



## **Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, Inc.**

1305 N. Shoreline Blvd, Ste. 205, Corpus Christi, Texas 78401-1500

361-885-6202 (phone) • 361-881-5168 (fax)

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August 20, 2009

To: CBBEP Board of Directors

From: Ray Allen, Executive Director

Re: Request to Cancel/Reallocate Funds from Project # 0927 - Colonial Waterbird Rookery Island Enhancement

This is primarily an administrative request to allow for the funds from Project # 0927 to be combined with new funds in the FY 2010 Work Plan for Project # 1014: Nueces Bay Causeway Marsh Restoration - Construction.

The purpose of Project # 0927 was to benefit colonial waterbirds through habitat management (see attached). Project # 1014 accomplishes that goal by creating fisheries habitat that will provide both feeding and some nesting habitat in Nueces Bay.

Project # 1014, was fully reviewed by the CBBEP Habitat & Living Resources Team, and was presented to and recommended by both the Coordination Team and the CBBEP Bays Council.

**Performing Organization:** CBBEP  
**Total Project Funding:** \$120,011  
**CBBEP Bays Plan Actions:** HLR-1, HLR-4

Most species of colonial nesting waterbirds such as pelicans, herons, terns and gulls, have experienced population declines over the past forty years. One of the principal reasons for this decline is loss of nesting habitat in our surrounding bay systems. These birds have several basic requirements to nest successfully, thereby replacing themselves and hopefully reversing declines in their populations. Most nesting activity in the Coastal Bend occurs on small islands that do not support populations of predators such as raccoons or coyotes, are remote enough so that invasion during nesting season is not likely, support substrate types (brush for wading birds, bare ground for terns, skimmers, etc.) that are required by the various species, and are not subject to excessive disturbance and destruction by human activities.

CBBEP's Colonial Waterbird and Rookery Island Management Plan has identified the need for increasing the size of existing rookery islands, and managing areas for the benefit of nesting birds. This suite of birds includes several high priority species of conservation concern, including American oystercatcher, Black skimmer, and Gull-billed tern. All species have been experiencing a decline, likely as a result of decreased available nesting area and factors associated with interspecific colony dynamics.

Habitat enhancement actions will be implemented in accordance with recommendations in CBBEP's Colonial Waterbird and Rookery Island Management Plan. Typical habitat enhancement actions include shoreline stabilization, placement of dredge material to increase usable nesting area, installation of nesting platforms, vegetation management, predator control, and installation of instructional signage.

**Project Objective:**

Continue efforts on enhancement and construction of nesting habitat and predator control in Nueces Bay, Corpus Christi Bay, and the Upper Laguna Madre for the benefit of colonial waterbirds.