**Regional Conservation News Release Template - Brownfields**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

[Month] [Date], [Year]

Contact:

**[NEWS RELEASE HEADLINE]**

*[News Release Sub-header]*

**[CITY, STATE]** – The Houston-Galveston region is home to home to abundant forests, native prairies, and more than 16,000 miles of bayous, rivers, and coastline. The region also has numerous former industrial or commercial properties that are underutilized due to possible contamination. These properties are called brownfields.

Since brownfields are properties that are not being used and usually centrally located, they represent significant conservation opportunities.

Several state and national programs are available to remediate brownfields, including the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality Brownfields Site Assessment Program, the Texas Railroad Commission (RRC) Brownfields Response Program, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields program.

*[Below is an example of a notable brownfield remediation project. You can use this as an example to highlight the potential economic benefits of your own conservation project, or you may replace this paragraph with information about your own conservation project and use this paragraph as a guide in how to discuss it.]*

An example of brownfield remediation is Turtle Bayou Nature Preserve in Liberty County. This 514-acre tract was the Turtle Bayou Oil Field and serves as a demonstration of how to convert a contaminated site into a safe recreational amenity. The Chambers-Liberty Counties Navigation District acquired the property in 2012 and designated it as a conservation easement. The site was rehabilitated using funding from the RRC Oil & Gas Regulation and Cleanup Fund. Technical support for cleanup was provided by the RRC Brownfield Response Program and supported by a $500,000 grant from the EPA. In 2016, it was opened to the public as a recreational site managed by the Galveston Bay Foundation. Today, the nature preserve is popular for birding from multiple viewing towers and walking trails.

In 2021, the Houston-Galveston Area Council launched the Regional Conservation Initiative aimed at magnifying local conservation efforts and assisting local governments and nonprofits in securing the funding and resources needed to launch their own conservation projects. More information about the initiative, including a conservation funding guide and toolbox, model projects throughout the region, ecosystem service benefits, and mapping tools, is available at [www.h-gac.com/regional-conservation](https://www.h-gac.com/regional-conservation).