



THE FUTURE STATE OF WATER IN THE MATAGORDA BAY SYSTEM

LOCATION: PALACIOS, TEXAS

DATE: Friday, March 24, 2023

TIME: 9 AM – 3:30 PM

CONTACT: Nellie Lee, Executive Director, The Trull Foundation,
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The Trull Foundation will host an environmental roundtable concerning the future state of water in the Matagorda Bay System, March 24, 2023, from 9 AM – 3:30 PM. The morning session will focus on organizations doing projects in Matagorda Bay, including Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept, Lavaca Navidad River Authority, the Harte Institute, The Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the Matagorda Bay Foundation. During the afternoon session, folks will be asked to discuss how we can address the effects of reduced freshwater inflows, climate issues, sea level rise, and historic land use change. Following this, local leaders from the museum and the Matagorda County Marine Agri-life will update us on their successful marine and environmental education programs for school youth and community members.

INTRODUCTION – CATHY WAKEFIELD

9:40-10:00: SEDIMENT QUALITY ASSESSMENT SURVEY OF LAVACA AND MATAGORDA BAYS

Jasmine Caillier, Marie DeLorenzo, and Paul Montagna - Jasmine Caillier is a graduate student in the Marine Biology Program, Life Sciences Department, at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi (TAMUCC). She obtained BS in Biology from TAMUCC in May 2021, was in intern with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric INFISH program in Summer 2021, and is currently a NOAA Center for Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Scholar.

10:00 – 10:20: LONG-TERM CHANGE IN LAVACA AND MATAGORDA BAYS RELATED TO FRESHWATER INFLOW CHANGE

Paul Montagna - Dr. Paul Montagna is the Chair for HydroEcology at the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies, Professor in the Physical and Environmental Sciences Department, Regents Professor for the Texas A&M System, and Co-Editor in Chief for the scientific journal *Estuaries and Coasts*. He was also a member of the Texas Science Advisory Committee for Environmental Flows. Building maintenance

BREAK – 20 MINUTES

10:40 – 11:00: WHAT'S HAPPENING UPSTREAM? AUSTIN WATER SUPPLY PLANNING

Jennifer Walker – Jennifer has nearly two decades of experience focusing on water policy/resources issues in Texas with an emphasis on water planning, water conservation and bay and estuary protection issues. Jennifer strives to work collaboratively and approach resource management challenges with a solution-oriented perspective. She serves on the Water Conservation Advisory Council of Texas and is Chair of Austin's Water Forward Task Force. She also serves on the Board of Directors of the Alliance for Water Efficiency and the Colorado River



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Alliance. Jennifer has a BS in Ecology, Evolution and Conservation Biology from the University of Texas at Austin. Jennifer and her family like to camp near rivers where they can listen to the frogs sing at night.

11:00 – 11:20: LAVACA BAY, WATER RIGHTS AND FRESHWATER INFLOWS?

Myron Hess – Myron Hess is a consultant and attorney in private practice in Austin working primarily on issues related to water. Myron has a long history of working on water-related issues in Texas on behalf of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the National Wildlife Federation, as well as various individual clients. His current involvement in water issues focuses primarily on protecting spring flows and environmental flows in Texas rivers and into Texas bays and estuaries, including Matagorda and Lavaca bays. Myron serves as the vice-chair of the Colorado and Lavaca Rivers and Matagorda and Lavaca Bays Area Stakeholder Committee and as the Chair of the Edwards Aquifer Habitat Conservation Plan Stakeholder Committee.

Myron obtained his law degree from the University of Texas in 1986 and his undergraduate degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences from Texas A&M University in 1977.

11:20- 11:40: BAIT! THE BASE OF THE COASTAL BIRD FOOD WEB

Leslie Hartman - Leslie Hartman is an ex-pat Yankee and self-declared pragmatic idealist still trying to "save the planet". She has her B.S. Biology from Millersville University of Pennsylvania, her M.S. Marine Biology from the University of South Alabama, and even a random M.Div. from Asbury Theological Seminary. She has been an aquatic toxicologist, outreach coordinator and hotel maid and has spent the last 25 years as a bay steward. After 10 years serving Alabama's marine resources, Leslie was recruited to Texas and has spent the last 15 years as the Matagorda Bay Ecosystem for Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, even picking up a few awards along the way. In the last few decades, she has served on various committees throughout Texas and the nation including invasive species, freshwater inflows, diversity and inclusion, and most recently on scientific communication; scientific jargon doesn't change hearts or habits.

11:40 – 12 :00: HRI – TEXAS COAST ECOSYSTEM HEALTH REPORT CARD

Amie West - Dr. Amie West is an assistant research scientist with the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies. Her work focuses on the relationship between humans and the ecosystems that sustain us. She leads the Texas Coast Ecosystem Health Report Card program to assess and communicate about the state of our bays and estuaries.

LUNCH 12:00 – 1:30

Afternoon Roundtable

THE FUTURE STATE OF MATAGORDA BAY: CLIMATE, SEA LEVEL RISE, AND FRESHWATER INFLOWS – Leslie Hartman/Bill Balboa Facilitator(s)

1:40 – 2:00: INTRODUCTORY SPEAKER: VULNERABILITY AND ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE: AN ASSESSMENT FOR THE TEXAS MID-COAST

Arsum Pathak - Arsum Pathak is the Senior Adaptation and Coastal Resilience Specialist for National Wildlife Federation's South Central Region. Her work focuses on advancing science-based climate adaptation and resilience to protect coastal communities and ecosystems in Texas and throughout the Gulf from the impacts of climate change and associated extreme events. In this role, she distills climate science and highlights effective nature-based approaches to help local communities and policy experts understand their

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baseline physical risks and develop equitable solutions in the face of sea level rise, storm surge, and other climate-induced threats. Before joining NWF, Arsum received her Ph.D. in Environmental Science and Policy at the University of South Florida where she researched and published on climate impacts and adaptation decision-making in small islands using a systems approach.

2:00 – 2:45: PANEL DISCUSSION: Woody, Paul, Pat, Myron, Jennifer, Arsam, Jasmine, Kayla, Cathy, Bill, Leslie

2:45 – 3:00: BREAK

3:00: RECAP

3:30: ADJOURN

