



# ECO-LOGICAL

Interactive Decision-Making Tool for  
Long-Range Transportation Planning





## OUR VALUABLE ECOSYSTEMS

The Houston-Galveston region is home to a variety of valuable environmental ecosystems:

- Tidal Wetlands
- Coastal Prairies
- Forests
- Waterways

Ecosystem resources enhance our region's quality of life:

- Protect Against Floods
- Improve Air and Water Quality
- Preserve Wildlife Habitat
- Create Tourism and Recreation Opportunities

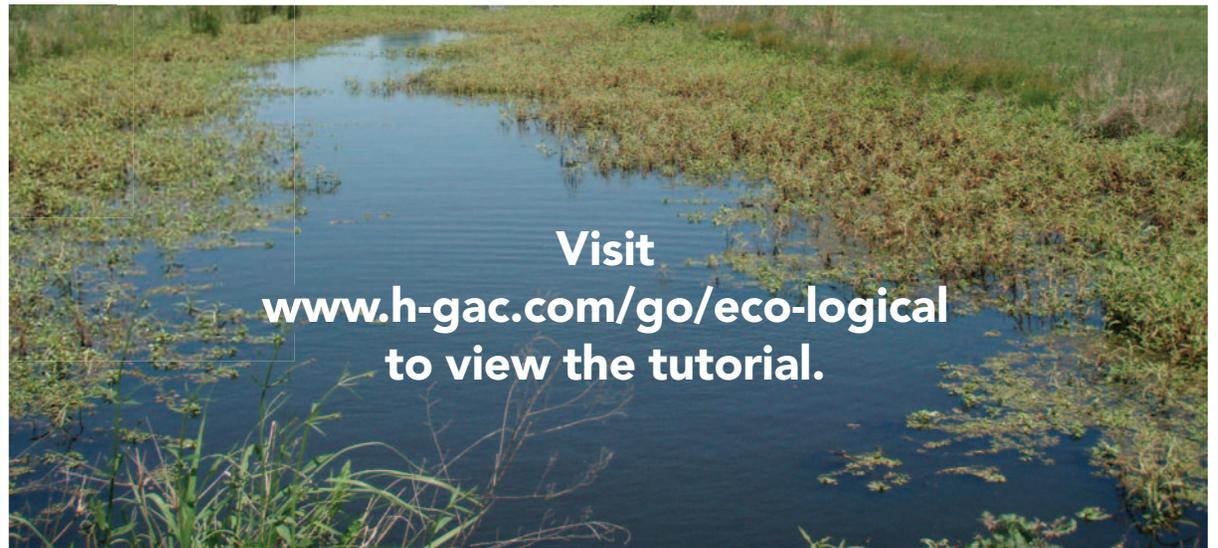
## PLANNING FOR GROWTH

The eight-county Houston-Galveston region is the sixth largest metropolitan area in the United States. Forecasts for population growth predict 9.5 million people will be living in our area in the next 30 years.

Growth will require more transportation facilities to support the population. New facilities can impact our ecosystems. For example, noise and pollution from construction and traffic can frighten away wildlife and affect habitats for miles.

Balancing infrastructure needs with protecting environmental ecosystem resources requires long-range planning.

## *Eco-Logical Can Help*



Visit  
[www.h-gac.com/go/eco-logical](http://www.h-gac.com/go/eco-logical)  
to view the tutorial.

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## HOUSTON-GALVESTON AREA COUNCIL INTRODUCES ECO-LOGICAL

Eco-Logical is a free, online, interactive tool that provides ecosystem information for proposed transportation projects. An ecosystem approach can be a cost-efficient and effective way to avoid and minimize impacts.

Eco-Logical offers:

- An interactive regional map with ecosystem locations.
- Metric-based information for each ecosystem, including size, shape, adjacency, presence of endangered species, habitat diversity, isolation, watershed scarcity, and more.



Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) is the voluntary association of local governments in the thirteen-county Gulf Coast Planning Region of Texas. H-GAC also serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the eight-county Houston-Galveston area.

## INTEGRATED PLANNING IS IMPORTANT

Transportation projects tend to consider environmental impacts late in the planning process. It is vital to our environment and economy to integrate long-range transportation and environmental planning to protect natural resources.

If transportation project planners are able to identify potential conflicts with valuable ecosystem resources early in the planning stages, project implementation can be more efficient.

*Eco-Logical is the first regional-scale tool to identify high-priority environmental resources.*

## ECO-LOGICAL IMPROVES PROJECT PLANNING

### *New Planning Methods*

- Integrates long-range transportation and environmental planning.
- Identifies potential environmental conflicts early in the planning and design process.
- Allows for regional analysis in addition to project analysis.
- Allows parties to collaborate and share data.

### *Easy to Use*

- Free of charge.
- Internet-based and interactive.
- No special software required.
- Geographic Information System (GIS) with analytical capabilities.
- Saves time and money.

By using ECO-LOGICAL to coordinate long-range environmental and transportation planning, the Houston-Galveston region can meet the challenges of a growing population and preserve our environmental resources.



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