

City of Morgan's Point
Colonel James Morgan New Washington Prairie
SEP No. 2016-07

Project Description

City of Morgan's Point owns approximately 52 acres of land within the City of Morgan's Point (the "City") in Harris County, Texas that sits in between the Port of Houston's Barbour's Cut Shipping Terminal and a residential community (the "Property"). The Property makes up 5% of the total land, and 33% of the remaining developable land within the City of Morgan's Point. City of Morgan's Point purchased the Property to provide a natural buffer between the Port of Houston's industrial facilities and the City's residential communities and to ensure the land would be maintained and preserved as undeveloped, open space for the public. City of Morgan's Point intends to name the Property the Colonel James Morgan New Washington Prairie in honor of the City's first settler.

Approximately 16 acres of the Property shall be preserved in perpetuity as palustrine emergent and palustrine forested wetlands in accordance with a federally issued Section 404 permit.¹ The remaining 36 acres of the Property are subject to a restrictive covenant and shall be maintained by the City of Morgan's Point as open space for public use in perpetuity. In accordance with the restrictive covenant, the City of Morgan's Point will ensure the protection and enhancement of the land's natural resources.

City of Morgan's Point shall use SEP Funds to restore the 36 acres of the Property subject to the restrictive covenant to its original native Texas Coastal Prairie grasslands. The Property has been underutilized for many years and non-native, invasive grasses and trees such as Hackberry and Chinese Tallow have taken root. These non-native species can severely disrupt the natural ecosystem by limiting the native prairie plant diversity and wildlife. City of Morgan's Point shall clear and eradicate the existing non-native grasses and trees and reestablish native prairie grasses and shrubs. City of Morgan's Point shall also plant 800 native trees such as Live Oak, Cypress, and Pecan.

City of Morgan's Point shall use SEP Funds to mitigate stormwater runoff from the 36 acres of the Property subject to the restrictive covenant through construction of one stormwater management pond. Current stormwater patterns for the Property sheet flow from east to west-southwest and ultimately discharge offsite into Galveston Bay through a drainage channel located approximately 1000 feet west of the Property's boundary line.² The stormwater management pond will collect and retain the Property's stormwater runoff and prevent offsite discharge. Prior to constructing the pond, City of Morgan's Point shall review and analyze a detailed grading and stormwater management plan based upon a topographic survey of the Property and ensure that the Property's runoff will be mitigated by the pond and will not adversely impact nearby residential communities.

After the restoration and construction of the stormwater management pond is complete, City of Morgan's Point shall purchase and install two weather resistant signs or kiosks which will provide information concerning the environmentally beneficial aspects of this project and must include the language "This prairie restoration project was performed with penalty monies from a Texas Commission on Environmental Quality Enforcement action."

¹ United States Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 Permit No. SWG-2016-00382.

² City of Morgan's Point current grading plan is based upon two-foot contour data obtained from the Houston-Galveston Area Council; <https://h-gac.sharefile.com>.

Environmental Benefit

Permanently preserving 36 acres of the Property as open space will prevent future development and maintain a natural barrier between residential communities and the industrial Barbours Cut Shipping Terminal. Restoring the 36 acres back to its natural Texas Coastal Prairie grasslands will enhance the quality of the Property's natural resources and wildlife. The restored natural prairie will provide habitats for a wide range of animals including the Monarch butterfly which has a significant population in the area during its migration to Mexico. Further, the stormwater management pond will mitigate the offsite discharge of runoff which will reduce the amount of pollutants reaching the surrounding environment.

Eligible Areas and Counties

Fort Bend, Grimes, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, San Jacinto, and Walker Counties.

Minimum Contribution Amount

\$100

Total Project Budget

\$991,800