

Partnership Award for Stormwater Management Project

June 27, 2001. – Houston, Texas. The first in a series of presentations on development of the Cypress Creek Watershed Stormwater Management Plan was made to the Citizen Advisory Committee. The announced goals of this Harris County Flood Control District / Texas Water Development Board partnership when completed *“will culminate in a comprehensive storm water management plan for Cypress Creek and its tributaries that ... incorporate objectives towards flood damage reduction, runoff controls in the form of regional/on-site detention, habitat/wildlife creation and/or preservation, storm water quality management facilities, maintenance provisions, geomorphology/stream bank erosion, and public acceptance.”*

Partnerships such as the one described above are vital in building our community storm water infrastructure. An outstanding example of successfully accomplishing these objectives exists in the Brays Bayou watershed neighboring the Cypress Creek watershed to the south. The Brays Bayou Freshwater Tidal Marsh Project at Mason Park in southeast Houston, Texas, was the recipient of a second place Gulf Guardian Award in the Partnership Category of the Environmen-

tal Protection Agency's Gulf of Mexico Program in 2006. (The Gulf of Mexico Program was formed in 1988 by the Environmental Protection Agency as a non-regulatory, inclusive partnership to provide a broad geographic focus on the major environmental issues in the Gulf.)

The Brays Bayou Freshwater Tidal Marsh Project is a created freshwater/tidal marsh that provides habitat for native plants, wildlife and fish, while functioning as a pilot demonstration project to treat storm water emanating from an urban residential community. The project began in 2001, when the Texas Coastal Watershed Program of the Texas Cooperative Extension/Texas Sea Grant received funding from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program to initiate a pilot storm water management project. The marsh is located in the Coastal Zone adjacent to the tidal portion of Brays Bayou which is currently listed with many 303(d) listed impairments. The storm water wetland is used to treat these impairments, capture sediments, and provide important native habitats for fish and wildlife.

In addition to the water quality and habitat benefits, the project has created public use and educational opportunities for Houston's underserved Eastside community. We have learned from the EPA advises there are 14 separate agencies and organizations that contributed to this highly successful Partnership Award winner.

The tidal marsh is part of the \$450 million Brays Bayou Flood Damage Reduction Project (Project Brays), a cooperative effort between the Harris County Flood Control District and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers designed to remove the 100-year flood plain from thousands of residences and business. It includes widening and deepening 21 miles of the bayou, excavating four detention basins and replacing and/or modifying 32 bridges.

Look Upstream articles are provided by the Cypress Creek Flood Control Coalition non-profit, community grass-roots organization as a public service. Visit www.ccfcc.org for more information on needed flood protection, environmental preservation, flood insurance and membership or send an e-mail to floodalliance@ccfcc.org.

