

# Galveston Bay Coalition of Watersheds

Bastrop Bayou | Dickinson Bayou | Highland Bayou | Jarbo Bayou

*Partnering for healthy watersheds.*

<https://agrillife.org/coalitionofwatersheds/>

Wednesday, July 21, 2021 | 10-11 AM

Virtual Meeting via ZOOM with call in option

## Dredging/Erosion Control/Riparian Buffers

### MEETING NOTES

Attendees: Michael Carlson, Steven Johnston, Barbara Bellows, Katie Wilson, Robert Michetich, Charriss York, and Celina Gauthier Lowry

**Grant proposal submitted** - *Highland and Bastrop Bayous: A Collaborative Approach to Implementation Through the Galveston Bay Coalition of Watersheds*, was submitted to Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for FY22 Clean Water Act (CWA) 319 (h) funding on July 15th. Highland and Bastrop are highlighted as having EPA-accepted watershed protection plans (WPPs). The Dickinson and Jarbo bayou watersheds are also included in the proposed project. Thank you to Coalition members who provided the five letters of support.

### Projects and Priorities

The presentation started with an introduction to the Coalition and a review of the three focus areas for projects prioritized by the Coalition in previous meetings. A brief overview of FOG and wipes project updates. This meeting we are working through efforts included under the *Dredging – Erosion Control – Riparian Buffer* topic.

### Review project opportunities and refine project strategies and actions.

**Misconceptions about Bayous, Dredging, and Land Use** – Public interest and misconceptions on how bayous operate, dredging versus drainage maintenance, and the tidal movement of sediment.

- Overview of how this topic heading was formed.
- There is a misconception in the general public that dredging the bayou would solve all flooding problems. What can and cannot be “fixed” by dredging?
- The public already goes to local sources for information. Putting together a feature for a local news outlet would segment the general public into a sizeable piece we can reach. This feature could lead up to a Texas Riparian & Stream Ecosystem workshop next spring.

- Riparian & Stream Ecosystem Training. This workshop has an open presentation spot where the watershed coordinator usually speaks over lunch. Can we find a headliner that would appeal to a more targeted audience and resonate locally? Addressing water quality and flooding together? Bring local case studies that our stakeholders could picture? Ideas: CLCWA Exploration Green, HCFCD, Conservation and Reclamation district in Alvin includes conversation not just drainage...Can this Coalition or local governments help shape that talk?

**Policy decisions regarding drainage practices** – Several local officials have expressed a need and desire for a multi-jurisdictional event that brings together city staff, local officials, drainage districts, floodplain managers and others, focused on drainage issues.

- Bring people and resources together to orient new local officials and open up conversation between drainage districts, municipalities, and the county
- To help select specific topics and speakers for an event this fall, a survey to local officials in Coalition communities was suggested. The H-GAC regional conservation program used this approach. They likely have lessons learned to share.
- Drainage districts have limited resources in general and limited public outreach; can we gather information and make it more accessible?
- The Coalition webpage could house local resources to share with local officials in attendance and following the event; what watershed based plans connect to each district; helping local officials and drainage districts by collecting information in one place; request for drainage district map including city boundaries from local official; list of local drainage plans
- How is the conservation district in Alvin different from the drainage districts?
- How can we assist floodplain managers?
- Evenings might be better for elected-appointed officials
- Additional ideas on topics and event format can be found in previous meeting notes.

Resources shared during the discussion:

- Local information sources- [Community Impact](#), [Galveston County Daily News](#), I-45 NOW [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), [The Facts](#), and local City Manager's updates.
- TWRI's Texas [Riparian & Stream Ecosystem Training](#) and [example agenda](#)
- H-GAC's [Regional Conservation Initiative](#) supports conservation projects that maintain, restore, and enhance natural areas in our communities. The [Regional Conservation Framework](#) is a high level strategy that coordinates and magnifies local conservation efforts to enhance resiliency and quality of life.

### **Next Steps and Future Meetings**

Celina will continue to follow up on projects with individual stakeholders. Before the next meeting, information from this meeting and individual stakeholder conversations will be pulled together and shared with the Coalition.

Next Meetings, virtual through Zoom:

- Thursday (7/22) 10-11am, Debris in Bayous and Illegal Dumping
- Tuesday (8/24) 1:30-3:30pm, full Coalition meeting