Second, the **Galveston Bay STEWARDS project** connects new audiences to existing watershed initiatives by introducing pre-service teachers and their future students to GBEP restoration, conservation, and monitoring projects through the use of publicly available GIS data, maps, and environmental resources. By incorporating these real-world projects into inquiry-based classroom lessons, participants gain a deeper understanding of ongoing watershed efforts and how community-based conservation actions contribute to the long-term health and sustainability of Galveston Bay.

Does the Project align with any EPA Areas of Special Interest?

- ☐ Reduce Nutrient Pollution to Protect Water Quality and Public Health
- ☐ Make Investments that Address Coastal Resiliency
- ☐ Reduce Trash

[If yes, please summarize how the proposal addresses EPA Areas of Special Interest.] N/A

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

The **Galveston Bay Social Studies Teachers Empowering Wetland Awareness and Responsible Decisions and Solutions (Galveston Bay STEWARDS)** project aims to prepare future (pre-service) elementary teachers to become data-literate civic educators who use Galveston Bay Estuary Program environmental data and inquiry-based social studies instruction to promote environmental stewardship and informed decision-making. Through targeted professional learning experiences, participants will develop standards-aligned lessons that engage elementary students in investigating real-world Galveston Bay issues, analyzing evidence, and taking informed civic action to support the sustainability of the ecosystem.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

The long-term health and sustainability of the Galveston Bay ecosystem depend on scientific research, environmental management, and informed citizens who can interpret environmental data, evaluate evidence, and engage in meaningful stewardship actions. Although GBEP has invested substantially in developing and disseminating science-based information about the bay, a gap remains between the availability of these resources and educators' and students' ability to use them effectively. Addressing the complex challenges facing Galveston Bay requires a citizenry capable of analyzing local evidence, participating in civic dialogue, and making informed, data-driven decisions.

Elementary education provides a critical opportunity to build these capacities. The National Council for the Social Studies' College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework emphasizes inquiry as the foundation of social studies instruction and the development of active, informed citizens. However, many elementary teachers have limited preparation in social studies content, inquiry-based instruction, and data literacy. As a result, elementary social studies instruction frequently emphasizes what is or is not responsible behavior rather than empowering students to discern responsible behavior within the context of real-world community concerns.

This need is especially important within the Galveston Bay watershed, where future residents must understand how human activities affect environmental outcomes. Through inquiry-based investigations of local issues using the NRU Galveston Bay Habitat Project database, an interactive geospatial tool, students can examine connections among people, places, resources, public policy, and environmental stewardship while using evidence to understand challenges facing Galveston Bay. To facilitate these experiences, teachers must develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to support civic and environmental inquiry.

The **Galveston Bay Social Studies Teachers Empowering Wetland Awareness and Responsible Decisions and Solutions (Galveston Bay STEWARDS)** pilot program addresses this need by preparing elementary social studies pre-service teachers to leverage GBEP's GIS-based publicly available environmental data resources to design interdisciplinary learning experiences focused on Galveston Bay stewardship. Through a series of three workshops and a lesson-design project, pre-service teachers will develop stronger understandings of citizenship at local, regional, and state scales; build capacity to interpret and communicate environmental data; and learn to implement inquiry-based instructional practices. Participants will create standards-aligned elementary lessons that engage students in investigating authentic issues affecting the Galveston Bay ecosystem and identifying informed actions that support environmental stewardship.

By strengthening the preparation of future elementary educators, the project will advance two key GBEP priorities: informing science-based decision making and engaging communities in conservation. The project creates a sustainable pathway through which generations of students will gain exposure to Galveston Bay issues, develop environmental awareness, and practice evidence-based civic decision-making.

Project Objectives

- Expand the NRU reach and support of the Back of the Bay campaign.
- Increase use of the NRU database in pre-service social studies methods courses.

- Provide workshops that facilitate teacher involvement in the protection and preservation of Galveston Bay.
- Enhance pre-service elementary teachers' feeling of connection to and responsibility for Galveston Bay.

Project Deliverables

- Three 1-hour professional development workshops on Galveston Bay, the GBEP, and the NRU database within the social studies methods course. (Fall 2027)
- Up to 73 pre-service teachers will develop a lesson plan using the NRU Galveston Bay Habitat Project database and aligning it to the Texas state social studies learning standards. (Fall 2027)
- Lesson Plan Presentations:
 - Up to 73 pre-service elementary teachers will present lesson plans and share experiences learning about Galveston Bay and using the NRU Galveston Bay Habitat Project database, e.g., classroom presentation, local conference, state, and national conference. (Fall 2027)
 - Up to 73 pre-service elementary teachers will be invited to share lessons learned at the UHCL Greater Houston STEM Conference (Spring 2028)
 - Up to two pre-service teachers will present at a state or national conference, such as the Texas Council for the Social Studies or National Council for Geographic Education conferences (Spring/Fall 2028)
- Project Evaluation will report performance indicators and qualitative analysis of pre-service teachers' perceptions (Fall 2028)

Project Timeline:

- Project Development
 - Create a course calendar for the undergraduate and graduate elementary social studies methods courses to embed learning about Galveston Bay and the NRU GIS-based data as it pertains to Texas learning standards.
 - Design class instruction to introduce Galveston Bay Estuary Programs, the NRU GIS-based online database, and Galveston Bay as a shared place.
 - Create inquiry-based learning experiences and assignments to develop awareness of place, understand challenges and civic responsibility and practice using local data to make informed, evidence-based decisions.
 - Develop project evaluation with external evaluator.
 - Invite 5 experienced educators to mentor pre-service teachers' lesson design.
- Project Implementation
 - Provide instruction on inquiry-based and place-based social studies teaching using geospatial technologies and Galveston Bay data.
 - Guide pre-service teachers in designing lessons that integrate GBEP data from the NRU database and demonstrate how scientific evidence informs civic decisions.
 - Engage teacher mentors in supporting lesson development.
 - Conduct observations, surveys, and small-group interviews to evaluate the implementation.
- Data Analysis and Dissemination
 - Facilitate reflection among project leaders, mentors, and participants to identify successes, challenges, and recommendations for future implementation Support pre-service teachers in creating conference posters that highlight their understanding of Galveston Bay and the instructional lessons they developed, including new connections and sense of awareness they may feel.
 - Pre-service teachers will present project outcomes at the UHCL Greater Houston STEM Conference (Spring 2028), increasing awareness of GBEP programs and resources. Presentation topics will be highlighted in media about the conference, thus broadening the audience awareness of GBEP programs.
 - State/National Conference (Fall 2028): The top two poster presentations at the UHCL Greater Houston Area STEM Conference will present their lessons and share their experiences at either a state or national conference. (Participants selected by a committee using a rubric.)
 - Analyze the project to repeat in subsequent semesters and grade levels.

Project Urgency:

The urgency of this funding request lies in the recognition that environmental stewardship begins with education. The need for funding for the Galveston Bay STEWARDS project is immediate and critical because the environmental challenges facing the Galveston Bay watershed continue to grow in complexity while the educational systems responsible for preparing future citizens have not kept pace with the skills required for science-based decision-making and environmental stewardship. Although the Galveston Bay Estuary Program has invested substantial resources in developing publicly accessible environmental data, these resources remain significantly underutilized in elementary classrooms due to a lack of teacher preparation in data literacy, inquiry-based instruction, and environmental civic education and awareness. Without targeted intervention, valuable scientific information will remain inaccessible to many educators and students who are positioned to become future stewards of the bay.

Elementary education represents a particularly urgent point of intervention because attitudes toward citizenship, stewardship, and community engagement begin forming during the elementary years. Many elementary pre-service teachers enter the profession with minimal exposure to social studies inquiry methods, human-environment interaction, GIS technologies, or place-based civic education. Once teachers enter classrooms without these competencies, opportunities to engage students in meaningful environmental learning are diminished. Funding is needed now to address these deficiencies before teachers begin their careers, creating a more sustainable and cost-effective approach to strengthening environmental literacy across the region.

Funding for Galveston Bay STEWARDS will allow for the immediate development and implementation of professional learning experiences that equip pre-service teachers with the skills to leverage GBEP's environmental data resources, facilitate inquiry-based learning, and integrate stewardship concepts into elementary social studies instruction.

This project will create a multiplier effect in which each participating teacher influences hundreds of students over the course of a career, substantially expanding the reach and impact of GBEP's educational investments. In the Fall 2027, up to 73 PST will enroll in the EC-6 Social Studies methods classroom (TCED 4321/5321). Each PST in their first year of teaching may teach up to approximately 100 students. Therefore, Dr. Curtis has the potential of **impacting 73 adult learners and 7,300 elementary students** and their families. Furthermore, the reach of this project is expanded by project mentor teacher participation, UHCL social media posts, local and state/national conferences, and potential scholarly manuscripts. By acting now, the project can bridge the gap between scientific information and public understanding, ensuring that future generations are prepared to make informed decisions that support the long-term health and sustainability of Galveston Bay.

Other Plans Implemented:

N/A

Partners¹ and Their Roles:

The Galveston Bay Estuary Program is a project partner because the project leader will be using its resources and optimizing the expertise of fellow Galveston Bay Estuary Program partners. The Galveston Bay STEWARDS project would not be possible without the GBEP work and financial support for their website and the NRU GIS-based database. GBEP is critical to the success of this project.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

¹ If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted as an appendix with the application.

☐ Yes

☒ No

N/A

Is the project subject to Title VI requirements?

To meet federal nondiscrimination guidance and laws (Title VI), TCEQ requires information and services to be provided in languages other than English when significant numbers of beneficiaries are of limited English-speaking ability (LEP). If 5% or more of the population within your project area is LEP and share a common language, then you are required to provide outreach in the alternative language. For statewide projects, Spanish language outreach is required. As Title VI compliance could impact the project budget, please reach out to the primary subcommittee coordinator for this application with questions on determining applicability.

☐ Yes

☒ No

N/A

Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

N/A

Location:

The pre-service teachers will determine the natural resources that they wish to explore on the NRU database. The selection will be based on student interest and the Texas student learning standards (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)) selected for the lesson.

Projects Map

[\[Insert Map Here or Attach as an Appendix if Applicable\]](#)

Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):

[\[Insert Here or Attach as an Appendix\]](#)

SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

a. Direct Costs

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$14,694.00
Fringe Benefits (###)% ²	\$2,571.00
Travel	\$9,300.00
Supplies	\$14,180.00
Equipment	\$0.00
Contractual	\$4,410.00
Construction	\$0.00
Other	\$6,450.00
Total Direct Cost	51,605.00

b. Indirect Costs³

Distribution Base Amount (<i>identify Base type below</i>)	\$ 51,605.00
Indirect Cost Rate for Reimbursement	% 50
Total Indirect Costs	\$ 24,553.00

c. Maximum Authorized Reimbursement

Maximum Authorized Reimbursement (Direct and Indirect Costs)	\$76,158.00
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Indirect Cost Distribution Base. The Distribution Base above is (check one):

- ☐ direct salary/wages and fringe benefits
☒ modified total direct costs
☐ other direct cost Base

If other direct cost Base, identify:

The indirect cost rate is (check one):

☒ **Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.

☐ **De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of 15 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

☐ **Partial Reimbursement Rate** — a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes

² If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

³ Please attach Indirect Cost Agreement as an appendix if applicable

all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

☐ **Other:** [Examples: De Minimis Rate with a base of direct salary and wages (less than or equal to actual indirect costs) or Provisional Rate. If this is a Provisional Rate, include the following language: Provisional Rate: The subsequent adjustment of the indirect cost rate is subject to the requirements of Article 9 of this (Cost Budget) section.]

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of budget total, identify the main constituents:

[Description of costs associated with “Other” budget category.]

Travel. In order to be reimbursable, travel costs must be specifically authorized in advance of the travel. Travel costs will be reimbursed only in the amount of actual costs, up to the maximum allowed by law for employees of the State of Texas at the time the cost is incurred.

Budget Categories. The Budget Categories above are representative of the items of cost found in TxGMS and 2 CFR Part 200, and have the definitions, requirements, and limitations found therein. Construction costs are not reimbursable without prior, specific written authorization from TCEQ.

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will post notification of the meeting's time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by **July 24, 2026 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:**

WSQ Subcommittee: Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov
NRU Subcommittee: Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov
PPE Subcommittee: Zoe.Gapayao@tceq.texas.gov
M&R Subcommittee: Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov
Programmatic Projects: Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2028 Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **July 24, 2026**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for fiscal 2028 (FY 2028) Priority Area Actions that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for FY 2028 at the June 2026 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

Timeline of Proposals:

Task	Date Due
Release of Request for Proposals	June 22, 2026
Proposals Due	July 24, 2026
Send Proposals to Subcommittees Members for Review	August 12, 2026
Present Proposals to Subcommittees for Council Recommendation	September 2, 2026 (NRU and PPE) September 9, 2026 (M&R and WSQ)
Present Proposals to B&P Subcommittee for Final Recommendation	September 30, 2026
Present Proposals to Galveston Bay Council for Approval	October 14, 2026

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Primary Subcommittee: Public Participation and Education (PPE)
Secondary Subcommittee (if applicable): Choose an item.
Tertiary Subcommittee (if applicable): Choose an item.

Project Name:

Texas Envirothon Teacher Capacity Building Project
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Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes ☒ No ☐

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

University of Houston Clear Lake

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

- ☐ Federal, State, or Local Government ☐ Council of Government ☒ Public ISDs or Universities
☐ Nonprofit ☐ Other*

N/A

Unique Entity ID (UED) Number:	RD74AUNCTZJ1
Vendor Identification Number (VIN) or Tax ID:	74-60001399

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Wendy Reistle
Project Representative Phone	281-283-3014
Project Representative Email	reistle@uhcl.edu

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2027 – ending no later than May 31, 2030) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

September 1, 2027 – August 31, 2029

Amount Requested from GBEP:

\$138,791

Federal ☐ State ☐ No Preference ☐
Is the project scalable? ☒

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2028 (09/01/2027-08/31/2028)	\$74,956
FY 2029 (09/01/2028-08/31/2029)	\$63,835
FY 2030 (09/01/2029-05/31/2030)	\$0.00
Total	\$0.00

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

Requested funds:	\$ 138,791 (91% of total project costs)
Leveraged cash funds:	\$ 14,000 (funds pending as of this proposal)
Total calculable project funds:	\$ 152,791

Is this an estimate? ☒

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

Cash: Texas Association of Environmental Professionals \$1000 (potential) Harris County Soil and Water Conservation District \$500 (potential) Montgomery County Soil and Water Conservation District \$2000 (potential) Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts \$500 (potential)
--

Dow \$10,000 (potential)

In-Kind Contributions:

Professionals from the Texas A&M Forest Service, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), State Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC), and other partner organizations volunteer their time and technical expertise to develop educational materials, write and review tests, deliver presentations, and support the statewide Texas Envirothon program.

TPWD provides significant in-kind support by hosting field testing activities at state parks and natural areas. Past host sites have included Sheldon Lake State Park, Galveston Island State Park, South Llano River State Park, and Caddo Lake State Park. Additional partners have included Armand Bayou Nature Center, Houston Arboretum, King Ranch, Long Acres Ranch, Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge, and Bear Creek Park, have provided facilities and field sites for Envirothon activities.

Community volunteers, including members of the Texas Master Naturalist Program, the Native Plant Society of Texas Clear Lake Chapter, and other local conservation organizations, contribute approximately 100 volunteer hours annually to support program delivery. The Texas Association for Environmental Education (TAEE) serves as a promotional partner, helping recruit participants and increase program awareness, and has provided additional support for statewide events.

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Subcommittee Priorities (Section Four) will be considered above others. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

The *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* Action Plans are found at:

<https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 1: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

NPS-1 ☐	NPS-2 ☒	NPS-3 ☐	NPS-4 ☒
PS-1 ☒	PS-2 ☐	PS-3 ☐	
PHA-1 ☐	PHA-2 ☐	PHA-3 ☐	PHA-4 ☐ PHA-5 ☐

Plan Priority 2: Protect and Sustain Living Resources

HC-1 ☐	HC-2 ☐	HC-3 ☐
SC-1 ☐	SC-2 ☐	
FWI-1 ☒	FWI-2 ☐	FWI-3 ☐

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

SPO-1 ☒	SPO-2 ☒	SPO-3 ☐	SPO-4 ☐
PEA-1 ☐	PEA-2 ☒	PEA-3 ☒	

Plan Priority 4: Inform Science-based Decision Making

RES-1 ☐	RES-2 ☐	RES-3 ☐	RES-4 ☐
RES-5 ☐	RES-6 ☐	RES-7 ☐	RES-8 ☐
ACS-1 ☐	ACS-2 ☐	ACS-3 ☐	

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

Plan Priority 1: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

NPS-2: Support nonpoint source education and outreach campaigns:

This project supports NPS-2: by incorporating extensive education on the causes, impacts, and prevention of nonpoint source (NPS) pollution throughout the Texas Envirothon curriculum. Students and educators learn how runoff from urban areas, agricultural lands, construction sites, and other diffuse sources can transport pollutants into rivers, lakes, wetlands, estuaries, and groundwater resources, affecting both human health and aquatic ecosystems.

NPS-4: Host nonpoint source workshops:

This project supports NPS-4 by providing educational workshops and training opportunities that emphasize the causes, impacts, and prevention of nonpoint source (NPS) pollution. Aquatic Science is one of the four primary subject areas of the Texas Envirothon program and serves as a key avenue for educating both teachers and students about water quality protection and watershed stewardship.

The project will enhance and expand its free online curriculum resources, making current, science-based information on nonpoint source pollution more accessible to educators and students throughout Texas. In addition, the four-day teacher workshop will include dedicated instruction on nonpoint source pollution, watershed processes, stormwater runoff, best management practices, and green infrastructure approaches that reduce pollutant loading to waterways.

PS-1: Support stormwater education programs:

This project supports PS-1 by providing comprehensive education on stormwater management through the Texas Envirothon's Aquatic Science curriculum. Students and educators learn how stormwater runoff can transport sediments, nutrients, bacteria, chemicals, and other pollutants into streams, rivers, lakes, estuaries, and coastal waters, affecting water quality, aquatic habitats, and human uses of water resources.

Plan Priority 2: Protect and Sustain Living Resources

FWT-3: Water Conservation and Education:

This project supports FWT-3 by providing educators and students with a strong foundation in water resource conservation through the Texas Envirothon curriculum. The program includes extensive instruction on the protection and sustainable management of surface water, groundwater, watersheds, and estuarine ecosystems, emphasizing the importance of maintaining healthy water resources for both human and ecological needs.

Through the Aquatic Science component of the curriculum, participants learn about hydrology, water quality, watershed function, water conservation practices, and the interconnectedness of rivers, streams, wetlands, groundwater systems, and the Galveston Bay estuary. Students explore how land use, population growth, pollution, and water consumption affect water availability and ecosystem health, while also examining strategies for protecting and conserving water resources.

The project's teacher workshops, field experiences, and updated online curriculum provide current, science-based information on water conservation and stewardship. Participants gain a better understanding of the importance of protecting water quantity and quality, maintaining freshwater inflows to estuaries, and supporting the ecological health of aquatic habitats. By increasing awareness and knowledge of water resource management, the project helps cultivate informed citizens and future leaders who are equipped to support the long-term sustainability of Texas's water resources and living aquatic ecosystems.

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities:

SPO-1: Stewardship Programs and Volunteer Opportunities:

This project supports SPO-1 by creating meaningful opportunities for community members, natural resource professionals, and college students to participate in the Texas Envirothon program as volunteers. Each year, volunteers assist with planning and conducting the state Texas Envirothon competition, including supporting field testing stations, mentoring participants, coordinating event logistics, and sharing technical expertise with students and educators. These opportunities foster community engagement while helping build a network of citizens committed to environmental education and natural resource stewardship.

The project also encourages participating teachers and students to extend their learning beyond the classroom through independent school and community-based environmental projects. While not a formal requirement of participation, many students and educators apply the knowledge and skills gained through the program to local conservation efforts, environmental awareness activities, habitat improvement projects, and other stewardship initiatives within their communities. By connecting environmental

education with volunteer service and community action, the project helps cultivate environmental responsibility, civic engagement, and long-term stewardship of natural resources.

SPO-2: Workshops and Events:

This project supports SPO-2 by providing hands-on educational programs for both teachers and students that promote environmental literacy and natural resource stewardship. The project includes a four-day intensive teacher workshop featuring classroom instruction, field experiences, and interactive learning activities. These workshops provide educators with current scientific information, field-based training, and instructional resources that can be integrated into their classrooms and extracurricular programs.

The project also supports a three-day Texas Envirothon competition and educational event for students in grades 9-12, where participants engage in field testing, problem-solving activities, and oral presentations based on real-world environmental scenarios. Students interact with natural resource professionals, explore environmental issues, and apply their knowledge in a collaborative and competitive setting. Together, these workshops and events provide meaningful opportunities for experiential learning, professional development, and community engagement while fostering a greater understanding of environmental stewardship and conservation.

Public Education and Awareness Initiatives (PEA):

PEA-1: Key Issue Engagement:

The project supports PEA-1: by increasing educator and student understanding of critical natural resources and environmental issues affecting Texas and the nation. Through the four-day teacher workshop, participants will explore current challenges related to water quality and aquatic ecosystem health, sustainable forest management, wildlife conservation, and soil conservation and land use practices. Lectures, field experiences, and hands-on activities will connect scientific concepts to real-world environmental concerns, enabling educators to better engage students in analyzing complex environmental issues and developing informed solutions.

The project will also strengthen key issue engagement by updating the Texas Envirothon online curriculum, ensuring that educational materials reflect current environmental science, emerging resource management challenges, and best management practices.

PEA-2: Adult Education:

The Texas Envirothon teacher capacity building project supports PEA-2 through the development and delivery of a new four-day intensive professional development workshop for teachers. The workshop will combine expert-led lectures, hands-on learning experiences, and field-based investigations to strengthen participants' knowledge and teaching skills in the four-core Texas Envirothon subject areas: Aquatic Science, Wildlife, Soils and Land Use, and Forestry. Participants will engage with current environmental issues, field methods, and best practices that can be incorporated into classroom instruction and student Envirothon preparation.

In addition, the project will modernize and expand the Texas Envirothon online curriculum, providing educators with updated, accessible instructional resources that support continued learning beyond the workshop. Together, these activities will increase educators' environmental literacy, enhance their capacity to deliver high-quality environmental education, and strengthen student engagement in conservation and natural resource stewardship.

PEA-3: K-12 Education Efforts:

This project supports PEA-3 by providing high-quality, environmentally focused STEM education opportunities for students in grades 9-12 and professional development opportunities for teachers. Through the Texas Envirothon program, students engage in a comprehensive curriculum covering Aquatic Science, Forestry, Soil Health and Land Use, and Wildlife, while developing critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork, and communication skills.

Students learn about important environmental topics including nonpoint source pollution, water quality, watershed and estuary health, habitat conservation, sustainable natural resource management, and species protection. Their knowledge is evaluated through written field tests and oral presentations that require them to analyze real-world environmental scenarios, consider multiple stakeholder perspectives, and propose balanced, science-based solutions. The program's problem-based learning approach encourages environmental literacy and prepares students to become informed community leaders and environmental stewards.

The project also strengthens K-12 environmental education by supporting both existing and new teacher partnerships through training, educational resources, and equipment. Approximately 100 students and 16

teachers participate annually. Educational content is further expanded through the publicly accessible UHCL Environmental Institute of Houston Texas Envirothon website and YouTube channel, which provide recorded presentations, tutorials, and instructional videos focused on essential environmental science concepts and technical skills. In addition, the revised online curriculum will improve accessibility and navigation, ensuring that students and educators throughout Texas have access to current, high-quality environmental education resources. Exposure to environmental professionals and career pathways further helps students connect classroom learning to future educational and career opportunities in natural resources and conservation fields.

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

Subcommittee Identified Priorities:

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- ☐ WSO: Supporting management measures and watershed-based plans through adaptive management, workforce development, and technical assistance.
- ☐ WSO: Improve knowledge and accessibility of pollution reporting tools to empower the community.
- ☐ WSO: Implementation and/or evaluation of best management practices that address point and nonpoint source pollution.
- ☐ NRU: Habitat Acquisition.
- ☐ NRU: Enhancement of existing or ongoing restoration-conservation efforts. Special emphasis on:
 - ☐ Adaptive management for previously completed projects; and
 - ☐ Projects that may have lost/delayed funding from other federal sources.
- ☐ NRU: Benefit to native fish and wildlife, including federal and state listed species, Species of Greatest Conservation Need, or nongame wildlife.
- ☐ NRU: Project urgency: Project must be completed in next 24 months or opportunity is lost.
- ☒ PPE: Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed.
- ☒ PPE: Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects.
- ☒ PPE: Opportunities to host workshops/networking events to provide technical assistance for local leadership (local governments, MUDs, schoolboards, the public) on key topics.
- ☒ PPE: Conservation and environmental workforce development.
- ☐ M&R: Meaningful and effective monitoring of existing, past, and new projects (NRU: especially research and monitoring for diamondback terrapin and best management projects, WSO, PPE).
- ☐ M&R: Baseline assessments for large-scale, man-made changes to Galveston Bay at an adequate *timeline and spatial range to provide useful information.*
- ☐ M&R: *Assessment, Exposure, and Response to stressors, including but not limited to:*
 - ☐ *Species of greatest conservation need;*
 - ☐ *Contact recreation standards;*
 - ☐ *Environmental parameters;*
 - ☐ *Emerging contaminants; and*
 - ☐ *Legacy contaminants.*

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

PPE 1: Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed

The Texas Envirothon teacher capacity building project will connect teachers and, ultimately, their students to local watershed conservation and restoration efforts through field-based learning experiences at sites such as the Galveston Bay Foundation property in Kemah, Exploration Green, Armand Bayou Nature Center, and a local state park. These field trips will expose participants to real-world environmental management, habitat restoration, water quality protection, and conservation projects within the Galveston Bay watershed. Through targeted outreach to educators who are new to the Texas Envirothon program, the project will expand awareness of these watershed resources and engage new audiences in ongoing conservation efforts.

PPE 2: Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects.

The Texas Envirothon empowers K-12 students and educators to positively impact their local environment by increasing scientific literacy, environmental awareness, and stewardship. Through teacher training, curriculum enhancement, and hands-on learning experiences, participants gain knowledge of water quality, watershed health, habitat conservation, wildlife management, forestry, and sustainable land use practices. The program uses real-world environmental issues and problem-based learning to develop critical thinking and informed decision-making skills. By equipping educators with high-quality resources and environmental science training, the project expands opportunities for students to engage in conservation-related activities and become informed stewards of their local communities and natural resources.

By training teachers in this curriculum, the proposed project expands the program's reach and impact. Educators gain the knowledge and confidence needed to engage students in meaningful environmental learning and to inspire stewardship within their schools and communities. As a result, students are better equipped to understand environmental issues, adopt conservation-minded behaviors, and contribute to community efforts that protect and improve local natural resources. Through increased environmental literacy and hands-on learning, the Texas Envirothon helps develop informed citizens capable of making positive, lasting impacts on their local environment.

PPE 3: Opportunities to host workshops/networking events to provide technical assistance for local leadership (local governments, MUDs, schoolboards, the public) on key topics.

The proposed four-day workshops in 2028 and 2029 will serve as intensive professional development and networking opportunities for educators from across the region. Participants will receive technical assistance and instruction from environmental professionals and subject matter experts from organizations such as the Texas A&M Forest Service, Houston-Galveston Area Council, and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. The workshops will foster collaboration among educators, environmental agencies, and conservation organizations while providing participants with practical tools, resources, and current scientific information that can be shared within schools and communities.

We will partner with the Galveston Bay Foundation (GBF) to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the first year of the teacher professional development workshops. GBF will develop and administer pre- and post-workshop surveys, conduct six-month follow-up assessments, and collect observational data during workshop delivery to evaluate program effectiveness and participant outcomes. GBF will analyze the data and provide a final evaluation report with recommendations to strengthen future workshops and improve educator and student learning outcomes.

PPE 4: Conservation and environmental workforce development.

The project supports conservation workforce development by preparing teachers to guide students toward greater awareness of environmental sciences and natural resource careers. Through exposure to professionals working in forestry, wildlife management, aquatic science, conservation, and environmental stewardship, teachers will gain insights into career pathways that can be shared with students. By strengthening and expanding the Texas Envirothon program, the project will help develop the next generation of environmental professionals while encouraging student interest in conservation, natural resource management, and environmental science careers critical to the future health of Texas watersheds and ecosystems.

Does the Project align with any EPA Areas of Special Interest?

- ☐ Reduce Nutrient Pollution to Protect Water Quality and Public Health
- ☒ Make Investments that Address Coastal Resiliency
- ☐ Reduce Trash

The Texas Envirothon project invests in the next generation of environmental stewards, educators, and decision-makers by increasing knowledge of watershed management, water quality, habitat conservation, and estuarine ecosystems. Through curriculum enhancement, teacher training, and student learning

opportunities, participants develop an understanding of the environmental challenges facing coastal communities and the science-based practices that support resilient ecosystems. By building environmental literacy and stewardship capacity, the project contributes to the long-term resilience of the Galveston Bay watershed and Texas coastal resources.

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

The Texas Envirothon teacher capacity building project will strengthen environmental education across Texas by modernizing the Texas Envirothon curriculum and providing intensive professional development for educators. The project will develop an updated, accessible curriculum resource guide aligned with current educational standards and deliver two four-day teacher training workshops at the University of Houston-Clear Lake in 2028 and 2029. The goal is to increase educator capacity, expand participation among new schools and teachers, and improve environmental science education opportunities for students across Texas.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

The Texas Envirothon teacher capacity building project will strengthen environmental education across Texas by modernizing instructional resources and providing intensive professional development for educators who are new to the Texas Envirothon program. Through curriculum enhancement, teacher training, and targeted outreach, this project will equip educators with the knowledge, confidence, and tools needed to guide students in environmental science learning and competition.

Beginning in September 2027, the project will undertake a comprehensive revision of the Texas Envirothon curriculum. Existing materials will be reviewed, updated, and reorganized into a comprehensive resource guide that aligns with current educational standards and best practices. A major focus of the revision will be accessibility, ensuring that all materials meet accessibility guidelines and can be effectively used by a diverse audience of educators and students. The revision will also reduce reliance on external websites by incorporating essential content directly into the resource guide, creating a more user-friendly and sustainable curriculum that remains available even when outside links change or become unavailable.

To support implementation of the updated curriculum, the project will offer a four-day intensive teacher workshop in 2028 for up to 12 educators, with a second workshop offered in 2029. The workshops will be hosted at the University of Houston Clear Lake, where participants will stay in campus accommodations throughout the training. The workshops will be provided at no cost to participants, and teachers will receive a stipend for their participation. In addition, the training will qualify for SBEC professional development credits, providing further value to participants and their school districts.

The workshop curriculum will focus on the four core Envirothon subject areas: Forestry, Wildlife, Soils and Land Use, and Aquatic Science. Through a combination of lectures, hands-on field exercises, and guided discussions, teachers will gain a thorough understanding of the content knowledge required to coach Texas Envirothon teams and integrate environmental science concepts into their classrooms.

A key element of the training will be experiential learning. Participants will engage in many of the same activities their students will encounter during competition, building both technical skills and instructional confidence. Hands-on training topics will include soil texturing and color analysis, tree identification, bird identification, mammal skull identification, aquatic ecosystem assessment, and other field-based skills commonly used in Envirothon testing. By experiencing these activities firsthand, participants will develop practical strategies for teaching environmental science concepts and preparing students for field investigations.

The workshops will also incorporate field trips to local natural areas that showcase a variety of Texas ecosystems and conservation practices. Proposed field sites include, but are not limited to, Exploration Green, Armand Bayou Nature Center, and a nearby Texas State Park. These field experiences will provide opportunities for teachers to apply classroom concepts in real-world settings, practice field identification skills, and explore examples of natural resource management, habitat conservation, and ecosystem stewardship.

To ensure the highest quality instruction, the project will leverage partnerships with the Texas A&M Forest Service, Houston-Galveston Area Council, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, etc. These organizations will provide subject matter expertise and contribute instructional support in the areas of forestry, wildlife

ecology, conservation, and natural resource management. Their involvement will help ensure that workshop content reflects current environmental science knowledge and resource management practices.

To further familiarize participants with the Envirothon experience, teachers will complete a field test and participate in the oral presentation component that is central to Envirothon competitions. This immersive approach will allow educators to better understand competition expectations while strengthening their ability to mentor and support student teams.

An additional goal of the project is to expand participation by reaching educators who are new to the program. Targeted outreach efforts will promote the updated curriculum and professional development opportunities to schools and teachers that have not previously participated in Texas Envirothon. By lowering barriers to entry and providing high-quality training and resources, the project will help grow the network of Envirothon educators across the state.

Through curriculum modernization, expert-led professional development, and expanded educator engagement, the Texas Envirothon Teacher Capacity Building Project will build a stronger foundation for environmental education in Texas. The project will increase teacher knowledge, improve access to high-quality instructional resources, and ultimately provide more students with meaningful opportunities to explore natural resource conservation, environmental stewardship, and environmental science careers.

Finally, the Galveston Bay Foundation (GBF) will evaluate the first year of the teacher workshops through participant surveys and provide a final report with recommendations to improve program effectiveness and learning outcomes.

Project Urgency:

The Texas Envirothon curriculum requires a comprehensive update to ensure educators and students have access to current, accurate, and accessible information on natural resource management, water quality, conservation, and environmental stewardship. Funding during this cycle is needed to modernize curriculum materials, expand teacher training opportunities, and engage new schools and educators. Without this investment, opportunities to strengthen environmental literacy, prepare future environmental leaders, and expand participation in the Texas Envirothon program may be delayed. The project will build educator capacity and provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to address future environmental and coastal resource challenges.

Other Plans Implemented:

- North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) Guidelines of Excellence.
- Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills: Aquatic Science, Environmental Science, Environmental Systems.
- NOAA Education Strategic Plan (2021-2040): Goal 1, Science-Informed Society; Goal 3, Ready, Responsive, Resilient; and Goal 4, Future Workforce
- Texas Coastal Management Program through education and stewardship of coastal ecosystems, watersheds, and estuarine resources.
- National Conservation Foundation (NCF) Envirothon Program objectives through conservation education, environmental literacy, and workforce development.

Partners¹ and Their Roles:

University of Houston-Clear Lake, Environmental Institute of Houston (EIH) – Lead organization responsible for project management, curriculum revision, teacher recruitment, workshop coordination, and overall implementation of the Texas Envirothon Teacher Capacity Building Project.

Galveston Bay Foundation (GBF) – Evaluation partner responsible for assessing the effectiveness of the teacher professional development workshops. GBF will administer participant surveys, evaluate program outcomes, and provide a final report with recommendations to improve program effectiveness and learning outcomes.

Texas A&M Forest Service – Technical partner providing subject matter expertise in forestry and natural resource management. Staff will support curriculum development, deliver workshop presentations, and assist with statewide Texas Envirothon programming as available.

¹ If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted as an appendix with the application.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) - Technical partner providing expertise in wildlife ecology, conservation, and natural resource management. TPWD staff will present during teacher training workshops and support implementation of the statewide Texas Envirothon program.

Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) - Educational partner providing expertise in water quality, watershed management, and nonpoint source pollution. H-GAC staff will assist with workshop instruction and field experiences that connect educators to local conservation and watershed initiatives.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

☒ Yes

☐ No

The project will engage new educators, schools, and communities by providing no-cost training, updated curriculum resources, and ongoing support for schools new to Texas Envirothon. The project also fosters partnerships with local conservation organizations and natural resource agencies to expand environmental education opportunities and community engagement.

Is the project subject to Title VI requirements?

To meet federal nondiscrimination guidance and laws (Title VI), TCEQ requires information and services to be provided in languages other than English when significant numbers of beneficiaries are of limited English-speaking ability (LEP). If 5% or more of the population within your project area is LEP and share a common language, then you are required to provide outreach in the alternative language. For statewide projects, Spanish language outreach is required. As Title VI compliance could impact the project budget, please reach out to the primary subcommittee coordinator for this application with questions on determining applicability.

☐ Yes

☒ No

N/A

Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

[degrees, minutes, and seconds format]

Location:

Participating schools come from across Texas. Teacher training workshops will be held in the Greater Houston-Galveston area and will utilize local conservation sites and natural areas for field-based learning opportunities. The project's educational benefits will extend statewide through participating educators and their students.

Projects Map

N/A

Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):



Figure 1 Teacher workshop in December 2025, presentation by Dr. Jenny Oakley Houston-Galveston Area Council on Non-point Source Pollution



Figure 2 Teacher workshop in December 2025, hands-presentation by Sam Hill, Texas A&M Forest Service.



Figure 3 Teacher workshop in December 2025, hands-presentation by Jaden Kelly, Texas A&M Forest Service.

SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

a. Direct Costs

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$ 42,919
Fringe Benefits (##%) ²	\$ 15,451
Travel	\$ 0
Supplies	\$ 4,933
Equipment	\$ 0
Contractual	\$ 6,540
Construction	\$ 0
Other	\$ 29,084
Total Direct Cost	\$ 98,927

b. Indirect Costs³

Distribution Base Amount (identify Base type below)	\$ 98,927
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² If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.
³ Please attach Indirect Cost Agreement as an appendix if applicable

Indirect Cost Rate for Reimbursement	50%
Total Indirect Costs	\$ 39,864

c. Maximum Authorized Reimbursement

Maximum Authorized Reimbursement (Direct and Indirect Costs)	\$ 138,791
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Indirect Cost Distribution Base. The Distribution Base above is (check one):

- ☐ direct salary/wages and fringe benefits
☒ modified total direct costs
☐ other direct cost Base

If other direct cost Base, identify:

The indirect cost rate is (check one):

☒ **Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.

☐ **De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of 15 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

☐ **Partial Reimbursement Rate** — a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

☐ **Other:** [Examples: De Minimis Rate with a base of direct salary and wages (less than or equal to actual indirect costs) or Provisional Rate. If this is a Provisional Rate, include the following language: Provisional Rate: The subsequent adjustment of the indirect cost rate is subject to the requirements of Article 9 of this (Cost Budget) section.]

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of budget total, identify the main constituents:

The Other category includes mileage rates for university vehicles (exclusive of fuel costs) based on the [current \(FY26\) rate schedule](#) (\$0.71 per mile for wear and tear), accommodation costs for teacher lodging (estimated at \$400 per teacher for 12 teachers per year), and teacher stipends to cover workshop incidentals, meals, etc. (estimated at \$800 per teacher for 12 teachers per year).

Travel. In order to be reimbursable, travel costs must be specifically authorized in advance of the travel. Travel costs will be reimbursed only in the amount of actual costs, up to the maximum allowed by law for employees of the State of Texas at the time the cost is incurred.

Budget Categories. The Budget Categories above are representative of the items of cost found in TxGMS and 2 CFR Part 200, and have the definitions, requirements, and limitations found therein. Construction costs are not reimbursable without prior, specific written authorization from TCEQ.

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will post notification of the meeting's time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by **July 24, 2026 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:**

WSQ Subcommittee: Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov
 NRU Subcommittee: Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov
 PPE Subcommittee: Zoe.Gapayao@tceq.texas.gov
 M&R Subcommittee: Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov
 Programmatic Projects: Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES RATE AGREEMENT

EIN: 1741792163

ORGANIZATION:

University of Houston at Clear Lake
2700 Bay Area Blvd.
Houston, TX 77058-1098

Date: 05/21/2024

FILING REF.: The preceding
agreement was dated
03/23/2021

The rates approved in this agreement are for use on grants, contracts and other agreements with the Federal Government, subject to the conditions in Section III.

SECTION I: Facilities And Administrative Cost Rates

RATE TYPES:		FIXED	FINAL	PROV. (PROVISIONAL)	PRED. (PREDETERMINED)
<u>EFFECTIVE PERIOD</u>					
<u>TYPE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>	<u>RATE(%)</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>APPLICABLE TO</u>
PRED.	09/01/2020	08/31/2024	48.00	On Campus	All Programs
PRED.	09/01/2020	08/31/2024	22.00	Off Campus	All Programs
PRED.	09/01/2024	08/31/2028	50.00	On Campus	All Programs
PRED.	09/01/2024	08/31/2028	16.00	Off Campus	All Programs
PROV.	09/01/2028	Until Amended			Use same rates and conditions as those cited for fiscal year ending August 31, 2028

***BASE**

Modified total direct costs, consisting of all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel and up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards under the award). Modified total direct costs shall exclude equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs and the portion of each subaward in excess of \$25,000. Other items may only be excluded when necessary to avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, and with the approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs.

SECTION II: SPECIAL REMARKS

TREATMENT OF FRINGE BENEFITS:

The fringe benefits are specifically identified to each employee and are charged individually as direct costs. The directly claimed fringe benefits are listed below.

TREATMENT OF PAID ABSENCES:

Vacation, holiday, sick leave pay and other paid absences are included in salaries and wages and are claimed on grants, contracts and other agreements as part of the normal cost for salaries and wages. Separate claims are not made for the cost of these paid absences.

OFF-CAMPUS DEFINITION: The off-campus rate will apply for all activities: a) Performed in facilities not owned by the institution and where these facility costs are not included in the F&A pools; or b) Where rent is directly allocated/charged to the project(s). Actual costs will be apportioned between on-campus and off-campus components. Each portion will bear the appropriate rate.

FRINGE BENEFITS:

FICA

Retirement

Worker's Compensation

Life Insurance

Unemployment Insurance

Health Insurance

DUE DATE:

The next indirect cost rate proposal based on actual costs for the fiscal year ending 08/31/2027 is due in our office by 02/28/2028.

Equipment means tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds \$5,000.

SECTION III: GENERAL

A. LIMITATIONS:

The rates in this Agreement are subject to any statutory or administrative limitations and apply to a given grant, contract or other agreement only to the extent that funds are available. Acceptance of the rates is subject to the following conditions: (1) Only costs incurred by the organization were included in its facilities and administrative cost pools as finally accepted: such costs are legal obligations of the organization and are allowable under the governing cost principles; (2) The same costs that have been treated as facilities and administrative costs are not claimed as direct costs; (3) Similar types of costs have been accorded consistent accounting treatment; and (4) The information provided by the organization which was used to establish the rates is not later found to be materially incomplete or inaccurate by the Federal Government. In such situations the rate(s) would be subject to renegotiation at the discretion of the Federal Government.

B. ACCOUNTING CHANGES:

This Agreement is based on the accounting system purported by the organization to be in effect during the Agreement period. Changes to the method of accounting for costs which affect the amount of reimbursement resulting from the use of this Agreement require prior approval of the authorized representative of the cognizant agency. Such changes include, but are not limited to, changes in the charging of a particular type of cost from facilities and administrative to direct. Failure to obtain approval may result in cost disallowances.

C. FIXED RATES:

If a fixed rate is in this Agreement, it is based on an estimate of the costs for the period covered by the rate. When the actual costs for this period are determined, an adjustment will be made to a rate of a future year(s) to compensate for the difference between the costs used to establish the fixed rate and actual costs.

D. USE BY OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES:

The rates in this Agreement were approved in accordance with the authority in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 200 (2 CFR 200), and should be applied to grants, contracts and other agreements covered by 2 CFR 200, subject to any limitations in A above. The organization may provide copies of the Agreement to other Federal Agencies to give them early notification of the Agreement.

E. OTHER:

If any Federal contract, grant or other agreement is reimbursing facilities and administrative costs by a means other than the approved rate(s) in this Agreement, the organization should (1) credit such costs to the affected programs, and (2) apply the approved rate(s) to the appropriate base to identify the proper amount of facilities and administrative costs allocable to these programs.

BY THE INSTITUTION:

University of Houston at Clear Lake

(INSTITUTION)


(SIGNATURE)

Dr. Sherry Hawn
(NAME)

Associate Vice President
(TITLE)

5/24/24
(DATE)

ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT:

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
(AGENCY)

Arif M. Karim -S Digitally signed by Arif M. Karim -S
Date: 2024.05.22 13:12:52 -05'00'

(SIGNATURE)

Arif Karim
(NAME)

Director, Cost Allocation Services
(TITLE)

05/21/2024
(DATE)

HHS REPRESENTATIVE: Olulola Oluborode

TELEPHONE: (214) 767-3261



GALVESTON BAY FOUNDATION

July 20, 2026

To Whom it May Concern:

The Galveston Bay Foundation (GBF) is excited to partner with UHCL EIH on their Envirothon proposal for the GBEP 320 funding opportunity. This project aligns well with GBF's work to ensure a healthy future for Galveston Bay by providing environmental education and assistance to local teachers and students.

As a contractual partner in this proposal, GBF will implement teacher surveys in order to determine the effectiveness of the Envirothon teacher professional development workshops, including pre-post surveys and 6-month follow-up surveys. GBF will additionally attend the workshops in order to gather observational data. All data will be provided to EIH in a final report.

The budget summary below includes all prep, communications, implementation, and reporting related to GBF's deliverables.

Description	Cost
GBF Staff Salary	\$4850
Mileage	\$26
Fringe	\$711
Printing	\$100
Indirect Costs (15%)	\$853
TOTAL	\$6540

GBF's education, volunteer, research, and outreach programs are all focused on the health and resilience of Houston's watersheds and Galveston Bay. We take pride in our ongoing successful partnership efforts with UHCL EIH and are excited to partner on this project to increase environmental education knowledge with both teachers and students. Please feel free to contact me should you have any additional questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bob Stokes

President

Galveston Bay Foundation

bstokes@galvbay.org

Galveston Bay Estuary Program

Fiscal 2028 Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **July 24, 2026**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for fiscal 2028 (FY 2028) Priority Area Actions that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for FY 2028 at the June 2026 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

Timeline of Proposals:

Task	Date Due
Release of Request for Proposals	June 22, 2026
Proposals Due	July 24, 2026
Send Proposals to Subcommittees Members for Review	August 12, 2026
Present Proposals to Subcommittees for Council Recommendation	September 2, 2026 (NRU and PPE) September 9, 2026 (M&R and WSQ)
Present Proposals to B&P Subcommittee for Final Recommendation	September 30, 2026
Present Proposals to Galveston Bay Council for Approval	October 14, 2026

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Primary Subcommittee: Monitoring and Research (M&R).
Secondary Subcommittee (if applicable): Natural Resource Uses (NRU).
Tertiary Subcommittee (if applicable): Public Participation and Education (PPE).

Project Name:

Avian Bioacoustic Assessment Across Armand Bayou Nature Center		
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Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes ☐ No ☒

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

Armand Bayou Nature Center (ABNC)

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

☐ Federal, State, or Local Government ☐ Council of Government ☐ Public ISDs or Universities
☒ Nonprofit ☐ Other*

[If other, please identify pass-through partner.]

<u>Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:</u>	CTBHH28PCJB8
<u>Vendor Identification Number (VIN) or Tax ID:</u>	23-7403757

Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Jennifer Bock, Stewardship Coordinator
Project Representative Phone	(850)445-8065
Project Representative Email	jen@abnc.org

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2027 – ending no later than May 31, 2030) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

24 Months (September 1, 2027 – August 31, 2029)

Amount Requested from GBEP:

\$ 78,312.50

Federal ☐ State ☐ No Preference ☒

Is the project scalable? ☒

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2028 (09/01/2027-08/31/2028)	\$63,212.50
FY 2029 (09/01/2028-08/31/2029)	\$15,000.00
FY 2030 (09/01/2029-05/31/2030)	\$0.00
Total	\$78,312.50

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

\$78,312.50

Is this an estimate? ☒

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

Armand Bayou Nature Center: In-kind staff time for land access, volunteer coordination, and adaptive management integration (Secured).
American Bird Conservancy: Technical support and bioacoustic pipeline access (Secured).

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Subcommittee Priorities (Section Four) will be considered above others. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

The *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* Action Plans are found at:
<https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>
<https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 1: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

NPS-1 ☐ NPS-2 ☐ NPS-3 ☐ NPS-4 ☐
PS-1 ☐ PS-2 ☐ PS-3 ☐
PHA-1 ☐ PHA-2 ☐ PHA-3 ☐ PHA-4 ☐ PHA-5 ☐

Plan Priority 2: Protect and Sustain Living Resources

HC-1 ☒ HC-2 ☐ HC-3 ☐
SC-1 ☒ SC-2 ☐
FWI-1 ☒ FWI-2 ☐ FWI-3 ☐

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

SPO-1 ☐ SPO-2 ☐ SPO-3 ☐ SPO-4 ☐
PEA-1 ☒ PEA-2 ☐ PEA-3 ☐

Plan Priority 4: Inform Science-based Decision Making

RES-1 ☒ RES-2 ☒ RES-3 ☐ RES-4 ☐
RES-5 ☐ RES-6 ☐ RES-7 ☐ RES-8 ☐
ACS-1 ☐ ACS-2 ☐ ACS-3 ☐

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

This project implements the goals and actions outlined in the **Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition (GBP)**, leveraging past GBEP investments:

Priority 2: Protect and Sustain Living Resources (HC-1, SC-1, FWI-1): Building on GBEP's landmark \$340,000 investment toward ABNC's acquisition of 1,147 acres of the former ExxonMobil tract, this project establishes automated acoustic tracking across both legacy sanctuary lands and the newly integrated parcel. It targets native wildlife species, including federal and state listed Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN), evaluating ecological health across coastal tallgrass prairie, riparian forest, fresh/saltwater marsh, and riparian bayou habitats.

Priority 4: Inform Science-Based Decision Making (RES-1, RES-2): By establishing continuous, standardized bioacoustic monitoring, this project fills critical data gaps on species distributions and delivers actionable baseline assessments of urban-wilderness interface dynamics. Specifically, the study quantifies how multi-year coastal tallgrass prairie restoration influences avian community structure across grassland, riparian forest, and coastal marsh habitats, while evaluating key shifts in avian biodiversity along a gradient from restored preserve lands to adjacent urban corridors.

Priority 3: Engage Communities (PEA-1): This project advances conservation and environmental workforce development by training ABNC staff, early-career researchers, university students, and community partners in state-of-the-art bioacoustic hardware deployment, machine-learning identification pipelines, and spatial ecological data analysis.

SECTION FOUR: SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITIES / FACTORS TO BE USED TO SELECT AWARDS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(6)]

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

Subcommittee Identified Priorities:

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- ☐ WSQ: Supporting management measures and watershed-based plans through adaptive management, workforce development, and technical assistance.
- ☐ WSQ: Improve knowledge and accessibility of pollution reporting tools to empower the community.
- ☐ WSQ: Implementation and/or evaluation of best management practices that address point and nonpoint source pollution.
- ☐ NRU: Habitat Acquisition.
- ☒ NRU: Enhancement of existing or ongoing restoration-conservation efforts. Special emphasis on:
 - ☒ Adaptive management for previously completed projects; and
 - ☐ Projects that may have lost/delayed funding from other federal sources.
- ☒ NRU: Benefit to native fish and wildlife, including federal and state listed species, Species of Greatest Conservation Need, or nongame wildlife.
- ☐ NRU: Project urgency: Project must be completed in next 24 months or opportunity is lost.
- ☐ PPE: Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed.
- ☐ PPE: Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects.
- ☐ PPE: Opportunities to host workshops/networking events to provide technical assistance for local leadership (local governments, MUDs, schoolboards, the public) on key topics.
- ☒ PPE: Conservation and environmental workforce development.
- ☐ M&R: Meaningful and effective monitoring of existing, past, and new projects (NRU: especially research and monitoring for diamondback terrapin and best management projects, WSQ, PPE).
- ☒ M&R: Baseline assessments for large-scale, man-made changes to Galveston Bay at an adequate timeline and spatial range to provide useful information.
- ☒ M&R: Assessment, Exposure, and Response to stressors, including but not limited to:
 - ☒ Species of greatest conservation need;
 - ☐ Contact recreation standards;
 - ☐ Environmental parameters;
 - ☐ Emerging contaminants; and
 - ☐ Legacy contaminants.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

Monitoring and Research (M&R) Priority: This project addresses the M&R mandate for baseline assessments of large-scale, man-made changes along Galveston Bay. By utilizing continuous acoustic sampling across 50 deployment sites (or 24 under the modular scale-down), it measures how vocal species communities and overall biodiversity metrics adapt or degrade along the urban-wilderness transition zone.

Natural Resource Uses (NRU) Priority: The project directly benefits native wildlife and SGCN species by assigning site-level conservation weights to acoustic detections. It evaluates the success of multi-year coastal tallgrass prairie restoration efforts compared to surrounding urban corridors. Following GBEP's land acquisition funding for the 1,147-acre ExxonMobil tract, establishing this baseline provides critical data to evaluate restoration outcomes amidst surrounding regional urbanization. Furthermore, ABNC will retain all ARU hardware post-grant, ensuring long-term adaptive management and tracking across the North Property.

Public Participation and Education (PPE) Priority: This project advances conservation and environmental workforce development by training ABNC interns, early-career researchers, and university students in state-of-the-art bioacoustic hardware deployment, automated machine-learning identification pipelines, and spatial ecological data analysis.

Does the Project align with any EPA Areas of Special Interest?

- ☐ Reduce Nutrient Pollution to Protect Water Quality and Public Health
- ☒ Make Investments that Address Coastal Resiliency
- ☐ Reduce Trash

High-resolution bioacoustic monitoring across coastal tallgrass prairie, riparian forest, and tidal marsh habitats provides essential baseline data to measure ecosystem resilience against climate drivers and surrounding urban expansion.

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

To implement an automated bioacoustic monitoring framework across four core habitat types at Armand Bayou Nature Center, evaluating the impact of long-term coastal tallgrass prairie restoration on bird communities relative to urban areas and establishing a quantifiable site-level biodiversity accounting index (BirdsPlus) to direct adaptive land management.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

Introduction & Ecological Need

Migratory birds and vocal wildlife communities across North America face severe population declines. As documented in the *American Bird Conservancy (ABC) BirdsPlus Index Technical Overview*, over 2.5 billion native migratory birds have been lost from breeding populations since 1970, representing a 30% reduction driven primarily by habitat fragmentation and anthropogenic stressors.

As a crucial ecological refuge within the Houston-Galveston urban landscape, ABNC provides essential habitat for resident and migratory species, including numerous federal and state-listed Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). Following GBEP's pivotal \$340,000 grant supporting the acquisition of 1,147 acres of the former ExxonMobil tract, ABNC has expanded its protected footprint. However, evaluating wildlife usage and assessing the ecological returns of multi-year prairie restoration across these newly protected lands and along urban perimeter zones has traditionally been limited by surveyor bias, field safety constraints, weather variability, and high financial overhead.

To overcome these barriers, ABNC and ABC will deploy an innovative bioacoustic monitoring infrastructure utilizing the BirdsPlus Index platform.

Project Methodology & Technical Framework

The BirdsPlus platform utilizes a standardized four-stage bioacoustic pipeline:

1. **Acoustic Data Capture:** Autonomous Recording Units (ARUs) are deployed in key biological windows (e.g., spring/fall migration) across coastal tallgrass prairie, riparian forest, fresh/saltwater marsh, and riparian bayou systems.
2. **Automated Species Identification:** Raw audio files are passed through cloud-based automated classification models (machine-learning algorithms) to catalog species presence without human observer bias.
3. **Conservation Tier Weighting:** Detected species are assigned conservation values based on rarity, state/federal listing, and SGCN status, generating a customized raw Site-Level Index Score.
4. **Remote Sensing Integration:** The site score is integrated with remote sensing metrics to generate a normalized, relative BirdsPlus Index score comparing local ecological performance against regional expectations and urban baselines.

Study Design & Scalability

Primary Ask (Extensive Sampling Scenario - \$78,312.50): Structured under the 'Higher Intensity' sampling configuration, this design deploys **50 sampling locations** distributed across core habitats, prairie restoration zones, urban transition perimeters, and the newly acquired 1,147-acre tract. This spatial density enables high-resolution mapping of avian communities across restored vs. urbanized areas.

Alternative Ask (Minimal Sampling Scenario - \$28,590.00): Structured under the 'Lower Intensity' sampling configuration, this design scales down to **24 sampling locations** focused on core interior natural habitats, maintaining core methodology and scientific validity.

Project Urgency:

With grant funding beginning in FY2028 (September 2027), immediate deployment upon award execution is critical. Installing the bioacoustic hardware in tandem with the initial rollout of conservation and land management activities on the newly acquired 1,147-acre North Property ensures operational efficiency and allows ABNC to capture unrepeatable baseline ecological data before active prairie restoration and surrounding urban development progress further.

Other Plans Implemented:

The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition: Directly implements Priorities 2 and 4 by establishing continuous bioacoustic monitoring across ABNC's legacy sanctuary lands and newly acquired acreage.

GLO Coastal Resiliency Master Plan: Supports GLO Tier One priorities by tracking ecological health and biodiversity resilience across critical coastal prairie and wetland buffers.

Texas Conservation Action Plan (TCAP): Advances TPWD priority monitoring directives for state-listed species and Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) across coastal prairie, marsh, and forest habitats

Partners¹ and Their Roles:

Armand Bayou Nature Center (ABNC): Responsible for overall project management, field deployment/retrieval of ARU hardware, spatial design execution, and integration of findings into local land management plans. ABNC will retain all ARU hardware post-grant to conduct long-term monitoring across the 1,147-acre North Property.

American Bird Conservancy (ABC): Responsible for technical study design oversight, cloud storage hosting, running automated classification pipelines, remote sensing integration, and generating BirdsPlus validation reports.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

☒ Yes

☐ No

ABNC will partner with university students, early-career environmental practitioners, and community science volunteers to assist with hardware maintenance, field sampling protocols, and data outreach.

Is the project subject to Title VI requirements?

To meet federal nondiscrimination guidance and laws (Title VI), TCEQ requires information and services to be provided in languages other than English when significant numbers of beneficiaries are of limited English-speaking ability (LEP). If 5% or more of the population within your project area is LEP and share a common language, then you are required to provide outreach in the alternative language. For statewide projects, Spanish language outreach is required. As Title VI compliance could impact the project budget, please reach out to the primary subcommittee coordinator for this application with questions on determining applicability.

☐ Yes

☒ No

[TBD.]

Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

29°36'15" N / 95°04'45" W (Preserve Centroid / Headquarters reference point; sampling grid spans 50 distributed sites across ABNC acreage)

Location:

Armand Bayou Nature Center (including legacy preserve acreage and the newly acquired 1,147-acre tract). ABNC is located in the lower Galveston Bay watershed with Armand Bayou flowing into Lake Mark Kramer (formerly known as Mud Lake), then into Clear Lake and directly into Galveston Bay.

Projects Map

[\[Insert Map Here or Attach as an Appendix if Applicable\]](#)

Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):

[\[Insert Here or Attach as an Appendix\]](#)

¹ If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted as an appendix with the application.

SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

a. Direct Costs

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$0.00
Fringe Benefits (###)% ²	\$0.00
Travel	\$2,500.00
Supplies	\$11,812.50
Equipment	\$0.00
Contractual	\$50,000.00
Construction	\$0.00
Other	\$14,000.00
Total Direct Cost	\$78,312.50

b. Indirect Costs³

Distribution Base Amount (<i>identify Base type below</i>)	\$
Indirect Cost Rate for Reimbursement	%
Total Indirect Costs	\$

c. Maximum Authorized Reimbursement

Maximum Authorized Reimbursement (Direct and Indirect Costs)	\$ 78,312.50
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Indirect Cost Distribution Base. The Distribution Base above is (check one):

- ☐ direct salary/wages and fringe benefits
☐ modified total direct costs
☐ other direct cost Base

If other direct cost Base, identify:

The indirect cost rate is (check one):

- ☐ **Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.
- ☐ **De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of 15 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

² If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

³ Please attach Indirect Cost Agreement as an appendix if applicable

☐ **Partial Reimbursement Rate** — a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

☐ **Other:** [Examples: De Minimis Rate with a base of direct salary and wages (less than or equal to actual indirect costs) or Provisional Rate. If this is a Provisional Rate, include the following language: Provisional Rate: The subsequent adjustment of the indirect cost rate is subject to the requirements of Article 9 of this (Cost Budget) section.]

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of budget total, identify the main constituents:

Supplies (\$11,812.50): Total ARU hardware purchase (initial hardware plus additional units/accessories for attrition as needed) for 50 field units.

Travel (\$2,500.00): Travel expenses for technical project staff for initial deployment set-up and field auditing.

Contractual (\$50,000.00): Technical services provided by American Bird Conservancy (ABC) for study design, automated classification algorithm execution, data validation, remote sensing integration, and final BirdsPlus Index reporting.

Other (\$14,000.00): Direct operational expenses including field ARU deployment (\$2,000), ARU retrieval (\$2,000), and cloud data storage/processing (\$10,000).

Modular Scale-Down Option (Option B - \$38,090.00 Breakdown):

If full funding is unavailable, the project can be scaled down to 24 sites: Supplies (\$5,670), Travel (\$2,500), Contractual (\$23,000), Other (\$6,920: \$960 deployment, \$960 retrieval, \$5,000 storage).

Travel. In order to be reimbursable, travel costs must be specifically authorized in advance of the travel. Travel costs will be reimbursed only in the amount of actual costs, up to the maximum allowed by law for employees of the State of Texas at the time the cost is incurred.

Budget Categories. The Budget Categories above are representative of the items of cost found in TxGMS and 2 CFR Part 200, and have the definitions, requirements, and limitations found therein. Construction costs are not reimbursable without prior, specific written authorization from TCEQ.

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will post notification of the meeting's time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by **July 24, 2026 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:**

WSQ Subcommittee: Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov
NRU Subcommittee: Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov
PPE Subcommittee: Zoe.Gapayao@tceq.texas.gov
M&R Subcommittee: Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov
Programmatic Projects: Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Fiscal 2028 Project Proposal



Please complete this proposal form and submit to the appropriate Subcommittee Coordinator (end of form) by **July 24, 2026**. No late submittals will be considered for funding.

This Call for Project Proposals complies with 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 14.7, which lays out requirements for a competitive solicitation by TCEQ for grant awards. For convenience, specific citations to 30 TAC § 14.7 are identified in the text.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose [required by 30 TAC § 14.7(1)]: The purpose of the proposed grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), is to implement *The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (the Plan), a comprehensive conservation and management plan falling under Section 320, of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1330), for a designated national estuary in the State of Texas.

Objective and Allowable Activities [see 30 TAC § 14.7(4)]: The objective of this grant is to implement the GBEP stakeholder developed priorities for fiscal 2028 (FY 2028) Priority Area Actions that were developed by GBEP subcommittees for FY 2028 at the June 2026 meetings. Any proposal implementing the Plan may be submitted, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Priority Area Actions will be considered above others.

Authority [see 30 TAC § 14.7(2)]: Grants issued by GBEP under this solicitation are authorized by: the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) § 320 (33 UNITED STATES CODE § 1330), commonly referred to as the National Estuary Program; TEX. WATER CODE § 5.124; and 30 TAC ch. 14.

Match Requirement [see 30 TAC § 14.7(10) and 30 TAC § 14.7(11)]: No matching funds are required. Therefore, there is no need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.

Multiple Awards [see 30 TAC § 14.7(7)]: GBEP anticipates awarding funds for multiple proposals. GBEP intends to award grants to that combination of proposals which best implements the Plan, factoring in all criteria identified in this Call for Project Proposals, the availability of funds, and the most effective division of funds between awards.

Timeline of Proposals:

Task	Date Due
Release of Request for Proposals	June 22, 2026
Proposals Due	July 24, 2026
Send Proposals to Subcommittees Members for Review	August 12, 2026
Present Proposals to Subcommittees for Council Recommendation	September 2, 2026 (NRU and PPE) September 9, 2026 (M&R and WSQ)
Present Proposals to B&P Subcommittee for Final Recommendation	September 30, 2026
Present Proposals to Galveston Bay Council for Approval	October 14, 2026

SECTION TWO: SUBMITTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

Primary Subcommittee: Monitoring and Research (M&R)
Secondary Subcommittee (if applicable): Natural Resource Uses (NRU)
Tertiary Subcommittee (if applicable): Public Participation and Education (PPE)

Project Name:

Building a Baseline for Sandy Beach Ecosystem Health: Monitoring the Ecological Effects of Beach Nourishment and Contaminant Exposure in Galveston Bay
--

Project Previously Funded by GBEP? Yes ☐ No ☒

Lead Implementer / Categories of Eligible Recipients [see 30 TAC § 14.7(3)]:

Texas A&M University at Galveston

The lead implementer must be in one of the following categories of eligible recipients. Please indicate which category applies to your entity. If the proposing party is not already paired with a lead implementer in one of the categories listed below, the proposing party will need to partner with an eligible recipient in one of these categories to be selected for funding. Please reach out to GBEP staff with any questions.

☐ Federal, State, or Local Government ☐ Council of Government ☒ Public ISDs or Universities
☐ Nonprofit ☐ Other*

[If other, please identify pass-through partner.]

Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:	G8Y3L8JV2588
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Vendor Identification Number (VIN) or Tax ID:	74-2125225
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Contact Information:

Project Representative Name	Guilherme N. Corte
Project Representative Phone	409 261-7903
Project Representative Email	corte@tamug.edu

Project Dates / Duration (beginning no earlier than September 1, 2027 – ending no later than May 31, 2030) [see 30 TAC § 14.7(5)]:

September 1, 2027 – May 31, 2030

Amount Requested from GBEP:

\$145,229

Federal ☐ State ☐ No Preference ☒

Is the project scalable? ☒

Amount Requested per year (if applicable):

FY 2028 (09/01/2027-08/31/2028)	\$60,753
FY 2029 (09/01/2028-08/31/2029)	\$61,946
FY 2030 (09/01/2029-05/31/2030)	\$22,530
Total	\$145,229

Total Project Cost (including Leveraging Amounts, if any; provide leveraging information where indicated below):

\$145,229

Is this an estimate? ☐

Leveraging (in-kind and/or cash):

The proposed project will leverage complementary resources supporting field sampling, laboratory analyses, and ecological assessments of Texas sandy beaches. These resources, together with existing laboratory infrastructure, personnel, and ongoing biodiversity and beach nourishment monitoring, will expand the scope and value of the GBEP-funded activities by supporting contaminant analyses, eDNA characterization, and long-term ecological monitoring across the Galveston Bay Estuary System..

SECTION THREE: GALVESTON BAY PLAN, 2ND EDITION IMPLEMENTATION

Grant recipient activities to be funded must implement the Plan, but proposals implementing the FY 2028 Subcommittee Priorities (Section Four) will be considered above others. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

The *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* Action Plans are found at:

<https://gbep.texas.gov/ensure-safe-human-and-aquatic-life-use/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/protect-and-sustain-living-resources/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/engage-communities/>

<https://gbep.texas.gov/inform-science-based-decision-making/>

Galveston Bay Plan Priority Area Actions Addressed:

Plan Priority 1: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

NPS-1 ☐ NPS-2 ☒ NPS-3 ☐ NPS-4 ☐
PS-1 ☐ PS-2 ☐ PS-3 ☐
PHA-1 ☐ PHA-2 ☒ PHA-3 ☐ PHA-4 ☐ PHA-5 ☐

Plan Priority 2: Protect and Sustain Living Resources

HC-1 ☐ HC-2 ☒ HC-3 ☒
SC-1 ☒ SC-2 ☐
FWI-1 ☐ FWI-2 ☐ FWI-3 ☐

Plan Priority 3: Engage Communities

SPO-1 ☒ SPO-2 ☒ SPO-3 ☒ SPO-4 ☒
PEA-1 ☒ PEA-2 ☐ PEA-3 ☐

Plan Priority 4: Inform Science-based Decision Making

RES-1 ☒ RES-2 ☒ RES-3 ☐ RES-4 ☐
RES-5 ☐ RES-6 ☐ RES-7 ☐ RES-8 ☒
ACS-1 ☒ ACS-2 ☒ ACS-3 ☐

Plan Priority Area Actions Detail:

[Please identify action items and state how the project implements actions of the *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* Action Plans.]

Priority 1: Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use

NPS-2 Support Nonpoint Source Education and Outreach Campaigns:

The project will support locally relevant education and outreach connecting beach health, bay health, and human well-being. By documenting biodiversity, sediment characteristics, beach nourishment effects, and contaminant exposure across Galveston-area sandy beaches, the project will provide examples that can be incorporated into public education on stormwater runoff, water quality, shoreline management, and the ecological importance of beaches beyond recreation. The project will quantify 54 polycyclic aromatic compounds, including the 16 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency priority compounds, and 26 polychlorinated biphenyls, including nine dioxin-like congeners. These results will support outreach on the sources, transport, accumulation, and ecological consequences of nonpoint-source pollution in coastal environments.

PHA-2 Improve Regional Contact Recreation Risk Awareness:

Sandy beaches are among the most heavily used recreational environments in the Galveston region. This project will provide information on sediment conditions, biodiversity, nourishment effects, and contaminant patterns across beaches monitored from 2025 through 2028. The resulting dataset will complement programs such as Texas Beach Watch and the Galveston Bay Foundation's Water Monitoring Team by addressing ecological and sediment-associated conditions that are not routinely monitored. Although the project will not conduct a formal human-health risk assessment, its results will help identify contaminant patterns and locations that may warrant additional investigation or public awareness. The

project will therefore support more informed management and communication concerning recreational coastal environments.

Priority 2: Protect and Sustain Living Resources

HC-2 Habitat Restoration:

Sandy beaches within the Galveston Bay Estuary System face increasing pressure from chronic erosion, storms, sea-level rise, and coastal development. Beach nourishment is widely used to restore eroded shorelines and protect coastal infrastructure, but its ecological outcomes are rarely evaluated. This project will quantify how nourishment affects sandy beach biodiversity, sediment characteristics, nutrient conditions, habitat quality, and ecosystem recovery. By comparing conditions before and after nourishment and at reference beaches, the project will provide recommendations for improving the design, implementation, and ecological monitoring of future nourishment projects.

HC-3 Habitat Enhancement:

The project will evaluate how nourishment practices and sediment sources influence sandy beach habitat quality. Results will help identify management practices that maintain suitable sediment conditions, support native invertebrate communities, preserve food resources for shorebirds and surf-zone fishes, and sustain the ecological functions of beaches. These findings will inform shoreline-management strategies that balance habitat quality, coastal protection, and public access.

SC-1 Native Species Management:

Sandy beaches support diverse native species, including ghost shrimp, ghost crabs, amphipods, mole crabs, insects, shorebirds, surf-zone fishes, and other organisms that are often overlooked in coastal monitoring and management. Through repeated surveys across 11 Galveston-area beaches from 2025 through 2028, the project will establish baseline and long-term monitoring data for native sandy beach communities. Contaminant measurements will also help identify species and ecological groups that may be particularly vulnerable to pollution or habitat disturbance. These data will support future management decisions intended to sustain native beach biodiversity.

Priority 3: Engage Communities

SPO-1 Stewardship Programs and Volunteer Opportunities:

Because sandy beaches are familiar and publicly accessible, they provide effective settings for environmental stewardship and community participation. The project will create opportunities for students, volunteers, and community members to participate in beach surveys, biodiversity monitoring, field demonstrations, and public outreach. The research program already engages local stakeholders through activities with organizations such as the Surfrider Foundation, where participants learn about sandy beach ecology and observe local biodiversity and ecological processes. Project findings will be incorporated into future community-science activities, volunteer monitoring, student training, and public demonstrations.

SPO-2 Workshops and Events:

Results from biodiversity surveys, nourishment monitoring, and contaminant analyses will be shared through public events, workshops, agency meetings, and opportunities such as the State of the Bay Symposium. These activities will present sandy beaches as living ecosystems that provide habitat, coastal protection, recreation, tourism value, and support for coastal food webs. Locally relevant examples and project findings will be used to engage coastal managers, educators, students, local governments, community organizations, and the public.

SPO-3 Support Regional Initiatives:

The project will address a major regional knowledge gap by documenting the ecological condition and management needs of sandy beach ecosystems within the Galveston Bay Estuary System. By integrating information on biodiversity, nourishment, sediment quality, contamination, and ecosystem condition, the project will strengthen regional conservation and resilience initiatives. It will also promote recognition of beaches, dunes, shorelines, and nearshore habitats as connected components of the broader Galveston Bay coastal system.

SPO-4 Local Government Outreach:

Local governments play central roles in beach access, nourishment planning, erosion response, tourism

management, and shoreline maintenance. Over the past two years, the research team has worked with the Galveston Park Board to better understand management priorities and identify information needed to support decision-making. Building on this relationship, the project will generate practical data on nourishment outcomes, vulnerable beaches and species, contaminant patterns, and changes in ecosystem condition. Results will be communicated through technical summaries, maps, presentations, and outreach materials developed for municipalities, county partners, park managers, and other coastal decision-makers.

PEA-1 Key Issue Engagement:

The project will promote public engagement with major issues affecting Galveston Bay and its coast, including erosion, beach nourishment, pollution, biodiversity loss, recreational use, and coastal resilience. By presenting sandy beaches as biologically active ecosystems rather than only recreational spaces, the project will encourage broader discussion of how human activities affect beach health and how communities can contribute to protecting these habitats.

Priority 4: Inform Science-Based Decision Making

RES-1 Conduct Biological Stressor Monitoring and Research:

The project will monitor biological responses of sandy beach communities to stressors including nourishment, erosion, sediment alteration, human use, urbanization, and contaminant exposure. Repeated biodiversity surveys across Galveston-area beaches from 2025 through 2028, combined with monitoring of post-nourishment recovery, will reveal how beach communities respond to disturbance and environmental variability. These data will help identify biological indicators of ecosystem condition, disturbance, and recovery.

RES-2 Conduct Geochemical Stressor Monitoring and Research:

The project will investigate oil-derived hydrocarbons and other contaminants of concern in sandy beach sediments and organisms. Analyses will include 54 polycyclic aromatic compounds, including the 16 EPA priority compounds, and 26 polychlorinated biphenyls, including nine dioxin-like congeners. Because organisms such as ghost shrimp and ghost crabs live in close contact with beach sediments, they can provide information on local contaminant exposure and ecological risk. The project will establish baseline conditions, identify potential contaminant hotspots, and evaluate relationships among contamination, environmental characteristics, biodiversity, and ecosystem condition.

RES-8 Complete Coastal Resiliency and Acclimation Studies:

The project will evaluate how sandy beaches respond to nourishment, erosion, sediment alteration, and other coastal stressors. Because nourishment is an important adaptation strategy for shoreline erosion, storm impacts, and sea-level rise, understanding its ecological consequences is essential for resilient coastal management. The project will monitor biodiversity, ecosystem recovery, beach width, slope, sediment grain size, and sediment composition through time. These data will clarify recovery trajectories, identify factors affecting habitat quality, and support management practices that enhance the long-term resilience of Galveston-area beaches.

ACS-1 Tracking Ecosystem Health Indicators:

Sandy beach ecosystems are underrepresented in existing coastal monitoring frameworks. This project will generate information that can support the development and tracking of sandy beach health indicators, including biodiversity, benthic-community metrics, sediment characteristics, eDNA-based community composition, nutrient conditions, contaminant concentrations, and post-nourishment recovery. These indicators can contribute to future assessments of the Galveston Bay Estuary System and its adjacent coastal habitats.

ACS-2 Access to Monitoring and Research Data:

The project will produce datasets, maps, technical reports, outreach materials, and scientific publications for GBEP partners, local governments, coastal managers, educators, community organizations, and the public. Results from biodiversity surveys, nourishment monitoring, eDNA analyses, and contaminant assessments will be translated into accessible products that support science-based decision-making, long-term monitoring, and public understanding.

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority. This selection criteria provides for the selection of multiple recipients as needed.

Subcommittee Identified Priorities:

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

- ☐ WSQ: Supporting management measures and watershed-based plans through adaptive management, workforce development, and technical assistance.
- ☐ WSQ: Improve knowledge and accessibility of pollution reporting tools to empower the community.
- ☐ WSQ: Implementation and/or evaluation of best management practices that address point and nonpoint source pollution.
- ☐ NRU: Habitat Acquisition.
- ☒ NRU: Enhancement of existing or ongoing restoration-conservation efforts. Special emphasis on:
 - ☒ Adaptive management for previously completed projects; and
 - ☐ Projects that may have lost/delayed funding from other federal sources.
- ☐ NRU: Benefit to native fish and wildlife, including federal and state listed species, Species of Greatest Conservation Need, or nongame wildlife.
- ☐ NRU: Project urgency: Project must be completed in next 24 months or opportunity is lost.
- ☐ PPE: Connecting new audiences to existing/completed on-the-ground projects in the watershed.
- ☐ PPE: Empowering K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects.
- ☐ PPE: Opportunities to host workshops/networking events to provide technical assistance for local leadership (local governments, MUDs, schoolboards, the public) on key topics.
- ☒ PPE: Conservation and environmental workforce development.
- ☐ M&R: Meaningful and effective monitoring of existing, past, and new projects (NRU: especially research and monitoring for diamondback terrapin and best management projects, WSQ, PPE).
- ☒ M&R: Baseline assessments for large-scale, man-made changes to Galveston Bay at an adequate timeline and spatial range to provide useful information.
- ☒ M&R: Assessment, Exposure, and Response to stressors, including but not limited to:
 - ☐ Species of greatest conservation need;
 - ☐ Contact recreation standards;
 - ☒ Environmental parameters;
 - ☐ Emerging contaminants; and
 - ☒ Legacy contaminants.

Subcommittee Priority Detail:

[Please explain in detail how project addresses priorities selected. Attachments may be submitted via email in conjunction with this application.]

M&R: Baseline assessments for large-scale, man-made changes to Galveston Bay at an adequate timeline and spatial range to provide useful information

This project directly addresses the M&R priority by establishing integrated ecological, physical, molecular, and contaminant baselines for sandy beaches along the Galveston coast. Building on standardized surveys conducted across 11 Galveston-area beaches in 2025 and 2026, the project provides the spatial coverage needed to compare beaches across gradients of human use, shoreline modification, sediment characteristics, and management history. These data will provide a reference for evaluating future effects of storms, hurricanes, oil spills, harmful algal blooms, nonpoint-source pollution, and other natural and human-driven disturbances.

The project also incorporates a strong temporal framework through baseline, post-impact, and recovery assessments of beach nourishment, one of the most extensive shoreline-management interventions along the Galveston coast. Although nourishment projects are routinely evaluated from an engineering perspective, their ecological effects on biodiversity, sediment characteristics, nutrient dynamics, habitat quality, and ecosystem recovery are rarely assessed. By monitoring conditions before and after nourishment and comparing nourished beaches with reference sites, the project will determine whether ecosystems return to pre-disturbance conditions, remain altered, or shift to alternative ecological states. Contaminant baselines in sediments and key beach organisms will likewise help distinguish background conditions from future pollution events and spill-related impacts. Together, these spatial and temporal datasets will help managers identify vulnerable beaches and species, compare nourished and non-nourished shorelines, evaluate sediment-source effects, detect environmental change, and improve nourishment, habitat restoration, spill-response planning, and long-term coastal resilience.

M&R: Assessment, exposure, and response to stressors, including environmental parameters and legacy contaminants

This project will evaluate how sandy beach ecosystems respond to interacting physical, chemical, and biological stressors, including beach nourishment, sediment alteration, erosion, human use, urbanization, freshwater and stormwater inputs, nutrient enrichment, oil-derived hydrocarbons, and other contaminants of concern. The project will quantify 54 polycyclic aromatic compounds, including the 16 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency priority compounds, and 26 polychlorinated biphenyls, including nine dioxin-like congeners. Contaminant concentrations will be evaluated alongside sediment grain size, beach morphology, habitat condition, nutrient dynamics, biodiversity, and eDNA-based community composition.

Exposure assessments will focus on sediments and key sandy beach organisms, including ghost shrimp and ghost crabs, which live in close contact with sediments and can indicate local contaminant exposure. By linking contaminant concentrations in sediments and organisms with biodiversity, community composition, environmental conditions, and post-nourishment recovery, the project will identify contaminant hotspots, vulnerable beaches and taxa, and ecological responses to multiple stressors. This integrated approach will provide practical information for contaminant monitoring, ecological risk assessment, habitat restoration, and sustainable beach management throughout the Galveston Bay Estuary System.

NRU: Enhancement of existing or ongoing restoration and conservation efforts, with emphasis on adaptive management for previously completed projects

This project directly addresses the NRU priority by strengthening beach nourishment, one of the most widespread shoreline restoration and conservation practices along the Galveston coast, through ecological monitoring that supports adaptive management. With erosion reaching approximately 6.86 feet per year along portions of Galveston Island, nourishment has become a central coastal-management strategy. However, nourishment projects are generally evaluated primarily from an engineering perspective, and their ecological effects on biodiversity, sediment characteristics, nutrient dynamics, habitat quality, and ecosystem recovery remain poorly understood. This lack of ecological performance data limits the ability of managers to refine nourishment design, sediment selection, implementation, and monitoring. By addressing this gap, the project will enhance an ongoing restoration strategy rather than duplicate existing efforts.

The project specifically applies adaptive management to a previously completed nourishment project. A major nourishment project on West Beach was completed through CAP 204 using hundreds of thousands of cubic yards of sediment from the Galveston Ship Channel. Immediately before construction in September 2025, the research team sampled dune arthropods, benthic infauna, microbial communities using eDNA, and environmental conditions at the nourishment site and two reference sites. Sampling was repeated

immediately after construction and six months later. This before-impact, post-impact, and recovery design will determine whether the nourished ecosystem returns to its pre-construction condition, remains altered, or shifts to an alternative ecological state.

Two additional nourishment projects planned for 2027 and 2028, including projects involving the beneficial use of dredged material, will extend this framework across multiple nourishment events, sediment sources, and management contexts. Together, these assessments will provide managers with recommendations for improving nourishment design, selecting appropriate sediments, refining monitoring protocols, and ensuring that nourishment supports both shoreline protection and ecological function.

PPE: Conservation and environmental workforce development

This project addresses the PPE priority by using sandy beach ecosystems as accessible, hands-on training environments for students, early-career scientists, educators, volunteers, and community participants. Trainees will gain practical experience in field sampling, biodiversity surveys, sediment and organism collection, eDNA methods, contaminant sampling, data management, ecological analysis, and science communication. Because sandy beaches are familiar and publicly accessible, they provide an effective setting for developing technical skills while helping participants recognize beaches as biologically active coastal ecosystems rather than only recreational spaces.

The project will prepare participants for careers in conservation, coastal management, environmental consulting, academic research, nonprofit organizations, and local government by providing training in methods directly relevant to Galveston Bay. These methods include monitoring beach nourishment, assessing habitat condition, evaluating contaminant exposure, mapping ecological patterns, managing environmental data, and communicating findings to managers and the public. Project activities and outreach products will also support K-12 education, community science, public workshops, and stewardship programs, thereby strengthening both technical workforce capacity and broader environmental literacy

Does the Project align with any EPA Areas of Special Interest?

- ☐ Reduce Nutrient Pollution to Protect Water Quality and Public Health
- ☒ Make Investments that Address Coastal Resiliency
- ☐ Reduce Trash

[If yes, please summarize how the proposal addresses EPA Areas of Special Interest.]

The proposed project addresses coastal resiliency by improving how sandy beach ecosystems are monitored, restored, and managed in response to erosion, storms, sea-level rise, shoreline modification, and other human-driven stressors. Sandy beaches provide shoreline protection for coastal communities while supporting tourism, recreation, nearshore biodiversity, fisheries, and wildlife habitat. By evaluating beach nourishment, sediment characteristics, biodiversity, eDNA-based community composition, environmental conditions, and ecosystem recovery across Galveston-area beaches, the project will generate practical information needed to design and manage nourishment projects that protect shorelines while maintaining ecological function.

The project will also strengthen coastal resiliency by establishing ecological and contaminant baselines needed to evaluate future storms, pollution events, and shoreline-management activities. It will quantify 54 polycyclic aromatic compounds, including the 16 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency priority compounds, and 26 polychlorinated biphenyls, including nine dioxin-like congeners, in beach sediments and key organisms such as ghost shrimp and ghost crabs. These analyses will identify contaminant hotspots, characterize ecological exposure, and reveal vulnerabilities that may reduce the capacity of beach ecosystems to withstand and recover from disturbance.

By integrating contaminant assessment with biodiversity surveys, eDNA-based community monitoring, environmental measurements, and post-nourishment recovery assessments, the project will provide coastal managers with science-based information to identify vulnerable beaches, evaluate restoration effectiveness, improve future nourishment practices, and prioritize investments that support shoreline protection, ecosystem health, and long-term resilience throughout the Galveston Bay Estuary System.

SECTION FIVE: PROPOSAL DETAILS

Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses a subcommittee priority.

Project Summary:

Building on ongoing field surveys, this project will integrate biodiversity assessments, environmental DNA (eDNA), contaminant analyses of sediments and organisms, and beach nourishment monitoring to evaluate the condition and resilience of Galveston Bay sandy beaches. The project will identify vulnerable beaches, contaminant hotspots, ecological responses to nourishment, and environmental drivers of ecosystem condition. Results will provide actionable information to support coastal resilience planning, habitat management, spill-response preparedness, and the science-based design and evaluation of shoreline restoration practices.

Full Project Description (1,000 words or less):

[Please explain in detail how project addresses priorities selected. Attachments may be submitted via email in conjunction with this application.]

No coastal ecosystem is more present in daily life than sandy beaches. They comprise one-third of the world's shorelines and support fisheries and tourism, buffer communities from storms and sea-level rise, filter water, provide nesting habitat for threatened species, and sustain coastal food webs (Defeo and McLachlan 2025). Their socioeconomic importance is substantial: U.S. beaches attract nearly 200 million visitors annually and generate approximately \$240 billion in local economic activity (Houston 2024). In Galveston alone, more than 7 million annual visitors support a tourism economy exceeding \$1.3 billion (Visit Galveston). Yet Galveston's sandy beaches are exposed to interacting stressors, including erosion, urbanization, stormwater runoff, recreational use, freshwater influence, nutrient inputs, oil-derived hydrocarbons, and other contaminants of concern.

Despite their ecological and economic importance, sandy beaches remain among the least-studied coastal ecosystems, receiving far less research attention than adjacent reefs and estuaries. Within the Galveston Bay Estuary System, sandy beaches are especially underrepresented in monitoring programs, and no integrated effort currently evaluates their biodiversity, contaminant exposure, and response to major shoreline interventions. This gap limits the ability of managers and stakeholders to develop science-based strategies for coastal resilience, habitat protection, spill-response preparedness, and long-term shoreline management.

The project has three objectives: (1) document biodiversity and ecological condition across Galveston-area sandy beaches; (2) establish a standardized baseline of oil-related contamination in beach sediments and organisms; and (3) evaluate how beach nourishment affects habitat quality, biodiversity, and ecosystem recovery.

Objective 1: Biodiversity and ecological condition. Our team sampled 11 Galveston-area sandy beaches in both 2025 and 2026, spanning heavily used sites such as the Seawall and less modified sites such as Galveston Island State Park. At each beach, we surveyed benthic biodiversity using protocols and collected environmental DNA (eDNA) to characterize ecological communities. We also sampled key organisms, including ghost shrimp and ghost crabs, to evaluate population structure and ecological responses across sites, and measured environmental variables including beach slope, grain size, salinity, and degree of human modification. With support from this project, we will complete taxonomic and eDNA analyses of samples already collected and repeat standardized sampling in summers 2027 and 2028. This multiyear framework will reveal how natural variation, human use, and shoreline management shape biodiversity and ecological condition along Galveston Bay shorelines.

Objective 2: Contaminant baseline and recreational-use relevance. We will analyze sediments and key beach organisms to characterize oil-derived contamination and ecological exposure. Analyses will include 54 polycyclic aromatic compounds, including the 16 U.S. EPA priority compounds, and 26 polychlorinated biphenyls. Galveston Bay is affected by an estimated 170,000 gallons of oil spills annually, and petroleum-associated contaminants can accumulate in sediments and organisms, with potential consequences for ecosystem condition and coastal food webs. Current Texas beach monitoring focuses primarily on bacterial indicators and shoreline change, leaving a major gap in sediment-associated contaminant characterization. This project will produce spatially explicit contamination maps and ecological risk assessments identifying potential hotspots relevant to beach ecosystems, coastal food webs, and recreational areas. These products will complement existing monitoring programs and support long-term environmental assessment, habitat management, and spill-response planning.

Objective 3: Beach nourishment and adaptive management. Beach nourishment has become an important response to erosion along the Galveston coast, where shoreline retreat reaches approximately 6.86 feet per year in some areas. However, nourishment projects are generally assessed from an engineering perspective, while their ecological effects remain poorly understood. A major nourishment project was completed on West Beach through CAP 204 using hundreds of thousands of cubic yards of sediment from the Galveston Ship Channel. Immediately before construction in September 2025, our team sampled dune arthropods, benthic infauna, eDNA-based microbial communities, and environmental conditions at the nourishment site and two reference sites. Sampling was repeated immediately after construction and six months later. This

before-impact, post-impact, and recovery design directly addresses the M&R priority for baseline assessment of large-scale human modifications and the NRU priority for adaptive management of completed restoration projects. Two additional nourishment projects planned for 2027 and 2028, including the beneficial use of dredged material, will extend this framework across multiple nourishment events, sediment sources, and management contexts.

Community engagement, workforce development, and project readiness. The project builds on established field, laboratory, and analytical workflows in both PI laboratories and will provide hands-on training for graduate and undergraduate students in coastal field methods, molecular ecology, contaminant analysis, data management, ecological interpretation, and science communication. Because beaches are familiar and publicly accessible, the project also offers opportunities for volunteer and community participation in field sampling, biodiversity monitoring, beach surveys, and outreach. Existing activities with organizations such as the Surfrider Foundation allow participants to learn about sandy beach ecology and observe local biodiversity and ecological processes firsthand. Public-facing contamination maps, plain-language summaries, community-science activities, and technical products will make results accessible to coastal managers, local governments, community partners, and recreational users.

The project is ready for immediate implementation. The investigators have already completed extensive field surveys and collected samples for biodiversity, eDNA, and contaminant analyses. GBEP support will accelerate taxonomic identification, molecular processing, chemical analyses, oil fingerprinting, ecological risk assessment, and continued monitoring through 2028, providing the temporal resolution needed to detect ecological change and evaluate responses to environmental variability and shoreline management.

This project directly advances all four priorities of *The Galveston Bay Plan*: (1) **Ensure Safe Human and Aquatic Life Use** by establishing a baseline of oil-related contamination and identifying hotspots relevant to ecological risk, coastal food webs, and recreational use; (2) **Protect and Sustain Living Resources** by documenting sandy beach biodiversity, population structure, and ecosystem functioning; (3) **Engage Communities** by producing accessible maps, summaries, and data products while engaging students, volunteers, community partners, and recreational users in sandy beach monitoring and outreach; and (4) **Inform Science-based Decision Making** by generating the first integrated ecological, contaminant, and nourishment-response baseline for sandy beaches in the Galveston Bay Estuary System. By integrating biodiversity surveys, eDNA, environmental characterization, oil-contamination assessments, and nourishment monitoring, the project will generate actionable data to support coastal resilience, habitat management, spill-response planning, and science-based evaluation of shoreline restoration practices.

Project Urgency:

[Please indicate the need for receiving funding during this cycle; such as loss of other funding secured, loss of opportunity to implement project, potential of breach, etc.]

Funding during this cycle is urgent because field samples have already been collected, and the project has reached the stage when taxonomic identification, laboratory analyses, reagent purchases, and sample processing must be completed. The investigators have the samples, personnel, field capacity, and established analytical workflows in place, but additional support is needed to complete this work. Without timely funding, samples may remain unanalyzed, delaying management-relevant results and disrupting continuity in the monitoring program.

Timely support is also essential because the project will continue standardized sampling for two additional years, creating a four-year dataset for Galveston-area sandy beaches. This time series will provide a rare opportunity to document understudied coastal biodiversity, detect ecological changes associated with human activities and environmental variability, and evaluate the effects of beach nourishment and other shoreline-management actions. Two additional nourishment projects are anticipated in 2027 and 2028, and pre-construction baselines must be collected before sand placement. Once construction occurs, those baseline conditions cannot be reconstructed. Similarly, ecological and contaminant baselines must be established before the next hurricane, spill, or other disturbance to support meaningful impact assessment. Delayed funding could therefore interrupt the monitoring timeline and result in the permanent loss of critical sampling opportunities.

The work is particularly urgent because standardized, multiyear datasets describing sandy beach biodiversity, contaminant exposure, and ecological responses to nourishment remain lacking for the Galveston Bay Estuary System. Without pre-disturbance baselines, it is difficult to distinguish chronic background conditions from acute impacts, limiting damage assessment, recovery monitoring, and long-term management. The investigators have already completed extensive biodiversity surveys and established methods for characterizing oil-related contamination in sediments and organisms. Funding will therefore immediately advance taxonomic identification, eDNA processing, chemical analyses, ecological risk

assessment, and continued field monitoring. The project will complement existing programs such as Texas Beach Watch while providing an integrated assessment of biodiversity, contaminant exposure, and ecological condition across Galveston-area sandy beaches.

Other Plans Implemented:

[Please identify any third-party conservation plans this project implements, such as the Texas Coastal Management Plan, Texas Coastal Resiliency Master Plan, watershed-based plans, etc.]
N/A

Partners¹ and Their Roles:

Dr. Guilherme N. Corte (Principal Investigator, Texas A&M University at Galveston)

Dr. Corte will lead the overall project, including project coordination, study design, field sampling, biodiversity surveys, environmental DNA (eDNA) analyses, beach nourishment monitoring, data integration, statistical analyses, reporting, and stakeholder outreach. He will oversee assessments of sandy beach biodiversity, ecosystem condition, ecological responses to nourishment, and the development of science-based recommendations for coastal management.

Dr. David Hala (Co-Principal Investigator, Texas A&M University at Galveston)

Dr. Hala will lead the environmental chemistry component of the project. He will oversee contaminant analyses in beach sediments and organisms, including the quantification of 54 polycyclic aromatic compounds (PACs), including the 16 U.S. EPA priority PACs, and 26 polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), including nine dioxin-like congeners. He will contribute to study design, quality assurance and quality control (QA/QC), contaminant data interpretation, ecological risk assessment, and the integration of contaminant and ecological datasets to support sustainable beach management.

Does the Project work with new, smaller communities/partnerships?

☐ Yes

☒ No

[TBD.]

Is the project subject to Title VI requirements?

To meet federal nondiscrimination guidance and laws (Title VI), TCEQ requires information and services to be provided in languages other than English when significant numbers of beneficiaries are of limited English-speaking ability (LEP). If 5% or more of the population within your project area is LEP and share a common language, then you are required to provide outreach in the alternative language. For statewide projects, Spanish language outreach is required. As Title VI compliance could impact the project budget, please reach out to the primary subcommittee coordinator for this application with questions on determining applicability.

☐ Yes

☒ No

[TBD.]

Latitude/Longitude (Optional):

[degrees, minutes, and seconds format]

Location:

Galveston Bay shorelines

Projects Map

¹ If partners are subgrantees completing work reimbursable under GBEP funding, a letter of commitment from the partner must be submitted as an appendix with the application.

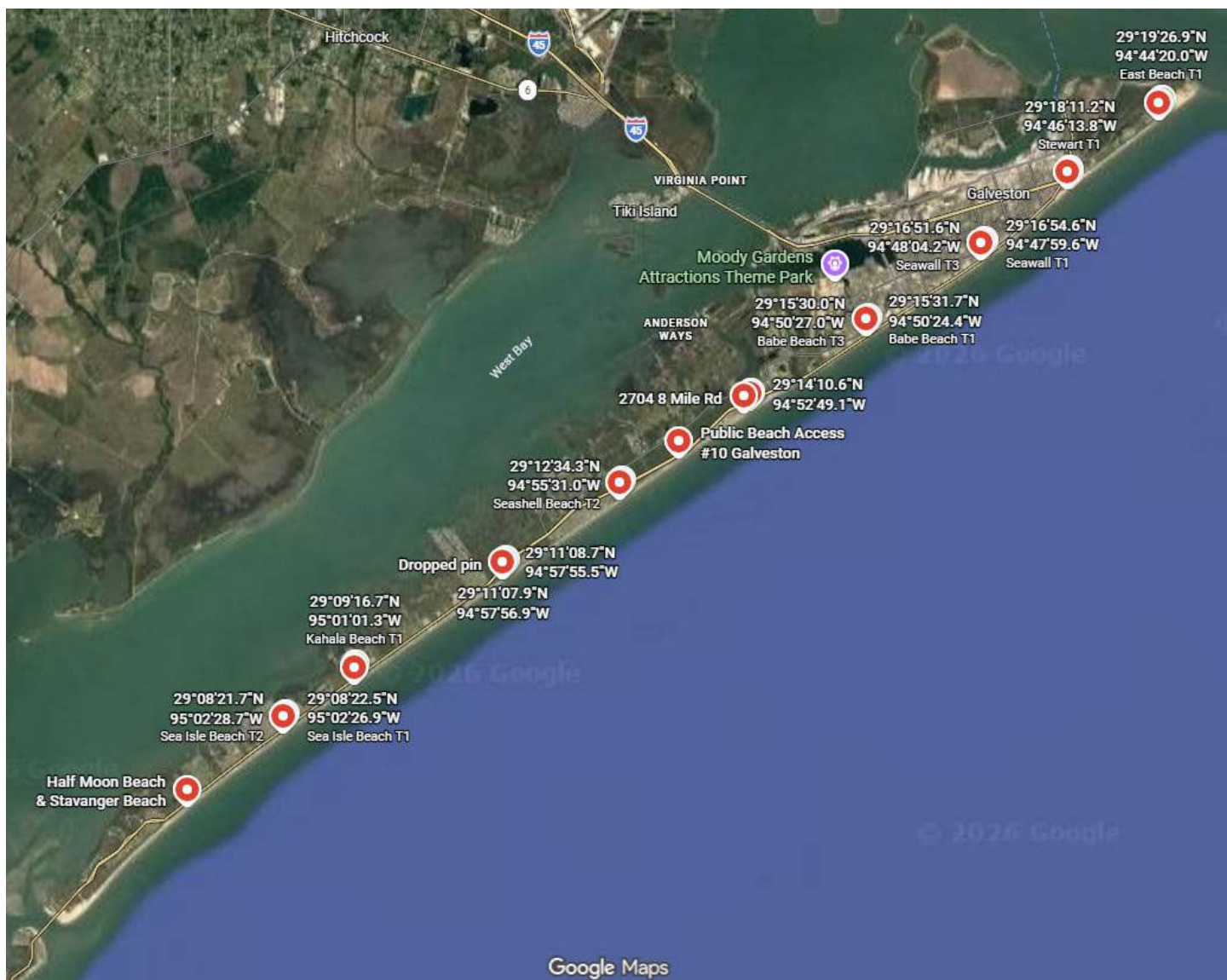


Figure 1. Locations of 11 Galveston-area sandy beaches sampled in both 2025 and 2026. Standardized biodiversity, eDNA, environmental, and contaminant monitoring will continue at these sites in 2027 and 2028 to support long-term assessment of ecological condition and change.

Supplemental Photos/Graphics (Optional):



Figure 2. Beach Access #10 before and after nourishment under CAP204. The left panel shows the site prior to nourishment, and the right panel shows post-nourishment conditions following sand placement. These images illustrate the substantial physical changes in beach width, surface characteristics, and shoreline condition associated with the nourishment project.



Figure 3. Locations of the beach nourishment impact and control sites on Galveston Island. Hershey Beach, at Public Beach Access #10, served as the nourished impact site, while Seashell Beach and Sunny Beach served as nearby non-nourished control sites for evaluating ecological responses and recovery following nourishment.

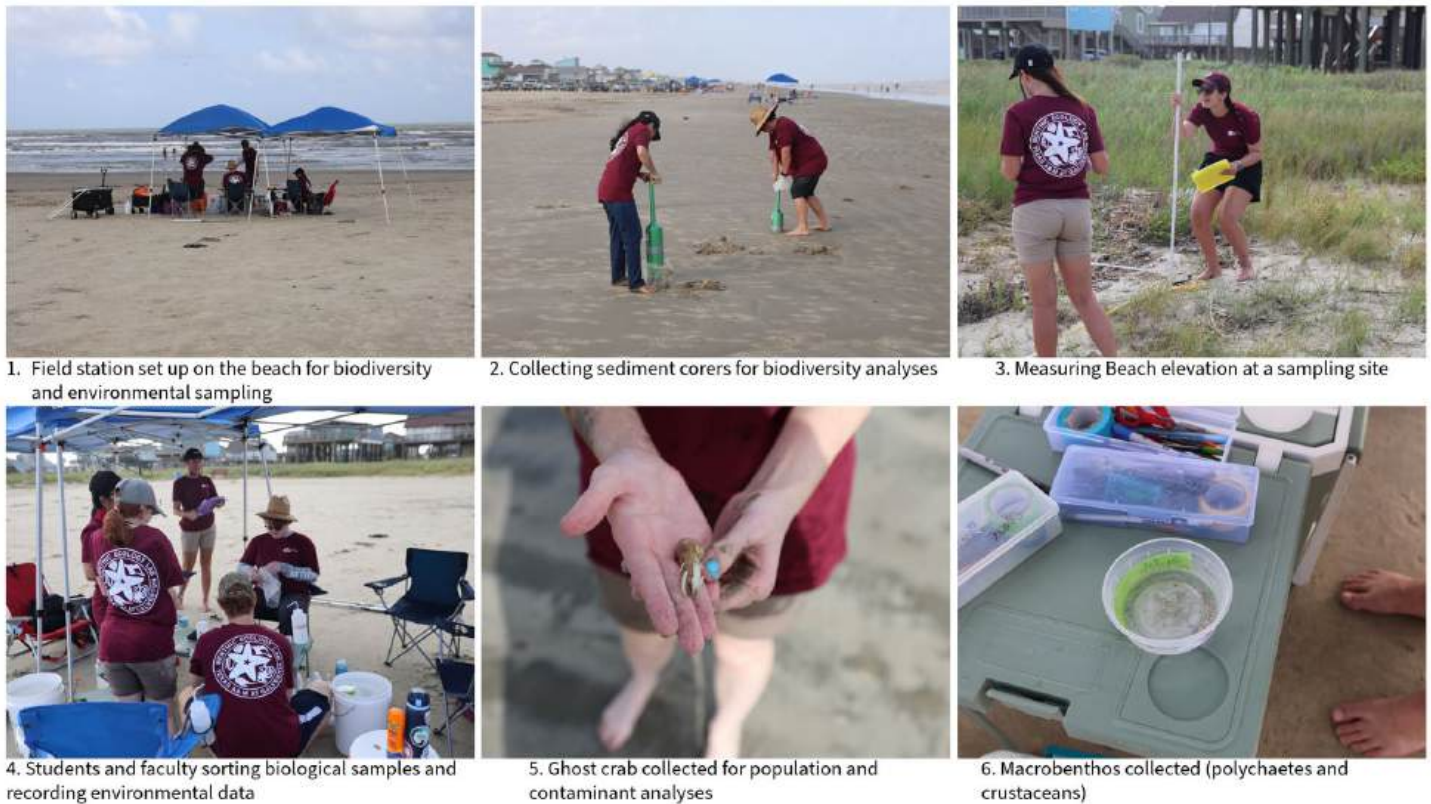


Figure 4. Representative field activities conducted during sandy beach monitoring in the Galveston Bay Estuary System.

SECTION SIX: BUDGET DETAILS

Grant Payments [see 30 TAC § 14.7(12)]: All grant payments will be made on the basis of reimbursement for allowable costs (as defined in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). All payments for awarded proposals will be reimbursements of allowable costs incurred after both parties have entered (signed) a grant agreement for the project.

Budget. Authorized budgeted expenditures for work performed are as follows:

a. Direct Costs

Budget Category	Cost for Work to be Performed
Salary / Wages	\$49,135
Fringe Benefits (Please see attachment #1) ²	\$11,232
Travel	\$0.00
Supplies	\$30,000
Equipment	\$0.00
Contractual	\$0.00
Construction	\$0.00
Other	\$6,064
Total Direct Cost	\$96,431

b. Indirect Costs³

Distribution Base Amount (identify Base type below)	\$ 90,367
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² If fringe is not a single rate, please attach calculation or explanation as an appendix.

³ Please attach Indirect Cost Agreement as an appendix if applicable

Indirect Cost Rate for Reimbursement	% 54
Total Indirect Costs	\$ 48,798

c. Maximum Authorized Reimbursement

Maximum Authorized Reimbursement (Direct and Indirect Costs)	\$ 145,229
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Indirect Cost Distribution Base. The Distribution Base above is (check one):

- ☐ direct salary/wages and fringe benefits
☒ modified total direct costs
☐ other direct cost Base

If other direct cost Base, identify:

The indirect cost rate is (check one):

☒ **Predetermined Rate**— an indirect rate that is negotiated between the Performing Party and its federal cognizant agency and supported by a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter. A Predetermined Rate is not subject to adjustment except as provided by 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.411.

☐ **De Minimis Rate**— if Performing Party does not have a current negotiated indirect rate, Performing Party may use a standard rate of 15 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in lieu of determining the actual indirect costs of the service. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs.

☐ **Partial Reimbursement Rate** — a reimbursement rate agreed to between TCEQ and Performing Party that is less than the rate authorized under TxGMS or, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200. Performing Party contributes all of its unreimbursed indirect costs to the successful performance of the project or projects funded under this Contract, in accordance with Article 9 of this section.

☐ **Other:** [Examples: De Minimis Rate with a base of direct salary and wages (less than or equal to actual indirect costs) or Provisional Rate. If this is a Provisional Rate, include the following language: Provisional Rate: The subsequent adjustment of the indirect cost rate is subject to the requirements of Article 9 of this (Cost Budget) section.]

Other. If Budget Category “Other” is greater than \$25,000 or more than 10% of budget total, identify the main constituents:

[Description of costs associated with “Other” budget category.] Budget Category “Other” is below \$25,000 and under 10% of budget total.

Travel. In order to be reimbursable, travel costs must be specifically authorized in advance of the travel. Travel costs will be reimbursed only in the amount of actual costs, up to the maximum allowed by law for employees of the State of Texas at the time the cost is incurred.

Budget Categories. The Budget Categories above are representative of the items of cost found in TxGMS and 2 CFR Part 200, and have the definitions, requirements, and limitations found therein. Construction costs are not reimbursable without prior, specific written authorization from TCEQ.

SECTION SEVEN: CONTRACT REQUIREMENT [see 30 TAC § 14.7(15)]:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if you become a successful grant recipient selected for a grant award, you must enter into a signed grant agreement or contract with TCEQ following the announcement of that award.
- Texas A&M University at Galveston reserves the right to further negotiate all terms and conditions of the agreement if an award is made, including but not limited to those terms and conditions that conflict with TAMU System Policy and the laws of the State of Texas applicable to TAMU as an agency of the State of Texas.

SECTION EIGHT: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Please read and understand the following:

- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that information on how grant payments will be made is contained in the Budget Details section describing direct and possibly indirect costs. You further acknowledge that grant payments will be reimbursements on the basis of allowable costs incurred and that selected recipients will receive contract documents addressing allowable costs, unallowable costs, and reimbursement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge your understanding that Project Proposals do not require matching funds and that a TCEQ director does not need to adjust or waive any matching funds requirement.
- By submitting this Project Proposal, you acknowledge that, if GBEP elects to hold a pre-submittal meeting relating to this Project Proposal, GBEP will post notification of the meeting's time and location indicating whether attendance is mandatory.

SECTION NINE: QUESTIONS AND PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETINGS [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13) and 30 TAC § 14.7(14)]:

- There are no pre-submittal meetings scheduled.
- For requests for additional, pre-submittal information [see 30 TAC § 14.7(13)], please contact the corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page.

SECTION TEN: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

In submitting your Project Proposal, please refer and adhere to the following instructions and guidelines concerning materials and information required to be submitted by potential grant recipients:

- GBEP intends to accept only complete Projected Proposals in a layout and format constituting a filled version of this proposal document with all applicable sections therein addressed; however, GBEP may, in its sole discretion, consider and accept nonconforming Project Proposals in the best interest of the state.
- Unless otherwise specified by GBEP, formal signatures are not required on Project Proposals.
- Unless otherwise communicated or implied, GBEP requires 1 (one) completed copy of your Project Proposal per corresponding Subcommittee Coordinator.
- Project Proposals must be received electronically, through the email address of the relevant Subcommittee Coordinator listed on this page, by the deadline listed on both this page and the first page of this Project Proposal document.

Submittal Process and Deadline [see 30 TAC § 14.7(8) and 30 TAC § 14.7(9)]:

Please Submit Project Proposals (Microsoft Word Only – No PDFs) by **July 24, 2026 to the relevant Subcommittee Coordinators below:**

WSQ Subcommittee: Christian.Rines@tceq.texas.gov
NRU Subcommittee: Lindsey.Lippert@tceq.texas.gov
PPE Subcommittee: Zoe.Gapayao@tceq.texas.gov
M&R Subcommittee: Jenelle.Estrada@tceq.texas.gov
Programmatic Projects: Lisa.Marshall@tceq.texas.gov

Explanation of fringe benefits rates applied in project budget estimate:

1. Faculty members:

Category as defined in Fringe Benefits memo (attached): “Employees Eligible for all Fringe Benefits”

Component 1: 18.9% of direct salaries & wages

Component 2: Faculty and Staff – Full Time (100%) fixed monthly insurance amount **\$1,185 ***

*fixed monthly insurance amount escalated by 3% annually

2. Graduate Students:

Category as defined in Fringe Benefits memo: “FICA Exempt Students Eligible for Group Insurance but Not Eligible for Retirement”

Component 1: 3.0% of direct salaries & wages

Component 2: Insurance Eligible Student fixed monthly insurance amount **\$288**†**

*fixed monthly insurance amount escalated by 3% annually

†insurance amount calculated internally as \$576 per FTE month since university policy limits full effort for graduate assistantships to 20 hours/week (50% FTE)

3. Hourly Undergraduate Student Workers:

Category as defined in Fringe Benefits memo: “FICA Exempt Students Not Eligible for Group Insurance & Retirement”

Component 1: 3.0% of direct salaries & wages

Component 2: Not Applicable



System Office of Budgets and Accounting
THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

July 16, 2025

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chief Financial Officers
Academic Institutions and Service Agencies

FROM: Verna Fritsche, Director, Accounting *VF*

SUBJECT: FY2026 Budgeting for Fringe Benefits on Sponsored Agreements

For fiscal year 2026, please use the fringe benefit rates listed below when calculating fringe benefits for sponsored agreement budgeting purposes. This will not impact reimbursements from sponsored agreements, as fringe benefits will continue to be reimbursed at the actual dollar amount expensed, rather than the budgeted amount.

Beginning July 2000, the State is not required to pay Social Security and Medicare for students who meet certain criteria. For the purposes of fringe benefit budgeting, students that meet the criteria will be called FICA Exempt Students. For students who do not meet the criteria, choose the employee category that applies to them.

Fiscal Year 2026 Fringe Benefits for Budget Purposes

Employees Eligible for all Fringe Benefits	18.9% of direct salaries & wages PLUS A fixed monthly dollar amount for group insurance
Employees Not Eligible for Group Insurance & Retirement	10.7% of direct salaries & wages
FICA Exempt Students Eligible for Group Insurance	3.0% of direct salaries & wages PLUS A fixed monthly dollar amount for group insurance
But Not Eligible for Retirement	3.0% of direct salaries & wages
FICA Exempt Students Not Eligible for Group Insurance & Retirement	

Fiscal Year 2026 Fixed Monthly Dollar Amount for Group (Medical & Basic Life) Insurance

Classification of Employee	Fixed Monthly Insurance Amount
Faculty and Staff – Full Time (100%)	\$1,185
Faculty and Staff – Part Time (50% - 99.99%)	\$592
Insurance Eligible Student [b]	\$288
Combined (all employees) [a]	\$1,021



System Office of Budgets and Accounting
THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

- [a] If the classification of the employee who will be working on the sponsored agreement is known, use the above figure that applies to them. Otherwise, use the combined amount (\$1,021).
- [b] The fixed monthly insurance amount (\$288) is based on half of the GIP state contributions.

Below are two tables, *for informational purposes only*. The first table is a breakdown of the fringe benefit percentages. The second table details State monthly contribution towards group (medical and basic life) insurance premiums for insurance eligible employees.

Breakdown of The Fringe Benefit Percentages

	TRS Eligible Employees[c]	ORP Eligible Employees [d]	Employees Not Eligible for a Retirement Plan	FICA Exempt Students
Social Security on first \$183,100 (employer portion) [e]	6.20%	6.20%	6.20%	NONE
Medicare [e]	1.45%	1.45%	1.45%	NONE
Workman's Comp. Ins. [g]	.48%	.48%	.48%	.48%
Unemployment Comp. Ins. [h]	.50%	.50%	.50%	.50%
Retirement Plan	8.25% [c]	8.50% [f]	NONE	NONE
Leave Termination [i]	2.05%	2.05%	2.05%	2.05%
TOTAL	18.93%	19.18%	10.68%	3.03%
Fringe Benefit Rate for Budgeting Purposes	18.9%	19.2%	10.7%	3.0%

- [c] Teacher Retirement System. The retirement contribution for employees participating in TRS will remain at 8.25% in FY2026.
- [d] Optional Retirement Program.
- [e] \$176,100 was effective 1/1/2025. Social Security is subject to change as determined by federal law. For calendar year 2026, employee wages subject to social security increased to an estimated \$183,100.
- [f] Employees with an ORP start date on or before 8/31/1995 are provided the same contribution during FY2026 as they received during FY1995 (8.5%). The state contribution will remain at 6.6% in FY2026. Each member will supplement 1.9% to maintain the 8.5% contribution.
- [g] WCI Member assessments range from .11% to .48% based on previous claim experience. See the assessment for each Member in the FY2026 budget instructions.
- [h] UCI Member rates range from .01% to .50% based on previous claim experience. See the rate for each Member in the FY2026 budget instructions.
- [i] Leave Termination Member assessments range from .20% to 2.05% based on previous years' experience. Each Member determines the rate to use for their institution/agency/health science center.



System Office of Budgets and Accounting

THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Texas AgriLife Extension Service Exception

If the employee has a civil service appointment and is in TRS, the rate is 18.47%

If the employee has a civil service appointment and is in ORP on or after 9/1/1995, the rate is 16.73%.

If the employee has a civil service appointment and was enrolled in ORP before 9/1/1995, the rate is 18.63%.

Monthly State Contributions to Group (Medical and Basic Life) Insurance Premiums

Coverage	Full Time (100%)	Part Time (75%-99.99%)	Part Time (50%-74.99%)
Employee Only	\$1,057.17	\$1,057.17	\$530.94
Employee and Spouse	\$1,338.21	\$1,338.21	\$671.46
Employee and Children	\$1,252.43	\$1,252.43	\$628.57
Employee and Family	\$1,452.67	\$1,452.67	\$728.69

These fringe benefit percentages and amounts listed in this letter are estimates derived from the average population of all Texas A&M members, if a member's values differ, the member could use the different amounts based upon their employee population. If different numbers are used, the methodology must be documented by the member.

Please call Verna Fritsche at (979) 458-6090 if you have any questions.

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES RATE AGREEMENT

EIN: 1746000531A1

DATE:09/02/2022

ORGANIZATION:

Texas A & M University - College Station
200 Technology Way
A & M System Bldg, Suite 1281
College Station, TX 77845-3424

FILING REF.: The preceding
agreement was dated
08/07/2019

The rates approved in this agreement are for use on grants, contracts and other agreements with the Federal Government, subject to the conditions in Section III.

SECTION I: Facilities And Administrative Cost Rates

RATE TYPES: FIXED FINAL PROV. (PROVISIONAL) PRED. (PREDETERMINED)

EFFECTIVE PERIOD

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>	<u>RATE (%)</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>APPLICABLE TO</u>
PRED.	09/01/2022	08/31/2023	51.50	On Campus	Organized Research & Instruction
PRED.	09/01/2023	08/31/2025	52.50	On Campus	Organized Research & Instruction
PRED.	09/01/2025	08/31/2026	54.00	On Campus	Organized Research & Instruction
PRED.	09/01/2022	08/31/2026	32.00	On Campus	Other Sponsored Activities
PRED.	09/01/2022	08/31/2026	10.50	Off Campus	IPA Programs
PRED.	09/01/2022	08/31/2026	26.00	Off Campus	All Programs

ORGANIZATION: Texas A & M University - College Station

AGREEMENT DATE: 9/2/2022

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>	<u>RATE (%)</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>APPLICABLE TO</u>
PROV.	09/01/2026	Until Amended			Use same rates and conditions as those cited for fiscal year ending August 31, 2026.

*BASE

Modified total direct costs, consisting of all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel and up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards under the award). Modified total direct costs shall exclude equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs of off site facilities, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs and the portion of each subaward in excess of \$25,000. Other items may only be excluded when necessary to avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, and with the approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs.

ORGANIZATION: Texas A & M University - College Station

AGREEMENT DATE: 9/2/2022

SECTION II: SPECIAL REMARKS

TREATMENT OF FRINGE BENEFITS:

The fringe benefits are specifically identified to each employee and are charged individually as direct costs. The directly claimed fringe benefits are listed below.

TREATMENT OF PAID ABSENCES

Vacation, holiday, sick leave pay and other paid absences are included in salaries and wages and are claimed on grants, contracts and other agreements as part of the normal cost for salaries and wages. Separate claims are not made for the cost of these paid absences.

OFF-CAMPUS DEFINITION: OFF-CAMPUS DEFINITION: For all activities performed in facilities not owned by the institution and to which rent is directly allocated to the project(s) the off-campus rate will apply. Grants or contracts will not be subject to more than one F&A cost rate. If more than 50% of a project is performed off-campus, the off-campus rate will apply to the entire project.

FRINGE BENEFITS:

FICA, Retirement, Worker's Compensation, Life Insurance, Unemployment Insurance, Health Insurance, Accrued Compensated Absences

APPLICABILITY OF RATES: Texas A&M Research Foundation (EIN: 74-1238434), Texas Engineering Experiment Station (EIN: 74-1974733), Texas Engineering Extension Service (EIN: 74-2270626), Texas Agri-Life Research (FKA as Texas Agricultural Experiment Station) (EIN: 74-6000541), Texas Agri-Life Extension (FKA Texas cooperative Extension) (EIN: 74-6000537), Texas Transportation Institute, (EIN: 74-2270624), Texas A&M University at Galveston (EIN: 74-2125225), Texas A&M Health Science Center (EIN: 74-2907553), Texas Forest Service (EIN: 74-6014065), Texas A&M University System (EIN: 74-2648747), Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory (EIN: 26-3850570), Shared Services Center Commercialization (EIN: 74-2648747), Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), (EIN: 84-1876045).

Your next F&A proposal based on actual costs for the fiscal year ending 08/31/2025, is due in our office by 02/28/2026.

Equipment means tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds \$5,000.

ORGANIZATION: Texas A & M University - College Station

AGREEMENT DATE: 9/2/2022

SECTION III: GENERAL

A. LIMITATIONS:

The rates in this Agreement are subject to any statutory or administrative limitations and apply to a given grant, contract or other agreement only to the extent that funds are available. Acceptance of the rates is subject to the following conditions: (1) Only costs incurred by the organization were included in its facilities and administrative cost pools as finally accepted; such costs are legal obligations of the organization and are allowable under the governing cost principles; (2) The same costs that have been treated as facilities and administrative costs are not claimed as direct costs; (3) Similar types of costs have been accorded consistent accounting treatment; and (4) The information provided by the organization which was used to establish the rates is not later found to be materially incomplete or inaccurate by the Federal Government. In such situations the rate(s) would be subject to renegotiation at the discretion of the Federal Government.

B. ACCOUNTING CHANGES:

This Agreement is based on the accounting system purported by the organization to be in effect during the Agreement period. Changes to the method of accounting for costs which affect the amount of reimbursement resulting from the use of this Agreement require prior approval of the authorized representative of the cognizant agency. Such changes include, but are not limited to, changes in the charging of a particular type of cost from facilities and administrative to direct. Failure to obtain approval may result in cost disallowances.

C. FIXED RATES:

If a fixed rate is in this Agreement, it is based on an estimate of the costs for the period covered by the rate. When the actual costs for this period are determined, an adjustment will be made to a rate of a future year(s) to compensate for the difference between the costs used to establish the fixed rate and actual costs.

D. USE BY OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES:

The rates in this Agreement were approved in accordance with the authority in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 200 (2 CFR 200), and should be applied to grants, contracts and other agreements covered by 2 CFR 200, subject to any limitations in A above. The organization may provide copies of the Agreement to other Federal Agencies to give them early notification of the Agreement.

E. OTHER:

If any Federal contract, grant or other agreement is reimbursing facilities and administrative costs by a means other than the approved rate(s) in this Agreement, the organization should (1) credit such costs to the affected programs, and (2) apply the approved rate(s) to the appropriate base to identify the proper amount of facilities and administrative costs allocable to these programs.

BY THE INSTITUTION:

Texas A & M University - College Station

(INSTITUTION)

(SIGNATURE)

(NAME)

(TITLE)

(DATE)

ON BEHALF OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT:

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

(AGENCY)

(SIGNATURE)

Arif Karim

(NAME)

Director, Cost Allocation Services

(TITLE)

9/02/2022

(DATE) 6554

HHS REPRESENTATIVE: Denise Shirlee

Telephone: (214) 767-3261

COMPONENTS OF PUBLISHED F&A COST RATE

INSTITUTION: Texas A&M University - College Station

FY COVERED BY RATE: September 1, 2022 - August 31, 2026

APPLICABLE TO: ORGANIZED RESEARCH

RATE COMPONENT:	ORGANIZED RESEARCH & INSTRUCTION FY 23 ON CAMPUS	ORGANIZED RESEARCH & INSTRUCTION FY 24-25 ON CAMPUS	ORGANIZED RESEARCH & INSTRUCTION FY 26 ON CAMPUS	OTHER SPONSORED ACTIVITIES FY 23-26 ON CAMPUS	ALL PROGRAMS FY 23-26 OFF CAMPUS
Building Depreciation	6.6	6.9	7.3	1.0	
Equipment Depreciation	4.4	4.6	4.9	4.0	
Interest	2.7	2.8	3.0	0.1	
Operation & Maintenance	10.3	10.7	11.3	0.9	
Library	1.5	1.5	1.5		
Administration*	26.0	26.0	26.0	26.0	26.0
TOTAL	51.5	52.5	54.0	32.0	26.0

* Reflects provisions of Appendix III to Part 200 of Uniform Guidance—Indirect (F&A) Costs Identification and Assignment, and Rate Determination for Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs), C.8. dated December 26, 2013.

CONCURRENCE:

Texas A&M University - College Station
(Institution)

(Signature)

(Name)

(Title)

(Date)

Joseph Duron
JOSEPH DURON
Chief Administrative Officer
9-14-2022