



Implementation of 3 Key Goals

A Regional Land-Use Strategy Enhanced Air, Water and Soil & Long-term Resilience

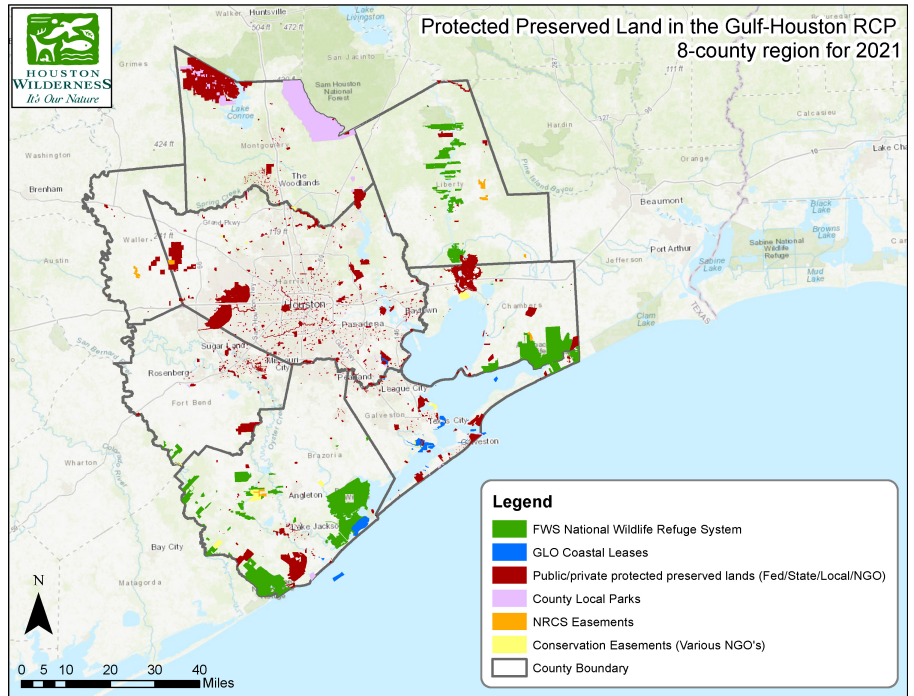
8-County Region: Brazoria • Chambers • Fort Bend • Galveston • Harris • Liberty • Montgomery • Waller

Facilitated by Houston Wilderness, the **Gulf-Houston Regional Conservation Plan (GulfHoustonRCP.org)** is a long-term collaborative of environmental, business, and governmental entities working together to implement an ecosystem continuity and connectivity plan for the Gulf-Houston region through implementation of three key goals for enhanced resilience and online GIS-based database of Working List and Funded Environmental Projects in the 8-county region through the Houston Wilderness and Gulf-Houston RCP websites.

27% is currently developed land-use
 15.6% is currently preserved nature-based infrastructure
 40% is available undeveloped land
24% nature-based infrastructure is needed by 2040

THREE KEY GOALS

- (1) Reaching **24% by 2040** in protected/preserved nature-based infrastructure in the 8-county region (see county breakdown below),
- (2) Providing **50% by 2040** in nature-based stabilization techniques on riparian, developed & undeveloped, agricultural and coastal lands in the region, and
- (3) Working toward a **.4% annual increase** in organic carbon offsets on regional lands through enhancements in native soils, plants and tree species throughout the region

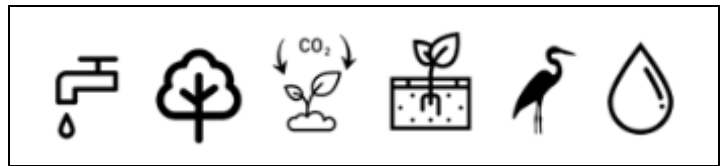


Land Cover by County - 8 Counties

County	Total Land Cover (Acres)	Total Developed Land % (with Acres)	Land Currently Protected % (with Acres)	Agricultural lands % (with Acres)	Available Undeveloped Land % (with Acres)
Harris	1,103,836	62% (679,088)	19.5% (215,018)	2.4% (26,479)	16.6% (183,251)
Montgomery	683,220	29% (199,167)	10.9% (74,814)	0.02% (145)	60.2% (415,094)
Fort Bend	558,738	26% (145,142)	5.6% (31,550)	13.4% (74,849)	55.0% (307,198)
Liberty	752,809	7% (53,100)	8.0% (60,595)	11.7% (88,086)	73.2% (551,027)
Waller	327,852	11% (37,116)	7.7% (25,098)	9.7% (31,905)	71.3% (233,733)
Galveston	247,594	36% (88,405)	22.8% (56,561)	0.4% (945)	41.1% (101,682)
Brazoria	893,083	15% (137,976)	21.0% (187,113)	8.4% (74,798)	55.2% (493,197)
Chambers	385,724	7% (28,183)	20.8% (80,324)	30.8% (118,851)	41.1% (168,365)
Total RCP 8 counties	4,958,857	27.6% (1,368,177)	14.7% (731,075)	8.4% (416,058)	49.3% (2,443,548)
Total Land Cover 8 counties (Acres)	4,958,857				



BENEFITS & CURRENT METRICS OF THREE KEY GOALS



- **Economic:** Investing in long-term undeveloped nature-based infrastructure (NBI) is a critical part of long-term protection of the region's residents, businesses and wildlife. Over \$185 million in land acquisition projects have been funded since 2013, mainly from RESTORE funds, federal/state agency grants and public bonds. Miles of marsh and living shorelines reduce inland storm surge. Nature-based stabilization techniques provide space for flood control, better air/water quality, green space, large-scale tree planting and carbon sequestration.
- **Ecological:** Increasing protected/preserved NBI enhances ecosystem services critical to our region's resilience like flood mitigation and carbon sequestration. Annual increases in carbon sequestration could provide offsets of as much as 27 million tons of carbon annually from the atmosphere in our region.
- **Social:** Large parts of our region's conserved lands serve multiple purposes as flood control and riparian buffer areas with parks, beaches, hike & bike trails, eco-tourism, fishing, kayaking and other outdoor activities. Protecting 24% in targeted nature-based infrastructure provides as much as 700,000 acres in additional green space in our region.

As the global community commits to bolder action on abating biodiversity loss, placement of future Protected Areas (PAs) will be critical, as will an increased focus on landscape-scale habitat retention and restoration efforts to ensure those important areas set aside for conservation outcomes will remain (or become) connected. Ward, M., Saura, S., Williams, B. *et al.* Just ten percent of the global terrestrial protected area network is structurally connected via intact land. *Nat Commun* 11, 4563 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-020-18457-x>

Gulf-Houston RCP's OVERLAP WITH RESILIENT HOUSTON PLAN



In early 2020, the City of Houston initiated its Resilient Houston Plan - a framework for collective action that links existing efforts with new ones to protect Houston against future disasters—from hurricanes and flooding to extreme heat waves—and chronic stresses such as aging infrastructure, poor air quality, and climate change. *Resilient Houston* was forged during an 18-month process in collaboration with local stakeholders and regional, national and global partners and the Gulf-Houston RCP's three key

goals overlaps with three key goals of the Resilient Houston Plan:

Chapter 2: Safe & Equitable Neighborhoods – Goal 6: Plant 4.6 million new native trees by 2030. A Tree Strategy Implementation Group (TSIG) has come together to create a large-scale native tree planting strategy and related *Regional Native Tree Planting Policy Manual*. See information and upcoming TSIG Forums at <https://www.gulfhoustonrhp.org/>

Chapter 4: Accessible & Adaptive City – Goal 11: 100 new green stormwater infrastructure projects by 2025

Chapter 5: Innovative & Integrated Region – Goal 16: Conserve 24% of undeveloped regional lands as natural spaces by 2040

