

Galveston Bay Coalition of Watersheds

Bastrop Bayou | Dickinson Bayou | Highland Bayou | Jarbo Bayou

Partnering for healthy watersheds.

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

Wednesday, February 2, 2022 | 10:00-11:30 AM

Virtual Meeting via ZOOM with call in option

MEETING NOTES

Attendees: Chris Armacost, Julie Masters, Deb Webb, Steven Johnston, Kendall Guidroz, Katie Wilson, Brent Spier, Charlotte Cisneros, Michael Shannon, Barbara Bellows, Ali Saleh, Michael LaMontagne, Nicole Plowman, Jean Wright, Brian Koch, Doug Roesler, Israel, Charriss York, and Celina Gauthier Lowry

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting started with individual introductions and a brief overview of the Coalition.

State of Water Quality for Coalition Watersheds

The initial State of Water Quality for Coalition Watersheds report serves as a benchmark to inform priorities, target future efforts, and assess water quality improvements over time. The report contains bacteria data for samples collected within Coalition watersheds. Data in the report was provided by the Houston-Galveston Area Council, collected as part of their Clean Rivers Program, between January 2019 and December 2020. Summary data for the furthest downstream monitoring station for each watershed was presented as a “big picture” view of water quality in Coalition watersheds. Bacteria data for monitoring stations in one Coalition watershed (Bastrop Bayou) was reviewed as an example of what the full report includes for each Coalition watershed. The full State of Water Quality for Coalition Watersheds report is available in the virtual binder online - <https://www.livebinders.com/b/2673240>; Access Key: Coalition

Project Updates

The three focus areas for projects prioritized by the Coalition in previous meetings were reviewed:

- 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

Updates for each project idea since the last Coalition meeting in August of 2021 was presented.

FOG and Wipes in Sanitary Sewer Systems

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 September 4th and at the Bay Area Plant Exchange in Dickinson on October 9th featuring several FOG and wipes educational displays, interactive games, and giveaways
- KDB adapted the FOG and wipes flyer from a previous effort for use during in-person outreach events

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

- Hitchcock delivered FOG and wipes flyers to 10 apartment complexes; 2,600 utility bills went out with the FOG and wipes bill insert image on the front page of their newsletter; FOG and wipes bill insert flyers remain at Hitchcock City Hall for new service agreements, utility receipts, and service call follow ups; FOG and wipes flyers were delivered by the City of Hitchcock to the library, post office, and two banks

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

- The handout KDB adapted for continued use included their 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.

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

- KDB shared FOG and wipes information on Facebook before and after the Market event in September.
- A FOG and wipes [Social Media Toolkit](#) was developed and shared with the Coalition. Sample posts with new graphics were developed as well as a list of resources to help those who prefer to find content themselves. The goal is to make sharing content easy for Coalition members.

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.

- Texas A&M AgriLife Extension staff participated in League City Eco-Fest on September 18th interacting with residents from Dickinson, Highland, and Jarbo Bayou watersheds at resource tables and during classroom presentations
 - “What Watershed Do You Live In” map activity

- “Watershed Watchers” children’s activity book specific to Dickinson Bayou
- QR code and magnet giveaway on [Galveston Bay Action Network](#) (GBAN) [reporting tool](#) for reporting pollution in Brazoria and Galveston Counties to help local agencies by increasing the number of reports
- “We All Live in a watershed” classroom presentation to communicate how our storm drains are connected to local bayous, actions at home impact local water quality, and introduce GBAN; included a demonstration of nonpoint source pollution and sources using enviroscape tabletop model
- “Rain Gardens” classroom presentation, requested by League City

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.

- At the League City Eco-Fest event: a flyer made by KDB with information on recycling used tires for Galveston County residents was displayed; GBAN was shared as a resource for pollution reporting (including abandoned tires); copies of “Recycling Information for Citizens” made by the City of League City were offered with information for all Galveston County residents

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

Where are we now?

Wrap up open items – Digital FOG and wipes bill insert files will be provided to communities and organizations in Coalition watersheds with their logo upon request.

Upcoming Event – The Coalition will co-host a Riparian and Stream Ecosystem workshop with Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI) on February 22nd from 8:00 am – 4:30 pm at Carbide Park in La Marque. The free workshop includes both indoor classroom presentation and an outdoor field portion along Marchand Bayou. Many professional CEUs are available including: Texas Floodplain Management Association, Agriculture Pesticide License, Texas Board of Architectural Examiners, and more. RSVP is required by Feb. 15th [online](#) or by contacting Lucas Gregory at 979-314-2361 or LFGregory@ag.tamu.edu. Coalition members are invited to: attend, encourage decision makers to attend, and forward to others.

Partner Announcements

Coastal Communities Workgroup - Fats, Oils, and Grease Outreach for Rental Properties. Next meeting is Feb. 8, 2022 at 9 am. Contact [Kendall Guidroz](#) for more information.

Dickinson Bayou- [Barbara Bellows](#) from the Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Research (TIAER) at Tarleton State University [shared updates](#) on water, sediments, and soil assessments as well as modeling to propose mitigation strategies for minimizing the impact of catastrophic flood events.

Looking Forward

Current funding ends Mar. 31, 2022.

A poll questions was administered, “What has been the most impactful for your work?”. *Participants were able to select more than one answer.* These are compiled below.

- 80% Shared resources for a larger impact
- 33% Setting the stage; making inroads for future efforts
- 20% Moving actions forward through this external group
- 20% Flexibility in implementation, based on current needs and capabilities
- 13% Coalition actions were impactful, but not specific to my organization
- 7% Similar actions would have happened, even without the Coalition
- 0% Other [I'll add feedback in meeting chat]

Without a coordinated focus through the Coalition, there are still many actions happening through individual organizations to move these efforts forward. Staying engaged with each other, and using the resources developed by this group, are two ways to continue improving water quality in Coalition watersheds.