



Houston-Galveston
Area Council

Take A Hike: Building and Connecting Trails Across the Region

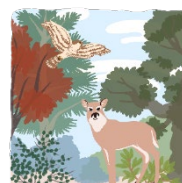
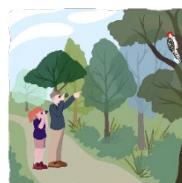
April 25, 2024

AGENDA

- 9:00 a.m.** **Welcome and Event Overview**
Justin Bower, Houston-Galveston Area Council
- 9:10 a.m.** **Tools and Resources for Successful Rail Trails**
Yvonne Mwangi, Rails to Trails Conservancy
- 9:30 a.m.** **Trail Mix Magic: Blending Community & Conservation**
Gibrán Lule Hurtado, National Park Service
Participants will learn practical strategies for starting and nurturing community-driven conservation initiatives.
- 9:50 a.m.** **Oh The Places You'll Go: Harris County Precinct 3 Experience with Trails in the Region**
Eric Heppen, Harris County Precinct 3
- 10:10 a.m.** **Trail Blazers Getting from Here to There: Developing a Trail**
Belinda Halfin, FM1093 Rails to Trails Local Government Corporation
- 10:30 a.m.** **Take A Hike Interactive Trail Map Demonstration**
Everett Neucere, Houston-Galveston Area Council
- 10:40 a.m.** **Break**
- 10:50 a.m.** **Breakout Sessions**
- 11:30 a.m.** **Take A Hike Map Application: Exercise**
<https://bit.ly/HGACTakeAHike>



Breakout Group Guides





Houston-Galveston
Area Council

Building and Connecting Trails Across the Region Today's Presenters



Justin Bower, Houston-Galveston Area Council

Justin Bower has over 20 years of experience in leading natural resource management and urban planning efforts for a variety of local government and non-governmental organizations. For the past 14 years, Justin has served the Houston-Galveston Area Council in its focus on enhancing community resilience, most currently serving as H-GAC's Director of Community and Environmental Planning, overseeing the agency's natural resources, urban planning, disaster resilience, public safety, and conservation programs. Justin has an educational background in environmental science and urban planning, including a master's degree in urban planning and public policy from the University of Delaware.



Belinda Halfin, FM1093 Rails to Trails Local Government Corporation

Belinda Halfin is President of the FM1093 Rails to Trails Local Government Corporation and has been active with its development from inception. Her "day job" career spans over 35 years in the petrochemical industry, developing complex projects around the world, and she works to bring those organizational skills to community projects. She stays active in the community and currently serves on the Wallis City Council and Wallis Economic Development Corporation (EDC).



Eric Heppen, Harris County Precinct 3

Eric Heppen is a Senior Project Manager with Harris County Precinct 3. Prior to his role in government, he worked in Texas, California, Pennsylvania, and New York doing various types of development, such as residential subdivision, commercial development, utility design, and commercial windfarm development. He has worked for Harris County for more than 10 years. He has helped design nearly a dozen parks and many more park features, and his efforts have led to recognition multiple times through H-GAC's Annual Parks and Natural Areas Awards program.



Gibrán Lule Hurtado, National Park Service

Gibrán Lule Hurtado is an Urban and Community Planner with National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA) in Austin. He joined RTCA's Austin office in March 2019 after completing a fellowship through the New Leaders in Conservation Community Assistance program. With a master's degree in community and regional planning from the University of Texas (2015) and a master's degree in education from the American College of Education (2018), his work focuses on access to recreational spaces, social justice, and educational planning. Prior to RTCA, he taught grade school, managed internships, and interned at the National Park Service's National Center for Preservation Technology and Training.

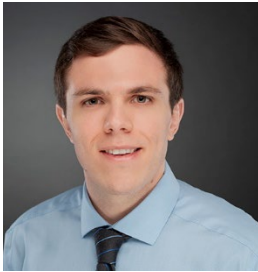


Building and Connecting Trails Across the Region Today's Presenters



Yvonne Mwangi, Rails to Trails Conservancy

With an in-depth understanding of trail-related issues, Yvonne Mwangi provides up-to-date knowledge, tools, data and connections to empower communities to advance their trails and active transportation projects. She is responsible for the robust delivery of all levels of Rails to Trails Conservancy's (RTC) growing trail development technical assistance including development of web-based resources, managing RTC's email and phone-based ("quick assist") technical assistance services, supporting the Trail Development team in technical assistance and planning tasks for RTC's TrailNation projects, and providing RTC's legal program research and monitoring assistance through an extensive trails database.



Everett Neucere, Houston-Galveston Area Council

Everett Neucere is a Senior Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Analyst at the Houston-Galveston Area Council. He graduated from Texas A&M University with a bachelor's degree in Geographic Information Science and Technology and has previously worked in Hydrology and Hydraulics engineering. He specializes in data analysis and automation.

Upcoming H-GAC Event



H-GAC Parks and Natural Areas Parks Tour
Wednesday, May 15, 2024 | Bridgeland – Cypress
<https://bit.ly/515ParkTourHGAC>





3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 120
Houston, Texas 77027
713-627-3200
h-gac.com
@HouGalvAreaCog