



DATE: 09/20/2019

TO: Texas General Land Office Coastal Management Program

FROM: Environment Texas

Dear Texas General Land Office Coastal Management Program,

Environment Texas Research and Policy Center supports the research proposal of the Geotechnology Research Institute (GTRI)/ Houston Advanced Research Center (HARC) entitled, *“Forecasting Public Health Risk: A Response to Degraded Beach Water Quality on the Texas Coast”*, for submission to be considered by the Texas General Land Office, Coastal Management Program Cycle 25.

Texas has a problem of fecal bacterial pollution on our beaches. Our newly released report “Safe for Swimming? Water Quality at Our Beaches” found that 141 of 167 tested beach sites, in Texas, were potentially unsafe for swimming on at least one day in 2018 because of fecal bacteria in the water. This pollution makes us sick. Providing a framework for early notification of potential health risk at contaminated beach sites is a timely and much needed solution to better protect public health at Texas coastal recreational beaches.

Environment Texas supports the directives in this proposal to create such a warning system based on scientific forecast modeling of bacterial pollution loads, and the creation of an online warning system to help notify the public when we are unsafe.

Sincerely,

Anna Farrell-Sherman

Anna Farrell-Sherman
Clean Water Associate
Environment Texas