

TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
AGENDA ITEM REQUEST

AGENDA REQUESTED: April 11, 2007

DATE OF REQUEST: March 23, 2007

NAME & NUMBER OF PERSON TO CONTACT REGARDING CHANGES TO THIS REQUEST, IF NEEDED: Dania Grundmann, 239-3449.

CAPTION: Docket No. 2007-0190-TML. Consideration for approval to publish and solicit public comment on a draft TMDL Implementation Plan for two total maximum daily loads for chloride and total dissolved solids in the Colorado River Below E. V. Spence Reservoir (Segment 1426) in Coke and Runnels Counties of the Colorado River Basin.

(Faith Hambleton, Marc Friberg)



Chief Engineer

TEXAS
COMMISSION
ON ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY
2007 MAR 22 PM 4:05
CHIEF CLERKS OFFICE

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN LIBRARY
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS INTERNATIONAL

300 NORTH ZEEB ROAD

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN 48106-1500
SERIALS ACQUISITION DEPARTMENT
SERIALS ACQUISITION

PLEASE PRINT NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE
LIBRARY TO WHICH THIS JOURNAL IS
BEING SENT. IF THE LIBRARY IS
DIFFERENT FROM THE LIBRARY OF
ORIGIN, PLEASE PRINT THE NAME AND
ADDRESS OF THE LIBRARY OF ORIGIN
ALSO.

PLEASE PRINT NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE
LIBRARY OF ORIGIN.

DC 200-200-2000
SERIALS ACQUISITION

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

To: Commissioners

Date: March 23, 2007

Thru: LaDonna Castañuela, Chief
Glenn Shankle, Executive Director

From: David C. Schanbacher, P.E., Chief Engineer *DCS*
Chief Engineer's Office

Docket ID: 2007-0190-TML

Subject: Release of draft implementation plan for public comment

Issue Consideration for approval to publish and solicit public comment on a draft Implementation Plan for two TMDLs for chloride and total dissolved solids in the Colorado River Below E.V. Spence (Segment 1426) in Coke and Runnels Counties of the Colorado River Basin.

Background and Current Practice Elevated levels of chloride and total dissolved solids in the Colorado River Below E.V. Spence have resulted in the impairment of the general use of the river. Two TMDLs for chloride and total dissolved solids were developed as required by Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act. The commission adopted the TMDL in November 2006 and they were then submitted to EPA for approval. The next step in the process is the development of an implementation plan, a flexible tool that organizations involved in TMDL implementation will use to guide their programs.

The TCEQ has established a process for preparing implementation plans. The process includes opportunity for public input and comment. TCEQ staff prepare a draft implementation plan by coordinating with internal programs, other state agencies, and stakeholders. A key aspect of establishing an effective implementation plan is obtaining input and commitments from other state agencies and stakeholders who have responsibility for implementing control actions and management measures that fall outside of the TCEQ's authority.

Upon completion of the draft implementation plan, TCEQ staff request approval from the commission to solicit public comment. After the public comment period, TCEQ staff may revise the implementation plan, if appropriate. The implementation plan, combined with the TMDL, provides local, regional, and state organizations with a comprehensive strategy for restoring and maintaining water quality in an impaired water body.

Question Does the commission approve the Executive Director's request to publish and solicit public comment on the draft *Implementation Plan for Two Total Maximum Daily Loads for Chloride and Total Dissolved Solids in the Colorado River Below E. V. Spence Reservoir, For Segment Number 1426?*

Agency contacts:

Kerry Niemann, Project Manager, 239-0483

Marc Friberg, Staff Attorney, 239-0611

Attachments

cc: Chief Clerk, 5 copies
Executive Director's Office
David C. Schanbacher, P.E.
Jason Skaggs
Ashley K. Wadick
Office of General Counsel

cc (without attachments): Marc Friberg, Staff Attorney
Kerry Niemann, Project Manager

Briefing Outline for an Implementation Plan to Address Two Total Maximum Daily Loads for Chloride and TDS in the Colorado River Basin

Segment Number: 1426 – Colorado River Below E.V. Spence Reservoir

I. Introduction

This outline summarizes an implementation plan (I-Plan) developed to address two total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) for chloride and total dissolved solids (TDS) for one stream located within the Colorado River Basin. An I-Plan is prepared for each TMDL adopted by the TCEQ. The I-Plan describes the actions that will be taken to achieve the load allocations specified in the TMDL and the means by which these actions will be tracked, evaluated, and reported.

II. TMDL Summary

Segment 1426 is a freshwater stream approximately 66 miles long, with a watershed greater than 2000 square miles. The segment receives the majority of its flow from E.V. Spence Reservoir. It begins at Robert Lee Dam and flows southeasterly through Coke and Runnels Counties in Texas, ending 2.3 miles below the confluence of Mustang Creek in Runnels County (Figure 1).

General uses were identified as impaired in the *2000 Texas Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List*. Concentrations of chloride and TDS are among the numeric criteria used to evaluate the support of general uses, specifically, intermediate aquatic life. The criteria for chloride and TDS are average annual concentrations of 610 milligrams per liter (mg/L) and 2,000 mg/L, respectively (Table 1).

Based on the TMDL, to meet the criteria defined in the state's water quality standards, releases from E.V. Spence Reservoir must be at or below 550 mg/L of chloride and 1,537 mg/L of TDS.

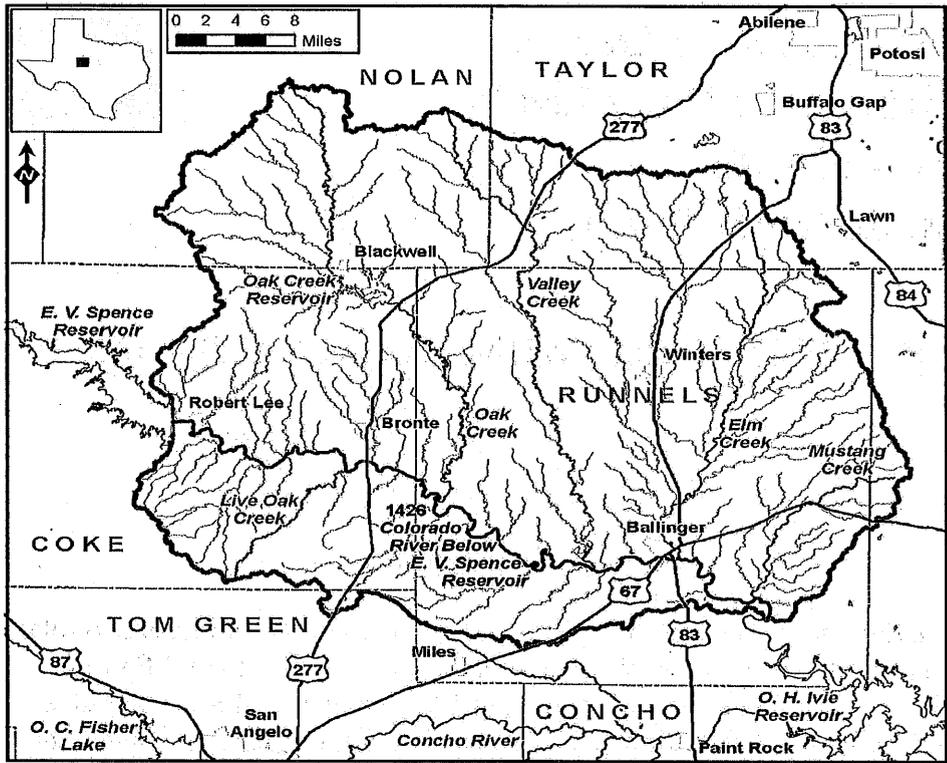


Figure 1: Colorado River Below E.V. Spence Reservoir Watershed

Table 1: Numeric Criteria for Colorado River Below E.V. Spence Reservoir

Segment	Criteria						
	Cl (mg/L)	SO4 (mg/L)	TDS (mg/L)	Dissolved Oxygen (mg/L)	pH Range (Standard Units)	Indicator Bacteria #/100ml (E. coli)	Temperature (°F)
1426: Colorado River Below E.V. Spence Reservoir	610*	980*	2,000*	5.0	6.5-9.0	126+/ 394++	91

* expressed as annual average values

+ expressed as a geometric mean

++ expressed as an instantaneous grab sample

The total load allocations (LAs), wasteload allocations (WLAs), and margins of safety (MOS) for chloride and TDS are summarized in Tables 2 and 3. The natural loads from chloride and TDS are included in groundwater contributions and explicitly considered in the LA. The sum of WLA and LA is divided by 0.95 to provide an explicit margin of safety of 5 percent and obtain the TMDL.

Table 2: Chloride TMDL (10⁶ lbs/yr)

TMDL (lbs/year)	WLA (lbs/year)	LA (lbs/year)	MOS (lbs/year)
13	2	11	0.66

Table 3: TDS TMDL (10⁶ lbs/yr)

TMDL (lbs/year)	WLA (lbs/year)	LA (lbs/year)	MOS (lbs/year)
37	6	29	2

III. TMDL Action Strategy

During development of the TMDL, several implementation activities were initiated to achieve pollutant reductions.

- The EPA has awarded a nonpoint source grant through the TCEQ to the Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC) to investigate the nature and extent of known salinity contamination associated with oil and gas production, the development of remediation/abatement alternatives or best management practices (BMPs), and the implementation of the BMPs to specifically reduce water pollution.
- The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) are in the process of funding a multi-year project to control salt cedar.
- Because it has been confirmed that the area upstream is generally more conductive than the area downstream from E.V. Spence Reservoir, and contributes a significant saline load to E.V. Spence Reservoir and therefore Segment 1426, the TCEQ and the Colorado River Municipal Water District (CRMWD) have deployed two continuous monitoring stations to measure specific conductivity. These continuous monitors will guide the district in management of flow, and therefore salinity, from the upper watershed into E.V. Spence Reservoir, which in turn discharges to Segment 1426. To date, management of flow has improved water quality and reduced the level of salinity in E.V Spence Reservoir, a source of drinking water. The TCEQ adopted TMDLs to reduce salinity in the reservoir in 2000, and amended them in 2002.
- The RRC is working cooperatively with the TCEQ to eliminate pollution caused by unplugged or improperly plugged wells and reduce the chloride content of the Upper Colorado River basin through a project called Runnels County/Upper Colorado River Saltwater Discharge Minimization Project. Activity associated with oil and gas operations, such as abandoned, improperly plugged or unplugged oil and gas wells, and salt-water injection and/or disposal wells have been identified as possible sources of salinity. As of June 2006, 167 of the 189 wells identified,

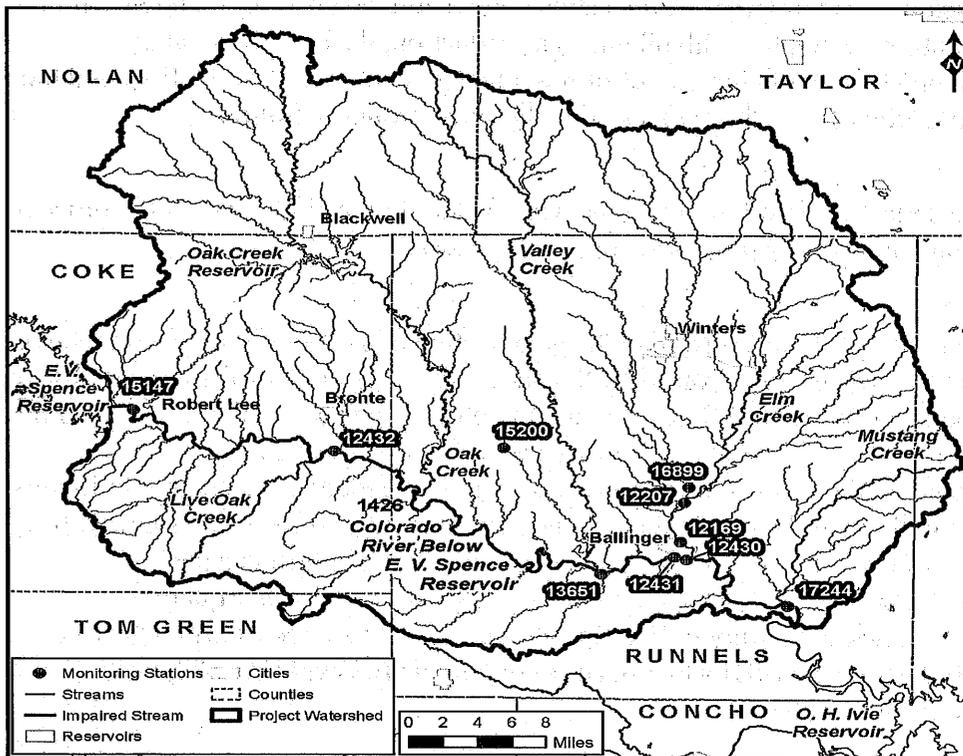
recommended, and approved for plugging have been plugged since the project began in 2003.

III. TMDL Tracking Strategy

The TCEQ will track the control action strategies and water quality conditions resulting from implementation to determine if progress is being made toward meeting water quality standards. Data will be collected by the Upper Colorado River Authority (UCRA), the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA), the CRMWD, and the TCEQ in Segment 1426 as part of the state's routine monitoring program. This monitoring will allow the TCEQ to track levels of chloride and TDS subsequent to specific I-Plan control actions. Monthly data collection activities will focus Water Quality Station No. 12432, Colorado River at US 277 (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Water Quality Monitoring Stations Located on Segment 1426

Furthermore, the TCEQ and the CRMWD have deployed two continuous monitors at the Beals Creek Pump Station southeast of Big Spring, and the Colorado River Pump Station



northwest of Colorado City to measure specific conductivity. These continuous monitors will guide the CRMWD in management of flow, and therefore salinity, from the upper watershed into E.V. Spence Reservoir, which discharges to Segment 1426. This measure also supports implementation of an I-Plan approved by the commission in 2001 to reduce salinity in E.V. Spence Reservoir. The success of flow management activities will be measured in terms of reduced salinity in E.V. Spence Reservoir.

IV. TMDL Review Strategy

The TCEQ and project stakeholders will periodically assess the results of TMDL implementation to evaluate the adequacy of the I-Plan. The ultimate goal of the I-Plan is to reduce levels of chloride and TDS to levels that are below criteria and restore general uses. To review progress, the TCEQ will assess data collected as part of routine water quality monitoring to determine attainment with the applicable criteria and compliance with the TMDLs. If insufficient reductions of chloride and TDS are not observed, the TCEQ will re-evaluate the I-Plan and potential sources identified in the TMDL.

V. TMDL Communication Strategy

Communication is necessary to ensure stakeholders understand the TMDL I-Plan and its progress in restoring water quality conditions. Summaries of all TMDL projects are available on the TCEQ web site. The Upper Colorado TMDL project summary is available at:

http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/32-colorado_group.html.

The TCEQ publishes a biennial report that summarizes the status of the TMDL Program in general and of individual TMDL projects in the state. The report includes highlights of TMDL Program activities to restore impaired surface waters in Texas, including environmental results, program management, and summaries of restoration projects being implemented. The current version of the status report is available on the TCEQ web site at:

<http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/tmdlprogram.html>.

At the local level, the progress of this I-Plan will be reported in the Basin Highlights report prepared annually by the LCRA, UCRA, and CRMWD under provisions of the Texas Clean Rivers Program.



For Public Comment, April 2007

Implementation Plan for Two Total Maximum Daily Loads for Chloride and Total Dissolved Solids in the Colorado River Below E. V. Spence Reservoir

For Segment Number 1426

printed on
recycled
paper

Prepared by the:
Chief Engineer's Office, Water Programs, TMDL Section

TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Distributed by the
Total Maximum Daily Load Program
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
MC-203
P.O. Box 13087
Austin, Texas 78711-3087

TMDL project reports are also available on the TCEQ web site at:
<www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/>

Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
Introduction.....	2
Summary of TMDLs.....	3
Problem Definition.....	3
Source Analysis.....	6
Linkage.....	7
TMDL Expressions.....	8
Implementation Strategy.....	8
Control Action 1.0.....	9
Investigations and Abatement of Loads from Produced Water and Seeps to Surface Water.....	9
Control Action 2.0.....	11
Brush Control.....	11
Control Action 3.0.....	12
Well Plugging.....	12
Control Action 4.0.....	13
Continuous Water Quality Monitoring.....	13
Implementation Tracking.....	14
Programmatic Indicators.....	15
Water Quality Indicators.....	15
Review Strategy.....	16
Communication Strategy.....	16
References.....	1

Figures

Figure 1: Watershed of the Colorado River Below E.V. Spence.....	5
Figure 2: Map of the segment study area (Segment 1426) depicting TDS concentrations measured in August 2004 (Paine et al., 2005).....	6
Figure 3: Areas of elevated conductivity measured along the axis of the Colorado River between Spence and Ivie Reservoirs. (Paine et al, 2005).....	8
Figure 4: Saltwater seep locations and Dugout Creek study area (RRC).....	10
Figure 5: Wendkirk Oil Field and Ballinger seep locations (RRC).....	11
Figure 6: Beals Creek Pump Station southeast of Big Spring.....	13
Figure 7: Colorado River Pump Station northwest of Colorado City.....	14

Tables

Table 1: Summary of Nine Key Elements.....	4
Table 2: Numeric Criteria for the Colorado River Below E.V. Spence Reservoir.....	5
Table 3: Permitted Dischargers in Segment 1426.....	7
Table 4: TDS and chloride TMDL allocation: load distributions by source.....	9

Table 5: Chloride TMDL (10^6 lbs/yr) 9
Table 6: TDS TMDL (10^6 lbs/yr) 9



Implementation Plan for Two Total Maximum Daily Loads for Chloride and Total Dissolved Solids in the Colorado River Below E.V. Spence Reservoir

Executive Summary

On February 7, 2007, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) adopted *Two Total Maximum Daily Loads for Chloride and Total Dissolved Solids in the Colorado River Below E. V. Spence Reservoir*. The total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) address chloride and total dissolved solids (TDS) in Segment 1426, the Colorado River Below E.V. Spence Reservoir. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) approved the TMDLs on **[Date]**.

This implementation plan, or I-Plan:

- describes the steps the TCEQ and its stakeholders will take to achieve the pollutant reductions identified in the TMDL report.
- outlines the schedule for implementation activities.

The TCEQ conducted an investigation to identify possible point and nonpoint sources of chloride and TDS, and to quantify the appropriate reductions necessary to comply with established water quality standards. Field investigations confirmed that excessive chloride and TDS concentrations occur throughout the length of Segment 1426, with significant loadings originating from the watershed of E.V. Spence Reservoir, which is immediately upstream of Segment 1426.

Based on the TMDL, the ultimate goal of this I-Plan is to ensure that releases from E.V. Spence Reservoir are at or below 550 milligrams per liter (mg/L) of chloride and 1,537 mg/L of TDS in order to meet the criteria defined in the state's water quality standards.

Several implementation activities were initiated to achieve pollutant reductions while the TMDL was being developed.

- The TCEQ awarded a federal nonpoint source grant to the Texas Railroad Commission (RRC) to investigate the nature and extent of known salinity contamination associated with oil and gas production, the development of remediation/abatement alternatives or best management practices (BMPs), and the implementation of BMPs to specifically reduce water pollution.
- The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) is in the process of funding a multi-year brush control project to reduce salt cedar.
- The TCEQ and the Colorado River Municipal Water District (CRMWD) deployed two continuous monitoring stations to measure specific conductivity. These continuous monitors guide the district in managing flow, and therefore salinity, from the upper watershed into E.V. Spence Reservoir, which in turn discharges to Segment 1426. To date, management of flow has improved water

quality and reduced the level of salinity in E.V Spence Reservoir, a source of drinking water.

- The RRC is working cooperatively with the TCEQ to eliminate pollution caused by unplugged or improperly plugged wells and reduce the chloride content of the Upper Colorado River basin through a project called Runnels County/Upper Colorado River Saltwater Discharge Minimization Project. Activity associated with oil and gas operations, such as abandoned, improperly plugged, or unplugged oil and gas wells, and salt-water injection and/or disposal wells have been identified as possible sources of salinity. As of June 2006, the RRC has plugged 189 wells since the project began in 2003.

Additional sampling at appropriate locations and frequencies will allow tracking and evaluation of progress toward the targeted and primary endpoints. These steps will provide reasonable assurances that the regulatory and voluntary activities necessary to achieve the pollutant reductions will be implemented. To ensure stakeholders stay informed about implementation, the TCEQ will post pertinent material on a project web page and schedule meetings as needed.

Introduction

In order to keep Texas' commitment to restore and maintain water quality in impaired rivers, lakes, and bays, the TCEQ recognizes that it must establish implementation plans for each TMDL. The TMDL is a technical analysis that:

- determines the amount of a particular pollutant that a water body can receive and still meet applicable water quality standards, and
- estimates how much the pollutant load must be reduced to comply with water quality standards.

This I-Plan is designed to guide activities that will reduce chloride and TDS in Segment 1426, as defined in the adopted TMDLs. The ultimate goal of the I-Plan is to restore the general uses of Segment 1426 by reducing the average annual concentrations of chloride and TDS to levels that meet the criteria established in the state's water quality standards.

The I-Plan is a flexible tool that governmental and nongovernmental organizations involved in implementation use to guide their program management. The participating organizations may accomplish the activities described in this I-Plan through rule, order, guidance, or other appropriate formal or informal action.

This I-Plan contains the following components:

- 1) a description of control actions and management measures¹ that will be implemented to achieve the water quality target;

¹ Control actions refer to regulated point source pollutant reduction strategies, generally TPDES permits. Management measures refer to nonpoint source pollutant reduction strategies, generally voluntary best management practices.

- 2) a schedule for implementing activities;
- 3) the legal authority under which the participating agencies may require implementation of the control actions;
- 4) a follow-up tracking and monitoring plan to determine the effectiveness of the control actions and management measures undertaken;
- 5) identification of measurable outcomes and other considerations the TCEQ will use to determine whether the I-Plan has been properly executed, water quality standards are being achieved, or the plan needs to be modified; and
- 6) identification of communication strategies the TCEQ will use to disseminate information to stakeholders and other interested parties.

This I-Plan also includes all of the nine key elements (Table 1) for watershed-based plans as prescribed in the *FY 2004 Guidelines for the Award of Section 319 Nonpoint Source Grants to States and Territories* (USEPA, 2004). Consequently, projects developed to implement nonpoint source elements of this plan that meet the grant program conditions are eligible for funding under the USEPA's Section 319(h) incremental grant program. This I-Plan was prepared by the TMDL Program of the Chief Engineer's Office of the TCEQ.

The TCEQ approved the I-Plan on ~~/date/~~. The TCEQ has primary responsibility for restoring water quality standards in impaired water bodies.

Summary of TMDLs

The Colorado River Below E.V. Spence Reservoir (Segment 1426) is a freshwater stream approximately 66 miles long, with a watershed greater than 2000 square miles. The segment receives the majority of its flow from E.V. Spence Reservoir. It begins at Robert Lee Dam and flows southeasterly through Coke and Runnels Counties in Texas, ending 2.3 miles below the confluence of Mustang Creek in Runnels County (Figure 1).

The Edwards-Trinity aquifer is the principal source of groundwater in the Segment 1426 watershed. The aquifer is composed of sandstone and carbonate-rock aquifers and encompasses an area of 818 square miles. Elevations in the watershed range from 1,650 to 2,350 feet above sea level. A majority of the land is well adapted to cultivation. Vegetation can be best described as mesquite savannah. Mineral resources include brick-making clay and oil and gas deposits.

Problem Definition

General water quality uses were identified as impaired in the *2000 Texas Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List*. A TMDL project was initiated to identify possible point and nonpoint sources of chloride and TDS, and to quantify appropriate reductions necessary to comply with established water quality standards.

Table 1: Summary of Nine Key Elements

Summary Table for Nine Key Elements of Proposed Control Measures for I-Plan Study Area									
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)
Causes/Sources of Impairment Targeted Critical Areas	Management Measures	Estimated Potential Load Reduction (lbs/Year)	Technical and Financial Assistance Needed for Each Measure	Education Component for Each Measure (and Other Education)	Schedule of Implementation for Each Measure	Interim, Measurable Milestones for Each Measure	Indicators to Measure Progress	Monitoring Component	Responsible Entity
Oil and gas operations in the Wendkirk Oil Field and the Ballinger Seep or dissolution of gypsum from the San Angelo Formation Segment 1426 (Machae Creek Area and Ballinger Seep Area)	site assessments of both the Wendkirk Oil Field and the Ballinger Seep surface water monitoring and groundwater investigations implementation of BMPs	Chloride: 9.53E+06 TDS: 5.86E+06	Section 319 Nonpoint Source Grant	quarterly project reports available electronically via the project web-page	2007 - 2009	n/a	recommendations for abatement, monitoring and/or further investigation eventual reduction in TDS-related concentrations from strategic deployment of BMPs	routine basin monitoring	RRC
Carbonate Dissolution Upper Colorado River Watershed	maintenance of continuous water quality monitors and reservoir management	Chloride: 5.60E+05 TDS: 1.57E+06	Section 106 Water Pollution Control Program Grant	TCEQ web-page and LCRA basin highlights report	2007	n/a	reduction in TDS-related concentrations	continuous monitoring and routine basin monitoring	TCEQ, LCRA, and CRMWD
Brush Control Upper Colorado River Watershed	Eradication of Salt Cedar	Chloride: 4.29E+04 TDS: 1.20E+05	Texas Legislature	TSSWCB web-page	ongoing	acres of land treated	reduction in TDS-related concentration	continuous monitoring and routine basin monitoring	TSSWCB

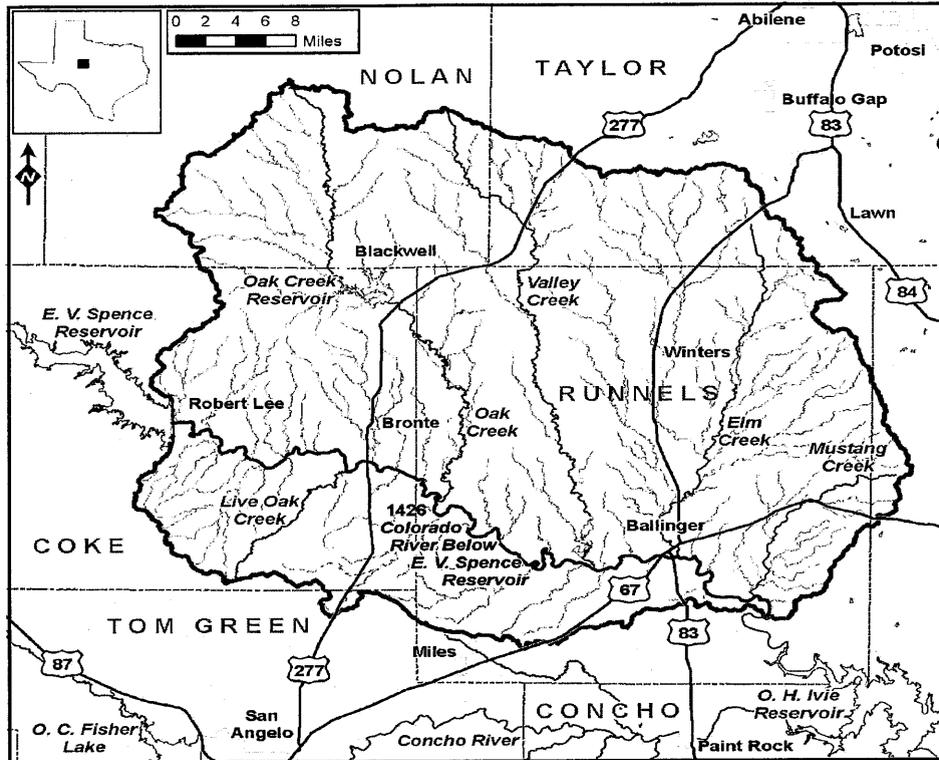


Figure 1: Watershed of the Colorado River Below E.V. Spence

Concentrations of chloride and TDS are among the numeric criteria used to evaluate the support of general uses. The criteria for chloride and TDS are average annual concentrations of 610 mg/L and 2,000 mg/L, respectively (Table 2).

Table 2: Numeric Criteria for the Colorado River Below E.V. Spence Reservoir

Segment	Criteria						
	Cl (mg/L)	SO4 (mg/L)	TDS (mg/L)	Dissolved Oxygen (mg/L)	pH Range (Standard Units)	Indicator Bacteria #/100ml (E. coli)	Temperature (°F)
1426: the Colorado River Below E.V. Spence Reservoir	610*	980*	2,000*	5.0	6.5-9.0	126+/394++	91

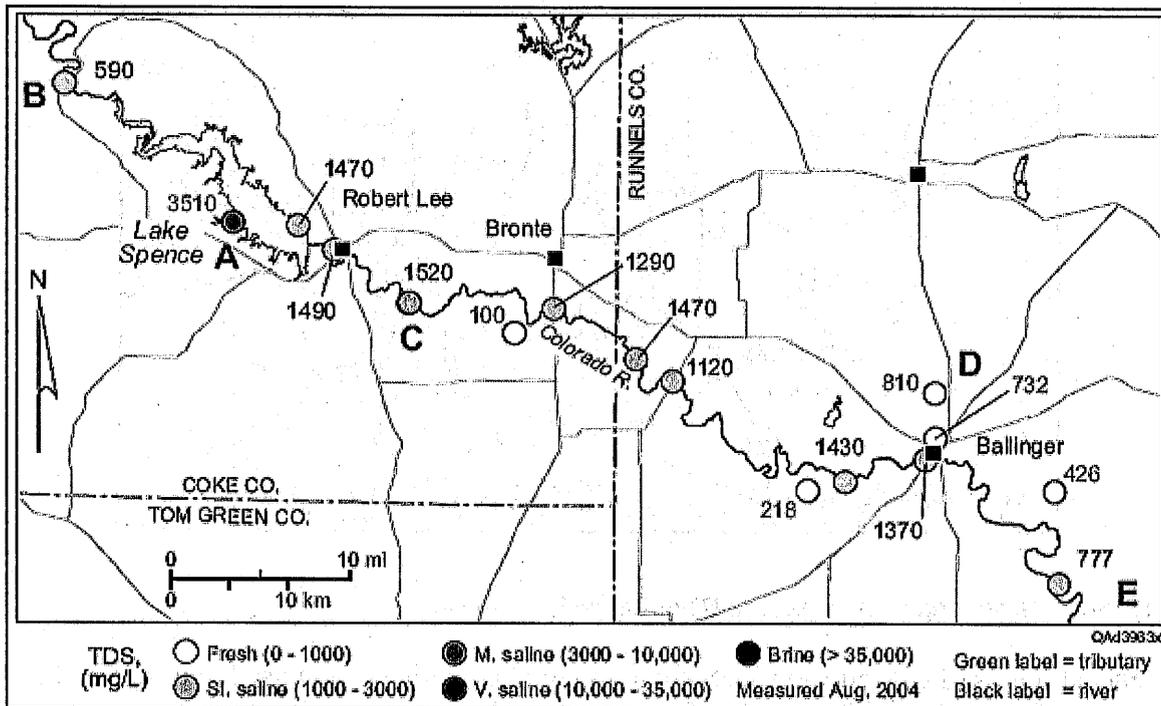
* expressed as annual average values

+ expressed as a geometric mean

++ expressed as an instantaneous grab sample

Measurements of conductivity and salinity in surface water and shallow groundwater were taken around E.V. Spence Reservoir, along the Colorado River from E.V. Spence Reservoir to below Ballinger, and along numerous tributaries north and south of the

Colorado River. Chemical analyses and field investigations of surface water in Segment 1426 and its tributaries verified that salinity is above criteria in E.V. Spence Reservoir and its tributary, Salt Creek, and in the Colorado River from E.V. Spence Reservoir to Ballinger (Figure 2).



Graduated circles, from yellow to red, represent increased concentrations of total dissolved solids. Circles with green labels represent tributaries off the main stem of the segment. Alphabetical letters in the map represent areas that do not correspond to information presented in this report.

Figure 2: Map of the segment study area (Segment 1426) depicting TDS concentrations measured in August 2004 (Paine et. al., 2005)

Source Analysis

Pollutants may come from several sources, both point and nonpoint. The sources of salinity in Colorado River Below E.V. Spence Reservoir are:

- Five permitted wastewater discharger's discharge to the Colorado River Below E.V. Spence Reservoir (Table 3).
- Produced water, generated as a by-product of petroleum production, from documented, orphaned, and noncompliant oil and gas wells in Coke and Runnels Counties.
- Salt cedar, which is especially detrimental to water quality because of its ability to transport salts from groundwater to its leaves. Salt stored in the leaves is transported to the ground surface when leaves drop, and can contaminate surface

waters via runoff. Salt cedar density along stream banks of the Colorado River is estimated at 23,376 plants per acre.

- Permian gypsum-salt deposits contribute via the transport action of runoff flowing through mineral beds or by dissolution of natural underground mineral deposits into groundwater that discharges to the surface. Geologic formations containing gypsum are present in the upper portion of the segment.

Table 3: Permitted Dischargers in Segment 1426

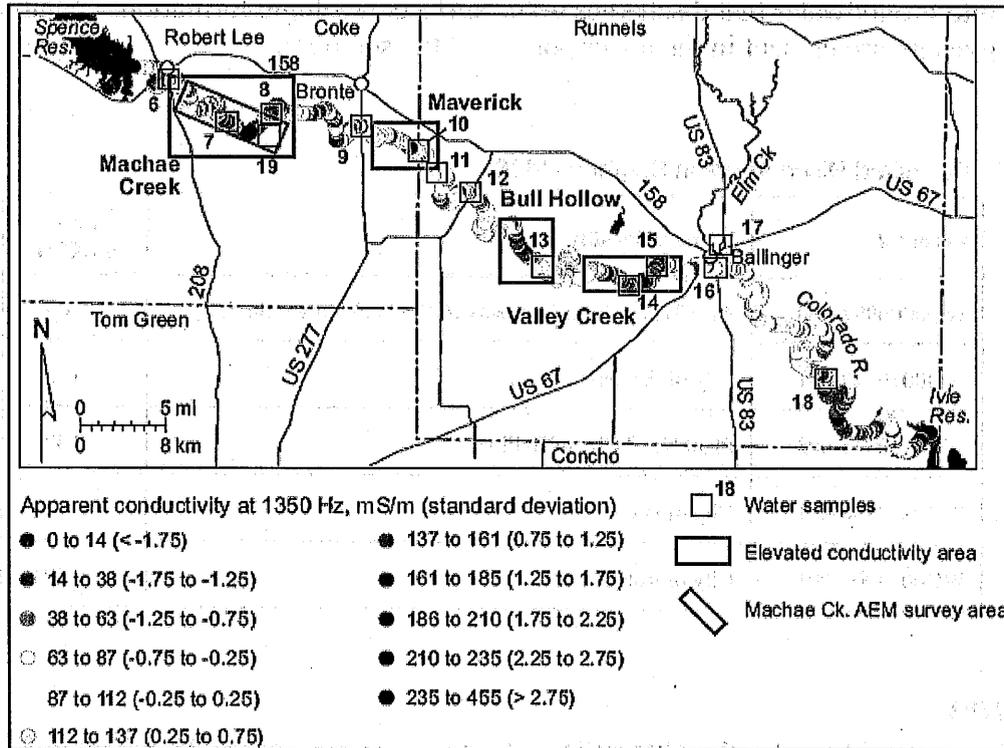
Permit #	Name of Facility	Flow (MGD)
WQ0000997-000	AEP Texas North Company (Oak Creek Power Station)	60
WQ0010320-001	City of Winters	0.53
WQ0010325-003	Plant No. 2 City of Ballinger	0.375
WQ0010390-001	City of Bronte	0.15
WQ0013901-001	City of Robert Lee	0.121

Linkage

Sampling and analysis by the CRMWD and others has repeatedly documented elevated concentrations of chloride and TDS in the Colorado River along and upstream from Segment 1426. Chemical analyses of surface water flowing in the river conducted in support of an airborne survey allow the following general observations.

- There is a high degree of correlation between water quality data results and elevated apparent conductivities measured during Airborne Electromagnetic Surveys over Segment 1426 (Figure 3).
- The minimum flow release requirements from E.V. Spence Reservoir to sustain habitat for the Concho Water Snake are 4 cubic feet per second (cfs) during the period from April to September and 1.5 cfs from October to March. As stipulated in the revised Biological Opinion issued by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in December 2004, CRMWD will adhere to these release requirements. These requirements are applicable only when there is inflow to the reservoir and the water level remains at or above 1843.5 feet. Under these conditions, chloride concentrations in reservoir water have ranged from 220 mg/L, to 480 mg/L from top to bottom, based on historical data.
- There has been significant oil and gas exploration and production activity in the study area. As of September 2001, there were a total of 573 gas wells in Coke County and 821 in Runnels County (EA Engineering et al, 2006). The river flows adjacent to the Wendkirk Oil Field at the downstream end of the segment.

- The Machae Creek area is the most upstream conductive river reach within Segment 1426. This area is characterized by formations consisting of gypsum and dolomite.



AEM refers to Airborne Electromagnetic Survey

Figure 3: Areas of elevated conductivity measured along the axis of the Colorado River between Spence and Ivie Reservoirs. (Paine et al, 2005)

TMDL Expressions

A summary of allocation loads for the Colorado River Below E.V. Spence Reservoir is presented in Table 4. The total load allocations, wasteload allocations, and margins of safety for chloride and TDS are summarized in Tables 5 and 6. The natural loads from chloride and TDS are included in groundwater contributions and explicitly considered in the LA. The sum of WLA and LA is divided by 0.95 to provide an explicit margin of safety of 5 percent and determine the TMDL.

Implementation Strategy

The implementation strategy describes the actions that the TCEQ and its stakeholders will undertake to achieve water quality standards. The strategy specifies actions to meet the load allocations assigned to all point sources and nonpoint sources identified in the TMDL report. Action strategies may be selected from a menu of possible measures based

on an evaluation of feasibility, costs, support, timing, and other factors. Activities may be implemented in phases based on the TCEQ's assessment of progress.

Table 4: TDS and chloride TMDL allocation: load distributions by source

Source	Annual Average Loads (lbs/Year)			
	Chlorides	% Total	TDS	% Total
Spence Reservoir	0.56E+06	4.5%	1.57E+06	4.5%
Produced Water	1.27E+06	10.1%	3.55E+06	10.1%
Abandoned Brine Pits	0.36E+06	2.9%	1.01E+06	2.9%
Groundwater	8.26E+06	65.7%	23.1E+06	65.7%
Salt Cedar	0.04E+06	0.3%	0.12E+06	0.3%
Point Sources	2.08E+06	16.5%	5.80E+06	16.5%
Total	12.6E+06	100%	35.1E+06	100%

Table 5: Chloride TMDL (10⁶ lbs/yr)

TMDL (lbs/year)	WLA (lbs/year)	LA (lbs/year)	MOS (lbs/year)
13	2	11	0.66

Table 6: TDS TMDL (10⁶ lbs/yr)

TMDL (lbs/year)	WLA (lbs/year)	LA (lbs/year)	MOS (lbs/year)
37	6	29	2

Control Action 1.0

Investigations and Abatement of Loads from Produced Water and Seeps to Surface Water

The RRC has initiated projects both above and below E.V. Spence Reservoir to investigate the nature and extent of known salinity contamination associated with oil and gas production, develop remediation/abatement alternatives or BMPs, and implement BMPs to specifically reduce the high salinity that contributes to water quality degradation. The RRC will implement assessments and remediation projects through the following means:

- Install monitoring wells up-gradient of known saltwater seeps and in alluvial deposits along the drainage downstream of known seeps.
- Sample existing and newly installed monitoring wells in the areas of known seeps.
- Conduct a non-invasive geophysical survey on selected area(s) suspected to have high salinity in groundwater.
- Conduct further investigations if necessary, including dye studies, the installment of additional soil borings, and monitor wells.
- Conduct studies to choose and implement BMPs that will reduce the high TDS loading.

BMPs will be identified and evaluated for effectiveness for use in six areas where elevated salinity has been confirmed. These areas include seeps to the E.V. Spence Reservoir watershed (the West O'Daniel Seep, the O'Ryan Seep, the Pharoah Seep, and the Dugout Creek Alluvium) and seeps into the Segment 1426 watershed (Wendkirk Oil Field, and Ballinger Seep) (Figures 4 and 5).

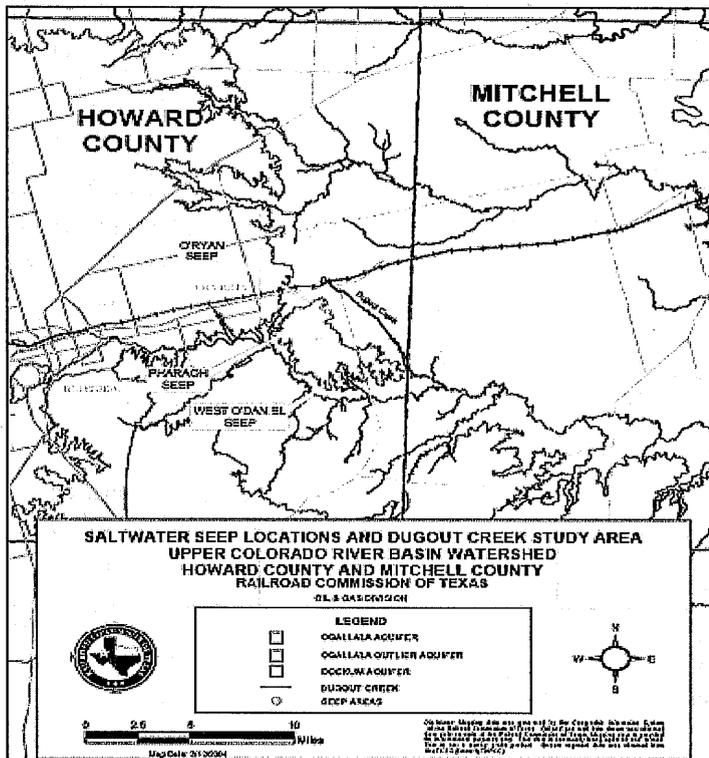


Figure 4: Saltwater seep locations and Dugout Creek study area (RRC)

These projects will enhance the pollution prevention efforts of the RRC and the TCEQ to restore and maintain the water quality in the Upper Colorado River Basin, upstream and downstream of E.V. Spence Reservoir. The project spans fiscal years 2005, 2006, and 2007, and will conclude August 31, 2007. A work plan schedule and quarterly reports can

be found on the project web site at <www.rrc.state.tx.us/divisions/og/site_rem/nps/upper/>

These projects are funded through a federal nonpoint source grant from the TCEQ, with matching funds from the state. The RRC is the legal authority tasked with protection of the state's natural resources, the environment, and public safety through the regulation of the oil and natural gas industry, pipeline transporters, natural gas utilities, rail safety, and surface mining operations. Therefore, implementation of regulatory actions to abate produced water impacts and seeps to surface water affecting the Upper Colorado River Basin lies within the jurisdiction of the RRC.

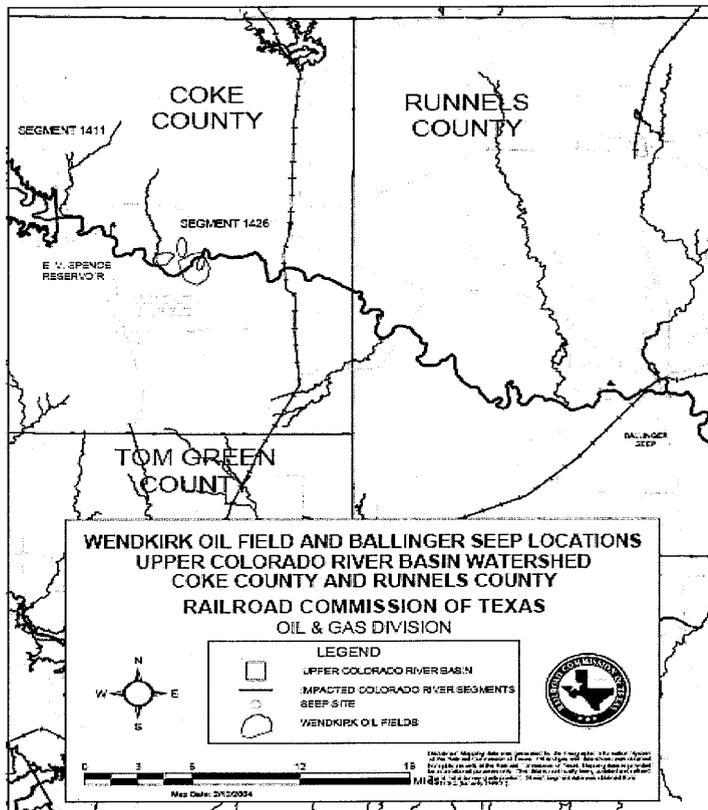


Figure 5: Wendkirk Oil Field and Ballinger seep locations (RRC)

Control Action 2.0

Brush Control

The TSSWCB is in the process of funding a multi-year project to control salt cedar inclusive of the Upper Colorado River watershed. The project is funded by a federal nonpoint source grant from the Environmental Protection Agency, with match funding from the state. Salt Cedar is an invasive plant species estimated to use as much as 75 gallons of water per tree per day, and increase the salinity of water. The newest tool approved to fight salt cedar is the plant's natural predator, a tiny leaf beetle from Europe and Asia. Adult beetles lay eggs that hatch into a worm-like larvae that consumes the

salt-cedar leaves for food. Research has shown that plants that have been stripped twice, died, and cannot thrive, spread, or consume water.

According to the TSSWCB Brush Control Program's 2006 Annual Report, 9,630 acres have been treated, and 10,387 acres remain to be treated. The Texas 79th Legislature (2005) provided \$1.8 million to continue the State Brush Control project and initiate a combined effort with the federal Natural Resources Conservation Service to continue control of salt cedar in the Pecos/Upper Colorado River Watersheds.

The TSSWCB is the state agency with the primary responsibility for activities relating to agricultural and silvicultural NPS pollution abatement as defined by Senate Bill (SB) 503, Texas 73rd State Legislature. The TSSWCB represents the state before the USEPA and other federal agencies on matters relating to agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source pollution abatement. Consistent with the intent of Federal Clean Water Act, Section 319, the TSSWCB and the TCEQ are committed to the development and implementation of a coordinated NPS pollution management program for Texas, as outlined in their Memorandum of Understanding (Title 30, Texas Administrative Code, Section 7.102).

Control Action 3.0

Well Plugging

The RRC is working cooperatively with the TCEQ to eliminate pollution caused by unplugged or improperly plugged wells and reduce the chloride content of the Upper Colorado River basin through a project called "Runnels County/Upper Colorado River Saltwater Discharge Minimization Project." Activity associated with oil and gas operations have been identified as possible sources of salinity. Such sources include abandoned, improperly plugged, or unplugged oil and gas wells, and salt-water injection and/or disposal wells. As of June 2006, 167 of the 189 wells identified, recommended, and approved for plugging have been plugged.

The RRC and the TCEQ began working to eliminate pollution posed by unplugged or improperly plugged wells on February 11, 2003. The original project goal was to plug a total of 115 wells in Runnels County. The project end date was extended to allow time to remediate 74 additional wells identified during the first phase of the project. As the lead entity, the RRC selected wells in the Upper Colorado River Basin, specifically in the Runnels County area, from a pool of non-compliant (abandoned and orphaned) and improperly plugged wells in the drainage basin.

The RRC will document well plugging operations for the Well Plugging Program on a Form W-3 "Well Plugging Report." This information is stored in the RRC's mainframe database system. In addition, a Well Plugging Invoice Summary Sheet is prepared for each lease/well plugged with state funds, and includes cost information for each well site. To date, the average plugging cost has been \$9,646.00 per well.

Control Action 4.0

Reservoir Management and Continuous Water Quality Monitoring

The TCEQ and the CRMWD have deployed two monitoring stations in the Upper Colorado River watershed to accomplish four primary purposes:

- To continuously measure specific conductivity and therefore salinity, of water flowing from the upper watershed into E.V. Spence Reservoir, which discharges to Segment 1426.
- To identify and track trends in water quality.
- To determine the effectiveness of the practices implemented to reduce salinity.
- To assist CRMWD in diverting highly saline flows away from E.V. Spence Reservoir, and therefore Segment 1426 as well.

CRMWD operates a “diverted water” supply system to prevent highly mineralized surface water that occurs routinely under base-flow and low-flow conditions in the Colorado River and Beals Creek (a tributary to the Colorado River) from reaching E.V. Spence Reservoir. Poor quality surface water is captured and pumped to nearby storage reservoirs for evaporation. The less-saline water experienced during high- or flood-flow conditions is allowed to bypass the pumping station and travel downstream to E.V. Spence Reservoir.

The Surface Water Quality Monitoring Team of the TCEQ’s Monitoring Operations Division coordinates all aspects of managing the continuous monitoring stations. The monitoring stations are located at the Beals Creek Pump Station southeast of Big Spring and the Colorado River Pump Station northwest of Colorado City (Figures 6 and 7). Both stations are operated and maintained by CRMWD staff. A web page allows users to review, customize, and generate a data report of the continuously monitored data. See the data at www.tceq.state.tx.us/compliance/monitoring/water/quality/data/wqm/swqm_realtime_swf.html#data.

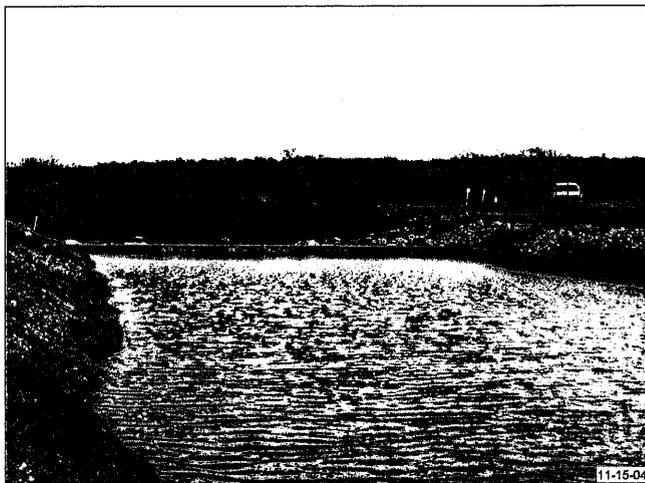


Figure 6: Beals Creek Pump Station southeast of Big Spring

Because the data generated will be real-time, CRMWD will be able to monitor changes in salt concentrations (using specific conductance) during base-flow and flood conditions that will assist them in managing their water diversion system and improving the water supply. Implementation of this action is funded through a federal Water Pollution Control Program Grant authorized under Section 106 of the Clean Water Act.

An Act of the 51st Legislature of Texas in 1949, Article 16, Section 59 of the Constitution of Texas established the Colorado River Municipal Water District and conferred its power and authority. According to the statute, the CRMWD is constituted and declared to be a water control and improvement district and as such, may provide for the control, storage, preservation, and distribution of its water and floodwater and the water of its rivers and streams, as well as provide for the protection, preservation, and restoration of the purity and sanitary condition of the water. CRMWD was issued a certificate of adjudication on August 19, 1977, recognizing they have a water right in the Upper Colorado River Basin including E.V. Spence Reservoir.

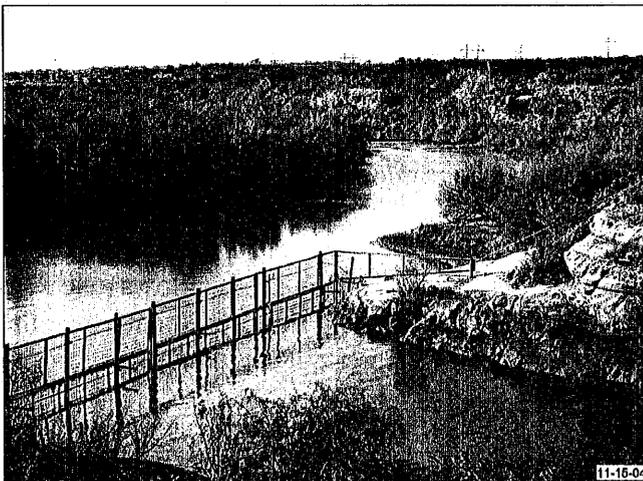


Figure 7: Colorado River Pump Station northwest of Colorado City

As a participant of the Clean Rivers Program, the CRMWD is tasked with maintaining a basin-wide water quality monitoring program, identifying water quality problems and known pollution sources, and setting priorities for taking appropriate actions to eliminate those problems and sources. These roles make CRMWD the agency with the authority and purpose appropriate to implement the water quality diversions and reservoir management measures.

Implementation Tracking

This I-Plan includes provisions to track the progress of the plan using both implementation and water quality indicators. These terms are further defined as:

- **Programmatic Indicator** – A measure of administrative actions undertaken that result in an improvement in water quality.

- **Water Quality Indicator** – A measure of water quality conditions for comparison to pre-existing conditions, constituent loadings, and water quality standards.

Programmatic and environmental monitoring activities are important aspects of TMDL implementation, and both types of monitoring are critical to assessing the effectiveness of activities implemented to improve water quality.

Implementation tracking provides information that can be used to determine if progress is being made toward meeting goals. Tracking also allows stakeholders to evaluate actions taken, identify those which may not be working, and make any changes that may be necessary to get the plan back on target. The RRC, LCRA, CRMWD, and TCEQ will work collaboratively to ensure that data and continuous monitoring results are assessed to track progress.

Programmatic Indicators

Several monitoring and remediation projects are planned or underway as part of this implementation plan. Additional details of the various monitoring efforts are described in the “Water Quality Indicators” section of this document.

The TCEQ and the USEPA will further evaluate the need for, and effectiveness of, the various mitigation and remediation options, and site-specific natural attenuation, based on periodic evaluation of monitoring results. Timetables for additional monitoring and/or the implementation of any BMPs, and estimates of the time necessary for restoration of the general use, will be further developed as the results of the ongoing monitoring are known. Interim evaluations will be made as appropriate, with final evaluations to be performed following completion of all ongoing efforts.

Water Quality Indicators

Verification that designated uses have been restored requires the measurement of applicable water quality indicators. Indicators generally fall into two major categories: programmatic indicators and environmental indicators. Environmental indicators can be subdivided into measures of environmental stressors or pollutants and measures of biological, ecological, and human states of health. The measurable outcome of all phases shall be the attainment of the TMDL endpoints for chloride and TDS in Segment 1426.

Follow-up monitoring will be conducted within the watershed throughout the implementation schedule. The monitoring strategy will consider the spatial and temporal aspects sufficient to characterize trends in water quality that result from implementing the activities in this plan. Follow-up monitoring will also provide water quality data for evaluation of standards attainment.

The Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) will monitor chloride and TDS in surface water at several stations on Segment 1426. Conductivity in the upper Colorado watershed above E.V. Spence Reservoir will be monitored continuously via continuous monitors.

Progress related to these environmental indicators will be analyzed by the CRMWD, LCRA, and the TCEQ.

Review Strategy

This I-Plan is a flexible tool that permits stakeholders to adapt to changing circumstances and to apply the lessons learned from experience. The TCEQ and stakeholders in TMDL I-Plans periodically assess the results of the planned activities and other sources of information to evaluate the adequacy of the I-Plan. Project stakeholders evaluate several factors, such as the pace of implementation, the effectiveness of best management practices, load reductions, and progress toward meeting water quality standards.

The I-Plan presents a general process and timetable that specifies how and when the I-Plan will be evaluated and may be revised. The TCEQ will document the results of these evaluations and its rationale for maintaining or revising elements of the I-Plan, and will present them to the USEPA and the public as part of the state's normal reporting process summarized in the following section.

Communication Strategy

Communication is necessary to ensure that stakeholders understand the I-Plan and its progress in restoring water quality conditions. The TCEQ will disseminate the information derived from tracking I-Plan activities to interested parties, including watershed stakeholders, state leadership, government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and individuals. A phased approach has been selected for this I-Plan. Implementing TMDLs under the phased approach establishes a schedule or timetable for the installation and evaluation of management measures, data collection, the assessment for water quality standards attainment, and if needed, additional predictive modeling. If monitoring determines that the measures implemented under a phase are not sufficient to achieve water quality standards, then the next phase of management practices shall be implemented.

The implementation of management measures for Colorado River Below E.V. Spence Reservoir will be scheduled into three separate phases.

- Phase I of the implementation plan will begin upon adoption (2007) of the plan by the Commission.
- Phase II of the plan will commence after three years (2010) upon determination that Phase I BMPs have not improved water quality sufficiently to achieve water quality standards.
- Phase III will begin after eight years (2015) of implementation upon determination that Phase II BMPs have not improved water quality sufficiently to achieve water quality standards.

Updates on these analyses will be provided to stakeholders via the TCEQ's project web page. Results and progress will be documented in the TMDL Program's biennial status report. Regionally, the progress of this implementation plan will be reported in the annual

reports prepared by the Lower Colorado River Authority under provisions of the Texas Clean Rivers Program.

References

- EA Engineering, Science, and Technology, Inc. and The Louis Berger Group, Inc., 2006. *Colorado River Below E.V. Spence Reservoir (Segment 1426) Total Maximum Daily Load for Chloride and Total Dissolved Solids: Final Report Prepared for Texas Commission on Environmental Quality*. Total Maximum Daily Load Requisition No. 582-1-30480.
- Paine, Jeffrey G., Nance, H.S., and Collins, Edward W., 2005. *Geophysical Investigations of Salinization along Upper Colorado River between Lake Thomas and Ivie Reservoir, Texas*. Bureau of Economic Geology, University of Texas at Austin.