

Galveston Bay Coalition of Watersheds

Bastrop Bayou | Dickinson Bayou | Highland Bayou | Jarbo Bayou
Partnering for healthy watersheds.
<https://agrillife.org/coalitionofwatersheds/>

Thursday, July 22, 2021 | 10-11 AM
Virtual Meeting via ZOOM with call in option

Debris in bayous and illegal dumping sites

MEETING NOTES

Attendees: Nicole Plowman, Stephanie Hendrickson, Eric Combs, Katie Wilson, Steven Johnston, Clay Forister, 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 project updates under the *FOG and Wipes* and *Dredging – Erosion Control – Riparian Buffers* topics. This meeting we are working through efforts included under the *Debris in Bayous and Illegal Dumping* topic.

Review project opportunities and refine project strategies and actions.

Tire drop off and abandoned tire awareness – Share locations and instructions on how to dispose of used tires or who to notify when you see them abandoned.

- Tires are an issue. Tires are pulled from ditches all the time.
- H-GAC Trash Bash sites, including Dickinson, offer an opportunity for tire collection.
- Will local tire retailers, e.g. Discount Tire, fund recycling?
- Outreach for drop off events:

- Working with community college programs in mechanics as a way to reach at home mechanics when a drop off event is scheduled– Brazosport College and College of the Mainland?
- Work with auto parts stores to put up flyers
- If we are reaching DIYers, could we show examples of how to reuse clean tires, e.g., swings, planters, etc. – a Keep Beautiful affiliate table or other in-person event.
- Can tire clean up events be coordinated with existing TPWD crab trap events?:
 - Do tires need to be cleaned before they are recycled
 - Several designated sites used for crab trap drop off over [10 days every February](#)
 - Other drop off location ideas: Sea Center Lake Jackson, Game Warden Offices, Boat Ramps, etc.
 - Expense to cover dumpster rental and disposal/recycling
 - Requires follow up with TPWD to see if they would be interested in partnering
- Participation for local tire collection events by Keep Beautiful affiliates look successful. Would this group help spread the word? Amplifying existing efforts?
- Free locations to drop off in Galveston County – City of Dickinson drop off is reoccurring
- Education to let people know about drop off and reporting
- Additional ideas can be found in previous meeting notes

General illegal dumping education – Outreach to general public on problems associated with illegal dumping, how to report illegal dumping, and how we are connected to local bayous and Galveston Bay.

- Are waste haulers, e.g. grease haulers, OSSF haulers, and others, making it to a proper disposal location or going down the road and dumping the load for free?:
 - Need more research on cradle to grave manifest for haulers. Who is responsible for checking manifests?
 - Contaminated soils are also dumped in unincorporated areas
- Are there citizen reported dump sites that can be looked into?
 - Identify illegal dumping sites.
 - Dumping usually happens in county boundaries outside of cities.
 - Is there a connection to GBAN?
 - Does Galveston County Health District have data for repeat sites?
- Share information on GBAN. Agencies do not have the staff to identify dumping. Reporting by the general public is helpful:
 - The [GBAN map](#) has trash and debris, fishing, litter, tires, and more.
 - GBF has magnet giveaways with GBAN info.
 - TPWD has handouts on GBAN they distribute.
 - Which local offices are receiving reports from GBAN? Are the contacts up to date?
- The Master Naturalist upcoming virtual volunteer opportunity webinar is a place we can talk about GBAN. Could these volunteers look at data to identify hotspots? Could we ask local master naturalists to report using GBAN?
- Additional ideas can be found in previous meeting notes

Resources shared during the discussion:

- The [Galveston Bay Action Network](#) (GBAN) [reporting tool](#) for reporting pollution in Brazoria, Chambers, Galveston, and Harris counties. GBAN enables citizens to report pollution relating to sewage, abandoned vessels, discolored water, fish kill, septic systems, trash and debris, and more. Once a report has been submitted, it's then sent directly to the appropriate authorities to take action. Giveaways are available, Celina can coordinate and deliver materials.
- [Coastal Communities](#) (H-GAC) has [materials](#) on Litter and Illegal Dumping and Household Hazardous waste.
- [Back the Bay](#) offers [materials](#) that communicate how the water in Galveston Bay and Gulf of Mexico starts in our backyards and is connected to our local bayous.
- Funds are available through TCEQ-approved [Supplemental Environmental Projects](#). These projects allow facilities in violation of state environmental regulations to voluntarily enhance, protect and improve the environment to offset a portion of the addressed penalty. Is there an opportunity to work with industrial partners to cover costs on a cleanup by applying as a 3rd party administrator?
- TPWD hosts annual [abandoned crab trap removal events](#). Volunteers may participate in facilitated events or add traps to dumpsters at any time during the scheduled closure.
- Goodyear Tire offers [grants](#) for a variety of initiatives, programs, and events. Possible funding resource for tire recycling expenses.

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:

- Tuesday (8/24) 1:30-3:30pm, full Coalition meeting