



May 2024

First Boat Launch at the Newly Finished Chris Andrews Boat Launch

PORTLAND, TX – A new way to the bay has been added to the list of boat and kayak launch sites around the Coastal Bend, just in time for the summer season. Community members, Portland city officials, and project partners gathered at the edge of the Nueces Bay off highway 181 Tuesday afternoon at the opening of the newly constructed Chris Andrews Boat Ramp. With the opening of Chris Andrew Boat Launch, fishermen and birders will now have improved access to the north side of Nueces Bay without having to trekking across the large spans of open water that can steer smaller craft away.



Chris Andrews Boat Launch off HWY 181



Nueces Marsh Restoration Complex

Though the updated pier is a new sight for commuters, the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program is no stranger to this corner of Nueces Bay. A short paddle north of the kayak launch lies the Nueces Bay Marsh Restoration site, sometimes referred to as “the Noodles” for the pasta-esque shape of the islands. In 2012, a collaborative effort between U.S. Fish and Wildlife, the Texas General Land Office, and CBBEP took on the task of restoring some of the 340 acres of marsh that has been lost in Nueces Bay over the last 60 years.

By building terraces or mounds at elevations suitable for *Spartina*, the foundation species in marsh habitats in the Gulf of Mexico, once lost land mass was returned to the system and life soon returned. When the project was finished, a new 160 acre marsh complex had been created and plant life was found to be growing more densely in the restored area compared to adjacent bays. A marsh complex offers a productive nursery ground for a variety of wildlife, providing structure and protection as they grow more independent. Its now not uncommon to find redfish chasing bait fish through the deep channels, terns foraging to bring a bite back to their chicks, or American Oyster Catchers nesting amongst the spartina on the shorelines. The addition of this boats ramp will provide another chance for the community to get out and experience the natural beauty of the Coastal Bend first hand.



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 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 Quinn Hendrick, 361-336-0305 or qhendrick@cbbep.org.
www.cbbep.org - www.facebook.com/CBBEP

