Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program

FY 2003 Comprehensive Annual Work Plan

Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, Inc.
1305 N. Shoreline Blvd., Suite 205
Corpus Christi, TX 78401

www.cbbep.org

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I. Introduction

In its 1987 reauthorization of the Water Quality Act, the U.S. Congress established the National Estuary Program (NEP) to promote long-term planning and management of nationally significant estuaries threatened by pollution, development, or overuse. The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was given authority to convene Management Conferences and to award Federal financial assistance grants to approved state programs for the purpose of developing and implementing a CCMP. The Act defines criteria by which Management Conferees are charged with balancing the conflicting uses in target estuaries, while restoring or maintaining their natural character.

The Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program (formerly the Corpus Christi Bay National Estuary Program) was formally established in October 1992 with committee meetings beginning in late 1993. The CBBEP was one of the first NEPs to use a streamlined approach to the development of a CCMP. The goal of the CBBEP to complete a Preliminary CCMP within 12 to 18 months (from 09/01/94) and a Final CCMP in approximately four years (by September 1998) was achieved.

A State-EPA Management Conference Agreement detailing this and other specific outputs of the four-year program was signed in May 1994 by the Regional Administrator of the EPA and the Chairman of the State-lead agency for the Program, the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC). The Program Office has been established since December 1993, as a program of the TNRCC, with a non-profit organization established in 1999 to lead implementation.

The project area encompasses the estuarine environment of 75 miles of the south-central Texas coastline, and includes the 12 counties of the region known as the Coastal Bend. This 514 square mile area of water includes all bays, estuaries, and bayous in the Copano, Aransas, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Baffin, and upper Laguna Madre bay systems, which together represent three of the seven major Texas estuaries.

All data and information produced under the auspices of the CBBEP will adhere to standardized formats and be made publicly accessible. A public participation strategy, refined under the 'public education and outreach' chapter of the *Bays Plan*, will continue to guide public participation efforts in Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) implementation. The list of Priority Issues, refined through public input and characterization projects will continue to serve as the focus for implementation.

The Priority Issues for the CBBEP are:

- Alteration of Freshwater Inflow into Bays and Estuaries
- Condition of Living Resources
- Loss of Wetlands and Estuarine Habitats
- Degradation of Water Quality
- Altered Estuarine Circulation
- Bay Debris
- Selected Public Health Issues

The *Coastal Bend Bays Plan* has been developed to address each of these priority issues under the following categories of action plans: Human Uses; Maritime Commerce and Dredging; Habitat and Living Resources; Water and Sediment Quality; Freshwater Resources; and Public

Education and Outreach. The projects selected for implementation reflect a combination of priority and readiness or feasibility for implementation. Implementing Partners for other actions of the *Bays Plan* will likewise be called upon to begin and continue to implement their own portions of the Plan. The role of Program staff is multi-faceted, but will include at a minimum the following tasks: (1) acquire, manage, and disperse funds to implement the *Bays Plan*; (2) develop and implement partnership projects with local governments, state and federal agencies, and private organizations; (3) monitor, track, and report on implementation performance by implementing partners, and work to maintain implementation commitments; and (4) coordinate the environmental monitoring and assessment of Plan implementation effectiveness.

II. Starting Date

The starting date for this FY 2003 Comprehensive Work Plan will be September 1, 2002.

III. Federal and State Program Coordinators and Project Officers

Federal
Ms. Barbara Keeler
CBBEP Program Coordinator
U.S. EPA Region 6
Marine and Wetlands Section (6WQ-EM)
1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200
Dallas, TX 75202-2733

Ms. Betty Ashley
CBBEP Project Officer
U.S. EPA Region 6
Office of State & Tribal Program Section (6WQ-AT)
1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200
Dallas, TX 75202-2733

State
Mr. Jeff Foster
CBBEP Program Coordinator
Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission
NRC Bldg, #3300
6300 Ocean Dr.
Corpus Christi, TX 78412

Mr. Frank Fuller
CBBEP Project Officer
Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission
P.O. Box 13087, MC 205
Austin, TX 78711-3087

IV. Accomplishments To Date

The CBBEP achieved its primary goal for FY 2002, which was to continue the successful initiation and completion of projects developed to implement the *Coastal Bend Bays Plan*. The Program and its partners achieved programmatic progress on 94 percent of CCMP actions. Action-specific environmental progress directly attributed to CBBEP activities is estimated at

over 9,000 acres of restored or protected habitat. The Program's success in leveraging funds for CBBEP projects has also been noteworthy. Through matching and in-kind contributions, the Program identified over $9 million in total resources, a nine-fold increase of EPA's 320 base funding. Broad support for the Program's activities is evidenced by the range of contributors, including local governments, industries, NGOs and state and federal agencies. The CBBEP Estuary Council has not made any changes in the priorities as listed in the CCMP.

All project deliverables identified during the FY 1999 implementation year have been completed. FY 2000 and 2001 projects are expected to be complete by May 31, 2003. The Estuary Council committees continue to identify, initiate and select project ideas for inclusion in the Program work plans.

In FY 2002 the CBBEP initiated a number of projects funded by various state, federal and local support. The following brief discussion highlights several of these projects.

Coastal Bend Regional Water Quality Monitoring Program – This phase of the CBBEP's water quality monitoring and assessment effort establishes a routine, baseline monitoring program that provides resource managers with an ongoing assessment of water quality and addresses special areas of concern.

Bay Ambassador Program - This project has been an extremely successful youth education and public outreach project contracted with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. The "Bay Ambassadors" have participated in a number of educational opportunities and public outreach projects such as Bayfest 2001 and Earthday / Bayday 2002.

Keepers of the Coast – This project continues to provide a series of 'hands-on' learning experiences for youth and educators through the Texas State Aquarium. Targeting rural school districts with limited funding has provided enhanced learning experiences such as outreach visits and field trips, family learning events, and classroom activities utilizing the teaching guide which focuses on the Gulf of Mexico and its coastal habitats.

Various Public Outreach and Education Projects – An ambitious public outreach strategy has been undertaken. The Program has produced three "Keep It Clean" public service announcements with the City of Corpus Christi. Fact sheets on specific CBBEP projects have been developed. The CBBEP web site was totally redesigned and is now a highly interactive site. A new brochure has been produced. Planned media events were held with project partners: Nueces Bay Habitat Restoration with the Texas General Land Office; Mollie Beatty Park with various partners; and Pollywog Pond with various partners. There was TV news coverage on the brown pelicans potential delisting, Sunfish Island restoration, and the crab trap removal project. Outreach activities include 2002 Boat Show where CBBEP distributed 700 Bay Users Guides; crab trap removal main event at Conn Brown Harbor in Aransas Pass; and the Coastal Issues Conference.

Colonial Waterbird / Avian Resources Project – The CBBEP has successfully completed the CBBEP Colonial Waterbird Rookery Island Management Plan and continues implementation of specific management actions. Monitoring regiments have been performed for the Nueces Bay Island Restoration Project with an increase in population of Black Skimmers and Gull-billed Terns. Snowy plover surveys were performed to determine breeding status. Least Tern nesting sites have shown success at two Port of Corpus Christi sites for the third year.

V. Goals for FY 2003

The primary goal for FY 2003 is to continue the successful initiation and completion of projects developed to implement the *Coastal Bend Bays Plan*.

The CBBEP continues to focus on habitat protection and restoration, assisting the recovery of species of concern, and public education and outreach. This work plan allocates funds for efforts to protect and restore estuarine wetlands lost to erosion. Halting and reversing the long-term decline of intertidal marsh habitat and associated uplands is critical to the long-term health of the bay system.

Public Education and Outreach remains an important component of the *Bays Plan.* The Advisory Committees of CBBEP have shown great interest in focusing on public outreach through the media, with emphasis on the priority issues as described in the *Bays Plan.*

The Rookery Island Strategic Master Plan has been developed by CBBEP staff, and focuses on maintaining healthy populations of colonial waterbirds with specific emphasis on those species showing a significant population decline. CBBEP has two avian biologists on staff who will continue to implement the Master Plan.

Maintaining a long-term water quality monitoring program is an important component of our effort to assess the health of the bay system. Monitoring data allows the CBBEP and other resource managers to identify "problem" areas and focus limited financial and manpower resources. Areas not meeting the water quality standards for their designated use will be monitored more frequently. Sources of pollution will be identified and remediation strategies developed for areas not meeting the standards.

Program staff will continue to seek additional partners to assist with the implementation of the *Bays Plan*.

VI. Implementation of Projects

Project activities for FY 2003 have been selected for their contribution towards implementation of the *Coastal Bend Bays Plan*. Twenty-seven projects will be implemented in FY 2003. A comprehensive list of projects outlining project numbers, titles, action items, performing party(s), and budget can be found in Table 1: FY 2003 Comprehensive Annual Work Plan Outline.

VII. Project Deliverables/Schedule

Specific project deliverables and schedules for completion are to be negotiated with the sub-contractor of the project and will be included in the scope of work of the project contract. The project contract and any amendments will be subject to review by funding entities and are incorporated into this annual work plan by reference.

Project #0301A **Continuation of Whooping Crane Habitat Restoration & Erosion Protection**

Performing Organization: **Texas General Land Office- CEPRA**
Section 320 Funding: **$30,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions: **HLR-1, HLR-2**

This habitat restoration and protection project will leverage available state funds (TGLO-CEPRA) up to a 15:85 ratio.

Roddy Island is in Aransas County, Texas, within the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). Roddy Island is actively used as critical habitat for the endangered whooping crane. The erosion problem at the ANWR is extensive. The USFWS and other organizations are attempting to mitigate this loss of critical habitat. The GIWW has been armored for several miles to protect whooping crane habitat along its banks from further erosion. Roddy Island has suffered severe long-term erosion, but has not received any type of erosion protection. The ANWR, Army Corps of Engineers, Texas General Land Office, and other resource agencies have agreed to a conceptual plan to create wetland habitat seaward of Roddy Island. This habitat would be armored to provide long-term protection to some of the most severely eroded portions of Roddy Island and restore important feeding and loafing habitat.

Project #0301B Continuation of Goose Island State Park Habitat Restoration & Erosion Protection

Performing Organization: **Texas General Land Office- CEPRA**
Section 320 Funding: **$60,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions: **HLR-1, HLR-2**

This habitat restoration and protection project will leverage available state funds (TGLO-CEPRA) up to a 15:85 ratio.

Goose Island State Park is comprised of 321.4 acres on the southern tip of Lamar Peninsula and is bounded by Aransas and St. Charles bays. Goose Island has an eroding shoreline of approximately 2 miles on Aransas Bay (southern) side. The unprotected shoreline consists of a shell ridge with smooth cordgrass (Spartina alterniflora) marsh occurring along portions of it. On the mainland (northern) side of the island, high marsh grades into intertidal smooth cordgrass marsh and tidal flats. The open water on the southern side of the island supports shoal grass (Halodule wrightii) and scattered oysters. The portion of the bay between Goose Island and the mainland supports expansive living oyster reefs. The seagrasses, cordgrass marshes, and tidal flats provide important feeding habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds, and wading birds, and important nursery areas for commercially and recreationally important finfish and shellfish. A comparison of 1969 and 1995 aerial photography by Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD) revealed that 17.1 acres of wetlands and wildlife habitat had eroded from the southern shoreline

This project would stabilize the eroding shoreline of Goose Island State Park, located 10 miles north of Rockport in Aransas County, Texas by the construction of an offshore breakwater (hard substrate reef). The breakwater would be constructed to avoid impacts to existing seagrasses and oysters. The breakwater would dampen wave action between the breakwater and the shoreline, creating a lagoon effect that would allow further development of seagrass beds and intertidal emergent marsh along the shoreline. The breakwater would protect the remaining 15 acres of Goose Island and the 75 acres of marsh and oyster reef habitats behind it. Future projects will be developed to restore the lost wetlands and wildlife habitat acreage.

Project #0301C **Continuation of Sunfish Island Habitat Restoration & Erosion Protection**

Performing Organization: **Texas General Land Office- CEPRA**
Section 320 Funding: **$75,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions: **HLR-1, HLR-2**

This habitat restoration and protection project will leverage available state funds (TGLO-CEPRA) up to a 15:85 ratio.

Sunfish Island, a colonial waterbird rookery, is located at the northeast section of the breakwater designed to protect the Corpus Christi Municipal Marina, Nueces County, Texas. Sunfish Island is approximately 0.4 hectare with a maximum elevation of one meter. The surface is primarily shell hash and is sparsely vegetated. This provides sanctuary for many species of coastal birds and sea life. During the 2000 spring/summer nesting seasons, the island supported more than 1,000 pair of nesting water birds (egrets, herons, & gulls).

Sunfish Island has suffered from erosion caused by high energy wave action. The erosion has practically split the small island in half. This project would restore the island habitat and protect it from further erosion.

Project #0301D Continuation Indian Point Habitat Restoration & Erosion Protection

Performing Organization: **Texas General Land Office- CEPRA**
Section 320 Funding: **$60,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions: **HLR-1, HLR-2**

This habitat restoration and protection project will leverage available state funds (TGLO-CEPRA) up to a 15:85 ratio.

The Indian Point & Sunset Lake Recreational Area and the associated protected wetlands are the largest acquisition of high quality wetlands by a local government in this area. The area is a high quality saltwater system with coastal wetland marsh and sandflat habitat. Numerous migratory and protected bird species nest, roost and feed within the lake, along the shoreline, and within the wetlands. Shoreline erosion currently threatens the existence of salt marshes along the southern fringe of the Indian Point, the southeastern portion of Sunset Lake Recreation Area.

This project would stabilize the eroding shoreline of Indian Point & Sunset Lake by the construction of a hard substrate reef to act as an offshore breakwater. The offshore reef would be constructed to avoid impacts to existing sensitive habitats and would dampen wave action between the breakwater and the shoreline thus creating a lagoon effect that would protect the intertidal emergent marsh and shell ridge that currently serves numerous shore birds and other marsh dependent species.

Project #0301E1 Continuation of Bayside Shoreline Restoration & Erosion Protection

Performing Organization: **Texas General Land Office- CEPRA**
Section 320 Funding: **$15,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions: **HLR-1, HLR-2**

This habitat restoration and protection project will leverage available state funds (TGLO-CEPRA) up to a 15:85 ratio.

This is a continuation of our current project that is using smooth cord grass (*Spartina alterniflora*) to create an energy buffer along eroding bay shorelines in Nueces, Aransas and Copano Bays. The vegetation replaces lost marsh habitat while providing erosion protection. Other erosion control techniques may be employed. The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical support and direct project management assistance.

Project #0301E2 Continuation of Mission Bay Habitat Enhancement & Erosion Protection

Performing Organization: **Texas General Land Office- CEPRA**
Section 320 Funding: **$15,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions: **HLR-1, HLR-2**

This habitat restoration and protection project will leverage available state funds (TGLO-CEPRA) up to a 15:85 ratio.

This is a continuation of our current project that is using smooth cord grass (*Spartina alterniflora*) to create an energy buffer along eroding bay shorelines in Nueces, Aransas and Copano Bays. The vegetation replaces lost marsh habitat while providing erosion protection. Other erosion control techniques may be employed. The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical support and direct project management assistance.

Project #0301E3 Continuation of Ingleside Habitat Enhancement & Erosion Protection

Performing Organization: **Texas General Land Office- CEPRA**
Section 320 Funding: **$15,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions: **HLR-1, HLR-2**

This habitat restoration and protection project will leverage available state funds (TGLO-CEPRA) up to a 15:85 ratio.

This is a continuation of our current project that is using smooth cord grass (*Spartina alterniflora*) to create an energy buffer along eroding bay shorelines in Nueces, Aransas and Copano Bays. The vegetation replaces lost marsh habitat while providing erosion protection. Other erosion control techniques may be employed. The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical support and direct project management assistance.

Project #0301F Continuation of Port Aransas Habitat Protection & Erosion Control

Performing Organization: **Texas General Land Office- CEPRA**
Section 320 Funding: **$30,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions: **HLR-1, HLR-2**

This habitat restoration and protection project will leverage available state funds (TGLO-CEPRA) up to a 15:85 ratio.

Erosion is taking land along the main ship channel where Port Aransas plans to develop a low impact nature preserve recreational park. This erosion has started to eat into the wetlands at Charlie's Pasture. There is also a significant erosion problem at Harbor Island. This project will stabilize the eroding shoreline and reduce the loss of emergent marsh habitat. As part of this project, the City of Port Aransas will also be acquiring property in Charlie's Pasture in order to provide protection for wetlands and wildlife habitat. This project, and a planned future phase II project, will provide protection for these important wetlands.

Project #0302 Colonial Waterbird Rookery Island Management

Performing Organization: **CBBEP**
Section 320 Funding: **$125,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions: **HLR-4, HLR-2, D-1, BTR-3, PEO-5**

The Living Resources Characterization Report prepared for the Estuary Program documented the declining populations of certain colonial waterbird populations. Colonial waterbird populations are indicators of the overall health of the estuary. Birding, especially viewing colonial waterbirds, is an important and growing component of ecotourism and the local economy.

Building on the efforts of the CBBEP in FY 2001 & 2002, this project will continue the implementation of specific management actions of the CBBEP Colonial Waterbird Rookery Island Management Plan. Management actions will include human-disturbance avoidance, nesting substrate supplementation, vegetation management to enhance rookery island habitat, and predator control where necessary. Outreach will continue to be a crucial component in achieving project objectives.

Project Objectives:
1. Continue efforts on enhancement and construction of nesting habitat.
2. Continue to promote public programs to protect colonial waterbirds.
3. Monitoring of Colonial Waterbird populations.
4. Develop new outreach materials and signage to reduce impacts of human disturbance on waterbird colonies.

Project #0303 Public Education & Outreach Media Campaign

Performing Organization: **CBBEP**
Section 320 Funding: **$50,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions: **BTR-1, PEO-2, PEO-3, PEO-5**

Public outreach continues to be a key element of the CBBEP to educate Coastal Bend residents about the importance of bays and estuaries to their communities. The CBBEP will utilize local, and regional, which includes television, radio, print, and websites, to implement the goals of the CBBEP Public Outreach Strategy.

The priority issues for this public outreach as identified in the *Coastal Bend Bays Plan* are:
- Altered Freshwater Inflow Into Bays and Estuaries
- Non-point Source Pollution
- Loss of Wetlands and Estuarine Habitats
- Degradation of Water Quality
- Condition of Living Resources
- Altered Estuarine Circulation
- Public Health Issues

The priority issues have been the topics of discussion and focus of the many committees that developed the *Coastal Bend Bays Plan* which includes the Scientific/Technical Advisory Committee, Citizens Advisory Committee, Bays Council and the CBBEP Board of Directors. All of the committees expressed great interest in the Altered Freshwater Inflows and the Non Point Source Pollution issues.

Some or all of the priority issues listed above will be considered for the Public Outreach through media.

Project #0304 Walk-Through-the-Wetlands / Adopt-A-Wetland

Performing Organization:	**Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, Center for Coastal Studies, Adopt-A-Wetland Program** **Corpus Christi Botanical Gardens**
Section 320 Funding:	**$25,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions:	**BTR-1, PEO-2, PEO-3, PEO-5**

One of the most important goals of the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program's *Bays Plan* is to educate citizens about the ecology of the bay system and its many environmental and economic values. Walk-Through-The-Wetlands is an interactive wetland display designed to interest and educate people about coastal wetlands. The display was first used at Bayfest 2000, where over 1000 visitors enjoyed the exhibit and learned about the values wetlands provide to people and animals.

The exhibit is a 30' x 30' x 24" constructed wetland consisting of a wooden frame with a waterproof PVC liner and over 400 wetlands plants which can be transported and setup on site. Interpretive stations representing various interesting aspects of wetlands are set up along a pathway designed to guide visitors completely through the wetland. Trained volunteer interpreters are available at the learning stations to share with visitors some of their knowledge of the various aspects of wetlands. Accessibility allows people of all ages and abilities to explore and learn about the plants and animals that inhabit wetlands.

Project Objectives:

1. Assist other Walk-Through-the-Wetlands partners with maintenance of the display.
2. Develop a schedule of events at which the display will be used.
3. Organize and oversee transportation, setup/break-down, and operation of display at scheduled events.

Project #0305 Nueces Delta Habitat Acquisition Project

Performing Organization: **CBBEP**
Total Funding: **$5,150,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions: **AM-2, HLR-1, HLR-2**

Due to its close proximity to a major urban area (Corpus Christi), much of the shoreline and wildlife habitat areas around Nueces Bay have experienced degradation due to land-use conversion and/or human encroachment. Essentially all of the southern and eastern shorelines of Nueces Bay have experienced a significant amount of anthropogenic impact. The northern shoreline of Nueces Bay, in San Patricio County, has experienced a slow but steady increase in residential and commercial development creeping to the west from the City of Portland. Only the Nueces River Delta, located at the west end of Nueces Bay, remains in relatively natural condition.

Long-term protection of the Delta is best accomplished through acquisition, including either outright ownership or the purchase of conservation easements. Once these areas are protected by acquisition, future projects can implement management strategies to restore the value and functionality of the habitat.

The CBBEP is working with the Nature Conservancy of Texas and the Coastal Bend Land Trust on this effort.

Project Objectives:
1. Protection and restoration of wildlife habitat through acquisition and conservation easements.
2. Development of a management strategy for each of the properties acquired.

Project #0306 Oso Bay / Oso Creek Habitat Acquisition Project

Performing Organization: **City of Corpus Christi & Coastal Bend Land Trust**
Total Funding: **$75,500**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions: **SM-2, HLR-1, HLR-2**

The purpose of this project is to acquire property and/or conservation easements along the Oso Creek area, to preserve habitat, maintain open space, and ensure watershed and water quality protection. CBBEP funds will be used by the City of Corpus Christi as a 20% match for a State Transportation Enhancement Program (STEP) grant. The grant, from the Texas Dept. of Transportation, is to continue design and construction of the Bay Trail hike and bike trail along a portion of the west shoreline of Oso Bay/Oso Creek.

CBBEP funds will be used to purchase property and conservation easements along Oso Bay/Oso Creek for siting of the hike and bike trail. The hike and bike trail will provide a riparian buffer strip between the Oso Creek/Oso Bay system and residential/commercial development. The buffer strip will provide open space, public access, visual access to the Oso Creek/Oso Bay system, habitat for wildlife, and will also help to filter pollutants in runoff before the water enters the Oso Creek/Oso Bay system.

The City will identify land in the Oso Bay/Oso Creek area available for fee-simple acquisition and/or acquisition of conservation easements for siting the new section of the hike and bike trail. The City will also work with landowners to negotiate the acquisition deals. Conservations easements or similar deed restrictions will be used to protect, in perpetuity, the land and its natural resources and preserve the public use and benefit of the land in accordance with the natural resource value.

Project Objectives:
1. Develop a list of properties in the Oso Bay/Oso Creek corridor suitable for the hike and bike trail which would also provide a suitable riparian buffer strip.
2. Acquire the property and/or conservation easements.
3. Secure conservations easements or similar deed restrictions.

Project #0307 Continue to Support Development of Local Land Trust

Performing Organization: **Coastal Bend Land Trust**
Total Funding: **$50,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions: **SM-3, HLR-1, HLR-2**

During the development of the Coastal Bend Bays Plan, the CBBEP Management Conference called for the establishment of a 'Locally Administered Land Trust Fund' for the dedicated purpose of habitat protection. During FY 2000, and 2001 the CBBEP provided the Coastal Bend Bays Foundation with funds to establish the Coastal Bend Land Trust (CBLT). The purpose of this project is to continue to assist the CBLT in developing and becoming firmly established within the community.

Over the past three years, the CBLT has become incorporated as an independent organization, formed a Board of Directors, developed a detailed business plan including operating and organizational procedures, developed a strategic financial plan aimed at achieving financial security, and updated outreach materials including a landowner information brochure. The CBLT has also identified specific habitat protection objectives and focus areas within the CBBEP region and acquired property and/or conservation easements within those focus areas for the purpose of preserving habitat, maintaining open space, and ensuring watershed and water quality protection within the CBBEP region. The CBLT has become an active focal point for conservation efforts through acquisition of property and conservation easements within the CBBEP region.

The major objectives of this project are to continue the process of informing landowners about the benefits of land conservation and conservation easements, to continue acquiring property and/or easements for the purposes of conservation, firmly establish a dynamic Board of Directors to guide future financial development, to assist the CBLT in continuing to build new partnerships and securing additional funding. The CBLT is required to find and secure a 3 to 1 match for CBBEP funds either through additional funding or through donations of property or conservation easements.

Project Objectives:
1. Contact and inform landowners about the benefits of land conservation and conservation easements.
2. Acquire property and/or easements for the purposes of conservation.
3. Continue development of CBLT Board of Directors.
4. Secure a 3:1 match for CBBEP funds.

Project #0308 Continuation of Atmospheric Deposition Monitoring Project

Performing Organization: **Texas A&M University-Geochemical and Environmental Research Group**
Total Funding: **$50,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions: **WSQ-3**

During the development of the CBBP, the Management Conference funded a project to develop a total loadings model that would determine total loads to Corpus Christi Bay. Data gaps in atmospheric pollutants and their sources were identified as a result of this project. A follow-up study was funded to determine atmospheric pollutant contributions to the bay system. This study has been on-going since April 1997. In June 2000, the site was established as a part of the National Atmospheric Deposition Program-National Trends Network (NADP-NTN).

The proposed FY2003 project will be a continuation of the on-going project and will provide an additional year of data. This project will provide resource managers with a data set capable of capturing data variations for evaluating trends in atmospheric pollutant sources. Data gathered as part of the NADP-NTN will be consistent with other sites around the country for comparative purposes

At the present time, Corpus Christi has the only coastal monitoring site in existence along the Texas coast. The continued monitoring of this site will provide information from this area to both national (U.S.) and regional (Gulf of Mexico) efforts as well as to local (Coastal Bend) efforts. The data will be evaluated to identify actions (if any) that can be administered to reduce the amounts of undesirable deposition.

Project Objective:
1. Continue to coordinate with the National Atmospheric Deposition Program (NADP) site with TAMU-GERG and Illinois State Water Survey personnel to gather sufficient information to characterize/quantify the loadings to the bay and estuary.

Project #0309 Continue Water & Sediment Quality Monitoring

Performing Organization:	**Center for Coastal Studies, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi**
Total Funding:	**$155,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions:	**WSQ-1, WSQ-3, WSQ-4, WSQ-5**

CBBEP has developed a comprehensive water quality monitoring program which collects water quality data throughout the CBBEP area. The CBBEP's water quality monitoring and assessment effort establishes a routine monitoring program that helps to provide resource managers with an ongoing assessment of water quality and addresses special areas of concern (303d list). The CBBEP water quality monitoring program allows other agencies and organizations to expand the effort with either additional parameters or monitoring events. CBBEP will prepare a comprehensive summary report on the status and trends of water quality and other key indicators of the health of the bay system on a five-year cycle.

A. Regional EMAP Based Water Quality Monitoring

The EPA Office of Research and Development's Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Program (EMAP) probability based sampling design allows for the determination of current status, extent, changes, and trends in the water quality and ecological community of the CBBEP project area with a scientifically sound monitoring plan. An EMAP sampling program is also designed to determine the condition of resources, to provide information to aid in evaluation of environmental policies, and to help identify emerging environmental concerns before they become widespread problems.

The CBBEP is committed to implementing an EMAP based regional water quality monitoring program that will provide the information needed to assess the health of the estuary. A regional water quality program allows the CBBEP and communities within the program area, to interact with local, state, and federal entities on the larger goal of protecting and preserving the entire Gulf Coast environment.

B. Dissolved Oxygen Monitoring – Upper Laguna Madre/Baffin Bay System and the Oso Bay/Oso Creek System

The upper Laguna Madre/Baffin Bay and Oso Creek/Oso Bay systems are on the 303(d) list for low dissolved oxygen and bacteria. This component of the water quality monitoring project will collect dissolved oxygen data at selected sites over a 24 hour period on a seasonal basis. This information will be helpful to determine if the previously observed low dissolved oxygen levels are a response to natural conditions, perhaps justifying the development of site specific standards, or is indicative of anthropogenic impacts.

C. Monitor Bacteria Levels at Priority Areas

Previous monitoring projects at a limited number of sites have documented the relationship between rainfall events and elevated bacteria levels in bay waters. This effort will expand to include selected smaller communities located on the bay and rural areas. Monitoring will be during dry weather and wet weather conditions.

Project #0310 Nueces Bay Ichthyoplankton Monitoring

Performing Organization:	**Center for Coastal Studies, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi**
Total Funding:	**$20,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions:	**FW-1, WSQ-4**

Nearly all marine fishes have an early life history involving a planktonic phase. Variability in numbers of larvae surviving through the dispersal and settlement phase can be the ultimate determinate in adult population sizes, creating a great potential for enormous variation from season to season. Numerous estuarine-dependent species (those utilizing the estuary as a nursery ground for the early portion of their life cycle) spawn well offshore and their eggs and larvae must be transported into coastal and estuarine nursery grounds against the net seaward flow. These species (including several commercially important ones) typically have extended larval periods, which are subjected to the widest degree of physical processes and can ultimately affect recruitment. Along the lower Texas coast, the Corpus Christi/Nueces Bay system serves as an estuarine nursery ground separated from the major riverine input.

Alternative efforts to maximize freshwater inflow to the Nueces River Delta, such as the Rincon Bayou channel and pipeline, are being pursued. To determine the ecological benefits and to provide assurances that “no harm" is caused by utilizing these efforts, water quality, biological, and ecological response data must be collected and analyzed. This icthyoplankton monitoring project will attempt to determine the type and extent of effects the altered flows may have on fish populations and community structure.

Although the ichthyoplankton monitoring project is being implemented by Texas Parks and Wildlife, CBBEP funding will provide the needed additional support for student workers to assist with field sampling and laboratory analysis. Texas Parks and Wildlife will provide a copy of the results of their monitoring project to the CBBEP.

Project Objectives:

1. Provide student assistance to support water quality and biological monitoring in Nueces Bay.
2. Determine the extent of larval fish recruitment to the Nueces delta.
3. Document the ichthyoplankton distribution of commercially important, estuarine-dependent finfish.
4. Assess the spatial and temporal distribution of larval and post-larval fish within Nueces Bay.
5. Determine if the discharge of the Nueces River away from the delta region acts as a ‘recruitment barrier’ for transport and recruitment of fishes into the Nueces delta.

Project #0311 Nueces County Hilltop Park Nature Area Enhancements

Performing Organization: **Nueces County**
Total Funding: **$50,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions: **HLR-1, HLR-2, BTR-2**

CBBEP funding will be a component of a larger effort by Nueces County and Texas Parks and Wildlife to renovate Hilltop Park. CBBEP funds will be used to help construct a nature trail throughout a new section of the park with kiosks, educational signage, and footbridges crossing water features.

The *Coastal Bend Bays Plan* identifies the need for protecting environmental resources, while promoting environmental stewardship, providing appropriate public access, and expanding tourism. Tourism, especially eco-tourism is an important part of the local economy and environmental education and stewardship help protect and preserve our resources for generations to come.

The CBBEP and Nueces County recognize the benefits of preserving ecologically special areas. Hilltop Park is well recognized as an ecologically unique area The park is located in an urban setting in northwest Corpus Christi yet, due to the existing undisturbed native vegetation, it provides important habitat for both migrating neo-tropicals and resident/breeding bird species. The Park is on the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Great Texas Birding Trail and is widely recognized by birders as the only place in the greater Corpus Christi area to find several less common species of birds. Native Tamaulipan thornscrub vegetation, adjacent grasslands, and an intermittent freshwater supply found in this park are important ecological resources. The park provides an excellent opportunity for public viewing of wildlife as well as other recreational benefits such as walking and picnicking, educational benefits via signage and learning opportunities.

Project Objectives:
1. Construct a nature walking trail.
2. Construct footbridges on the nature trail.
3. Construct kiosks and educational signage.

Project #0312 Oily Bilge Water Recovery Project

Performing Organization:	**Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, University Outreach**
Total Funding:	**$30,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions:	**NPS-1**

Oil spills to marine waters have often been traced to commercial and recreational marine vessel operations. Often the spills result from "pumping out" bilge water that has been contaminated with oil. These releases result in environmental impacts, significant cleanup costs, and require constant monitoring of these areas by TGLO and the Coast Guard. The goal of this project is to reduce oily bilge discharges in the harbors and channels thereby reducing pollution to the bays and estuaries. The identification of need for this project and development was through a partnership between Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi/Pollution Prevention Partnership, Texas General Land Office (TGLO), the US Coast Guard, Texas Parks & Wildlife, Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, marine facility owners, commercial vessel owners & operators, the City of Aransas Pass, and various technical advisors.

The implementation of this project will be a cooperative effort with the Texas General Land Office that will include the design, manufacture, installation, and start-up of two (2) Mobile Bilge Pumpout Stations to be located at Rockport-Fulton and Port Aransas Harbors. Each unit will consist of a skid-mounted tank and pump designed to pump-out and hold up to 3000 gallons of contaminated bilge water and may also include a parallel feature to pump-out and hold crankcase oil. TGLO will dispose of the contaminated water as part of their existing bilge pumpout and cleanup activities. The TGLO owns several bilge pumpout facilities and has already resolved regulatory issues concerning oily bilge water management, treatment and disposal resulting from facilities such as the facilities proposed.

Project Objectives:

1) Provide mobile bilge pumpout capabilities at Rockport-Fulton and Port Aransas.
2) Educate commercial vessel operators on availability and operating procedures.

Project #0313 Public Outreach Events and Activities

Performing Organization:		**CBBEP**
Total Funding:	**$13,000**	**Community Events and Festivals**
	$10,000	**Coastal Bend Wildlife Photo Contest**
	$ 8,000	**CBBEP Newsletter "Living On The Edge"**
	$ 5,000	**CBBEP Website**
	$ 5,000	**CBBEP Brochure**
	$ 6,500	**CBBEP Annual Meeting and Public Forums**
	$ 5,000	**National Ocean Science Bowl**
	$ 4,000	**Other Outreach Opportunities**
	$56,500	

CBBEP Bays Plan Actions: BTR-1, PEO-2, PEO-3, PEO-5

The goal of these public education and outreach projects is to provide the public with the environmental science knowledge to make sound decisions regarding the effective management of bay resources and to promote environmental stewardship through increasing awareness of the resources and the issues regarding their use.

Project Objectives:

Community Events and Festivals – CBBEP's presence at community events plays an important role to draw the public's attention to bay resources and environmental protection. Community events may include: Earth Day/Bay Day, Bayfest, Great Texas Birding Classic, International Migratory Bird Day, and other area events. In addition, the CBBEP will sponsor an interactive wetland display to be used for educational purposes at these community events.

Coastal Bend Wildlife Photo Contest – The purpose of the contest is to save, create and maintain wildlife habitats through partnerships with private landowners. The winners split prize money with landowners from a 10-county area.

CBBEP Newsletter "Living On The Edge" – This newly designed newsletter will serve as an important outreach tool and help keep Estuary Council members and the general public informed about local environmental issues and activities of the CBBEP.

CBBEP Website – The newly designed informative and interactive tool is a tremendous resource for general CBBEP information and projects with continual updates to improve navigation.

CBBEP Brochure – The brochure serves as a general overview/information about the Program. It is distributed at all events, meetings, outreach, schools, etc.

CBBEP Annual Meeting and Public Forums – The CBBEP Annual Meeting will bring together all Estuary Committees for project updates including past, present, and future status. The CBBEP sees an opportunity to partner with the Coastal Bend Bays Foundation on their monthly forum meetings. This creates an educational opportunity for the public.

National Ocean Science Bowl - This event provides the opportunity to increase knowledge of the aquatic environment on the part of students, their teachers and parents, as well as to raise public awareness of ocean-related concerns.

Other Outreach Opportunities - Public outreach continues to be a key element of the CBBEP to educate Coastal Bend residents about the importance of bays and estuaries to their communities. Program staff will utilize local and regional media (newspapers, television and radio stations, etc.), other public events, exhibit ideas, and other CBBEP materials to implement the goals of the CBBEP Public Outreach Strategy.

Project #0314 Estuary Exhibit Redesign at the Texas State Aquarium

Performing Organization: **Texas State Aquarium**
Total Funding: **$6,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions: **PEO-1, PEO-3**

The *Coastal Bend Bays Plan* highlights the importance to coordinate with private entities to identify and promote development and/or enhancement of educational facilities for school groups and other appropriate user groups. The *Texas Bays & Estuaries* exhibit at the Texas State Aquarium has been identified as an existing site that can be redesigned and improved to increase the visualization and educational aspects for the visitor. The aquarium has a good visitor infrastructure in place that promotes the CBBEP's priority issues to the community.

Project Objectives:
The Texas State Aquarium will design a new exhibit gallery highlighting *Texas Living Shores*, to replace the current *Texas Bays & Estuaries* exhibit. The original proposal for construction of *Texas Bays & Estuaries* estimated the exhibit life span to be approximately five years. *Texas Bays & Estuaries* opened in 1998, and a re-design of the gallery will provide an opportunity to reach more visitors in an engaging way.

The *Living Shore Gallery*, which currently encompasses the *Texas Bays and Estuaries* exhibit, further explores the Gulf Coast shoreline. The new gallery will focus on the entire shoreline ecosystem, including estuarine, barrier island, and nearshore habitats. Visitors will explore the vital role that marshes, bays, seagrass beds, and barrier islands play in the ecology of the oceans. The existing *Sea Star Discovery Pool* will form the centerpiece for the new gallery. Here, children and adults have the opportunity to get their hands wet and actually hold and examine up close some of the creatures in the touch pool. Animals in this exhibit include horse conchs, lightning whelks (the state shell of Texas) and hermit crabs.

Project Objectives:
1. The exhibit will present how a barrier island system, including its estuaries, supports ocean systems.
2. Focus on why this ecosystem is important to the visitor.
3. How the visitor can help to protect it.

Project #0315 Teaching Environmental Science & Applied Connections Course

Performing Organization:	**Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi**
Total Funding:	**$5,000 Teaching Environmental Science**
	2,500 Applied Connections
	$7,500
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions:	**PEO-3**

One of the many goals of the *Coastal Bend Bays Plan*, is to provide curricula for all levels of environmental education and promote greater use of outdoor educational facilities as a means of reaching children, young people, and adults. The environmental science courses include workshops and teacher training classes that focus on training key educators and leaders within the project area to subsequently train others within their organizations or community.

Teaching Environmental Science – This graduate course offered to a maximum of twenty-five Corpus Christi and surrounding area secondary (6-12) public and private school teachers. Course participants will receive formal and informal training focusing on important land, air and water issues relating to the environment/conservation including the ecologic and economic importance of management issues unique to the Coastal Bend environment. Three (3) hours of graduate credit will be awarded by TAMUCC to each participant completing the course. The Texas Education Agency will award each course participant with forty-five (45) hours of TEEAC credit. Participants will receive various teaching aids/materials during the course. Transportation to and from the field will be provided.

Applied Connections Course – This course is offered to math, science and communications teachers Grades 5-12. The goal is to create awareness among teachers of area industries and work opportunities so that they can better educate, counsel, and guide their students. It provides opportunities for teachers to learn about how the objectives they teach are applied in the real world and to expect them to create activities for the classroom based on real world data and world-of-work applications of those objectives. Teachers receive educational credit for the course.

Project #0316 Nonpoint Source Outreach & Education Project

Performing Organization: **Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi University Outreach**
Total Funding: **$50,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions: **NPS-1**

CBBEP characterization studies have documented the contribution of nonpoint source pollution and the difficulty of managing that source of pollution to our bays and estuaries. Coupled with projections for significant population growth throughout the Coastal Bend area, nonpoint source pollution management and control will become increasingly important. CBBEP has begun to take action by developing an outreach effort to inform communities of the recent changes in stormwater regulations that may affect their communities. These outreach efforts have been coordinated with TNRCC to avoid duplication of efforts.

The CBBEP Nonpoint Source Pollution Prevention Program has been a received by the community with great enthusiasm. Officials from most of the targeted Coastal Bend communities have received “general orientation” presentations and an updated presentation on best management practices relating to storm water pollution prevention measures. The program has been instrumental in identifying issues concerning nonpoint source pollution and solutions to minimize the pollution. The program continues to be a success by keeping a high level of interest on stormwater pollution prevention the communities.

Project Objectives:
1. Explore additional outreach mechanisms to better influence communities and organizations to implement nonpoint source management practices.
2. Continue to get participation from communities and organizations to implement nonpoint source pollution prevention management practices.
3. Continue nonpoint source pollution prevention workshops to encourage additional participation.
4. Continue to conduct site visits and provide nonpoint pollution prevention assistance to local businesses and governments.
5. Continue to provide educational materials for students and teachers to instill environmental stewardship in their everyday actions.

Project #0317 Keepers of the Coast

Performing Organization: **Texas State Aquarium**
Total Funding: **$25,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions: **PEO-3**

One of the greatest challenges facing educators today is providing rural and low-income school districts with the resources to meet the education needs of today's youth. Many rural districts have limited funds for enhanced learning experiences such as outreach visits and field trips. During FY 2002, the CBBEP provided additional educational resources for helping educators meet state academic standards. This project will provide schools, educators, and students with opportunities to enhance current classroom teaching strategies through the use of environmental education curricula and outdoor education facilities in order to stimulate interest and curiosity about the natural world, thereby promoting greater awareness and respect for our natural resources.

The Texas State Aquarium will continue to implement their "*Keepers of the Coast*" (KOTC) program which provides a series of hands-on learning experiences for youth and educators. Schools will be selected from the CBBEP area based on economic need, minority population, and other available statistics. The project will provide a variety of components, including teacher training at in-service or workshops, outreach visits to schools, onsite programs at various local hands-on learning centers, establishment of community projects, family learning events, and distribution of the KOTC Teacher Resource Guide utilizing classroom activities which focus on the Gulf of Mexico and its coastal habitats. The programs and activities in the KOTC Resource Guide support the state education standards and the National Environmental Education Guidelines. Through the project, the selected groups will gain knowledge and understanding of the linkages between inland and coastal habitats. With this knowledge, the students will be better prepared to encourage sustainable management of local water resources, watersheds, and coastal waters.

Project Objectives:
1. Select the target schools within the CBBEP area.
2. Utilize available education resources to conduct teacher training.
3. Conduct educational outreach visits to schools.
4. Coordinate and implement educational field trips to local facilities.

Project #0318 Continue Development of Geographic Information System

Performing Organization: **Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi**
Total Funding: **$20,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions: **All Action Items**

During FY 2002 the CBBEP initiated development of a geographic information system (GIS) which provides a multi-scale tool to archive and integrate information layers. The GIS can be used to efficiently track and assess projects and help analyze status and trends to determine the direction of future projects. It also allows CBBEP staff to prepare maps and graphic presentation and proposal materials, and provide information to the public. In addition, GIS project layers provide a tool for quickly locating projects, determining stages of completion, and evaluating the progress made toward implementation of the Coastal Bend Bays Plan.

The purpose of the project is continue collecting relevant existing data, to enter select existing CBBEP project data into the GIS, to continue to provide assistance with development and implementation of the GIS, and to continue staff GIS training.

Project Objectives:
1. Collect relevant existing GIS data.
2. Enter select existing CBBEP project data into the GIS.
3. Continue to provide assistance with development and implementation of the GIS.
4. Continue to provide CBBEP staff with GIS training.

Project #0319 Identify Potential Habitat Restoration & Enhancement Sites

Performing Organization:	**Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Center for Coastal Studies**
Total Funding:	**$20,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions:	**HLR-1, HLR-2**

The Bays Plan calls for efforts to identify habitat types that are most at risk and to work with landowners and local and state governments to conserve those habitats. Within the Coastal Bend, many separate efforts are underway to protect wetland and upland habitat. It is critical to the CBBEP's long-term environmental planning effort to be well informed and to have access to all relevant information regarding other habitat conservation projects in the CBBEP area. Data including project goals, funding entities and budgets, long-term plans, GPS coordinates, and digital site photos of other habitat conservation projects will be gathered and the information will be added to the CBBEP GIS.

In addition, funds frequently become available to the CBBEP for possible habitat conservation projects, especially wetland conservation projects. Wetlands have been specifically identified by the CBBEP and others as an important coastal natural resource that is at risk. However, preparation of documents describing project parameters sufficient to justify receipt of funding is often difficult to accomplish in the short time frame frequently provided. Therefore, it is important that potential projects be identified and well delineated prior to the availability of the funds. Potential wetland conservation projects should include project descriptions, goals, and objectives complete with aerial and ground photographs and maps.

Project Objectives:

1. Collect data regarding conservation projects conducted by other entities in the CBBEP area.
2. Identify potential wetland restoration and enhancement sites.
3. Using the site information generated, design potential wetland conservation projects.
4. Enter data into the GIS.

Project #0320 Support Animal Rescue and Rehabilitation

Performing Organization: **Various Organizations**
Total Funding: **$10,000**
CBBEP Bays Plan Actions: **HLR-4, HLR-5**

Animal rescue and rehabilitation programs provide important information on species of concern and increase public awareness about our ecosystem. Each year thousands of protected, threatened, or endangered species become stranded, ill, or injured along the Texas coast. Services provided by existing programs include stranding response, evaluation, temporary refuge for exhausted migrant animals, acute and comprehensive medical care, release of rehabilitated animals, and long-term care for permanently disabled non-releasable animals. These animals are invaluable tools for education. Rescued animals also encourage public environmental stewardship, remind the public of how closely we are tied to our environment and of how our actions ultimately affect the health of our coastal waters and the animals that depend on them.

The Coalition of Animal Rescue and Rehabilitation (CARR) was formed as a result of previous CBBEP funding. CBBEP helped to coordinate a communications network of animal rescue and rehabilitation professionals and volunteers, helped to develop a CARR management plan to aid in communications and identifying the priority needs of animal rescue and rehabilitation programs. Annual CARR workshops will be held to implement and help to fund the priority items established in the management plan.

Project Objectives:

1. Conduct workshop to define communication and training needs of professionals and volunteers involved with animal rescue and rehabilitation.
2. Provide opportunity for CARR to discuss permit, coordination and communication needs with regulatory agencies.
3. Implement selected priority items established in the animal rescue and rehabilitation management plan.

VIII. Program Administration

CBBEP administrative staff (3 FTE's) will provide organizational and logistical support for Estuary Council and subcommittee meetings, and coordinate/communicate as necessary with appropriate groups, including stakeholder groups, state and federal agencies, local governments, and professional groups relevant to CCMP implementation. Staff will:

1. Acquire, manage, and disperse funds to implement the *Bays Plan*;
2. Monitor, track, and report on implementation performance by implementing partners, and work to maintain implementation commitments;
3. Develop a prioritized biennial work plan and budget for Estuary Council review and approval;
4. Coordinate the periodic update of the *Bays Plan*, the *State of the Bay* report, the *Implementation Strategy*, and other key documents of the program;
5. Provide logistical support for all meetings, workshops, symposia, and special events related to program mission;
6. Provide for overall program coordination with EPA Region 6 and TNRCC.
7. Participate in regional, state, and national conferences and meetings relevant to estuarine management.

IX. Project Management

CBBEP Project Management staff (7 FTE's) will coordinate/communicate as necessary with appropriate groups, including stakeholder groups, state and federal agencies, local governments, and professional groups relevant to CCMP implementation. Staff will:

1. Develop and implement partnership projects with local governments, state, and federal agencies, and private organizations;
2. Monitor, track, and report on implementation performance by implementing partners, and work to maintain implementation commitments;
3. Provide communication and coordination with the Texas Coastal Management Program and the Coastal Coordination Council, the Gulf of Mexico Program, the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC), and other relevant coastal/watershed programs;
4. Coordinate the review of proposed actions of federal, state, and local projects in an open process for consistency with the *Bays Plan;*
5. Develop a prioritized biennial work plan and budget for Estuary Council review and approval;
6. Provide for overall program coordination, including quality control/quality assurance procedures with EPA Region 6 and TNRCC.
7. Participate in regional, state, and national conferences and meetings relevant to estuarine management.

X. Program Expenses

CBBEP funds will be used to support continued program implementation, evaluation, and reporting. Funds are also necessary to provide logistical support for Estuary Council and subcommittee meetings. Expense categories are as follows:

1. Travel – allows Program staff to attend state, regional and national meetings, workshops, and conferences;
2. Supplies – as needed, for the day-to-day operations of the Program;
3. Equipment – purchase of items over $1,000, i.e. computers;
4. Other – copier rental, temporary staff, postage, communication services, accounting services, printing, etc.

XI. Working Capital

The CBBEP Board of Directors has established working capital out of local funding. The funds will be set aside for possible future projects, matching funds and/or emergency funding.

XII. Summary

On September 1, 2002, the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program will begin Year 5 of implementing the *Coastal Bend Bays Plan*. This FY 2003 Work Plan describes the proposed work to be initiated during FY 2003. Of the total funds identified in the Work Plan budget, $667,500 are new (FY 2003) federal funds, $849,777 are new (FY 2003) state funds, $5,150,000 are new (FY 2003) special funds, and $350,000 are new (FY 2003) local partner funds. The total budget for this FY 2003 Work Plan is $7,017,277.