



Picture of West Keegans Bayou the morning after Hurricane Beryl (2024) taken from behind my fence. The greater Houston area received only 10 inches of rain during Hurricane Beryl, but West Keegans Bayou swelled noticeably.



Picture of West Keegans Bayou during Hurricane Harvey (2017) taken from my back fence. Close to the same view as the picture of Beryl above.

The bayou is not in as good of shape now as it was during Hurricane Harvey; the pictures demonstrate that. WKBID is currently at maximum capacity for any flood event, Kavi agrees.

The upstream wetland for West Keegans Bayou, ~ 60 acres, has been displaced by developments and the flow channel moved to higher ground. The major drainage ditch and smaller ditch now collecting excess stormwater cannot always contain stormwater resulting from the loss of wetland and increased impermeable surfaces from the development. The result is increased stormwater runoff and velocity of waterflow (transporting silt and debris into the channel) and flooding on Obrien Rd.

The increased stormwater flow must be accommodated downstream, but to accomplish that the flow channel and outfalls must be maintained constantly – maintenance of outfalls and the channel has been lax for 4 years; outfall repairs (desperately needed) were started last year with the bulk of the work not commenced until just before the current election (March 2026). Conditions downstream of WKBID are even worse. FBC Unincorporated (the next flood control entity downstream) has not maintained their portion of the flow channel; it is deemed high risk for flooding on FEMA floodplain maps. Farther downstream is Harris County; they have been using flood control funds for everything except maintaining their storm drains and bayous. If the water can't be conveyed down dip homes will flood. If WKBID cannot convey stormwater downstream; it must be temporarily contained in detention ponds (natural and manmade).

According to Harris County flood control District (the only published information), there has been a rainfall event exceeding local bayou capacities every other year since Harvey. There has been more effort put into changing law and code requirements than maintaining and improving the flood control systems everywhere. Current FEMA flood maps are out of date; the 2020 update is supposed to be released shortly (and it is already out of date). Following lax requirements is not the prudent thing to do.

The first page on the FEMA website (<https://www.fema.gov/flood-maps>) says,

“Floods are unpredictable. Because flood risk is always changing, communities use tools to understand their risk and take actions to protect their families, homes and businesses.”

This suggests that everyone needs to plan accordingly. WKBID should choose to protect residents by planning for the worst and hoping for the best. If water cannot be conveyed downstream for whatever reason, there will be flooding. WKBID should not stress its' at capacity flow channel with any additional burden. All nearby areas ultimately drain into WKBID; it does not matter whether the excess stormwater flow from your development crosses your property directly before entering the bayou or is conveyed through adjacent developments before entering the bayou. Excess stormwater flow is excess stormwater flow. Deepening the flow channel to accommodate development is not an option; flood districts downstream are at a higher elevation than WKBID and water does not flow up dip. The new development will be built and impacting flood control well before downstream remediation of the bayou can be accomplished, placing District residents (including residents of the “low-cost housing for the elderly”, Texas Inter-Faith Management Corporation development project) at risk. Ignoring that does not seem like a humanitarian thing to do. The most vulnerable groups are children, infirm, elderly and their pets.



A summer rainstorm (June 2025) turned Chimney Rock, just south of Westheimer, into an impassible waterway (a firetruck turned around instead proceeding to where we were stuck). There was no standing water on Chimney Rock when we turned onto it from Westheimer.

Harris County infrastructure downstream of WKBID is compromised and WKBID must take that into consideration.

Take your blinders off and look at the big picture!

WKBID can be part of the problem or part of the solution.

WKBID cannot improve the flow channel quick enough to counter the immediate increased stormwater flow caused directly or indirectly by this development compounded with the condition of WKBID and downstream water control districts.

AFTERWORD:

WKBID attorneys have cautioned the Board that we cannot win if the developer files a lawsuit (which Texas Inter-Faith Management Corporation assured us they would do); they have met the minimum requirements by code and law.

WKBID will be bound by the letter of the law, but not the intent of the law.

Our only option is to provide Texas Inter-Faith Management Corporation with their LONO and not waste taxpayers' funds on a legal battle that we cannot win. Funds should be used for bayou maintenance to ensure that flooding impact is minimized as much as possible. We can do no more.

Harris County residents can view their potential new flood risk under proposed FEMA map

The proposed map — which was quietly released on the agency’s site two weeks ago and intended for technical reviews by floodplain administrators — marks a major revision in Harris County’s flood risk zones that haven’t seen a comprehensive update in nearly 20 years.

[Sarah Grunau](#) | February 16, 2026, 4:01 PM (Last Updated: February 17, 2026, 1:17 PM)



<https://www.houstonpublicmedia.org/articles/news/flooding/2026/02/16/543472/harris-county-flood-map-fema/>

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