

PROCLAMATION

A Proclamation to Establish Rockport-Fulton and Aransas County as the “Ecosystem Capital of the Texas Gulf Coast” and Proclaim June 20, 2025, as Sustainable Ecotourism Day

Whereas, Rockport-Fulton and Aransas County have a heritage of individuals and organizations working to preserve and restore natural habitats to support wildlife and the ecosystem, and

Whereas, residents such as Connie Hagar, the Bird Lady of Texas, promoted the area as a birdwatcher’s paradise on the Central Flyway for migration, and Educator Martha McLeod’s Youth Birding Program at Rockport-Fulton ISD, and

Whereas, Sporting and Wildlife Artists, Jack Cowan, Herb Booth, Al Barnes, Steve Russell, and Kent Ullberg, created artwork that celebrated the wonders of nature and the enjoyment of hunting and fishing, and helped create environmental organizations that passed significant conservation legislation that protected Aransas County’s natural resources, and

Whereas, organizations like Aransas Bird and Nature Club, Aransas County Aquarium, Aransas County Navigation District-Save Little Bay, Aransas First Land Trust, Aransas Pathways, Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, Bent Oaks Conservancy and Rookery, Coastal Conservation Association - Aransas Bay Chapter, Ducks Unlimited, Flatsworthy, International Crane Foundation-Rockport, Keep Aransas County Beautiful, Mission-Aransas National Estuarine Research Reserve-Bay Education Center, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office, Texas Master Naturalist-Mid-Coast Chapter, Texas Parks and Wildlife, and Wings Rescue Center focus on protection and education of unique habitat like wetlands, shorelines and woodlands and preservation of wildlife, and

Whereas, Aransas County celebrates nature with annual events including Arbor Day, Babes on the Bay, Hummerfest, and Oysterfest as economic drivers and conservation events, and Rockport has been designated a “Tree City USA,” for 25 years, and

Whereas, Rockport-Fulton has become an innovative leader in oyster farming and restoring reefs through collaboration with the Sink Your Shucks Program and the Harte Research Center, and

Whereas, the Rockport Cultural Arts District has promoted Art in Nature, sustainable economic development and nature tourism, produced film documentaries about Rockport-Fulton’s legendary art colony and sporting artists, Charlie Bellaire and his lifetime advocacy for environmental issues, and is leading a Sustainable Ecosystem Summit June 20, 2025, to increase community awareness and outreach.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Aransas County Commissioners Court hereby proclaims Rockport-Fulton as the Ecosystem Capital of the Texas Gulf Coast and June 20, 2025, as the Sustainable Ecotourism Day for Rockport-Fulton and Aransas County.

Executed and adopted on the 4th day of May 2025.

Kelli Cole, Mayor

ATTEST:

Stephanie Garcia, City Secretary