



May 2020

CBBEP Receives EPA Grant for Up2U Litter Prevention Campaign

Up2U! Up2U! - Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program (CBBEP) was just awarded a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Trash Free Waters Program to expand the Up2U Litter Prevention Campaign to the six coastal counties and ten watersheds within the Coastal Bend! The grant, in the amount of \$422,857, seeks to cultivate a sustainable behavior-changing litter prevention program and includes distribution of Up2U litter bags, education and outreach, and community cleanups.



The cornerstone of the program is a yellow mesh bag emblazoned with the empowering Up2U message. The litter bags hold approximately 1/3rd yard of litter and serve as a tool for trash removal, trash prevention, and outreach. Currently in the Coastal Bend, these recognizable litter bags are made available by a few municipalities at certain beach and bay public access points. This project is looking to fill in the gaps and expand the distribution so that every recreationist within six coastal counties of the Coastal Bend (Refugio, San Patricio, Aransas, Nueces, Kleberg and Kenedy) has access to the litter bags!



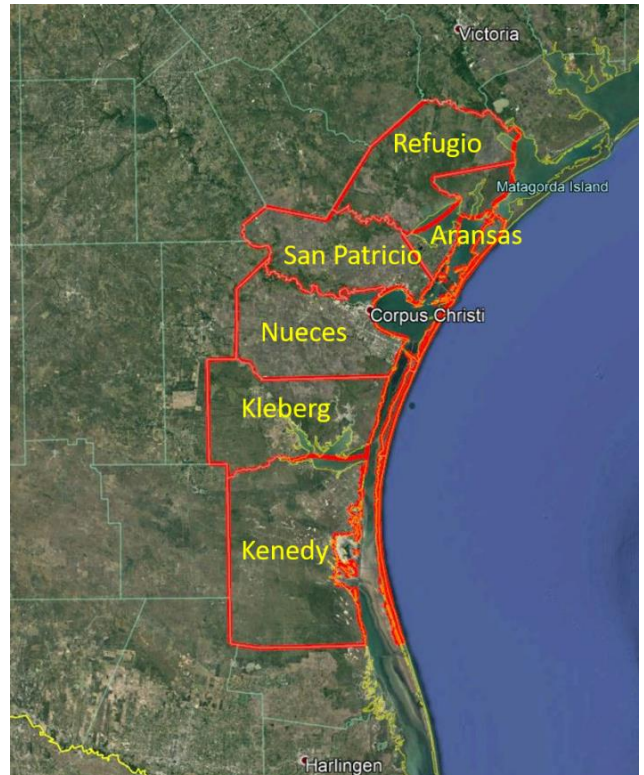
Nueces River Authority

The original Up2U Litter Prevention Campaign was started by the Nueces River Authority (NRA) in the headwaters of the Nueces River, near Uvalde, Texas. Since 2004 the headwaters campaign has distributed over 750,000 litter bags, which equates to about 250,000 cubic yards of litter being removed from the watershed. Building on the proven success of the headwaters campaign, the CBBEP will use this grant to partner with the NRA to expand the program to the coast.

“The Nueces River Authority has done such a wonderful job with the Up2U headwaters campaign, partnering with them to bring this model down to the coast was a natural fit” said Kathryn Tunnell, Communications Manager for the CBBEP. “We are hopeful that the campaign’s empowering message will inspire positive change that will benefit our coastal environments for years to come.”

FUN FACT: The 2010 Census reported approximately 550,000 people living in the Coastal Bend and it is estimated that approximately that many visit the area each year. That’s over a million people that could be reached with this program!

FUN FACT: Approximately 150,000 Up2U litter bags will be distributed over the five-year project at community events and bag distribution sites. If each Up2U litter bag holds approximately 1/3 cubic yard of litter, the project has the potential to prevent 50,000 cubic yards of litter from being left on beaches or allowed to reach coastal waterways! That’s 50,000 cubic yards of litter that will not be harming our fish and wildlife!



Map of Coastal Bend counties that will benefit from the Up2U project.

Litter and dumping along waterways, under bridges, and at water recreation sites is a huge problem in the Coastal Bend. To change this behavior will require partners, strong messaging targeted at personal responsibility, and an integrated approach of reaching students and their parents, recreationists, recreation-oriented businesses, and communities. This five-year project will start in September 2020, and by the end we expect strong partners to have emerged to carry on the distribution of litter bags and support of the message and the program into the future – because at the end of the day, it really is Up2U!

The Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program is a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting and restoring bays and estuaries in the 12-county region of the Texas Coastal Bend. CBBEP is partially funded by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. For more information about the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, contact Kathryn Tunnell at (361) 336-0304 or ktunnell@cbbep.org. This report published in May 2020.

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