

**A RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT THE  
THE LOWER LAGUNA MADRE  
NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM INITIATIVE**

**WHEREAS**, Hidalgo County located within the State of Texas, strives to protect our County's human and natural resources, promote opportunities to provide funding mechanisms to the County and its communities, and to seek economic development programs;

**WHEREAS**, the Lower Laguna Madre, the tidal section of the Arroyo Colorado, and the Port of Brownsville Ship Channel located within Hidalgo County are designated as impaired bodies of water and are named on the Clean Water Act 303(d) list;

**WHEREAS**, Hidalgo County and numerous Lower Rio Grande Valley local governments and other stakeholders are actively undertaking and/or pursuing projects that mitigate, minimize and/or reduce adverse impacts on the Lower Laguna Madre and Arroyo Colorado watersheds;

**WHEREAS**, the Clean Water Act, state and federal non-point source pollution programs, and coastal management programs provide several funding opportunities to address impaired bodies of water;

**WHEREAS**, the Lower Laguna Madre is identified as a high priority region by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA);

**WHEREAS**, the Lower Laguna Madre is designated as a major estuary by the State of Texas;

**WHEREAS**, the Lower Rio Grande Valley is currently not part of the National Estuary Program;

**WHEREAS**, the USEPA has designated 28 National Estuaries in the United States that were collectively funded by the USEPA in 2020 with an estimated \$17M;

**WHEREAS**, Hidalgo County desires to develop a working partnership with the Lower Laguna Madre Partnership (LLMEP), a State of Texas 501.3(c), not for profit corporation to develop a National Estuary Program;

**WHEREAS**, an Estuary program will position the County to become eligible for funding associated and limited to Estuary programs (Clean Water Act Chapter 320 funding, etc.);

**WHEREAS**, LLMEP will work with Hidalgo County officials to identify work group members, will use its staff and resources to support Hidalgo County, and will utilize its national network to facilitate this project;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF THE COUNTY OF CAMERON, TEXAS, THAT**

- 1) Hidalgo County will support the Lower Laguna Madre National Estuary Initiative.
- 2) Hidalgo County will assign the County's Environmental Division to this project;
- 3) Hidalgo County will partner with LLMEP in planning, developing and creating a National Estuary designation.

PASSED AND APPROVED this \_\_\_\_ day of May, 2021 by vote of the Commissioner's Court of the County of Hidalgo.

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**RICHARD F. CORTEZ**  
County Judge

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**DAVID L. FUENTES**  
County Commissioner, Pct. 1

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**EDUARDO "EDDIE" CANTU**  
County Commissioner, Pct. 2

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**EVERARDO "EVER" VILLARREAL**  
County Commissioner, Pct. 3

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**ELLIE TORRES**  
County Commissioner, Pct. 4

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**Attest: ARTURO GUAJARDO, JR.**  
County Clerk