



NEWS

News Release

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San Jacinto Marsh Restoration Enters New Phase

Public Informational Meeting to Explain Project Set for Feb. 11

AUSTIN -- The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is starting the next phase in an ongoing effort to restore the San Jacinto Battleground to its appearance in 1836. The restoration efforts, which date back to 1994, include reseeding prairie areas as well as marsh restorations on more than 120 acres so far.

The impending phase of the restoration will recreate approximately 101 acres of marsh in an area known as Santa Anna Bayou and a portion of Boggy Bayou, a tributary of Santa Anna Bayou. This area of the battleground has subsided about 10 feet in past decades, creating an open water lake that has replaced the bayou and adjacent marsh existing at the time of the battle.

Construction of the containment levees will begin this week. Pumping of soil is expected to begin in May and will take about three months. Public use of the battleground will not be affected during the project.

An informational meeting to explain the project and answer questions will be held in the San Jacinto Monument at 6 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 11. For more information, contact the park.

The Boggy Bayou marsh restoration is made possible through the use of material being removed for a private industry project near Morgan's Point, about five miles south of the battleground.

"The restoration project will provide services worth more than \$1.5 million," said Brent Leisure, TPWD state parks director. "The only costs to the parks department are limited to staff time needed for project oversight. It's a great example of how industry can continue to operate in the area while helping to restore and maintain the natural and cultural heritage of the San Jacinto Battleground."

As the restoration begins, two levees will be installed around the perimeter of the restoration area to contain dredge material from the Morgan's Point project that will be pumped to the site and dispersed over the area. The deposited material will raise the marsh bottom about 10 to 20 inches and allow marsh grasses to expand their coverage over the area.

The goal is to restore Boggy Bayou to the shallow stream with a wide fringe of marsh that played such an essential role in the battle for Texas Independence. Restoration will not only provide a benefit for

those interested in a better representation of the battlefield landscape, it will also result in a new pedestrian trail through the marsh area for park visitors to enjoy.

The newly restored marsh will also provide increased habitat for birds, small mammals and marine species such as shrimp larvae and crabs when the project is complete, reversing some of the effects of industrial development in the area. Restoration of the historically marshy terrain will also provide an additional buffer from storm surges such as those that affected the battleground during Hurricane Ike.

The restored marsh will more closely resemble the appearance of the battleground in 1836, allowing a better understanding of the constraints faced by the opposing forces during the conflict and the melee afterward as the routed Mexican forces attempted to flee from the Texan army.

This project has undergone the required review process by regulatory and oversight bodies, including the State Historic Preservation Office (Texas Historical Commission) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers. All work will be conducted in compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act and will not adversely affect the cultural resources of the site. Although it is probable that some battlefield artifacts remain in the restoration area, these are likely associated with human remains and the department practice and belief is they should rest undisturbed and intact.

"The THC supports TPWD's efforts to restore the battlefield to its historic appearance, said Mark Wolfe, Executive Director of the Texas Historical Commission. "We believe that these efforts will create a better experience for future visitors."

The marsh restoration is part of broader, longstanding plans to continue to restore and enhance the battleground.

"The Boggy Bayou project continues our goal of providing the best experience possible to San Jacinto visitors, by recreating the landscape of 1836," Leisure explained. "The department will also continue to conduct archeological research on the battleground as staff and financial resources are available to further gain insight and understanding of the events of that momentous day in April 1836 when the course of history was changed at San Jacinto."

Other partners support the restoration work, including the San Jacinto Museum Association, which operates the museum at the base of the monument.

"The San Jacinto Museum Association has partnered with Texas Parks and Wildlife to restore the Battlefield for many years and supports their continuing efforts in Boggy Bayou," said Larry Spasic, San Jacinto Museum Association director.

For more information about the San Jacinto Battleground, see the [park web page](#) or call the park at (281) 479-2431.