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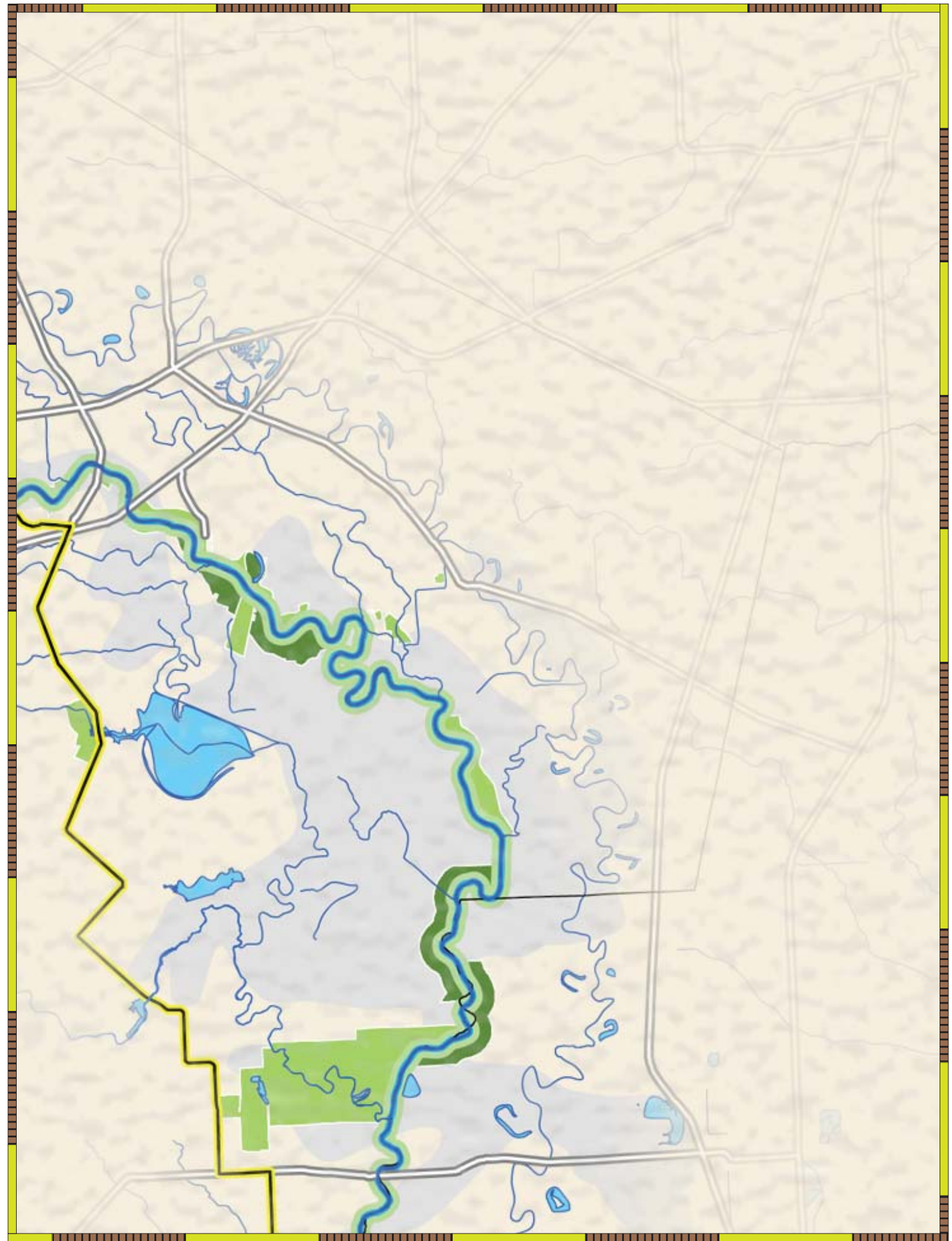
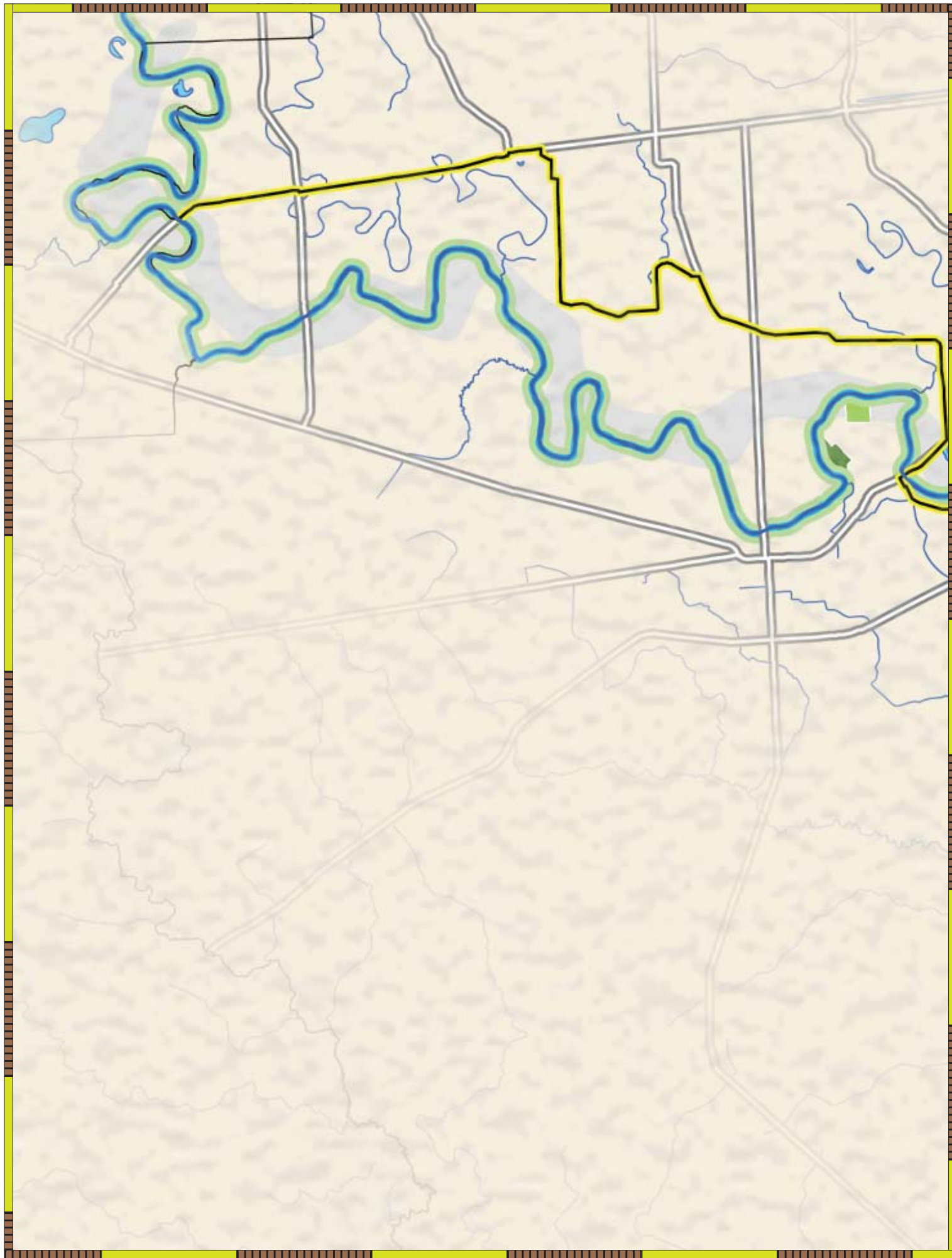
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# BRAZOS RIVER RECREATION MASTER PLAN MAY 28, 2014



This plan was made possible by assistance from the National Park Service: Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program.







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# Introduction

Fort Bend County has a rich and documented history, from Spanish Colonial land grants to a landscape of thriving urban business centers amid attractive master-planned communities and pastoral ranches, with much life and history happening along the way. In recent years, Fort Bend County has made headlines, landing on “best of the best” lists in categories such as job growth, cultural diversity, and community amenities.

The residents of Fort Bend County value their quality of life. A recognized and celebrated part of this quality of life is the Brazos River, which runs through the center of Fort Bend County from one end to the other. Growing community concern for the future of Fort Bend County, and interest in protecting the Brazos River for future generations led to the formation of Fort Bend Green.

Established in 2008 as a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Organization with an unpaid, volunteer Board of Directors, Fort Bend Green provides a means to facilitate the planning and development of green space in Fort Bend County, utilizing the entire spectrum of Federal, State, and Local Government.

In the summer of 2011, Fort Bend Green hosted a gathering of representatives from local governments and organizations interested in working collaboratively to develop a Recreation Plan for the Brazos River. On behalf of this group of entities, Fort Bend Green requested the assistance of the National Park Service through its Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA).

In the fall of 2011, RTCA formally accepted the request and began working with the new group of partners to develop a process that would culminate in this plan – the Brazos River Recreation Master Plan.

## *An Invitation to the Reader*

The projects proposed here are intended to be the first steps toward the long-term development of an extensive river recreation corridor that draws visitors and appreciation from near and far.

Successful development of these projects may take years to accomplish requiring strong partnerships among governmental bodies, community groups, businesses and landowners.

Furthermore, this plan is intended to be a living document. The Brazos River is wild, and literally changes the landscape of Fort Bend County. Consequently, the needs and desires of the people and wildlife along the River change with it.

You are invited to contribute your ideas and resources to the realization of this vision as a resource for all. If you and/or your organization have resources and ideas to contribute please contact Fort Bend Green.

*"The Brazos River Recreation Master Plan will serve as a guide for the future development of parks, trails and canoe launches along the river. It will be a valuable tool to use in our development of green space."*  
Robert Hebert, County Judge, Fort Bend County

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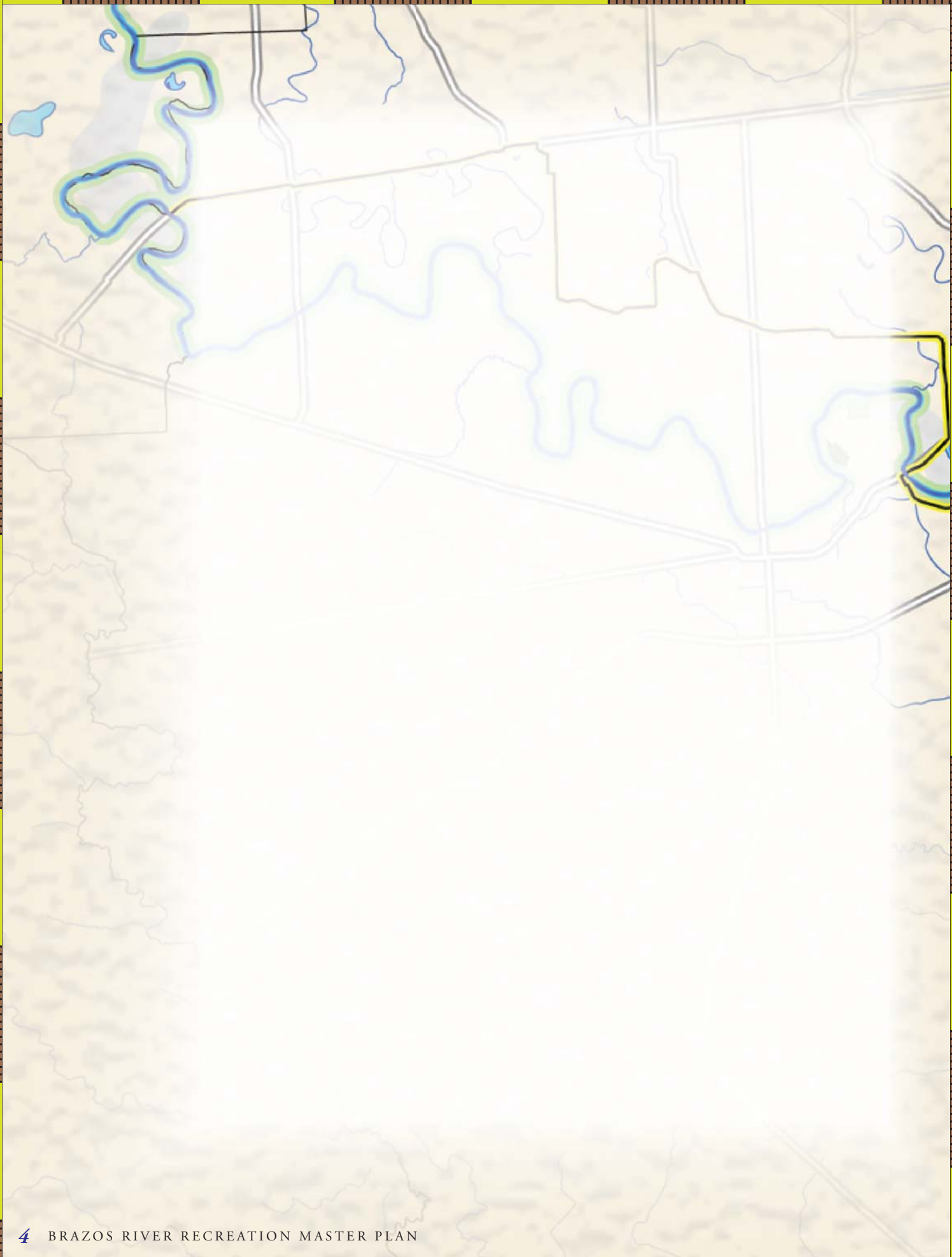
*"There are few places in Texas today that are less crowded, less utilized and just as peaceful as they were 200 years ago but the lower Brazos River is such a place. Walk its steep tree-covered banks, slip a canoe into its light brown water or just look out over its never-ending current and imagine Texas the way it used to be."*

*- David Heinicke, Park Naturalist, Brazos Bend State Park*

# THE BRAZOS RIVER









# A Celebration of the River

The Brazos River is the longest river in Texas. Called the “Rio de los Brazos de Dios” by early Spanish explorers (translated as “The River of the Arms of God”), it flows 1,280 miles from its headwater source in Curry County, New Mexico, to its mouth at the Gulf of Mexico. Almost 90 miles of the River has shaped Fort Bend County - the River defines portions of its eastern and western boundaries, and meanders through the heart of it, leaving oxbow lakes and rich agricultural land as clues of its wilder past. This Plan celebrates the River as a significant historical and present-day resource for the people, communities, and wildlife of Fort Bend County.

## Demographics

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Fort Bend County has a total area of 886 square miles, comprised of 875 square miles of land and 11 square miles (1.29%) of water. The County Seat is Richmond, while its largest city is Sugar Land. According to the Greater Fort Bend Economic Development Council, Fort Bend County:

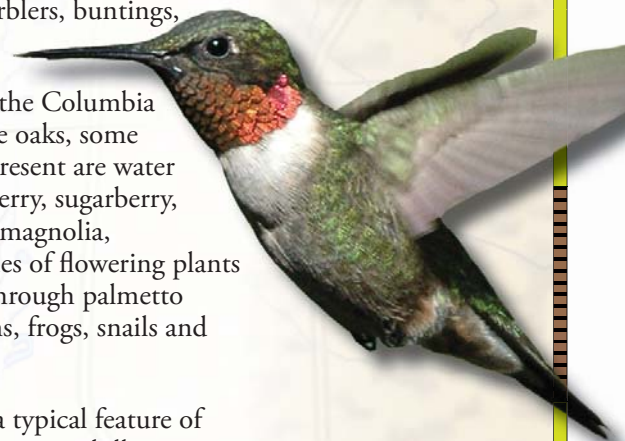
*Is the fastest growing county of the ten largest counties in Texas, and is expected to continue to grow at an annual rate surpassing 3% for the next five years; Has a current population of over 640,000 and a projected population of 750,000 in five years; Is consistently ranked in the top 3% of the nation's counties in five key demographic measures; Enjoys an exceptionally educated and skilled resident workforce with an average household income of nearly \$109K; And is a leading example of successful diversity in the community and in the workplace.*

## Natural Resources

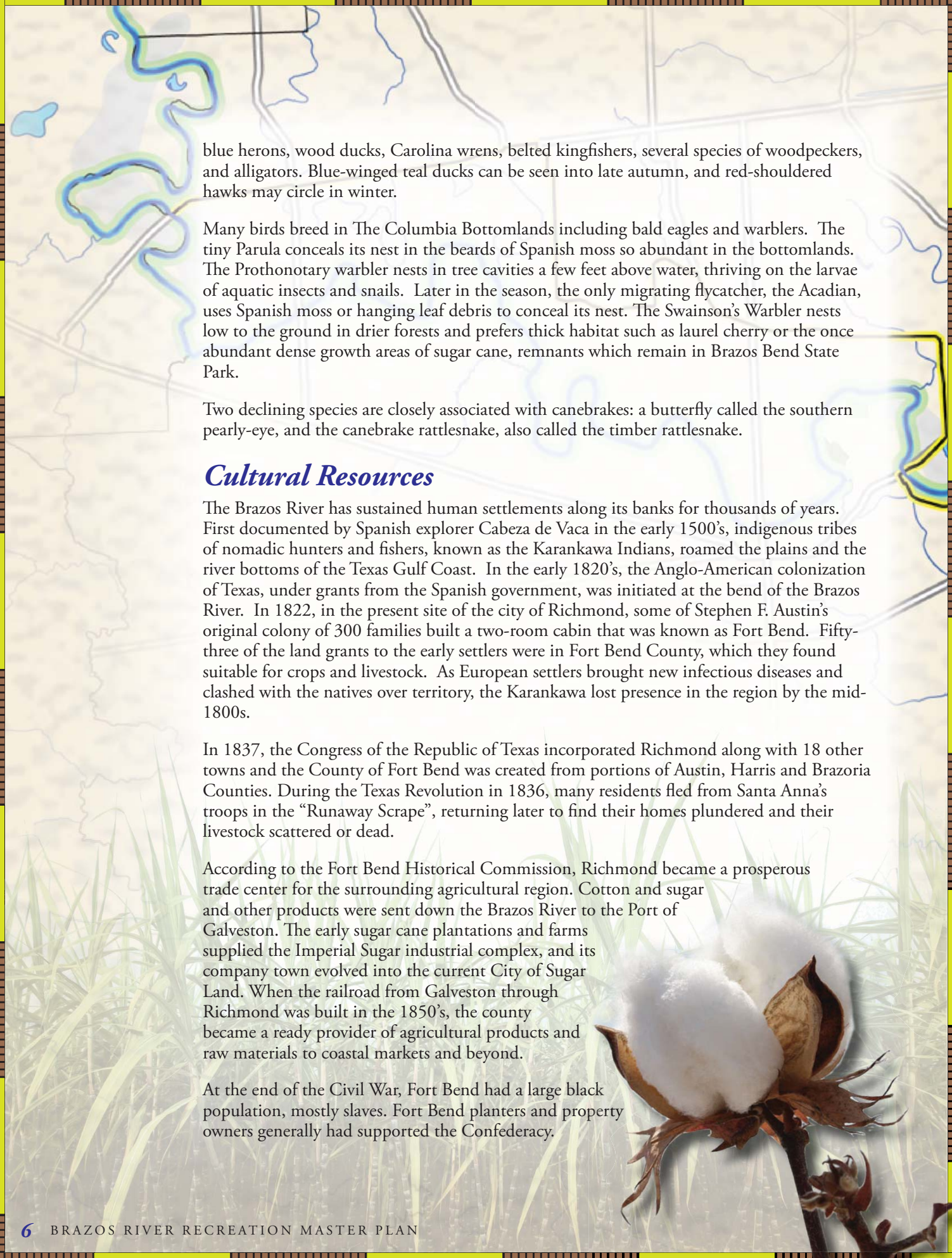
The dense, wet, hardwood-forested coastal bottomland area of the upper Texas Coast adjacent to the Brazos, Colorado, and San Bernard Rivers is commonly called the “Columbia Bottomlands”. According to Houston Wilderness, this area is the most important stopover habitat in Texas for birds that migrate from the Yucatan across the Gulf of Mexico in May and June on prevailing southeasterly breezes. That includes the warblers, buntings, grosbeaks, thrushes, hummingbirds, orioles and tanagers, among others.

An astonishing 239 million birds representing 237 species pass through the Columbia Bottomlands each spring. The birds find food and shelter within the live oaks, some hundreds of years old. Draped with Spanish moss and grapevines, also present are water oak, green ash, cedar elm, box-elder, maple, black willow, western soapberry, sugarberry, hackberry, honey locust, pignut hickory, cherry laurel, American beech, magnolia, cottonwood, sycamore, and pecan trees. More than three hundred species of flowering plants attract all manner of butterflies and hummingbirds. Sloughs meander through palmetto thickets, and the dense understory supports a lush world of orchids, ferns, frogs, snails and insects.

Oxbow lakes, a remnant of an old river bed that is often spring fed, are a typical feature of the Columbia Bottomlands. Ever-present are ibises, snowy egrets, roseate spoonbills, great







blue herons, wood ducks, Carolina wrens, belted kingfishers, several species of woodpeckers, and alligators. Blue-winged teal ducks can be seen into late autumn, and red-shouldered hawks may circle in winter.

Many birds breed in The Columbia Bottomlands including bald eagles and warblers. The tiny Parula conceals its nest in the beards of Spanish moss so abundant in the bottomlands. The Prothonotary warbler nests in tree cavities a few feet above water, thriving on the larvae of aquatic insects and snails. Later in the season, the only migrating flycatcher, the Acadian, uses Spanish moss or hanging leaf debris to conceal its nest. The Swainson's Warbler nests low to the ground in drier forests and prefers thick habitat such as laurel cherry or the once abundant dense growth areas of sugar cane, remnants which remain in Brazos Bend State Park.

Two declining species are closely associated with canebrakes: a butterfly called the southern pearl-eye, and the canebrake rattlesnake, also called the timber rattlesnake.

## ***Cultural Resources***

The Brazos River has sustained human settlements along its banks for thousands of years. First documented by Spanish explorer Cabeza de Vaca in the early 1500's, indigenous tribes of nomadic hunters and fishers, known as the Karankawa Indians, roamed the plains and the river bottoms of the Texas Gulf Coast. In the early 1820's, the Anglo-American colonization of Texas, under grants from the Spanish government, was initiated at the bend of the Brazos River. In 1822, in the present site of the city of Richmond, some of Stephen F. Austin's original colony of 300 families built a two-room cabin that was known as Fort Bend. Fifty-three of the land grants to the early settlers were in Fort Bend County, which they found suitable for crops and livestock. As European settlers brought new infectious diseases and clashed with the natives over territory, the Karankawa lost presence in the region by the mid-1800s.

In 1837, the Congress of the Republic of Texas incorporated Richmond along with 18 other towns and the County of Fort Bend was created from portions of Austin, Harris and Brazoria Counties. During the Texas Revolution in 1836, many residents fled from Santa Anna's troops in the "Runaway Scrape", returning later to find their homes plundered and their livestock scattered or dead.

According to the Fort Bend Historical Commission, Richmond became a prosperous trade center for the surrounding agricultural region. Cotton and sugar and other products were sent down the Brazos River to the Port of Galveston. The early sugar cane plantations and farms supplied the Imperial Sugar industrial complex, and its company town evolved into the current City of Sugar Land. When the railroad from Galveston through Richmond was built in the 1850's, the county became a ready provider of agricultural products and raw materials to coastal markets and beyond.

At the end of the Civil War, Fort Bend had a large black population, mostly slaves. Fort Bend planters and property owners generally had supported the Confederacy.



Although no battles were fought in the area, the war's duration and the economic, social and political hardships that followed put great stress on the community.

In the late 1800's, additional railroads further opened the county to new settlers, many from central Europe. Small productive family farms formed the central focus of the economic and social life from the 1880's through World War II. Ranching and cotton production then began to replace the small farms. Missouri City, Stafford, and Rosenberg developed along the rail lines.

Oil and gas was discovered at Blueridge in the early 1920's, followed by discoveries at Orchard, Thompsons, and Katy. Until the last decade, the development and transport of oil, gas, and sulfur have played a major role in the county's commerce and industry.

Beginning in the early 1970's with Houston's expansion, Fort Bend saw new growth in the form of increased residential development, especially master-planned communities such as First Colony, Greatwood, New Territory and Cinco Ranch. More recently the 10,000-acre Sienna Plantation has joined the ranks, along with developments ranging from 1,200 to 3,700 acres: Cross Creek Ranch, Firethorne, Grand Lakes, Riverstone, and Telfair.

Fort Bend has an exceedingly bright future as it continues to build on the foundations established by the original settlers of Texas.

*Citations:*

**Fort Bend County Historical Society**

Virginia Laird Ott, "FORT BEND COUNTY,"  
*Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hcf07>), accessed February 07, 2014. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.





## *Issues and Concerns Along the River*

The Brazos River is both a treasure and a force to be reckoned with. It offers both beauty and function. But it is a complicated ecosystem with many issues and uncertainties. The Steering Committee asked stakeholders during interviews early in the planning process to identify key issues surrounding the “management” of this great river. Below is a summary of the comments:

### *Personal Safety*

- Since the River is so long, there is plenty of opportunity for the River to swell upstream, changing the downstream conditions to become wild and murky with little advance notice.
- River safety should not be taught as a hindrance to enjoying the River, but should be seen as an opportunity to educate and broaden appreciation of human life and wildlife along it.
- The River is perceived to be dangerous, but the danger concerns can be addressed with educational materials and warning signs.
- People have the idea that the Brazos River is a “Monster”.
- The Brazos is a paddling river, not a swimming river.
- Public Safety officers throughout the County must be aware of the trails and paddling of the River, and must be capable of addressing emergency situations.
- Despite warnings posted about the dangers of the River currents, submerged obstructions, and wildlife, providing access could still be perceived as an invitation to engage in activity on or near the water.

### *Natural / Environmental Health*

- Areas with high levels of biodiversity as well as areas vital to water quality should be managed wisely to prevent significant habitat degradation.
- The impact to existing wildlife/plant habitats will be negative.

### *Dumping / Trash*

- The dangers include submerged logs or junk like large appliances that people have dumped into the River from highways.
- The Brazos should never be a “tubing” River like the Guadalupe or others in the Hill Country. Tubing has generally been the cause of debris and litter problems along these other rivers.



## ***Flooding***

- There is an impression that any change to the land on a park property has impacts that cause flooding issues on adjacent properties, regardless of whether the engineers have documents and studies that indicate otherwise.
- Ownership of or rights to the land may be in question. Because of floods and changes in the River, historical records may yield surprises in land ownership or not clearly designate ownership or rights to easements.

## ***Private Property***

- Home owners may object to park properties adjacent to their homes because of perceived trouble with light pollution, noise pollution, and the unprotected access that it will give strangers to their property.
- Hunters could possibly get on to private property.

## ***Changes to Current Way of Life***

- Projects that would have low impact, but high rewards obviously outweigh those with negative impacts to the quiet way of life. Annual events provide economic benefits to our community. However, if those events were held every weekend, it would be intrusive on the local quiet way of life.
- Increased traffic.

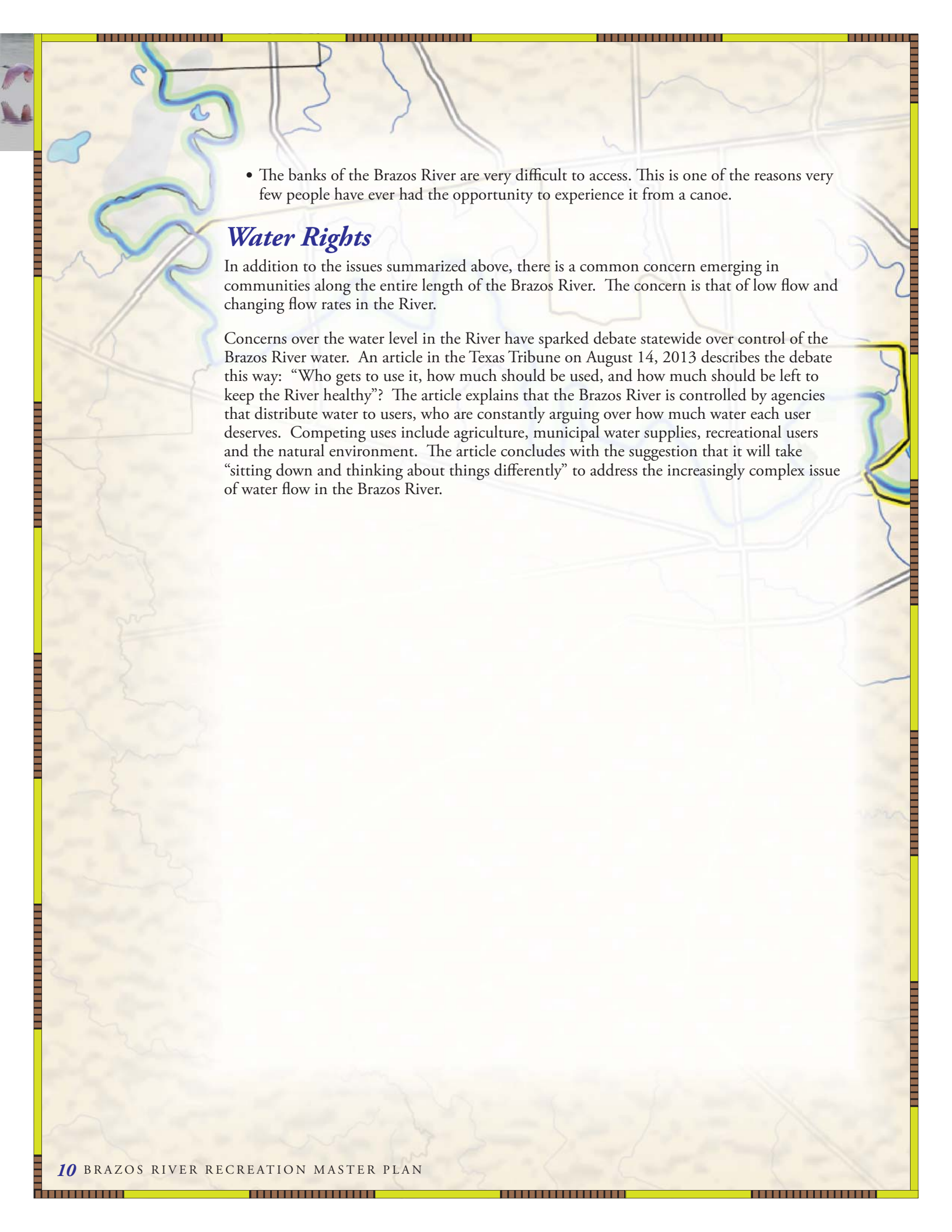
## ***Cost of Public Services***

- Maintenance of public facilities is an expensive ongoing operation.
- Managing entities must appreciate the full array of costs and think through important legal issues such as the liability of providing access to the River and the cost of insurance to cover potential suits.
- Public recreation improvements should encompass the water ways and adjacent natural greenbelts similar to the bayou improvements in Harris County.
- If public funds are used, they are used “in competition” with other mainline projects.
- The public may be against the use of tax dollars to help fund this project. The projects could be financed via government grants, incorporated into existing regional economic development plans, private fundraising events, pay-per-use fees, or real estate development fees.

## ***Engineering Challenges***

- The infrastructure around high-use recreation areas may need to be upgraded to address potential congestion and safety issues.



- 
- The banks of the Brazos River are very difficult to access. This is one of the reasons very few people have ever had the opportunity to experience it from a canoe.

### ***Water Rights***

In addition to the issues summarized above, there is a common concern emerging in communities along the entire length of the Brazos River. The concern is that of low flow and changing flow rates in the River.

Concerns over the water level in the River have sparked debate statewide over control of the Brazos River water. An article in the Texas Tribune on August 14, 2013 describes the debate this way: “Who gets to use it, how much should be used, and how much should be left to keep the River healthy”? The article explains that the Brazos River is controlled by agencies that distribute water to users, who are constantly arguing over how much water each user deserves. Competing uses include agriculture, municipal water supplies, recreational users and the natural environment. The article concludes with the suggestion that it will take “sitting down and thinking about things differently” to address the increasingly complex issue of water flow in the Brazos River.



*"Sugar Land is a city of development and progress, but part of what makes it so rich is our love of our green spaces. All nine miles of the Brazos River that flow through Sugar Land are special to us, and developing the amenities that will allow all of Sugar Land's residents to enjoy it are as important as the shopping spaces in Town Square and the historical spaces of Imperial Sugar. The Brazos River Corridor Recreation Master Plan allows us to keep the promises we make to our children: to keep green spaces green, and a river running through them."*

*- James Thompson, Mayor, City of Sugar Land*







# Brazos River Park

## Brazos River Park Land Acquisition and Master Plan

The City of Sugar Land is fortunate to have nine miles of the river and approximately 3,600 acres of floodway property within its boundaries. A master plan for the corridor was completed in 1997 laying a road map for land acquisition and development. The City has already acquired over 1,000 acres of land for parks, trails, and conservation along the corridor and is continually looking for opportunities to acquire more floodway acreage.

The City has only purchased 15 acres of the 1,000 acres; the remainder has been acquired through donations. The most significant donation was 420 acres from the State of Texas adjacent to the US Highway 59 Brazos River Bridge on the southeast side of the freeway. This area was former prison property which had been farm and ranch land tended by state prisoners for over 100 years.



BRAZOS RIVER PARK MASTER PLAN  
 CITY OF SUGAR LAND

## Sugar Land Memorial Park

Sugar Land Memorial Park was opened with a huge community event to celebrate the first phase of development in November 2007. The City's first Park development along the Brazos River included a pond, picnic pavilion, plaza, playground, two mile multi-use trail, restroom, parking, and landscaping.





## *Brazos River Park continued...*



### *Justin P. Brindley Bike Trail*

A generous donation to the City of Sugar Land by Robert and Valerie Brindley in honor of their son Justin allowed the City to develop an off-road bicycle trail in accordance with the Park's master plan. The trail is approximately 1.5 miles and meanders through a forest area along the river. The trail was designed by S&S Trails of Austin, Texas and constructed by Progressive Trails of Fayetteville, Arkansas.



The trail was one of the first in the Houston region to include technical trail features to make the ride more interesting and challenging. In addition, there are two river overlook areas that provide beautiful views of the river. The trail has become very popular with hikers and trail runners as well as bicyclists. The high use of this trail indicates a need to provide additional similar facilities along the corridor.

### *Pawm Springs Dog Park*

In addition to the Brindlley Bike Trail, the Pawm Springs Dog Park and another restroom building was added to the Brazos River Park in 2010. The dog park has been extremely popular. It is divided into small and large dog areas and has a swimming pond for large dogs. There is a shade pavilion, dog agility training equipment, and dog drinking fountains.





## Brazos River Park *continued...*

### *Trees Across Sugar Land*

Trees Across Sugar Land is a volunteer tree planting program held in conjunction with Keep Sugar Land Beautiful. Over 5,000 trees and seedlings have been planted in the Park since 2007. The volunteers have primarily been local high school students earning community service credits for National Honor Society and other service organizations. This program provides a learning experience for teens and helps reforest former farm land in the park.



### *River Park Trails*

The RiverPark Master Planned Community located in Sugar Land dedicated Brazos River park land and two miles of existing trails to the City upon annexation in 2010. These trails included wildlife interpretive graphics and wayfinding graphics. In addition, since the annexation the Greater Houston Off-Road Bicycling Association (GHORBA) and local Boy Scout troops have constructed an additional two miles of hike and bike trails along the corridor.

### *Next Steps*

The City of Sugar Land has two major projects identified for the Brazos River Park in the near future. A bond election was passed by residents supporting additional development of the Park. These improvements will include trails, festival grounds, a lake, parking, and road ways. Completion of these new developments is scheduled for 2016 or 2017.





# *Rosenberg, Fulshear and Simonton*

## *Rosenberg Parks Provide Opportunities for Humans and Animals Alike*

City of Rosenberg green space and parks are reaping the rewards of community partnerships and collaboration. Throughout the years, the City has partnered with Scout troops on various Eagle Scout projects which have added amenities to our natural spaces for the betterment of both animals and humans.

On a cold, rainy Saturday in December 2013, Thomas Heath of Scout Troop 1880 completed his Eagle Scout Project which consisted of constructing and mounting an Osprey nest platform along the Brazos River in the back of the Rosenberg Cemetery on Avenue D. Heath raised all the funds for the project, and a local electrical company donated the power pole and set it once the Osprey platform was complete. The tower will allow the birds to have a proper nesting site, and help keep them from nesting on power poles.



## *City of Fulshear Parks Master Plan Update*

The City of Fulshear updated its Comprehensive Plan including the Parks and Amenities Plan in 2013. Potential action concepts from the plan include a Bike Loop, Downtown Park/Plaza Space, and Community Scale Park. Other potential initiatives in the plan include a nature center, multi-use of floodplain/detention areas, joint city-school opportunities, public art opportunities, community gardens, and Brazos River access. The City of Fulshear has been a strong partner in the Brazos River Recreation Master Plan.

## *Simonton Conservancy*

The Simonton area has long been known as home to some of the most beautiful, pristine, native lands in the entire Brazos watershed. As development will certainly occur in the area, it has become clear that some of this land, not well-suited for development otherwise, should be set aside for future generations to enjoy. For this reason, a community-minded group has taken on the task of creating the "Simonton Conservancy." To be clear, this organization does not yet exist, but is in the beginning stages of understanding and pursuing the challenges to establishing the Simonton Conservancy.



# *Sienna Plantation, Lamar and Gordan*

## *Camp Sienna Providing Outdoor Family Fun*

The 160-acre Camp Sienna Park located in Sienna Plantation (Missouri City) continues to provide residents of Sienna Plantation and Fort Bend County with expansive outdoor recreational opportunities.



Trail enthusiasts are treated to a beautiful trail system meandering through the wooded sections of the park along the Brazos River and around the other park amenities (sport fields, playground, volleyball and basketball courts, horseshoe pits, pavilion, etc.).

Enhancement projects for Camp Sienna continue almost annually with not only major projects by the park owner (Sienna Plantation Levee Improvement District) but also through the enthusiastic efforts of dedicated local Eagle Scouts. Eagle Scout projects over the last five years have included installation of a Brazos River Trail Kiosk, development of an overnight camping area, trail foliage and tree identification signage, construction of horseshoe pits, and a community event for Blue Bird House/Habitat construction.



The Sienna Plantation Residential Association and local scouting troops also host overnight camp-outs for the community throughout the year at Camp Sienna which have provided quality outdoor recreational opportunities for family fun in this popular and extremely active park along the Brazos River.



## *Mirabeau B. Lamar Homestead Park*

The Mirabeau B. Lamar Homestead Park was formally created by Fort Bend County in 2013 on land purchased by Lamar from Jane Long in 1854. The park occupies 7.3 acres of Brazos River frontage in Richmond and is designated as an archeological reserve. Sign graphics and historical markers, including the probable location of Lamar's house and a cistern are posted along a walking path that winds through the park. The park is available for outdoor recreation for Fort Bend County residents to enjoy.

## *Gordon Ranch*

Fort Bend Green facilitated the purchase by Fort Bend County with donated funds of a 112-acre fully-developed park and event facility located in Richmond, Texas. Funding for the property was provided by two foundations and one private individual. The Gordon Ranch includes an amphitheater, a 7,000 square foot meeting facility, four pavilions, and an overnight facility. Additional facilities include two softball fields, basketball courts, an obstacle course, fishing pier, playgrounds, paddle boats, miniature golf course, two swimming pools, a sand pit, and volleyball courts. Fort Bend County will lease this property to the YMCA and it will remain available to Fort Bend County residents for events for a fee.

# *Sugar Land Memorial Park*

## *Honoring Fort Bend County Veterans*

Sugar Land Memorial Park was named in 2007 in order to honor Fort Bend County Veterans. Because the park had already been designed at this time, a plan was developed for future memorials to recognize Fort Bend County Veterans in the park. A dedicated group of individuals appointed by City Council worked for several months to determine appropriate locations and features in Memorial Park. These memorials were to be situated in four distinct areas within the Veterans' Memorial area of the park. Each memorial was intended to provoke different emotions.

City Council intended that all residents of the City and County have the opportunity to contribute to the memorials through the Sugar Land Legacy Foundation, established by the City of Sugar Land to support parks and civic projects, and feel ownership and pride for the memorials. The City of Sugar Land unveiled the first of the four memorials during the 2010 Memorial Day ceremony— an entry feature with flags representing each branch of the military.



The second memorial, the “Remembrance Tower” and “Flag Panel”, was the result of a collaborative effort of the Sugar Land Legacy Foundation, the Tilt-Up Concrete Association (TCA), numerous local construction companies and contractors as well as a willing and ready partner in the City of Sugar Land Parks & Recreation Department. The memorial was designed and constructed almost completely free of cost to the City of Sugar Land and within an amazingly short period of time.

The TCA Community Project Program was developed in 2010 by the TCA, to encourage collaboration between member companies of the convention host city and to provide a vehicle by which these companies could give back to their communities. The 2013 convention was held in Sugar Land September 30 – October 3.



## *Sugar Land Memorial continued...*

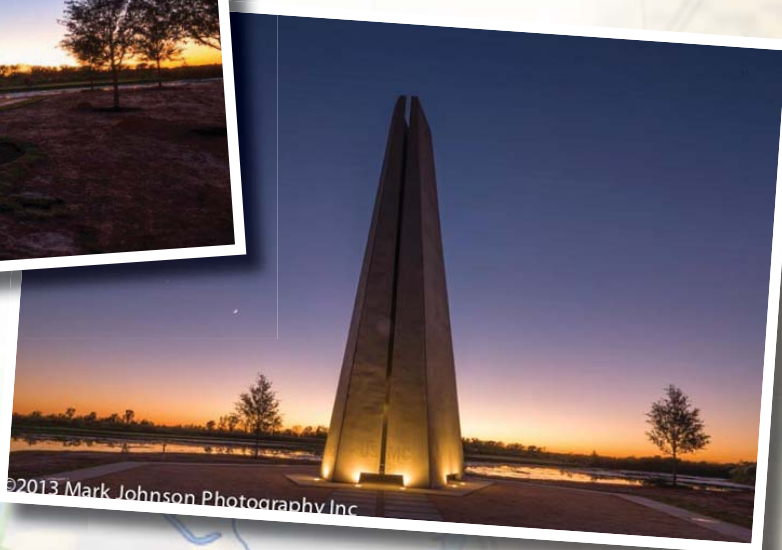
A monument and plaza have been developed to honor military veterans of Sugar Land and Fort Bend County. All Park visitors can visit the site and enjoy this peaceful reflective space.

TCA Board of Directors member Jeffrey Brown of Powers Brown Architecture offered his firm's services to design the memorial. Mr. Brown worked with Parks & Recreation Department employees to discuss the vision of the 2008 Memorial Task Force.

The final concept chosen was a memorial obelisk recognizing the branches of the military. After walking through a symbolic entryway and crossing a bridge to a peninsula, visitors are able to walk within the obelisk and experience rays of sunlight reflecting through a vertical opening. The goal of the memorial is to exploit the site in a way that accommodates two distinct, but perhaps overlapping, tropes of honor- the Celebratory and the Contemplative. The names of Sugar Land soldiers who have died while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces have been engraved into the interior walls of the monument.

The value of the donation exceeds hundreds of thousands of dollars and reflects a memorial concept for the park that was identified by a citizen task force and the City's Parks and Recreation Department in 2008.

"Our vision is to give others the opportunity to leave a legacy in their community, and we are very proud to have been a part of such an important project," said Sugar Land Legacy Foundation President Gene Reed, who is also the owner of E.E. Reed Construction, L.P. and a member of the TCA.





# Race on the Brazos and Online Map

## Ready, Set, Race!



*Race on the Brazos 2013 major sponsor, Texas Citizens Bank representative Kellie Grigar, flanked by KC 7445 ROTB Co-Admirals Marty Gibula and Andy Bockholt. Picture by Fort Bend Herald.*



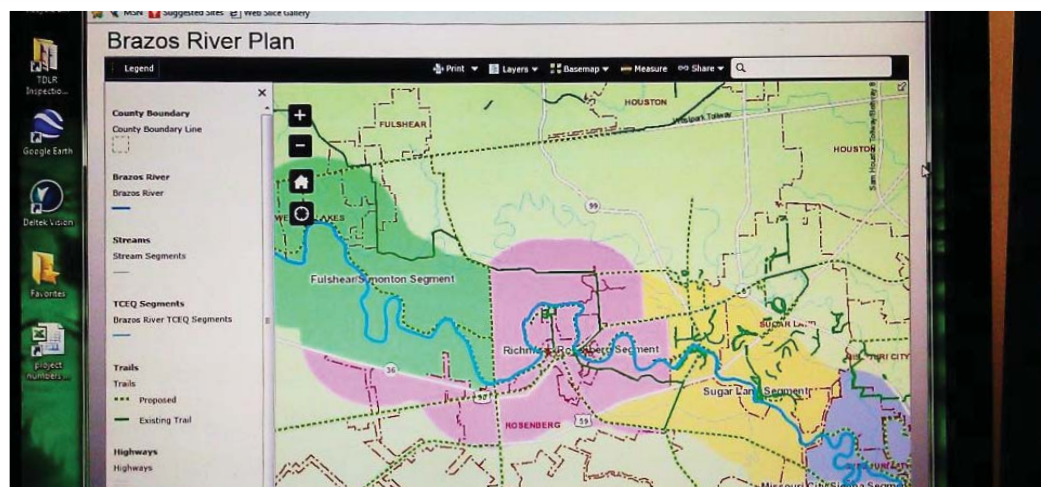
From 2010-2013 (2012 race was cancelled due to high water) the Richmond Knights of Columbus hosted the Race on the Brazos. The canoe/kayak race began in Simonton for advanced racers and Rosenberg for beginner racers. In 2010 and 2011 the end of the race was at George Park in Richmond. In 2013, racers began in Fulshear/Simonton and ended at the 723 bridge in Rosenberg. In Rosenberg, Fort Bend County Road and Bridge assisted in the creation of the launch in Community Park in Rosenberg to provide access to the river and assist the race.



## Brazos River Recreation Master Plan Interactive Online Map

Even before the Brazos River Recreation Master Plan took shape as an official project, the Geographic Information System (GIS) Administrator of the Fort Bend County Engineer's Office was collaborating with Fort Bend Green on a mutually beneficial digital mapping inventory of parks and trails located in the County. Other digital map layers such as roads, land use, ownership, and jurisdictions were overlaid with the parks and trails inventory as the Recreation Master Plan gained momentum. Park sites, conservation areas, canoe/kayak launches, and trails proposed at the Community Workshops were added to the Plan's GIS. The resulting maps and databases were instrumental in evaluating and consolidating projects to create a list of high-priority projects. As the Plan moves forward, partners for recreation development sites as well as users can keep up with the status of projects on this interactive online map created with ESRI's ArcGIS Online templates and hosted by Fort Bend County.

<http://fortbendcountytexas.gov/brazosriverrecreationplan/>





A photograph of three roseate spoonbills perched on a dark, gnarled branch. The birds are facing left, with their long, dark bills pointing downwards. They have white heads and necks, with a distinctive yellow patch on the forehead. Their bodies are covered in vibrant pink and red feathers. The background is a clear, light blue sky. The title 'THE PLANNING PROCESS' is written vertically in white, serif capital letters along the right edge of the image, with decorative flourishes at the top and bottom.

# THE PLANNING PROCESS

*“While representing Houston Wilderness, I had the pleasure and opportunity to participate in community workshops and to serve on a committee to discuss various portions of the Brazos River Recreation Master Plan. The Brazos River corridor plays a vital role in the Sam Houston Greenbelt Network, one of Houston Wilderness’ primary initiatives.”*

*- Marc Reid, Director of Conservation, Projects, and Partner Services*





# Fort Bend Green

In August of 2011 Fort Bend Green worked with strategic partners to submit an application for National Park Service assistance in developing a Brazos River Recreation Master Plan. The partnership effort was awarded the assistance of the National Park Service (NPS) through its Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA).

## *Step 1: Fall 2011*

Representatives from Fort Bend County, local municipalities, master-planned communities and private landowners from the study corridor, along with representatives from Brazos Bend State Park, were invited to join representatives from Fort Bend Green to become the Steering Committee for the Brazos River Recreation Master Plan. Facilitated by the National Park Service, this large group of interests was sought to ensure a broad base that reflected diverse community perspectives. In the fall of 2011, the Steering Committee began to meet regularly with the NPS planners to shape the scope and look of the Recreation Master Plan.

## *Step 2: Fall 2011*

As one of its first tasks, the Steering Committee defined the study corridor as two-and-a half miles on either side of the Brazos River, inside the limits of Fort Bend County. This five-mile wide corridor extends far enough to allow for new connections to be made to existing recreational facilities that are near but not adjacent to the River. Yet it is contained enough to keep the focus on development of recreational facilities and activities that are River-related.

The Steering Committee at this time also identified other key stakeholders that would have interest in the study corridor and important insight to include in the planning process. These key stakeholders included elected public officials, government staff, municipal utility district Boards of Directors, business leaders, and heads of local recreational clubs and environmental organizations.

## *Step 3: Winter 2012*

Early in the winter of 2012, the Steering Committee crafted Vision and Goals Statements that sought to capture the essence of the diverse community's desires to protect the Brazos River resources for environmental, economic, social, and health-related reasons. The Plan's Vision and Goals Statements follow this section.

## *Step 4: Winter 2012*

Also during this time, Steering Committee members gathered data and plans for land use, parks, recreation facilities, and transportation facilities, and analyzed them for impacts to the Brazos River Plan study corridor. The plan information was compiled in a geographic information system (GIS), along with other data such as flood zones, land ownership, and jurisdictional information.



### ***Step 5: Spring 2012***

In the spring of 2012, Steering Committee members individually contacted the key stakeholders that were identified previously and conducted one-on-one interviews with them to gather their perspectives regarding aspirations for and concerns about recreational development along the Brazos River in Fort Bend County. A summary of input from these stakeholder interviews appears later in this section.

### ***Step 6: Summer/Fall 2012***

In the summer of 2012 the Steering Committee developed an online public survey to target citizens and potential users of River-related recreational facilities in the study corridor, whether they were residents or not. The survey questions were designed to inquire about respondents' most desired types of River-related activities and facilities, what issues of River-related recreation were at the forefront of concern, and what efforts toward protection of the River were deemed most important. The survey also asked for input or validation of the Plan's Vision and Goals. The online survey link was published and distributed with the help of press releases, emails to stakeholders and community organizations, postcard postings in corridor coffee shops and public libraries, and word-of-mouth referrals. The survey was deployed from the Fort Bend Green website for 11 weeks and collected over 700 responses from the public. A summary of the public survey responses appears later in this chapter.

### ***Step 7: Winter 2012/2013***

In January 2013 the Steering Committee hosted three Community Workshops. The workshops were held at different sites in the eastern (Brazos Bend State Park), western (Fulshear), and central (Sugar Land) portions of the study corridor. They were strategically scheduled at different times on different days, including a weekend afternoon, to foster a broad range of opportunities for attendance by interested participants. Each workshop began with an introduction by a local Steering Committee member, and then the Fort Bend Green Liaison recapped the Steering Committee's planning activities to-date. Next, a NPS planner presented the results of the online survey. The attendees were then asked to break into small groups around map tables, and encouraged to suggest and draw "project ideas" such as conservation areas, parks, trails, and canoe/kayak launches on corridor-wide maps. This process resulted in a total of over 100 suggested projects which spanned the corridor, many of which overlapped in geography and concept. A summary of the community workshop results follows later in this section.

### ***Step 8: Spring 2013***

Following the Community Workshops, the Steering Committee subdivided into groups, representing six geographic segments of the study corridor, and enlisted the aid of additional representatives from their respective communities to review, "ground truth" and prioritize the project ideas for their study corridor segment. Project sites



were visited, documented, and photographed, if possible. Steering Committee members led their segment groups in the assessment of each site in terms of land availability, construction feasibility, what kind of support or funding might be likely for the suggested project from jurisdictions, private, or public entities, and how well it met the Plan Vision and Goals. For each study corridor segment, this process produced a list of high-priority projects and a list of projects for longer-term consideration. A summary of the segment group analysis activities follows later in this section.

### ***Step 9: Summer/Fall 2013***

The Steering Committee then took the work of the segment groups and compiled it, along with all the data and input collected throughout the planning process, into this Brazos River Recreation Master Plan.

### ***Step 10: The Future***

The projects proposed in the Brazos River Recreation Master Plan are intended to be the first steps toward the long-term development of an extensive river recreation corridor. Successful development of these projects will require strong partnerships among governmental bodies, community groups, businesses and landowners.

Fort Bend Green will continue to develop partnerships, identify potential funding sources and sources of assistance, and add “Success Stories” to the Plan as initiatives and projects are implemented. Project partners will implement projects within their jurisdictions as opportunities and resources allow.

The reader of this plan is invited to contribute his/her ideas and resources to the realization of this vision by visiting [www.fortbendgreen.org](http://www.fortbendgreen.org).

## **VISION**

The natural ecosystems of the Brazos River are conserved and appreciated by the community at large.

The relationship of the Fort Bend community to the Brazos River is enhanced by safe public access.

Land trails, paddle trails and parks are connected in a distinguished Brazos River greenway system.

## **GOALS**

### ***We will do this by:***

- Assuring that improvements for public use respect wildlife habitat and private lands.
- Facilitating public-private partnerships for maximizing shared economic, social and environmental benefits.
- Promoting river-oriented facilities and activities that encourage community and regional involvement.





## *Summary of Comments from Key Stakeholder Interviews*

Below is a brief summary of the comments received during the one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders from the Brazos River Recreation Master Plan corridor. Each question from the interview is followed by a summary of collected comments.

### **1. What do you believe are the best uses of the Brazos River and within an adjacent land corridor along the river in Fort Bend County (approximately 90 miles)?**

- Convenient and safe access to the river
- Nature tourism/eco-tourism.
- Guided excursions along the river.
- Hiking trails, running trails
- Self-guided bird watching, wildlife-viewing.
- Biking trails, equestrian trails
- Canoe/kayak launches and trail
- Access points for fishing
- Overlooks for observation of nature
- Wildlife conservation
- Conservation easements
- Opportunities for economic development through river-side commercial businesses
- Trail head with parking, shade, picnic area, pavilion, bathrooms
- Spaces for community events

### **2. What in your opinion are the highest priorities for public recreation and conservation projects (both in terms of types and in what part of the county)?**

- Preserving the natural, cultural and historical aspects of the river
- Paddling trail the length of the river
- “The River is a diamond in the rough that should be used to pull the community together.”
- “There is a sense that development is coming, and it makes sense to address the potential development before it happens, to preserve as much of the natural, quiet aspect of the river as possible.”
- Hiking, biking, more trails - including unimproved native type trails, viewing overlooks, bird watching, canoe launches
- Trails useable for all skill levels. Trails along floodway.
- “Priorities should include identifying lands that have high levels of biodiversity and the most impact on water quality and potential for recreational access. An additional “priority” should be community engagement and the development of coalitions to support for your initiatives.”

### 3. How do you feel about spending public funds on Brazos River projects compared to other needs you see in Fort Bend County? What about private funds?

- “Governments could think like a business and work with private developers to donate park space in return for other amenities such as roadways.”
- “Our organization did a survey of municipalities last year of issues, and interest in ecotourism was high.”
- “Parks and enhancements along the River will create economic benefits because they will attract more visitors.”
- “There are much larger issues that public funds should support, namely drainage issues and water quality issues.”
- “The use of public funds can be justified for these types of projects if the promoters can articulate – to the public & to policy makers - the numerous benefits for Fort Bend County citizens, including job growth (corporate expansion and relocation), flood mitigation, and enhanced quality of life. Leveraging public/private partnerships to increase the access to available pots of money would make any project more viable.”
- “Public Agencies need to balance priorities but quality of life improvements touch all resident’s lives in a positive way and should be factored into overall budgets.”
- “Public –Private Partnerships and donor opportunities should be considered.”

### 4. Are you interested in attending a community planning workshop?

Vast majority answered “yes.”

### 5. What individuals or what groups do you know that would likely be interested in participating in the river corridor planning process?

- Any HOA that abuts or is near the River
- Sheriff’s Dept
- Landowners
- State Representatives
- Kiwanis, Rotary, community service clubs
- Texas Historical Commission
- Running Groups
- Houston Canoe Club
- Houston Audubon
- Sierra Club
- Houston Association of Sea Kayakers (Hask.org)
- Texas Aggregate Mining Association
- National Wildlife Foundation
- Katy Prairie Conservation
- Police Departments and Fire and Rescue Departments



**6. Do you have email lists, messaging on a website, Facebook or other social media that you could offer to help us announce a public on-line survey that will be available in the near future?**

The majority answered “yes” and did subsequently help with the online survey announcement.

## ***Brazos River Corridor Citizen Opinion Survey Summary***

The following is a summary of the results from the online public survey. The survey was opened on October 26, 2012 and closed on January 11, 2013. There were 759 responses received (triple the expected response). Each survey question below is followed by the summary response. A copy of a blank survey is located in the Appendix.

Our Mission is “To create a collaborative plan that recommends priority projects for recreation and conservation within a specified corridor along the Brazos River in Fort Bend County.”

**1. The Steering Committee’s Vision for the Brazos River Corridor supports these future conditions:**

- “The natural resources of the Brazos River are protected and appreciated by the community at-large.”
- “The Brazos River is celebrated as one of the most outstanding and unifying resources of Fort Bend County.”
- “Land trails, paddle trails and parks are seamlessly connected in a distinguished Brazos River Greenway.”

*Please tell us your opinion of these vision statements or any changes you would like to see.*

Comments were received from 43% of the respondents. The general categories were:

34% of commenters agreed with the Vision Statement

45% of commenters agreed but with modifications

14% wanted more emphasis on protection of the natural ecosystem

18% suggested specific activities to include

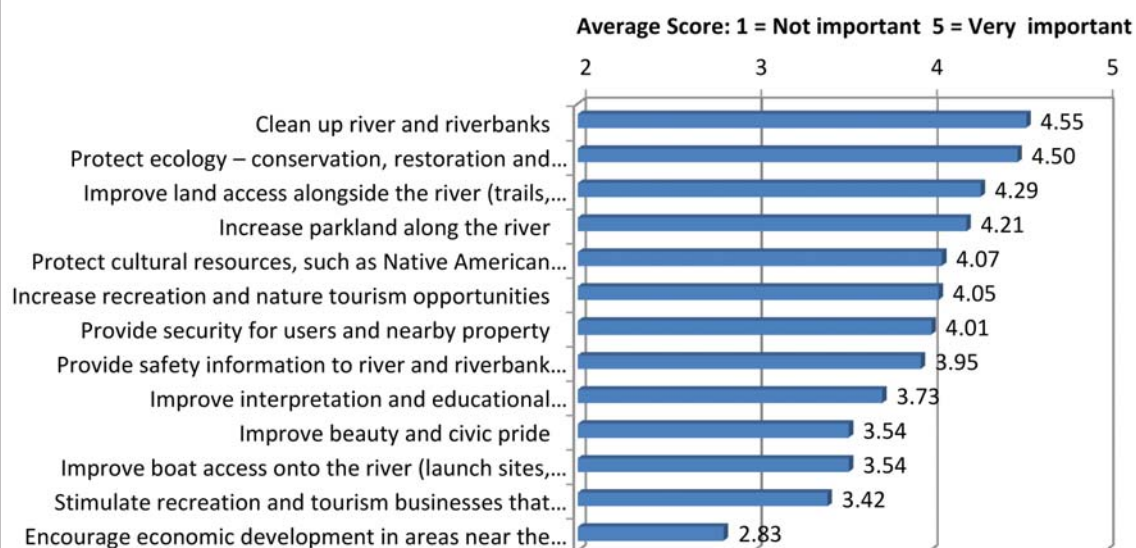
Only 4% disliked the river planning effort

**2. How important is each of the following actions in improving the Brazos River Corridor? (1 = least important, 5 = most important):**

- Improve land access alongside the river (trails, public access)
- Improve boat access onto the river (launch sites, boat rentals)
- Protect ecology – conservation, restoration and habitat protection
- Encourage economic development in areas near the river corridor

- Stimulate recreation and tourism businesses that depend on the river corridor
- Protect cultural resources, such as Native American & early settlement history
- Increase recreation and nature tourism opportunities
- Clean up river and riverbanks
- Improve beauty and civic pride
- Provide security for users and nearby property
- Provide safety information to river and riverbank users
- Improve interpretation and educational opportunities along the river corridor
- Increase parkland along the river
- Other (please specify)

## Importance of Actions on the Brazos



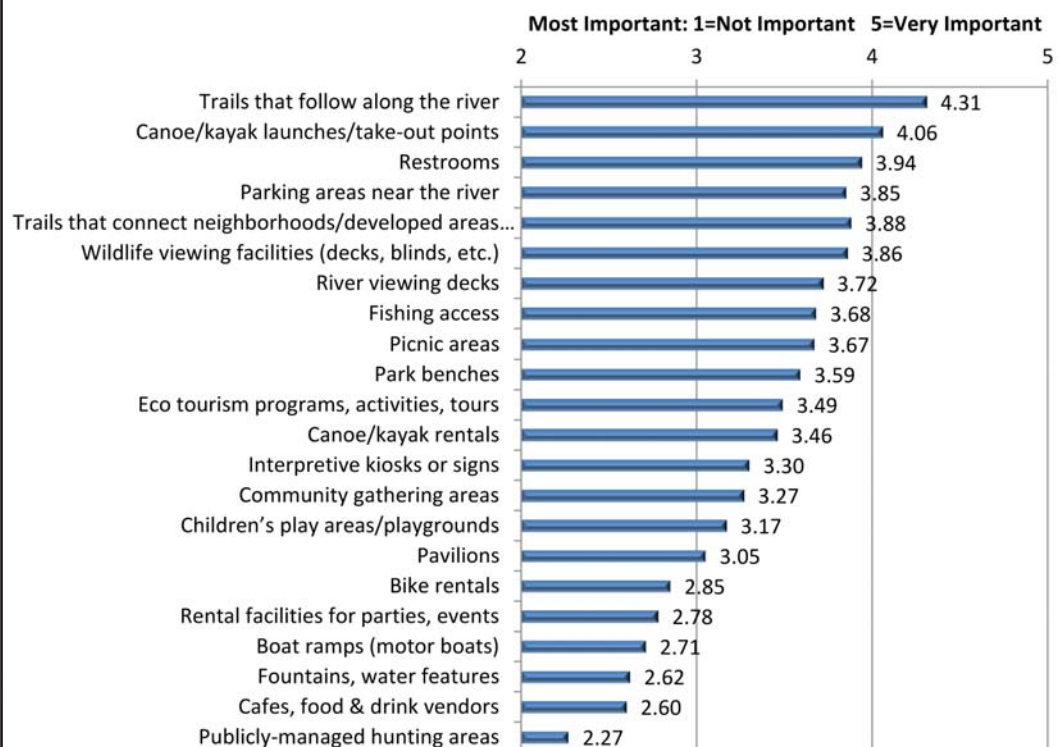
### 3. Following is a list of facilities and services that could be created along the river. In your opinion, how important is it to include each in the master plan recommendations? (1 = least important, 5 = most important):

- Eco-tourism programs, activities, tours
- Trails that follow along the river
- Fishing access
- Rental facilities for parties, events
- Canoe/kayak rentals
- Bike rentals



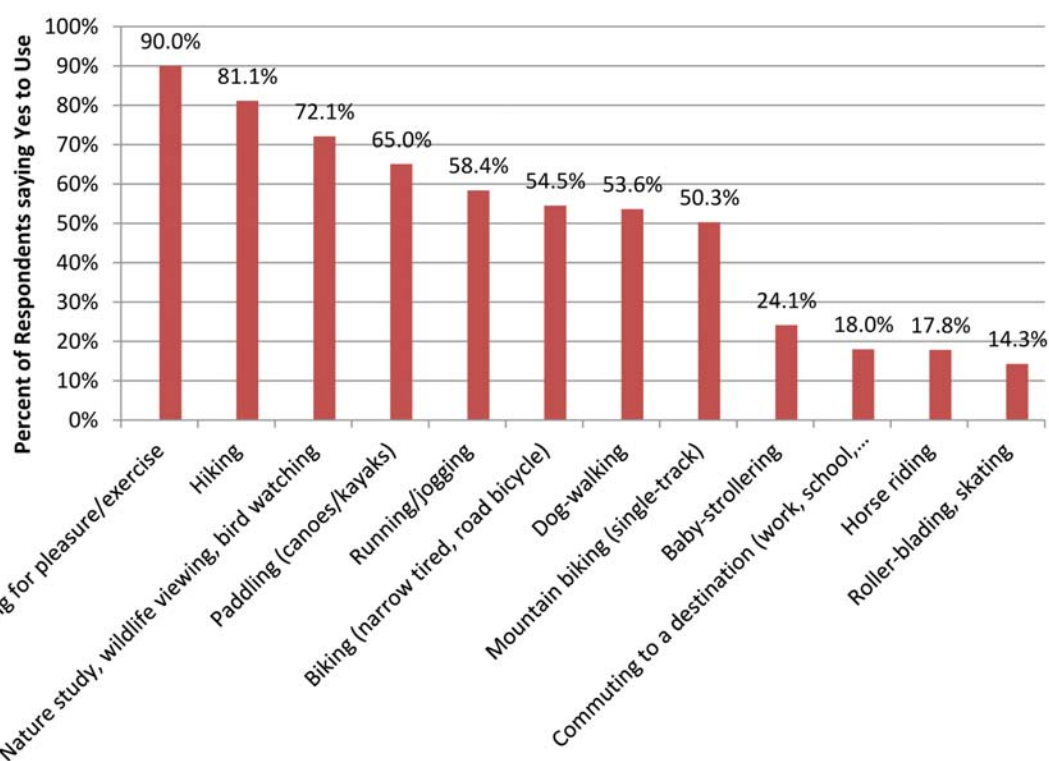
- Fountains, water features
- Restrooms
- Trails that connect neighborhoods/developed areas to the river
- Publicly-managed hunting areas
- Park benches
- Interpretive kiosks or signs
- Children's play areas/playgrounds
- Picnic areas
- Cafes, food & drink vendors
- Canoe/kayak launches/take-out points
- Pavilions
- Parking areas near the river
- Community gathering areas
- Boat ramps (motor boats)
- River viewing decks
- Wildlife viewing facilities (decks, blinds, etc.)
- Other (please specify)

## Importance of Facilities & Services in the Brazos River Corridor



## 4. If trails are constructed, what activities would you like to do on the trails? (Check all that apply)

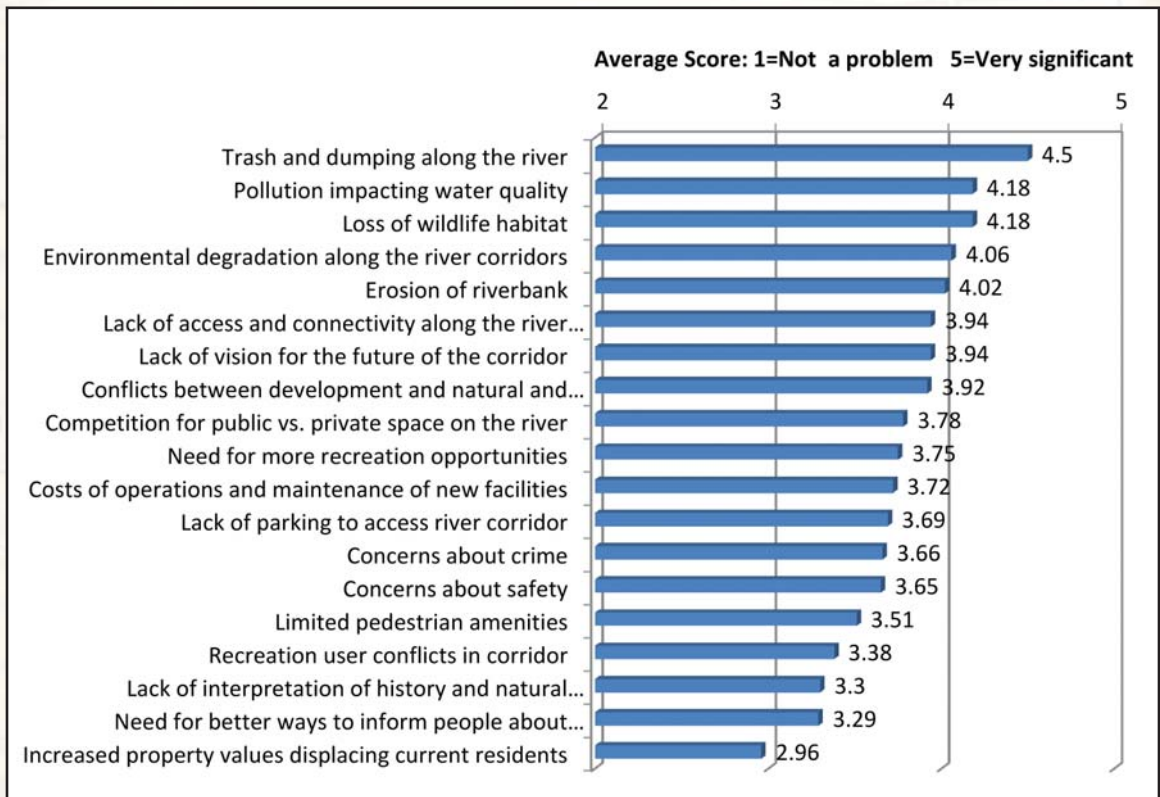
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- Pavilions
- Parking areas near the river
- Community gathering areas
- Boat ramps (motor boats)
- River viewing decks
- Wildlife viewing facilities (decks, blinds, etc.)
- Other (please specify)





5. The following list includes issues that may impact the quality of the river corridor in Fort Bend County for recreation and conservation. In your opinion, how significant is each issue? (Check one box per item, from 1 to 5, where 1 = Not a Problem, 5 = Very Significant)

- Trash and dumping along the river
- Loss of wildlife habitat
- Pollution impacting water quality
- Need for more recreation opportunities
- Concerns about safety
- Recreation user conflicts in corridor
- Competition for public vs. private space on the river
- Environmental degradation along the river corridors
- Erosion of riverbank
- Concerns about crime
- Need for better ways to inform people about opportunities
- Increased property values displacing current residents
- Lack of parking to access river corridor
- Conflicts between development and natural and cultural protection
- Lack of interpretation of history and natural resources to explain the importance of places
- Lack of vision for the future of the corridor
- Lack of access and connectivity along the river corridor
- Limited pedestrian amenities
- Costs of operations and maintenance of new facilities
- Other (please specify)



6. **The Brazos River has been a part of life for people living in the area since prehistoric times. We are interested in gathering personal experiences and folklore about the river to help visitors and residents understand the value of the corridor. If you have a story related to the river that you are willing to share, please enter it in the space below. We may use quotes in our promotional materials, attributed to “survey respondent.”**

There were 78 responses to this question. Some sample responses:

- “Keep it natural but improve access and trails. Do not turn this region into a San Antonio River Walk or a Galveston style boardwalk mess.”
- “I’ve been here a long time, but the river and corridor have been around forever. Let’s respect it first before people come in and over-populate and businesses over-commercialize the area to where we and the animals no longer have a nice forest, river, and habitat to enjoy.”
- “I am an avid paddler/kayaker. I would visit and paddle the river if there were take-in and take-out points.”
- “We’ve camped along the Brazos River, and believe it to be a Texas treasure, surrounded by bullfrogs and butterflies, grunting hogs and graceful deer, long nosed alligators, rustling raccoons, and that’s before you get into the water! Hope you can make the waterway safe for people without changing its incredible nature.”
- “I have spent a lot of time on the Brazos over my lifetime. It is a place for people to enjoy the quiet and peaceful aspects of nature for reflection on creation. I would hate to see development destroy the very nature of what draws people to live and play along the river.”

7. **If you are interested in receiving information about how you can participate in the Brazos River Corridor Plan, please provide your name and email address below.**

Approximately 50% of the respondents asked to be notified of opportunities to participate in the planning process. These respondents were invited to participate in the Community Workshops.

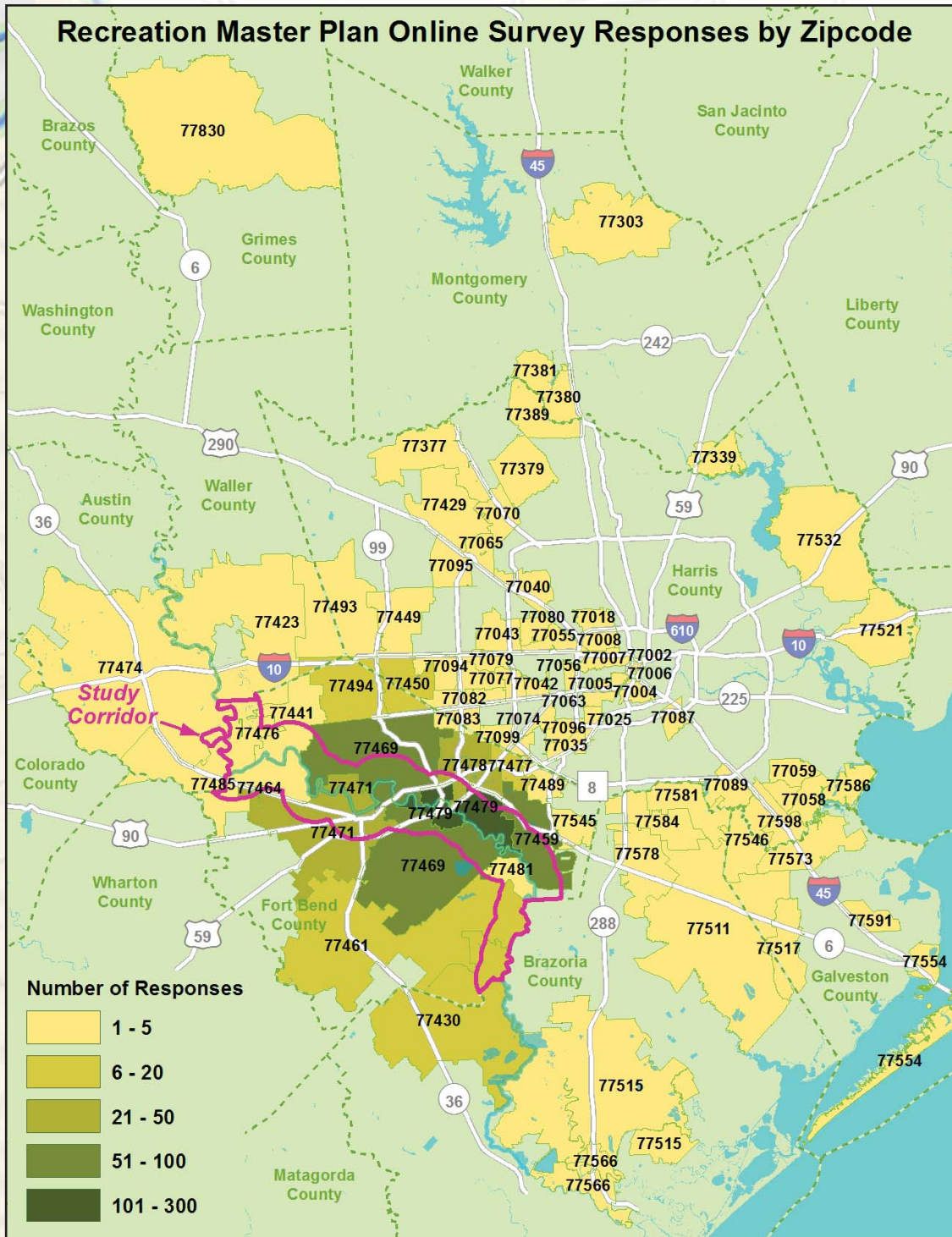
8. **Please provide us with your zip code.**

One hundred percent of the survey respondents graciously provided their zip codes so that we could map the density and breadth of their geographic locations. The resulting map confirmed that the Brazos River as a recreation destination attracts interest not only from Fort Bend County but also from surrounding counties.

*See map of Survey Responses by Zip Code on next page.*



## Recreation Master Plan Online Survey Responses by Zipcode



## Brazos River Corridor Citizen Workshops Summary

The following is a summary of the three Community Workshops held in early 2013. These workshops were conducted on the following dates at these locations:

January 27, 2014 – Brazos Bend State Park George Observatory	32 Attended
January 28, 2014 – City of Fulshear Irene Stern Community Center	25 Attended
January 31, 2014 – City of Sugar Land Recreation Center	46 Attended

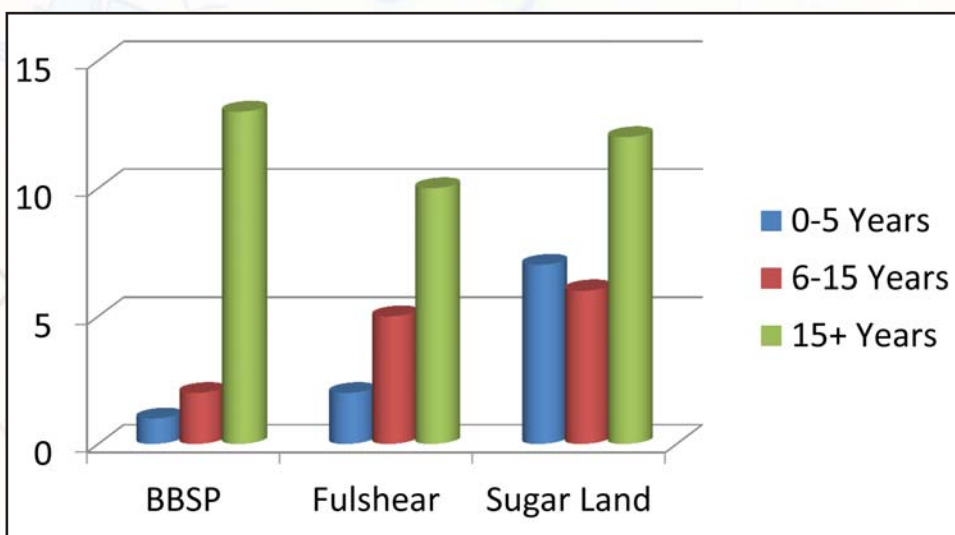
At each workshop, the participants were asked to fill out a “Tell Us About Yourself” form, which is summarized below. A local Steering Committee member introduced the Brazos River Recreational Master Plan project. Then the Fort Bend Green Liaison recapped the Steering Committee’s planning activities to-date. And a NPS Planner presented the results of the public survey, and directed participants about the purpose of the workshops: to collect recreational project suggestions within the Brazos River Corridor. The projects ranged from land and paddling trails to conservation areas and restoration of natural resources.

### Tell Us About Yourself Form

Approximately 50% of participants filled out the form which asked the following questions, with the responses following the questions:

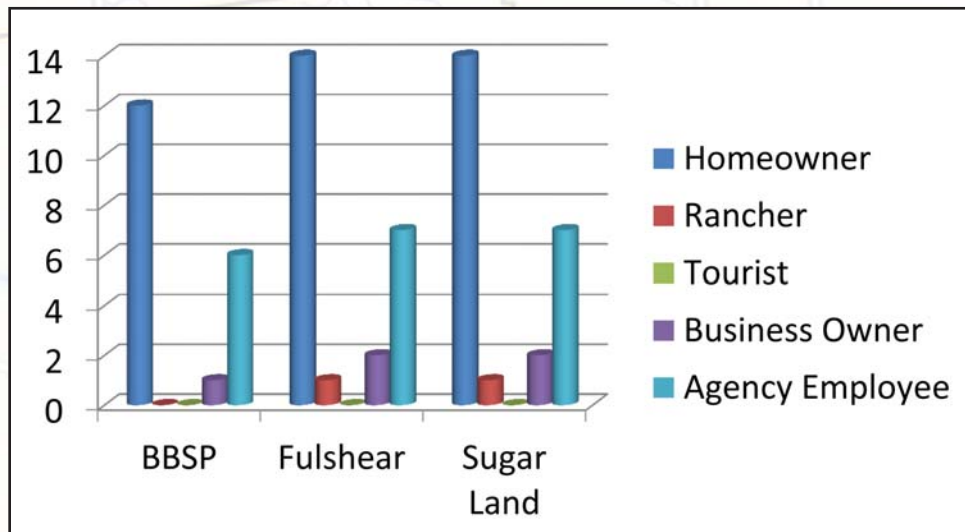
- How long have you lived/worked in the region?
- Which of the following best describes you?
- Which are your favorite recreation activities?
- What city/community do you represent?

#### 1. How long have you lived/worked in the region?

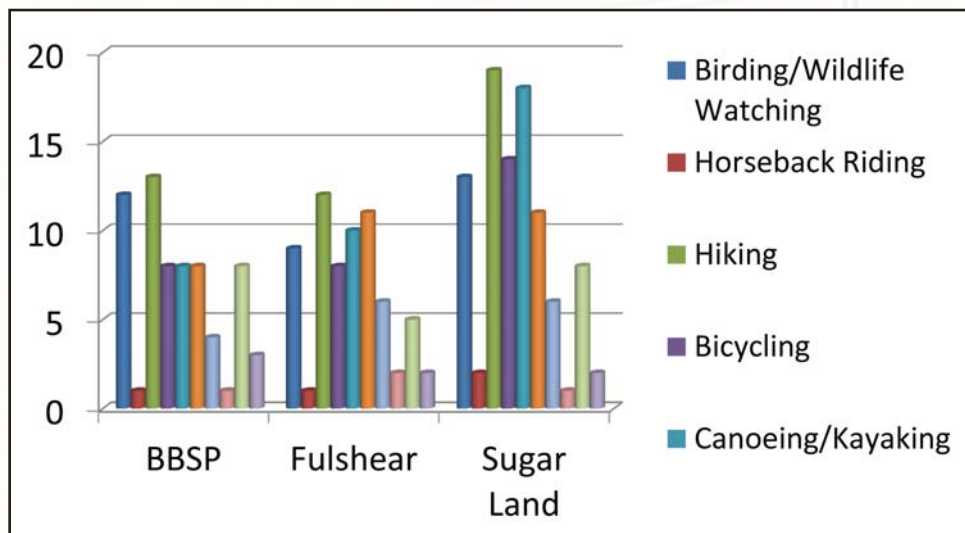




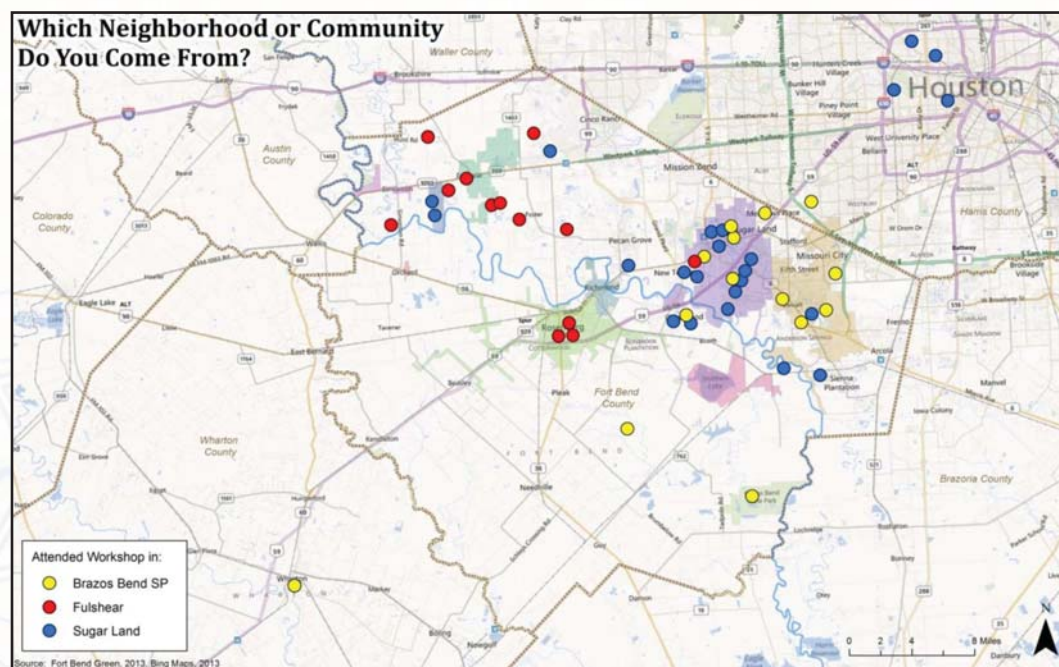
2. Which of the following best describes you?



3. Which are your favorite recreation activities?



#### 4. What city/community do you represent?



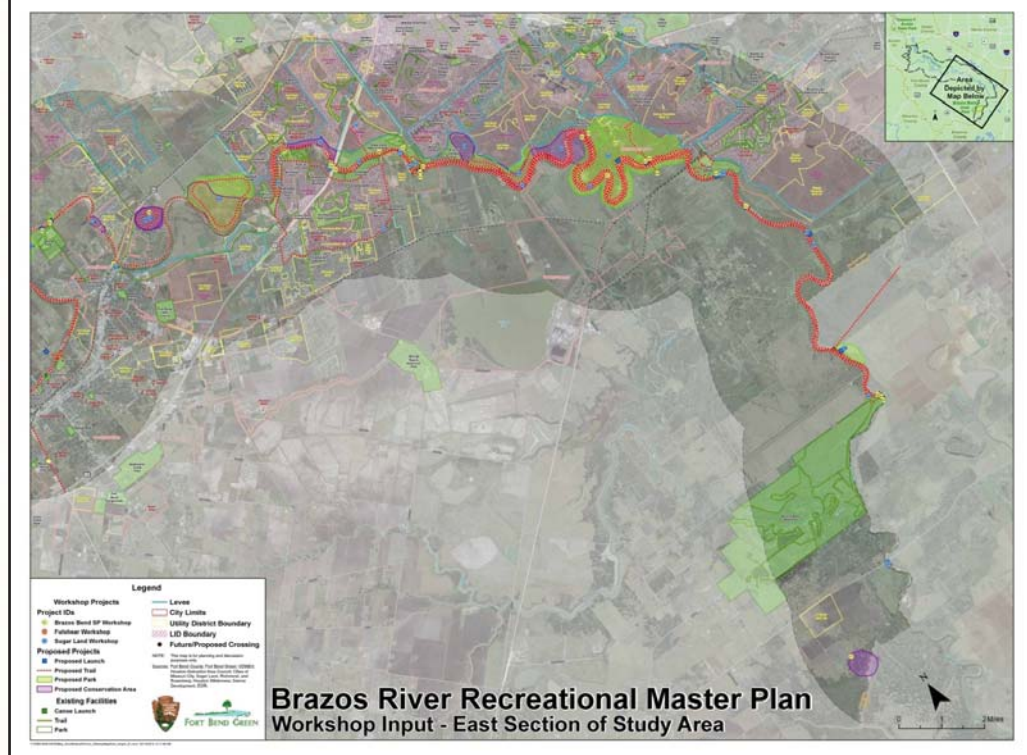
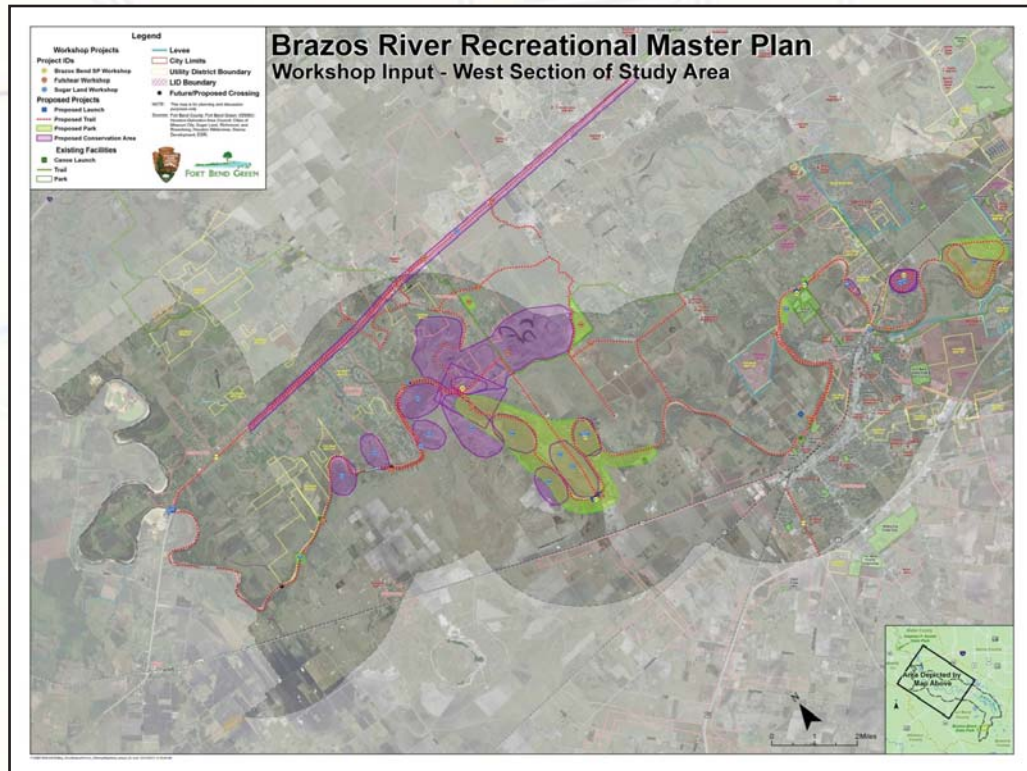
### *Workshop Projects Exercise*

Workshop participants were asked to break into small groups around map tables, and encouraged to suggest and draw desired recreational sites for conservation areas, parks, trails, and canoe/kayak launches on corridor-wide maps. As participants drew each site on the map, they also submitted a paper form with a corresponding number that suggested a project name, description, and remarks about known plans, actions, partners, jurisdictions, or issues with the site. There were 104 projects proposed at the three Community Workshops and through emails following the Workshops.

- Brazos Bend State Park: 32
- Fulshear: 22
- Sugar Land: 46
- Post-Workshop email suggestions: 4

After the Workshops, the project suggestions were mapped in the GIS, along with the information from the paper forms. Below are images of map posters of the project suggestions collected from the Community Workshops.

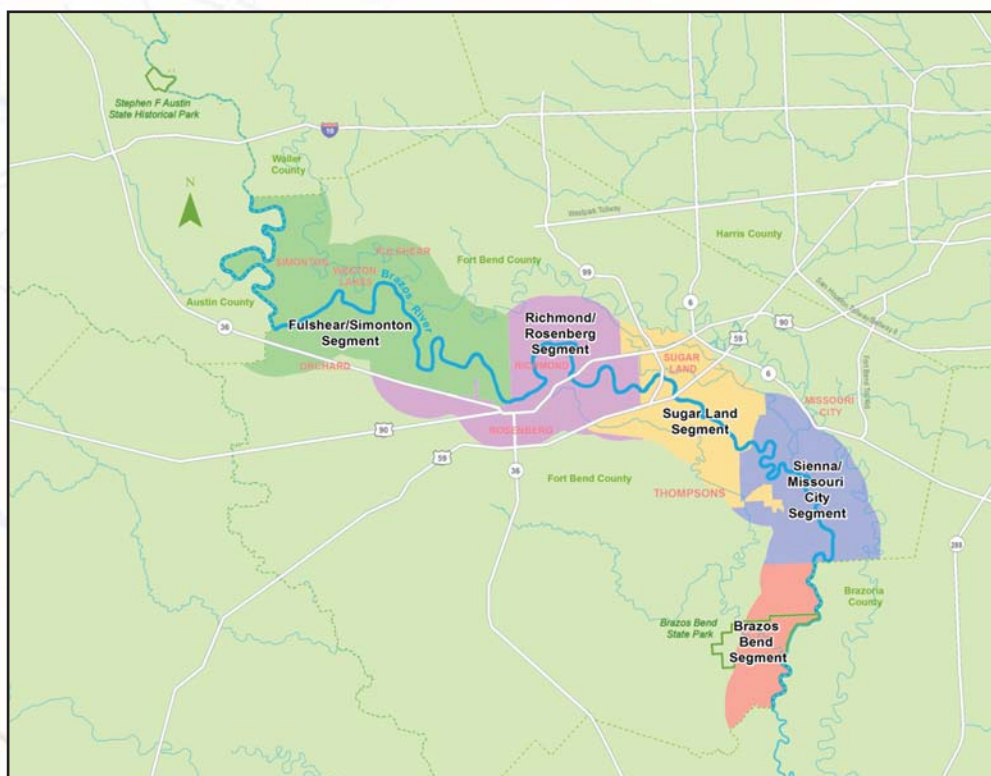




## Brazos River Corridor Small Group Summary

After the Community Workshops, the Steering Committee subdivided into groups, representing five geographic segments of the study corridor with one Corridor-Wide Group that spanned more than one segment. The geographic segments followed city boundaries and roadways. As shown in the map below, they were termed, from west to east:

- Fulshear/Simonton Segment
- Richmond/Rosenberg Segment
- Sugar Land Segment
- Sienna/Missouri City Segment
- Brazos Bend Segment

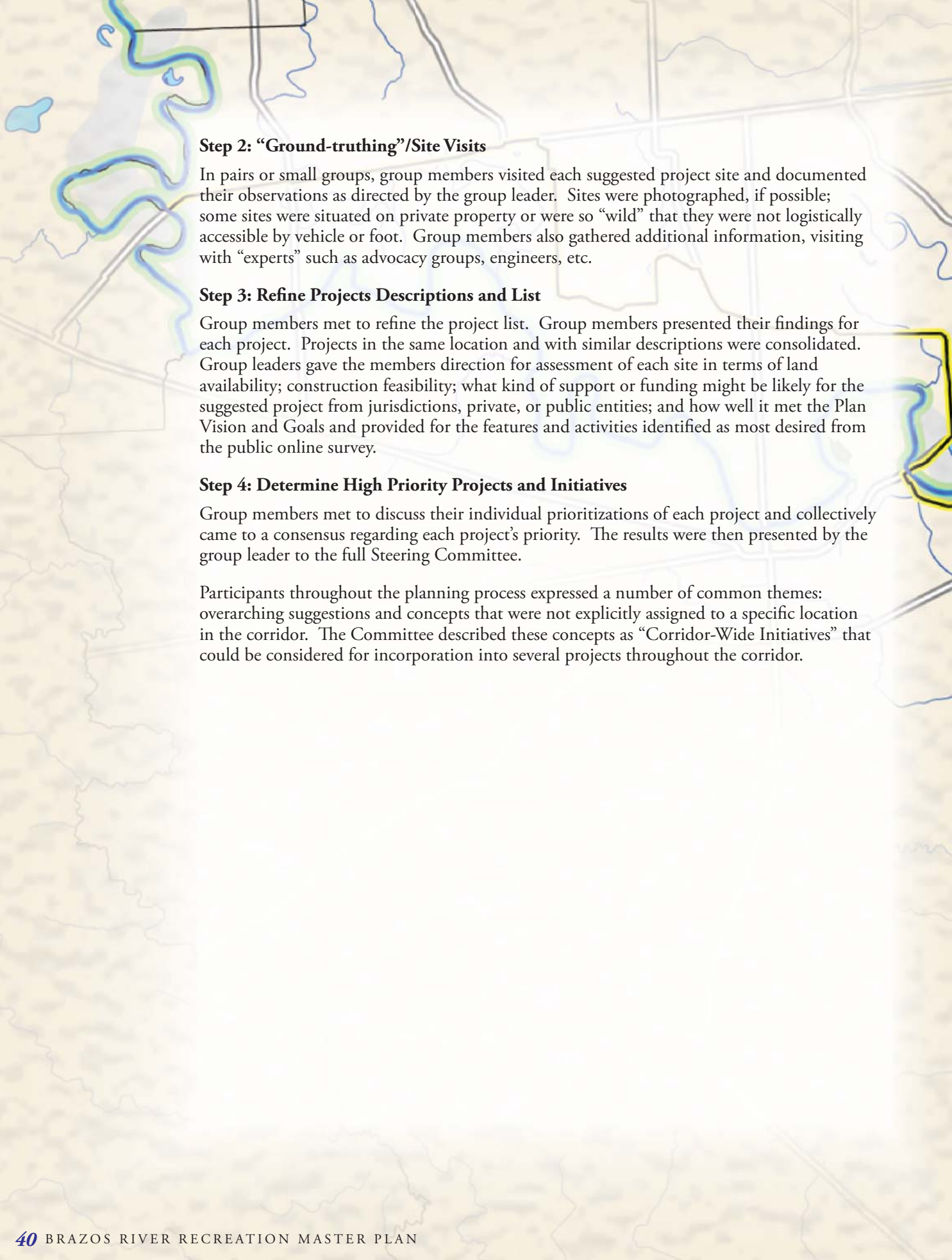


Each Steering Committee Member enlisted the aid of additional representatives from their respective communities to review and prioritize the project suggestions. The projects were evaluated in a four-step process outlined below.

### Step 1: Segment Group Introductory Meeting

Group members met for the first time and the group leader gave background information on the planning process so far, including the online survey and Community Workshops. The group leader distributed segment maps and project lists to all group members and explained the project site evaluation process. Group members then assigned themselves a schedule and volunteer duties for the next steps.





### **Step 2: “Ground-truthing”/Site Visits**

In pairs or small groups, group members visited each suggested project site and documented their observations as directed by the group leader. Sites were photographed, if possible; some sites were situated on private property or were so “wild” that they were not logistically accessible by vehicle or foot. Group members also gathered additional information, visiting with “experts” such as advocacy groups, engineers, etc.

### **Step 3: Refine Projects Descriptions and List**

Group members met to refine the project list. Group members presented their findings for each project. Projects in the same location and with similar descriptions were consolidated. Group leaders gave the members direction for assessment of each site in terms of land availability; construction feasibility; what kind of support or funding might be likely for the suggested project from jurisdictions, private, or public entities; and how well it met the Plan Vision and Goals and provided for the features and activities identified as most desired from the public online survey.

### **Step 4: Determine High Priority Projects and Initiatives**

Group members met to discuss their individual prioritizations of each project and collectively came to a consensus regarding each project’s priority. The results were then presented by the group leader to the full Steering Committee.

Participants throughout the planning process expressed a number of common themes: overarching suggestions and concepts that were not explicitly assigned to a specific location in the corridor. The Committee described these concepts as “Corridor-Wide Initiatives” that could be considered for incorporation into several projects throughout the corridor.



*"The rapid growth we have seen and continue to see in the City of Rosenberg impresses upon us the importance of preserving our existing natural assets and providing for the inclusion of green spaces and recreation opportunities in the future. The Brazos River was integral to Rosenberg's historical development, and we are honored that the City has been able to participate in creating a the Brazos River Recreation Corridor Master Plan through Fort Bend Green to help call attention to the river's importance today, and to lay out a vision for its future utilization as a recreation corridor for the benefit of all of Fort Bend County.*

*- Vincent M. Morales, Jr., Mayor, City of Rosenberg*







## Concept: Greenway/Outdoor Classroom

*A common idea that emerged during the stakeholder input process was that of creating a “greenway” - an area of undeveloped land for wildlife, both plant and animal, and for people, both residents and tourists.*

The diverse and unique plant and animal life along the Brazos River corridor has been well-documented by local and regional conservation organizations. The open spaces along the Brazos River are home to a diverse collection of wildlife including white-tailed deer, river otters, American alligators and numerous species of reptiles and amphibians. Over 300 species of birds have been documented in this area. Common species along the river include belted kingfisher, pileated woodpecker, red-shouldered hawk and numerous species of egrets and herons. River banks are lined with forests of live oak trees draped with Spanish moss, huge pecans and black willow trees.

Fort Bend County is part of the Central Flyway, which stretches from Canada through the central part of the United States and into Mexico. A flyway is a pathway used by migratory birds, animals and insects who tend to take predictable routes to get from winter feeding grounds to summer breeding grounds and back. Flyways usually occur along coastlines and major rivers. Many of the Central Flyway’s migratory bird species winter in Central and South America. Some migrate across the Western Hemisphere as far north as the Arctic Circle and others south to Patagonia, in southern South America. To survive these arduous journeys, they rely on stopover habitat all along the flyway, including stopover points in Fort Bend County.

Moreover, scientists have discovered that monarch butterfly migration actually moves through Texas on two different flyways, and at two different times, or pulses. The first pulse travels down the Central Flyway and the second pulse moves along what’s known as the Gulf Coast Flyway, which includes Fort Bend County. The coastal flyway monarchs most likely come from east of the Mississippi River.

A Greenway corridor along the Brazos River would provide numerous benefits for both wildlife and people. Areas of concentrated natural resource activity, such as wetlands, woodlands, and prairies would become even more functional when linked by a riparian corridor. Fish and wildlife populations, native plant distribution, and even clean water all depend on movement through riparian corridors. According to the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), over 70% of all terrestrial wildlife species use riparian corridors.

In addition to its environmental value, a greenway corridor along the Brazos River would offer social and economic benefits. It would help to define the community’s sense of place and distinctiveness, and would provide “services,” such as wind protection or storm water detention. It could also provide valuable outdoor educational settings and potential sites for research. The economic benefits of protecting a Brazos River Greenway may include increasing the value of nearby housing sites, providing flood protection, and reducing the potential expenses of stream-bank stabilization.





## Potential Implementation Projects

- Preservation of open spaces and “wild” lands
- Development of viewing blinds and observation platforms
- Restoration of strategic habitat areas
- Volunteer wildlife monitoring and “bird counts”
- Volunteer water quality monitoring
- Development of “outdoor classrooms”
- Conservation easements

## Concept: Heritage Corridor

*A noteworthy idea proposed during the stakeholder input process was that of designating a “Heritage Corridor” along the River which celebrates the unique cultural heritage of Fort Bend County. The designated “Heritage Corridor” would link existing historic and cultural sites and would be supported by professional and volunteer research, and educational signage and programming for the enjoyment of both residents and tourists.*

Fort Bend County has a long and rich history and continues to build on the foundations established by the original settlers of Texas. According to the Texas Historical Commission atlas, Fort Bend County currently registers 519 designated historic markers and/or sites, with the possibility of additional designations in the future as more sites are studied and documented by archaeologists and historians. The Brazos River has historically been a significant resource for the people and communities of Fort Bend County, and continues to be to this day.

Fortuitously, the Brazos River corridor in Fort Bend County boasts two of the premier historical preservation sites in the entire region:

- The George Ranch Historical Park is an internationally recognized living history site. A partnership of the Fort Bend County Museum Association and The George Foundation, the 20,000-acre+ working ranch features historic homes, costumed interpreters and livestock. The Park aims to educate people of all ages about Texas history and the region’s unique heritage through programming that connects and inspires learners of all ages.
- Brazos Bend State Park covers roughly 5,000 acres, with an eastern boundary of 3.2 miles fronting on the Brazos River on the southeast border of Fort Bend County. This was the area of Texas’ first Anglo colonization. In the early 19th century, this area of Texas was the site of Stephen F. Austin’s first colonial land grant from Mexico. Archeological materials show that long before Anglo colonization, prehistoric people visited this area, possibly as early as 300 BC. The park land was purchased by the state in 1976-77 and was opened to the public in 1984. Brazos Bend State Park also houses the George Observatory, a satellite of the Houston Museum of Natural Science.

In addition to these two facilities, the Fort Bend County Museum Association manages the Fort Bend County Museum and six historic structures in Richmond, an avocational archeological society, and a downtown historic district.

There is much history, both cultural and natural, to be celebrated along the “Heritage Corridor.” The designation of a Heritage Corridor would provide a framework for preserving and enhancing the natural and cultural qualities of the river corridor, and could offer a wide range of activities for residents and tourists of all ages.

### *Potential Implementation Projects*

- Preservation of historic and archaeological resources within the river corridor
- Development and installation of signage and wayside exhibits along the river
- Development of museum-led walking, biking or paddling tours
- Provision for self-guided walking, biking or paddling tours
- Provision of site-based educational programs at strategic riverside sites
- Development of internet-based educational programs
- Coordination of historic re-enactments or other events within the river corridor
- Preservation of dark skies within the river corridor
- Reduction of light and noise “pollution” within the river corridor
- Restoration of native ecosystems along the river corridor
- Installation of public art that celebrates the region’s heritage

*One of the most popular ideas that emerged during the stakeholder input process was that*

### *Concept: Paddle Trail*

*of a paddle trail. There is broad community interest in developing the infrastructure for a paddle trail down the length of the Brazos River, as it flows through Fort Bend County, and, longer term, extending the trail into neighboring counties.*

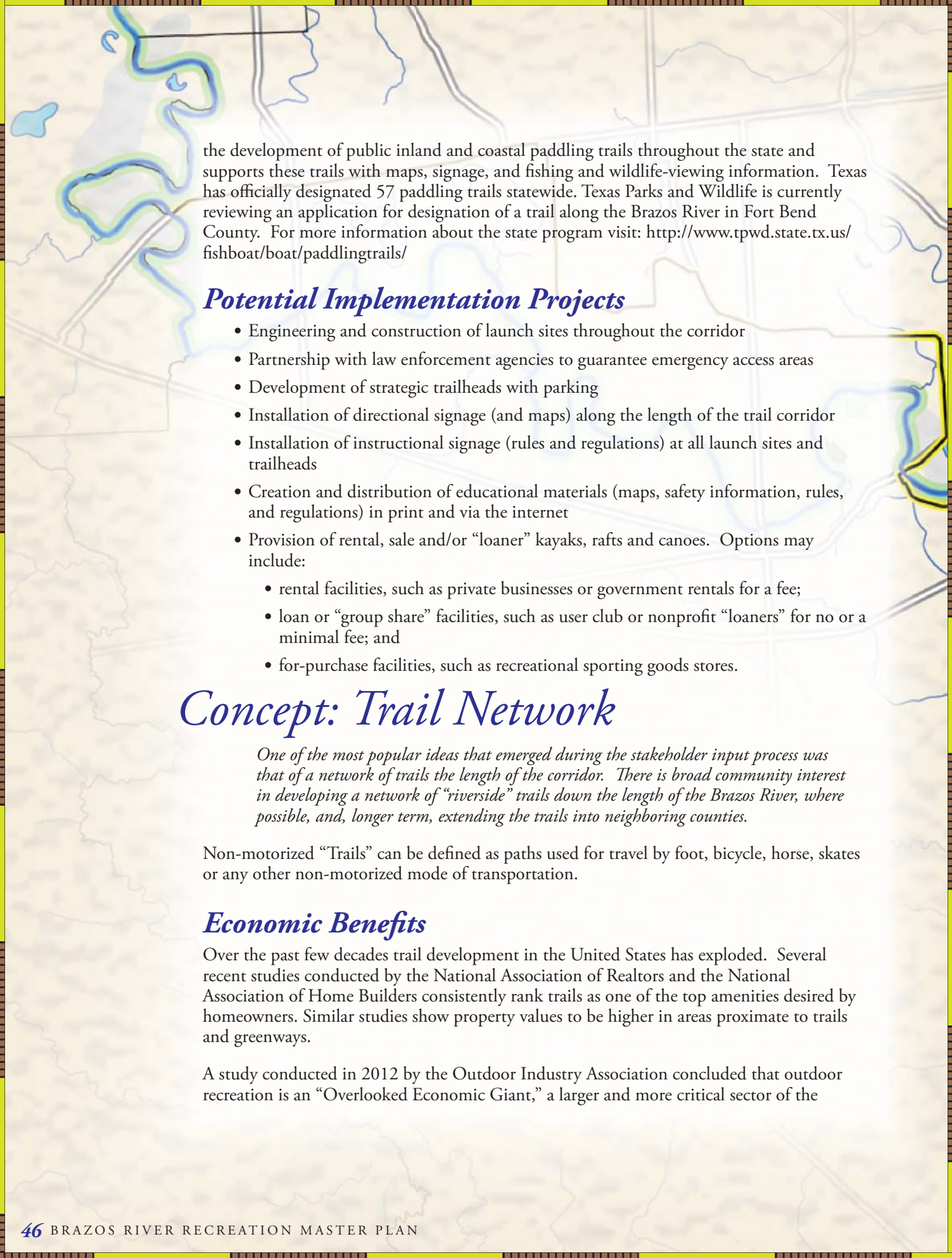
“Paddle trails” can be defined as marked routes on navigable waterways such as rivers, lakes, canals and coastlines for people using small non-motorized boats such as kayaks, canoes, rafts, or rowboats. Canoeing and kayaking offer a more personal way to connect with nature. The quiet of being out on the water allows paddlers to experience a closer view of wildlife and scenery, to drop a line for fishing, or to just relax.

Recreational paddling is gaining in popularity. According to the Outdoor Industry Foundation, three out of every four Americans participate in active outdoor recreation each year. Paddle sports, particularly kayaking, are among the fastest growing segments of the industry.

Paddle trails have been developed on a variety of water bodies around the U.S., all of which have this basic provision: suitable access points and take-outs for non-motorized boaters. Paddle trails may also include emergency access points for law enforcement vehicles and emergency personnel.

Texas is one of the first states to develop a statewide paddle trail program. The Texas Paddling Trails program, managed by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, facilitates





the development of public inland and coastal paddling trails throughout the state and supports these trails with maps, signage, and fishing and wildlife-viewing information. Texas has officially designated 57 paddling trails statewide. Texas Parks and Wildlife is currently reviewing an application for designation of a trail along the Brazos River in Fort Bend County. For more information about the state program visit: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/fishboat/boat/paddlingtrails/>

### ***Potential Implementation Projects***

- Engineering and construction of launch sites throughout the corridor
- Partnership with law enforcement agencies to guarantee emergency access areas
- Development of strategic trailheads with parking
- Installation of directional signage (and maps) along the length of the trail corridor
- Installation of instructional signage (rules and regulations) at all launch sites and trailheads
- Creation and distribution of educational materials (maps, safety information, rules, and regulations) in print and via the internet
- Provision of rental, sale and/or “loaner” kayaks, rafts and canoes. Options may include:
  - rental facilities, such as private businesses or government rentals for a fee;
  - loan or “group share” facilities, such as user club or nonprofit “loaners” for no or a minimal fee; and
  - for-purchase facilities, such as recreational sporting goods stores.

### ***Concept: Trail Network***

*One of the most popular ideas that emerged during the stakeholder input process was that of a network of trails the length of the corridor. There is broad community interest in developing a network of “riverside” trails down the length of the Brazos River, where possible, and, longer term, extending the trails into neighboring counties.*

Non-motorized “Trails” can be defined as paths used for travel by foot, bicycle, horse, skates or any other non-motorized mode of transportation.

### ***Economic Benefits***

Over the past few decades trail development in the United States has exploded. Several recent studies conducted by the National Association of Realtors and the National Association of Home Builders consistently rank trails as one of the top amenities desired by homeowners. Similar studies show property values to be higher in areas proximate to trails and greenways.

A study conducted in 2012 by the Outdoor Industry Association concluded that outdoor recreation is an “Overlooked Economic Giant,” a larger and more critical sector of the

American economy than most people realize. “As a multi-dimensional sector, the outdoor industry pumps \$646 billion in direct spending into the American economy and fuels traditional sectors like manufacturing, finance, retail trade, tourism and travel.”

## Health Benefits

The US Centers for Disease Control’s (CDC) “Healthy Community Design Initiative” lists parks and trails as some of the most important public facilities for improved community health. The CDC lists these benefits of parks and trails:

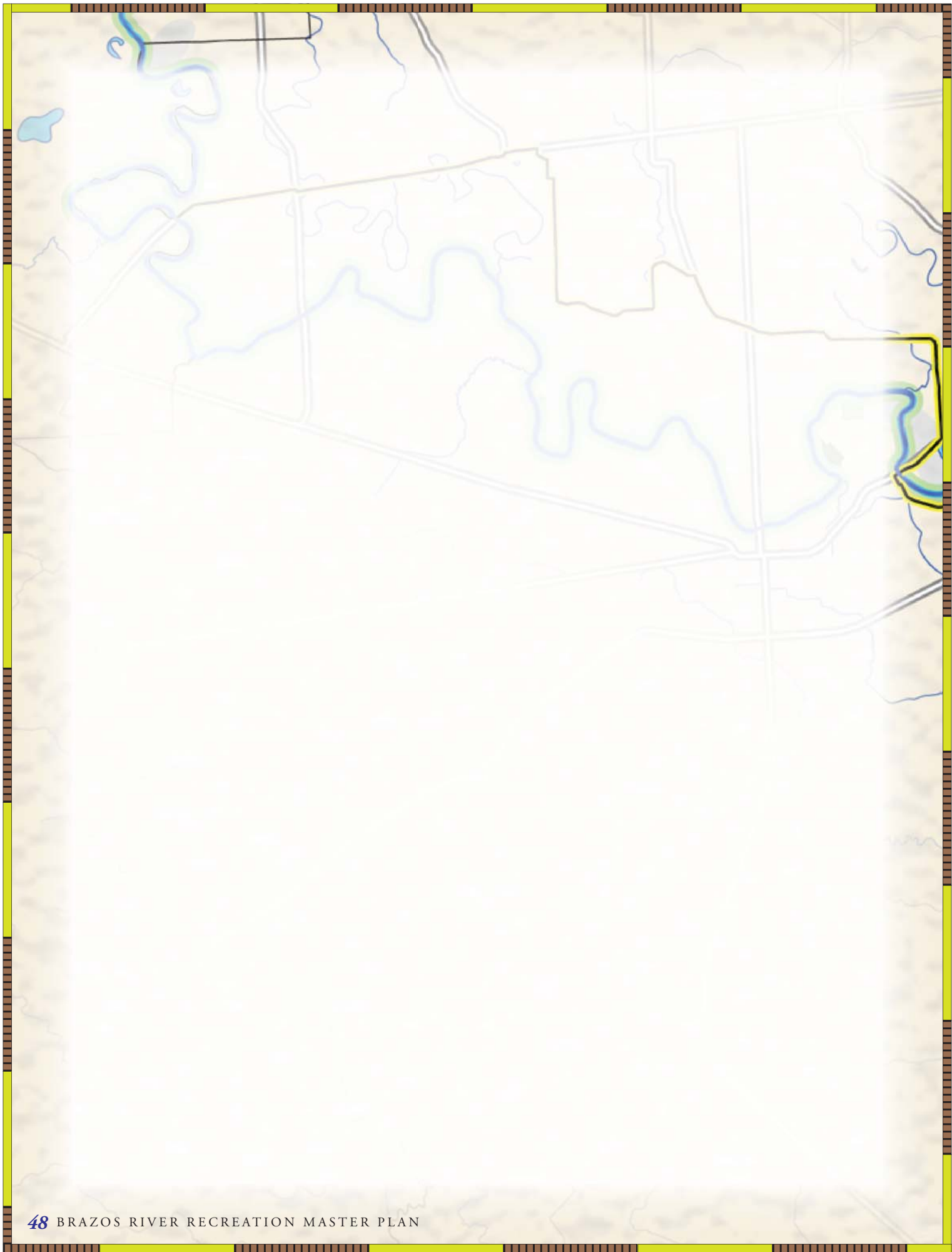
- Increased physical activity- walkable access to appropriate sites motivates people to participate in physical activity and to do so more frequently;
- Improved mental health- trails can serve as a venue for stress reduction;
- Community interaction- trails can provide meeting places for neighbors;
- Reduce injury- parks and trails can provide safe spaces for people to play and exercise, away from busy streets and commercial zones.

For these reasons and more, a trail network along the Brazos River would benefit the communities of Fort Bend County. A Brazos River trail network would offer numerous benefits to people of all ages and abilities, both residents and tourists. A complete trail network could provide linkages and connections to various communities and destinations in the corridor and a variety of experiences from hard-surfaced bicycle trails to soft-surfaced nature trails. Neighboring jurisdictions and developers could connect existing trails, where feasible, and create new trails to fill in the perceived gaps. In areas where land is primarily private, trails along nearby roads, railroads and/or utility corridors could provide the desired linkages.

## Potential Implementation Projects

- Development of riverside trails within jurisdictional boundaries, where feasible
- Development of riverside trails within new developments, where feasible
- Partnership among jurisdictions and developers to create linkages between trails
- Development of strategic trailheads along the trail, offering easy access to all communities within the corridor
- Development of common designs/standards for trail design and maintenance, including: signage, parking, landscaping, lighting, etc.
- Installation of directional signage (and maps) along the length of the trail corridor
- Creation and distribution of educational materials (maps, safety information, rules, and regulations) in print and via the internet







*"The Brazos River Master Plan will hopefully put people back in touch with this wonderful resource and all its lush flora, diverse fauna and rich history."*

*- David Heinicke, Park Naturalist, Brazos Bend State Park*

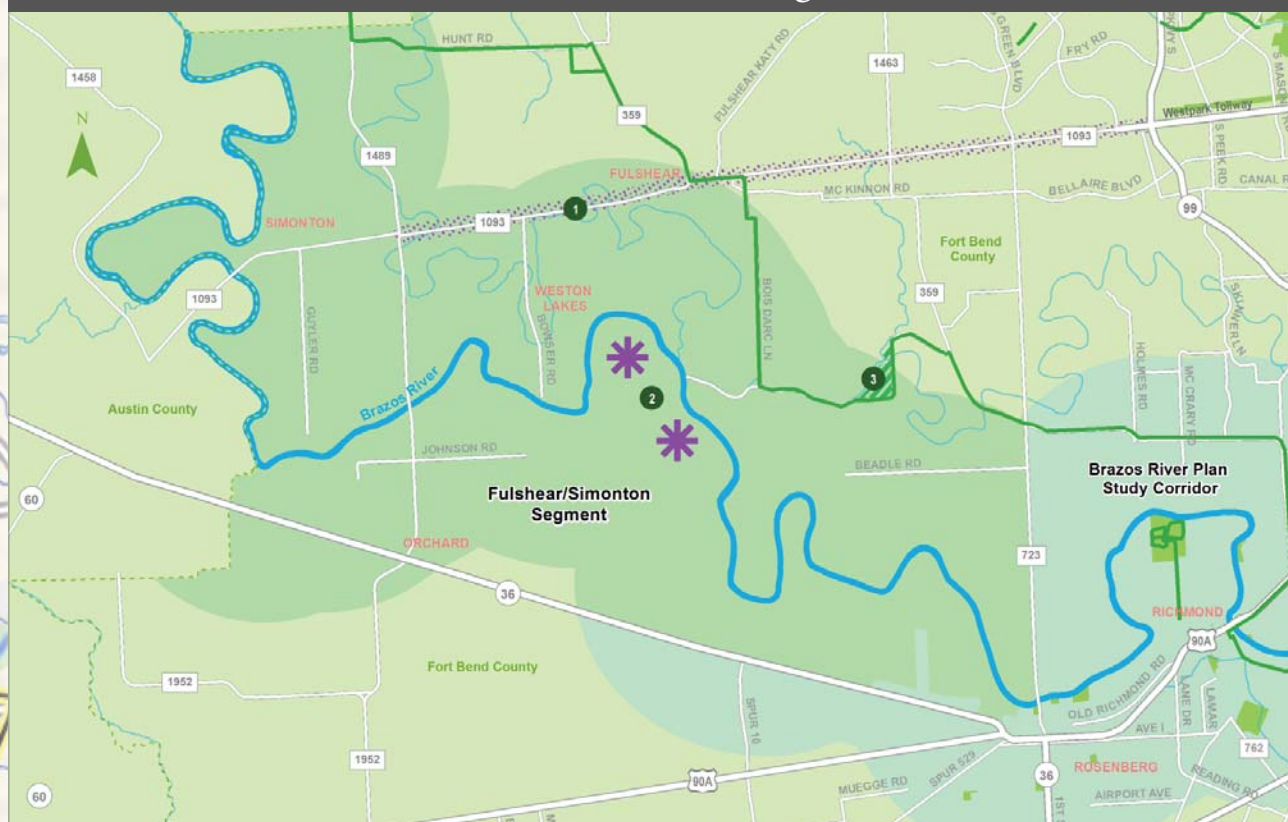
PROJECT IDEAS



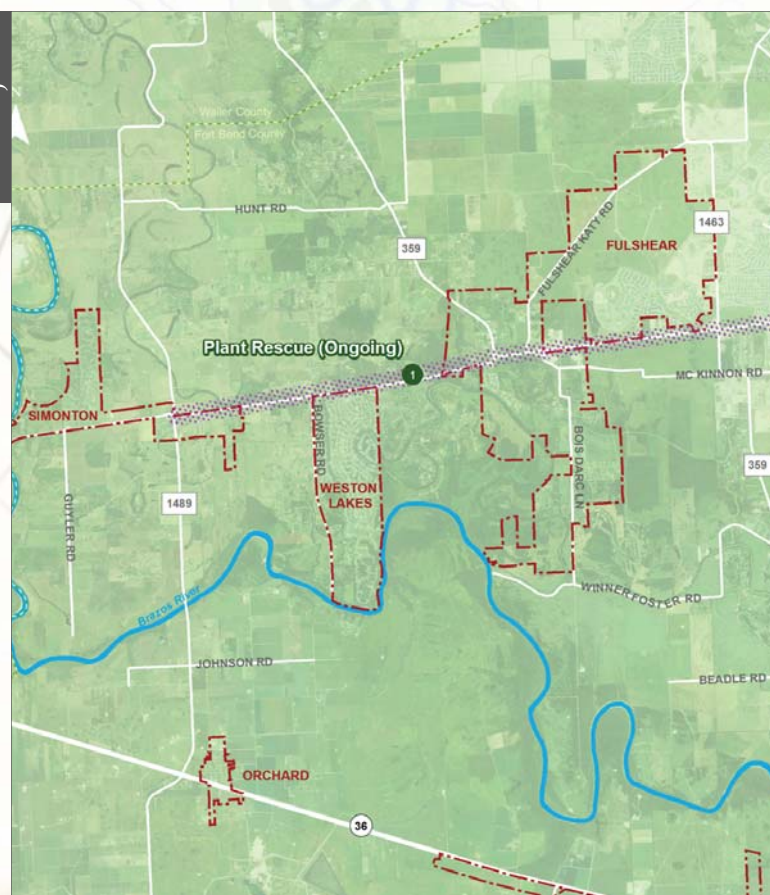




## Fulshear / Simonton Segment



### Project 1



**Project Name:** Fulshear Area Native Plant Rescue

**Location:** Currently along FM 1093 and FM 1463 in right-of-way for road expansion. Other areas of high development will also be considered for this ongoing effort.

**Description:** Native plants in high development areas can be dug up and transferred to parks and other natural areas such as the Katy Prairie Conservancy sites, Fulshear Park areas, and other areas to be identified.

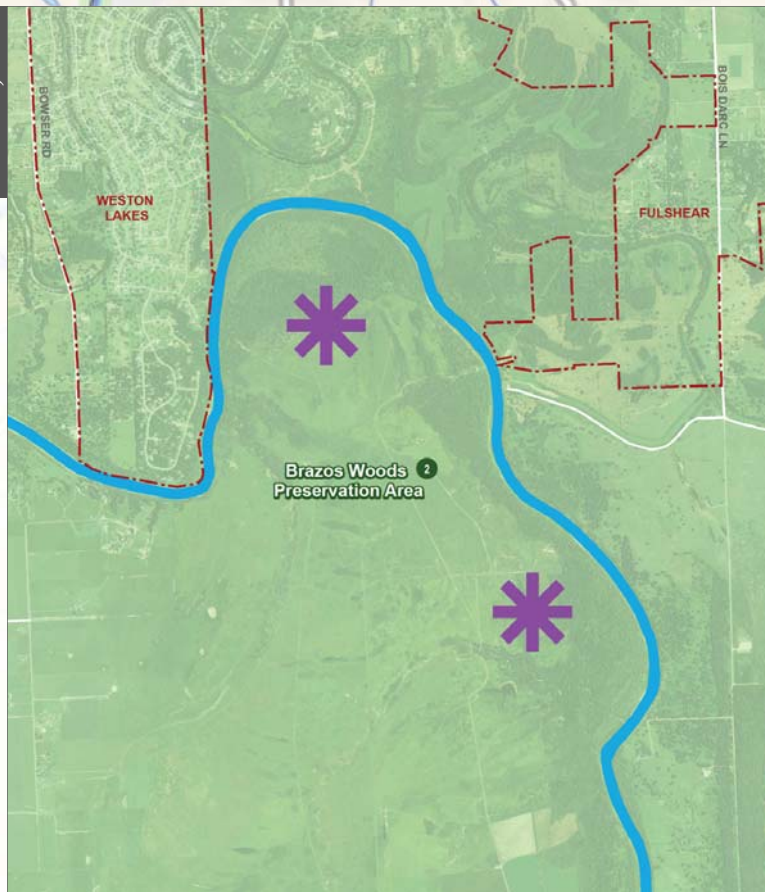
**Potential Partners:** The Native Plant Rescue effort is ongoing and the Fulshear Parks Board is working with the Katy Prairie Conservancy and Master Naturalists.

#### Implementation Strategies:

- Consult Master Naturalists on a list of native plants in Fulshear to be rescued.
- Educate volunteers on best way to garden with native species.
- Identify areas where plants at risk can be transplanted.



## Project 2



**Project Name:** Brazos Woods Preservation Area

**Location:** Areas north of SH 36 that are riparian and former prairie chicken habitat.

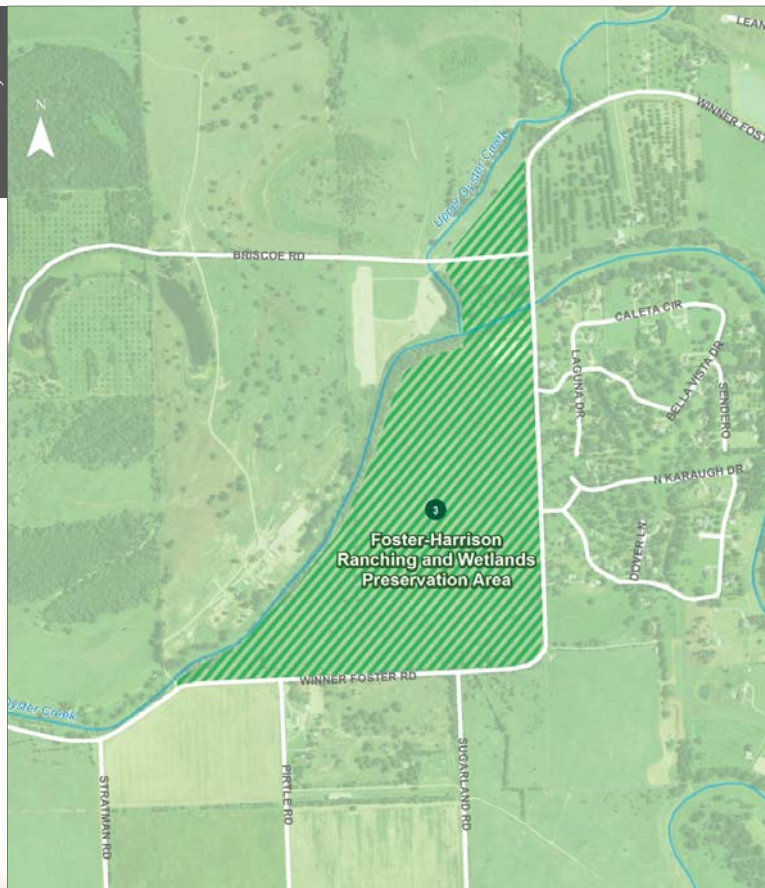
**Description:** In some cases this land is undevelopable because of its location primarily in Brazos River flood zones. Nature trails could be developed to provide educational experiences. Educational exhibits and/or guided tours could enhance the trails. Wetlands offer opportunities for outdoor nature study (botany, biology and hydrology).

**Potential Partners:**

- City of Fulshear
- City of Simonton
- Fort Bend County
- Katy Prairie Conservancy
- Master Naturalists
- Boy Scouts

**Implementation Strategies:** As land becomes identified, work with the appropriate agency to create conservation and green space with passive activity areas. Where lands are undevelopable and with consent of the owner, create conservation areas that will have interpretive signage, outdoor nature study and trails.

## Project 3



**Project Name:** Foster-Harrison Ranching and Wetlands Preservation Area

**Location:** South of Upper Oyster Creek, north of Winner-Foster Road between Pirtle Road and Briscoe Road.

**Description:** Undeveloped site would be good for preservation of scenic ranchland and riparian wetlands on the property which borders Upper Oyster Creek. Nature trails could be developed to provide educational experiences. Educational exhibits and/or guided tours could enhance the trails. Wetlands offer opportunities for outdoor nature study (botany, biology and hydrology).

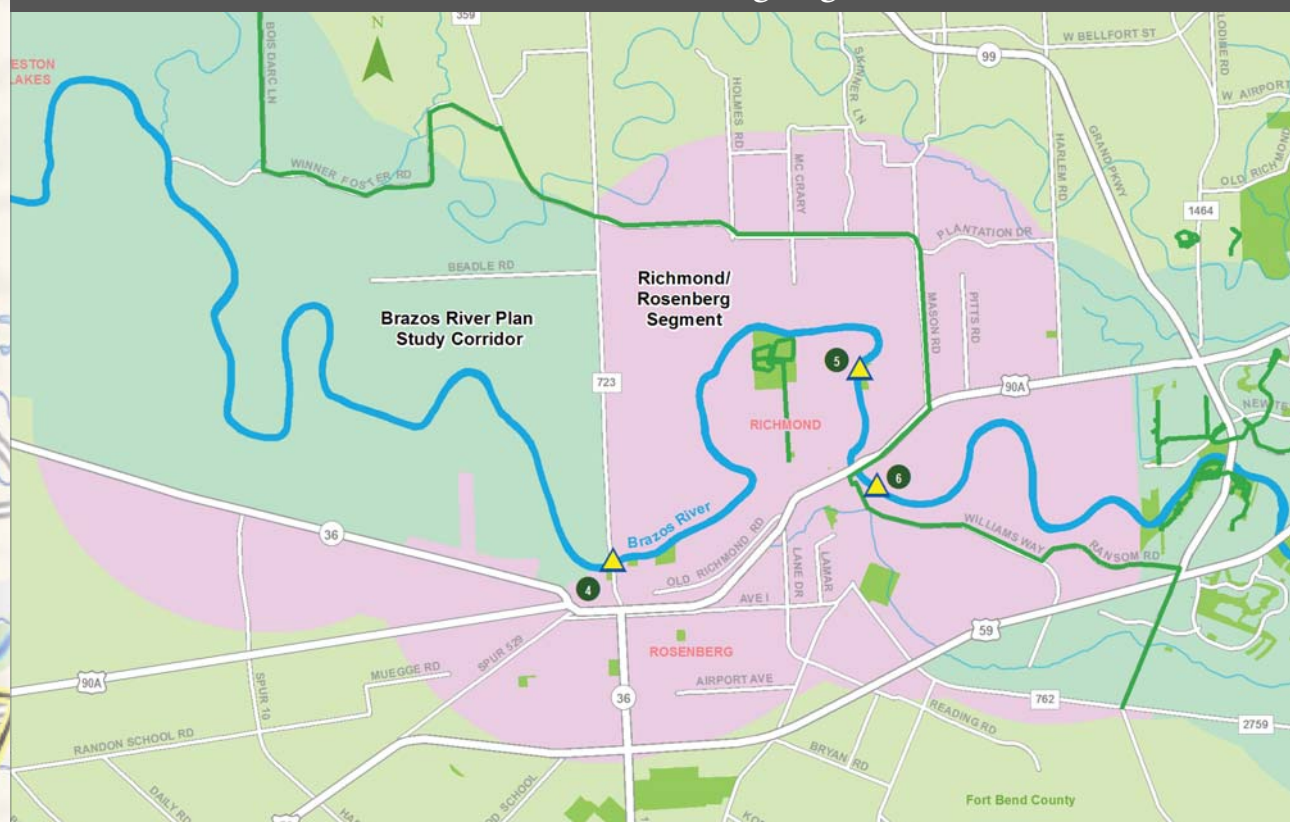
**Potential Partners:**

- City of Fulshear
- Landowners
- Scientists and educators

**Implementation Strategies:** As land becomes developed, work with the appropriate agency to create conservation and green space with passive activity areas. Where lands are undevelopable and with consent of the owner, create conservation areas that would offer interpretive signage, outdoor nature study, and trails.



## Richmond / Rosenberg Segment



### Project 4



**Project Name:** FM 723 Kayak/Canoe Launch

**Location:** The northeast corner of the FM 723 Bridge over the Brazos River, in north Rosenberg.

**Description:** This project was added to the Richmond/Rosenberg Segment analysis after it was discovered during ground-truthing visits to other sites. Located along a county easement and privately owned property, it's currently being used as a launch and fishing site due to ease of accessibility to the river. It has ample potential space for parking and easy access due to an opening in the guardrail on FM 723. It is a very promising site if a mutual use agreement and permission is granted from the Texas Department of Transportation.

**Potential Partners:** Texas Department of Transportation, City of Rosenberg, Fort Bend County, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

**Implementation Strategies:** Work with the Texas Department of Transportation and the City of Rosenberg to provide a mutual use agreement for the site. Work with TxDOT to provide/allow signage. Work with strategic partners such as Fort Bend Green to improve the launch site and parking access. Work with Fort Bend County/City of Rosenberg to provide trash removal and security for the site. Work with local Boy Scouts to provide amenities to the site.



## Project 5



**Project Name:** Hilmar Moore Nature Park Kayak/Canoe Launch

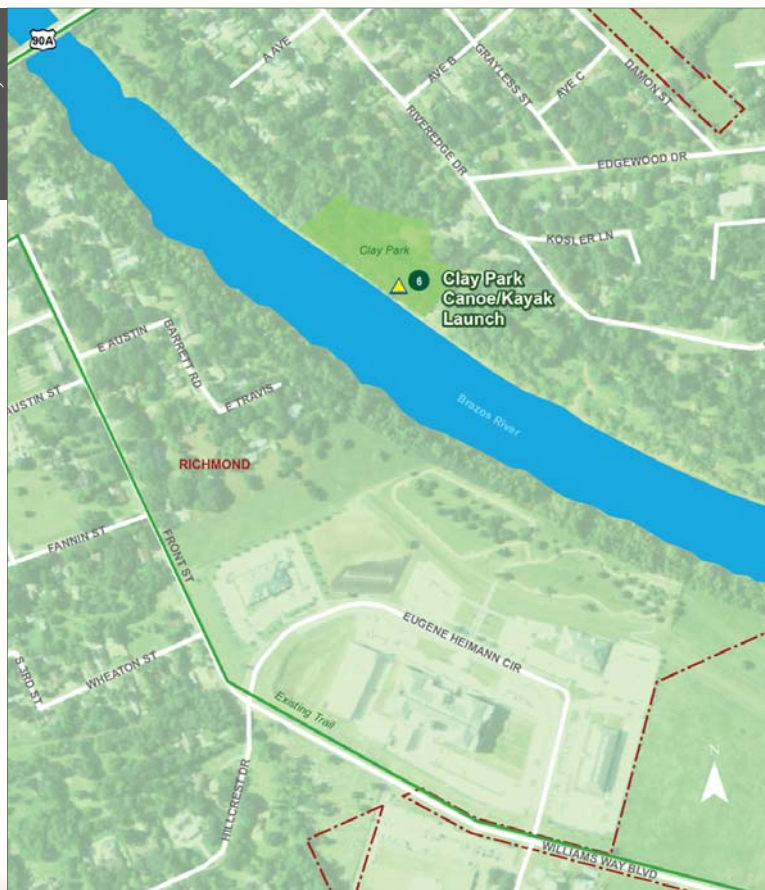
**Location:** The east side of the Brazos River near the River Edge subdivision, accessed from Blaisdale Road.

**Description:** Two projects proposed in the Workshops were combined to create this kayak/canoe launch site in Hilmar Moore Nature Park. Hilmar Moore Nature Park is part of MUD 140 and is open dawn to dusk. It already has some walking/hiking trails and an unimproved parking area. It is easily accessible from Blaisdale Road in Richmond. There could be multiple areas for kayak/canoe launch sites but it is posted to keep motor vehicles from those areas so a portage from the parking area to the river may be necessary. Site would also allow access for fishing. Note: There may be security concerns, as it is not a visible site, and there is evidence of undesirable activity.

**Potential Partners:** MUD 140, City of Richmond, George Foundation, Wessendorf Foundation

**Implementation Strategies:** Initiate discussion with MUD 140 about improvements that would make the launch site more accessible for canoes/kayaks. Work with Fort Bend County Drainage to make river access easier. Work with the City of Richmond for possible trash collection and security. Work with Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office to develop strategies to address any concerns of safety. Work with local Boy Scouts to bring additional amenities such as benches, picnic table, etc.

## Project 6



**Project Name:** Clay Park Kayak/Canoe Launch

**Location:** The Clay Park launch site is on the north side of the River near Riveredge Drive in Richmond, across the River from Eugene Herman Circle.

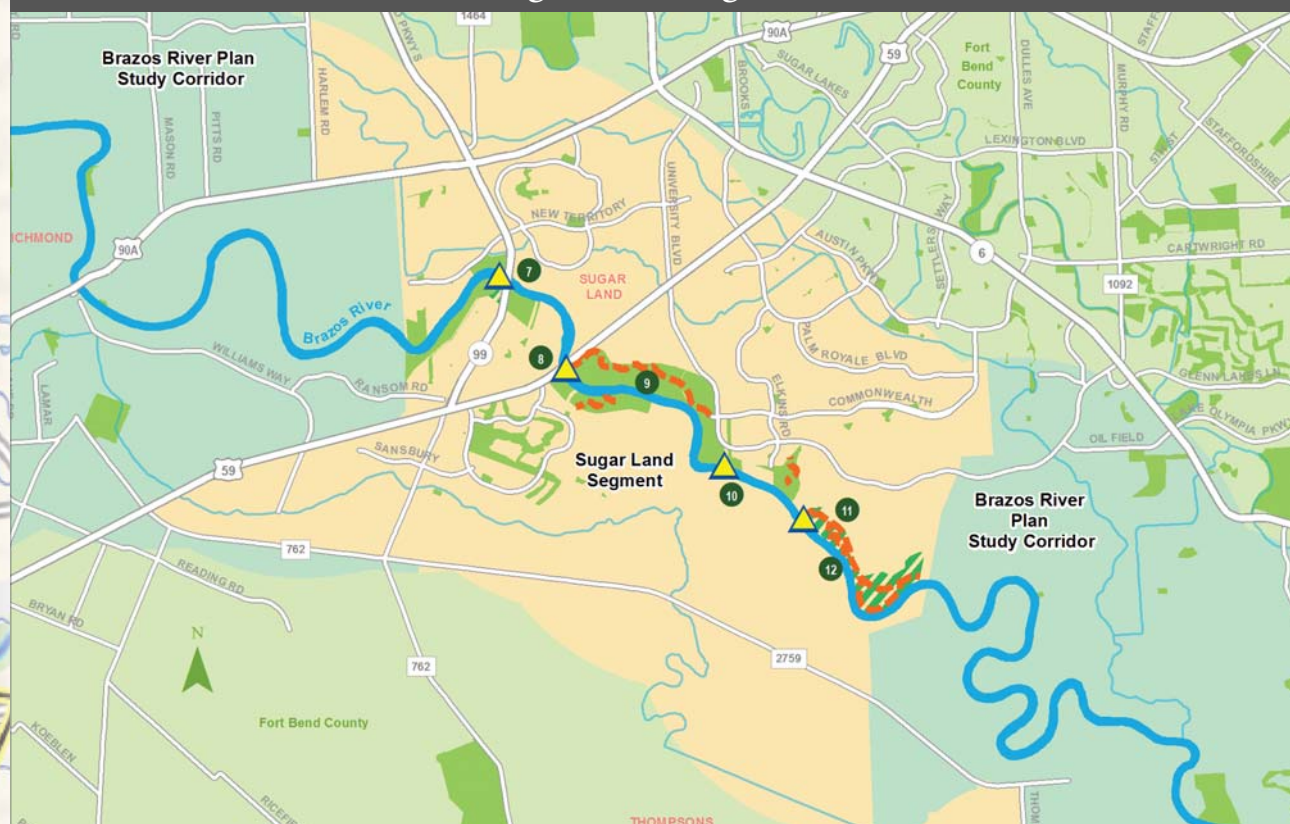
**Description:** To create a launch site at Clay Park, a pathway would need to be cleared to the sandy area along the river. The Eugene Herman Circle side, which was also evaluated for this study, is owned by Fort Bend County and the river bank is too high to be considered for a launch site. Note: The Clay Park site is in the flood plain.

**Potential Partners:** Property Owners, City of Richmond, Fort Bend County, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, Fort Bend Green

**Implementation Strategies:** Work with the City of Richmond to improve river access at the site, and to provide/approve additional signage. Develop design and maintenance strategies to address the regular flooding of the area.



## Sugar Land Segment



### Project 7



**Project Name:** SH 99 – River Park Canoe/Kayak Launch

**Location:** East side of State Hwy. 99 Bridge, south bank.

**Description:** The south side of the river has a flat bank and nice sand beach area. It is accessible only by foot currently. There are two tracts of land in this location one is owned by the City of Sugar Land and the other is owned by the River Park Episcopal Church. The City of Sugar Land is pursuing the purchase of the Church's floodway property. There is an existing CenterPoint Energy power line easement located in-between the Sugar Land and Church property. There are existing Hike and Bike trails in close proximity to this location that allow for pedestrian access. However, parking access is a good distance away from this location. The City is working with the Church and future potential developers of the adjacent tracts to provide parking and better access to this

area of the river. A long term goal would be for a canoe launch site.

**Potential Partners:** Levee Improvement District No. 10, City of Sugar Land, Center Point Energy, TxDOT, River Park Episcopal Church, River Park Development Home Owners Association

**Implementation Strategies:** Acquire access easements from adjacent developer and LID 10. Construct a vehicular access route to an existing beach area upstream from the State Highway 99 Bridge.



## Project 8



**Project Name:** US Highway 59 Canoe/Kayak Launch and Emergency Boat Ramp

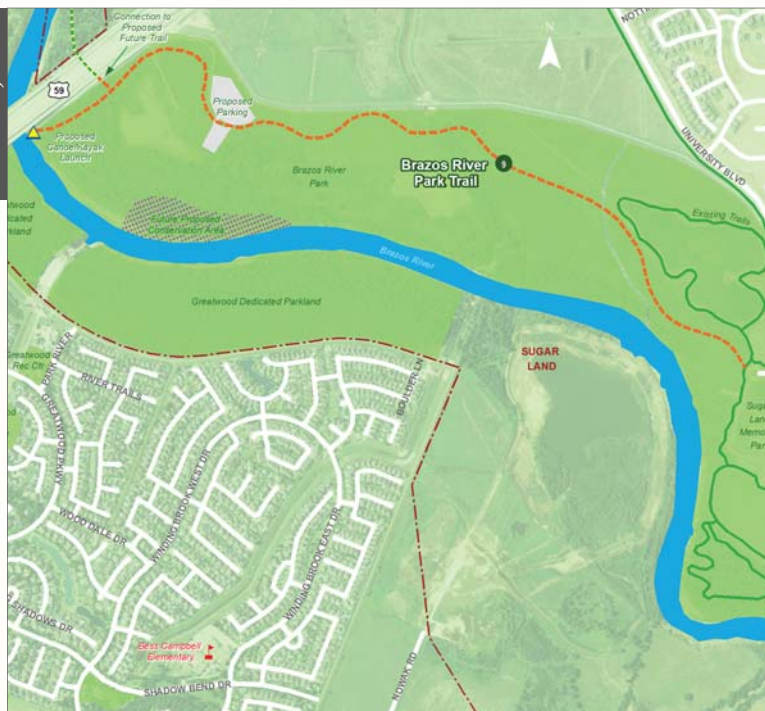
**Location:** U.S. Highway 59 Bridge, east side of Brazos River, off northbound frontage road.

**Description:** This location is in Texas Department of Transportation right-of-way and is located within the Sugar Land City limits. It provides easy access to the river by vehicles to launch canoes/kayaks and emergency services water craft if necessary. In 2014 the City of Sugar Land is expected to start construction of a parking lot to support canoe/kayak launches from this location.

**Potential Partners:** Texas Department of Transportation, Fort Bend County, Paddling Outfitters, Texas Parks and Wildlife, citizen volunteers, Sugar Land Legacy Foundation

**Implementation Strategies:** The City of Sugar Land has allocated Capital Improvement funds for the development of a paddle trail facility. The design has been completed. An agreement between TXDOT and the Sugar Land City Council must be approved prior to construction.

## Project 9



**Project Name:** Brazos River Park Trail

**Location:** Trail throughout Brazos River Park, parallel to the River

**Description:** One of the key guiding principles of the Brazos River Corridor Recreation Master Plan is to provide Hike and Bike Trails, as well as a Paddling Trail along the course of the river throughout as much of Fort Bend County as possible. There will need to be a hierarchy of Trail Development. Wide paved trails will be necessary near parking areas and high traffic locations, down to narrow single track natural surface trails, as well as trails of all widths and materials, and dictated by the planned use and site conditions. The trails will need to accommodate a wide variety of recreational activities as well as some trails being used for maintenance and emergency vehicles in addition to recreation. Sugar Land will continue to develop trails throughout Brazos River Park for the foreseeable future.

**Potential Partners:** Cities, Levee Districts, Private property owners, Home Owners Associations, Land Developers, citizen volunteers, running clubs, Greater Houston off Road Biking Association (GHORBA)

**Implementation Strategies:** Develop a trail hierarchy of paved and unpaved trails to accommodate a wide variety of users.



## Project 10



**Project Name:** Sugar Land Memorial Park Canoe/Kayak Launch

**Location:** Adjacent to Sugar Land's existing Memorial Park near the outfall of Ditch H (also known as Bull Head Slough)

**Description:** The Ditch Right-of-Way is owned by Fort Bend County Levee Improvement District No. 2 (LID 2). LID 2 would need to approve improvements and access to this location prior to commencing with construction. The existing Memorial Park parking lot, restrooms, and picnic facilities are in close proximity and can serve as support facilities. Due to existing park development access to the river at this location would need to be limited to approved outfitters or canoeists through correspondence with the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department.

**Potential Partners:** Fort Bend County, Levee Improvement District No. 2, City of Sugar Land, citizen volunteers, Sugar Land Legacy Foundation

**Implementation Strategies:** Easement acquisition from LID No. 2, gated access through Sugar Land Memorial Park

## Project 11



**Project Name:** Riverstone Parkland

**Location:** Riverstone Master Planned Community in Sugar Land and Missouri City

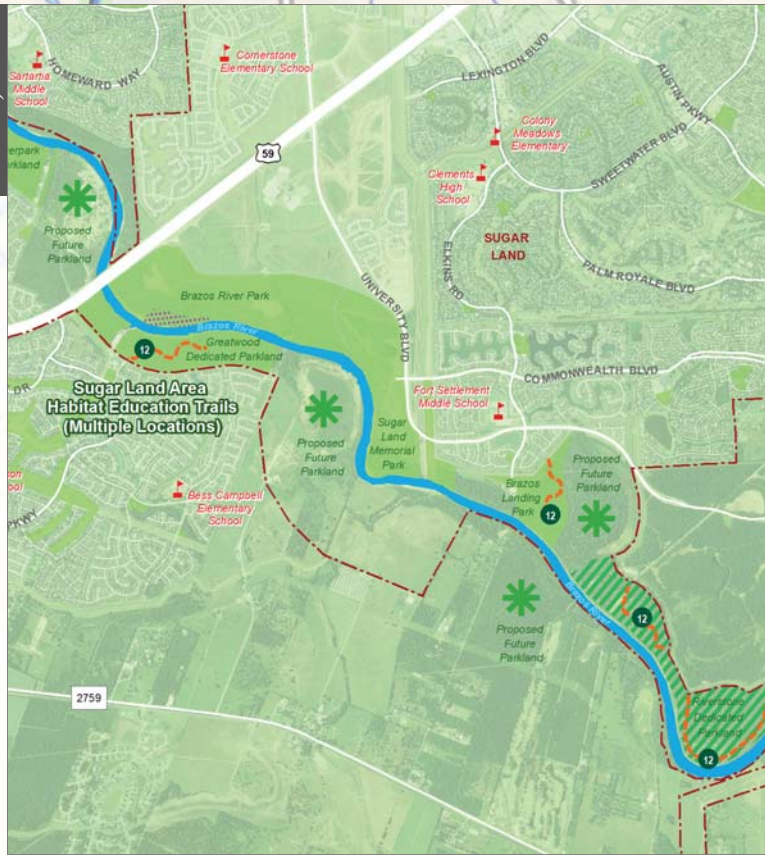
**Description:** Johnson Development Company is the developer of the Riverstone Community. They will be dedicating approximately 300 acres of floodway property to the City of Sugar Land sometime in the 2016 – 2018 time frame. The majority of this site has been designated by Johnson Development as a conservation easement. This will restrict the City of Sugar Land's opportunity to provide facilities on this site to a very small area of the property. If possible, a canoe launch/take out would be very beneficial in this stretch of the river as it is located in between two other good launch sites: one proposed in Sugar Land and one existing in

Sienna Plantation. Access to parking is needed to serve the residents of the surrounding communities and trails would allow connectivity to other planned and existing trails in the City of Sugar Land's Brazos River Park development. This location is also a good opportunity to provide restroom and picnic facilities for park visitors.

**Potential Partners:** Johnson Development Company, City of Sugar Land, citizen volunteers, Sugar Land Legacy Foundation.

**Implementation Strategies:** Johnson Development has identified approximately 300 acres of Brazos River floodway to dedicate to the City of Sugar Land. The City plans to develop park access, parking, restrooms, picnic facilities, paddling trail facilities, and trails.





**Project Name:** Sugar Land Area Habitat Education Trails

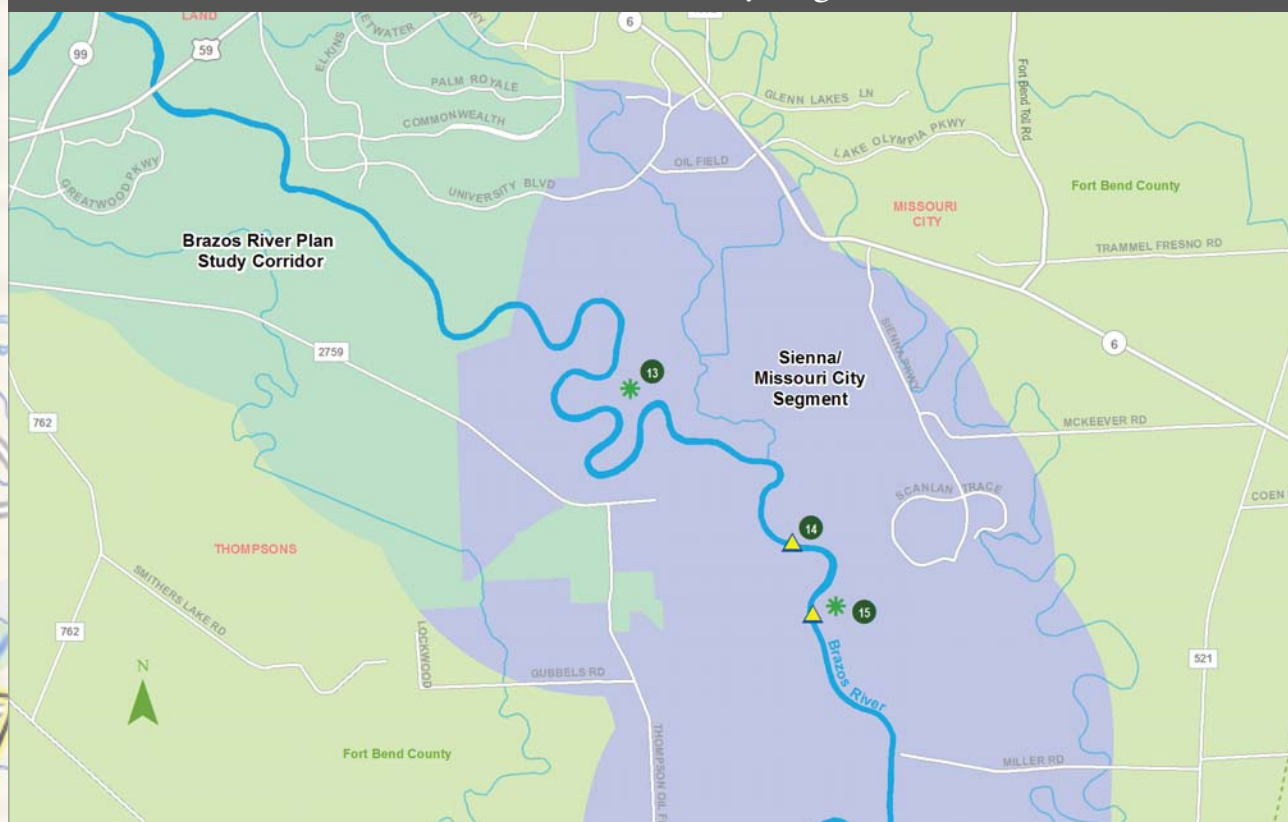
**Location:** Multiple sites throughout the Sugar Land Parks and Trails system

**Description:** The Brazos River Corridor through Sugar Land will provide one of the best opportunities to provide habitat for the many animals, birds, and plants existing in Fort Bend County. The County's rapid urbanization is squeezing wildlife into very limited undisturbed land. Control of invasive species of animals (example: feral hogs) and vegetation (example: Tallow trees) will require knowledgeable land management to protect desirable indigenous plants and animals to survive and hopefully thrive. City-dwellers that will frequent the park, especially in future generations, will need to understand the delicate nature of the Brazos River Ecosystem. Offering space and facilities for outdoor education, and coordinating with local educators will lead to a better understanding and appreciation for the nature that will exist along the entire stretch of the Brazos River, as well as ecosystems around the world that are threatened by urbanization.

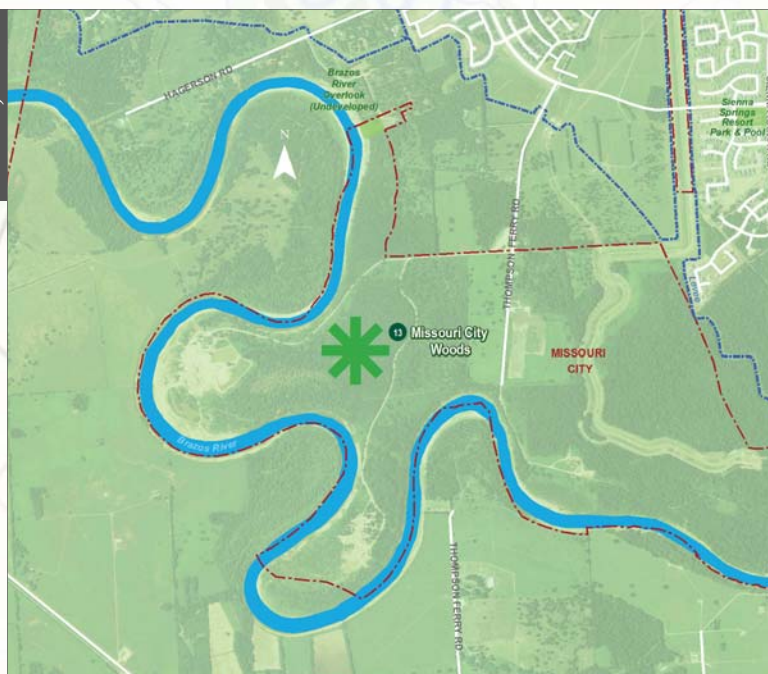
**Potential Partners:** Fort Bend Master Naturalists, City of Sugar Land, Boy Scouts, Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept.

**Implementation Strategies:** Include interpretive graphics on signs as areas develop along the river. QR codes would allow for providing detailed information without the high cost of large or detailed graphic signs.

## Sienna / Missouri City Segment



### Project 13



**Project Name:** Missouri City Woods

**Location:** Located in Missouri City, TX along the Brazos River between the master-planned communities of Riverstone and Sienna Plantation; undeveloped land used for sand production and owned by private land developer.

**Description:** This piece of property is owned by one of the large developers in Fort Bend County and has been used for sand production; often described as the 'sand pits'. It is adjacent to the Brazos River and does not have public infrastructure on existing site. No formal determination has been made to the potential for future development of this property for Brazos River access or park land at this time and it may be 10+ years before a decision would be made by the owner on its future development. There has been discussion on the possibility of developing this area as park land. Due to its location along

the river and nearby infrastructure (streets, communities), it was identified as being a priority project and could have potential for a good river launch access point between Sugar Land and Camp Sienna.

**Potential Partners:** Local Levee Improvement District or MUD Districts, Riverstone Community Services Foundation, Sienna Plantation Community Services Foundation, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

**Implementation Strategies:** Interest in potential future development for river access, trails or parkland should be discussed with property owner.



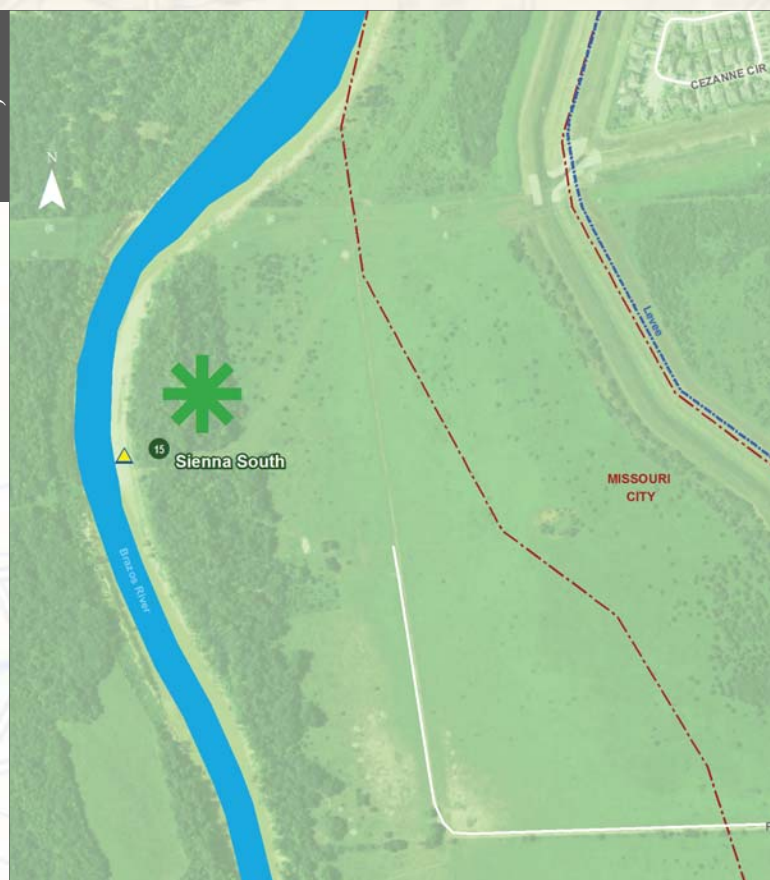
**Location:** 7725 Camp Sienna Trail, in Sienna Plantation, a large master-planned community in Missouri City.

**Description:** Camp Sienna is a 160 acre Sports Complex and Nature Park including 1.5 miles of walking trails, picnic pavilion, scenic Brazos River Boardwalk & Overlook, playground, and sport fields. The trails consist of decomposed granite surface and meander through wooded areas adjacent to the Brazos River and around the sports fields. One of the trails leads to a boardwalk and overlook at the Brazos River and the other river trail leads to an undeveloped canoe/kayak launch. There is signage describing the river trail and information about river access at this location.

This project is ranked high due to the current accessibility to the river at this undeveloped launch and the fact that a short trail to this location already exists. From the parking lot, the trail is approximately ½ mile and there is a short, man-made trail from a concrete platform to the river edge. The slope down to the river can vary from challenging to semi-

The park is owned by the Sienna Plantation Levee Improvement District (SPLID) who is supportive of the future development of this canoe/kayak launch as a regional attraction. This location has potential to be a large scope scout type development project and would involve construction of some type of durable steps down to the river edge and a possible canoe transportation structure. This launch provides a good mid-point between the City of Sugar Land future launches near Brazos River or Sugar Land Memorial Park and Brazos Bend State Park launches.

**Implementation Strategies:** Solicit potential partners for construction and installation of the launch steps and canoe transportation. Identify project budget/scope and determine funding needs. Solicit funding from potential partners.



**Project Name:** Sienna South

**Location:** Located in Missouri City along the Brazos River just south and adjacent to the Sienna Plantation master-planned community; undeveloped land and plans for development beginning in 2014 as a master-planned community by a land developer.

**Description:** This piece of property is owned by a land/community developer and will be developed as another large-scale master-planned community immediately adjacent to Sienna Plantation. The property does include future potential parkland that would be adjacent to the Brazos River. This location does not have public infrastructure on existing site and it may be 2-5+ years before development expands to include this area. No formal determination has been made yet regarding the potential for future development of this property for Brazos River access or parkland. It is anticipated that the Sienna Plantation Levee Improvement District that owns nearby Camp Sienna could potentially partner or participate in future park development in this area as it is located within the SLPID's service area. Due to its location along the river, a flat

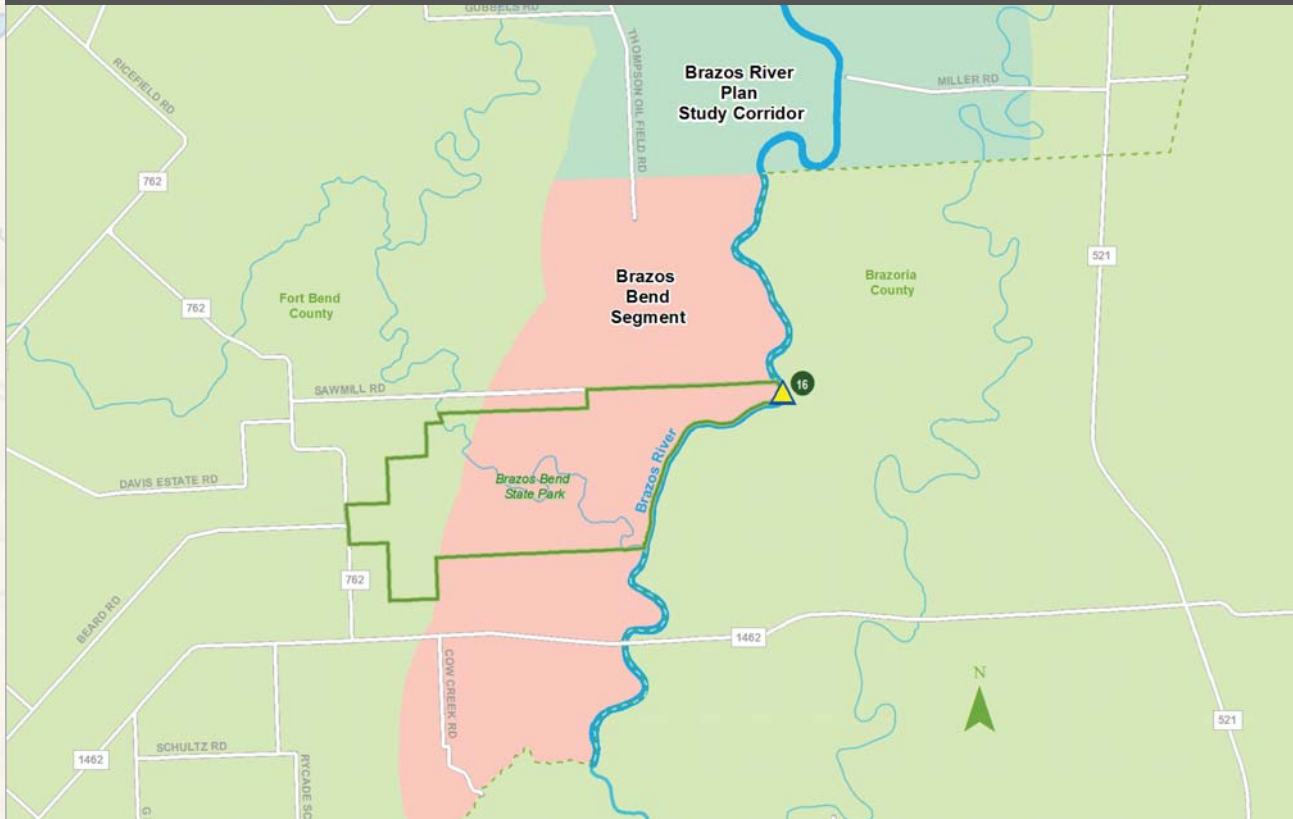
sand bank area (when River is not running at high levels), and nearby infrastructure (in Sienna Plantation), it was identified as being a priority project and could have potential for a good river launch access point between Camp Sienna and Brazos Bend State Park.

**Potential Partners:** Sienna Plantation Levee Improvement District, Land Developer/Owner, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

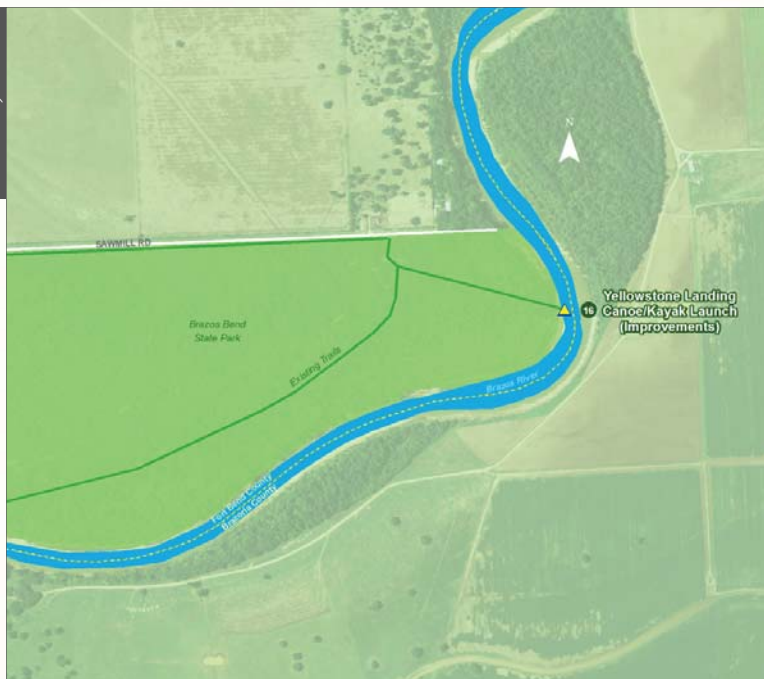
**Implementation Strategies:** Interest in potential future development for river access, trails or parkland should be discussed with land owner and the Sienna Plantation LID.



## Brazos Bend Segment



### Project 16



**Project Name:** Yellowstone Landing Launch

**Location:** Yellowstone Landing in Brazos Bend State Park, northeast corner.

**Description:** The Yellowstone Landing is an existing canoe/kayak launch located inside the Brazos Bend State Park. The location has a large sandbar and heavy vegetation on sides of the bank. The bank is quite steep and can be unstable. This is still an excellent location because of the sand bar. Currently vehicle parking and unloading is located approximately ¼ mile from the launch. Parking or an equipment loading and unloading area near the river bank would make this sight much more usable at a canoe/kayak launch. Some sort of steps or other structure to get people, equipment and canoes/kayaks up and down the step bank would also be needed. The fluctuation of the river level and the unstable nature of the bank make the possibility of a permanent structure difficult.

**Potential Partners:** Brazos Bend State Park, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Fort Bend Green, Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization, Coastal Prairie Chapter and the Cradle of Texas Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist, Houston Canoe Club, Houston Kayaking Club

**Implementation Strategies:** Brazos Bend State Park will need to look into possible clearance from local, state and federal agencies to create a more stable path to the river's edge. The park current has a rope system to help people ascend and descend to and from the river bank.





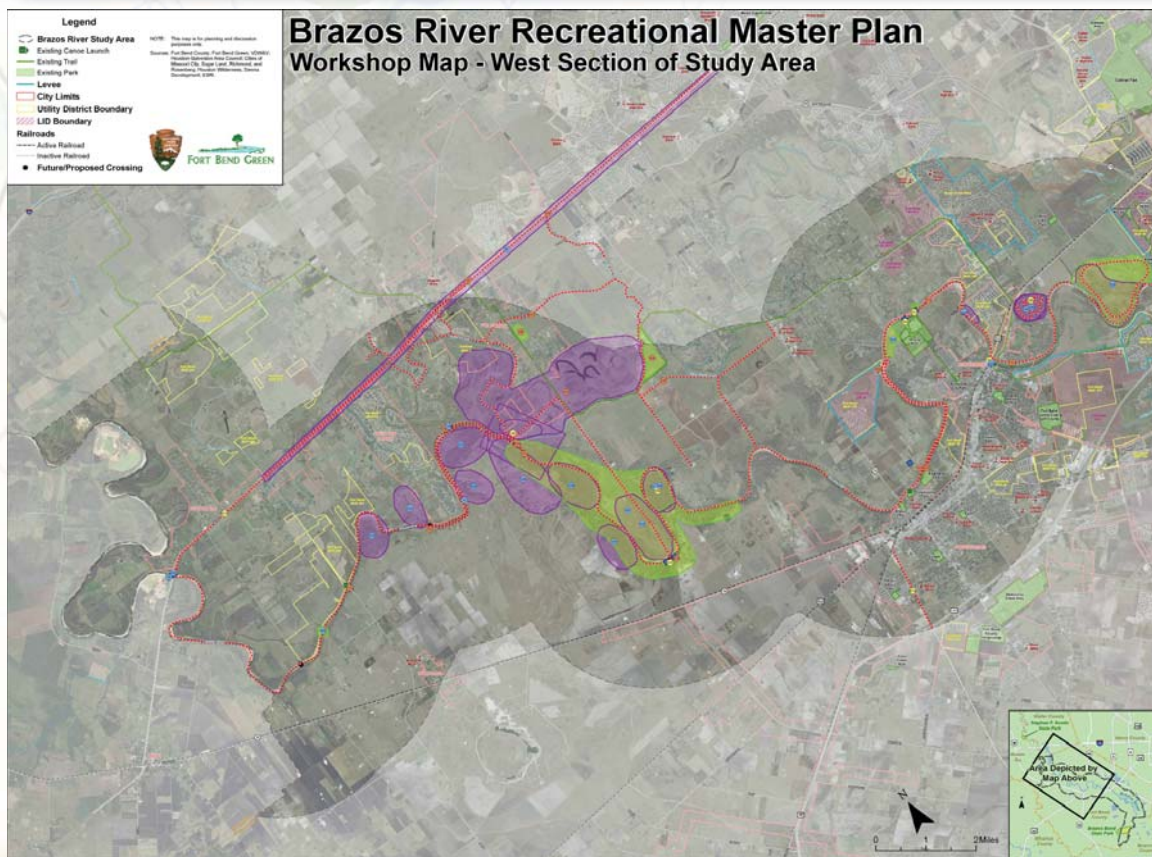
*"The rich heritage of Fort Bend County has its beginnings with the adventurous early settlers of Texas attracted to the area for the hopes of bountiful crops from the fertile soils of the Brazos River bottomlands."*

*- Roland Adamson, former George Foundation CEO and longtime Fort Bend County resident*





# Workshop Maps





# Survey Questionnaire

## Brazos River Corridor Recreation Master Plan Citizen Opinion Survey

Fort Bend Green, along with other partners on an initial steering committee, is developing a Recreation Master Plan for the Brazos River Corridor. This survey is designed to gather input from people who live, work and play along the Brazos River Corridor. We hope you will share your ideas and opinions with us. Your input will be used to guide the plan. Actual implementation of the plan will depend on future funding available from a combination of government, non-profit organizations, and private sector partners.

This survey will take about 15 minutes and we sincerely appreciate your time and effort in providing your preferences for the river corridor.

Our Mission is "To create a collaborative plan that recommends priority projects for recreation and conservation within the Brazos River Corridor in Fort Bend County."

**This map shows the corridor along the Brazos River that is part of the planning effort.**



# Survey Questionnaire

## Brazos River Corridor Recreation Master Plan Citizen Opinion Survey

**1. The Steering Committee's Vision for the Brazos River Corridor supports these future conditions:**

**"The natural resources of the Brazos River are protected and appreciated by the community at-large."**

**"The Brazos River is celebrated as one of the most outstanding and unifying resources of Fort Bend County."**

**"Land trails, paddle trails and parks are connected in a distinguished Brazos River Greenway."**

**Please tell us your opinion of these vision statements or any changes you would like to see.**





# Survey Questionnaire

## Brazos River Corridor Recreation Master Plan Citizen Opinion Survey

### 2. How important is each of the following actions in improving the Brazos River Corridor?

(Check one box per item, from 1 to 5, where 1 = Not Important, 5 = Very Important)

	1 Not Important	2	3	4	5 Very Important
Improve land access alongside the river (trails, public access)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improve boat access onto the river (launch sites, boat rentals)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Protect ecology – conservation, restoration and habitat protection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encourage economic development in areas near the river corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stimulate recreation and tourism businesses that depend on the river corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Protect cultural resources, such as Native American & early settlement history	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increase recreation and nature tourism opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clean up river and riverbanks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improve beauty and civic pride	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide security for users and nearby property	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide safety information to river and riverbank users	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improve interpretation and educational opportunities along the river corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increase parkland along the river	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other (please specify)

# Survey Questionnaire

## Brazos River Corridor Recreation Master Plan Citizen Opinion Survey



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# Survey Questionnaire

## Brazos River Corridor Recreation Master Plan Citizen Opinion Survey

**3. Following is a list of facilities and services that could be created along the river. In your opinion, how important is it to include each in the master plan recommendations?  
(Check one box per item, from 1 to 5, where 1 = Not Important, 5 = Very Important)**

	1 Not Important	2	3	4	5 Very Important
Cafes, food & drink vendors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Children's play areas/playgrounds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Canoe/kayak launches/take-out points	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bike rentals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Park benches	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rental facilities for parties, events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
River viewing decks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Publicly-managed hunting areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Picnic areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fountains, water features	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community gathering areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trails that follow along the river	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Eco tourism programs, activities, tours	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Canoe/kayak rentals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interpretive kiosks or signs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trails that connect neighborhoods/developed areas to the river	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Boat ramps (motor boats)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pavilions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parking areas near the river	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Restrooms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fishing access	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wildlife viewing facilities (decks, blinds, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

# Survey Questionnaire

## Brazos River Corridor Recreation Master Plan Citizen Opinion Survey

The images below show various trail designs and tell some of their characteristics.

Hard Surface Trail



This is an example of a hard surface trail. Hard surface trails, such as asphalt or concrete, provide a stable surface for all users and may encourage people with more limited mobility to use the trail. Hard surface trails have the most impact on the surrounding area during construction, but they are easy to maintain, resist flood damage, and are usable soon after rain events.

Crushed Rock Trail



Example of a crushed rock trail. Crushed rock trails are in between hard and natural surfaced trails, suitable for most uses, and liked for their aesthetic appearance. They cost about the same as hard surfacing, require on-going maintenance, and are susceptible to flood damage.

Natural Surface Trail



Example of a natural surface trail. Natural surface trails provide a more intimate connection with nature. When well designed, they can be sustainable and are able to be maintained by trail volunteers. They may need to be closed during and after rain events to prevent damage.

### 4. If trails are constructed, what activities would you like to do on the trails? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Nature study, wildlife viewing, bird watching
- ☐ Horse riding
- ☐ Paddling (canoes/kayaks)
- ☐ Biking (narrow tired, road bicycle)
- ☐ Hiking
- ☐ Running/jogging
- ☐ Baby-strollering
- ☐ Walking for pleasure/exercise
- ☐ Dog-walking
- ☐ Commuting to a destination (work, school, park, shopping)
- ☐ Roller-blading, skating
- ☐ Mountain biking (single-track)

Other (please specify)



# Survey Questionnaire

## Brazos River Corridor Recreation Master Plan Citizen Opinion Survey



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# Survey Questionnaire

## Brazos River Corridor Recreation Master Plan Citizen Opinion Survey

**5. The following list includes issues that may impact the quality of the river corridor in Fort Bend County for recreation and conservation.**

**In your opinion, how significant is each issue?**

**(Check one box per item, from 1 to 5, where 1 = Not a Problem, 5 = Very Significant)**

	1 Not a problem	2	3	4	5 Very Significant
Lack of access and connectivity along the river corridor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of interpretation of history and natural resources to explain the importance of places	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreation user conflicts in corridor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of parking to access river corridor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Limited pedestrian amenities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pollution impacting water quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Need for better ways to inform people about opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of vision for the future of the corridor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conflicts between development and natural and cultural protection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Concerns about safety	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trash and dumping along the river	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Loss of wildlife habitat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Environmental degradation along the river corridors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Erosion of riverbank	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Concerns about crime	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Need for more recreation opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Competition for public vs. private space on the river	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increased property values displacing current residents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Costs of operations and maintenance of new facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)



# Survey Questionnaire

## Brazos River Corridor Recreation Master Plan Citizen Opinion Survey

**6. The Brazos River has been a part of life for people living in the area since prehistoric times. We are interested in gathering personal experiences and folklore about the river to help visitors and residents understand the value of the corridor. If you have a story related to the river that you are willing to share, please enter it in the space below. We may use quotes in our promotional materials, attributed to "survey respondent."**

**7. If you are interested in receiving information about how you can participate in the Brazos River Corridor Plan, please provide your name and email address below.**

Name   
Email   
address

**\*8. Please provide us with your zip code.**

ZIP/Postal Codes

You're finished! Thank you for your time and input.

# Small Group Evaluation Process and Forms

### 4 Step Process for Prioritization of Projects

#### Small groups:

- Fulshear/Simonton (Leads: Janis, Kim)
- Richmond/Rosenberg (Leads: Darren, Roland)
- Sugar Land (Lead: Joe)
- Missouri City/Sienna (Lead: Lisa)
- Brazos Bend State Park (Lead: David Heinicke)
- Full Corridor (Leads: Kim, Janis, Beth)

#### Step 1: Introductory Meeting

Group members meet for first time. Leader explains the overall prioritization process and gives background information (online survey, community workshops, etc). Leader distributes project list (database) and map to all members. Group discusses each project idea briefly. Group members decide upon schedule and volunteer duties for Step 2 – “Groundtruthing”. Notes: From experience with her first meeting, Kim recommends: 1) group leaders read through the project list in detail before the meeting in order to answer questions that come up, 2) group leaders send group all relevant documents electronically after the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting. Janis points out the following helpful website: [www.fbcad.org](http://www.fbcad.org) for property ownership records and more.

#### Step 2: “Groundtruthing”/Site Visits

In pairs/groups, group members visit each site on the project list and document their observations on the attached form. (NOTE: One group member volunteers to consolidate and compile all data for that project idea. This group member becomes the “representative” of that project in Steps 3 and 4.) Group members may choose to invite additional “experts” to meet them at the site to answer questions (“experts” may include representatives of user groups and/or advocacy groups, engineers, etc). Group members may also collect data from other sources (online, interviews, etc). NOTE: Try to take 1 or 2 good representative photos at each site. Each photo needs to have a caption which includes: 1. Project ID number, 2. Description of the image, 3. Vantage-point from which the photo was taken, and 4. Direction of the shot. (One photo per project will be utilized in the final plan.) NOTE: Some photos with people in them are highly desirable. This could include the team members doing their “assessments” of the site with maps in hand, notetables, etc.

#### Step 3: Refine Projects (add details, combine projects, etc)

Group members meet to refine project list. Project representative presents project description, possibly with new details added. Group has authorization to combine projects. At the end of this meeting there will be a “final” list of projects ready for scoring. (NOTE: Final list may be shorter or longer than the original list of projects.) Be sure each project is given an ID number. Leader will edit the project list database to reflect the new project list and ID numbers. (If two projects are combined into one new project, please label the new project with an ID that identifies the former project numbers with a dash in between. Example: F15-B27).



# Small Group Evaluation Process and Forms

**NOTE: There is homework between Steps 3 and 4. Group members score each project idea using the scoring criteria. Each group member brings their scored project list to the final meeting, Step 4. THESE 2 STEPS MAY BE COMBINED INTO ONE LONG MEETING, IF PREFERABLE/NECESSARY.**

## Step 4: Score Projects

Group members meet to combine their collective scores into a formulated database. For each project, the project “representative” will give a brief background on the project, including any recent details. At this point, group members are allowed to change their individual scores if they feel so inclined. For each project, all group member scores will be combined into a database where a final/total score will be tabulated. When all projects have been scored, the list will be presented in order by ranking of highest to lowest score. The group will look for natural break points where the list can be segmented into “High, Medium, and Low” categories. Group members’ duties/commitments end at this point. The group leader will bring the prioritized list of projects to the Steering Committee for further review (mid-July Steering Committee meeting). NOTE: Group leaders should thank their members for participation and encourage them to “stay tuned” for the final plan, but note that the Steering Committee has final “authority” to make changes to the prioritization lists from the small groups.

# Small Group Evaluation Process and Forms

## Project Assessment Form for Site Visits

Small Group/Segment \_\_\_\_\_

Codes (list all IDs for this site) \_\_\_\_\_

1. **Project Name(s):** Use the name from the spreadsheet. If more than one proposal was done for the same area, show all the names, if different. You may then suggest another name that captures all the proposals.
2. **Project Location and Limits:** Include the street name(s) from which you viewed the site. Describe project boundaries by measurement, physical landmarks, streets, or other means, and estimate acreage of site or length of trail.
3. **Site Appearance:** Describe the appearance of the site in terms of vegetation (quality, invasives), topography, water feature, degree of naturalness, and if there are buildings there. For linear corridors, make a judgment if there's room for a trail to be constructed. Note land uses around the site (e.g. residential, offices, etc.). Remember to take photos.
4. **Feasibility Assessment:** Please comment on whether this project seems "doable" based on physical constraints or design challenges. Describe the reasons why you made this judgment.
5. Does this site have any other potential uses (parking, fishing, etc). Please list and describe.
6. **Information prepared by:** Please provide your name, affiliation (if any), email, and daytime phone.

**\*\*When visiting private land, please try to get landowner's permission before you visit, observe "No Trespassing" signs, and stay on major roadways and paved and well-lit areas.**



# Small Group Evaluation Process and Forms

## Proposed Project Prioritization Criteria

### Section A – Alignment with Plan Vision

*All Items are Ranked 0 – 5 with 0 being lowest rank and 5 being the highest rank. INDIVIDUAL SCORES WILL BE AVERAGED TO TABULATE FINAL SCORE.*

How well does the proposed project:

1. Protect ecology (i.e. prevent loss of habitat, protect the natural ecosystem, etc)?
2. Safely improve public access to the river?
3. Respect and express the community's appreciation of the River environment (i.e. by incorporating safety measures, pollution control, and/or water quality, etc)?
4. Connect parks and trails along the River to facilitate a greenway system?
5. Foster community partnerships (i.e. shared economic, social, and/or environmental benefits)?
6. Offer opportunities for community-based river-oriented activities (i.e. health, leisure, and/or education)?
7. Encourage implementation respectful of habitat, landowners, and communities with suitable site characteristics (access, terrain, flood zone, etc.)?

### Section B – Community Desires and Implementation

*Answers are scored 1 for Yes or 0 for No. GROUP WILL DECIDE ON A FINAL SCORE BY CONSENSUS (EITHER 1 OR 0).*

Will the proposed project include:

8. Wildlife/River viewing or nature study?
9. Pedestrian Trails?
10. Bicycle Trails?
11. Paddling Trails?
12. Fishing?
13. Parking?
14. Restrooms?
15. Picnic areas?
16. Increased opportunities for nature tourism?
17. Other community-desired amenities such as passive recreational areas, equestrian trails, bird or pollinator flyways?
18. Protection for cultural and historical resources?

Does the proposed project site have:

19. Reasonable requirements for upkeep and maintenance?
20. A high degree of public ownership?
21. Identified public sponsors?
22. Some planning underway?
23. Identified funding source(s)?

# Small Group Evaluation Process and Forms

Project ID		Project Name	CRITERIA FOR PRIORITIZATION		TOTAL SCORE	# of Times Idea Proposed
			Section A – Alignment with Plan Vision All items are Ranked 0 – 5 (with 0 being lowest rank and 5 being the highest rank). INDIVIDUAL SCORES WILL BE AVERAGED TO TABULATE FINAL SCORE.	Section B – Community Desires and Implementation Answers are scored 1 for Yes or 0 for No. GROUP WILL DECIDE ON A FINAL SCORE BY CONSENSUS (EITHER 1 OR 0).		
			1. Protect ecology (i.e. prevent loss of habitat, protect the natural ecosystem, etc)?		0	
			2. Safely improve public access to the river?		0	
			3. Respect and express the community's appreciation of the River environment (i.e. by incorporating safety measures, pollution control, and/or water quality)?		0	
			4. Connect parks and trails along the River to facilitate a greenway system?		0	
			5. Foster community partnerships (i.e. shared economic, social, and/or environmental benefits)?		0	
			6. Offer opportunities for community-based river-oriented activities (i.e. health, leisure, and/or education)?		0	
			7. Encourage implementation respectful of habitat, landowners, and communities with suitable site characteristics (access, terrain, flood zone, etc)?		0	
			8. Wildlife/River viewing or nature study?		0	
			9. Pedestrian Trails?		0	
			10. Bicycle Trails?		0	
			11. Paddling Trails?		0	
			12. Fishing?		0	
			13. Parking?		0	
			14. Restrooms?		0	
			15. Picnic areas?		0	
			16. Increased opportunities for nature tourism?		0	
			17. Other community-desired amenities such as passive recreational areas, equestrian trails, bird or pollinator flyways?		0	
			18. Protection for cultural and historical resources?		0	
			19. Reasonable requirements for upkeep and maintenance?		0	
			20. A high degree of public ownership?		0	
			21. Identified public sponsors?		0	
			22. Some planning underway?		0	
			23. Identified funding source(s)?		0	





*“Over time, our entire county will benefit from Fort Bend Green’s commitment to facilitating the transformation of the Brazos River into a local, regional and national destination. The preservation and development of parks and green space adds to our quality of life and the enjoyment of and pride in our communities throughout the region.”*

*- John Van De Wiele, President, Fort Bend Green*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS







# Community Partners

The Brazos River Corridor Recreation Master Plan was developed through a stakeholder-based community planning process. The following entities are gratefully acknowledged for their participation in the process through workshops, interviews, small committees and/or the online survey.

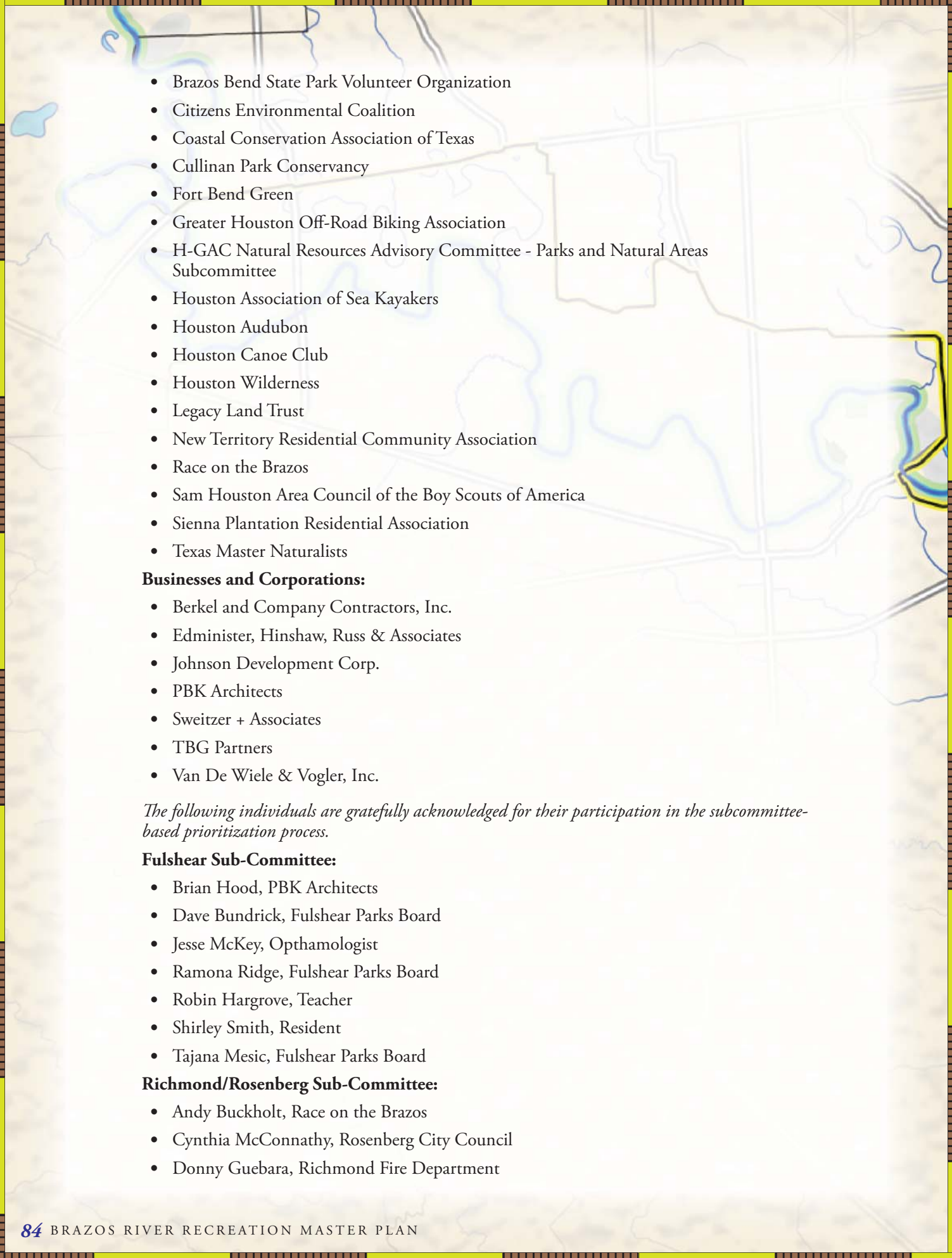
## Government Entities & Offices:

- Brazos River Authority
- Fort Bend County:
  - County Judge
  - Commissioners Court
  - Drainage District
  - Engineering
  - Fire Marshall
  - Office of Emergency Management
  - Parks and Recreation
- City of Fulshear
- City of Missouri City
- City of Orchard
- City of Richmond
- City of Rosenberg
- City of Simonton
- City of Sugar Land
- Sienna Plantation
- Fort Bend County MUD No. 140
- District 22, United States House of Representatives
- District 17, Texas State Senate
- District 18, Texas State Senate
- District 26, Texas House of Representatives
- District 28, Texas House of Representatives
- National Park Service Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program
- Texas Parks and Wildlife Department:
  - Brazos Bend State Park
  - Game Warden
  - Law Enforcement
- Texas AgriLife Extension Service
- Texas Department of Transportation
- Wharton County Junior College

## Organizations and Associations:

- Bayou Land Conservancy



- 
- Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization
  - Citizens Environmental Coalition
  - Coastal Conservation Association of Texas
  - Cullinan Park Conservancy
  - Fort Bend Green
  - Greater Houston Off-Road Biking Association
  - H-GAC Natural Resources Advisory Committee - Parks and Natural Areas Subcommittee
  - Houston Association of Sea Kayakers
  - Houston Audubon
  - Houston Canoe Club
  - Houston Wilderness
  - Legacy Land Trust
  - New Territory Residential Community Association
  - Race on the Brazos
  - Sam Houston Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America
  - Sienna Plantation Residential Association
  - Texas Master Naturalists

**Businesses and Corporations:**

- Berkel and Company Contractors, Inc.
- Edminister, Hinshaw, Russ & Associates
- Johnson Development Corp.
- PBK Architects
- Sweitzer + Associates
- TBG Partners
- Van De Wiele & Vogler, Inc.

*The following individuals are gratefully acknowledged for their participation in the subcommittee-based prioritization process.*

**Fulshear Sub-Committee:**

- Brian Hood, PBK Architects
- Dave Bundrick, Fulshear Parks Board
- Jesse McKey, Ophthalmologist
- Ramona Ridge, Fulshear Parks Board
- Robin Hargrove, Teacher
- Shirley Smith, Resident
- Tajana Mesic, Fulshear Parks Board

**Richmond/Rosenberg Sub-Committee:**

- Andy Buckholt, Race on the Brazos
- Cynthia McConnathy, Rosenberg City Council
- Donny Guebara, Richmond Fire Department

- Kevin Teague, Richmond Fire Department
- Mary Ward, CPC Texas Master Naturalists
- Rick Adams, CPC Texas Master Naturalists
- Teresa Bailey, Rosenberg Parks & Recreation Board

**Missouri City/Sienna Sub-Committee:**

- Adrienne Bottoms, Resident
- Bill Odle, TBG Representative
- Ken Beckman, Sienna LID President
- Trey Reichert, Riverstone Representative

**Sugar Land Sub-Committee:**

- Betty Gee, Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
- Bill Roy, Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
- Kimberley Terrell, City of Sugar Land Parks and Recreation
- Paul Barnett, Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
- Tony Neilsen, City of Sugar Land Parks and Recreation

**Brazos Bend State Park Sub-Committee:**

- Allan Harris, Fort Bend County LID 15
- Barbara Willy, Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization
- Bob Schwartz, Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization
- Carl Franke, Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization
- David Heinicke, Brazos Bend State Park
- Holly Haynes, Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization
- Linda Keltner, Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization
- Offie Walker, Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization

**Corridor-Wide Initiatives Sub-Committee:**

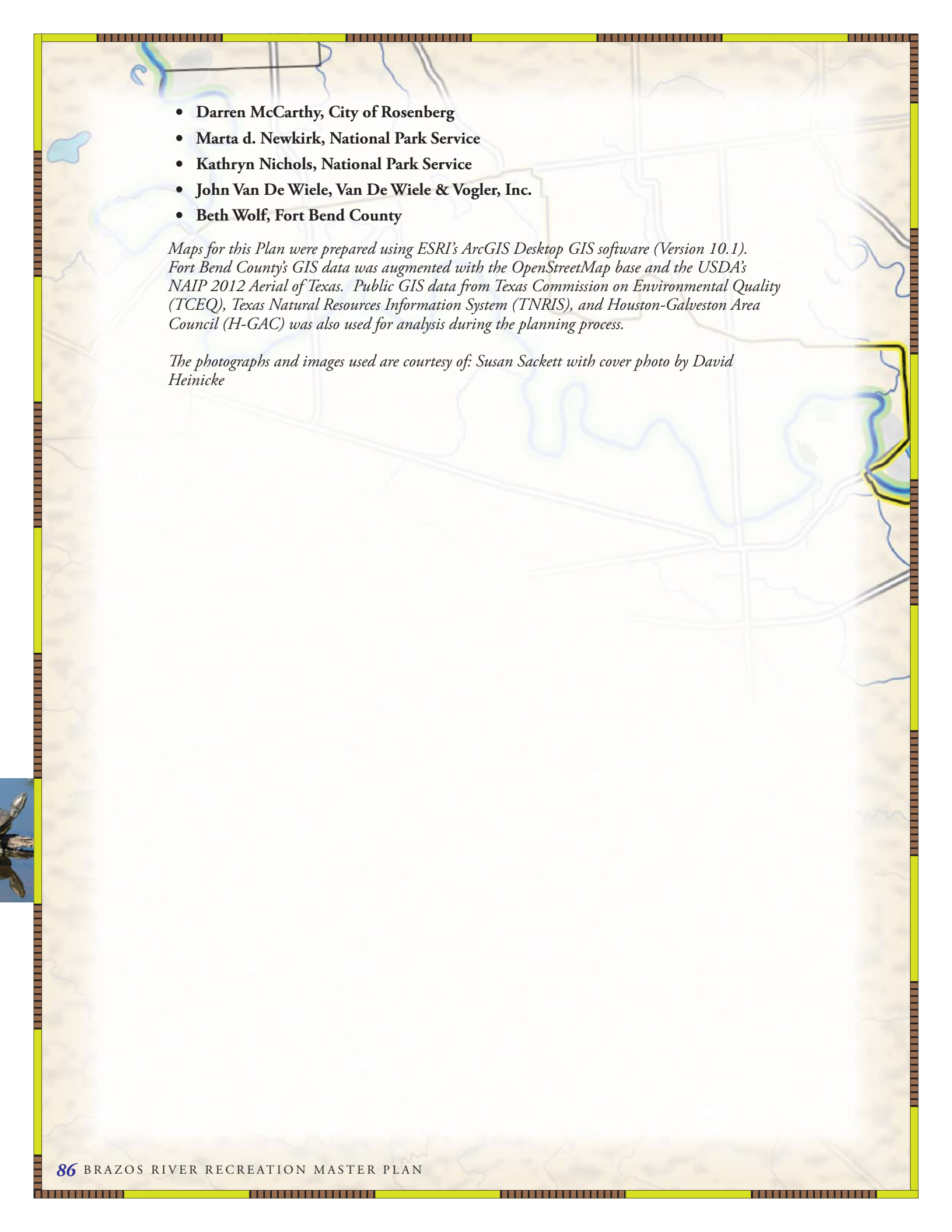
- Andy Clark, Boy Scouts
- Cee Cee Parker, Resident
- Keith Bauman, Sugar Land Coastal Conservation Association
- Marc Reid, Houston Wilderness
- Matt Cornell, Fort Bend County Fire Marshall

**Steering Committee:**

*The following individuals are given special recognition for serving in lead roles and making this plan a reality. Working together, they formed the Brazos River Corridor Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee:*

- Roland Adamson, The George Foundation
- Janis Burall, Van De Wiele & Vogler, Inc.
- Joe Chesser, City of Sugar Land
- Lisa Cox, Sienna Plantation
- Ralph Granados, Fort Bend County
- Kim Icenhower, Fort Bend Green
- Steve Killian, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department



- 
- **Darren McCarthy, City of Rosenberg**
  - **Marta d. Newkirk, National Park Service**
  - **Kathryn Nichols, National Park Service**
  - **John Van De Wiele, Van De Wiele & Vogler, Inc.**
  - **Beth Wolf, Fort Bend County**

*Maps for this Plan were prepared using ESRI's ArcGIS Desktop GIS software (Version 10.1). Fort Bend County's GIS data was augmented with the OpenStreetMap base and the USDA's NAIP 2012 Aerial of Texas. Public GIS data from Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), Texas Natural Resources Information System (TNRIS), and Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) was also used for analysis during the planning process.*

*The photographs and images used are courtesy of: Susan Sackett with cover photo by David Heinicke*