



News Release

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Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program Releases its New Management Strategy for the Coastal Bend

Corpus Christi, TX - The Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program (CBBEP) has released its updated management strategy for the bays and estuaries of the Coastal Bend, [*Coastal Bend Bays Plan, 2nd edition*](#). This guiding document revises its predecessor and advances strategies for protecting clean water and healthy habitats in the 12-county area including all bays, estuaries, and bayous in the Copano, Aransas, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Baffin and Upper Laguna Madre systems.

The original *Coastal Bend Bays Plan*, also known as '*The Bays Plan*', was adopted in 1998 and has served as a regional framework for the management, protection, and conservation of Coastal Bend bays and estuaries for over 20 years. Year after year, the CBBEP and its partners have been translating *The Bays Plan* into actions and projects that have resulted in a region with cleaner water and sediment, healthier habitats, greater public access, and a more aware and engaged public.

The CBBEP recognized that while much progress was made since the development of *The Bays Plan*, its action plans needed to be modified to respond to the changing needs of communities, incorporate new scientific and technological advances, and address new environmental challenges such as climate change. So, in 2016, the CBBEP initiated a collaborative effort to update *The Bays Plan* to incorporate developments that have occurred since the previous plan was drafted and to ensure that new priorities are being addressed.

"Since 1995, EPA has invested over \$16 million to support the conservation and restoration of the Coastal Bend's bays and estuaries," said David Gray, Acting EPA Regional Administrator. "Protecting critical ecological resources is not only important for wildlife, but also the communities who use the bays and estuaries for recreation and business. The Coastal Bend Bays Plan, 2nd edition demonstrates the progress of the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program and the need continue revitalizing the economic health and vitality of this important area."

The goal of the revision process was to produce a document that would meet the current and future needs of stakeholders in industry, local government, academia, and resource management. This was achieved in the new plan through development of the following expanded action plan categories: Human Uses; Maritime Commerce and Dredging; Habitat and Living Resources; Coastal Birds; Land Conservation and Stewardship; Water and Sediment Quality; Freshwater Resources; Public Education and Outreach; Delta Discovery; and Coastal Resilience.

"We are very proud of this updated plan and thankful for the many hours our stakeholders dedicated to working with us on this process," said Ray Allen, Executive Director, CBBEP. "This document sets a course for the next 20 years for the CBBEP and our partners and will help ensure a healthy and productive Coastal Bend for years to come."

The *Coastal Bend Bays Plan, 2nd edition* was prepared by the CBBEP, with planning and facilitation support from the Mission-Aransas National Estuarine Research Reserve. This support was funded under

a cooperative agreement between the United States Environmental Protection Agency, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, and the CBBEP. To view the document in its entirety visit: <https://www.cbbep.org/manager/wp-content/uploads/FINAL-Bays-Plan-2nd-Ed-Feb-2020-small.pdf>

About Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program: *The Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program is a local non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to protecting and restoring bays and estuaries in the 12-county region known as the Texas Coastal Bend. The mission of the program is the implementation of the Coastal Bend Bays Plan, which is to protect and restore the health and productivity of the bays and estuaries while supporting continued economic growth and public use of the bays.*

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For more information about the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program contact Kathryn Tunnell at ktunnell@cbbep.org or visit www.cbbep.org.