

Galveston Bay Coalition of Watersheds

Bastrop Bayou | Dickinson Bayou | Highland Bayou | Jarbo Bayou

Partnering for healthy watersheds.

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

Tuesday, August 24, 2021 | 1:30-3:30 PM

Virtual Meeting via ZOOM with call in option

MEETING NOTES

Attendees: Jimmy Millican, Nicole Plowman, Daniel Albanese, Wendy Forester, Lindsey Lippert, Katie Wilson, Kendall Guidroz, Tim Cawthon, Charlotte Cisneros, Mike Mullenweg, Clay Forister, Christian Rines, Michael LaMontagne, Barbara Bellows, Charriss York, and Celina Gauthier Lowry

Welcome and Introductions

This is the first full Coalition meeting since early March. Through several topic specific meetings and correspondence in between, we've made progress on many of the project ideas we started back in March.

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.

A poll questions was administered, "Which watershed do you work in?". *Participants were able to select more than one answer.* These are compiled below.

78%	Dickinson Bayou
56%	Highland Bayou
44%	Bastrop Bayou
33%	Jarbo Bayou
33%	Other

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:

- 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

A brief overview of updates for each project idea was presented.

FOG and Wipes in Sanitary Sewer Systems

Outreach to apartment residents – Share FOG education with apartment residents through apartment management and municipal communications.

- Lake Jackson has delivered 660 welcome packets with FOG and wipes giveaways and handouts to apartment managers to distribute to new residents; GBF shared the giveaway items and Celina collaborated with the City on the handouts.
- GBF has more complimentary Cease the Grease branded funnels, scrapers, and flyers (English and Spanish) to share. Celina can coordinate and deliver materials.
- League City wastewater has an established [FOG and wipes education program](#); welcome packets are delivered to apartment complexes with each apartment covered annually; daycares, nursing homes, and assisted living centers are provided with wipes information; the wastewater team has targeted outreach in areas where wipes were a problem.
- Have approached other cities about rolling out a similar project.

Interactive booth at in-person event – Demonstration of what FOG is and how to properly dispose of it at in-person events.

- Keep Dickinson Beautiful (KDB) hosted a table at Market on the Bayou in Dickinson on June 5th featuring several FOG and wipes educational displays, interactive games, and giveaways
- Several events were cancelled or modified due to weather or COVID including the Market on the Bayou event in May, the National Trails Day in League City in June, and the Back to School with the Galveston County Health District.
- The next planned in-person event featuring FOG and wipes outreach is the Market on the Bayou in Dickinson on September 4th.

FOG Collection Points/Receptacles – Share FOG collection points to encourage residential recycling and encourage additional receptacles

- The welcome packet handout in Lake Jackson included the local cooking oil recycling location.
- The recycling location in Dickinson was visible from the KDB table at market on the Bayou and was marked with flags to increase visibility from the Market. Table visitors were informed about the receptacle.
- There are two known [cooking oil recycling locations](#) in Coalition watersheds, Lake Jackson and Dickinson, both are hosted by active Coalition stakeholders who have experiences to share. A potential educational meeting is being explored with KDB for Keep Beautiful affiliates and similar organizations within the Coalition to provide information on FOG, collection locations, and shared stories from Coalition members who currently host receptacles. GBF and H-GAC are planning to participate.

Outreach to Homeowners (digital) – Share FOG education with homeowners through local government communications

- KDB shared photos of pipes clogged with grease and wipes on Facebook before and after the Market event in June.

- Several people in the group have requested social media content on FOG and Wipes to share with their communications departments. There is a ton of quality content available for sharing online. Celina is drafting a list of posts ready to share and creating a list of resources to help those who prefer to find content themselves. The goal is to make sharing content easy for Coalition members.
- Several Coalition communities and GCHD with communications staff are willing to share information through social media or submit to their City Manager’s weekly updates.

Debris in Bayous and Illegal Dumping Sites

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.

- Share information on the [Galveston Bay Action Network](#) (GBAN) [reporting tool](#) with residents for reporting pollution in Brazoria and Galveston Counties to help local agencies by increasing the number of reports.
- GBF has shared GBAN magnets. Celina has provided these giveaways to KDB and League City Parks for distribution.
- Planned presentation at the League City Eco-Fest on September 18th to introduce “watersheds”, our storm drains are connected to local bayous, actions at home impact local water quality, and GBAN.
- There are several other established education programs on how the water in our local bayous are connected to our backyards.

Outreach on Tire Drop-off Options – Share locations and instructions on how to dispose of used tires or who to notify when you see them abandoned.

- Participation at local tire collection events by Keep Beautiful affiliates and local communities look successful. Coordinate with local organizations conducting these events to help spread the word.
- Look into opportunities to offset recycling and other costs for existing tire recycling efforts.
- Planned presentation at the League City Eco-Fest on September 18th will include information on tire recycling options for Galveston County residents.

Dredging – Erosion Control – Riparian Buffers

Some background on how this topic heading was formed was provided.

Outreach to Policy Makers on 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 facilitate a conversation between drainage districts, municipalities, and the county
- Attendees were asked, “What information or resources do you recommend to help us shape the agenda?”
 - Case studies from across the region to answer questions.

- Some guidance on drainage maintenance outside of jurisdictions.

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.

- The Texas Riparian & Stream Ecosystem Training format and content was introduced.
 - The project team has our watersheds on their schedule for next February or March for a workshop at Carbide Park in La Marque.
 - This workshop has an open presentation spot where the watershed coordinator usually speaks over lunch.
 - Questions raised during a previous meeting was brought forward for additional input: “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?” Feedback: Houston Parks and Recreation and Bayou Preservation have water quality project examples but may not have a flood prevention component.
- The public goes to local sources for information. At a previous meeting the group discussed putting together a feature for a local news outlet to address misconceptions leading up to the Texas Riparian & Stream Ecosystem workshop next spring.

Additional discussion items for all projects can be found in previous meeting notes.

Guest Presentation

Dickinson Bayou Bacteria TMDL Update- Jimmy Millican from the Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Research (TIAER) at Tarleton State University [provided updates](#) to the Dickinson Bayou Bacteria [TMDL](#) (Total Maximum Daily Load) and shared the online [implementation activities list](#). Two tributaries are being added to the TMDL: AU 1103G_01 (Tributary of Gum Bayou) and AU 1103F (Tributary of Dickinson Bayou Tidal).

Announcements

Community Planning for Flood Mitigation – September 2 from 9:00am-4:00pm. A no cost virtual one-day course designed for local officials, staff, and consultants to learn about a range of practices communities can use to reduce their flood risks. While floods may seem to be a hazard outside of a community’s control, local planning is one of the most effective tools in reducing current and future flood losses. Approved for 5 CFM CECs and AICP CMs. List of speakers and registration link [here](#).

[Galveston Bay Report Card](#) –

Launch in September both virtual and in-person.

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.