FUNDED PRIORITIES LIST 3B

Texas Coastal Water Quality Program

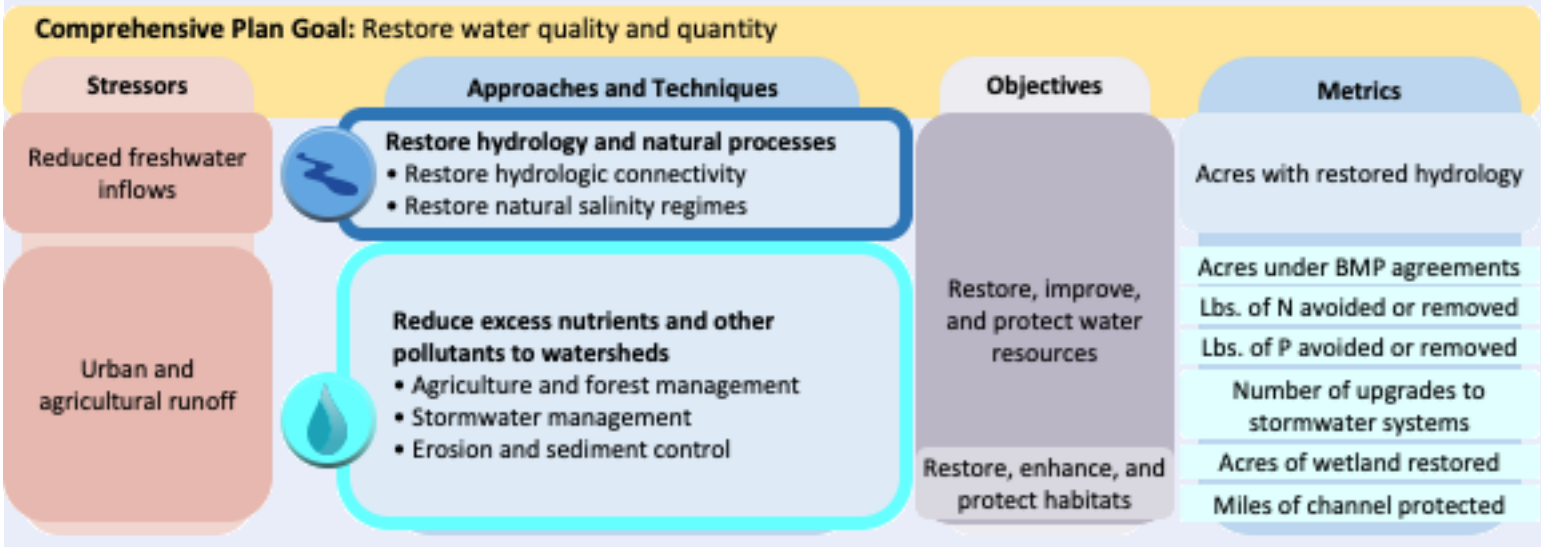
Funded Priorities List (FPL) 3b is part of a two-phase approach used by the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (Council) to respond to ecosystem needs and take advantage of important partnership opportunities to advance large-scale ecosystem restoration.

The Council has approved $3,262,500 in planning funds as FPL Category 1 for the *Texas Coastal Water Quality Program*. In addition, the Council has included an implementation component for potential future funding as an FPL Category 2 activity, and has reserved $19,237,500 for this component, pending further review and a Council vote. The *Texas Coastal Water Quality Program* will utilize the Planning Framework techniques and approaches outlined in the figure below to address environmental stressors in Texas. Texas, through the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality is the sponsor of this program.

This program will restore water quality and freshwater inflows on the Texas coast using a variety of proven methods. Methods include the implementation of best management practices in Texas coastal watersheds to reduce nonpoint source pollution, the repair and enhancement of drainage channels and outfalls to improve stormwater flow and increase freshwater inflow to adjacent marshes, and the construction of living shoreline features to reduce erosion and improve water quality. The program will utilize specified criteria for selecting projects that were identified earlier through public meetings and as part of a stakeholder process. Water quality on the Texas Coast is adversely impacted by diverted freshwater inflows and increased nutrient input from agriculture. This program will address environmental issues focused on stormwater runoff, freshwater inflows, floodplain management, sediment control and water quality for activities related to coastal communities, wetlands, and agriculture.

Program at a Glance

The *Texas Coastal Water Quality Program* applies Planning Framework approaches and techniques to support Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives. In support of the primary objective to *Restore, improve, and protect water resources*, stressors such as reduced freshwater inflows will be addressed using the *Restore hydrologic connectivity* technique and the *Restore natural salinity regimes* technique, while runoff will be addressed using the *Agriculture and forest management*, *Stormwater management*, and *Erosion and sediment control* techniques. Success using restoration of hydrologic connectivity and natural salinity regimes to *Restore, improve, and protect water resources* may be tracked using acres with restored hydrology as a metric, while success using the other techniques may be tracked using acres under BMP agreements, lbs. of nitrogen and phosphorous avoided or removed, and number of upgrades to stormwater systems. The metrics acres of wetland restored and miles of stream channel protected may also track benefits to the secondary objective, *Restore, enhance, and protect habitats*.



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