



**TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE**  
COMMISSIONER DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

# **Commissioner Buckingham Celebrates First-Year Accomplishments and Looks Forward to Continuation of Service to Texans in 2024**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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AUSTIN — Today, Texas Land Commissioner Dawn Buckingham, M.D. announced several of the groundbreaking accomplishments of the General Land Office under her first year of leading this critical state agency.

“I am so proud to serve as your first female Land Commissioner and of the tremendous successes your General Land Office has made in education, historical preservation, veteran support, coastal conservation, and strategic land management,” Buckingham said. “This past year marked the beginning of a new era, and our team has wasted no time getting to work for Texans. We launched many new initiatives, and together with this agency's hardworking men and women, we produced remarkable results. I look forward to this New Year and the continuation of our dedicated service to the great people of Texas. I have made it my mission to serve the people we are supposed to serve and do it well.”

### **EDUCATION**

Commissioner Buckingham's Carbon Sequestration Leases program is expected to produce a staggering \$10 Billion in funds for Texas public education. Buckingham is also engaging students with the Save Texas History Essay contest, which promotes historical awareness and fosters a love for learning among young Texans.

Commissioner Buckingham launched the “I Saved Texas History” fundraising campaign in May. She invited all Texans to pitch in and help preserve our historical records and rich heritage. To raise further funds to assist in this preservation, she also launched the GLO's new online store, [HistoricTexasMaps.com](https://HistoricTexasMaps.com). History buffs, researchers, and lovers of historical maps can now easily access these records and assist with their important work.

### **ALAMO RESTORATION AND RECOGNITION**

Commissioner Buckingham is committed to protecting the Alamo and promoting it as a sacred memorial to the struggle for freedom over tyranny. She successfully ended eminent domain litigation –paving the way for the future Alamo Visitor Center and Museum.

She also worked successfully to secure \$400 million in appropriations for comprehensive restoration efforts at our most cherished historical landmark. Under her leadership, the Alamo has been recognized as the “Best Free Attraction” in the nation by USA Today.

#### VETERAN SUPPORT AND HONOR

Thanks to the care and hard work of the Veterans Land Board, Chaired by Commissioner Buckingham, Texas state veterans’ homes now rank among the top nursing homes in Texas and in the nation, according to Newsweek.

Commissioner Buckingham has allocated over \$22 million to our state veterans’ cemeteries. In November, the GLO broke ground on a brand-new cemetery in Lubbock, serving over 21,000 veterans and their families in the region.

These beautiful grounds of the Texas State Veterans Cemeteries received an outstanding customer satisfaction score of 99%, reflecting their high quality of care and service.

#### COASTAL CONSERVATION

This year, Commissioner Buckingham led the GLO in cleaning up 123 miles of the Texas coast across 22 sites. Over 11,400 volunteers participated in coastal cleanup efforts, collecting an impressive 306,848 pounds of trash!

Commissioner Buckingham awarded numerous Texas coastal communities millions of dollars in Coastal Erosion Planning & Response Act (CEPRA) funding. This allocated money will contribute to numerous vital projects that ensure these communities are safeguarded from natural disasters, wildlife habitats are fostered, beaches are nourished and preserved for all to enjoy, and much more.

Additionally, she announced the allocation of \$10 million from the GLO’s Surface Damage Account to be used for plugging orphaned oil and gas wells in Trinity Bay in Chambers County, Texas. This impactful move displays her dedication to safeguarding our shoreline and ensuring the stewardship of our coastal lands, habitats, and ecosystems they support.

#### STATE LAND MANAGEMENT

In the wake of President Biden’s abdication of duty on the border, Commissioner Buckingham and the GLO are taking up the mantle in the fight against illegal immigration. The GLO successfully took control of Fronton Island in Starr County, reinforcing the state’s territorial integrity. This island previously served as a crossing point for human smugglers, but the GLO granted access to Texas DPS to clear the island of brush and shut down this hideout.

Commissioner Buckingham is dedicated to stewarding Texas’ precious, energy-rich state land. The well-being of Texans and their families will always serve as her top priority. The GLO deposited over \$2.1 billion in oil and natural gas revenues last fiscal year into the Permanent School Fund which provides the state’s public schools and universities needed additional capital.

#### DISASTER RECOVERY RELIEF AND REBUILDING

Since Commissioner Buckingham took the helm of the Texas General Land Office, the GLO has deployed \$1.3 billion in funding for disaster recovery and mitigation, which is an average of about \$3.6 million per day!

In the last year, the GLO has approved more than 100 mitigation and infrastructure projects that will protect communities across Texas. The GLO is helping Texas families get back on their feet and in their homes, rebuilding housing rapidly.

- 3,243 houses and rental units rebuilt, averaging nearly 9 homes per day
- 68 affordable rental projects, with another 19 multifamily projects under construction
- 4,900 rental homes rebuilt
- 1,664 affordable rental homes under construction

Overall, the GLO has rebuilt nearly 8,000 homes, with over 700 more approved for construction. Additionally, more than 3,000 Texas homeowners have been reimbursed more than \$86 million through the GLO's repair reimbursement program.

Texas Back in Business, the GLO's economic revitalization program has awarded more than \$89 million to 570 small, local businesses, which has created or retained 1,780 jobs for Texans.

Under Commissioner Buckingham's leadership, she has been able to foster a communicative relationship with the City of Houston leaders, and more than \$1 billion in mitigation and infrastructure projects have begun moving forward toward construction in Harris County to benefit Houstonians and neighboring communities.