

Galveston Bay Coalition of Watersheds

Bastrop Bayou | Dickinson Bayou | Highland Bayou | Jarbo Bayou

Partnering for healthy watersheds.

agrillife.org/coalitionofwatersheds

Wednesday, March 3, 2021 | 1:30-3:00 PM

Virtual Meeting via ZOOM with call in option

MEETING NOTES

Attendees: Steven Johnston, Katie Wilson, Nicole Plowman, Barbara Bellows, Brian Koch, Kendall Guidroz, Stacey Carr, Charlotte Cisneros, Christian Rines, Jean Wright, Sean Skipworth, Brent Spier, Martin Entringer, Julie Masters, Lindsey Lippert, Daniel Albanese, Justin Bower, Clay Forister, Mike Mullenweg, Jack Murphy, Ali Saleh, Elizabeth Kompanik, Celina Gauthier Lowry, and Charriss York.

What is the Coalition all about?

The presentation started with the purpose of bringing the Galveston Bay Coalition of Watersheds together: to form partnerships which share resources and funding to implement management measures in existing watershed-based plans in Coalition watersheds. Stakeholders in attendance represent one or more of the four Coalition watersheds: Bastrop Bayou, Dickinson Bayou, Highland Bayou, and Jarbo Bayou. A review of the efforts completed during the last Coalition cycle in 2017 and 2018 was described including the consolidation of management measures into a top 12 list that led to the development of the Coalition's goals and action items.

Projects and Priorities

The Coalition will aim to complete six education/outreach efforts before Thanksgiving 2021. Celina presented example topics, audiences, and methods of delivery to communicate the flexibility the Coalition has when using the Goals and Action Items as their guide. The results from two poll questions asked during the October 2020 meeting was shared:

- “What are the top 3 topics for your work or organization that you'd like to see the Coalition help move forward in the next 12 months?”
- “Which people or groups are most important for the Coalition to reach?”

Establish Priority Topics.

The first exercise narrowed the ten priority topic areas down to determine what the Coalition would focus on in 2021. All other topics were set aside for consideration at a later time. Some of the guiding questions used during the exercise were:

- Are there education or outreach opportunities?
- Does it benefit multiple watersheds?
- Are we the group to implement the idea?

Three priorities remained at the end of the exercise (listed below in no particular order). Several topic areas were grouped together to form them.

- Reduce fats, oils, and grease (FOG) and wipes in sanitary sewer systems
- Debris in Coalition Bayous and illegal dumping sites
- Dredging needs for Coalition bayous; Erosion control, nutrient reduction, and the management of livestock and large groups of animals; Natural riparian buffers and conservation easements

Breakout Sessions for 2021 Project Pool

Once the topic areas were narrowed down, Celina provided instructions for the breakout discussion, referring to the Breakout Discussion Reference document emailed prior to the meeting. Participants were asked to create a pool of project ideas including the target audience and delivery method. They each choose one breakout discussion to join from the following three topic areas: (1) Fats, Oils, Grease (FOG) and Wipes; (2) Dredging/Erosion Control/Riparian Buffers; and (3) Debris in Bayous and Illegal Dumping. No discussion took place for the Debris in Bayous and Illegal Dumping topic. Stakeholders were more focused on the other two topic areas.

Report Out

Following the breakout discussions, a representative from each topic area shared project ideas with the group. Each representative took turns, round robin style, sharing one project idea at a time.

FOG and Wipes

- Apartment complexes. Work with managers. What messages resonate?
- Interactive booth at farmers market or trade shows. Cook with grease to show what it is and how to dispose of it.
- Partners for collection sites for FOG in apartment complexes or communities.

Dredging/Erosion Control/Riparian Buffers

- Public interest in dredging. Based on faulty information. Educate on how bayous operate. Pros and Cons for all three. Bayous versus rivers. Tidal Surge.
- General Public – physics and problems with dredging
- Adjacent land owners to any waterway – erosion control and riparian buffers on their land
- Policy makers – flood control and erosion control activities

Next Steps and Future Meetings

The pool of ideas generated at this meeting will help determine the six or so projects the Coalition will carry out in 2021. A survey will be sent to the Coalition to schedule the next meeting. The meeting agenda will be informed by information from this meeting and survey responses.