

# PRESS RELEASE

## **Cmr. George P. Bush announces completion of the Texas Coastal Resiliency Master Plan**

First master protection plan for state with 367 miles of coastline

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AUSTIN — AUSTIN - Today Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush announced the General Land Office (GLO) has completed the Texas Coastal Resiliency Master Plan, the first inclusive coastal plan for the state with the 6th longest coastline. To review the executive summary, master plan and technical report, visit the GLO's [Hurricane Preparedness & Planning](#) webpage.

"It is long past the time to protect our Texas coast," said Commissioner Bush. "The reality is that it is not a matter of if, but when, the next big storm will strike. Sadly, our current level of Texas coastal protection is no better than in 2008 when Hurricanes Dolly and Ike caused devastation from South Padre Island to Port Arthur. In creating the Texas Coastal Resiliency Master Plan, we have prioritized restoration and protection projects that can be implemented in the short-term to protect our coastline while we continue to work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and congressional stakeholders on a defensive coastal barrier system."

The Texas Coastal Resiliency Master Plan better prepares the state for the next hurricane to hit the Texas Coast by creating a framework for coastal management, restoration and protection measures. The plan also guides the GLO in the execution of its responsibilities and provides Texas coastal communities with a set of scientifically sound, feasible and cost-effective coastal resiliency projects. The GLO is also working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and meeting with Members of Congress to move forward with the Coastal Texas Protection and Restoration Feasibility Study, which will study and make recommendations for large-scale projects, including the coastal barrier system, to protect the densely populated neighborhoods and industries surrounding the Houston Shipping Channel.

"As the Commissioner of the Texas General Land Office, I am committed to making sure that this state does all it can to protect the people, economy and natural resources of the Texas coast," said Commissioner Bush. "As Texans, we are resilient, but we should also be prepared. The GLO's efforts to mitigate the damage from the next big storm is conducted through a dual approach of planning for the coast at the state and federal levels."

To assist with the development of the plan, the GLO formed a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) made up of statewide and regional coastal experts from state and federal agencies, universities, local governments, non-profits, engineering firms, port representatives, regional trusts, foundations and partnerships. TAC members served as subject matter experts and provided input and technical guidance throughout the

entire planning process. The planning team evaluated more than 900 potential projects within watersheds and beach subregions located in the four regions of the Texas coast.

Project screening reduced the list of candidate projects to 177, which were further designated as Tier 1 (high priority), Tier 2 and Tier 3 projects. Tier 1 projects are listed in the master plan document.

With 65 percent of the Texas Gulf shoreline eroding at an average rate of approximately six feet per year, and in some areas much more rapidly, our state is not only losing its beaches, it is leaving homes and businesses vulnerable to storm surge and flooding. Protecting the Texas coast is vitally important not just to the state, but to the entire nation. The Texas coast is home to the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, the nation's third busiest inland waterway, 25 percent of the nation's refining capacity, four of the 15 busiest ports in the country, most of the nation's strategic petroleum reserves, and numerous strategic military deployment and distribution installations. Tied directly to this industry activity and these strategic sites are the coast's natural resources, beaches, dunes, wetlands, oyster reefs and rookery islands that serve as natural storm barriers and are the backbone for coastal tourism and the ocean economy. The population and economic activity along the coast is also growing - 6.5 million people and total wages in excess of \$37 billion are located on the Texas coast. This growing population and economic activity puts our state and country at greater risk of storm surge damage, and places increasing pressure on our coastal resources and their ability to provide protection from coastal hazards.

"The need for this Texas Coastal Resiliency Master Plan has never been greater, and the commitment to the Texas coast has never been stronger," Commissioner Bush concluded. "While our response in the face of disaster is important, it's equally important to have a plan for mitigation of impact. The Texas Coastal Resiliency Master Plan will help us accomplish this goal, ensuring a stronger coast for Texas, now and in the future."

The plan will be used by the GLO to guide and enhance the various coastal programs it manages, with the goal of protecting, restoring and enhancing the Texas coast through an efficient and cost-effective approach to achieve a resilient coast. The plan also can be used by coastal communities to highlight the issues of concern in their region, and to solicit action to fund the coastal projects that can make their communities more resilient and less vulnerable to the next big storm. The plan will also be used in conjunction with the recommendations for large scale barrier projection systems that will result from Coastal Protection and Restoration Feasibility Study with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to provide comprehensive protection measures for the Texas Coast.

For more information, please visit the GLO's [Hurricane Preparedness & Planning](#) webpage. The Executive Summary, full Texas Coastal Resiliency Master Plan and Technical Report are available at the linked website.

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