

Press Release

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**Willow Waterhole Greenway Project
Receives \$399,999 Coastal Impact Assistance Program Grant
*Funding to Restore Willow Waterhole Coastal Prairie Region and Provide Education
Resources To Public***

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department (H.P.A.R.D.) and the Office of Harris County Commissioner Precinct One have received a \$399,999 Coastal Impact Assistance Program grant from the U.S. Department of Interior - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program for the Willow Waterhole Greenway Project. Harris County submitted and received the grant for the Willow Waterhole Greenway Project on behalf of H.P.A.R.D. The grant funds will be used by the department in partnership with the Willow Waterhole Greenspace Conservancy for the project implementation.

"The Willow Waterhole Greenway Project is an example of how partnerships between groups and agencies can make a difference in neighborhoods. Willow Waterhole is a partnership agreement between Harris County Commissioner Precinct 1, the Harris County Flood Control District (H.C.F.C.D.) and our department," said Joe Turner, Director, Houston Parks and Recreation Department. "Now, thanks to Harris County and Commissioner El Franco Lee, Willow Waterhole will become a living example of the important role waterways and natural habitats play in maintaining an ecologically sound environment."

Grant funding will be used to restore the natural environment at Willow Waterhole Park through the removal of invasive species and restoration of the riparian forest and coastal prairie. Environmental interpretative signage will be installed. The signage will help educate the public on the importance of coastal natural resources, conservation and habitat, and the ecological connections between Willow Waterhole Greenway and waterways it connects to (Brays Bayou, the Houston Ship Channel, Galveston Bay and the Gulf of Mexico).

The project will include the following:

- Planting of approximately 20 acres of tree-based layered planting zones
- Building 275 linear feet of connective trails
- Constructing 21 on-site permeable parking spots
- Building an outdoor classroom or observation platform
- Designing/producing and installing 50 signs (interpretative, way-finding and street)
- Hosting of 6 volunteer events
- Coordinating 12 program activities

About the Willow Waterhole Stormwater Detention Basin

The Willow Waterhole Stormwater Detention Basin is part of H.C.F.C.D. Project Brays' four stormwater detention basins designed to reduce flooding in southwest Houston. The basin was designed to hold approximately 600 million gallons of stormwater during heavy rainfall and peak flows in the channel that could cause flooding. At the same time, the project offers 279 acres of usable greenspace for the nearby community. The Willow Waterhole Greenway Project is a local initiative that aims to provide the stormwater detention basin with recreational and aesthetic amenities. For more information, visit www.HCFCD.org

About the Willow Waterhole Greenspace Conservancy

The Willow Waterhole Greenspace Conservancy (W.W.G.C.) is a diverse and broad-based group of citizens dedicated to the creation of the **Willow Waterhole Greenway Project**. The Mission of the W.W.G.C. is to mobilize individuals, neighborhoods, government agencies, businesses and foundations to support the creation of the **Willow Waterhole Conservation Reserve**. For more information on the Willow Waterhole Greenspace Conservancy, visit www.wwgc.org.

About the Houston Parks and Recreation Department

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department (H.P.A.R.D.) stewards and manages over 37,832 acres of parkland and greenspace for the City of Houston and develops and implements recreational programming for citizens of all abilities. For more information on the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, call (832) 395-7022 or visit www.houstonparks.org.