



**MEETING DATE:** October 28, 2025  
**PRESENTED BY:** Xavier Cervantes, AICP, CPM, Director of Planning  
**AGENDA ITEM:** Consideration and possible action to adopt Resolution # \_\_\_\_\_ establishing a Native Plants Ad Hoc Committee - Cervantes

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**NATURE OF REQUEST:**

Project Timeline:

- September 9, 2025 – Presentation before the City Council.
- October 28, 2025 – Consideration of a resolution establishing a Native Plants Ad Hoc Committee

Summary:

- While doing some research staff came across a program that the City of Lewisville, Texas has in place that could be of interest to the City Council.
- In Lewisville they have the Roots for Wings Program that encourages residential gardening choices that support natural and sustainable landscaping. The purpose of the program is to reduce irrigation and mowing requirements in the community.
- The first step is that interested residential property owners are asked to attend a 4-hour workshop. The second step is to establish the garden. The third step is to apply for the designation and submit photos.
- After the initial application review is approved by the program manager, a site inspection is scheduled. If the site inspection passes, the city provides a yard sign. The program manager then notifies the Code Enforcement Department that the property is exempt from weedy lot notices.
- In Lewisville the property owners must renew their certificate every three (3) years.
- No ordinances were amended to establish the Roots for Wings Program in Lewisville.
- The committee made up of experts in the field would be needed to review the applications.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends adoption of the resolution.

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**Departmental Approval:** Approval

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**Advisory Board Recommendation:** N/A

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**City Manager's Recommendation:** Approval *JP7*

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**RECORD OF VOTE:**

**APPROVED:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**DISAPPROVED:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**TABLED:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ AYES

\_\_\_\_\_ NAYS

\_\_\_\_\_ DISSENTING

\_\_\_\_\_

## RESOLUTION PART 1

### RESOLUTION NO.

#### **A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF MISSION, TEXAS, ESTABLISHING A NATIVE PLANTS COMMITTEE, APPOINTING MEMBERS, ASSIGNING DUTIES AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**WHEREAS**, the City Council desires to create a Native Plants Committee to develop guidelines and review properties for native plant designations; and

**WHEREAS**, the people listed below have demonstrated expertise in the subject and are willing to assist the city with this important work; and

**WHEREAS**, native plants are important to ecosystems because they are adapted to local conditions, providing essential food and shelter for local wildlife and supporting biodiversity; and

**WHEREAS**, the seven (7) committee members shall serve and shall forward recommendations to various advisory boards and the City Council as necessary; and

**WHEREAS**, each member of the committee shall serve without compensation; and

**WHEREAS**, the Director of Planning is hereby directed to support the Native Plants Committee and attend all meetings.

#### **NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MISSION, TEXAS, THAT:**

**Section 1.** The following individuals are appointed to serve in the Native Plants Committee:

1. Elizabeth (Betty) Grace Perez
2. Carlos Garcia Patlan
3. Ernesto Herrera
4. John Brush
5. Mackenzie Feldman
6. Angela Rojas
7. Hector Alejandro Leal

**Section 2.** The Native Plants Committee shall serve at the pleasure of the City Council and shall serve unless or until replaced by the City Council and shall be subject to rules applicable to other City boards.

**Section 3.** The recitals set forth above are hereby incorporated as findings of fact and made part of this resolution for all purposes.

## RESOLUTION PART 2

**CONSIDERED, PASSED, AND APPROVED** this 28th day of October, 2025, at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Mission, Texas at which a quorum was present and which was held in accordance with Chapter 551, Texas Government Code.

### CITY OF MISSION

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Norie Gonzalez Garza, Mayor

### ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Anna Carrillo, City Secretary

### APPROVED AS TO FORM:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patricia Rigney, City Attorney

## ELIZABETH (BETTY) GRACE PEREZ RESUME

Elizabeth (Betty) Grace Perez

Mission, Texas 78576

[bettygraceperez@gmail.com](mailto:bettygraceperez@gmail.com)

**Manager and Family Partner** of the 2,600-acre Perez Ranch in northwest Hidalgo County which was purchased by my grandparents starting in the 1930's. Primarily a cattle ranch with a dryland farming operation, range land, and native plants nursery. Revegetation on the ranch from 1996 to the present with plants coming from the nursery.

**Native Plant Grower** for the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Yearly contracts from 1998 to 2022 ranching from 5,000 to 20,000 seedlings a year. All plants grown from seeds mostly picked from the natives growing on the ranch.

**Homeowner** of 1020 Pamela Drive, Mission, Texas with native landscaping.

Education: Undergraduate work at Gonzaga University, Pan American University. **BA in Natural Sciences from the University of Texas at Austin** with an emphasis in Botany and Native Plants, 1976.

Board Member, former president, director and newsletter editor for the Friends of the Wildlife Corridor, a friends group formed to protect and enhance the **Santa Ana and Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuges**.

**Native Plants Project** lifetime member and newsletter editor.

**Founder of Planta Nativa**, a festival of LRGV native plants, at Quinta Mazatlan in Mc

## Carlos Garcia Patlan

cg618936@gmail.com

*Specialized in environmental sciences and related fields with 6+ years of experience. Successful in conducting and leading field operations. Experience in laboratory, field, and office settings. Knowledgeable in remote sensing, GIS, precision agriculture, drone work. urban ecology, wildland firefighting, and related fields.*

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

#### Texas A&M Forest Service

Edinburg, TX

RGV Regional Community Ecologist - Urban and Community Forestry Program

July 2024-Present

- Experience promoting sustainable urban and community forestry practices that connect people with the benefits of trees.
- Collaborates with cities, schools, and local organizations to advance reforestation, environmental education, and community resilience through data-driven conservation initiatives through grant project leading and management.
- Supports field operations as a certified wildland firefighter and licensed drone pilot, integrating technology and on-the-ground expertise to enhance environmental monitoring and emergency response.

#### The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

Edinburg, TX

Graduate Student Project Associate

December 2019–August 2024

- Experience conducting field and lab experiments, such as soil quality and properties, air and water contamination, and research in the fields of environmental science, such as hydrology, geology, ecology, chemistry, etc.
- Data collection and project execution. Remote sensing via Unmanned Aerial Systems and Real Time Kinematics (RTK) and Post Processing Kinematics (PPK).
- Interest in Photogrammetry and Vegetation index algorithms.

#### USDA Aerial Research Service

College Station, TX

Remote Sensing Intern

July 2023-August 2023

- Training utilizing photogrammetry software such as Pix4Dmapper and QGIS. Data analysis of crop height and volume estimation. Field work related to aerial imagery and GPS data gathering.
- Interest in machine learning and use of AI for weed and plant detection.

#### NOAA Infish Program

La Jolla, CA

Intern

June 2022-August 2022

- Complex Systems and Diverse Ecosystems course. Statistical analysis of data through R.
- Data analysis of anchovy communities through computer softwares at National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration labs.

#### La Maceta Nursery and Ecoscaping LLC.

Edinburg, TX

Volunteer

December 2021-May 2022

- Responsibilities included the maintenance of nursery plants, groundskeeping, identification and organization of plant species, and soil work.

#### The Home Depot

Mission, TX

Customer Service Desk

September 2021-May 2022

## CARLOS GARCIA PATLAN RESUME

- Aiding in order fulfillment; provided primary customer support to internal and external customers in a fast paced environment.

**The International Museum of Arts and Science**  
Science Educator

**McAllen, TX**  
*July 2015–May 2019*

- Work experience as an Educator at Biozone and Science On a Sphere departments of the International Museum of Arts and Sciences. Promoted education in Biology and Marine Sciences.
- Responsible for routine care of animal ambassadors. Lead groups of students during presentations.

### EDUCATION

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**The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley**  
Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science  
Honors: cum laude (GPA: 3.6/4.0)  
Masters of Science in Agricultural, Environmental, and Sustainable Sciences

**Edinburg, TX**  
*July 2022*  
*August 2024*

### ADDITIONAL SKILLS

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- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills.
  - Proficiency using Microsoft Office.
  - Leadership skills.
  - Fluent in Spoken and Written Spanish.
  - Quick Learner.
  - Public Speaker.
  - Drone Pilot
  - Wildland Firefighter Type 1 Traynee
  - Hazwoper 40 Certified.
  - Knowledge in GIS software, R, Photogrammetry, Pix4D, Agisoft Metashape, and other softwares.
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## ERNESTO HERRERA RESUME

### ERNESTO HERRERA

Mission, TX 78572 | ernest6h@gmail.com

### Education

#### ***M.S. in Biology***

The University of Texas – Rio Grande Valley

GPA: 3.6

Relevant Coursework: Restoration Ecology, Global Change Ecology, Marine Plant Science, Plant-Animal Interactions, Subtropical Ornithology, Plant Pathology, Urban Sustainability, Ecosystem Management, Integrated Pest Management, Agricultural Ecology

#### ***B.S. in Biology and Psychology***

The University of Texas – Pan American

GPA: 3.13

Relevant Coursework: Plant Morphology, Herpetology, Animal Behavior, Invertebrate Zoology

### Skills Summary

Plant Identification: 8 years experience

Bird Identification: 7 years experience

Reptile and Amphibian Identification: 10 years experience

Restoration Experience: 7 years experience

Environmental Policy: 5 years experience

Geographic Information Systems (GIS): 5 years experience

Horticulture and Plant Nursery: 5 years Experience

Experience conducting field surveys for Waters of the US, threatened and endangered species, and plant communities

Experience with GPS, ArcGIS, ESRI apps, and Microsoft Office

Bilingual: English and Spanish



## Work Experience

### ***Texas Department of Transportation***

*Environmental Project Planner II - Biologist* | July 2024 - Present

Served as biology subject matter expert for environmental project planners around state

Maintained up-to-date on species listings under the ESA

Created guidance for TxDOT staff and consultants regarding federally-listed species

Created and maintained GIS geodatabase for TxDOT biological surveys

Consulted with USFWS and TPWD officials on transportation projects impacting protected species

### ***Raba Kistner Consultants Inc.***

*Environmental Specialist II* | May 2023 – July 2024

Served as an on-call extension of environmental division for 1 private client

Consulted with clients regarding environmental policy and regulations under NEPA, with a strong focus on Threatened and Endangered species

Surveyed and prepared reports for 15 Waters of the US projects, 18 protected species projects, 2 Community Impact Assessments, and 3 Hazardous Material projects

Surveyed and monitored for threatened and endangered species protected by the ESA including, but not limited to: Aplomado Falcon, Piping Plover, Red Knot, Snowy Plover, Wilson's Plover, ocelot, jaguarundi, Texas tortoise, reticulate collared lizard, sea turtles, Zapata bladderpod, star cactus, prostrate milkweed, ashy dogweed, and Texas Ayenia

Monitored for nesting birds protects by the MBTA for 3 projects during two nesting seasons

Used drones to survey and map areas of interest for 5 projects

Prepared spatial data and maps for team using GIS for 13 projects

Served as project manager for 10 projects

Prepared for and hosted 2 public meetings

Consulted with local, county, state, federal and private clients working on projects for industries such as transportation, space exploration, national defense, municipal waste, and public utilities

Consulted and coordinated with agencies including, but not limited to: USFWS, TPWD, USACE, FAA, TxDOT, TCEQ, and TWDB

Worked with existing datasets from agencies including, but not limited to: USFWS, TPWD, USDA, USGS, and NOAA

Collected field data using a variety of apps and devices including, but not limited to, Field Maps, Google Earth, Google Maps, ArcGIS, Trimble GEO7X, DroneDeploy

## ERNESTO HERRERA RESUME

### ***LandHawk Consulting***

*Wildlife Biologist/GIS Manager* | November 2017 – December 2022

Surveyed and monitored for threatened and endangered species protected by the ESA including, but not limited to: Aplomado falcon, piping plover, ocelot, Texas tortoise, reticulate collared lizard, sea turtles, Zapata bladderpod, star cactus, and prostrate milkweed

Survey and monitored for nesting birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act

Delineated Waters of the USA, habitat types, and plant communities

Submitted weekly reports and maps to contractors and affiliated agencies

Maintained good relations with stakeholders, clients, and contractors

Managed data and created maps for 53 projects using data sourced from government websites and ESRI

Monitored 17 construction projects for compliance with USFWS, TPWD, IBWC, USACE, CBP, EPA, and other federal and state agencies

Monitored 17 construction projects for reptiles, amphibians, endangered species, and nesting birds

Monitored projects for 2 wind farms, 7 border fence segments, 2 toll roads, 5 highways, and 1 natural gas pipeline

Attended meetings with all staff and educated staff on possible plant and animal species they may encounter on the job and how to correctly identify those species

Prepared invoices, requests for quotes, and project proposals to contractors

Maintained good relationship with other members on staff and took the lead in field projects

Submitted data collected in the field to the designated project manager

Attended trainings for Waters of the USA, bat identification, protected species observers, and OSHA guidelines

### ***The University of Texas - Rio Grande Valley***

*Graduate Research Assistant* | August 2019 – December 2021

Collected data for lab regarding restoration plots of different ages in order to assess success and failure of the different treatments and sites

Trained other students to collect data and identify plants

Compiled data for analysis on Excel

## ERNESTO HERRERA RESUME

### ***Estero Llano Grande State Park - Texas Parks and Wildlife Department***

*Intern | June 2019 - August 2019*

Created new interpretation signs for the native plants found within the park and the rest of the Lower Rio Grande Valley

Greeted visitors and helped them find their way around the park

Painted trail signs found throughout the park

Assisted maintenance crew with various tasks in the park such as pruning, cleaning restrooms, and maintaining trails

Led 2 plant walks showcasing the plants of the RGV

Assisted the archery instructor while teaching various group

Assisted interpretation team with bird walks and night hikes

### ***McAllen Nature Center – City of McAllen***

*Supervisor | August 2015 - May 2019*

Served as lead naturalist and supervisor for the park

Planned and implemented restoration work for a butterfly garden, cactus garden and the Ebony Grove

Supervised more than 50 staff members during time there to work on various tasks such as pruning shrubs and trees, cleaning trails, watering plants, greeting visitors, and filling bird feeders

Trained staff members to identify plants and animals, to lead nature walks and to maintain the 33-acre park looking tidy

Managed habitat by controlling for invasive species such as *Arundo donax*, guinea grass, and buffelgrass

Reported to park manager to update them on work being done as well as receive new orders

Greeted visitors and taught them about what could be found at the park

Learned about the flora and fauna inhabiting the reserve

Recorded 582 species on iNaturalist and 162 birds on eBird

### ***The University of Texas – Rio Grande Valley***

*Part-time Lecturer | August 2018 – May 2020*

Taught marine botany, ornithology, ecology, anatomy and physiology, and general biology.

Taught students how to ID birds, and marine plants in the field

Taught students how to properly dissect specimens, stain bacteria, and press plants in the lab

Gave lectures during classes and answered student questions

## ERNESTO HERRERA RESUME

Administered field and lab quizzes  
Kept attendance records for all classes  
Attended weekly meetings with professor/mentor

### ***Frontera Audubon***

*Naturalist and Board Member* | November 2016 – February 2018

Led bird walks and night hikes.

Consulted with board members and director to manage wetlands for wildlife within the reserve.

Attended monthly board meetings to balance budget, and plan fundraisers.

### **Volunteer Work**

*Huizotchil Plant Nursery* | January 2021 – Present

Germinated seeds to increase stock

Helped with maintenance such as watering, transplanting, repotting, and rearranging plants

Collected native seeds throughout the Rio Grande Valley

Helped with tasks during landscape projects such as planting, mulching, and other miscellaneous work

*Bird Banding* | January 2019 – Present

Helped lead bird bander to set up and take down nets

Removed birds from nets in safe manner for data collection

Helped lead bird bander with data transcription

Released birds after data collection according to the instructions given by lead bird bander

*Texas Master Naturalists* | January 2019 – Present

Taught yearly herpetology course for new TMN students

Taught class on reptile and amphibian conservation in the RGV as advanced training

Led TMN on tours to several nature parks and taught them about the local ecosystem and its inhabitants

*McAllen Nature Center* | June 2019 – March 2020; May 2015 – August 2015

Helped employees with park maintenance such as watering, transplanting, pruning, raking and cleaning trails

Gave advice to employees on park maintenance and easier work flows



Served as on-call interpreter for programs such as night hikes, bird walks, and butterfly walks

### **Research Work**

*The University of Texas – Rio Grande Valley | 2016 - 2020*

Conducted plants surveys on restoration plots

Conducted ecological and behavioral research on a parasitic interaction between water lilies and native bees

*The University of Texas – Pan American | 2014*

Conducted behavioral research on Chilean Flamingos at Gladys Porter Zoo in Brownsville, TX to improve their quality of life

### **Certifications and Trainings**

Bat Identification and Tool Training

Tucson, Arizona – June 2022

OSHA Training

Corpus Christi, Texas – May 2022

Wetland Delineation and Corp Permitting Training

Houston, Texas – April 2022

Certified Remote Pilot

FAA – January 2021

Marine Protected Species Observer

April 2023

### **Awards and Acknowledgements**

#### ***Friend of the Texas Master Naturalists***

Recognized by RGV Chapter of TMN for teaching herpetology class, and helping local Master Naturalists with field identifications and plantings

#### ***Great Texas Birding Classic***

2017: Second Place in Lower Texas Coast in Big Day category with team Cyanocorax

2018: First Place in Lower Texas Coast in Big Day category with team Cyanocorax

#### ***Society for Conservation Biology***

## ERNESTO HERRERA RESUME

Member of the UTPA chapter, volunteered for US Fish and Wildlife Service on invasive species removal along the Rio Grande River, and tabled at different events highlighting species found within the Rio Grande Valley

### References

#### ***Raziel Flores***

Lead Wildlife Ecologist, Landhawk Consulting LLC

Owner, Huizotchil Native Plant Nursery

956-562-6030

ravolucionar@gmail.com

#### ***Tiffany Kersten***

Manager, McAllen Nature Center

956-681-3333

tiffanykersten@gmail.com

#### ***Timothy Brush***

Professor, The University of Texas – Rio Grande Valley

956-665-2921

Timothy.brush@utrgv.edu

#### ***Ken King***

Author, Plants of Deep South Texas

956-252-7470

Wk\_king01@yahoo.com

#### ***Zachary Johnson***

Environmental Protection Specialist, Texas Department of Transportation

956-702-6130

Zachary.johnson@txdot.gov

## JOHN BRUSH RESUME

# John Brush

Biologist, Environmental Consultant

Prickly Pair RGV, LLC., Edinburg, Texas

[prickly.pair.rgv@gmail.com](mailto:prickly.pair.rgv@gmail.com)

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### RELEVANT SKILLS

- Bird Identification
- Plant Identification
- Biological Surveys
- Habitat Evaluation
- Methodology Review
- Data Organization
- Report Writing
- Project Management
- Teaching Aptitude
- Prompt Deliverables
- Clear Communicator
- Public Speaking

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### WORK EXPERIENCE

#### Urban Ecologist

2017 - Present

Quinta Mazatlan, City of McAllen

- Developed nature interpretation training materials for staff to increase their bird, plant, and ecological knowledge in the Rio Grande Valley.
- Managed Tiny Forest projects in McAllen, including project planning, implementation, organizing data, and writing impactful reports on progress and outcomes.
- Produced organizational methodologies to enable more effective program development and reporting on outcomes.
- Supervised a team of employees to accomplish nature interpretation, habitat maintenance / restoration, and data collection goals.
- Collaborated with inter-departmental partners and community partners, maintaining clear lines of communication and task-setting.

#### Bird and Biological Surveys

2008 - Present

- Conducted field surveys of birds as core data collection for MS degree in Biology at UT Rio Grande Valley, which included two summers of point counts and spot-mapping.
- Completed bird surveys of USFWS tracts to compare bird communities at restored sites and conservation sites in wildlife refuges (including data entry, organization, and analysis).
- Assisted on bird surveys at wind turbine sites in the Rio Grande Valley.
- Hired as a field technician to conduct rare plant surveys in the Rio Grande Valley.
- Volunteered for a USGS Breeding Bird Survey route since 2011 in Cameron County.



## JOHN BRUSH RESUME

### **Bird Identification Expert and Guide**

**2005 - Present**

- Led birdwatching tours at the Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival for over 10 years, co-leading with some of the most well-known bird guides in the country.
- Taught bird identification workshops and led guided bird walks for thousands of people, including at colleges/universities, environmental consulting companies, the Texas Master Naturalist program, and privately booked tours or speaking events.
- Learned about bird identification and behavior in the Rio Grande Valley since 2000, with additional visits to Mexico for greater coverage of Tamaulipan Mezquital avifauna.

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### **EDUCATION**

#### **MS in Biology**

**2015 – 2016**

University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

GPA 3.79

- Subtropical Ornithology – A
- Advanced Ecology – A
- Advanced Herpetology – A
- Advanced Ichthyology – A
- Advanced Agroecology – A

#### **BS in Biology**

**2012 – 2013**

University of Texas Pan American

GPA 3.73 (Summa Cum Laude, Dean's List)

- Ornithology – A
- Entomology – A
- Intro Remote Sensing – A
- Biological Writing – A
- Plant Morphology – A
- Plant Taxonomy – A
- Plant Physiology – A

# MACKENZIE FELDMAN RESUME

## Mackenzie Feldman

mackenziefeldman@gmail.com | linkedin.com/in/mfeldman18

### EDUCATION

#### UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS, RIO GRANDE VALLEY, EDINBURG, TX

August 2022 – December 2024

Masters of Science | Program: Agricultural, Environmental, and Sustainability Sciences

Cumulative GPA: 4.0/4.0

#### UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY, BERKELEY, CA

August 2014 – May 2018

Bachelor of Science, 2018 | Major: Society and Environment, Minor: Food Systems

Cumulative GPA: 3.62/4.0

### EXPERIENCE

#### GROUND BAKERS: 60+ PLANT-BASED COMFORT FOOD RECIPES AND 16 LEADERS CHANGING THE FOOD SYSTEM

January 2016 – September 2022

Author

- Published book with my mother, where we created over 60 plant-based, gluten-free recipes
- Interviewed 16 food system leaders for the book including José Andrés, Bryant Terry, Sean Sherman, Alice Waters, Leah Penniman, Anna Lappé, Aileen Suzara, Michel Nischan, and more.

### EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

#### RE:WILD YOUR CAMPUS

September 2018 – Present

Founder, Co-Director

- Founded organization with the mission of stopping the use of synthetic pesticides on school campuses and transitioning to organic management
- Worked with 100+ schools and over 400 students, and have certified 10 schools so far in new Green Grounds Certification
- Achieved a ban on all herbicides from every public school in the state of Hawai'i, as well as a glyphosate ban at all 10 UC campuses
- Conducting organic land management pilot projects on 5 campuses across the U.S. in 2025

#### UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS, RIO GRANDE VALLEY

September 2022 – August 2024

Graduate Student Researcher

- Conducting social science research for the Subtropical Soil Health Demonstration: On-Farm Trials of Cover Crops for Conservation Innovation in arid farms of South Texas

#### DATA FOR PROGRESS

Jan 2019 – August 2022

Food Research Fellow

- Brought experts together to create a Food Procurement and Infrastructure memo to inform Congress on policy additions to leverage federal food procurement to Build Back Better
- Led a team to research and design a series of food and agriculture policy briefs for the Green New Deal on the topics of Regenerative Agriculture, Land Access, Rural Economic Revitalization, Antitrust, Seafood and Blue Jobs, and Support for Farmworkers
- Lead Author on Regenerative Agriculture policy brief and interviewed and collaborated with 50+ policy experts, farmers, and community leaders to collect information for the briefs
- Engaged with and supplied Democratic presidential candidates and U.S. Congress candidates with the briefs, and Senator Elizabeth Warren ended up adopting our brief into her Blue New Deal and brought on our co-author, Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson to be her ocean policy expert

#### UNITED NATION'S FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO)

September 2018 – September 2021

Food Sovereignty Research Assistant

- Worked with international team of researchers to conduct systematic reviews of the impact of food sovereignty and right-to-food approaches to addressing food insecurity and malnutrition, published in Frontiers research publication
- Inform Committee on Food Security High Level Panel of Experts (CFS-HLPE) on agroecological approaches for sustainable agriculture
- Published in Frontiers Rese

#### UC BERKELEY | THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA GLOBAL FOOD INITIATIVE, BERKELEY, CA

June 2017 – June 2018

Global Food Initiative Student Ambassador

- Contribute to UC President's leadership committee, representing UC Berkeley in order to provide reports pertaining to campus engagement
- Create and manage all communications for *BFI Student Opportunities Newsletter* to share job, internship, fellowship, and scholarship resources with more than 1,000 students
- Lead BFI Undergraduate Advisory Council, serving as liaison to coordinate and facilitate collaboration among UC Berkeley food groups

#### REAL FOOD MEDIA, OAKLAND, CA

June 2016 – August 2016

Content Creation and Directed Research Intern

- Researched front group information and generated Food Mythbusters Report with Director, Anna Lappé
- Communicated with filmmakers to create action prompts and biographies for films

## ANGELA ROJAS RESUME

### Angela Rojas Mission, TX

**OBJECTIVE** To use my bachelor's degree in biology and passion for botany to manage and conserve habitat.

**SKILLS & ABILITIES** Conducting flora and fauna surveys  
Well versed in botanical nomenclature and dichotomous keys  
Spanish Proficient

**EDUCATION** **UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS RIO GRANDE VALLEY**

- Biology Major
  - Plant Taxonomy, Plant Morphology, Ecology,

**MISSION HIGH SCHOOL**

- Graduated Salutatorian

**EXPERIENCE** **COORDINATOR, QUINTA MAZATLAN WORLD BIRDING CENTER**  
June 2024- Present

- Prepares and delivers programs and presentations for workshops, special events, tours, and outreach events.
- Propagates native plants for annual Tree Giveaway.
- Workshops include Introduction to Native Gardening, Plant Propagation 101, Introduction to Plant Identification, and Cactus and Native Container Gardening.
- Trains and manages volunteers as well as ensures proper documentation is filed and hours are recorded.
- Manages and writes articles for the Center of Urban Ecology blogsite.

**SUBSTITUTE TEACHER, MCISD**  
November 2021- May 2022

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**PARK RANGER/NATURALIST, TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE, STATE PARKS DIVISION**  
March 2018- January 2020

## ANGELA ROJAS RESUME

- Developed and created interpretive thematic programs for park visitors, school groups, outreach initiatives, citizen science projects, and stewardship trainings. Offered an average of 5 to 9 interpretive programs per week. Native plant tours, guided hikes, tram tours, kayaking 101, bird walks, fishing 101, and night sky programs were some of the interpretive programs offered on a regular basis.
- Collaborated with agency staff and private growers to promote native habitat restoration with the help of volunteers and support from rangers. Projects completed include Apache Tree Grant planting, park bollard installation, and pollinator garden planting.
- Assistant volunteer coordinator to 70 park volunteers. Trained volunteers to maintain grounds, help with bird feeding program, and facilitate or lead educational programs while following safety operating procedures

### **ENVIRONMENTAL INSTRUCTOR, QUINTA MAZATLAN WORLD BIRDING CENTER**

December 2015- March 2018

- Developed and led lessons to youth and adults in the natural sciences
- Created stewardship programs, designed and created monarch butterfly gardens at local schools
- Habitat management of the 20-acre property and a 10-acre revegetation zone

### **TESTING SUPERVISOR, ACT**

September 2012- March 2018

- Administered test and recited instructions to students

### **VITAMIN SALES ASSOCIATE, SPROUTS FARMERS MARKET**

May 2012- March 2015

- Provided high level of prompt, friendly, and knowledgeable customer service to an average of 150 customers per day.

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#### **ADDITIONAL SKILLS**

Experience in Tamaulipan Thornscrub wild seed collecting, banking, and seed propagation.

# HECTOR ALEJANDRO LEAL RESUME

## Hector Alejandro Leal

Mission, Texas 78574 | HectorALeal83@gmail.com

### EDUCATION

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Edinburg, TX, 2025  
Bachelor of Science, Environmental Science; GPA: 3.8

*Relevant Courses:* ArcGIS, General Chemistry, Biology, Geology, Environmental Science, Hydrologic Systems, Hydrologic Systems Modeling, Oceanography, Science Communication, Soil Ecology.

### HONORS AND GRANTS

NOAA CCME-II Scholarship (2023 - 2025)  
UTRGV STEM Research Conference Best Environmental Department Poster (2025)  
National Hispanic Environmental Council Scholarship (2023)

### RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

#### The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Earth, Environmental, and Marine Sciences Dept.

NOAA Center for Coastal and Marine Ecosystems II Scholar, July 2023 - May 2025

Advisor: Dr. Alejandro Fierro Cabo, Dr. David Hicks

Monitored greenhouse gas emissions from estuarine ecosystem's soil while testing variables that contribute to emissions, such as pore water salinity, soil texture, and inundation. Simulated variables in controlled microcosms. Presented work at multiple conferences.

NOAA Center for Coastal and Marine Ecosystems II Scholar, August 2024 - May 2025

Advisor: Dr. Alejandro Fierro Cabo, David Lecusay

Monitored water quality of distributaries of the Rio Grande delta (resacas) in Brownsville, Texas. Sought a relationship between chlorophyll-a concentration and secchi disk depth to easily determine trophic conditions of resacas. Work was presented at the UTRGV STEM conference and won best poster in the Earth, Environmental, and Marine Sciences department.

### INTERNSHIPS

#### City of McAllen Public Works

Drainage department, May 2024 - August 2024

Supervisor: Delilah Martinez

Researched various BMPs for the City Of McAllen drainage system. Created zoning map on ArcGIS and damage categorization for storm drains. Researched hydrologic system of drainage canals.

#### Port of Houston Authority

Environmental Affairs department, May 2023 - August 2023

Supervisor: Trae Camble

## HECTOR ALEJANDRO LEAL RESUME

Performed tenant audits to ensure environmental compliance in stormwater, wastewater, and air.  
Performed internal ISO 14001 environmental management system audit. Collaborated with employees to find a solution to a cleaner ship channel.

### PRESENTATIONS

UTRGV STEM Research Conference, Edinburg, TX 2025. Leal, H., Rodriguez, N., Zapata, M., Fierro-Cabo, A., Lecusay, D. "Evaluating Trophic Dynamics of the Resacas of Brownsville, Texas: Exploring the Link Between Chlorophyll-a Concentrations and Secchi Disk Transparency" (poster).

11th Biennial NOAA EPP/MSI Education & Science Forum, Salisbury, MD 2025. Leal, H., de la Garza, D., Fierro-Cabo, A. "Effects of inundation on greenhouse gases production in a tidal salt marsh soil: a microcosm study" (poster).

College of Science Annual Research Conference, Edinburg, TX 2024. Leal, H., de la Garza, D., Fierro-Cabo, A. "Effects of Inundation on Greenhouse Gas Production in a Tidal Saltmarsh Soil" (poster).

9th California Environmental STEM Institute, Camarillo, CA 2024. Leal, H., Bedford, M., Melendez, A., Jackson, C., Prieto, F., De Jesus, L., Arabia, I., McFarlin, E. "Calleguas Creek Ecological Assessment" (oral presentation).

Port of Houston, Houston, TX 2023. Leal, H. "SWOT Analysis of Port of New York & New Jersey" (oral presentation).

NOAA Center-wide Core Competency Course, St. Petersburg, FL 2023. Leal, H., Jackson, D., Chapa, N., Cesarone, A., Burey, J. "The Effect of HABs on Region Relevant NGOs" (oral presentation).

### CERTIFICATIONS

#### 40-hour HAZWOPER

UTHealth, May 2024 - Present

Certified to clean, work on, and respond to emergencies on hazardous waste sites.

### TECHNICAL SKILLS

**Computational:** Microsoft 365, ArcGIS, Hydrus, MODFLOW, R.

**Laboratory:** Soil science tests, water quality tests, greenhouse gas analysis from soils, chlorophyll-a extraction, and spectrophotometry.

**Other:** Science communication, basic federal environmental regulations, Spanish (beginner).