



March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022

The Honorable Arch H. “Beaver” Aplin, III, Chairman  
Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission  
4200 Smith School Road  
Austin, Texas 78744

Dear Chairman Aplin,

As a Texas-based conservation organization of nearly 6,000 members, Guadalupe River Trout Unlimited fully supports the proposal to prohibit oyster harvest in the Mesquite Bay Complex, which includes Ayres, Mesquite and Carlos Bays.

According to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the proposal to close Mesquite, Carlos, and Ayres bays would protect 2,129 acres of oyster habitat. Restoration of oyster reef is costly at approximately \$60,000/acre. Quite frankly, Texas can easily avoid such costs by simply protecting the existing resource.

Oysters are, in many ways, the unsung heroes of the Texas coast. They are vital to the entire ecosystem. Their presence provides habitat for microorganisms of all kinds, which in turn, creates prime feeding areas for larger predators as well. The intrinsic benefits of healthy oyster reefs are almost without number. From water clarity and filtration to coastline preservation and erosion control – oysters play an invaluable role on the Texas coast.

Guadalupe River Trout Unlimited has long supported and collaborated with the efforts of Texas Parks and Wildlife and we look forward to doing so in the future. We greatly appreciate the work of TPWD in conserving both our inland and coastal fisheries. As a chapter and on behalf of our membership, we implore you to pass the proposal as drafted.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter and we greatly thank you for your efforts.

Sincerely,

Chris Johnson

GRTU Conservation Chair  
Texas TU State Council Chair