



American YouthWorks' Clean & Green Annual Operational Report

March 2022 - January 2023



AYW.org/Clean-and-Green

Introduction

The Clean & Green Program is an environmental and social justice initiative of the Harris County District Attorney's Office (HCDAO) in partnership with American YouthWorks' Texas Conservation Corps (TXCC). The program is designed to divert non-violent offenders around the justice system and into community service opportunities providing a restorative alternative to traditional prosecution, which benefits offenders and the community.

Participants are scheduled Wednesday through Saturday through HCDAO to work with TXCC for 6 hours-a-day, engaging in conservation projects that help to restore the health of Harris County's watersheds and waterways, with a main focus in cleaning up illegal dumpsites. The clean up of these dumpsites provide numerous benefits to the community, including public health and flood risk mitigation. The program also provides participants with hands-on skills training, environmental education and connection to employment and other community resources.

Through the combined efforts of HCDAO and TXCC, the Clean & Green Program has proven to maintain safe operations that have an enormous impact on Harris County's environment and communities. From March 25th of 2022 to January 28th of 2023, **619** participants have successfully completed the Clean & Green Program with a total of approximately **3,700 hours of community service in Harris County**.

This report is meant to serve as an overview of 10 months of operations of the Clean & Green Program, from its launch on **March 25th 2022 up to January 28th, 2023**.

The information in this report contains the following information.

- Participants Data
- Project Work Overview
 - Metric Data
 - Challenges
 - Goals for 2023
- Participants Feedback



Before
&
After



Texas Conservation Corps at American Youthworks Commitment

The Clean & Green Crew Supervisors commit to this program by providing the best possible education and community service experience for the participants. Crew Supervisors engage in environmental education with the participants throughout the day on topics such as the environmental impacts of illegal dumpsites, watershed health, and the effects that waste has on our environment and waterways. The Crew Supervisors also ensure everyday that the crew is built on a foundation of mutual respect, trust, and teamwork to reach a common goal. This program is a real catalyst for change in human behavior and commitment to their communities and environment.

Clean & Green Crew Supervisors

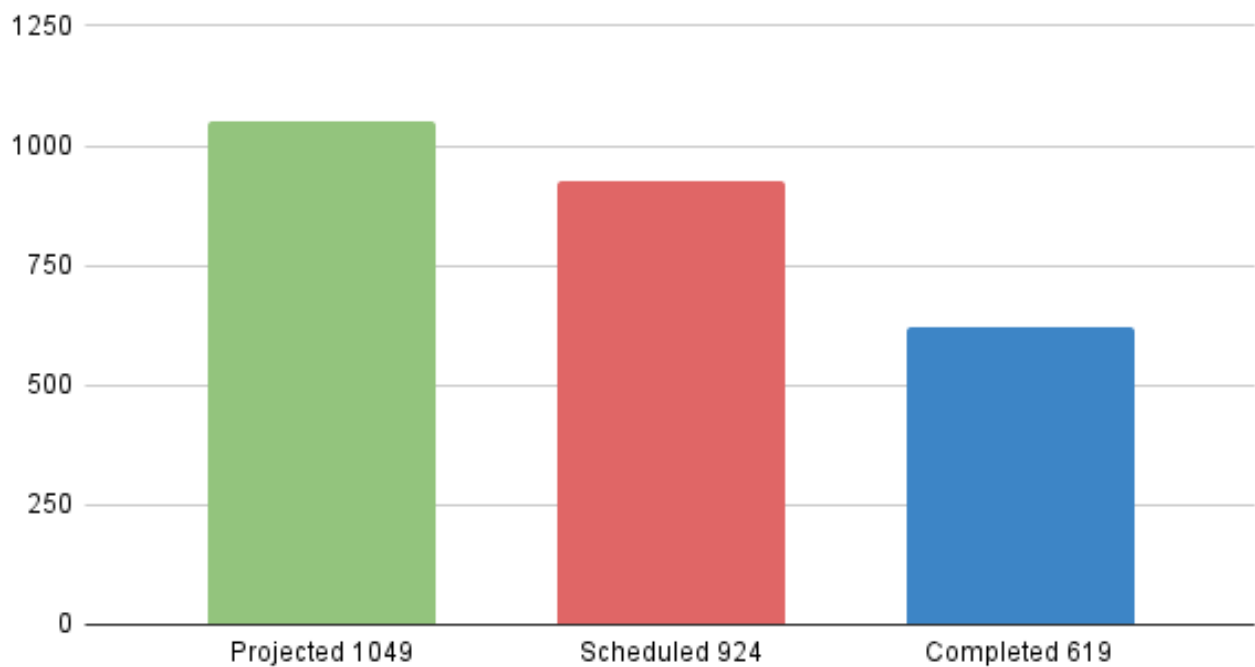
Crew Supervisors Mickey Salcido, Maria Arteaga, and Roman Wooten have worked hard over the past months to fine tune operations that are designed to engage participants in environmental education while building confidence in themselves and their communities. Roman Wooten is one of many success stories of the program. He participated in the program in November, and now he is successfully leading other participants in their community service as our newest Clean and Green staff Crew Supervisor.



Participants Data

The Clean & Green program is currently serving up to **40 participants per week** (10 participants per day, Wednesday through Saturday) and it's capable of serving up to 80 participants per week as an attainable goal for 2023. The graph below displays the number of projected participants based on the operating schedule, the number of actual scheduled participants, and the number of participants that completed the program throughout a 10 month period.

Participants Data 03/25/22 to 01/28/23



For the first ten months of operations, we expected 1049 participants. 924 participants were scheduled by the District Attorney's Office, 305 participants were "no shows" and only 619 completed their mandated community service hours.

A total of approximately 3,700 hours of community service have been completed.

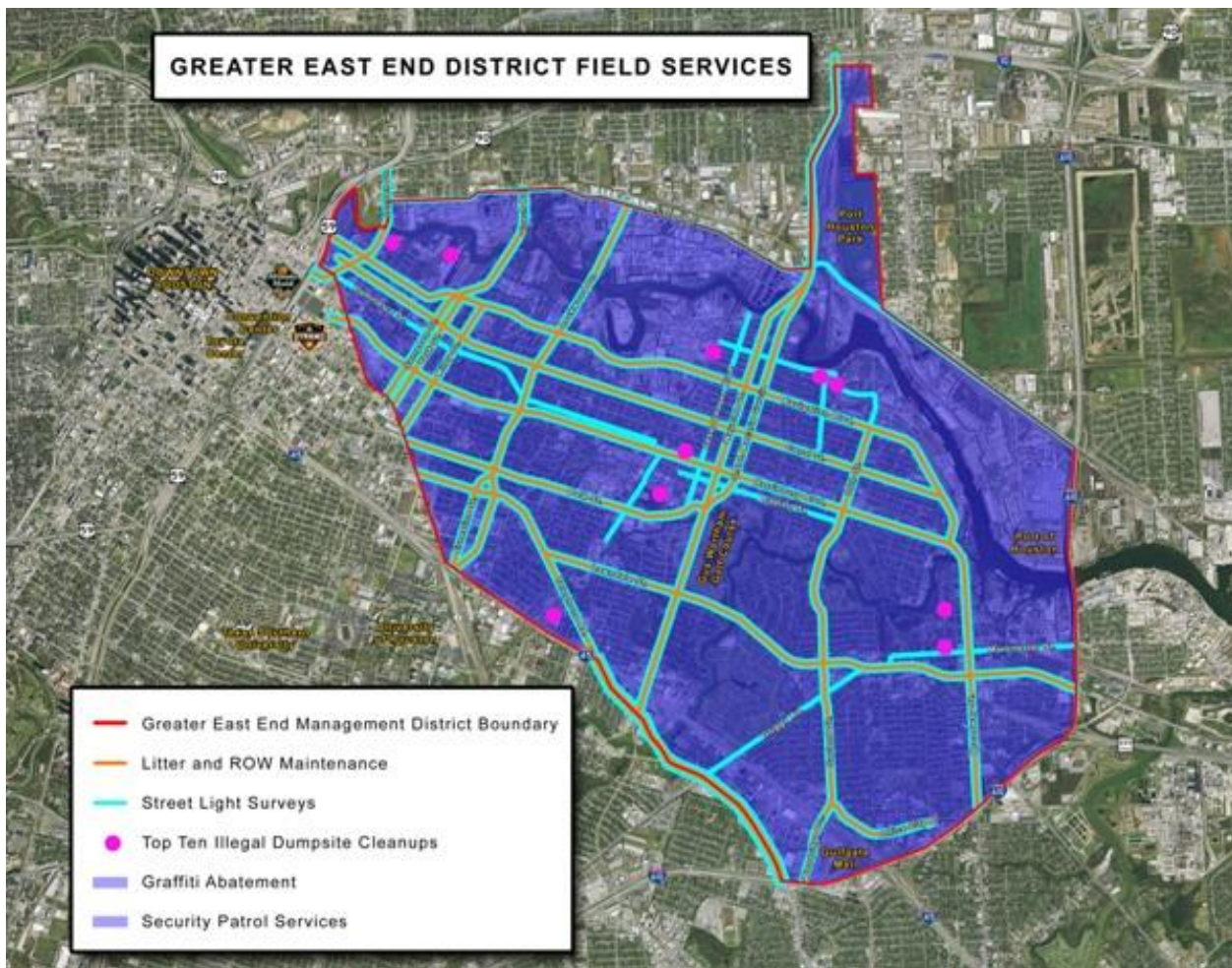
Project Work Overview

The Clean and Green Program focuses on cleaning up illegal dumpsites throughout Harris County, as well as conservation projects that restore the health of Houston's watersheds and waterways. Over the past 10 months, TXCC has developed several collaborative partnerships with many organizations that target illegal dumpsites across the county, to ensure that there are sufficient worksites available for all scheduled days, including inclement weather days.

The following list shows a timeline of the organizations we have partnered with.

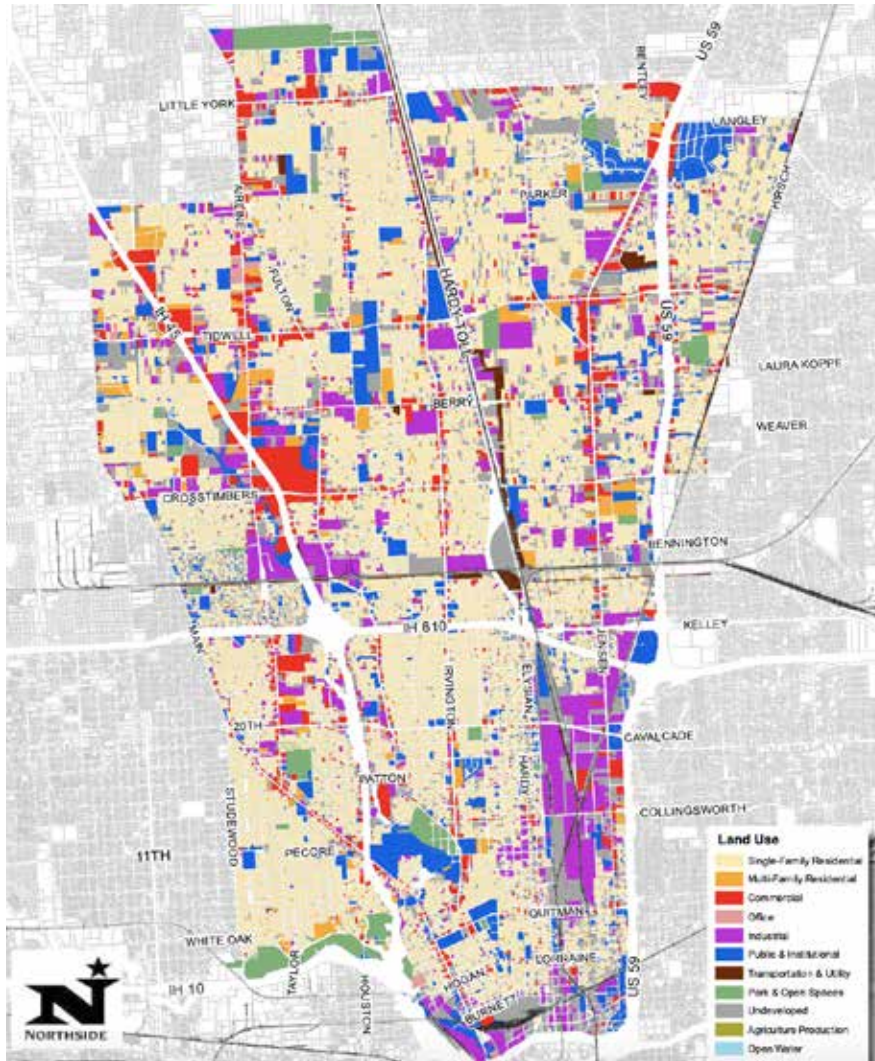
East End District (April 2022)

- Assisting the East End District in picking up litter, plastic, household waste, and debris within 16 square miles of their district.



Greater NorthSide Management District (November 2022)

- Assisting the litter abatement program in picking up and disposing of debris and waste within the district's 24 square miles boundaries.



Harris County Flood Control District (March 2022)

- Assisting the District in picking up debris, litter, tires in areas of flood risk and water blockages.

City of Houston Public Works (January 2023)

- Assisting the Public Works Maintenance team in clearing debris and litter from areas adjacent to storm drains and clearing the gutters and inlets from mud and debris.

Future Partnerships

- Army Corps of Engineers
- Houston SouthEast Management District
- Houston Solid Waste Management



Program Metrics

Since March 25th of 2022, to January 28th of 2023, Clean & Green participants and crew supervisors have picked up a total of

1,106 Illegally disposed tires

- 329 tires picked up on Flood Control District Property.
 - 220 of these were disposed of and recycled by the Greater NorthSide Management District.
- 304 tires picked up in the East End sector and recycled by the East End District.
- 473 tires picked up across Harris County.
 - 96 tires have been disposed of by the Army Corps of Engineers.
 - 361 tires have been recycled at the Southeast Neighborhood Depository Recycling Center.

1,333 Litter filled trash bags and discarded

- Household waste, single use plastic, construction debris, clothing items etc.



68 mattresses and 168 furniture items

- Mattresses boxes, bed frames, couches, office chairs, tables, center tables, lamps, shelve units, etc.

A total of 1,120 cubic yards have been disposed of

- 540 cubic yards disposed through GFL (Contractor)
- 417 cubic yards disposed of through the East End District roll off containers.
- 163 cubic yards disposed through COH WM Neighborhood / Recycling depositories.





Operational Challenges

Tire Recycling Challenge

Throughout the 10 months of operations, the Clean & Green program has experienced issues with picking up and disposing of tires properly through some of the recycling facilities. A total of 125 tires are currently stationed at our operating warehouse because no Waste Management recycling depository will take semi trucks tires.

Crew Supervisors turnover

The Clean & Green program has experienced a high turnover of crew supervisors voluntarily resigning their position due to low wages. Over a 10 month period, the program has hired 6 crew supervisors, only retaining 2; thus creating operational challenges. This is due to the time it takes to train and onboard the appropriate personnel. An adjustment to their annual salary is overdue to retain the staff with the necessary combination of skills, willingness, ability to perform and supervise the difficult outdoor work this position requires.

Goals for 2023

Increased participation

Starting in January of 2023, the average of participants increased from 6 to 8 in comparison with previous months in 2022. This will allow for more illegal dumpsites to be cleared. Additionally, the program can begin increasing the number of participants from 40 to 60 per week, and up to 80 per week if we have the appropriate personnel.

Illegal Dumping Prevention

Signage highlighting Clean & Green's work and providing contact info for reporting illegal dumping at chronic illegal dumpsites will provide community members visual awareness of the work being done, and will provide the community with opportunities to be a part of the solution to decrease illegal environmental activities.

Access to all Neighborhood Depositories

Free and expedited access to all the City of Houston Neighborhood Depositories will allow the Clean & Green program to reduce expenditures on dumping fees and redirect time spent queuing to offload waste.

Increase Public Awareness and Support for the Program

Developing a formal mechanism for those who have seen the program in their neighborhood and have expressed interest in volunteering and/or financially supporting Clean & Green efforts will enable us to engage and formally track public support to increase program resources.

Participants Feedback

The Clean & Green program's commitment is to foster an environment of mutual respect and trust among all participants while servicing the larger community. The following comments are samples of participants voluntary feedback shared with staff on what the Clean & Green program means to them.

"It felt like I was at my regular job but without getting paid." - Christian

"I had fun today. It went better than expected because it is important to conserve wildlife since everything goes back to nature. Thanks for today, and I am glad I could learn more in the process." - Erick

"Felt good to work with park team and I believe I've gained a positive experience." - Brandon

"I had a good experience working at the park and seen a place in Houston I have not been to." - Tommy

"Hello my name is Joscelyn today was actually very informative but a pretty swift workday. I have no complaints, thank you so much and have a blessed day."

"I came here thinking it was gonna be the worst 6 hrs of my life but in fact it has been the best day I've had this week. I can't wait to tell my girl all about it." - Ivan

"I want to say that this experience was not what I thought at all. The crew leaders were great and made me feel comfortable while being here. They also opened my eyes on how much we play a part of the community and can make the environment better 1 step at a time if we work together and put our mind to it but overall I had a great time." - Calvin

