



**Agenda Item:** Update from East End Lagoon Task Force

**Background:** The East End Lagoon Task Force is responsible for leading the efforts surrounding the construction of a new open-air pavilion and connected trail system at the East End Lagoon utilizing a \$1.35 million RESTORE grant. The Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act (RESTORE Act) dedicates 80 percent of all administrative and civil penalties related to the Deepwater Horizon spill to restoration along the Gulf Coast. The East End Lagoon Trail and Pavilion Project is one of two grants the Park Board received from RESTORE.

Since our last update in December, the following has taken place:

**Work Plan:** Park Board staff submitted the Work Plan to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for approval. TCEQ is the state agency who is overseeing this Federal Grant. Staff has received TCEQ's initial feedback and is working to update the resubmit the document for one final review.

**Joint Evaluation Meeting (JEM):** Park Board staff met with the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to conduct a Joint Evaluation Meeting. This forum with State and Federal Resource Agencies addresses topics such as proposed impacts, design concerns, suggestions for minimization of environmental impact, etc. This meeting aids in determining if a Federal Permit is needed and if so, what type is required.

**University of Texas Collaboration:** The task force met with Coleman Coker, a professor at the University of Texas Gulf Coast Design Lab to view the site and determine if a group of students could work on the design of the trails, to include interpretive signage.

Looking forward, the Task Force will work on:

**Finalizing the Work Plan:** The completion and approval of the Work Plan by TCEQ is a foundational step in the construction process. Until the Work Plan is finished, the Task Force cannot spend money on the project.

**Update Drawings and Specs:** Once the Work Plan is approved, Park Board staff will work with the engineer to finalize the plans and provide updated construction costs. If additional funds are needed, staff will begin seeking opportunities through our new Grants Manager.

**Design of Trails and Signage:** Students from the Gulf Coast Design Lab will come in early June to assess the site and begin their project. They will provide competing designs for the committee to review.