**Regional Conservation News Release Template - Flood Mitigation**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

[Month] [Date], [Year]

Contact:

**[NEWS RELEASE HEADLINE]**

*[News Release Sub-header]*

**[CITY, STATE]** – In the past decade, the Houston-Galveston region faced flood damages exceeding $142 billion. Hurricane Harvey alone accounted for $125 billion of this total. Harnessing the power of our natural ecosystems for flood mitigation can be an important tool in the region’s resiliency efforts.

Flat, coastal areas like the Houston-Galveston region are vulnerable to hurricanes and other severe storms. However, natural features, such as barrier islands, native prairies, marshes, and forested wetlands, help provide a buffer between flood waters and adjacent properties. Wetlands can be found across the Houston-Galveston region as naturally occurring areas or as built detention in neighborhoods or around businesses. A single acre wetland can hold about 3 million gallons of water that would otherwise contribute to rising floodwaters or require costly flood infrastructure.

*[Below is an example of a prominent natural area that contributes significantly to flood mitigation. You can use this as an example to highlight the potential disaster mitigation benefits of your own conservation project, or you may replace this paragraph with information about your own conservation project and use this paragraph as a guide in how to discuss it.]*

In 2011, the Clear Lake City Water Authority purchased the Clear Lake Golf Course using Harris County bond funds. Following town hall meetings to garner community input and support, the water authority and Exploration Green Conservancy began construction on a five phase 200-acre multi-use stormwater detention project, including wetlands. When fully built, Exploration Green’s detention ponds will hold a combined 500 million gallons of stormwater, protecting an estimated 2,000 to 3,000 homes from flooding in 12 to 15 inches of rain.

Exploration Green also serves as a nature preserve, with 6 miles of walking and biking trails, athletic fields, and dedicated wetlands and native grassland areas.

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).