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Subject: Bayou Land Conservancy announces 2021 Awards: Conservation Champion, Bob Rehak, and Trailblazer, Rebecca Kuo

Houston, TX – Bayou Land Conservancy (BLC) is pleased to announce they will be honoring Kingwood resident, Bob Rehak, as the 2021 Conservation Champion. The Conservation Champion award is presented annually to an individual, or group, that has had an exceptional impact on land conservation in our region. Mr. Rehak writes and publishes the ReduceFlooding.com blog where he seeks to educate his community about flooding and other natural resources issues. Mr. Rehak is being honored by BLC for his effort to use his writing to advocate for natural resource protection, especially critical wetlands habitat along streams, as a vital part of the flood mitigation toolbox. “Mr. Rehak has been an important partner in our flood plain protection advocacy efforts”, said BLC board chair Jonathan Lok. “The broad reach of his blog amplifies the message that wetlands and floodplains are important to healthy, vibrant communities.”

Says Mr. Rehak, “I’m honored to win this award. But it was not my goal. My goal was and is to inform people about the causes of flooding and how to mitigate them. Every day since Hurricane Harvey, I have researched and written about those topics. Several things have become abundantly clear to me in looking at thousands of examples. At the top of the list is this: if we don’t protect nature, it won’t be there to protect us. We need to cherish wetlands and floodplains for the protection they provide us. They are like insurance policies for entire communities. Their value becomes apparent in times of need. Also at the top of the list is the need for *education* about the value of wetlands and floodplains. That’s why I do what I do. And that’s why I love the Bayou Land Conservancy. The group's mission statement talks about protecting land. But they’re really protecting people. And that’s why the Conservancy deserves all of our support.”

Each year BLC also recognizes an outstanding volunteer with the Trailblazer award. The 2021 Trailblazer is Rebecca Kuo, who works in energy procurement for BASF. Ms. Kuo is also an MBA student at Rice University and has served as a non-voting board member at BLC as part of the

Rice Board Fellow program since November 2020. Says Rebecca, “I have never served on a non-profit board before, but I was instantly impressed by BLC’s mission, passion, the caliber of both the board and the staff, and overall just the A+ quality and friendliness of the people. They made it easy for me to get involved, and I was able to help spearhead the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access committee with my co-chair and mentor Lisa Lin. While I have always been passionate about DEI, it was amazing to understand the intersectionality between DEI and land conservation and to help think of ways to improve inclusivity and access for the outdoors. It has also been great to discover new trails and lands across Houston that BLC works to conserve and to even help clean up trash from these lands! I am very honored to be selected as the 2021 Trailblazer, and it means so much coming from such a great organization who is so passionate about what they do.”

The Conservation Champion and Trailblazer awards will be presented at BLC’s Annual Land Lover Gala, which will be held on Friday, November 12th, at Shirley Acres, located at 217 Woerner Road, Houston, TX 77090. More information about the event is available [here](#).

About Bayou Land Conservancy: Bayou Land Conservancy protects land along streams for flood control, clean water, and wildlife. BLC is a nationally accredited, community-sponsored land preservation organization working to permanently protect land, with a focus on the streams that feed Lake Houston, an important source of drinking water for millions in the region. More information is available at our website: www.bayouland.org.

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