



ExploreLoneStarCoastal.com

Lone Star Coastal Alliance and Stakeholders Unveil “Explore Lone Star Coastal”

Regional collaboration for tourism and coastal resilience seeks to inform and inspire travelers to visit the middle and upper Texas Gulf Coast region

HOUSTON — The Lone Star Coastal Alliance – representing a decade old coalition of local citizens, businesses, governments and non-governmental organizations - welcomes you to visit the Lone Star Coastal region. Experience our expansive and unique mosaic of natural, cultural and historic sites and recreational opportunities along the upper and middle Texas Gulf Coast from the Matagorda Peninsula to the Sabine Pass, all within just an hour or two drive from Houston and the gateway city of Galveston.

Now more than ever travelers are itching to get out of their homes and are seeking outdoor experiences that are safe and healthy. We welcome visitors to explore our abundance of open spaces across Matagorda, Brazoria, Galveston and Jefferson counties, including pristine coastline, beaches, forests, rivers, wetlands, bayous, bays and prairies. These open spaces are home to outstanding places to bird, paddle, fish, camp, hunt, hike, bike, swim, boat, picnic, watch wildlife, watch the stars, or just relax. Friendly by nature, we invite you to disconnect from the everyday and connect with our region’s lesser known and appreciated small towns and welcoming communities. Places of culture, history, art and cuisine offer a special window into what makes this region and its people so unique.

Our on-line interactive travel guide is available at ExploreLoneStarCoastal.com The website features over 300 points of interest recommended by local residents, businesses, organizations, public and private land managers, educators, and community establishments. To help you experience it all, outfitters, guide services, tour providers and great places to stay, shop and dine are included as well.

Included on the website, and representative of the diverse ecosystems of our region, are 60 parks and natural areas, including 8 National Fish and Wildlife Service Refuges and 9 dedicated bird sanctuaries. This diversity in habitat also makes for a diversity of recreation – fishing, hunting, biking, kayaking, boating and, yes, exceptional birding! We are in the heart of the central flyway for neotropical migration, we are home to a large colonial water bird population and hawk migration, we have the 2nd most abundant estuary in the nation with Galveston Bay, and we are home to 5 species of sea turtles.

In addition to the diverse and extraordinary nature-based activities, the Lone Star Coastal region is also home to deep history and fascinating cultures including American Indians, Spanish and French explorers, portions of the Texas Independence Trail, the Civil War Sabine Pass Battleground State Historic Site, the birthplace of Juneteenth at Ashton Villa and other locations, Galveston’s Historic Strand District and the birthplace of the Oil and Gas industry. Plans include further development of interpretive experiences around these historical and cultural stories.

Also included on the website are themed auto touring routes and recommended itineraries, including paddling and cycling routes and trails. An interactive map helps visitors build their own adventures, and blog posts provide the latest news about happenings in the region.

“This website will serve local, regional, national and international tourists seeking unique nature, heritage and recreation experiences. In addition to offering touring routes and itineraries, it will give visitors access to insights from local residents in order to create their own itineraries, personalized to their tastes and interests,” said Elizabeth Winston Jones, of the Lone Star Coastal Alliance.

“This initiative will highlight our local small businesses, offering visitors direct access to an authentic and personal experience of the region. It will also bring attention to these businesses so they, and their communities, can better benefit from tourism,” said Paula Whitney, owner of the Peaceful Pelican Bed and Breakfast in Palacios.

Edith Fisher, Director of Tourism, Brazosport Convention and Visitors Council said. “Our communities look forward to welcoming travelers who are excited to explore our region’s unique beauty and character.”

“This initiative will demonstrate that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts and promote what’s special about where we live. This in turn will draw the Gold Standard of visitors who, among other things, are interested in unique and authentic experiences, spend more, stay longer and leave a place better than they found it,” said Christine Lokey, Marketing Director, Beaumont Convention and Visitors Bureau.

“The Explore Lone Star Coastal initiative not only brands the middle and upper Texas Gulf Coast region as a destination for high quality tourism, it also will help us sustain our unique history and culture,” said J.P. Bryan, Chair, Lone Star Coastal Alliance, legendary entrepreneur and businessman, and founder of the Bryan Museum in Galveston.

“Our region is unique in its ecological diversity and, consequently, is among the nation’s and the world’s most diverse and abundant birding destinations. This website will bring awareness and travelers to the region, elevating conservation of our resources while enhancing our economies,” said Richard Gibbons, Conservation Director, Houston Audubon.

“Our 10-year effort to establish this important recreation area is moving forward because of teamwork by a wide array of local stakeholders who understand that its natural beauty and recreational opportunities can attract tourists from around the state, the country and the world,” said James A. Baker, III, Honorary Co-Chair of the Lone Star Coastal Alliance. “It is proof that we can build a better world when we all work together.”

“Not only is this region a short drive from Houston, it is unique in its cultural and geographic significance and diversity, making it an ideal candidate for National Recreation Area designation,” said Suzanne Dixon, Lone Star Coastal Alliance. “National Park Service affiliation would put this region on par with the nation’s finest public lands and heritage sites and attract significant economic benefits through exposure to large national and international markets.”

The locally based Lone Star Coastal Alliance oversees and manages the Lone Star Coastal regional destination brand identity collaboration. The first product of the regional collaboration is the ExploreLoneStarCoastal.com website. The Lone Star Coastal Alliance is a 501(c)3 created to preserve and promote the upper Texas Gulf Coast region in a manner that enhances coastal resilience while fostering economic development focused on conservation and tourism that elevates the unique natural, cultural and historic assets of the region. For more information about the Lone Star Coastal Alliance go to www.lonestarcoastal.org

We wish to thank all of the local and County tourism representatives, local business owners and non-governmental organizations who contributed their time, insights, expertise and local knowledge. Special thanks to the Launch Task Force, NEOS Marketing and Dearwater Design.

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