



# Summer Teacher Institute Gulf Coast Expedition

Greetings!

Thank you for joining us for this fun and informative expedition. The workshop is open to all current and previous Groundwater to the Gulf participants and will include presentations and field investigations to enhance your knowledge about the lower Colorado River and Matagorda Bay.

Our ultimate destination will be the LCRA Matagorda Bay Nature Park ([http://lcra.org/parks/developed\\_parks/matagorda.html](http://lcra.org/parks/developed_parks/matagorda.html)) located on the mouth of the Colorado River on the Matagorda Peninsula. The 1,600-acre park and preserve has about two miles of Gulf of Mexico shoreline and two miles river frontage and hundreds of acres of coastal marshes and dunes. Participants will receive 15 hours of SBEC credit.

***Registration is limited, and available on a first come, first serve basis.***  
Please complete the registration and submit your payment by June 10, 2010.

**FEE:** \$50. Includes fees for workshop activities and sessions, and lunch on Tuesday and Wednesday. No refunds.

Lodging, transportation and other meals are the responsibility of the workshop participant and are indicated by the **\$\$** icon.

## **WORKSHOP DETAILS:**

### **TRIP LEADERS:**

Carolyn Meredith, City of Sunset Valley, Environmental Services Manager  
Karen Marks, Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept, Outdoor Learning Training Specialist  
Kris Shipman, Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept., Coastal Expo Coordinator  
Linda McCall, Texas Water Development Board, Conservation Education  
Marsha May, Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept, Texas Nature Trackers Coordinator

### **LODGING:**

A block of rooms, under "Groundwater" (non-smoking, double beds) have been reserved for workshop participants at:

Holiday Inn Express  
920 Avenue F, Bay City, TX 77414  
Hotel Front Desk: 1-979-323-9500, Ask for Arlene

Please contact Arlene between 7 a.m. and 3 p.m. at the hotel to reserve your room under the "Groundwater" block. Special room rates of \$95 plus tax/day have been arranged. If your organization is tax-exempt, please bring your tax exempt certification form with you. The hotel provides a free hot breakfast bar and high-speed internet, and has a pool. The room block will expire on June 10, 2010.

**MEALS:**

Tuesday: Continental breakfast provided by hotel, lunch (sandwiches, chips & fruit) provided. Group Dinner at the K-2 Steak House, 1701 8<sup>th</sup> St., Bay City. (\$\$)

Wednesday: Breakfast provided by hotel, lunch (sandwiches, chips & fruit) provided.

**WORKSHOP AGENDA:**

**Tuesday, June 29th**

8:30 am Registration/Check-In at LCRA Matagorda Natural Science Education Center  
9:00 - 3:00 pm Coastal Investigations (2hrs in kayak & 2 hrs in classroom & 1 hr lunch)  
3:30 – 4:30 pm Harmful Algal Blooms (HABS) presentation  
6:00 - 7:30 pm Group Dinner in Bay City (\$\$)  
8:00 - 9:00 pm Amphibian Watch presentation and monitoring, Matagorda County Birding Nature Center

**Wednesday, June 30th**

7:00 am Optional Birding Trip (w/TPW Staff) or Beach Combing (self-guided)  
8:30 am Registration/Check-In at LCRA Matagorda Natural Science Education Center  
9:00 - 10:00 am Adaptation Artistry  
10:00 - 11:00 am Oyster Ecology  
11:15 - 12:30 pm Lunch & Intracoastal Highway presentation  
1:00 – 4:00 pm Field trip to Simon DeSoto's Colorado Lock Facility  
4:00 – 4:30 pm Wrap-up, evaluations and certificates

**SESSION DESCRIPTIONS:**

Amphibian Watch: Amphibians are more important than you might think. Texas Amphibian Watch gives you a chance to help us understand what frogs and toads are telling us about the world around us. Learn how to identify Texas frogs and toads, and participate in scientific research. (TPWD Staff)

Coastal Investigations: After plotting your course by GPS, explore the river and estuary by kayak for two hours, collecting water quality and plankton samples along the way. Back in the classroom, examine your collection samples and learn about dune defense and beach processes. Dress to get wet and wear weather-appropriate gear. Bring a change of clothes for remainder of the day. (LCRA Staff)

HABS: What are Harmful Algal Blooms? Algae are microscopic plants that are usually aquatic, unicellular, and lack true stems, roots, and leaves. Algal blooms occur in both marine and freshwater environments when an algal species out-competes other species and reproduces rapidly. Learn about this microscopic single celled algae that belongs to the group of dinoflagellates! (TPWD Staff)

Adaptation Artistry: Using coastal bird species, this Project WILD activity helps students to identify and describe the advantages and evaluate the importance of bird adaptations. (TPWD Staff)

Oyster Ecology: Not just for eating! Learn about the life history of this mollusk and why it serves as an indicator species for freshwater inflow, the commercial importance and other issues affecting oysters. (TPWD Staff)

Intracoastal Highway Overview: The Gulf Intracoastal Waterway is a 1,300-mile system of channels and tributaries spanning the US Gulf coast from Brownsville, TX to S. Marks, FL and provides a vital transportation route for more than 123 million tons of cargo each year. (Willie Younger)

Simon DeSoto's Colorado Lock Facility Field Trip: See the engineering marvels of a lock facility with this up-close view of a section of the Gulf Intracoastal canal during our visit to the Colorado Lock Facility!

### **OPTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES:**

Birding: Meet at the LCRA Nature Center for a stroll on the beach with TPW staff, to view local shorebirds. For beginners and enthusiasts alike, all are welcome! No binoculars? No Problem! We'll have a few extras on hand for your use.

### Beach Combing:

Ever wonder what washes up on the Texas coast? Explore the shoreline for interesting items that have washed up on the beach from around the world. Discover shells, sea beans, marine debris and more! (Self-guided)

### **WHAT TO BRING:**

- Comfortable, casual clothing and shoes
- Clothing suitable for kayaking
- Hat, Sunscreen & Insect repellent
- Water bottle (refillable)
- Flashlight & extra batteries
- Camera, binoculars & bird or shell field guides (optional)





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## GROUNDWATER TO THE GULF: SUMMER INSTITUTE GULF EXPEDITION REGISTRATION FORM

Registration and payment deadline is June 10, 2010.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_, TX zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Do you use text-msg?  Yes  No (for use during trip only)

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Teaching Grade Level & Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

How many students do you teach per year? \_\_\_\_\_

Special Dietary Needs or Food Allergies:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

In Case of Emergency, please contact:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ or (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete and return the registration form and your payment by **June 10, 2010**.

**Make checks payable to: Keep Austin Beautiful**

Mail registration form and payment to:

**Carolyn Meredith, Environmental Services Manager**

**City of Sunset Valley**

**3205 Jones Road**

**Sunset Valley, TX 78745**

**Phone: 512-891-9103**