

Ag/Wildlife/Habitat/Feral Hogs

Work Group Meeting Summary

Armand Bayou I-Plan

July 30, 2013

H-GAC: Aubin Phillips, Chris Llewellyn

Meeting Attendees: Steven Mitchell (TPW), Alisa Max (Harris County), Diana Foss (TPW), Steve Hupp (BPA), Mark Kramer (ABNC), Doug Blanchard (TLV), James Trammell (Harris County), William Stefanov (NASA/JSC), Janice Schrager (ABNC),

This meeting was held at Armand Bayou Nature Center. Participants made self introductions before getting started with the meeting. The rest of the meeting was spent discussing the implementation activities from other I-plans from around the state that have to do with wildlife, agriculture and feral hogs. There are actually not too many other implementation activities to consider.

The group thought it would be good to know how many agricultural properties there are in the watershed and what their acreages are. It was suggested that we specifically contact landowners that run cattle. TPW has sent a map of some particular properties to look at.

For feral hogs, these are mostly the landowner's responsibility. These are a problem in the watershed; some have been spotted in neighborhoods. Harris County Precinct 3 is still waiting on funding for their reservoir traps. The Fort Worth Nature Center has been successful in decreasing numbers of feral hogs. There is also a study that has been done in Australia using sodium nitrite to control feral hog populations. Possibly there could be a feral hog bounty program.

There was also some discussion about "crazy" ants. People are using a lot of chemicals to try to get rid of them. They are shorting out electricity and killing off honeybees. Although this problem does not directly relate to the bacteria problems in the watershed, it is of concern.

One thing that the group though might be missing was an implementation activity having to do with riparian repair and created or constructed wetlands. There are a few areas of the watershed where this could be helpful in helping filter the water before it reaches the waterways. There was also some discussion about whether or not this would even be doable. There have been some difficulties implementing this kind of thing in other watershed. It was suggested that we research this carefully first, there could be some resistance on privately owned land, for keeping up flow capacity and/or introducing mosquitoes or alligators. Possibly this could be done from the angle of "preserve, protect, and restore". We will check into other I-Plans and local

ordinances having to do with this. Such initiatives would be available through grant funding, if available.