**Regional Conservation News Release Template - Education**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

[Month] [Date], [Year]

Contact:

**[NEWS RELEASE HEADLINE]**

*[News Release Sub-header]*

**[CITY, STATE]** – Conservation means protecting natural areas in balance with the needs of people living in and around them. Preserving, enhancing, and restoring natural areas is critical to the Houston-Galveston region’s tourism economy, environmental quality, and disaster resilience.

Many of the region’s 9,892 square miles of natural areas and parks incorporate education methods, such as signage or demonstration areas. Learning about the importance of conservation can impact choices businesses and residents make on their own property.

*[The two paragraphs below provide an example of a recognized regional conservation education project. You can use this as an example to highlight the potential economic benefits of your own conservation education project, or you may replace these paragraphs with information about your own conservation education project and use them as a guide in how to discuss it.]*

An example of an award-winning conservation education project is Ghirardi WaterSmart Park in League City. Tucked away in an east side League City neighborhood, the Ghirardi WaterSmart Park features a small pavilion, water cisterns, picnic areas, an outdoor classroom, a rain garden, a playground, walking trails, and a bathroom. Play spaces at the park double as a teaching display for water conservation – the park shows how conservation need not be expensive or complicated.

Visitors to the park can see examples of native plantings, swales, rain gardens, vegetated buffers, a green roof, pervious pavement, and rainwater harvesting that can be used in any residential or commercial setting. The park won a Houston-Galveston Area Council Parks and Natural Areas Award in 2014 for its educational opportunities and the emphasis the city placed on placed on researching water conservation techniques as well as water quality from stormwater runoff.

In 2021, the Houston-Galveston Area Council launched the Regional Conservation Initiative aimed at magnifying local conservation efforts and assisting local governments and nonprofits in securing the funding and resources needed to launch their own conservation projects. More information about the initiative, including a conservation funding guide and toolbox, model projects throughout the region, ecosystem service benefits, and mapping tools, is available at [www.h-gac.com/regional-conservation](https://www.h-gac.com/regional-conservation).