

# CURRICULUM VITAE

## MARISSA G. SIPOCZ

### PERSONAL/CONTACT INFORMATION

Marissa Gisella Sipocz  
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Texas Coastal Watershed Program  
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service/Texas Sea Grant Program  
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### ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Bachelors of Science in Aquatic Biology, 1995. Brown University, Providence,  
Rhode Island  
Bachelors of Arts in English Literature, 1995. Brown University, Providence,  
Rhode Island

### CURRENT POSITION

WETLAND PROGRAM COORDINATOR, Texas Coastal Watershed Program (Texas A&M  
AgriLife Extension Service/Texas Sea Grant), Houston, Texas.  
January 2000-present

*Coordinates the Coastal Prairie Wetland Restoration Project at Sheldon Lake State Park, total project funding to date: \$1,153,901.* This large-scale, long-term restoration effort has spanned over 12 years and to-date has restored over 300 acres of freshwater wetlands to pre-disturbance conditions. Project management included: grant writing to fund several restoration phases, partnership development, permitting for all construction activities, interagency and inter-organization communication and coordination; contract supervision and administration; contractor guidance and oversight; and final plant installation for all restored areas. Project partners to date include: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Department, Texas Master Naturalist chapters, YES Prep School system (multiple campuses), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Galveston Bay Estuary Program

*Coordinates the Wetland Restoration Team.* This collaborative effort between the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Texas Master Naturalist program, has trained

Texas Master Naturalist volunteers on the specific tasks and procedures of wetland restoration. As the lead program coordinator for the Team, I provide the basic training and education for the Team mentors, as well as planning guidance and partner coordination. The lead role includes planning for various aspects of each restoration project from the collection and maintenance of the stock (plant) material to the final planting of the stock material on-site, as well as planning for the needs of the volunteers. In addition to the on-the-ground restoration, the Team's efforts include providing mentorship and needed instruction for student volunteer groups participating in the restoration projects (See Teaching and Training Experience, *Wetland Restoration Team*).

*Coordinated, managed and completed the successful implementation of the stormwater treatment wetland at Mason Park, Houston, Texas, total project funding \$266,925. This wetland project created 3.5 acres of freshwater tidal marsh to treat adjacent stormwater runoff from Brays Bayou. Project included partner agency coordination, permitting oversight and wetland plant installation. Project partners included Harris County Flood Control District, Houston Parks and Recreation Department, Texas Master Naturalist, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Galveston Bay Estuary Program, NRG Energy LLC, Stephen F. Austin High School, Cesar E. Chavez High School, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, and Texas Coastal Management Program. As the primary project coordinator, I developed and submitted grant requests to various organizations to fund portions of the total wetland creation project. Additionally, I created and published a news release titled, "Innovative Wetland on Brays Bayou Effectively Removes Bacteria from Polluted Stormwater Runoff" showcasing the effective treatment of stormwater runoff by the created wetland system.*

Coordinated and completed 6 additional wetland restoration and education grants (application, implementation and deliverables, and final monitoring and reporting) within the Galveston Bay region, including Sims Bayou, Buffalo Bayou, San Jacinto River, and Dickinson Bayou.

Conducts outreach/educational presentations to the public regarding wetlands functions and values, habitat preservation and restoration, the importance of water quality, and the on-going need for restoration.

Developed the first edition of the Stormwater Treatment Wetland Creation manual for use by municipalities and other agencies for the planning and building of Stormwater treatment wetlands as part of a best management practice to improve local water quality.

## **PAST POSITIONS**

CONSERVATION COORDINATOR, Galveston Bay Foundation, Webster, TX.  
November 1996-December 1999.

Responsible for the coordination all conservation related activities, including coastal marsh restoration projects; Cultivated coastal wetland plant stock; Monitored the success and progress of the Foundation's wetland restoration projects; Presented results of restoration projects in both written reports and oral presentations; Coordinated a multiple agency and organization task force on marsh restoration projects; Coordinated the monthly meetings of the regulatory review committee for permit impacts to coastal wetlands, and submitted all written correspondence to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer on behalf of the committee; Coordinated the biological, and economic aspects of the Foundation's large-scale multiple site restoration project called Marsh Mania; Participated on the Area Contingency Plan Steering Committee of local U.S. Coast Guard representatives with private corporation, nonprofits and other governmental agencies, to review progress, needs and goals for local oil or chemical spill response.

FIELD ECOLOGY INTERN, International Crane Foundation, Baraboo, Wisconsin.  
November 1996–June 1996

Responsible for the collection, cleaning and subsequent viability examination of collected seeds for prairie restoration on facility grounds as part of a large-scale multi-year restoration effort; Conducted an independent study on the presence of Karner Blue Butterfly in restored prairie areas. Conducted vegetation surveys of previously restored prairie areas with other interns.

STUDENT CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION/AMERICORPS INTERN. Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge, Brazoria, Texas. June 1996 – January 1996

Responsible for the establishment of vegetation monitoring protocol for Moist Soil Units on Brazoria and San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge, and implemented the first data collection for the established monitoring protocol.

## TEACHING AND TRAINING EXPERIENCE

*Wetland Functions and Values. An introductory lecture on the development of wetlands within our region, focusing on coastal prairie wetlands. The lecture defines and discusses the various types of wetlands typical to the region, and the general geologic development of these regional wetlands, to numerous chapters of Master Naturalists (Gulf Coast, Galveston Bay Area, Heartwood, Katy Prairie, Port Aransas, ) and student groups (Austin High School, Chavez High School). 63 completed lectures from September 2001 to December 2015.*

*Wetland Plant Identification Course. A 5-week basic introductory course to the major family groups of wetland plants used in freshwater wetland restoration projects. This class is intended for Master Naturalists, consultants, and those interested in pursuing advanced understanding of wetland plants. 13 completed annual courses from August 2003 to August 2015.*

*Wetland Field Day at Sheldon Lake State Park. An all-day lecture and field site visit showcasing the wetland restoration work at Sheldon Lake State park. The Field Days present the important innovative restoration technique developed between Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. These Field Days target land owners,*

land managers and government agencies who retain responsibility for large land parcels. 6 completed events from October 2011 to October 2015.

**Wetland Restoration Team (WRT) Workdays.** *Coordinated, organized and managed wetland restoration workdays with volunteers, primarily Master Naturalists as part of various larger wetland restoration projects, including Brays Bayou Urban Wetland Creation, Sims Bayou Wetland Restoration, Dickinson Bayou Wetland Restoration, Sheldon Lake State Park Prairie Wetland Restoration, and San Jacinto State Park Wetland Pond Creation. Various workdays with the WRT included student groups from local middle schools and/or high schools (refer to chart below). Organize, fund (approximately \$2,000 annually) and implement a long-term compensatory system for volunteers based on their hourly contribution to the Team's restoration effort*

Year	WRT Workdays	Student Workdays	Year	WRT Workdays	Student Workdays
2001	1	3	2009	55	--
2002	16	9	2010	56	--
2003	12	8	2011	62	14
2004	44	8	2012	48	12
2005	35	6	2013	47	12
2006	47	7	2014	47	6
2007	36	2	2015	51	9
2008	60	--			

## OTHER RELATED EXPERIENCE

### Wetland Consultations (as part of my expertise within wetland restoration and as an Extension employee)

*Site Evaluation for Wetland Restoration at Long Acres Ranch.* Richmond, Texas. February 2015. Conducted a site visit to evaluate the need and extent of potential freshwater wetland restoration for parcel of land. Provided input to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension on-site staff regarding prairie and wetland enhancement potentials, which were presented to the land owner for approval.

*Site Evaluation for Wetland Restoration.* Deer Park, Texas. February 2015. Conducted a site visit with colleagues, Mary Edwards and Dr. John Jacob, to evaluate the need and extent of potential freshwater wetland restoration for parcel of land.

*Site Evaluation for Wetland Restoration.* Matagorda, Texas. August 2014. Conducted a site visit with colleagues to evaluate the need and extent of potential freshwater wetland restoration for parcel of land.

*Clear Creek Wetland Restoration Plan.* Webster, Texas. January 2013. Conducted site visit to evaluate the viability of shoreline planting in an effort to stabilize the erosion for sections of Clear Creek. Provided formal report with guidelines for planting to property owners (Lisa and Mike Mize), in addition to providing material for the shoreline establishment.

*Wetland Evaluation of Munson Ranch.* Columbus, Texas. Fall 2006. Conducted site visit and subsequent on-site evaluation of private property for the potential for wetland

restoration and habitat enhancement.

### Outreach/Educational/Training events

*La Cuenca Cuenta: A Watershed Fiesta*, Mason Park, Houston, TX. 2006 and 2007. Coordinated 2 large-scale community festivals at Mason Park, which attracted over 500 attendees from surrounding neighborhoods. Recruited underwriters and sponsors to support the Festival which hosted a variety of kid crafts, environmental education booths, an artificial wetland where attendees can wade through simulated marshes, and a tour of the adjacent created wetland within the park.

*Lessons Learned in Restoration Workshop*, Clear Lake Park, Houston. 2007. Organized, executed and presented a one-day workshop including private consultants, nonprofits and state and federal agencies together to discuss the efficacy of coastal wetland restoration projects, needs for improvement, and measures necessary to improve the success of restoration projects, particularly to enhance populations of native fish, wildlife and plants.

*"Living Shorelines" Landowner workshops*, Dickinson, TX. 2007. The "Living Shoreline" project was a joint effort with Galveston Bay Foundation to approach landowner who own water front property and work with interested and willing landowners to install marshes and/or "hard" structures to protect their shoreline from erosion, and as an alternative to traditional bulkheads. The effort was designed for landowners anywhere within the Galveston Bay watershed.

*Wetland Workshop for Science Teachers*, NRG Cedar Bayou Partnership Nursery, Baytown, TX. 2005. Organized and conducted this teacher training workshop for teachers regarding the functions and benefits of wetlands.

*Wetland Delineation Course*, Armand Bayou Nature Center, Pasadena, TX. 2005 and 2007. Organized and prepared a week-long course for consultants and environmental science professionals to meet the established Corps of Engineers requirement for wetland delineation certification. Courses included both lectures series, lab-oriented and field exercises, and field and final exams.

## **GRANTS**

(Career total: \$ 2,116,093)

**Sipocz, MS.** 2015. Coastal Prairie Wetland Restoration. Natural Resource Damage Assessment. (\$8,965).

*Completed and submitted proposal to funding agency, managed contract progression including project tasks and deliverables, completed periodic reporting. This grant was in support on Phase 4 of the coastal prairie wetland restoration at Sheldon Lake State Park.*

**Sipocz, MS and J Jacob.** 2014. Continued restoration of the Coastal Prairie Wetlands at Sheldon Lake State Park. Texas State and Soil Water Conservation Board. (\$404,204)

*Completed and submitted proposal to funding agency, managed contract progression including project tasks and deliverables, completed periodic reporting. This grant supported Phase 4 of the coastal prairie wetland restoration at Sheldon Lake State Park.*

**Sipocz, MS and J. Jacob. 2014 Coastal Prairie Wetland Restoration at Sheldon Lake State Park. Galveston Bay Estuary Program (\$160,885)**

*Completed and submitted proposal to funding agency, managed contract progression including project tasks and deliverables, completed periodic reporting, and completed and submitted the final report. The grant supported Phase 4 coastal prairie wetland restoration construction and maintenance work at Sheldon Lake State Park.*

**Sipocz, MS and J Jacob. 2012. Interagency Cooperation Contract for Sheldon Lake State Park. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (\$24,309)**

*Completed and submitted proposal to funding agency, managed contract progression including project tasks and deliverables, completed periodic reporting. This grant supported the planting of the coastal prairie wetland ponds created as part of a mitigation project for Texas Department of Transportation at Sheldon Lake State Park.*

**Sipocz, MS and J Jacob. 2010. Coastal Prairie Wetland Restoration at Sheldon Lake State Park. Texas State and Soil Water Conservation Board. (\$390,538)**

*Completed and submitted proposal to funding agency, managed contract progression including project tasks and deliverables, completed periodic reporting, and completed and submitted the final report. This grant was the initial funding to complete Phase 2 and 3 of the coastal prairie wetland restoration at Sheldon Lake State Park.*

**Sipocz, MS and J Jacob 2009. Interagency Cooperation Contract for Sheldon Lake State Park. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. (\$149,000)**

*Completed and submitted proposal to funding agency, managed contract progression including project tasks and deliverables, completed periodic reporting, and completed and submitted the final report. This grant funded the initial planting portion of Phase 2 and 3 of the coastal prairie wetland restoration at Sheldon Lake State Park.*

**Sipocz MS and J Jacob 2008. Stormwater Wetland Best Management. Texas AgriLife Research. Harris County Flood Control District. (\$80,574)**

*Completed and submitted proposal to funding agency, managed contract progression including project tasks and deliverables. This grant funded the additional collection of water quality data to verify the effectiveness of the Stormwater Treatment wetlands at Brays Bayou.*

**Sipocz MS and J Jacob. 2007. Texas Coastal Stormwater Treatment Wetland Design Manual. Texas General Land Office. (\$98,772)**

*Completed and submitted proposal to funding agency, managed contract progression including project tasks and deliverables, completed periodic reporting, and completed and submitted the final report. This grant supported the creation of a technical manual and a general guide to the creation of stormwater wetlands in our region.*

**Sipocz, MS and J Jacob 2006. Wetlands for Dickinson Bayou. Coastal Management Program-Texas General Land Office (\$89,940)**

*Completed and submitted proposal to funding agency, managed contract progression including project tasks and deliverables, completed*

*periodic reporting, and completed and submitted the final report. This grant supported the selection and subsequent restoration of coastal brackish marshes along Dickinson Bayou, in addition to providing education about wetlands and wetland resources.*

**Sipocz MS and J Jacob. Urban Wetlands Restoration & Education. 2006. Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. (\$40,000)**

*Completed and submitted proposal to funding agency, managed contract progression including project tasks and deliverables, completed periodic reporting, and completed and submitted the final report. This grant supported the continued restoration work and education at the Brays Bayou Stormwater Wetland at Mason Park.*

**Sipocz MS and J Jacob. Wetland Restoration Team. 2005. Texas General Land Office. (\$73,981)**

*Completed and submitted proposal to funding agency, managed contract progression including project tasks and deliverables, completed periodic reporting, and completed and submitted the final report. This grant supported the effort and logistics of training the volunteer who comprised the Wetland Restoration Team.*

**Sipocz MS and J Jacob. Wetland Restoration. 2006. Project Aware. (\$2,000)**

*Completed and submitted proposal to funding agency, managed contract progression including project tasks and deliverables, completed periodic reporting, and completed and submitted the final report. These funds supported the volunteers as part of the Wetland Restoration Team.*

**Sipocz MS and J Jacob. Urban Wetland Education & Restoration Project. 2004. Texas General Land Office. (\$88,925)**

*Completed and submitted proposal to funding agency, managed contract progression including project tasks and deliverables, completed periodic reporting, and completed and submitted the final report. This grant supported the efforts of the Brays Bayou Stormwater Wetland Creation at Mason Park.*

**Sipocz MS and J Jacob. Restoration & Planting of the Prairie / Wetlands at the Sheldon Lake State Park Restoration Site. 2003. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. (\$16,000)**

*Completed and submitted proposal to funding agency, managed contract progression including project tasks and deliverables, completed periodic reporting, and completed and submitted the final report. This contract supported Phase 1 of the coastal prairie wetland restoration at Sheldon Lake State Park.*

**Sipocz MS and J Jacob. Brays Bayou Urban Wetland Creation Project. 2003. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. (\$18,000)**

*Completed and submitted proposal to funding agency, managed contract progression including project tasks and deliverables, completed periodic reporting, and completed and submitted the final report. This contract supported the educational component of the Brays Bayou Stormwater Wetland Creation project.*

**Sipocz MS and J Jacob. Urban Wetlands to Treat Stormwater Runoff. 2001. Galveston Bay Estuary Program. (\$ 120,000)**

*Completed and submitted proposal to funding agency, managed contract progression including project tasks and deliverables, completed periodic reporting, and completed and submitted the final report. This grant supported the planning and coordination of the Brays Bayou Stormwater Wetland Creation project at Mason Park.*

**Sipocz MS** and J Jacob. Clean Water for Armand Bayou. 2000. Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (\$ 350,000, *grant obtained prior to hire*)

*Managed contract progression including project tasks and deliverables, completed periodic reporting, and completed and submitted the final report. This grant supported the initial work of the Texas Coastal Watershed program and began the Wetland Restoration program.*

## **PROFESSIONAL PUBLICATIONS**

“Stormwater Wetlands for the Texas Gulf Coast: Ecology and Beauty for Improved Runoff Water Quality.” John S. Jacob, Marissa Sipocz, Fouad Jaber, and Charriss York. TAMU-SG-12-501. August, 2012.

“Freshwater Coastal Prairie Wetland Restoration – Case Study: Sheldon Lake State Park.” Sipocz, M. Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board/U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (2010). Houston, Texas: Texas AgriLife Extension Service.

“Utilizing Local Native Plants in Coastal Prairie Wetland Restoration.” Sipocz, M. Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board/U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (2010). Houston, Texas: Texas AgriLife Extension Service.

“Wetland Plants of Sheldon Lake State Park and Environmental Learning Center.” Sipocz, M. Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board/U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (2010). Houston, Texas: Texas AgriLife Extension Service.

“Habitats of the Dickinson Bayou Watershed” Sipocz, M, with Dickinson Bayou Watershed Partnership Habitat workgroup. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service (December 2007).

“Mason Park Messenger newsletter.” Sipocz, M. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service (September 2003).

## **PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS**

### *National*

*Coastal Prairie Wetland Restoration-Sheldon Lake State Park.* November 2014. Restore America’s Estuaries Summit. Washington, DC

*Coastal Prairie Wetland Restoration-Sheldon Lake State Park.* November 2014. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Headquarters, Washington, DC

*Coastal Prairie Wetland Restoration: A Case Study at Sheldon Lake State Park, FIELD SESSION.* 2010. Restore America’s Estuaries, Galveston, TX.

*Coastal Prairie Wetland Restoration-Sheldon Lake State Park.* June 2014. International Conference on Science and Technology. Houston, TX.

*Wetland Restoration Team.* 2008. Restore America’s Estuaries, Providence, RI.



- Mason Park Innovative Freshwater Wetland: Best Practices in Partnership.* 2006. Restore America's Estuaries, New Orleans, LA.
- Old Goats and Young Kids: Wetland Restoration with Master Naturalist Mentors.* 2005. Coastal Zone Conference, New Orleans, LA.
- Old Goats and Young Kids: Wetland Restoration with Master Naturalist Mentors (poster session)* 2004. Restore America's Estuaries Conference, Seattle, WA.

#### State

- Teamwork in the Muck.* 2012. Texas Master Naturalist State Meeting, Navasota, TX.
- Coastal Prairie Wetland Restoration-Sheldon Lake State Park.* 2012. Texas Master Naturalist State Meeting, Navasota, TX.
- Uncovering the past: buried coastal prairie potholes re-emerge through an innovative restoration process.* November 2012. Texas Society for Ecological Society, Weslaco, TX.
- Innovative wetland on Brays Bayou effectively removes bacteria from polluted stormwater runoff.* 2009. State of the Bay Conference, Galveston, TX.

#### Regional/Local

- Coastal Prairie Wetland Restoration-Sheldon Lake State Park.* May 2015. Natural Resource Action Committee/Houston Galveston Area Council. Houston, TX.
- Wetland Function and Values and the need for restoration.* April 2015. Urban Harvest, Permaculture course series. Houston, TX.
- Coastal Prairie Wetland Restoration-Sheldon Lake State Park.* July 2014. Gulf Coast Master Naturalist Chapter meeting, Houston, TX.
- Coastal Prairie Wetland Restoration-Sheldon Lake State Park.* May 2013. Gulf Coast Master Naturalist Chapter meeting, Houston, TX.
- Coastal Prairie Wetland Restoration-Sheldon Lake State Park.* October 2012. Galveston Bay Council. Houston, TX.
- Coastal Prairie Wetland Restoration-Sheldon Lake State Park.* August 2012. Clean Waters Initiative, Houston, TX.
- Coastal Prairie Wetland Restoration-Sheldon Lake State Park.* February 2012. Heartwood Chapter Master Naturalist Chapter meeting, Woodlands, TX.
- Stormwater Wetlands: Best Management Practices that Work.* 2009. EPA Region 6 MS4 Operators Conference, Houston, TX.
- Mason Park Innovative Wetland: Why StormwaterWetland BMPs are needed.* 2009. State of the Bay Symposium, Houston, TX
- Old Goats and Young Kids: Wetland Restoration with Master Naturalist mentors.* 2007. Coastal Zone, New Orleans, LA
- Brays Bayou: A Partnership Wetland.* 2007. State of the Bay Symposium, Galveston, TX
- Wetland Function and Values.* 2005. Hispanic Women in Leadership. Houston, TX.
- Wetland Habitats and their value to a watershed plan.* 2005. Dickinson Total Maximum Daily Load Steering committee meeting. Dickinson, TX.
- Old Goats and Young Kids: Wetland Restoration with Master Naturalist Mentors.* 2004. Texas Society of Ecological Restoration, Houston, TX.
- Brays Bayou Urban Wetland Creation: the need and benefits of wetlands.* 2003. Positive Interaction Program (Super Neighborhood). Houston, TX
- Brays Bayou Urban Wetland Creation: the need and benefits of wetlands.* 2003. Magnolia Park Civic Association. Houston, TX

*Brays Bayou Urban Wetland Creation: the need and benefits of wetlands.* 2003. East Lawndale Civic Association, Houston, TX

*Brays Bayou Wetland Creation Project: Restoration of Freshwater Tidal Marshes.* 2003. State of the Bay Symposium, Houston, TX

## **PROFESSIONAL LICENSES**

Noncommercial Political Pesticide Applicator License

Texas Department of Agriculture, License No: 0713232, Effective Date: 05/04/2015

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF WETLANDS. Texas Coastal Watershed Program, Houston, TX.  
April 2015

WETLAND DELINEATION COURSE-NEW FEDERAL REVISION. Wetland Institute, Houston, TX, May 2008.

REMOTE SENSING WORKSHOP. Texas A&M University, Corpus Christi, TX. 2007.

## **AWARDS**

- 2015 Proud Partner Winner, Keep Houston Beautiful-Mayor's Proud Partners Award
- 2014 Finalist, Texas Environmental Excellence Award for Sheldon Lake State Park Prairie Wetland Restoration, Texas Environmental Excellence Council
- 2013 Honorable Mention, Keep Houston Beautiful-Mayor's Proud Partners Award
- 2006 Partnership (Synergy) Award for Mason Park Freshwater Wetland project, The Park People
- 2006 Gulf Guardian Award for Partnership, Gulf of Mexico Program/U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- 2005 Treasures of the Bay/Making a Difference Award, Texas Master Naturalist Galveston Bay Area Chapter

## **PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

2010-2015 Watershed Coordinator Steering Committee member, Texas State and Soil Water Conservation Board

1996-2015 Natural Resources Uses Subcommittee member, Galveston Bay Estuary Program

Invited as a partner by Park Superintendent to serve on the hiring committee for Natural Resource ranger at Sheldon Lake State Park, April 2, 2015, interview potential candidates with accompanying panel, and provide input on the candidates for selection