

Highland Bayou Workgroup Meeting Notes

March 10th • 12:00-2:30 p.m.

Galveston County Extension Office – Classroom 2, Carbide Park
4102-B Main Street (FM 519), La Marque, Texas 77568-4666

Steve Mikulencak (TX Coastal Watershed Program (TCWP)), Celina Lowry (TCWP), Amanda Solitro (TCWP), Bill Alcorn (Municipal Utility District (MUD) 12), Bob Bassett (MUD12), Martin Entringer (Galveston County Health District (GCHD)), Nancy Baher (Galveston County), Joe Giusti (Galveston County), Michelle Krause (Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP)), Lindsey Lippert (GBEP), Linda Broach Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), Harry Robinson (Hitchcock Industrial Development Corporation (HIDC)), Nick Stepchinski (Resident Stakeholder), Steven Mitchell (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department(TPWD)).

Introductions

Steven Mikulencak and Celina Lowry introduced themselves and asked attendees to share their name and affiliation, as well as their interest in the Project. Steve thanked MUD 12 for sponsoring lunch for the group.

Presentation

Texas Coastal Watershed Program presented on the following items specific to the Highland and Marchand bayou watersheds:

- Announced possible revisions for the WPP Project to extend through summer.

Existing Management Measures-Issues and Observations review

- Discussion items from ongoing One-on-One meetings are added to one the following categories:
 - Agriculture and Wildlife, Wastewater Treatment Plant Collection System and On-site sewage facility. Streamflow /Hydrological Modification/Dredging, Urbanization, and General Comments.
- The group reviewed and added items to the Urbanization category, followed by the Flow category.

Funding Next Steps

- Mid Term – 319 and Coastal Management Plan (CMP). (2016/2017)
 - TSSWCB 319 funding is expected to open April 30th.
 - TCEQ 319 funding cycle opens after TSSWCB cycle closes. Another opportunity to submit the same projects we submit through TSSWCB.
 - CMP funds through NOAA and GLO open this summer for applications.
 - GBEP funding through the Water and Sediment Quality (WSQ) Subcommittee opens in late summer.
 - Texas Farm and Ranch Lands Conservation Program through TPWD. Can provide money for conservation easements. The land does not have to be agricultural.
- Long Term - RESTORE (2017 and beyond)
 - RESTORE deadline of April 15th is too soon. We can start planning for the 2017 cycle in the coming months.
 - Copies of the RESTORE application were handed out to the group.

- Near Term - Grease Recycling (Summer 2016)
 - Example of existing funded projects looking for partners.
 - Pilot kitchen grease recycling station for residents - the pilot program is looking for one more organization that is interested in being the host of a recycling receptacle; other
- Cease the Grease campaign opportunities for municipalities.

Other Topics of Discussion

- Difficulty of measuring flow for the Highland Bayou Watershed. A technologically complex issue as the watershed is flat and tidal.
- Drainage Study for the Highland Bayou Watershed to understand the water depth, profile, shape of the basin, etc.

Action Items

- Send potential meeting dates for late April or early May
- Continue stakeholder outreach to individuals/groups identified during the meeting exercise
 - Introduce the project and invite them to the next meeting
- Continue to meet with group members one-on-one (each organization or a subset of) to gain understanding of recent and possible future projects. Discuss possible projects or efforts for funding.
- Upcoming events/milestones
 - April 2nd, 2016: Trash Bash at the Virginia Point site off Hwy 45. The Moses-Karankawa Bayous Alliance will host an educational booth. Registration for the event can be found at trashbash.org
 - Draft Watershed Protection Plan for Public Comment
 - Highland Bayou Open House
 - Final Draft Watershed Protection Plan