



Natural Resources Division

Strategic Plan

Created 2018

Natural Resources Division

The Natural Resources Division falls under the umbrella of the Parks & Recreation Department within the City of Pearland. City leadership recognizes the importance of devoting resources to protecting and enhancing the city's valuable natural resources and created the division in fall 2016.

Currently, the division is made up of a Natural Resources Manager and an Outdoor Recreation Specialist.

Mission

To protect, manage, and enhance the City's natural resources, provide citizens with outdoor recreation opportunities, and to further the public's understanding and appreciation of its natural resources through education and hands-on experiences.

Vision

To be the source of environmental education, awareness, and stewardship in the community that leads the City to increased nature-based connections and experiences by:

- Preserving natural areas and features
- Restoring important habitats
- Providing wildlife-friendly parks
- Providing accessible nature-based recreation
- Acting as an abundant environmental education outlet

Natural Resources Management

Goal: To manage, restore, and enhance natural resources within the City for the benefit of conserving native plant and animal life as well as preserving their associated ecological functions.

Initiative 1: Habitat Restoration

Actions:

- Identify potential restoration sites.
- Prioritize projects based on impact, needs, size, costs, location, and benefits.
- Source funding for large-scale projects that may require partners or grant funding.
- Focus on restoring historical plant communities at sites.
- Install only native vegetation that would naturally occur at the project site.
- Remove, control, and manage invasive species (plant and animal).
- Mimic natural disturbances as best management practices.

Initiative 2: Parkland Flora and Fauna Management

Actions:

- Remove non-native and invasive species (plants and animals).
- Implement all available management techniques to improve habitats through effective and environmentally conscious methods to further enhance native plant and animal life.
- Install artificial wildlife supplements (i.e., nest boxes, roosting structures, water features, accessibility) when necessary.

- Install locally native plants in gardens, green spaces, and natural areas.
- Collect and propagate locally native plants, including trees, grasses, and herbaceous species.
- Monitor populations through various survey techniques to assess and help determine management strategies.

Initiative 3: Wildlife & Environmentally-Friendly Initiatives Development

Actions:

- Encourage programs that have positive results directly on area resources.
- Develop new innovative strategies to improve wildlife spaces.
- Provide assistance to outside organizations' environmental initiatives.
- Encourage the incorporation of wildlife and environmentally-friendly features in new development.
- Offer educational materials.
- Acquire land for the purpose of conserving natural habitats.

Initiative 4: Environmentally Sensitive Areas Management

Actions:

- Protect and control access to sensitive areas.
- Encourage individuals to be mindful of such sites during disruptive activities and make recommendations to limit impacts.
- Increase public awareness of sites and promote conservation of such areas.

Initiative 5: Waterway Conservation

Actions:

- Incorporate green infrastructure into existing sites and new projects when possible.
- Encourage the establishment of vegetation in and around water bodies.
- Preserve naturally occurring wetlands and swells.
- Use aquatic-rated pesticides whenever possible, even when not working directly in or adjacent to standing water.

Education

Goal: Provide nature and outdoor education to the citizens of Pearland and the surrounding communities by encouraging familiarity with the local native habitats, plants, and animal species through hands-on opportunities that utilize live animals, bio-facts, relevant curriculum, and interactive learning.

Initiative 1: Nature/Outdoor Education Programming

Actions:

- Develop and program nature classes and workshops to serve all ages.
- Have educational signage throughout the Nature Center and Parks showcasing the local environment.

- Maintain and rotate a collection of bio-facts on display for the public to view and touch.
- Maintain a collection of native live animals for the public to experience in a controlled environment.

Initiative 2: Field Trips Provision

Actions:

- Develop and program field trip opportunities for schools and other educational groups.
- Integrate hands-on learning opportunities to engage all aspects of the learning process.
- Integrate state learning standards into curriculum in order to encourage schools to learn the requirements in new, thought-provoking ways.

Initiative 3: Nature Center Exhibits Provision

Actions:

- Provide interactive exhibits at the Delores Fenwick Nature Center that encourage learning through play.
- Design and maintain engaging exhibits that utilize technology, live plants and animals, dioramas, nature-based art, and real natural elements that cover a variety of environmental education topics, such as wildlife; ecology; water quality issues; conservation issues; and native plant management, propagation, and general information for trees, grasses and herbs.
- Create a unique and inclusive educational environment that promotes learning through activities.

- Create and maintain signage to complement exhibits and displays.

Community Outreach & Involvement

Goal: Provide unique opportunities for community outreach and engagement in natural resource projects that will foster deeper connections to nature and create a community invested in its natural resources through increased awareness and education of local resources and outdoor recreation activities.

Initiative 1: Introduction Classes

Actions:

- Offer Introductory Classes on environmental topics to the community to help garner interest in future programs and classes.
- Provide outreach opportunities at no costs to outreach groups who are providing an equal service to the City or groups who are also working to benefit the community, particularly the underserved populations.

Initiative 2: Volunteer Opportunities

Actions:

- Host routine volunteer workdays that allow citizen involvement in natural resource projects.
- Provide opportunities and guidance to outside organizations for environmentally-based projects.
- Encourage, promote, and host citizen science programs.

- Allow qualified individuals to offer environmental education opportunities under staff supervision.

Initiative 3: Event Participation

Actions:

- Attend local events and/or functions with a booth to interact with the public in new spaces with the intent of promoting interest in the Delores Fenwick Nature Center, its programs, outdoor recreation, and other activities relating to Natural Resources.
- Provide information to visitors about opportunities to be involved with current and upcoming natural resource projects.
- Provide activities, such as animal demos, that will engage the public and help them to better appreciate nature.
- Speak/present to organizations and groups to share the goals and mission of the Natural Resources Division and advertise opportunities within the Division.

Initiative 4: Partnerships

Actions:

- Work with other groups and organizations, as outlined under the Partnership section, who share our vision and mission goals to offer additional amenities and resources to our community.
- Use partners to create programs, educational opportunities, and recreational opportunities that the City alone cannot produce.

Partnerships

Goal: Provide better services, additional opportunities, and improve natural resources on a local and landscape scale.

Initiative 1: Collaboration

- Seek partnerships with organizations to assist in funding, planning, and management of natural resources.
- Join work groups, committees, and boards to collaborate on similar projects.
- Partner with outside organizations to provide outdoor recreation and education opportunities to participants.

Initiative 2: Networking

- Identify workshops and trainings targeted toward similar division goals.
- Attend workshops and trainings to learn new techniques and to grow a network of potential partners.
- Speak/present at trainings and workshops to share projects and to offer partnering opportunities.

Initiative 3: Cross-Department Collaboration

- Join with other programmers to provide outdoor recreation and education opportunities to a wider audience.
- Assess other departments for overlap in objectives.
- Identify City projects for potential cross-department collaboration.

Recreation

Goal: Provide various outdoor recreation activities for the community, remaining informed of the wants of the community and trending recreational activities, to encourage activity in nature and increased utilization of the park spaces in Pearland.

Initiative 1: Outdoor Recreation Programming

Actions:

- Program various outdoor recreational activities throughout the year for participants of all ages while maintaining awareness of seasonal changes.
- Conduct research on new and upcoming activities in outdoor recreation to remain on top of trends in the field, while ensuring that they fit our community needs and resources.
- Utilize City parks and natural spaces for outdoor recreation programs when possible.

Initiative 2: Crossover Programming

Actions:

- Work with other Recreation Specialists in the City to incorporate outdoor recreation into other areas of programming, such as Camps, Adaptive Recreation, Senior Programming, and others.

Delores Fenwick Nature Center Fees

Field Trips:

- \$8.⁰⁰ per participant

Classroom Rentals:

- \$140.⁰⁰ refundable deposit at booking
- \$180.⁰⁰ cleaning fee
- \$25.⁰⁰ per hour non-profit rate
- \$50.⁰⁰ per hour organization rate