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**Subject:** Bayou Land Conservancy Winner of Houston-Galveston Area Council Parks & Natural Areas Award

**Houston, TX** – The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) recently announced the winners of the 2018 Parks and Natural Areas Award competition. These projects are models for planning and project implementation for parks and natural areas in the region. Projects are honored in three categories: Planning Process, On-The-Ground Projects over \$500,000, and On-The-Ground Projects under \$500,000. The winner of the under \$500,000 category was the 13-mile Spring Creek Nature Trail, a project constructed by Bayou Land Conservancy (BLC). The natural surface, hike/bike trail runs along Spring Creek, in both Harris & Montgomery County, and was mostly constructed by community volunteers, including about 20 boardwalks and bridges. The trail is part of a larger system of green space along the border between the two counties known as the Spring Creek Greenway. The greenway is the longest, continuous, urban, forested greenway in the country. Said BLC Executive Director Jill Boullion about the trail, “We are really proud of this community-led project because it provides a wilderness experience only miles from the 4<sup>th</sup> largest city in the country. Since we officially opened the trail in June of 2018, the community has embraced it and come to love and appreciate it. We are especially grateful for funding received through the Texas Parks & Wildlife Recreational Grants program and our project partners Howard Hughes Corporation, The Woodlands Township, Montgomery County Precinct 3 and Harris County Precinct 4.”

“Since 2006, H-GAC has recognized creative and innovative park and natural area projects that implement best management practices in planning, policy, and development” said Jeff Taebel, Director of Community and Environmental Planning at H-GAC. “This year, we had 11 award winning entries representing five counties across our region.”

Winners were honored during a special ceremony on February 8 at H-GAC.

**About Bayou Land Conservancy:** Bayou Land Conservancy is a community-sponsored land preservation organization working to permanently protect land in the Houston region since 1996. Bayou Land Conservancy preserves land along streams for flood control, clean water and wildlife. We envision a protected network of green spaces that connect people to nature.

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Pictured from left: Honorable Stacy Adams, Brazoria County Commissioner/H-GAC Board Chair; Bayou Land Conservancy Executive Director, Jill Boullion; Bayou Land Conservancy Lands Stewardship Director and trail program manager, Suzanne Simpson; H-GAC Director of Community and Environmental Planning, Jeff Taebel.