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PRESS RELEASE

Cmr. George P. Bush announces more than \$43 million in disaster recovery funds for Aransas County

Combined with \$13 million previously approved for Rockport and Fulton, more than \$56 million in infrastructure at work in Aransas County

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AUSTIN — Today Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush announced the Texas General Land Office (GLO) sent a contract for \$43,390,628 in Hurricane Harvey disaster recovery funds to Aransas County for final signature. The funds will enable Aransas County to conduct extensive infrastructure improvements relating to drainage, street, communication, and public facility systems as well as conducting a fiber optics communications planning study.

"Aransas County was one of the areas hardest hit by the destructive wind and flooding of Hurricane Harvey," said Commissioner Bush. "These mitigation funds are vital for communities in the Coastal Bend, which continue to need additional fortification against future storm damage. Every day the GLO is working to cut red-tape and move much-needed federal recovery dollars to communities to improve infrastructure, mitigate against future flooding events, and protect both the homes and lives of local residents."

Once finalized, Aransas County will perform more than 150,000 linear feet of extensive flood and drainage infrastructure improvements on either side of TX-35 between TX-188 and W. Moore Avenue. These vital projects will include installing new storm sewer pipe, replacing storm sewer culverts, regrading roadside ditches, and repairing streets. Hurricane Harvey's extensive rainfall and high winds inundated the drainage system and streets in this area causing massive flooding. These improvements will facilitate proper stormwater conveyance, thus reducing the impact of future flooding and providing continued access in and out of the area.

Substantial street improvements, including regrading, constructing roadways, laying asphalt, excavating drainage, and installing new drainpipe, will occur throughout the Copano Heights and Holiday Beach neighborhoods. Street improvements will continue the length of Rattle Snake Point Road and Lido Road from Old Salt Lake Rd. to Copano Cove Rd. as well as along Loop 1781 from SH 35 Business North to FM 3036.

The disaster recovery funds will also be used to improve the Downtown Anchor area and Rockport Center for the Arts parking lot. Upgrades will include:

- Installing underground water, sewer, and gas lines;
- Installing storm drains, traffic controls, and light poles;
- Repairing streets;
- Improving parking lots, including curb, gutter, and sidewalks;
- Construct a public meeting room and public bathrooms;
- Installing signage, landscaping, and irrigation systems; and
- Relocating gas mains, drainage pipes, and inlets.

Aransas County will also build a new radio tower for the Rockport Volunteer Fire Department at Hwy 188 and the SH 35 bypass. Additionally, a planning study will be conducted to determine how a protected fiber optic communications loop could prevent failure of communications systems in future storms in Aransas County.

These funds are in addition to \$8,320,696 allocated to the City of Rockport in January for street improvements and facilitating proper stormwater conveyance to provide continued street access during rain events and reducing the impact of future flooding. These improvements will take place in the following locations:

- Market Street - Church Street to East of Water Street and Sabinal Street to Nopal Street
- Ann Street - Market Street to Murray Street
- Hackberry Street - Young Street to Ann Street
- Sabinal Street - Litron Street to Ann Street
- Orleans Street - Ann Street to Broadway
- Laurel Street - Pearl Street to Magnolia Street
- Magnolia Street - Laurel Street to Nopal Street
- Tule Ditch System - SH 35 Business to Little Bay Outfall

Additionally, \$4,759,465 was also approved in January for flood and drainage improvements in the City of Fulton. With these funds, Fulton will replace storm sewer culverts, regrade roadside ditches, install area inlets/outfalls, grade ditches and repair pavement in the area between Prairie Road and FM 3036, west of TX 35 to the city limit.

Texas GLO Hurricane Harvey Recovery Funds:

Commissioner George P. Bush and the Texas General Land Office was appointed by Governor Greg Abbott to lead the historic Hurricane Harvey housing recovery efforts funded by \$5.676 billion in Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The GLO allocated \$413 million of the allocation for infrastructure projects to protect communities affected by the storm. The GLO allocated the funds to regional Council of Governments' (COGs) based on a HUD approved needs assessment. The locally-led COGs then conducted methods of distribution (MODs) for determining infrastructure and buyout and acquisition amounts for cities and counties within each jurisdiction. COG boards are comprised of officials from the impacted communities elected in part to prioritize funds allocated for recovery programs. The MOD process requires public engagement and the GLO reviewed each MOD for compliance with federal rules and requirements before approving each plan.

To review the approved MODs, please visit <https://recovery.texas.gov/action-plans/hurricane-harvey/index.html>.