



## CBBEP adds acreage at the Nueces Delta Preserve

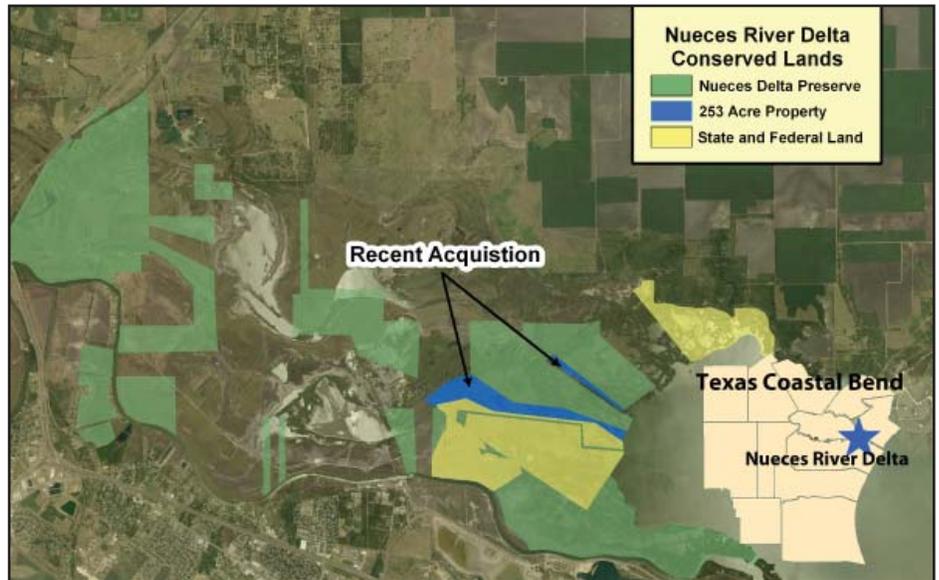
Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program's Nueces Delta Preserve is 253 acres larger after the purchase of additional property in the river delta.

The now 5,800-acre preserve off Highway 77 near Odem is home to environmental programs, research and monitoring, and is the highlight of the program's conservation efforts.

"It's always more economical to conserve the property, the habitat, than to go through the expense of recreating it," said Jake Herring, CBBEP's property manager.

CBBEP has habitat restoration and improvement projects as well, but conserving undeveloped land is ideal.

"Being stewards of the land makes it easier to accomplish our goal of ensuring that environmental



*This map shows the Nueces Delta Preserve, with the newly purchased 253 acres highlighted in blue.*

health and functions of the Nueces River Delta continue," Herring said.

The 253-acre piece is situated between tracts already under protection with the estuary program. Efforts to purchase it began in 2009 when CBBEP first contacted the owners, a family that inherited the land years ago and were interested in selling.

The property is mostly wetlands and fronts Nueces Bay. It is only accessible by boat or helicopter.

Its proximity to rookery islands in Nueces Bay make it a superb feeding habitat for birds such as the Roseate Spoonbill, Great Blue Heron, Clapper Rail, Ibis, and Fulvous Whistling-Duck.

The Nueces Delta Preserve is located on the former McGregor Ranch. Its site includes the Rincon Bayou, a vital link in the riparian habitat, and a significant freshwater inflow route from Nueces River into Nueces Bay. The area also has uplands, river and bay shoreline. This makes it



*The Nueces Delta Preserve includes mud flats, pothole wetlands, marsh, bay and river habitats.*



White Ibis

ideal for conservation and restoration.

With a goal of preserving and protecting this unique land, the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program began planning in 2000 to acquire land in the delta. The first parcel was purchased in 2003.

By 2007, the estuary program began using the Nueces Delta Preserve for student field trips and teacher workshops. An outdoor pavilion was built in 2007 and a screened-in classroom in 2009.

Now, more than 7,000 students visit the preserve each year. Plans now call for an education center with trails and restroom facilities.

Herring said there are still about 8,000 acres in this delta region that CBBEP is interested in protecting.

The estuary program plans to continue its land acquisition efforts in the delta, but is also interested in other areas, including whooping crane habitat in the northern Coastal Bend and barrier island habitat on Mustang and Padre islands.



Great Egret

Herring encourages landowners to consider conservation through the estuary program.

Conservation easements are negotiated, legal documents between the land owner and a conservation organization such as the CBBEP.

The conservation easement is attached to the title of the land and helps land owners continue to operate their land as they wish subject to the terms of the easement.

Land owners retain their rights to the property, as stated in the easement, and may receive property, income, and estate tax benefits.

The donated or purchased easement allows for the ongoing protection of wildlife, habitat, and open spaces.



Green-winged Teal



Long-Billed Curlew



*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 the 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 Beth Becerra at (361) 885-6246 or [bbecerra@cbbep.org](mailto:bbecerra@cbbep.org).*

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