

PRESS RELEASE

\$9 million granted by Texas GLO for historic disaster mitigation projects in Hardin County

Funds to improve water infrastructure approved for the city of Sour Lake

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AUSTIN — Today Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush, Texas Senator Robert Nichols and Mayor Bruce Robinson announce the Texas General Land Office (GLO) approved \$9 million in flood mitigation projects to improve water infrastructure in Hardin County and the City of Sour Lake. These infrastructure projects will directly benefit residents in a majority low-to-moderate income (LMI) area that faced repetitive storm damage in 2015, 2016 and in 2017 with Hurricane Harvey.

“All across Texas, communities are in need of better infrastructure; in some cases, the current systems are several decades old, inefficient, and often unreliable,” said Commissioner Bush. “We received more than \$6.5 billion in requests for project funding for low-to moderate-income communities underscoring the great need for mitigation projects throughout Texas' coastal counties. The top scoring projects being awarded today represent some of the greatest needs from our most underserved communities. This funding will benefit these communities and their residents for generations.”

“Since Hurricane Rita in 2005, the city of Sour Lake has recognized the need to mitigate its aging and vulnerable drinking water system from hurricanes, tropical storms, tropical depressions, and riverine flooding,” said Sour Lake Mayor Bruce Robinson. “With the \$9 million our city is receiving from Commissioner Bush and the GLO, we will build a new, 650 gallon-per-minute well, and replace nearly 13 miles of old water line pipes to provide more reliable water delivery to our residents. This will be a historic change for our community.”

Texas Senator Robert Nichols offered his support from the Texas Capitol saying, "It's impossible to overstate how important these flood mitigation funds are to East and Southeast Texas. Senate District 3 saw severe flooding during the 2015 floods, the 2016 floods, and again during Hurricane Harvey in 2017. These flooding events showed just how vulnerable this area of the state is and how necessary mitigation efforts are. Senate District 3 won over \$105 million in the competitive flood mitigation fund award process because the projects in our region are vital to protecting Texans from future flood events. I appreciate the professionalism of the GLO throughout this process and our local officials who worked so hard to make these projects a reality."

In May 2020, Commissioner George P. Bush announced the [kick-off of the application process](#) for the first round of more than \$2.3 billion in Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to protect Texas communities hit by Hurricane Harvey and severe

flooding in 2015 and 2016. [During the first round, the GLO conducted three competitive application programs from the CDBG-MIT Action Plan.](#) Those programs include:

- 2015 Floods State Mitigation Competition – GLO [awarded](#) \$31,426,781 to four grantees.
- 2016 Floods State Mitigation Competition – GLO [awarded](#) 21 grantees with \$135,462,438.
- Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition Round 1 (\$1 billion of \$2,144,776,720 total)

Applications closed for the first round of funding October 28, 2020, and the GLO evaluated all 290 submitted applications in accordance with the HUD approved scoring criteria. Eligible applications with the highest scores were awarded funds. The second round of the competition will award the remaining \$1,144,776,720 in mitigation funding to Hurricane Harvey eligible entities.

HUD defines mitigation as activities that increase resilience to disasters and reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of loss of life, injury, damage to and loss of property, and suffering and hardship, by lessening the impact of future disasters. HUD requires that at least 50% of total funds must be used for activities benefiting low- to moderate-income (LMI) persons.

The State of Texas CDBG Mitigation Action Plan: Building Stronger for a Resilient Future outlines the use of funds, programs, eligible applicants, and eligibility criteria as required by HUD. The plan was sent to HUD on February 3, 2020, after an extraordinary public outreach effort including a 50-day public comment period and eight regional public hearings, far-surpassing HUD requirements. HUD approved the plan March 31, 2020. For more information, please visit recovery.texas.gov/mitigation.

City of Sour Lake: Water System Improvements Project -

\$9,071,196.29

LMI Percentage: 51.57%

Since Hurricane Rita in 2005, the city of Sour Lake has recognized the need to mitigate its portable water supply from hurricanes, tropical storms, tropical depressions, and riverine flooding. There are thousands of linear feet of short joint asbestos cement water pipe that both leak and pose a severe health hazards to residents. The transmission line that brings water from the water well to Sour Lake is over 2 miles long, crosses two (2) streams and is vulnerable to breaks caused by flooding. Furthermore, additional water well capacity and elevated storage tank capacity for redundancy is needed. This will aid in providing reliable water supply and increased water pressure to the residents of Sour Lake.

Currently, the city has two (2) operational water wells, they are Well #1 at 650 GPM in capacity and Well #2 at 500 GPM. To mitigate the problems of the portable water system the city will execute the following:

- Water Well #3 – East Side of Sour Lake on Highway 105: Construct a 650 GPM water well, 100,000-gallon elevated storage tank, chemical feed system, electrical and controls, control building, SCADA communications systems, standby generator, header piping, yard piping, access drive, and parking area.

- Water Line Replacement: Replace approximately 68,028 (LF) of old water line pipes that will eliminate leaks and provide more reliable portable water to the residents of Sour Lake along:
 1. Ryan Road
 2. Cuniff Road to Old Beaumont Hwy
 3. Gilbert Road to Old Beaumont Hwy to Guedry
 4. Lee
 5. Cruse
 6. Ann
 7. West Herring
 8. West Barkley
 9. South Merchant
 10. 7th
 11. Fannin
 12. 3rd
 13. North Merchant
 14. Crosby
 15. 105
 16. Hartel
 17. East Herring
 18. Masterson
 19. Smith
 20. Hwy 105 WI Installation
 21. Sh 326