

June 1, 2023



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ASSOCIATION
celebrate. protect. restore.

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Dear Bayou Aficionado,

I hope this letter finds you in good spirits.

Reflecting on the past six months, I am filled with gratitude for the incredible journey we have embarked upon together. The opportunity to immerse myself in one of the longest-running conservation organizations in Houston (established in 1966) has shown the immense power we possess as a collective.

While I may not be a Houston native, I have spent a decade in this vibrant city, and it has become my cherished home. One of the greatest joys of my tenure here has been the exploration of the remarkable ecosystems that grace our diverse bayou landscape. Houston is a city blessed with an array of natural wonders, ranging from the enchanting Colombia Bottomlands to the picturesque Coastal Marshes. It has been an awe-inspiring journey to witness the transition from sprawling grasslands to dense forests, all within the boundaries of our beloved city.

Exploring these ecological treasures has deepened my understanding of the delicate balance that exists within our natural ecosystems and reinforced our association's mission to celebrate, protect and restore these invaluable habitats for future generations. Something we like to call, 'CPR'.

Your unwavering dedication to our mission ignites the flames of our collective effort as we confront new challenges in preserving the sanctity of Houston's diverse bayous. In December, I introduced you to our newest staff members, Ryan Francisco, our outreach manager, and Grant Moss, who coordinates our various science programs. Their expertise and passion have invigorated our initiatives, enabling us to take meaningful strides forward.

One notable project spearheaded by Grant is our targeted bacteria monitoring. As you may know, Houston bayous have been grappling with high bacteria levels, stemming from watershed runoff and wastewater leaks, often exacerbated by sewage treatment plants that overflow during and after storm events, posing risks to both human health and aquatic life. In collaboration with the Houston-Galveston Area Council, we have launched a targeted monitoring project to pinpoint the primary sources of these bacteria in some of Houston's most affected waterways.

In March of 2023, Grant completed the training of six young adults, who have become our dedicated sample collection team, that has already commenced monitoring activities along Pine Gully. Through this work, we remain steadfast in our commitment to identify areas of concern and present our results to local jurisdictions for corrective action. Through our efforts, we are striving to ensure the long-term health and vitality of our bayous.

In our pursuit of environmental preservation, we continue to expand our team and broaden our impact across Houston. This year, we welcomed Morton Sager, whose expertise and passion have propelled our Clean Bayous program forward. Morton has spearheaded our "Reclaimed BaYou" campaign, recognizing that litter is not just an aesthetic or economic issue but a threat to water quality, wildlife, and quality of life. Our Reclaimed BaYou Program diligently works to reduce litter through bayou clean-ups and the development of prevention strategies to combat litter at the source. Under the Reclaimed BaYou program, we are fostering grassroots-level waste diversion by focusing on items with no existing recycling or return system in place. Did you know that over 500,000 plastic planting pots are purchased each season across the City of Houston? Of those 500,000 planting pots, only 1% are properly recycled. It brings me immense joy to share that in first quarter of 2023 alone, we have successfully diverted over 5,200 plastic planting pots from local waterways and landfills by diverting them to conversation groups dedicated to cultivating and seeding sites for a greater proliferation of native species.

As we move forward, I am filled with hope and determination, knowing that our collective efforts are making a lasting impact. None of this would be possible without the unwavering support of donors like you. Your generosity and belief in our mission fuel our endeavors and enable us to create tangible change in the Houston area.

On behalf of the entire Bayou Preservation Association team, I extend my heartfelt gratitude for your continued support. Together, we are leaving a legacy of environmental stewardship and ensuring that future generations can experience the natural wonders of our beloved Houston.

In the spirit of progress, let us forge ahead, inspired by the natural beauty of our city and driven by a shared commitment to protect and preserve our bayous. We invite you to visit our newly updated website, www.BayouPreservation.org, where you can explore our ongoing projects, view the latest updates, and learn more about the impact made possible by your invaluable contributions.

Together, we are creating a future where the beauty and vitality of our bayous remain a source of pride and inspiration for all.

Sincerely,



Brittani Flowers, MUEP
President and CEO

PS: Thank you in advance for your kind consideration in supporting the enhancement of the health and beauty of our Houston region bayous. Your generous contribution, whether it's \$60, \$100, \$250, \$1,000, or any other amount, will have a significant impact on making our water-filled greenways accessible and safe for both humans and the wildlife that call them home. To donate, you can use the enclosed envelope to send a check, or visit www.bayoupreservation.org/support to show your support. Your help is immensely appreciated.