



TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE
GEORGE P. BUSH, COMMISSIONER

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PRESS RELEASE

George P. Bush Announces GLO Accomplishments Across First 365 Days

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Today Texas General Land Office (GLO) Commissioner George P. Bush unveiled a new website touting the accomplishments of the GLO team under his first year in office. All Texans are invited to visit yourtxglo.com to learn what the GLO has accomplished during Commissioner Bush's first year in office.

"The work the General Land Office quietly does every day is important to all Texans: taking care of our veterans, protecting the coast for future generations, maximizing Permanent School Fund revenue, preserving and improving the Alamo experience and minimizing government's reach into our lives while also making it more efficient," Commissioner Bush said. "The realization of these goals and ideals is not a gift to be received but an honor to be won. The blessings of our great state are limited only by our commitment. That's why I'm issuing this report of my first year as Commissioner of the General Land Office. We have committed to and followed through on much in this first year. But this isn't just a recap; it's a pledge to you that we're only getting started. And it's an appeal. There is work to be done. And there is room for you in the long line of Texans already engaged in our efforts to create an even greater Texas. So take a look at what we've done in year one, and then join the General Land Office in committing to win the realization of our goals and ideals."

Below is a more detailed description of Commissioner Bush's top GLO priorities:

- As a U.S. Navy veteran of Afghanistan, Commissioner Bush has made outreach to our Texas veterans community a priority and will continue to spread the word of benefits and services available to veterans in 2016.
- As a former asset manager in the energy sector, Commissioner Bush is committed to applying private sector principles and innovative technology to bolster PSF assets in a corrected market.
- In 2015 Commissioner Bush demonstrated his commitment to deep-rooted conservative principles by fighting federal overreach into states rights by pushing back against needless EPA regulations and the BLM's land grab of Permanent School Funds assets.

- Under Commissioner Bush's leadership 2015 was a monumental year for the future of the Alamo including a landmark partnership with the city of San Antonio, pivotal support of the Texas Legislature, major fundraising titans joining the Alamo Endowment Board, and initiation of a master planning process for the long-term future of the Alamo.
- As a former public school teacher, Commissioner Bush is dedicated to helping educators and teachers to have greater access to resources and options to provide our Texas schoolchildren with the greatest educational opportunities.
- In Commissioner Bush's first year he utilized private sector principles to reduce agency expenditures by implementing greater government efficiencies such as zero-based budgeting, utilizing technological innovations, and prioritizing transparency.
- In 2015 the GLO momentous strides in coastal protection initiating concurrent studies of critically needed projects and completing historic renourishment projects.

Veterans

Commissioner Bush has had a life-long passion for helping serve veterans. Having served in the U.S. Navy, including a tour in Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom, Commissioner Bush is honored to serve as the Chairman of the Texas Veterans Land Board, a division of the GLO. One of his initial acts as VLB Chairman was to raise the [VLB land loan limit](#) by 25 percent from \$100,000 to \$125,000, making it easier for Texas veterans to obtain the financing they need to pursue their dreams of home ownership, business leadership, and economic security. Commissioner Bush launched a [new website](#) for Texas veterans, a state-of-the-art portal through which Texas veterans can find out about land and home loans, veterans homes, and burial benefits at a Texas State Veterans Cemetery. Under Commissioner Bush's leadership the Veterans Land Board voted to pass sweeping changes to a [handful of policies](#) at VLB run Texas State Veterans Cemeteries eliminating the cost of spousal interment, extended visiting hours and relaxed flower policies. These policies will become permanent following the completion of the rule making process.

In 2015 Commissioner Bush laid the groundwork for continuing to serve our Texas veterans at a higher level in the future. The GLO received approval on a grant application with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for a ninth Texas State Veterans Home near Houston. Having seen the devastating effect of post-traumatic stress on our veterans, Commissioner Bush also initiated a first of its kind program in the eight Texas State Veterans Homes to better identify and treat PTS, ensuring that Texas will be serving the next generation of men and women who have fought for this country. Commissioner Bush believes it is these efforts that will help Texas continue to be the best state in the nation for not just current veterans, but also for the next generation of soldier, sailor or airman.

Energy

With a background in the oil and gas business, Commissioner Bush committed his first year to introducing technological innovations and greater efficiencies to advance this sector of the GLO despite the dip in oil prices in 2015. Commissioner Bush oversaw the [first ever online sale of oil and gas leases](#) at the GLO, which brought in more bidders making \$20 million for the Permanent School Fund in 20 minutes. Commissioner Bush directed staff to automate generation of the GLO's Oil and Gas Well Inventory. This database is critical to the GLO's oil and gas leasing function, the primary revenue driver

of the Permanent School Fund. Commissioner Bush helped protect the private property rights of Texas companies by ensuring hydraulic fracturing is consistently regulated statewide. By doing so, Commissioner Bush fulfilled his duty to maximize the utilization of state mineral rights to fund the PSF.

Federal Overreach

In 2015 Commissioner Bush demonstrated his commitment to deep-rooted conservative principles by fighting federal overreach into states rights. He pushed back against the environmental lobby's "[sue and settle](#)" racket as well as unnecessary and damaging federal regulations by the Environmental Protection Agency. Additionally Commissioner Bush [joined the lawsuit](#) against the Bureau of Land Management to stop an illegal federal land grab detrimental to law abiding Texans and Texas schoolchildren. In 2016 Commissioner Bush will continue to fight against bureaucratic overreach and demand the federal government back off its grab of Texas minerals and private property that has belonged to families and the Permanent School Fund (PSF) for generations.

Alamo

Under the leadership of Commissioner Bush, 2015 was a [historic foundational year](#) for the future of the Alamo. Commissioner Bush reconstituted the [Alamo Endowment Board](#) with A-list Texas titans to bring expertise, purpose and vision to the Alamo. Commissioner Bush negotiated and signed a [historic cooperative agreement](#) with the city of San Antonio and the Alamo Endowment to develop a joint master plan for the Alamo Historic District and the Alamo Complex. Commissioner Bush worked with his colleagues in the [Texas Legislature](#) to secure \$31 million to address critical preservation work to defend the Alamo from the ravages of time, implementation of the master plan, and increased staffing of Alamo operations. Additionally the [San Antonio City Council approved \\$17 million](#) for the joint effort, which will be augmented by the massive fundraising effort being formulated by the Alamo Endowment Board. In December, Commissioner Bush [announced the official acquisition of three historically significant buildings across the Alamo Plaza](#) from the Alamo Complex. This acquisition concludes a landmark year in the Alamo's history in which state and local leaders have been energized by the overwhelming collaborative spirit of the San Antonio community and supporters statewide.

"The purchase of these buildings caps an extraordinary year in the history of the Alamo," Commissioner Bush said. "In one year, we have upgraded the state's management of the Alamo complex, re-established the Alamo Endowment Board with Texas titans, begun work with San Antonio on the master plan, and now with the Texas Legislature's support the state purchased irreplaceable properties adjacent to the plaza. While there will be no immediate changes for the tenants, having the state own these buildings will help as we all work together to make the Alamo the destination that it should be."

Education

In Commissioner Bush's first year in office he focused on advancing [educational resources](#), a personal passion of his since serving a year as a public school history teacher before going to law school. In 2015 Commissioner Bush taught two Texas history classes, which were streamed online on YouTube Live. Commissioner Bush invited students from Texas schools to learn about "Pioneering Principles: Why Character Matters" and "Opportunity in Texas: Land and Its Legacy in Texas History." Commissioner Bush also oversaw the development and launch of a new GLO education

website, providing tools for Texas teachers on subjects ranging from pollution control to Texas history. Commissioner Bush used his platform at the General Land Office to champion school reform by working with his colleagues in the Texas Legislature to give public charter schools their fair share of the \$38 billion Permanent School Fund's bond capacity, saving charter schools more than \$6.5 million annually without costing the state a dime.

Government Efficiency and Technological Innovation

For the first time in the agency's storied history, Commissioner Bush appointed a [Director of Open Government](#) and created a contracting compliance and ethics division as well as a contract management division. These positions have overhauled the agency's standards to ensure we uphold the highest standards of fairness, honesty and transparency within government. Commissioner George P. Bush ordered all agency budget planners and managers to implement [zero-based budgeting](#) in lieu of the traditional "baseline budgeting" formula and eliminated no-bid contracts in nearly all circumstances.

Commissioner Bush launched the [Texas Coasts app](#) to make it easier than ever for tourists and Texans to find their perfect beach through customized search criteria and location-enabled mapping across platforms. Texas Coasts is the first digital access guide to all of Texas' vast shoreline, reducing publication and updating costs while delivering an app that all Texas beachgoers can use. Texas beaches are one of the state's great attractions and one of its great economic engines. This app is the digital guide to our state's coasts, showing visitors from across Texas and the world what our 367 miles of Gulf coast and 3,300 miles of beach and bay shoreline have to offer.

Additionally, Commissioner Bush lead the creation of a mobile field inspections app enabling staff to gather data in the field using this handy application, eliminating paperwork. Information captured includes GPS points, photos and basic incident reports. The GLO uses the data for tactical and strategic planning.

Coastal

In 2015 the GLO also made momentous strides in coastal protection both on the local and statewide level. Commissioner Bush is leading a historic coastal protection planning effort teaming with the Army Corps of Engineers on a long-range, comprehensive Coastal Texas Feasibility Study to reduce the impact of major storm surge such as hurricanes through the construction of larger projects. Simultaneously Commissioner Bush is developing a GLO Texas Master Plan, a faster and lighter analysis which will identify smaller projects that can be accomplished sooner to more immediately address coastal protection needs. In addition to coastal protection planning, Commissioner Bush oversaw the [largest beach renourishment effort in Galveston's history](#) including a project in which the GLO, Army Corps of Engineers and the Galveston Park Board partnered to save Texas taxpayers more than sixty percent on the cost of the project by using approximately 725,000 cubic yards of beach quality sand dredged from the Galveston Ship Channel to renourish beach along the seawall. Commissioner Bush partnered with Texas Parks and Wildlife and Galveston County to address the persistent issue of abandoned vessels plaguing the Texas coast by organizing the [Vessel Turn-in Program](#) through which twenty-five vessels were processed for disposal, which resulted in savings of nearly \$100,000.

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