



**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
(USEPA) Environmental Response Team  
Trace Atmosphere Gas Analyzer (TAGA)  
Post-Harvey Monitoring  
Houston, Corpus Christi, and Beaumont  
Areas, TX**

**October 9, 2017**

## **Background**

Hurricane Harvey hit the Texas Coast as a Category 4 Hurricane on August 25, 2017, and subsequent stalling of the system over south Texas, caused unprecedented flooding in the Houston Region. As a result, several industrial facilities were damaged. To help protect and minimize damage to valuable monitoring equipment, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), and other monitoring entities temporarily shut down several air monitoring stations from the greater Houston, Corpus Christi, and Beaumont areas ahead of the storm, as one of many preparations. After the storm passed, and conditions were safe, state and local authorities began work to get the systems up and running again as soon as possible. By August 28, 2017, TCEQ began efforts to assess sites for damage and bring monitors back online. In the interim, the USEPA dispatched its Environmental Response Team to conduct mobile monitoring in the Houston areas most affected by Hurricane Harvey.

## **USEPA Trace Atmosphere Gas Analyzer (TAGA)**

The Trace Atmospheric Gas Analyzer (TAGA) is a self-contained mobile laboratory capable of real-time sampling of outdoor air emissions while in motion. The instrumentation refers both to the analytical instrument and the mobile laboratory built around it. The instrumentation aboard a TAGA mobile air monitoring bus (TAGA bus) includes:

1. A TAGA mass spectrometer/mass spectrometer (MS/MS), which provides real-time monitoring for many organic and inorganic compounds at the part-per-billion by volume (ppbv) levels or lower
2. An Agilent gas chromatograph/mass spectrometer (GC/MS), which analyzes volatile organic compounds at the ppbv level or lower in air samples collected in Tedlar® bags using a loop injection system
3. An Agilent Micro GC, which assays permanent gases at part-per-million by volume (ppmv) levels
4. A global positioning system (GPS), which supplies accurate, real-time positional data during mobile monitoring or stationary events
5. A GIS system, which maps and presents the TAGA's position in real time.

This versatile mobile monitoring system offers a wide variety of services to assist groups within USEPA with cost-effectively conducting investigatory and enforcement activities. This mobile monitoring system collects instantaneous/grab samples which are not directly comparable to the TCEQ's 1-hour, short-term ambient air monitoring comparison values (AMCVs), although the USEPA concluded that no levels of targeted air toxics were above the TCEQ's AMCVs.

## USEPA Mobile Monitoring in Houston and Southeast Texas

The USEPA conducted post-Hurricane Harvey air monitoring by deploying up to two TAGA buses throughout Houston and southeast Texas (see Table 1). Specifically, an area in the Manchester community near the Valero Houston Refinery, which had suffered significant damage from Hurricane Harvey, was a particular focus of sampling efforts.

**Table 1. Areas and Dates of Post-Harvey TAGA Monitoring**

Area(s) Monitored	Date(s) of Monitoring
Manchester	9/5/2017 – 9/7/2017 & 9/10/2017 – 9/12/2017
Deer Park	9/14/2017
Baytown	9/15/2017
Sweeny	9/17/2017
Texas City	9/17/2017
Beaumont/Port Arthur	9/18/2017
Victoria	9/18/2017
Point Comfort	9/18/2017
Corpus Christi	9/19/2017

The TAGA buses measured ambient, instantaneous concentrations (durations ranging from 1 to 2 minutes) of six air toxics (benzene; 1,1-dichloroethene; tetrachloroethene; toluene; trichloroethene; xylene) throughout Houston and southeast Texas (see Table 1). This duration of data are classified as grab samples. Grab samples (instantaneous samples) provide data that are used for source identification. The short nature of the sample, in conjunction with meteorological data, aids in the identification of potential sources of a contaminant plume. Grab samples are not sufficiently similar to the durations used to derive safe levels, such as AMCVs, for comparison.

For six days the TAGA mobile air monitoring bus collected thousands of ambient air samples in and around the Manchester community area. Following analysis of these samples, the USEPA concluded “no levels of targeted toxic chemicals were detected above the Texas TCEQ AMCV short-term screening levels” and “that the probable source of benzene and volatile organic compound readings in the Manchester community in Houston was the roof failure and spill from a light crude storage tank at the Valero Houston Refinery during Hurricane Harvey.” The TCEQ reviewed the TAGA data provided by the USEPA for any levels of potential concern. Maximum concentrations (Table 2) and associated mapped locations can be found in the Attachments. The TCEQ’s short-term AMCV’s are provided for information purposes only in order to provide some context to the monitored levels. All of the TAGA measured

concentrations were below levels of concern and would not be expected to cause health, odor, or welfare effects. The USEPA and TCEQ will continue their investigations into the incident at the Valero Houston Refinery.

Additional sampling was conducted in other Houston communities and areas along southeast Texas (see Table 1). Maximum concentrations (Table 3) and associated mapped locations can be found in the Attachments. The TCEQ's short-term AMCV's are provided for information purposes only in order to provide some context to the monitored levels. All of the TAGA measured concentrations were below levels of concern and would not be expected to cause health, odor, or welfare effects.



## Attachments

**Table 2. Maximum concentrations measured in the Manchester area TAGA study**

Date	Substance	Maximum Instantaneous Concentration (ppbv)	TCEQ 1-Hour Short-Term AMCV (ppbv)*
Sept. 5, 2017	Benzene	21.22	180
	1,1-Dichloroethene	7.50	180
	Tetrachloroethene	6.66	1,000
	Toluene	27.40	4,000
	Trichloroethene	5.60	100
	Xylene	30.40	1,700
Sept. 6, 2017	Benzene	15.98	180
	1,1-Dichloroethene	7.86	180
	Tetrachloroethene	6.80	1,000
	Toluene	73.13	4,000
	Trichloroethene	7.06	100
	Xylene	76.51	1,700
Sept. 7, 2017	Benzene	25.35	180
	1,1-Dichloroethene	8.47	180
	Tetrachloroethene	4.71	1,000
	Toluene	45.90	4,000
	Trichloroethene	5.84	100
	Xylene	34.00	1,700
Sept. 10, 2017	Benzene	29.03	180
	1,1-Dichloroethene	9.39	180
	Tetrachloroethene	9.61	1,000
	Toluene	89.84	4,000
	Trichloroethene	9.22	100
	Xylene	155.48	1,700
Sept. 11, 2017	Benzene	9.14	180
	1,1-Dichloroethene	7.09	180
	Tetrachloroethene	9.86	1,000
	Toluene	16.39	4,000
	Trichloroethene	4.18	100
	Xylene	32.10	1,700
Sept. 12, 2017	Benzene	11.36	180
	1,1-Dichloroethene	8.68	180
	Tetrachloroethene	8.88	1,000
	Toluene	23.99	4,000
	Trichloroethene	8.38	100
	Xylene	46.83	1,700

\*Short-term, 1-hour AMCVs are provided for informational purposes in order to provide some context to the monitored levels. Instantaneous samples should not be directly compared to 1-hour AMCVs.

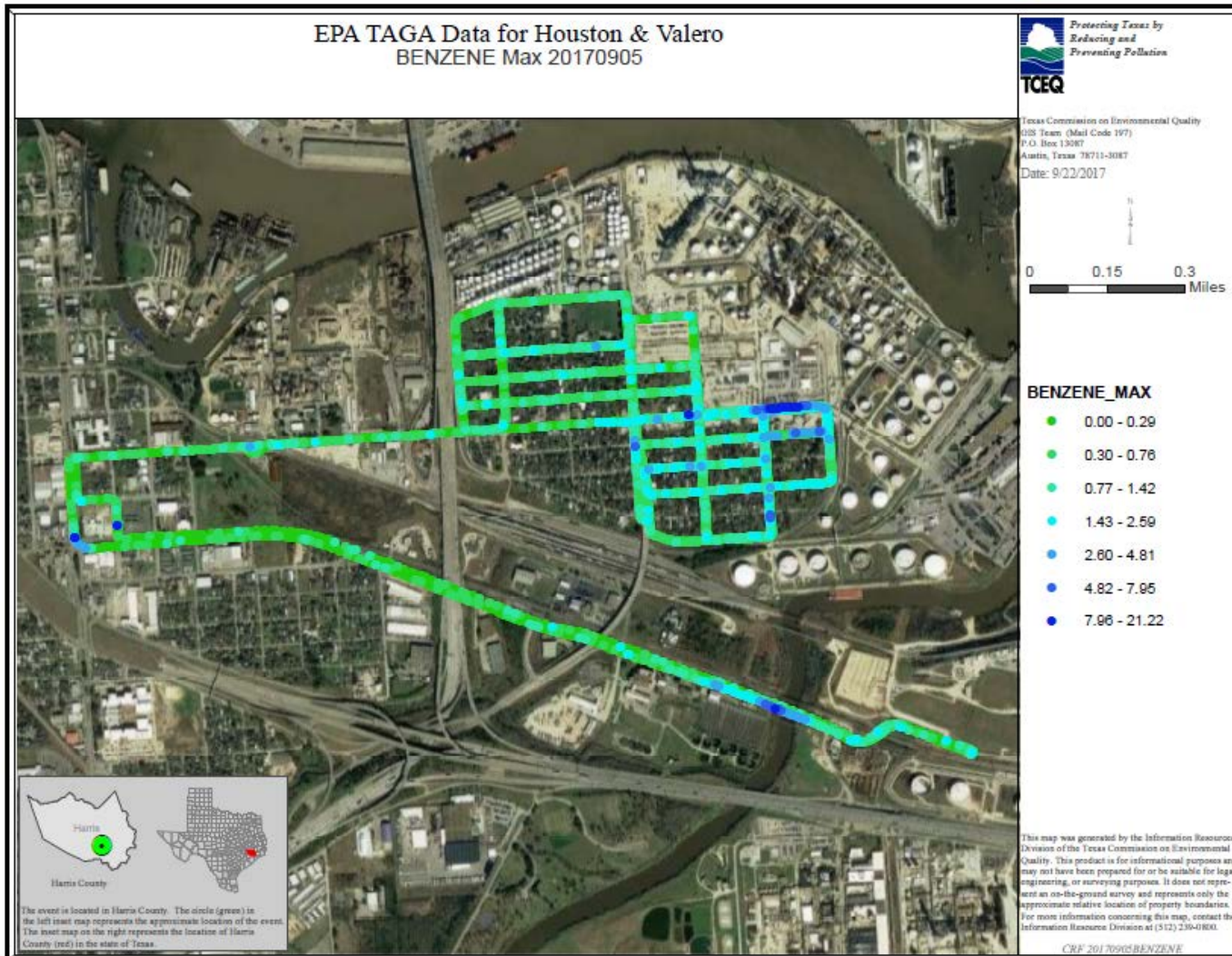
**Table 3. Maximum concentrations measured in the Houston and southeast Texas TAGA study**

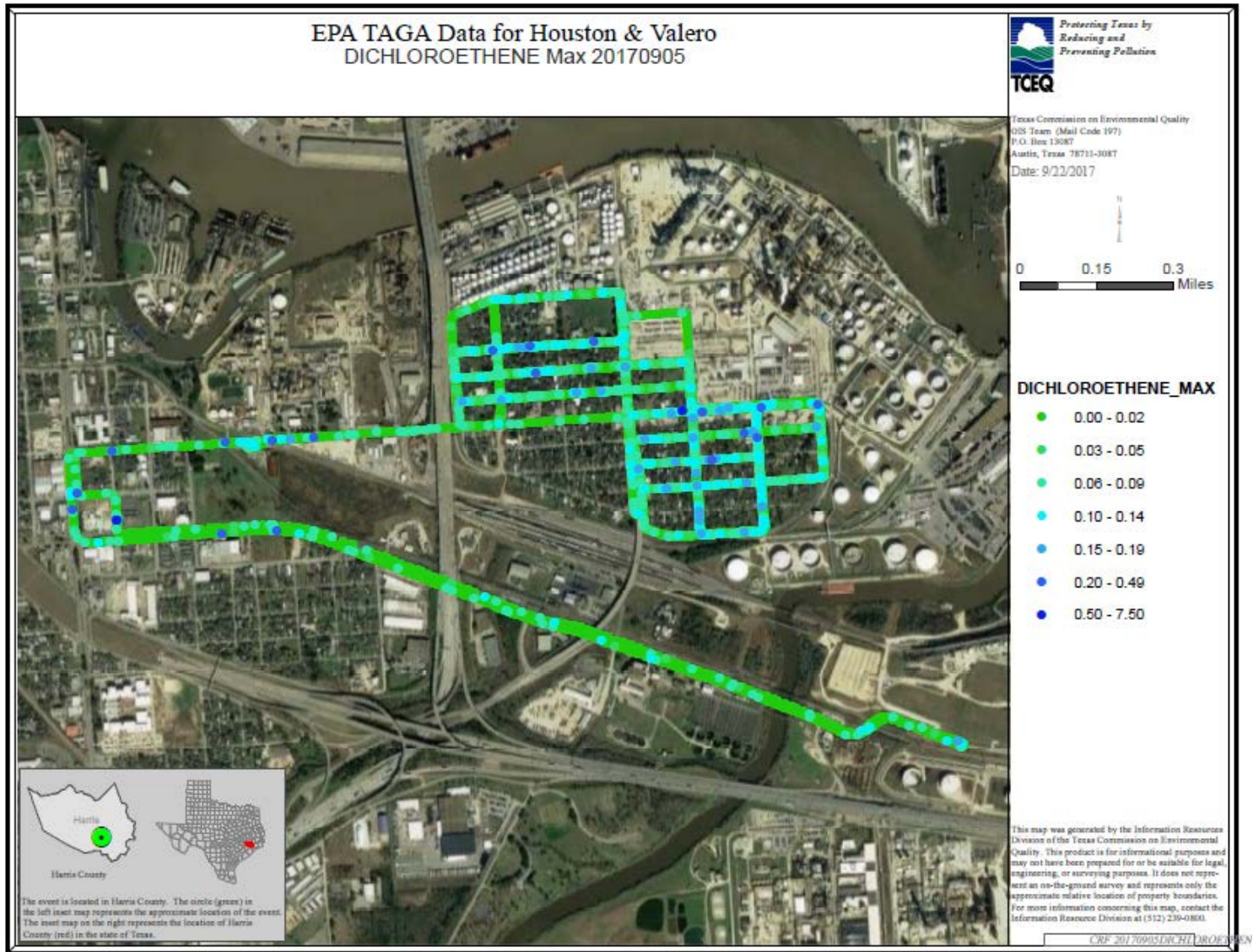
<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Substance</b>	<b>Maximum Instantaneous Concentration (ppbv)</b>	<b>TCEQ 1-Hour Short-Term AMCV (ppbv)*</b>
Sept. 14, 2017	Deer Park Study	Benzene	10.88	180
		1,1-Dichloroethene	8.51	180
		Tetrachloroethene	6.61	1,000
		Toluene	26.07	4,000
		Trichloroethene	6.91	100
		Xylene	30.74	1,700
Sept. 15, 2017	Baytown Study	Benzene	11.38	180
		1,1-Dichloroethene	8.08	180
		Tetrachloroethene	7.38	1,000
		Toluene	16.06	4,000
		Trichloroethene	7.52	100
		Xylene	24.40	1,700
Sept. 17, 2017	Sweeny Study	Benzene	11.45	180
		1,1-Dichloroethene	8.46	180
		Tetrachloroethene	6.63	1,000
		Toluene	6.75	4,000
		Trichloroethene	8.57	100
		Xylene	9.83	1,700
Sept. 17, 2017	Texas City Study	Benzene	10.30	180
		1,1-Dichloroethene	7.76	180
		Tetrachloroethene	6.64	1,000
		Toluene	6.66	4,000
		Trichloroethene	7.40	100
		Xylene	9.38	1,700
Sept. 18, 2017	Port Arthur Study 1	Benzene	22.09	180
		1,1-Dichloroethene	7.86	180
		Tetrachloroethene	6.56	1,000
		Toluene	12.56	4,000
		Trichloroethene	6.58	100
		Xylene	24.55	1,700
Sept. 18, 2017	Port Arthur Study 2	Benzene	6.96	180
		1,1-Dichloroethene	0.77	180
		Tetrachloroethene	0.19	1,000
		Toluene	2.36	4,000
		Trichloroethene	0.18	100
		Xylene	1.95	1,700

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Substance</b>	<b>Maximum Instantaneous Concentration (ppbv)</b>	<b>TCEQ 1-Hour Short-Term AMCV (ppbv)*</b>
Sept. 18, 2017	Victoria Study	Benzene	8.82	180
		1,1-Dichloroethene	7.27	180
		Tetrachloroethene	5.68	1,000
		Toluene	6.27	4,000
		Trichloroethene	6.11	100
		Xylene	9.03	1,700
Sept. 18, 2017	Point Comfort Study	Benzene	11.06	180
		1,1-Dichloroethene	7.92	180
		Tetrachloroethene	6.53	1,000
		Toluene	20.05	4,000
		Trichloroethene	7.00	100
		Xylene	24.40	1,700
Sept. 19, 2017	Corpus Christi Study 1	Benzene	30.56	180
		1,1-Dichloroethene	8.53	180
		Tetrachloroethene	4.62	1,000
		Toluene	11.66	4,000
		Trichloroethene	5.78	100
		Xylene	10.51	1,700
Sept. 19, 2017	Corpus Christi Study 2	Benzene	7.95	180
		1,1-Dichloroethene	7.91	180
		Tetrachloroethene	3.97	1,000
		Toluene	5.36	4,000
		Trichloroethene	5.40	100
		Xylene	5.45	1,700

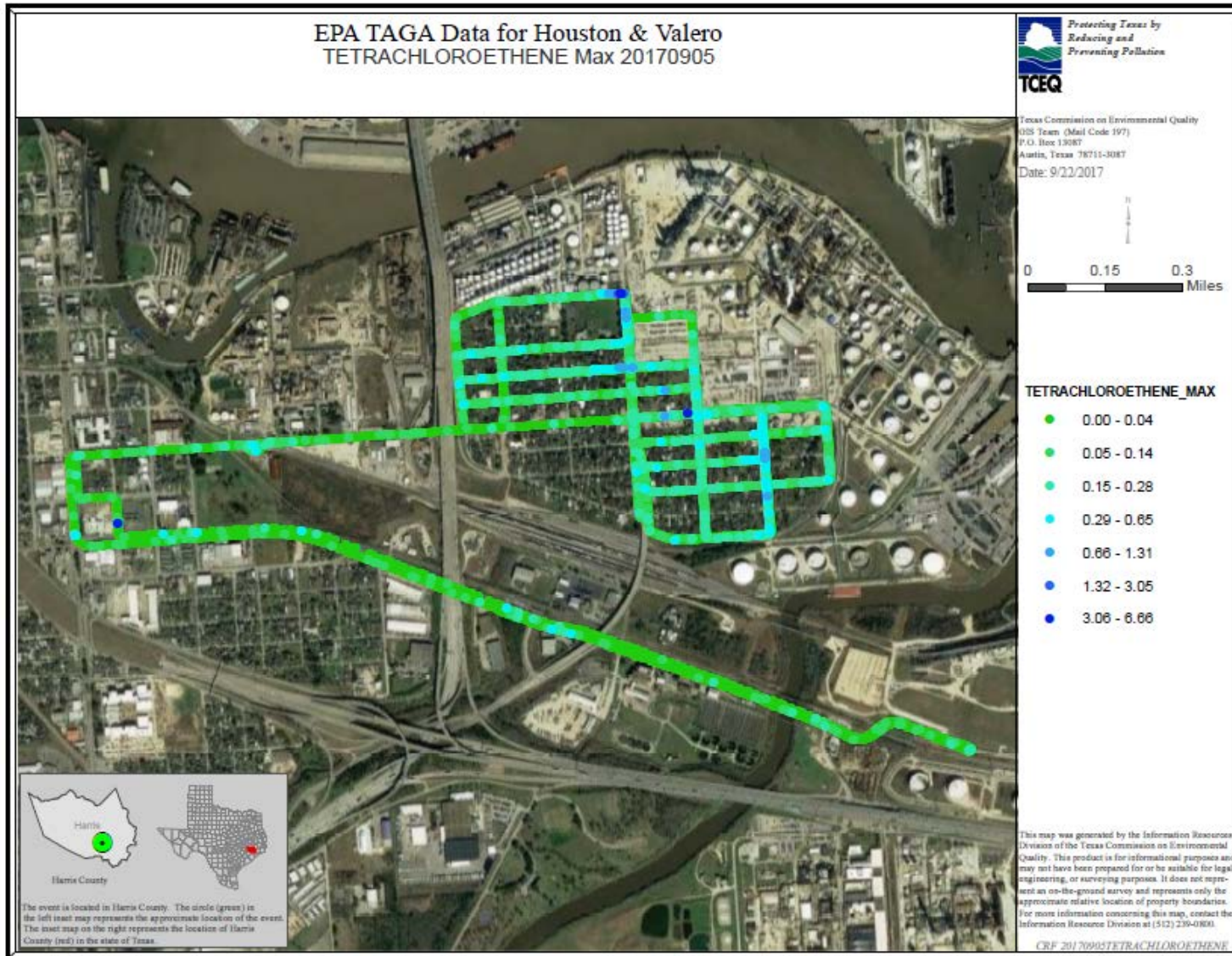
\*Short-term, 1-hour AMCVs are provided for informational purposes in order to provide some context to the monitored levels. Instantaneous samples should not be directly compared to 1-hour AMCVs.

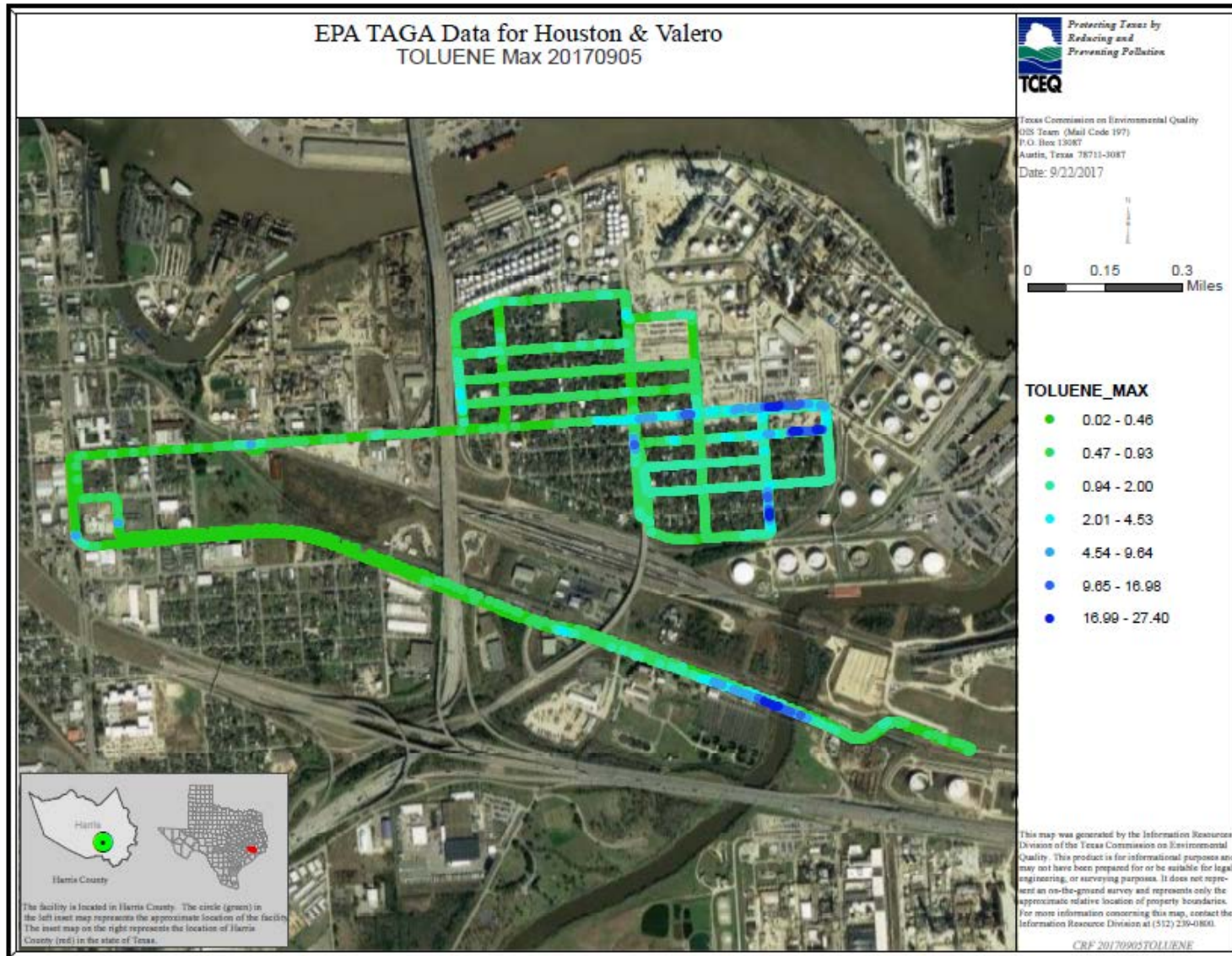
**Manchester Monitoring Study – Sept. 5-7;9-12, 2017**



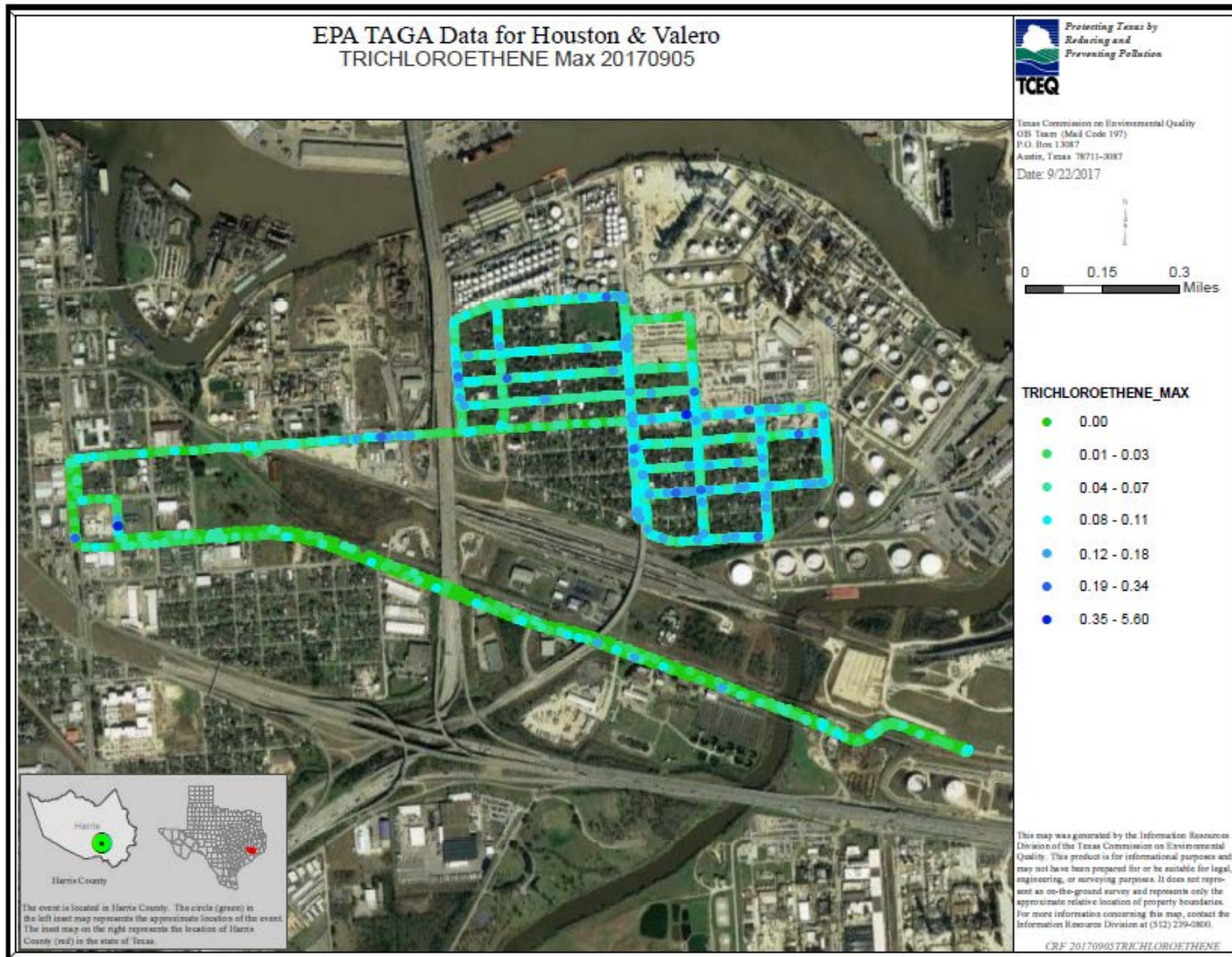




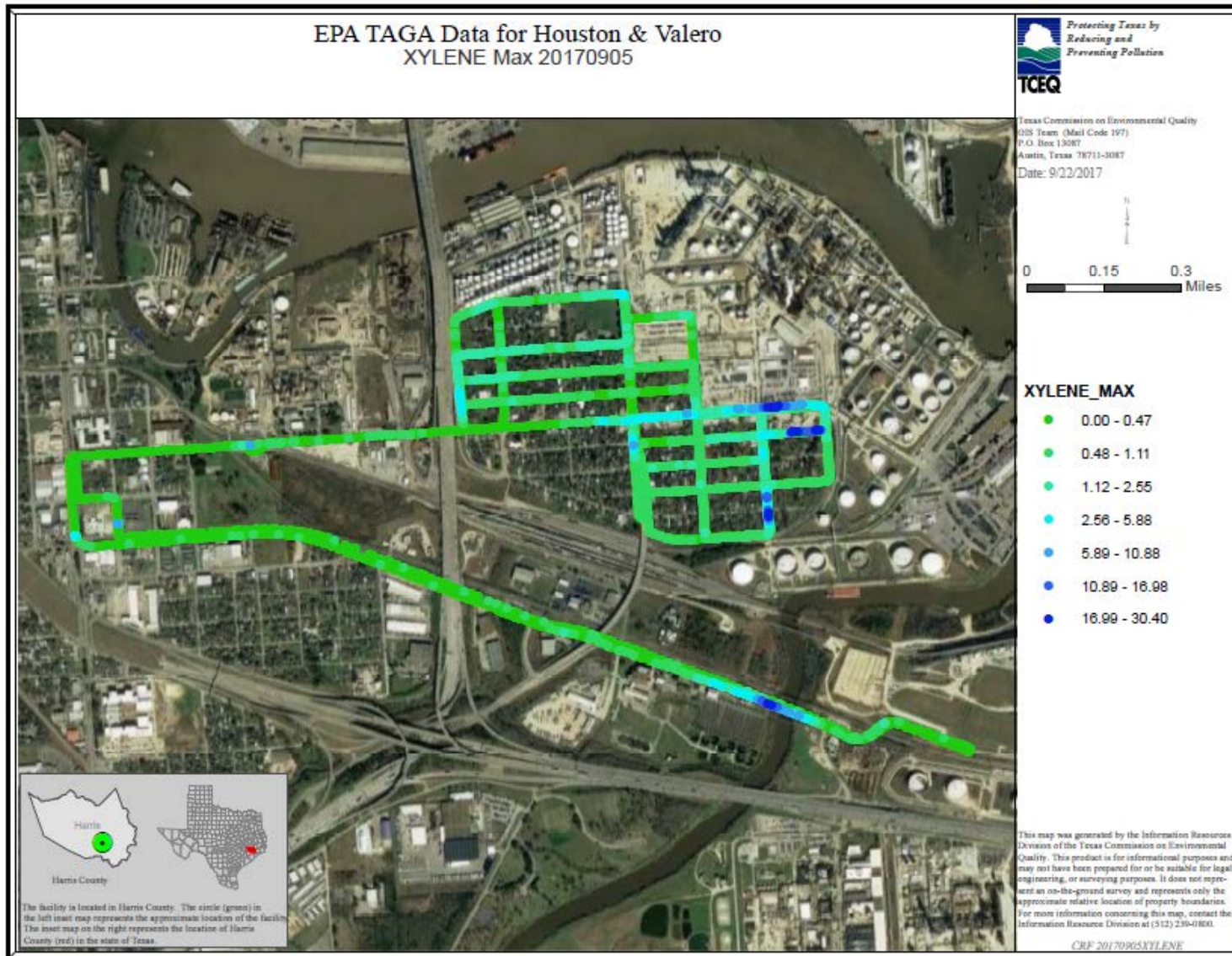


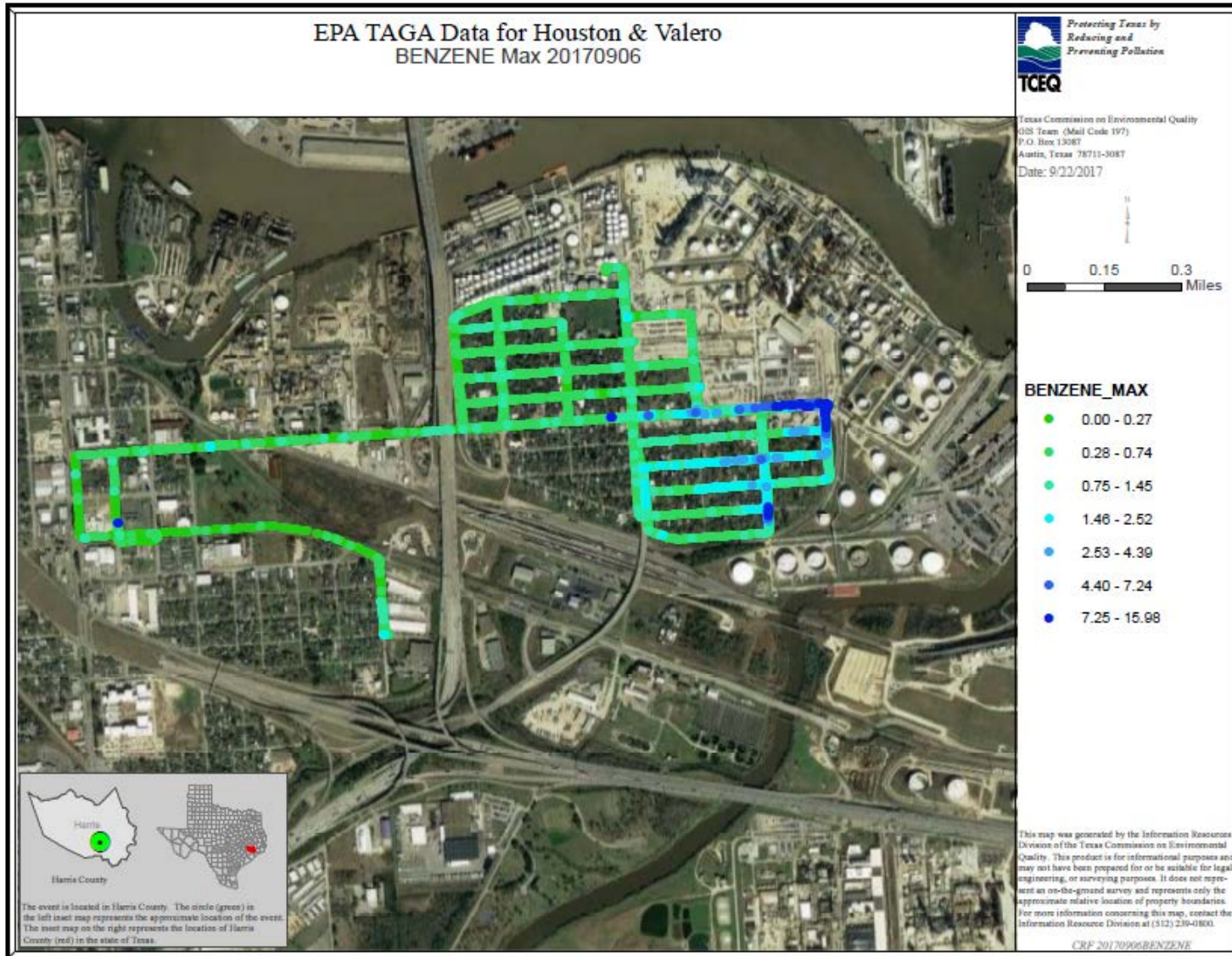




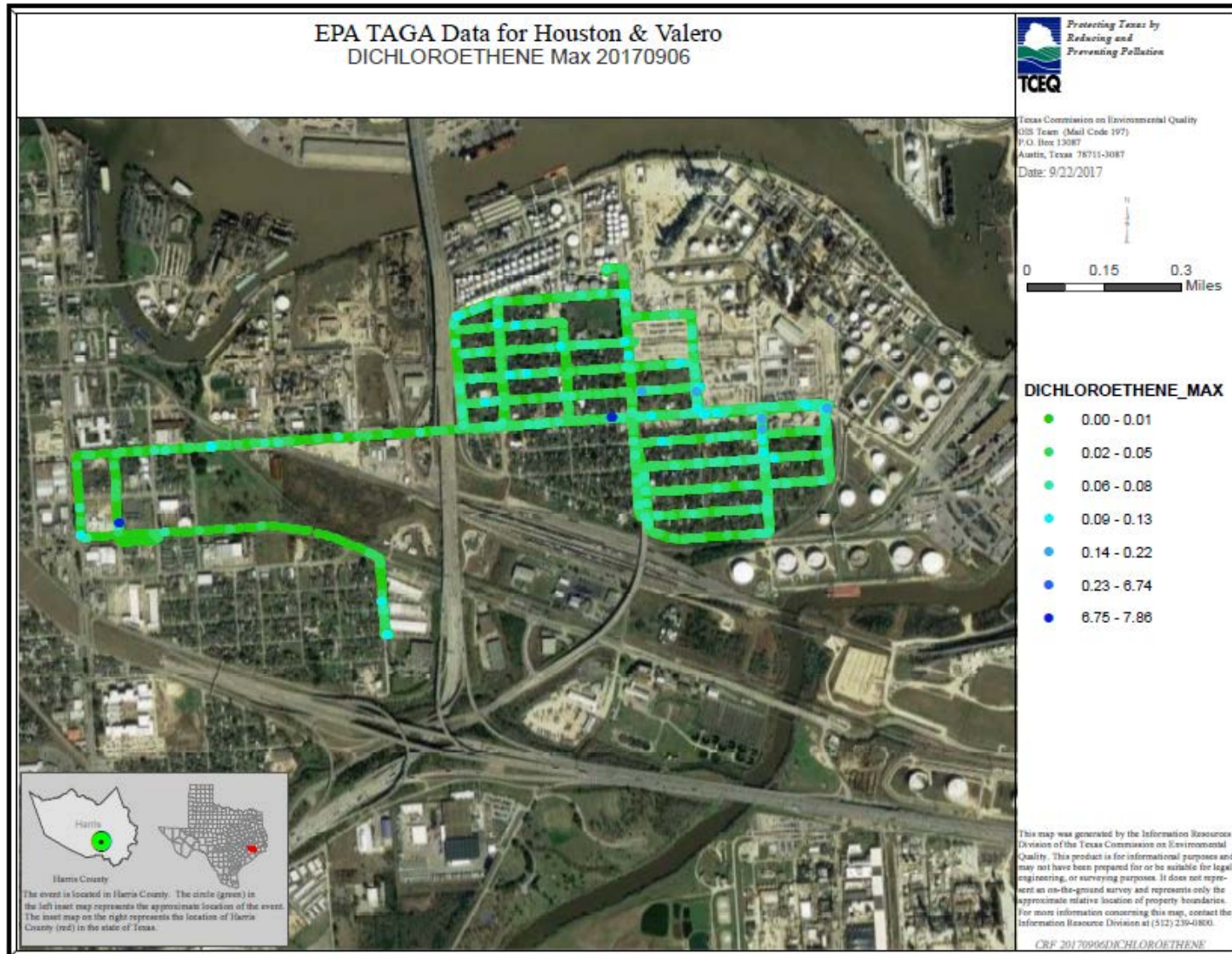


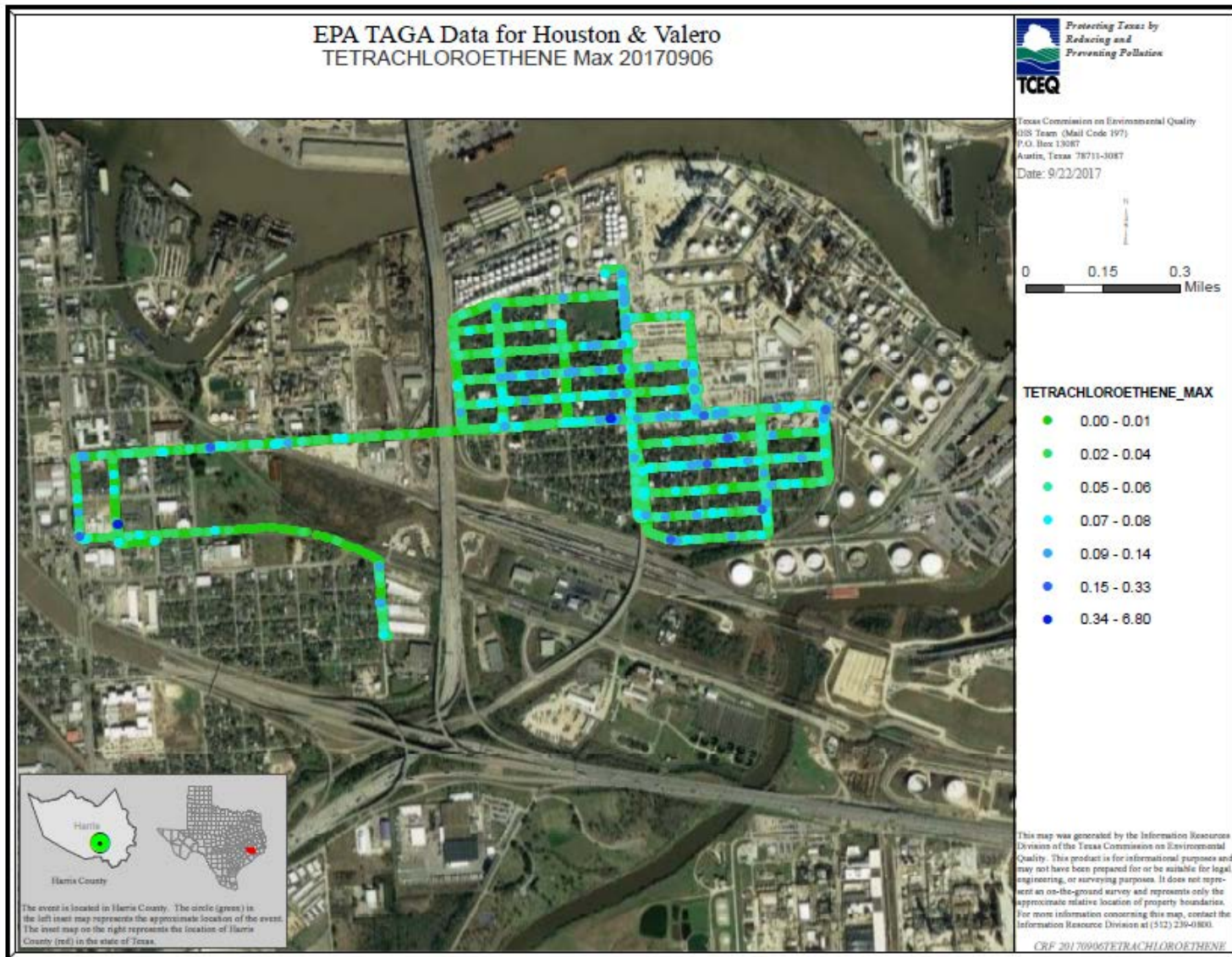










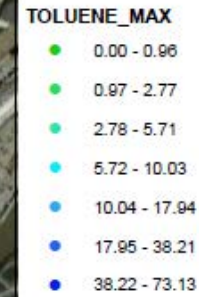




### EPA TAGA Data for Houston & Valero TOLUENE Max 20170906



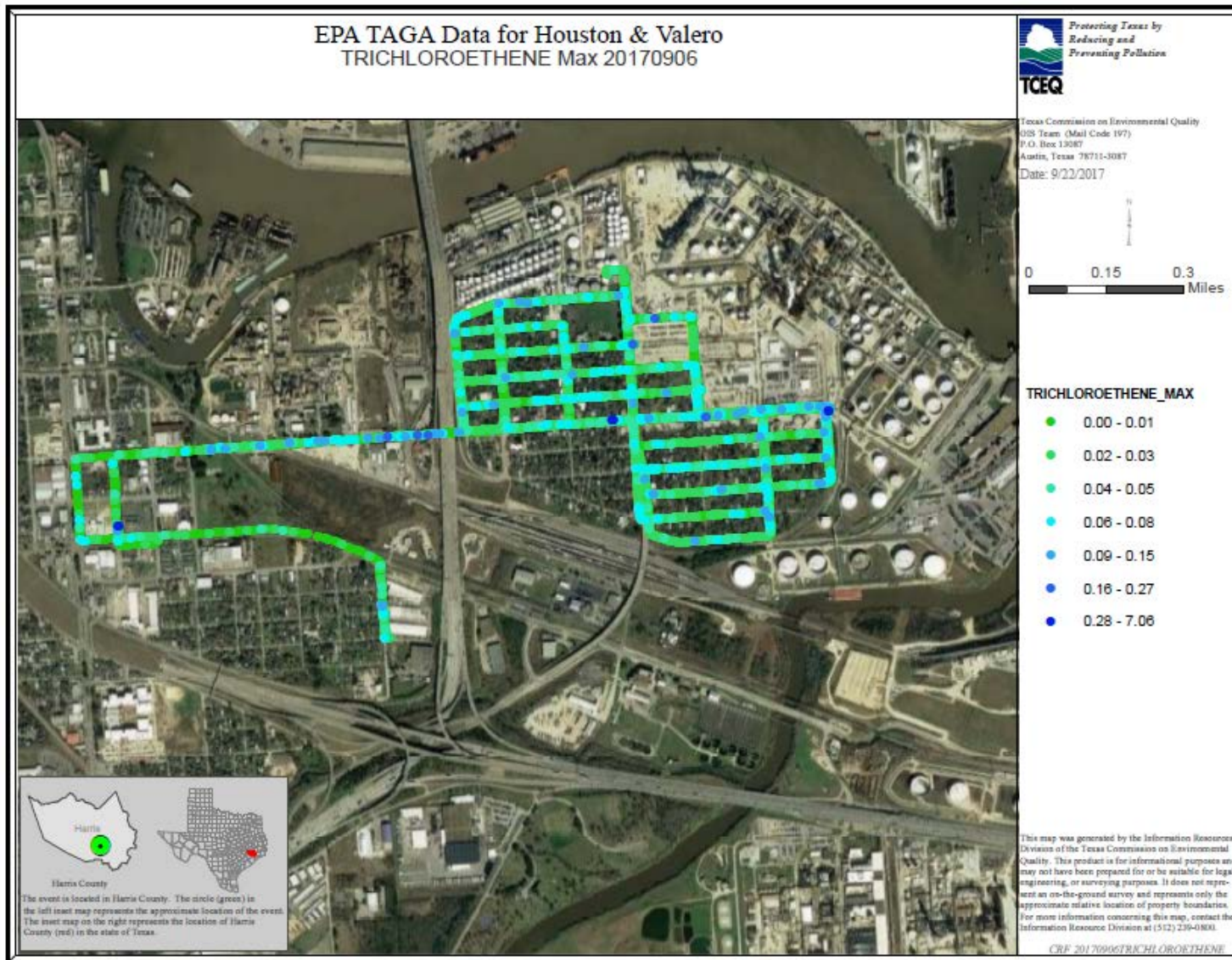
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ISS Team (Mail Code 197)  
P.O. Box 13087  
Austin, Texas 78711-3087  
Date: 9/22/2017



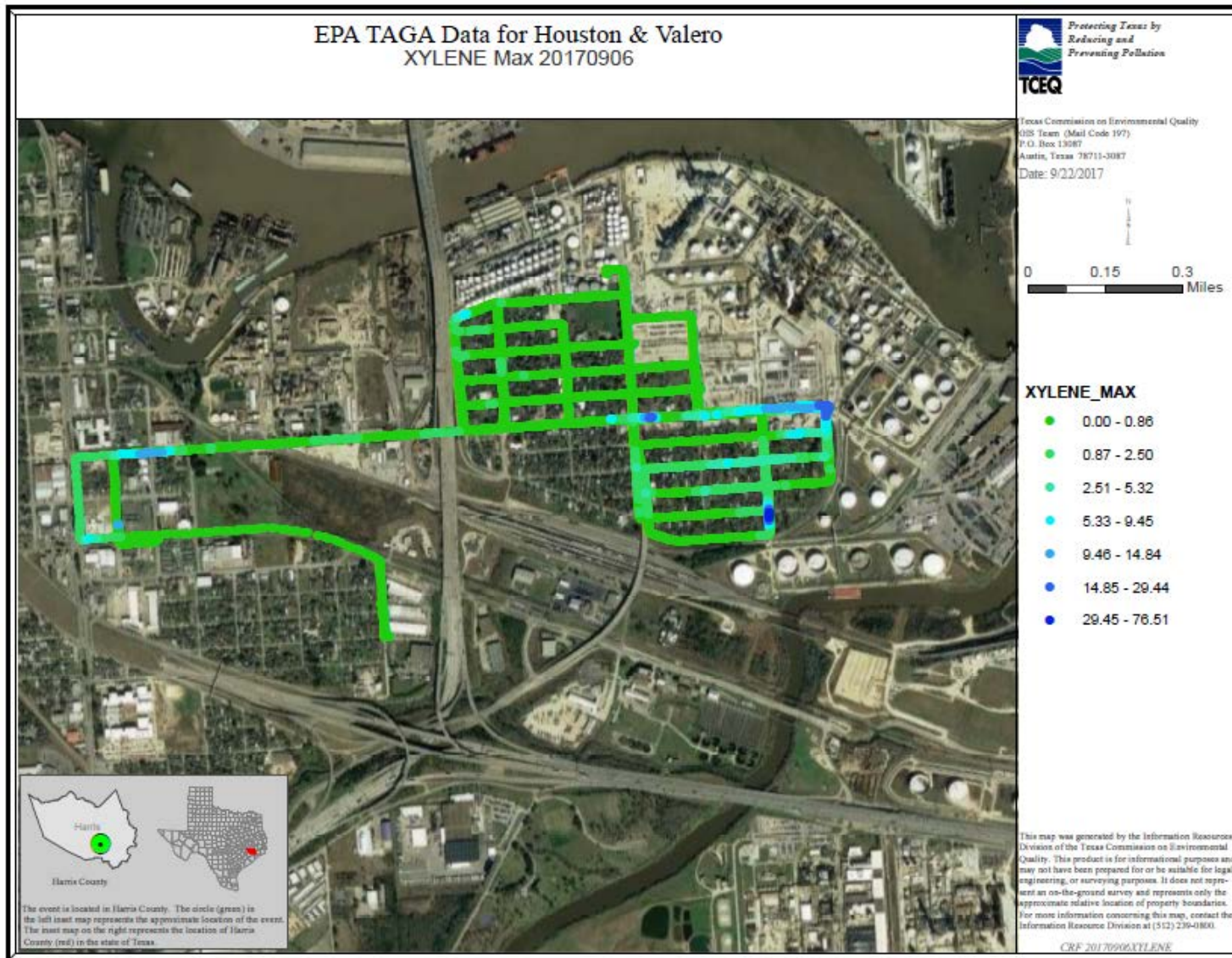
The event is located in Harris County. The circle (green) in the left inset map represents the approximate location of the event. The inset map on the right represents the location of Harris County (red) in the state of Texas.

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CRF 20170906TOLUENE



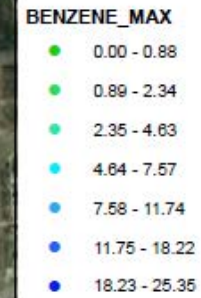




### EPA TAGA Data for Houston & Valero BENZENE Max 20170907



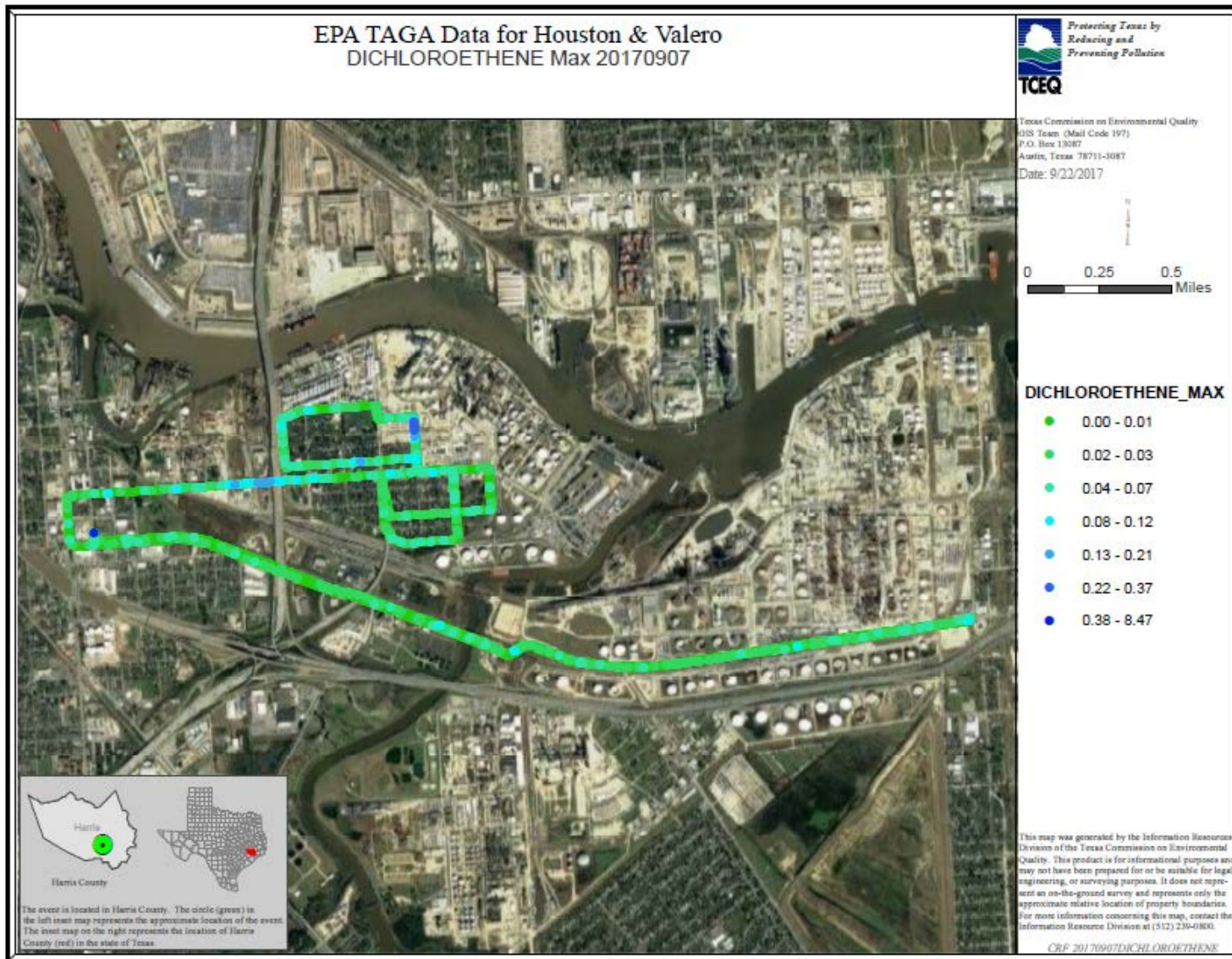
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CRF 20170907BENZENE





### EPA TAGA Data for Houston & Valero TETRACHLOROETHENE Max 20170907



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#### TETRACHLOROETHENE\_MAX

- 0.00 - 0.01
- 0.02 - 0.04
- 0.05 - 0.09
- 0.10 - 0.16
- 0.17 - 0.29
- 0.30 - 0.47
- 0.48 - 4.71

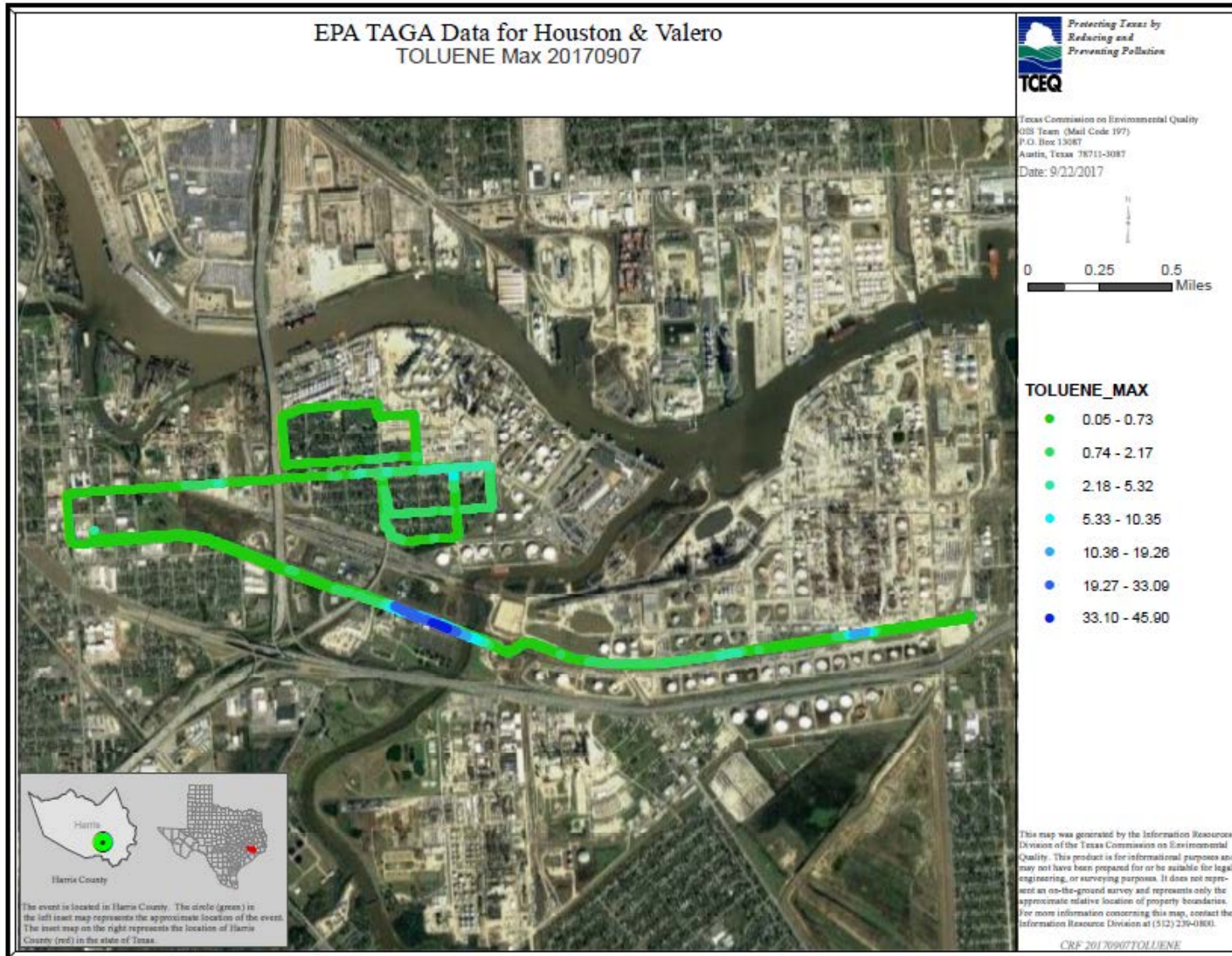


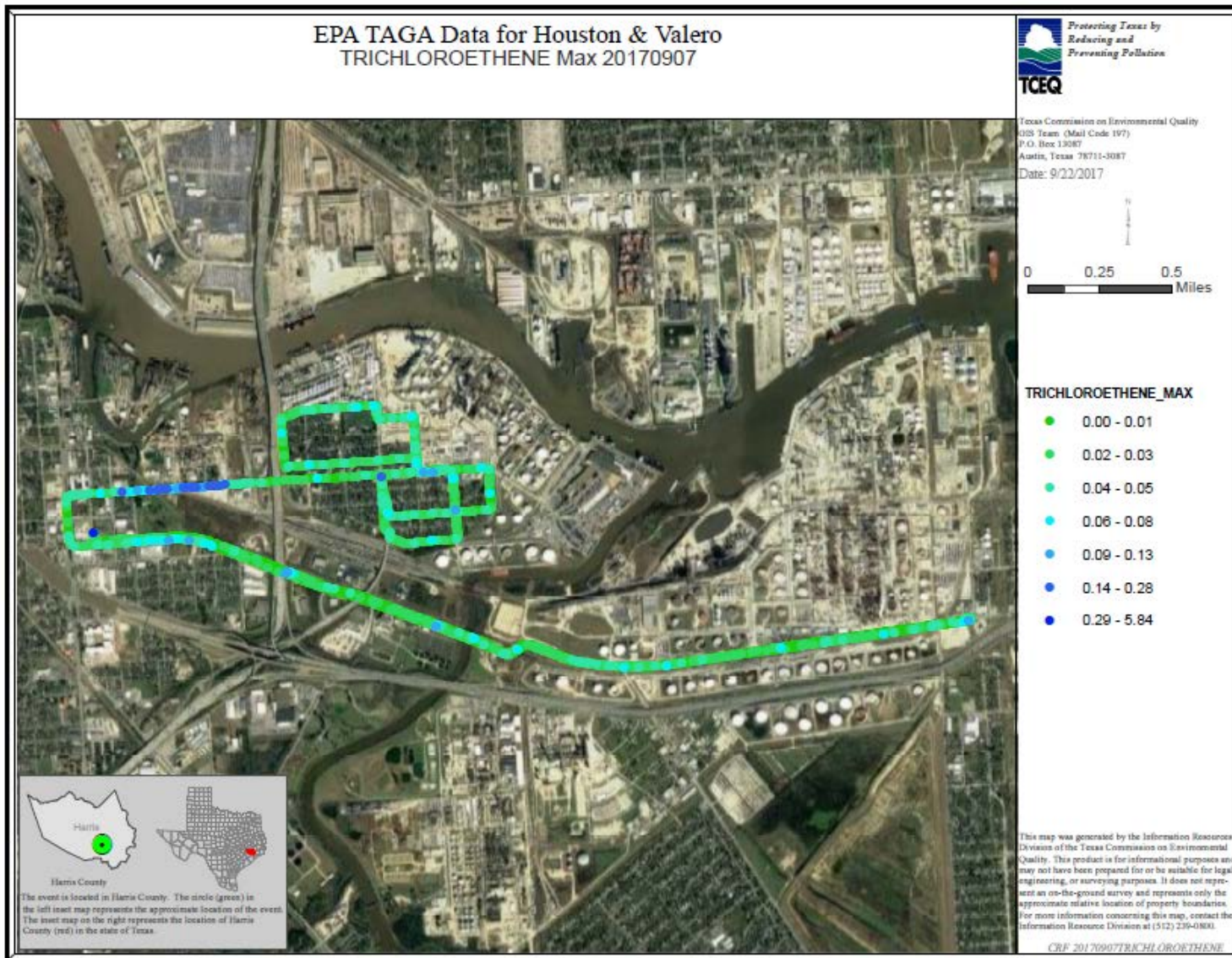
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CRF 20170907TETRACHLOROETHENE





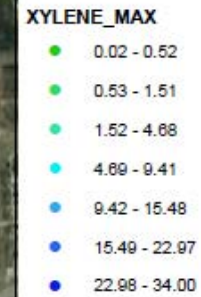




### EPA TAGA Data for Houston & Valero XYLENE Max 20170907



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CRF 20170907XYLENE

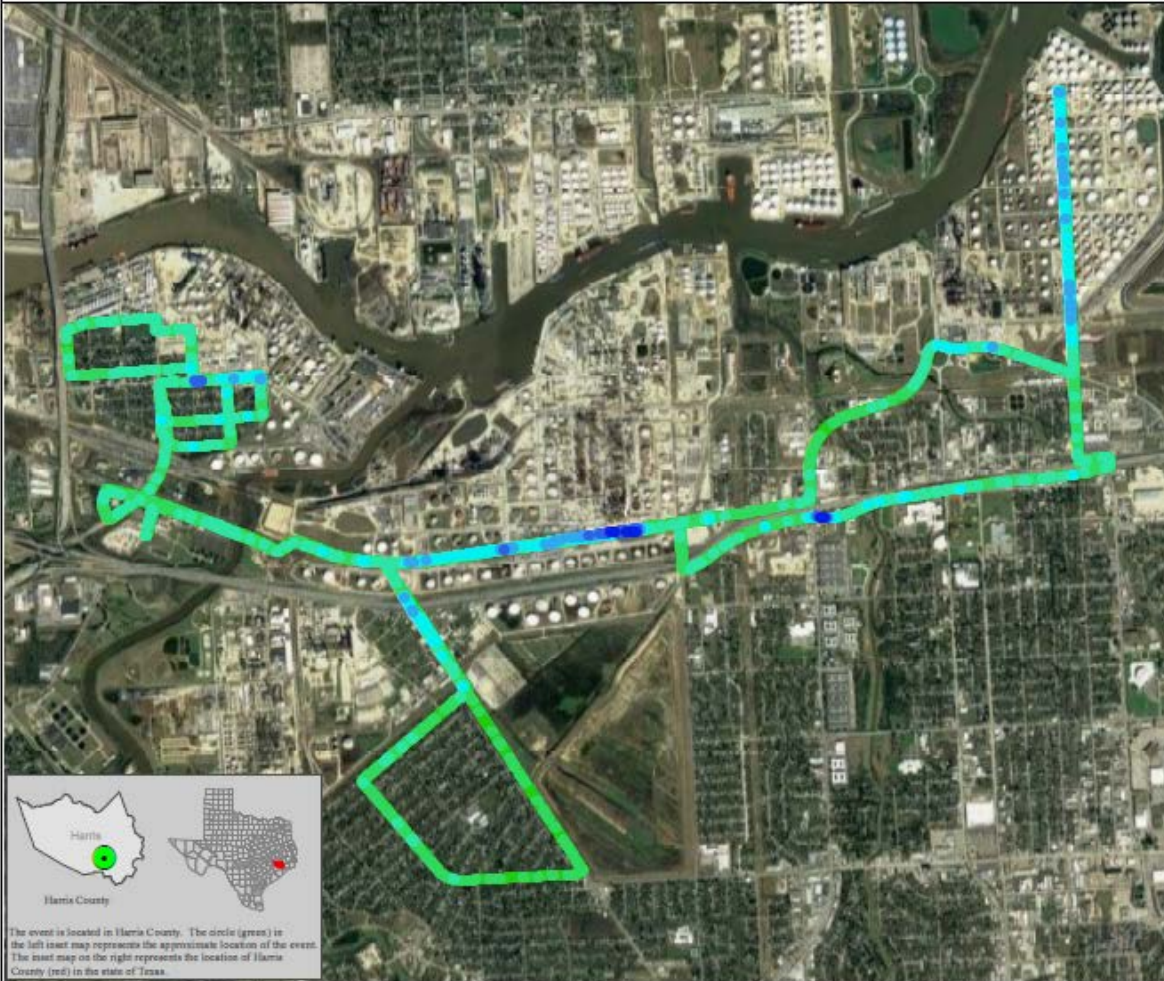
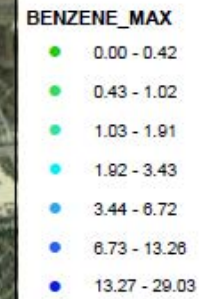


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### EPA TAGA Data for Houston & Valero BENZENE Max 20170910



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CRF 20170910BENZENE



### EPA TAGA Data for Houston & Valero DICHLOROETHENE Max 20170910

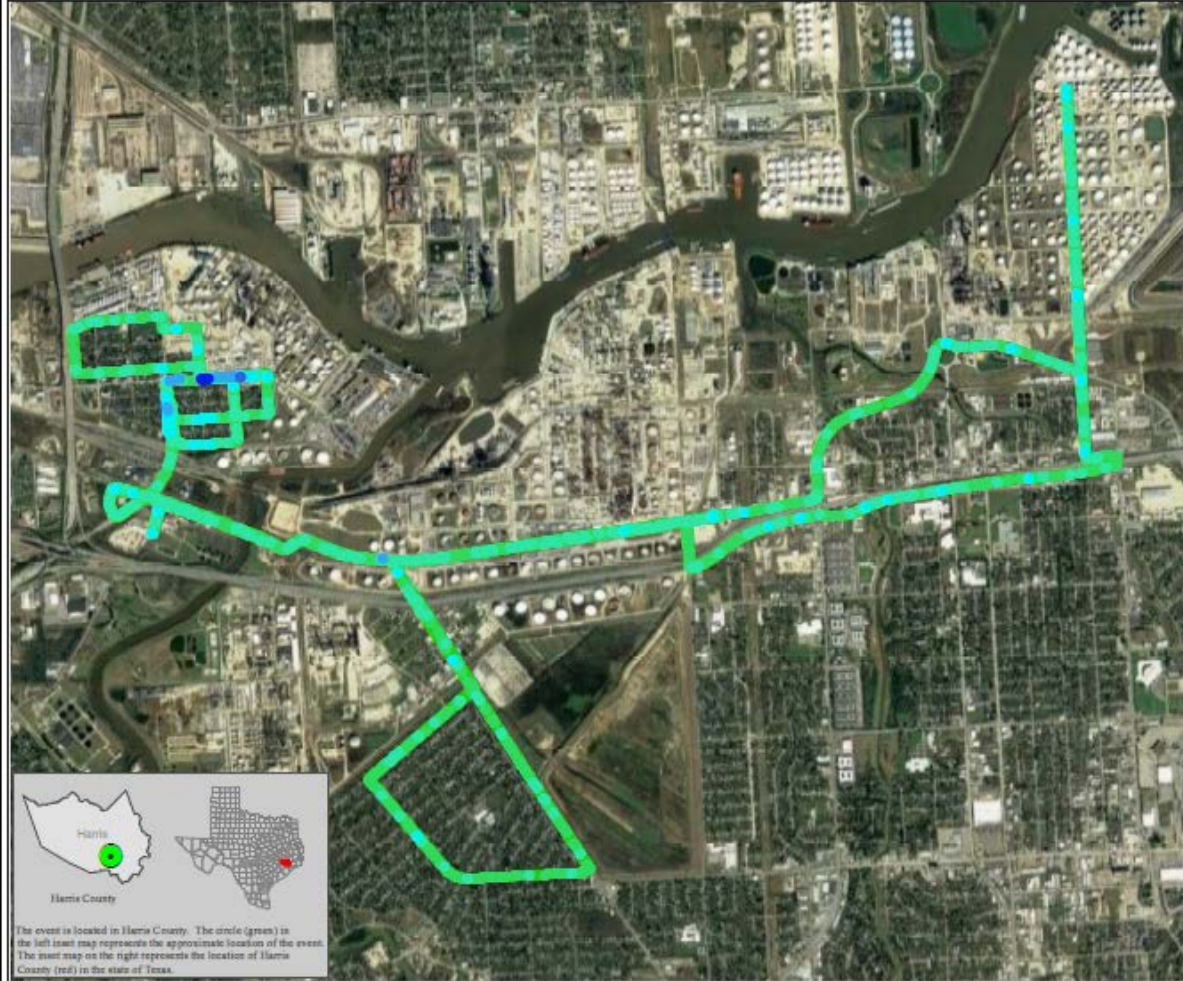


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#### DICHLOROETHENE\_MAX

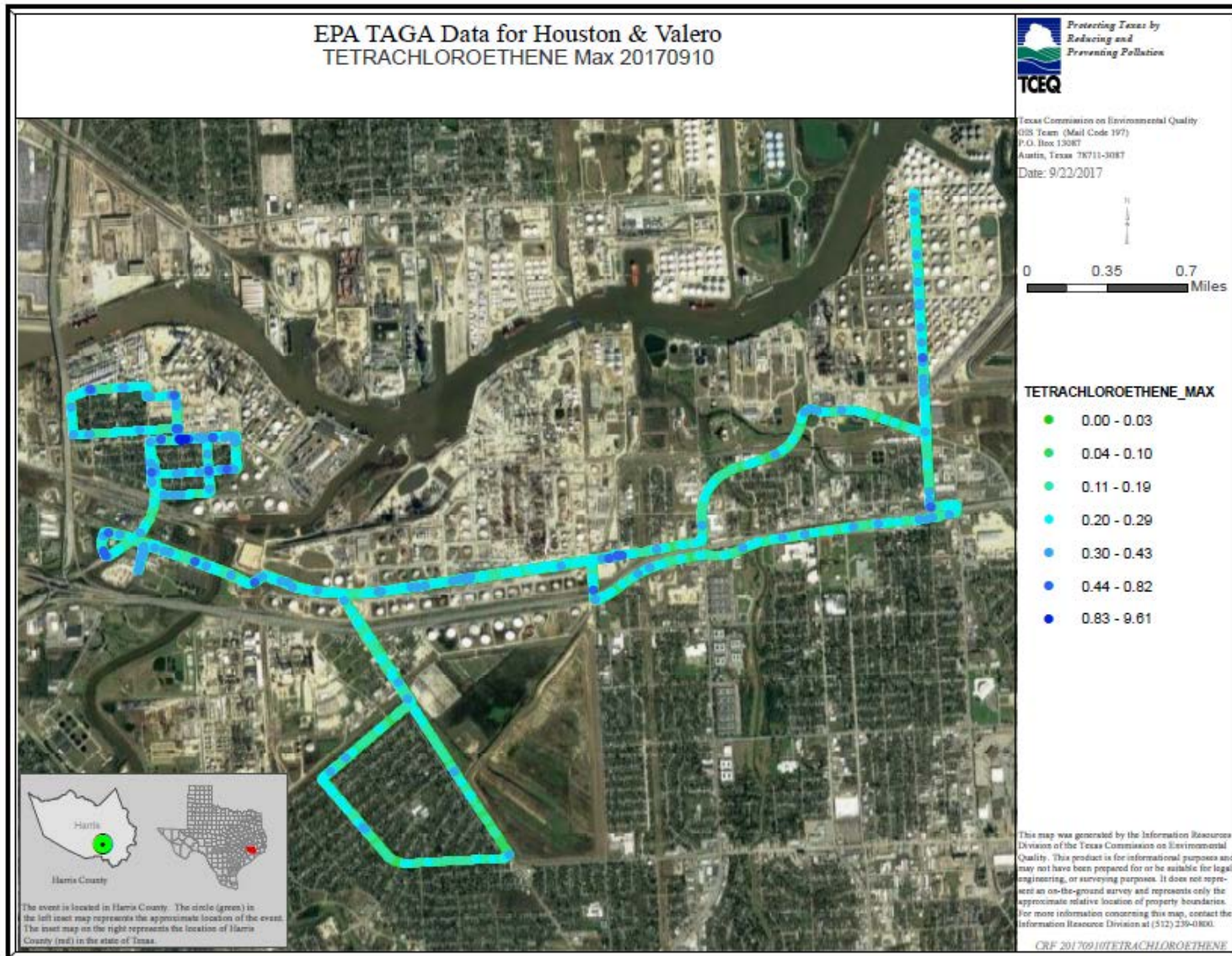
- 0.00 - 0.02
- 0.03 - 0.07
- 0.08 - 0.15
- 0.16 - 0.33
- 0.34 - 0.80
- 0.81 - 1.71
- 1.72 - 9.39



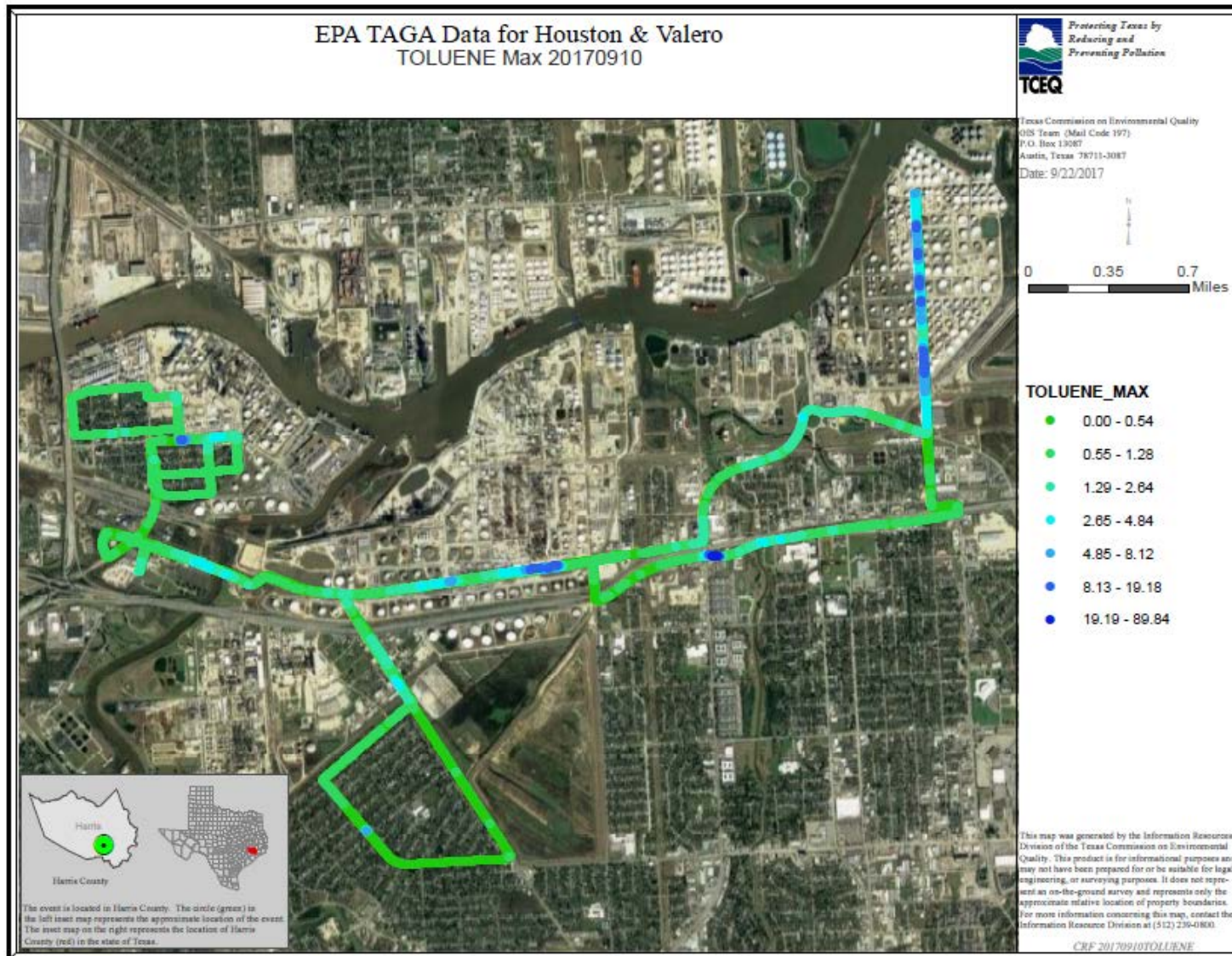
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CRF 20170910DICHLOROETHENE







### EPA TAGA Data for Houston & Valero TRICHLOROETHENE Max 20170910

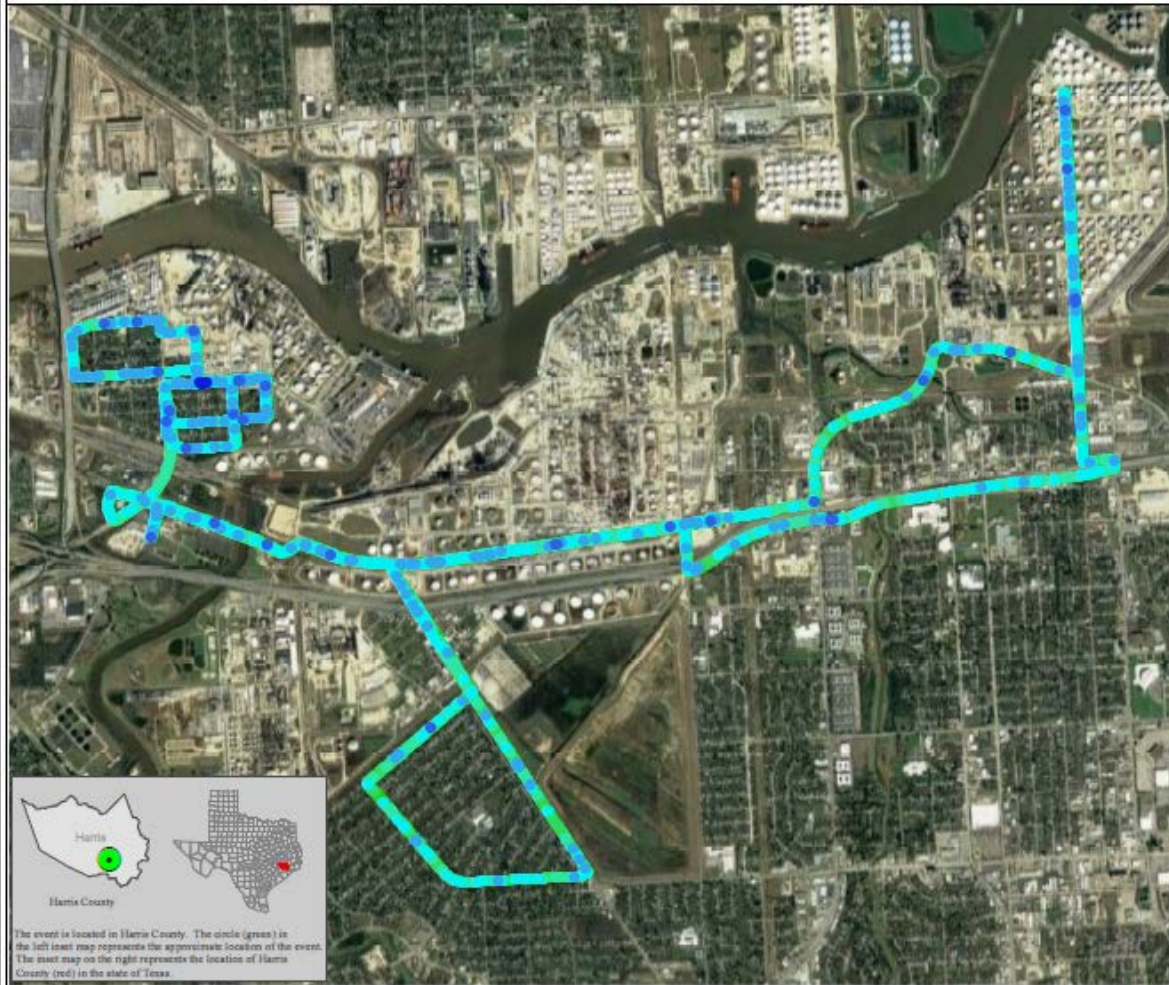


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#### TRICHLOROETHENE\_MAX

- 0.00 - 0.02
- 0.03 - 0.05
- 0.06 - 0.09
- 0.10 - 0.14
- 0.15 - 0.21
- 0.22 - 0.40
- 0.41 - 0.22

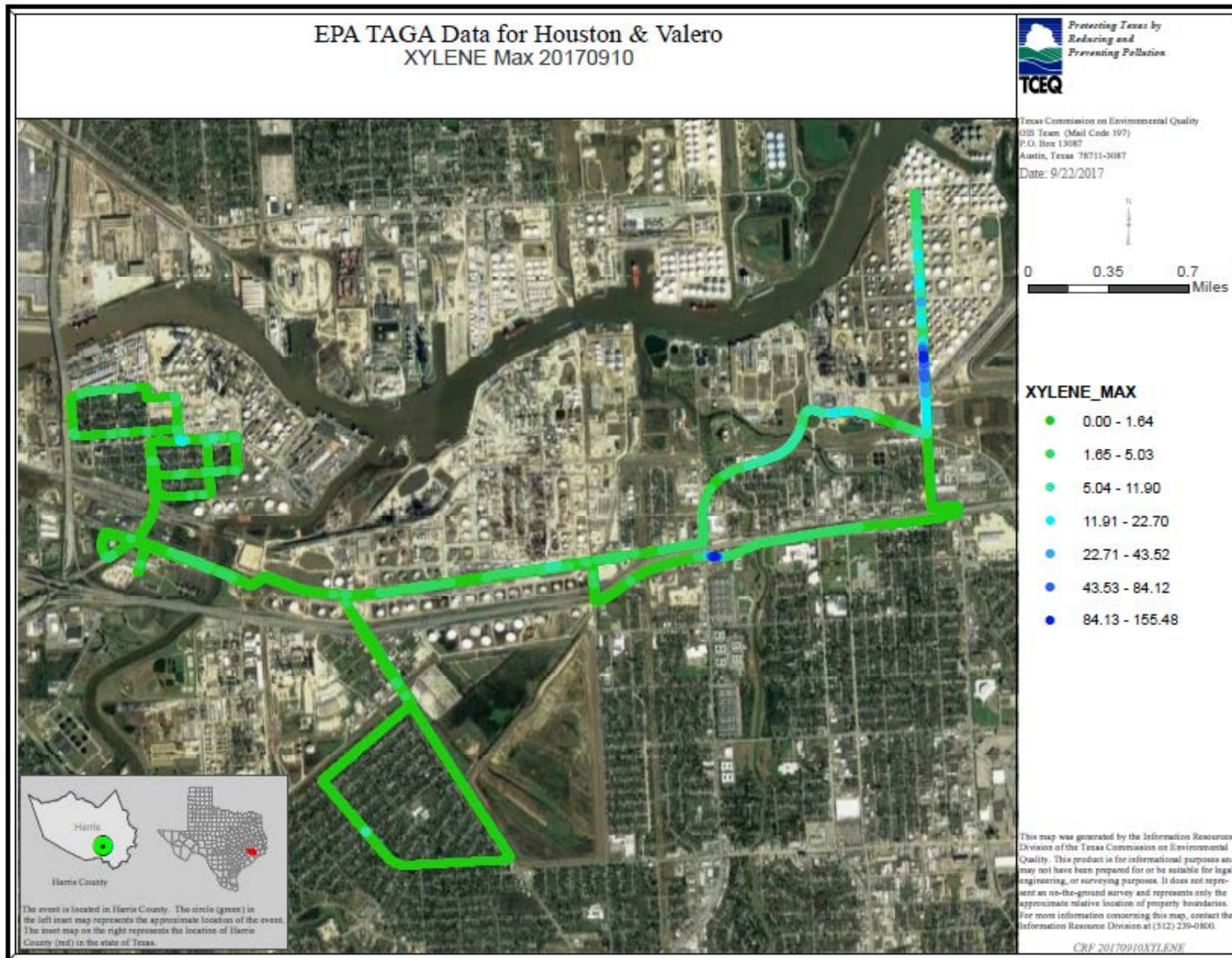


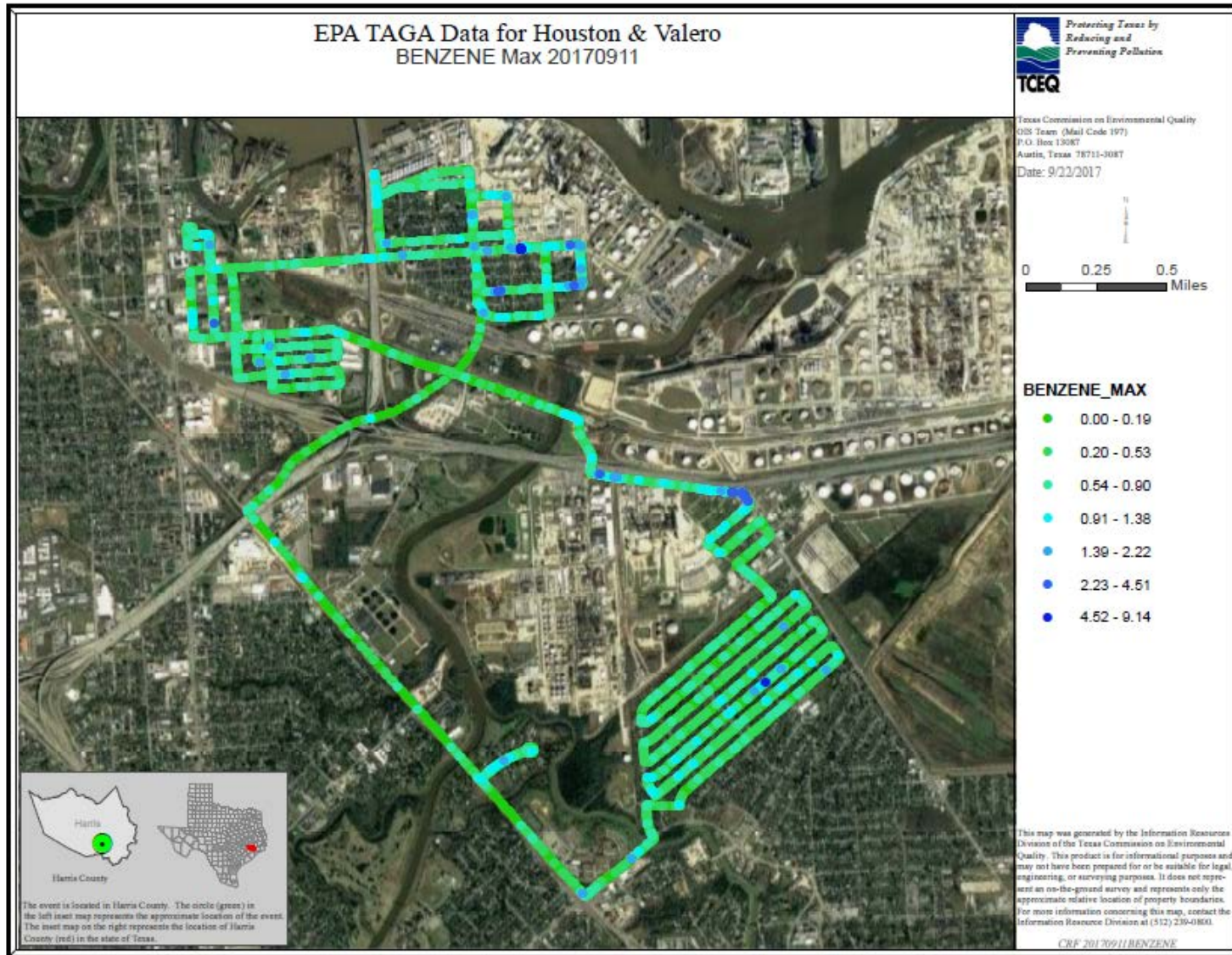
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CRF 201.709.10 TRICHLOROETHENE









### EPA TAGA Data for Houston & Valero DICHLOROETHENE Max 20170911

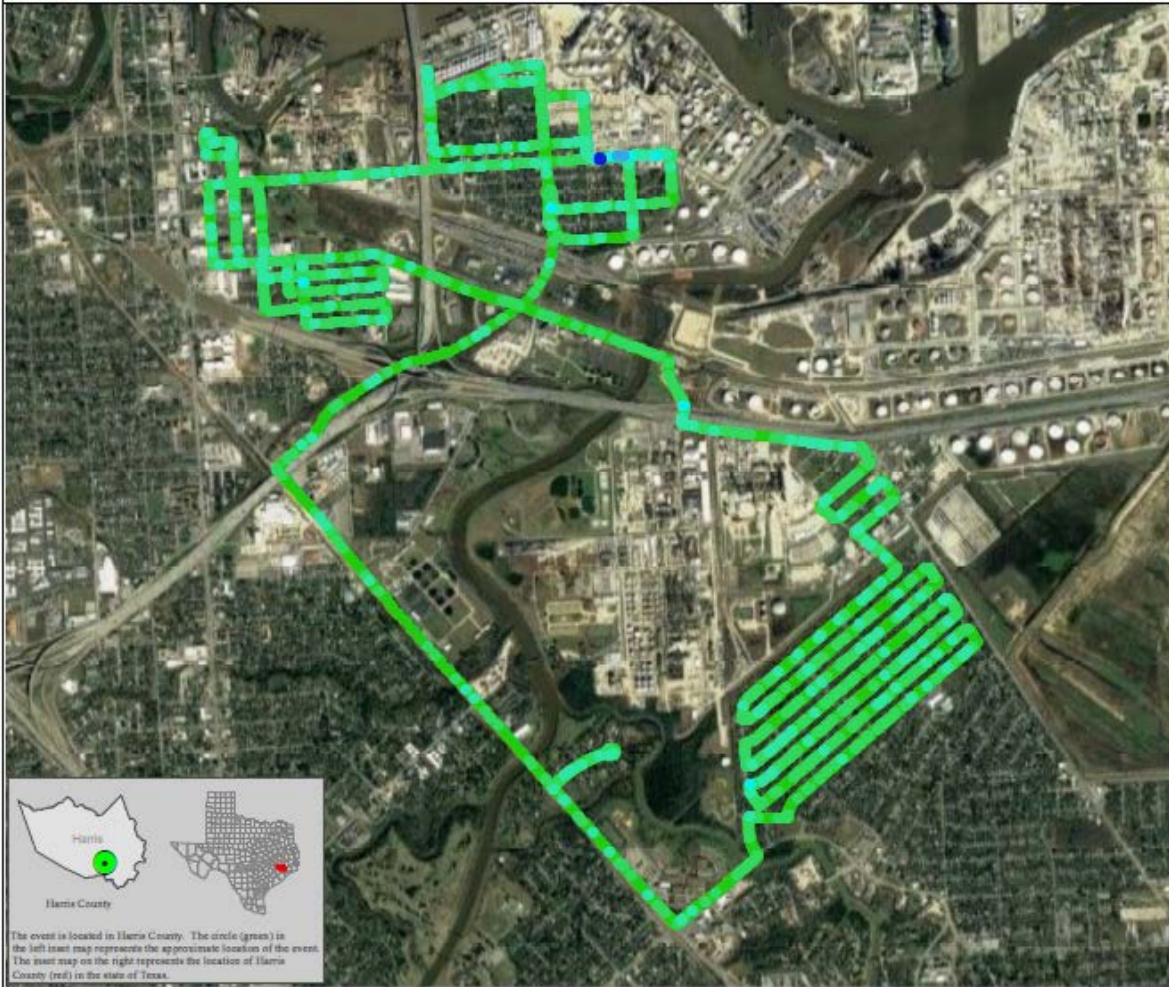


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#### DICHLOROETHENE\_MAX

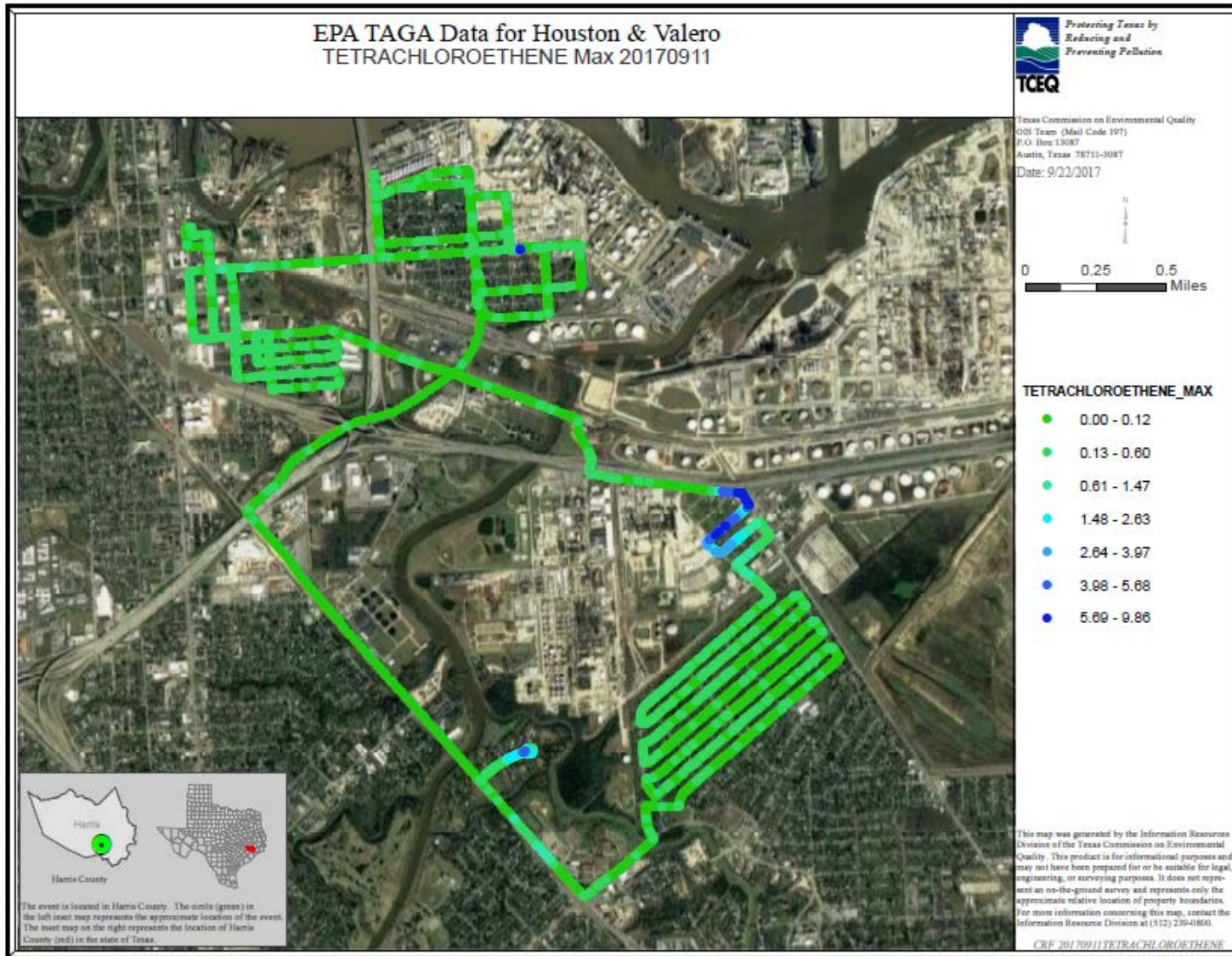
- 0.00 - 0.01
- 0.02 - 0.06
- 0.07 - 0.17
- 0.18 - 0.30
- 0.31 - 0.58
- 0.59 - 6.12
- 6.13 - 7.09



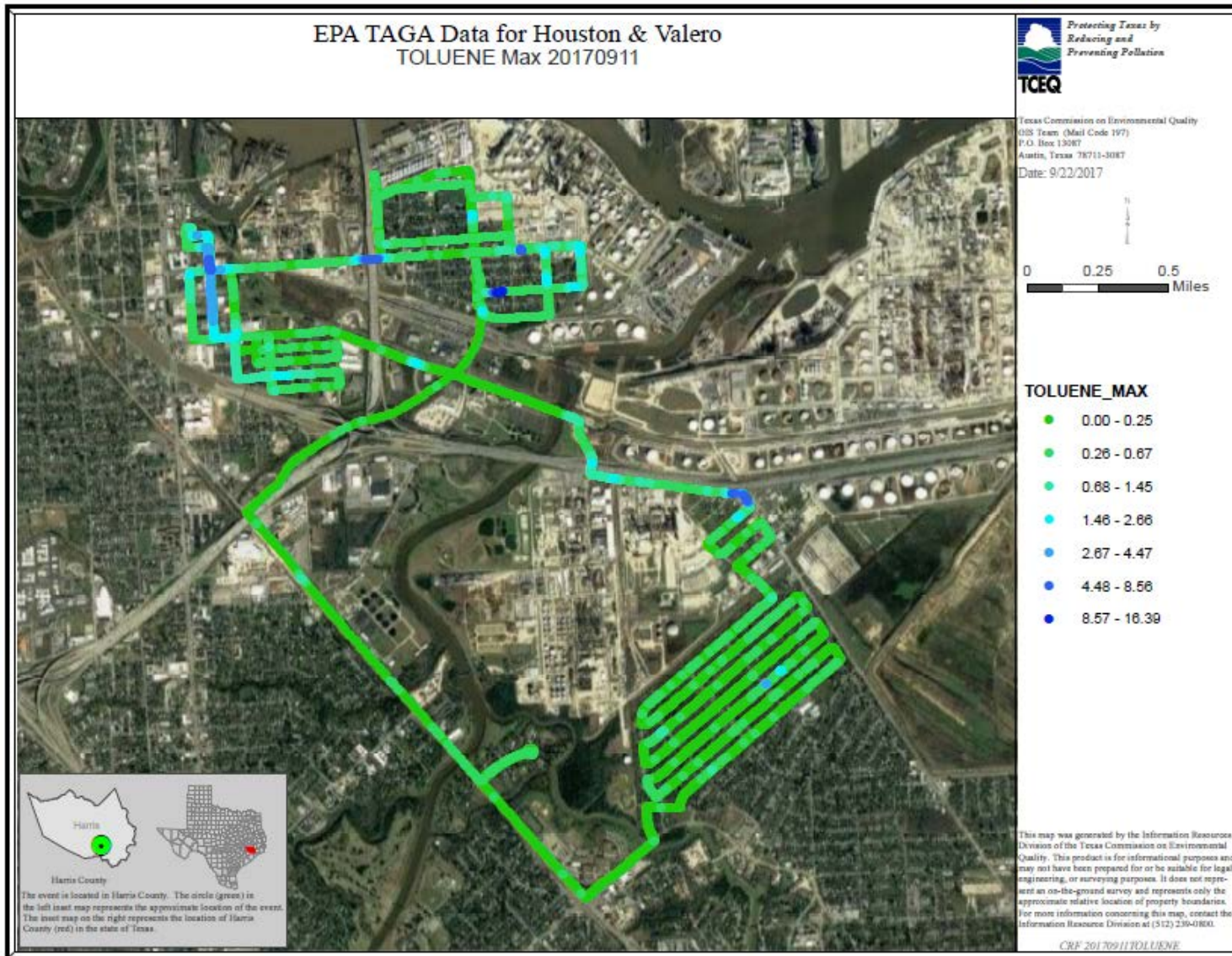
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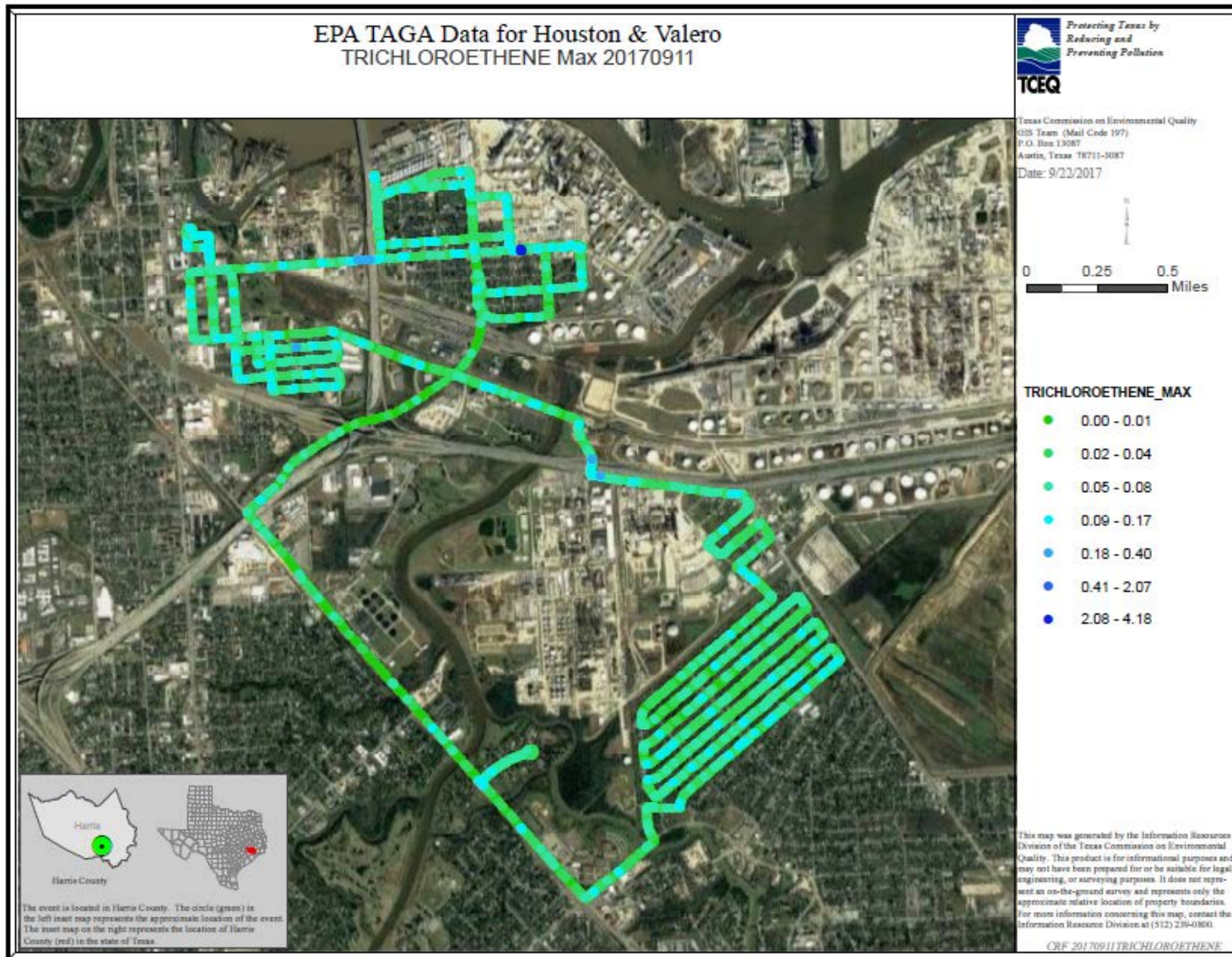
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CRF 201.709 (1) DICHLOROETHENE

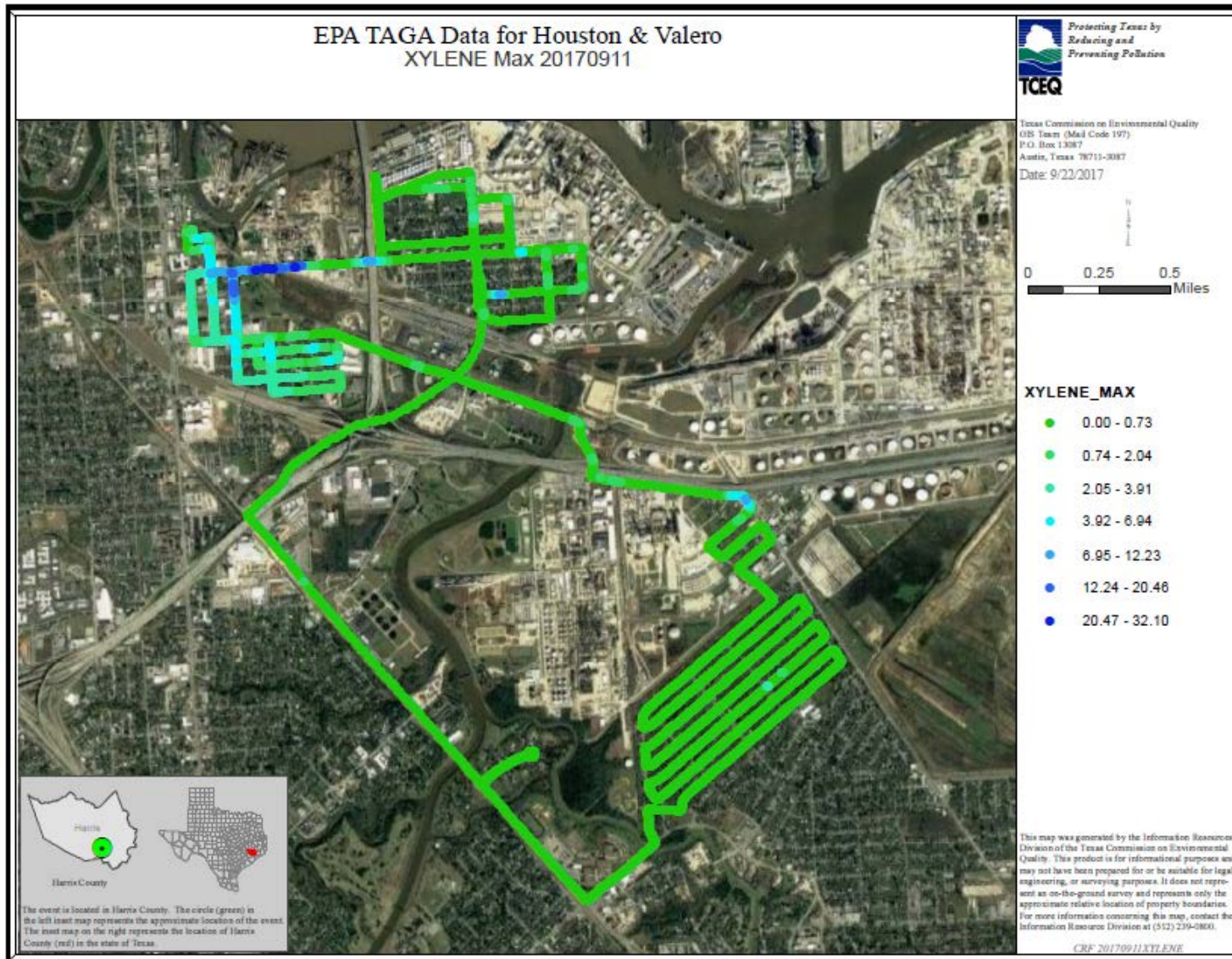


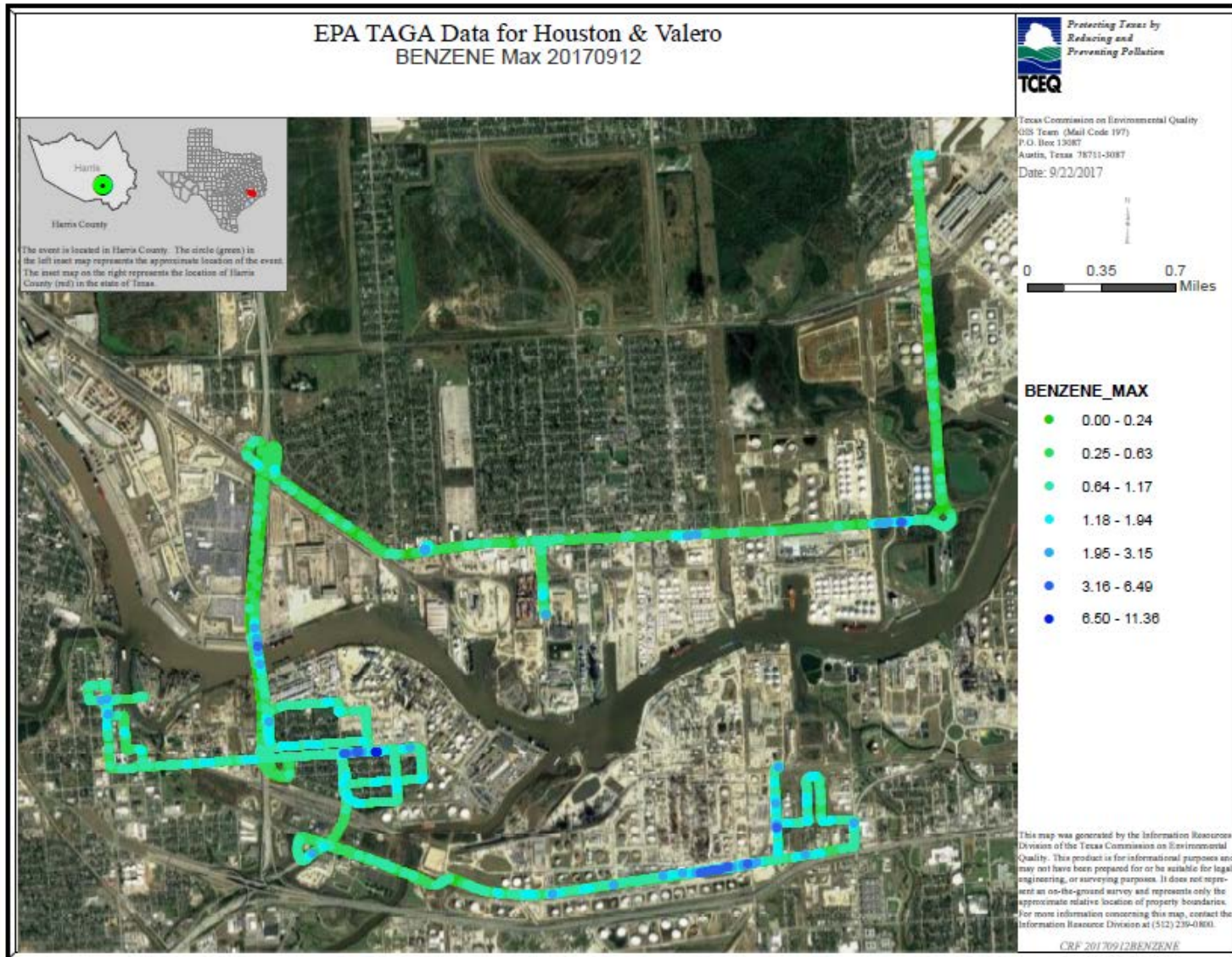




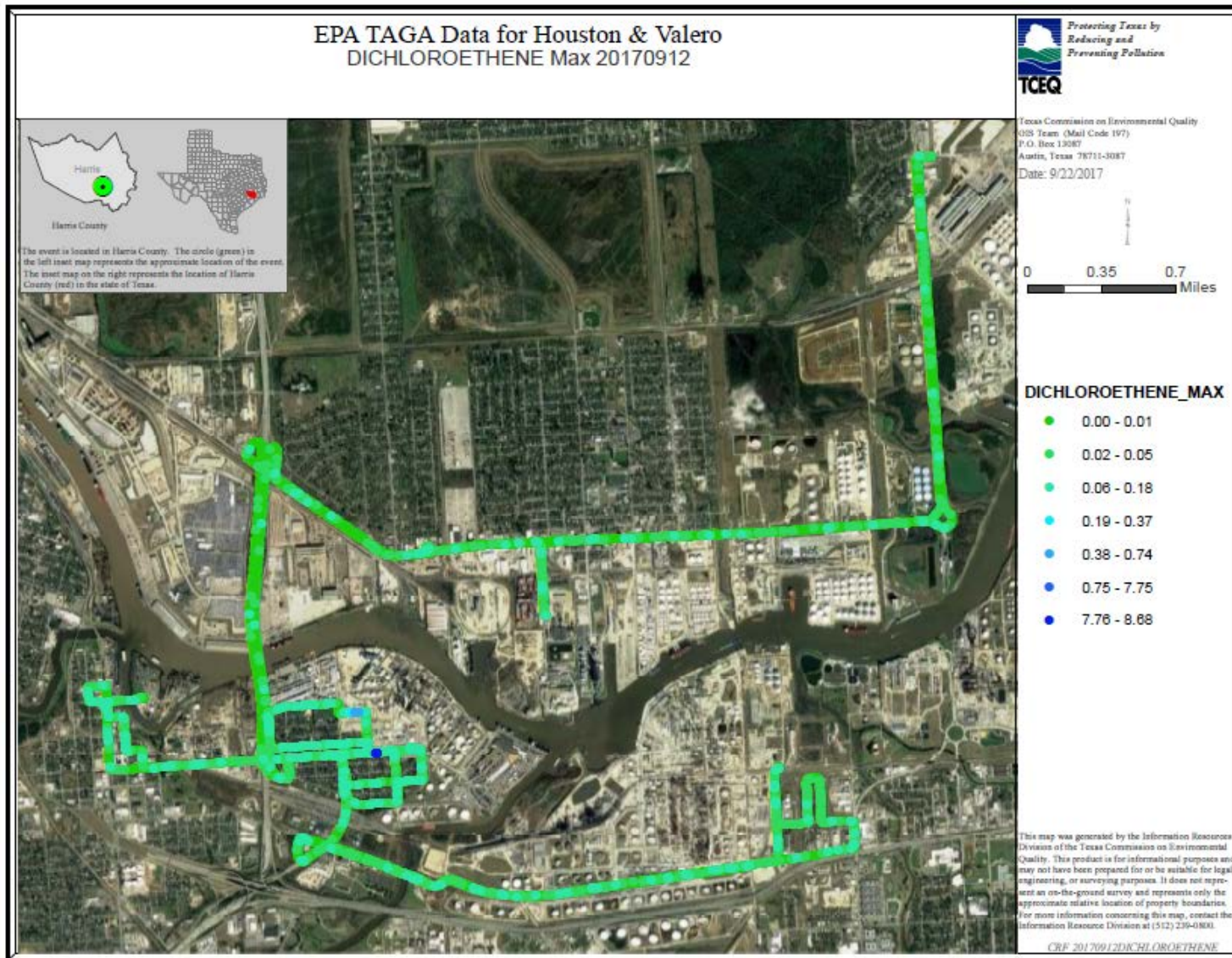


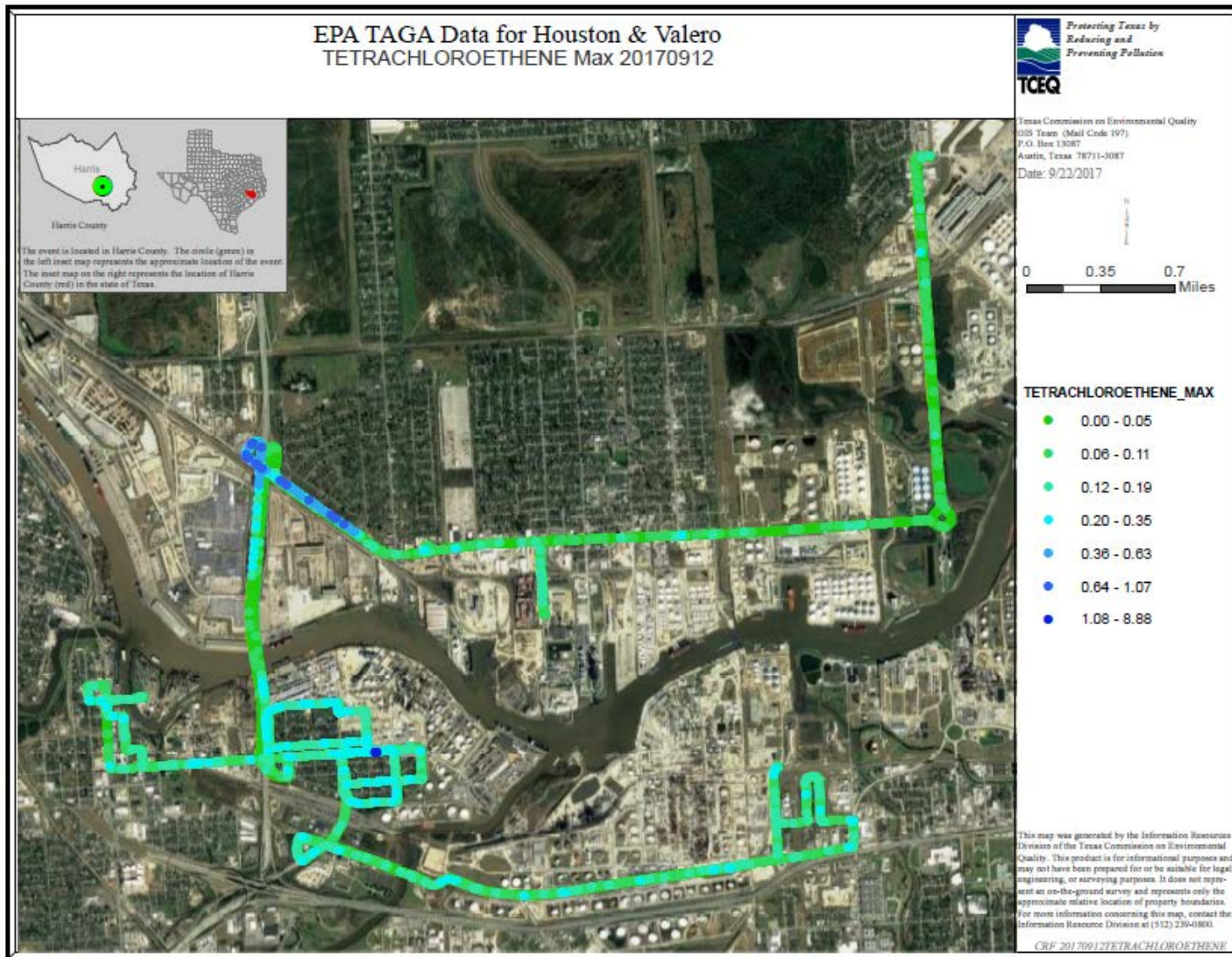










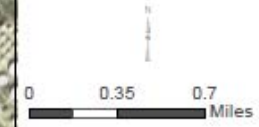
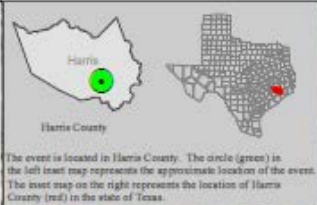




### EPA TAGA Data for Houston & Valero TOLUENE Max 20170912



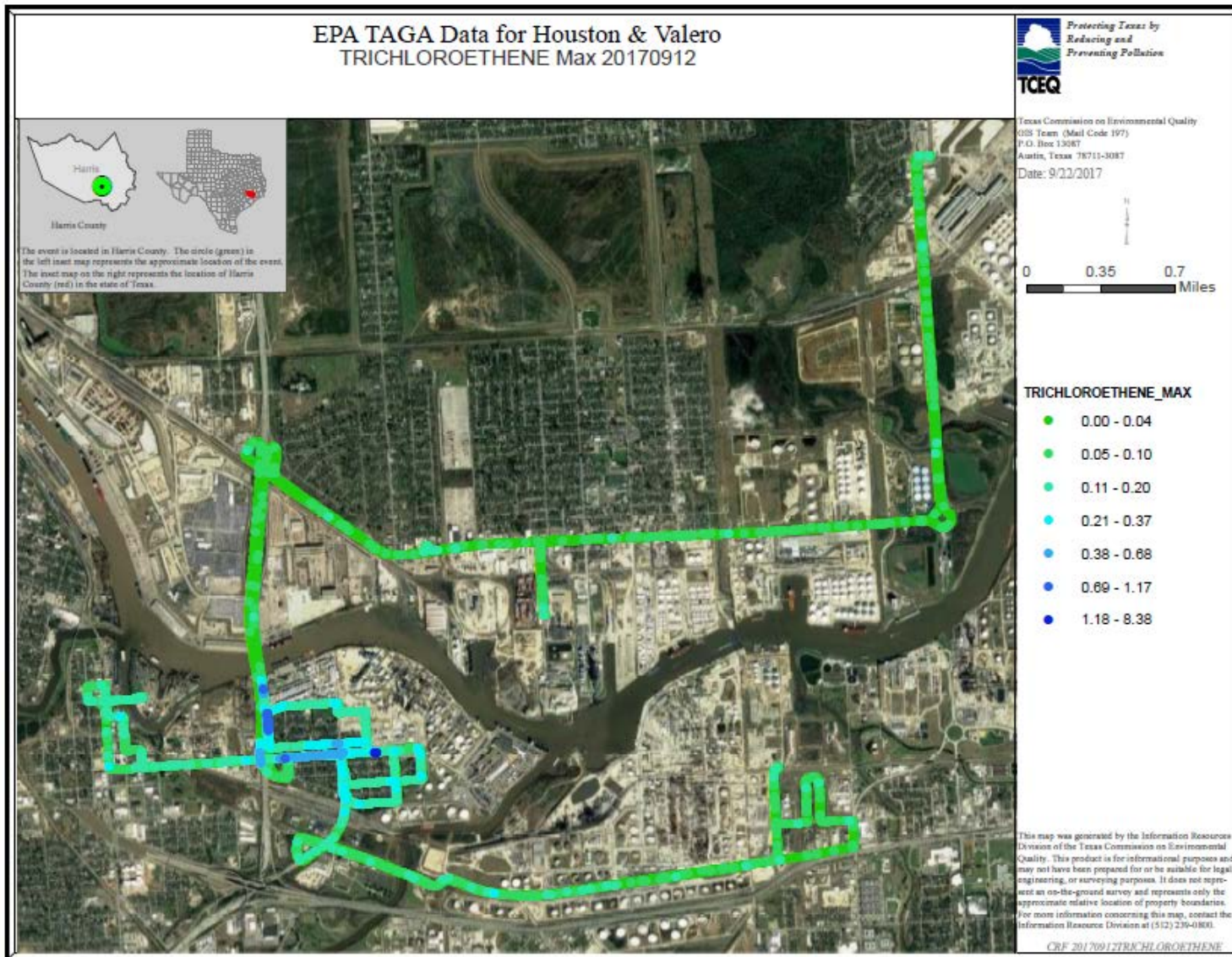
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality  
OS Team (Mail Code 197)  
P.O. Box 13087  
Austin, Texas 78711-3087  
Date: 9/22/2017



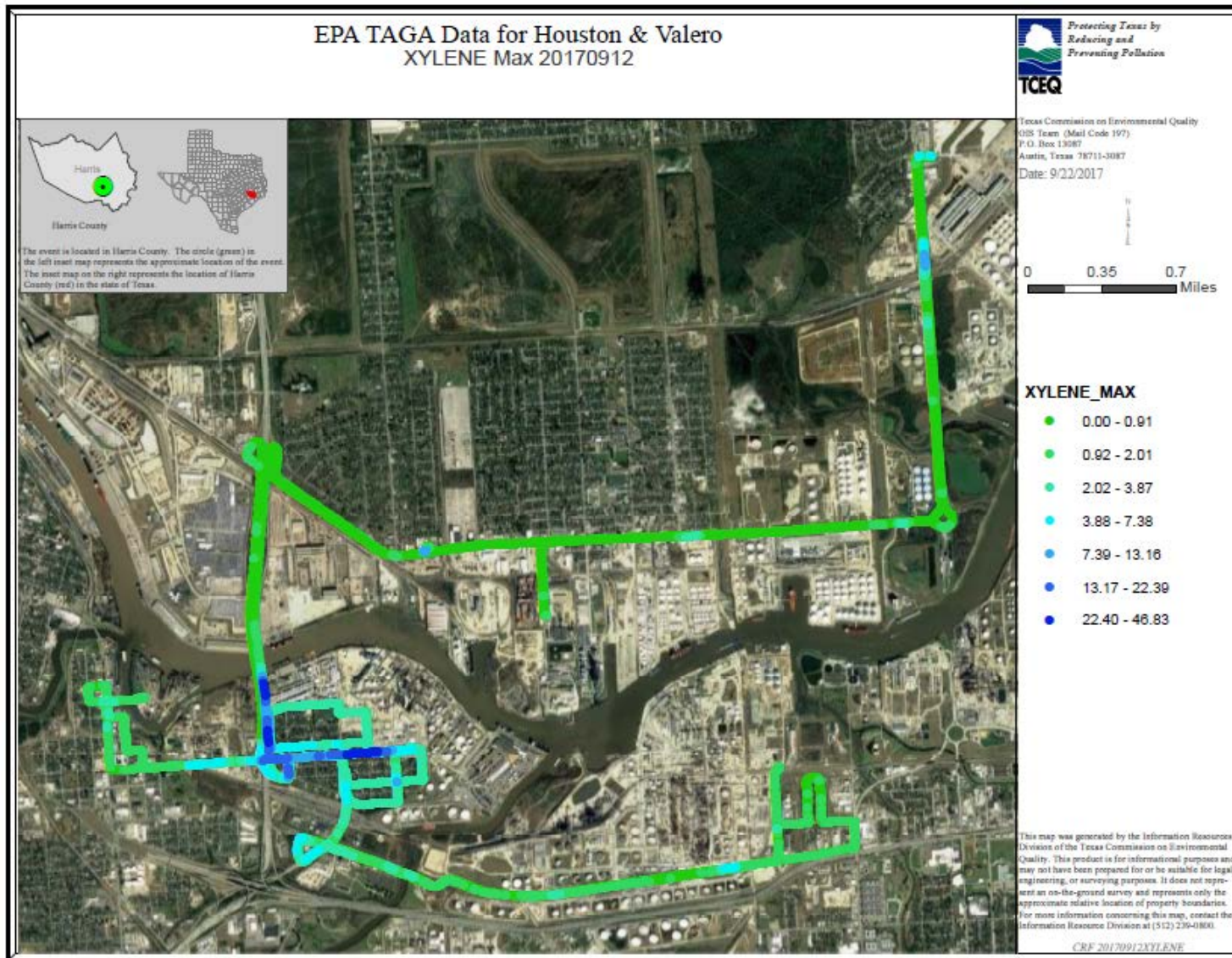
TOLUENE_MAX	
●	0.02 - 0.56
●	0.57 - 1.10
●	1.11 - 1.89
●	1.90 - 3.33
●	3.34 - 6.38
●	6.39 - 11.78
●	11.77 - 23.99

This map was generated by the Information Resource Division of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries. For more information concerning this map, contact the Information Resource Division at (512) 236-0800.

CRF 201.70912TOLUENE

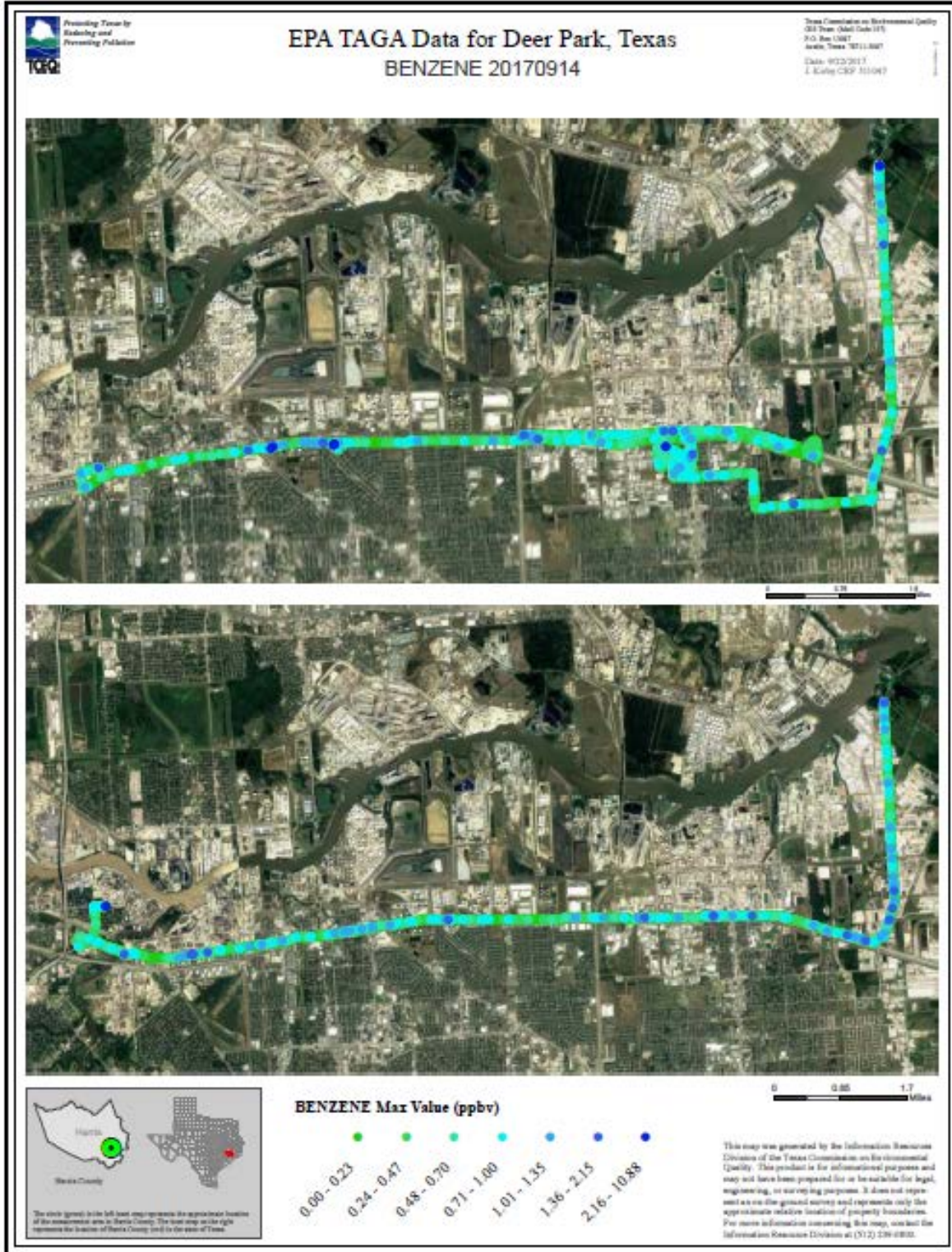








**Deer Park Monitoring Study – Sept. 14, 2017**



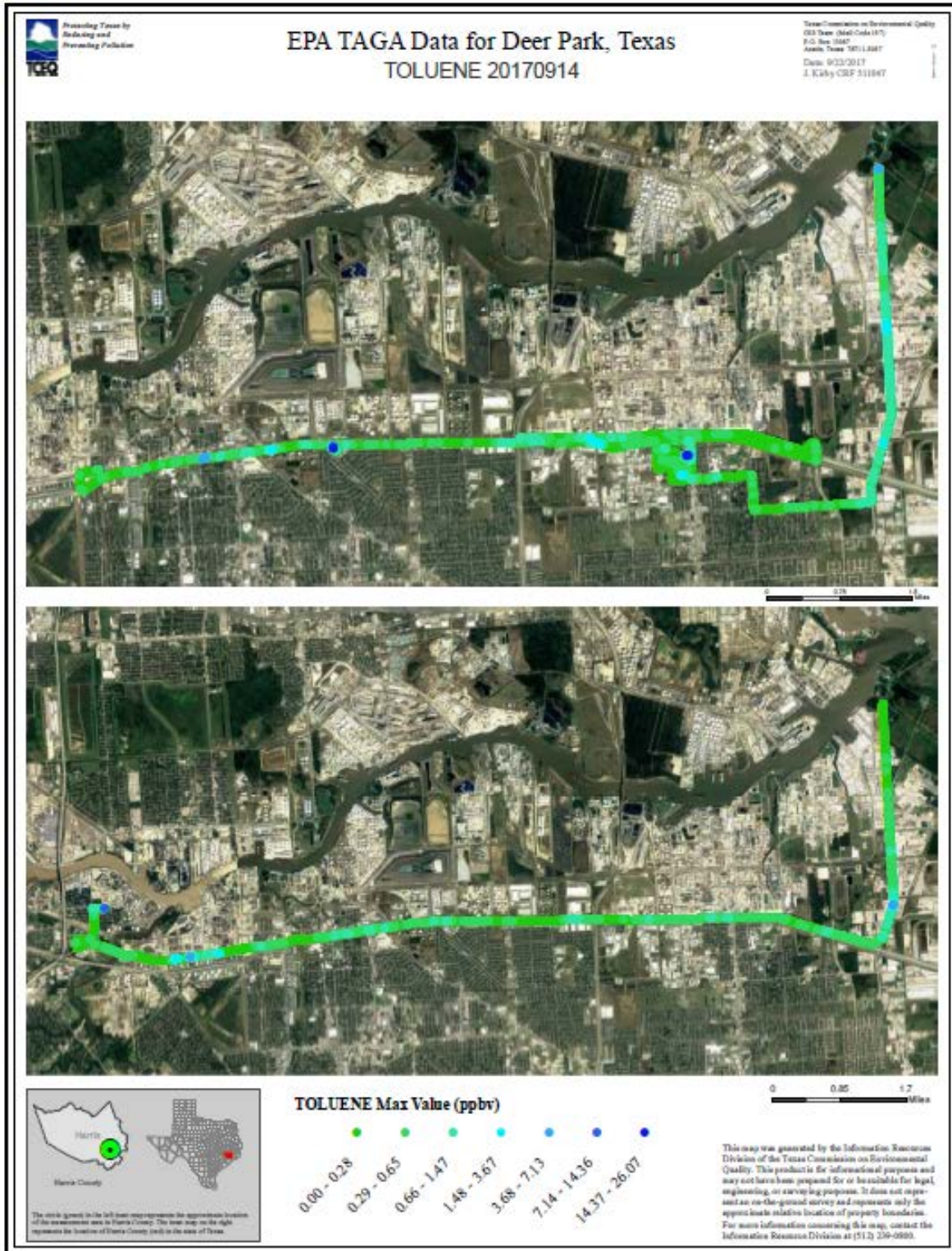














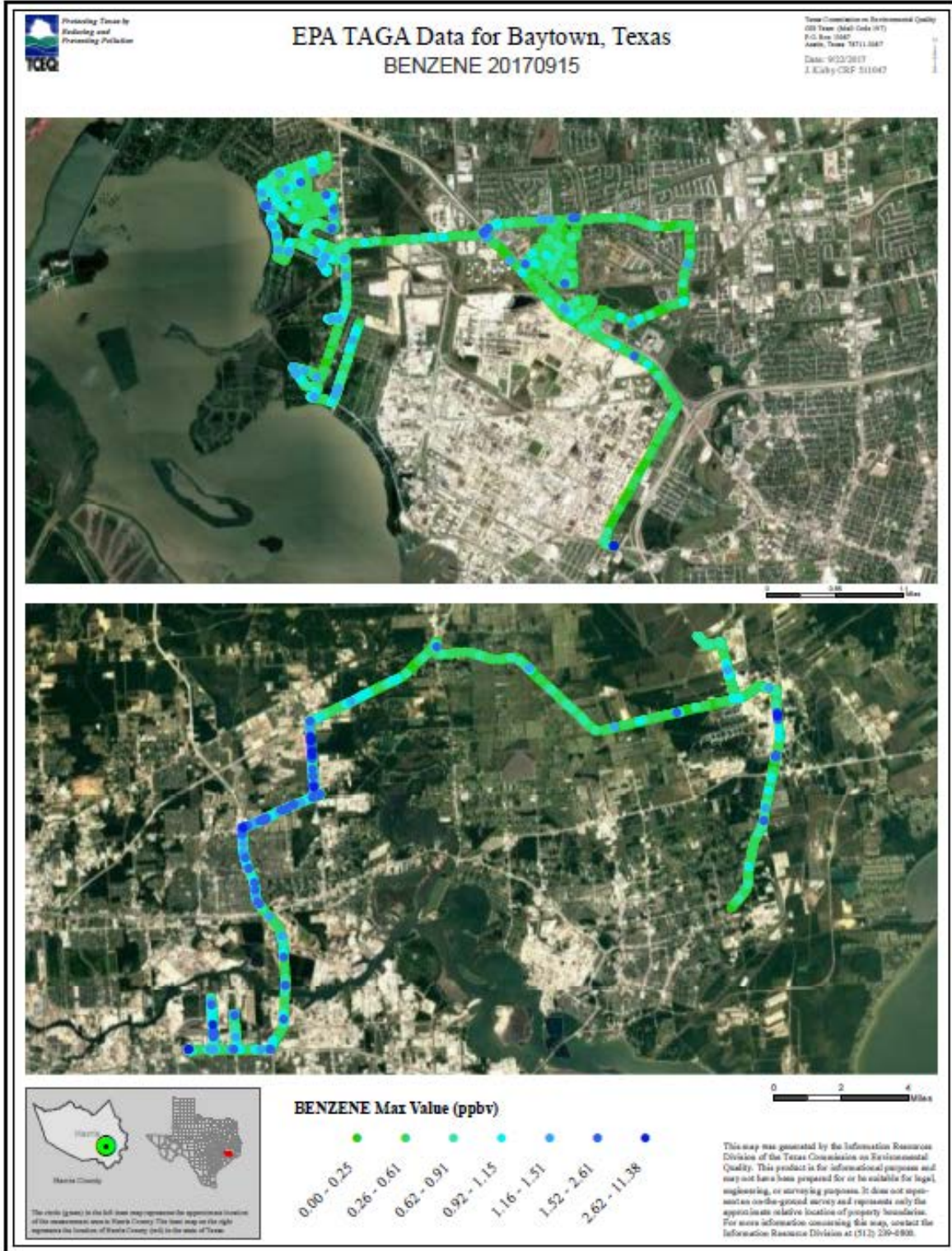








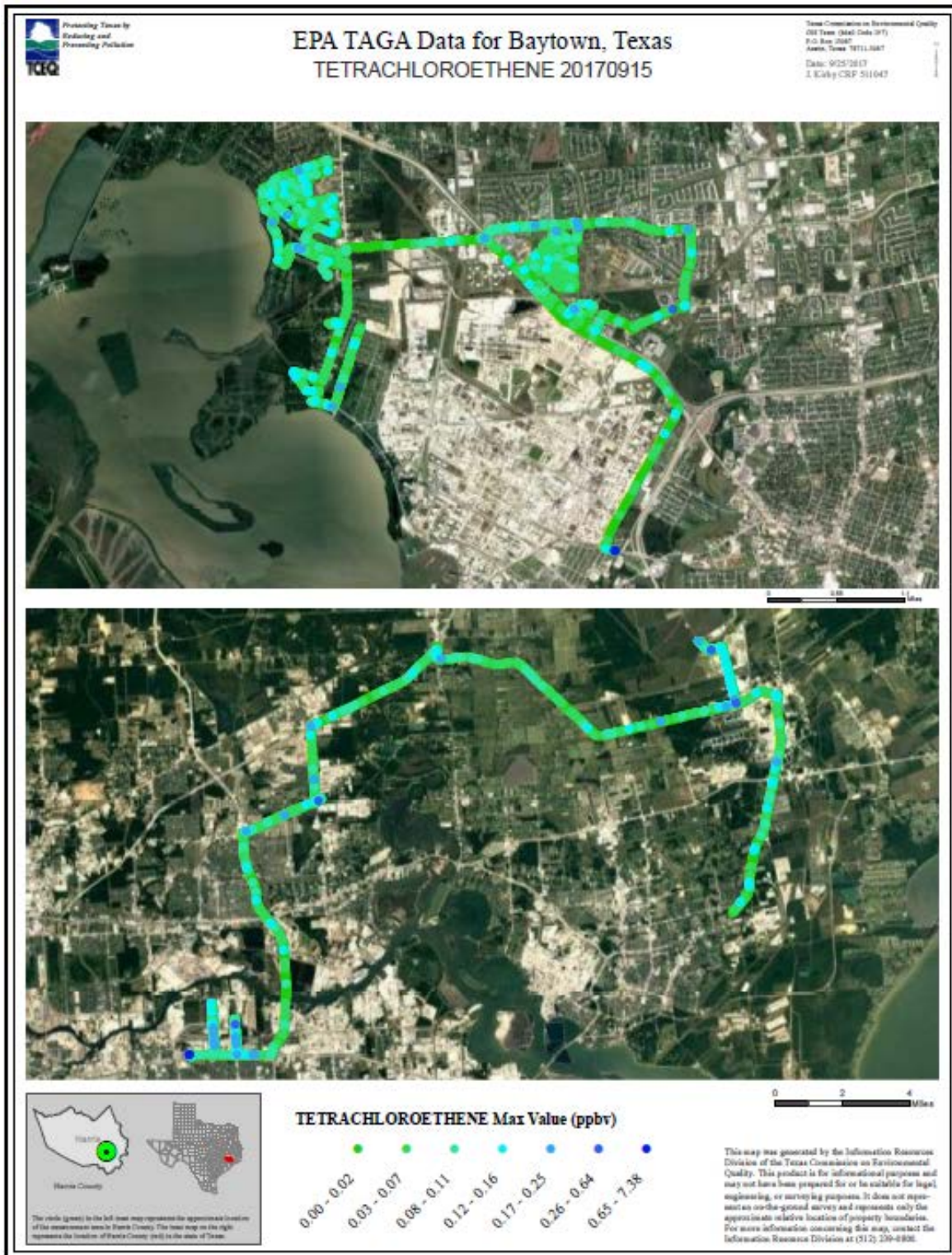
**Baytown Monitoring Study – Sept. 15, 2017**



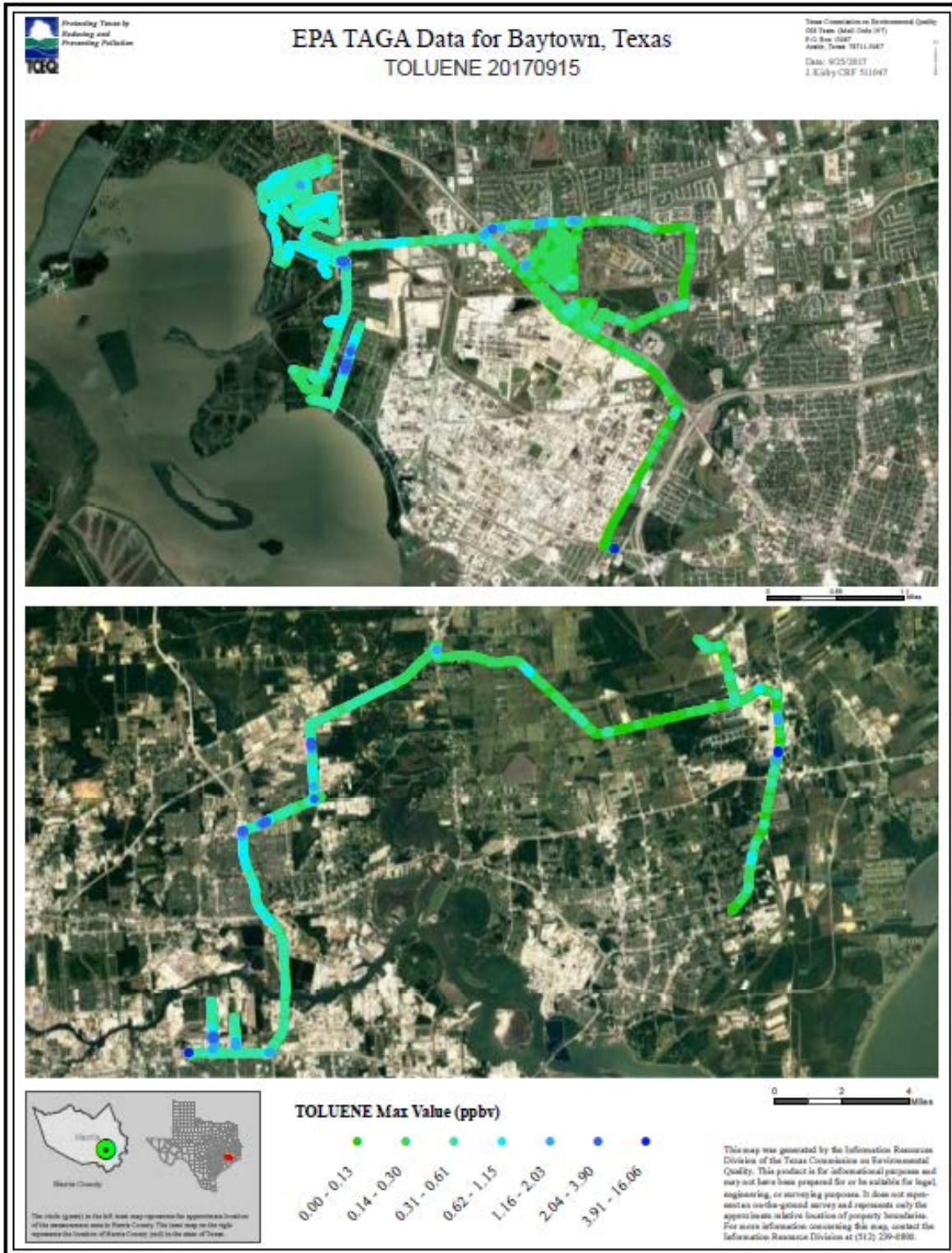




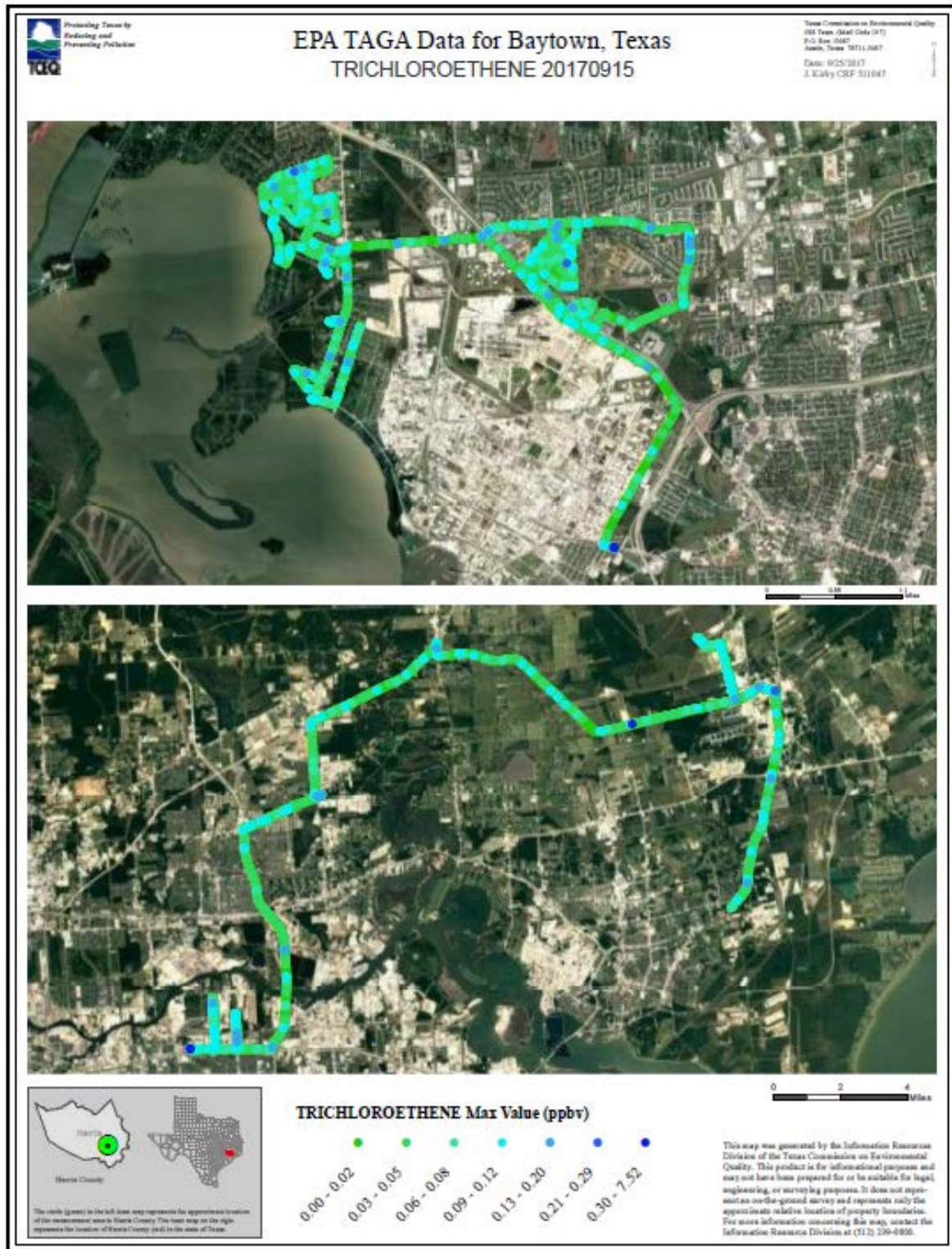








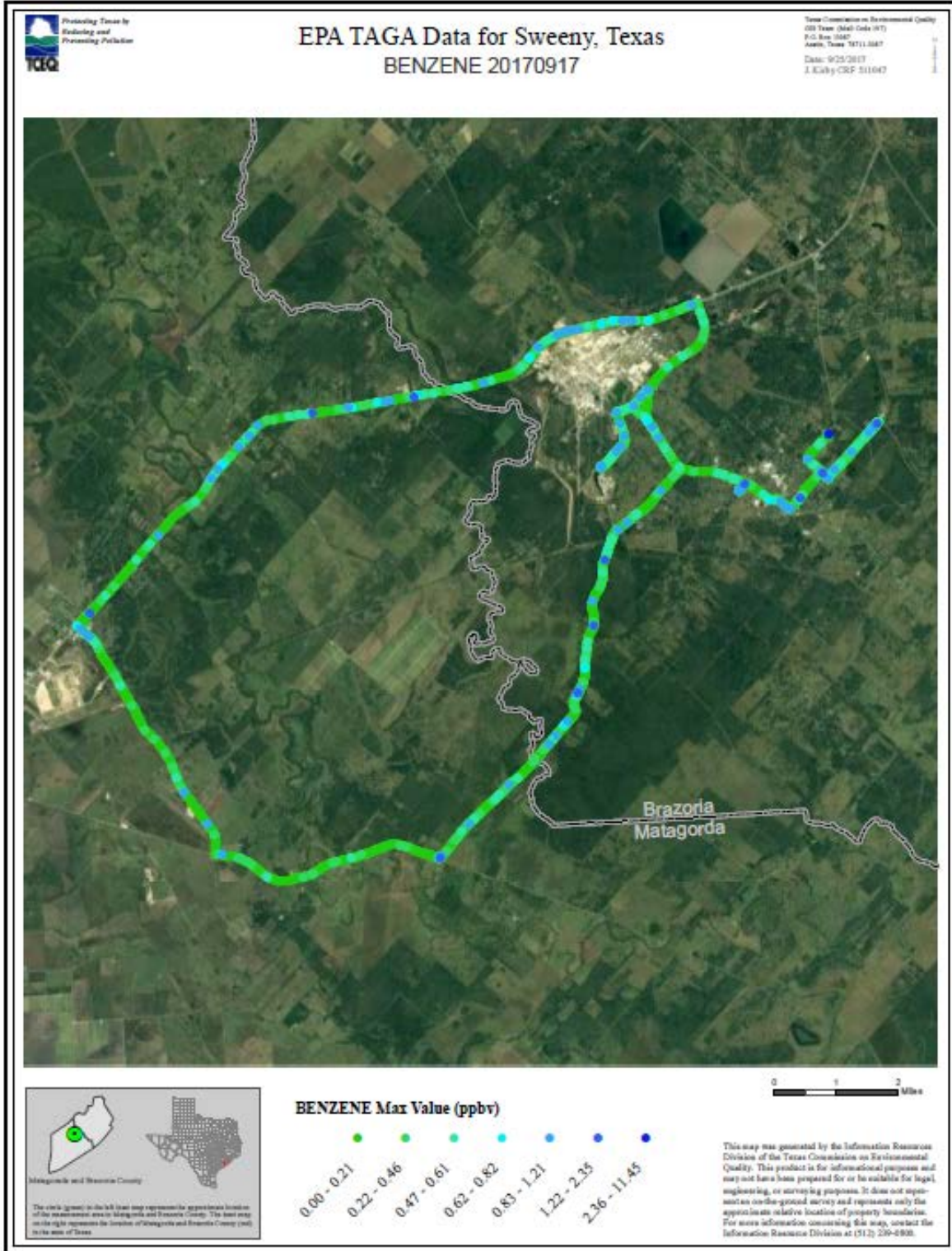




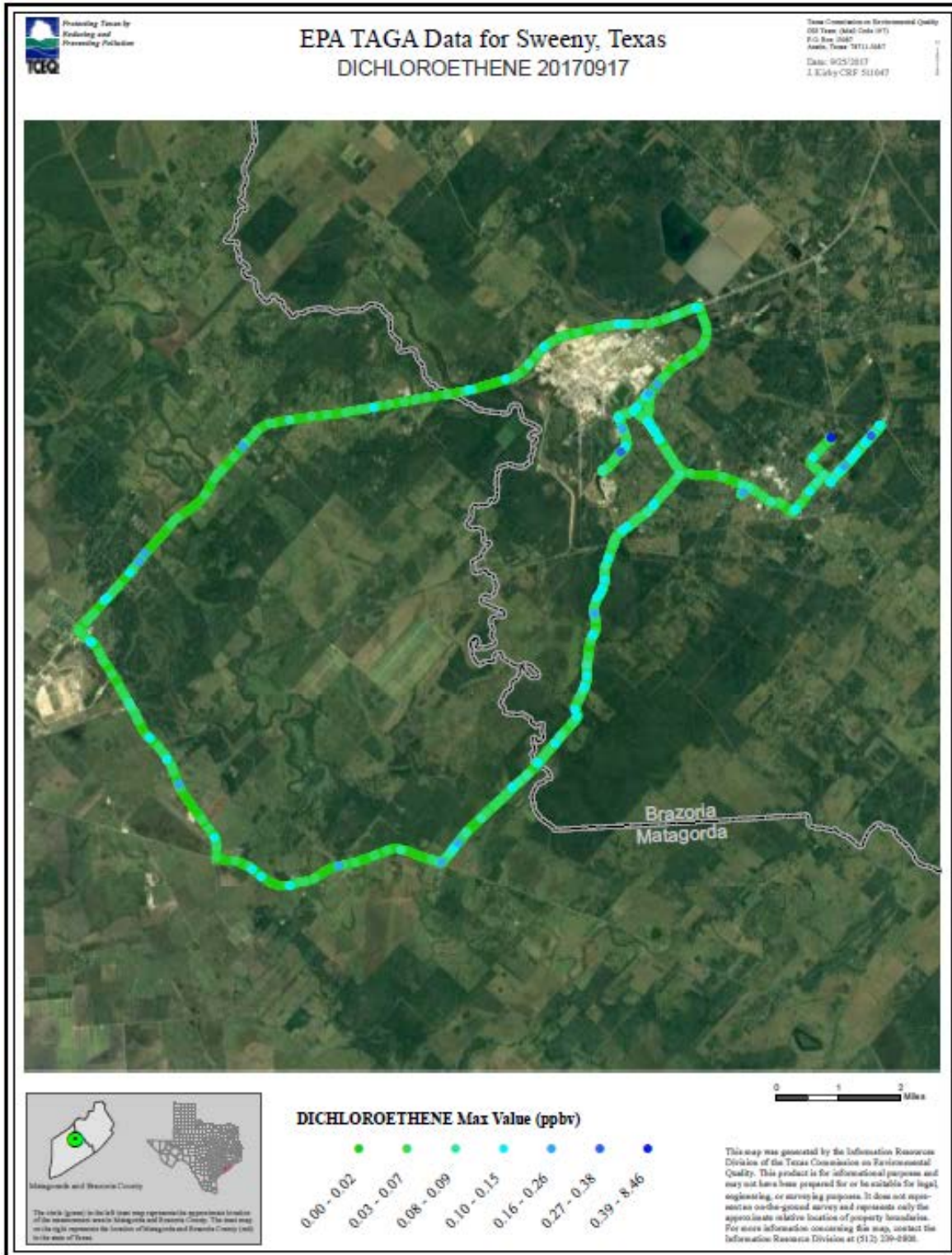


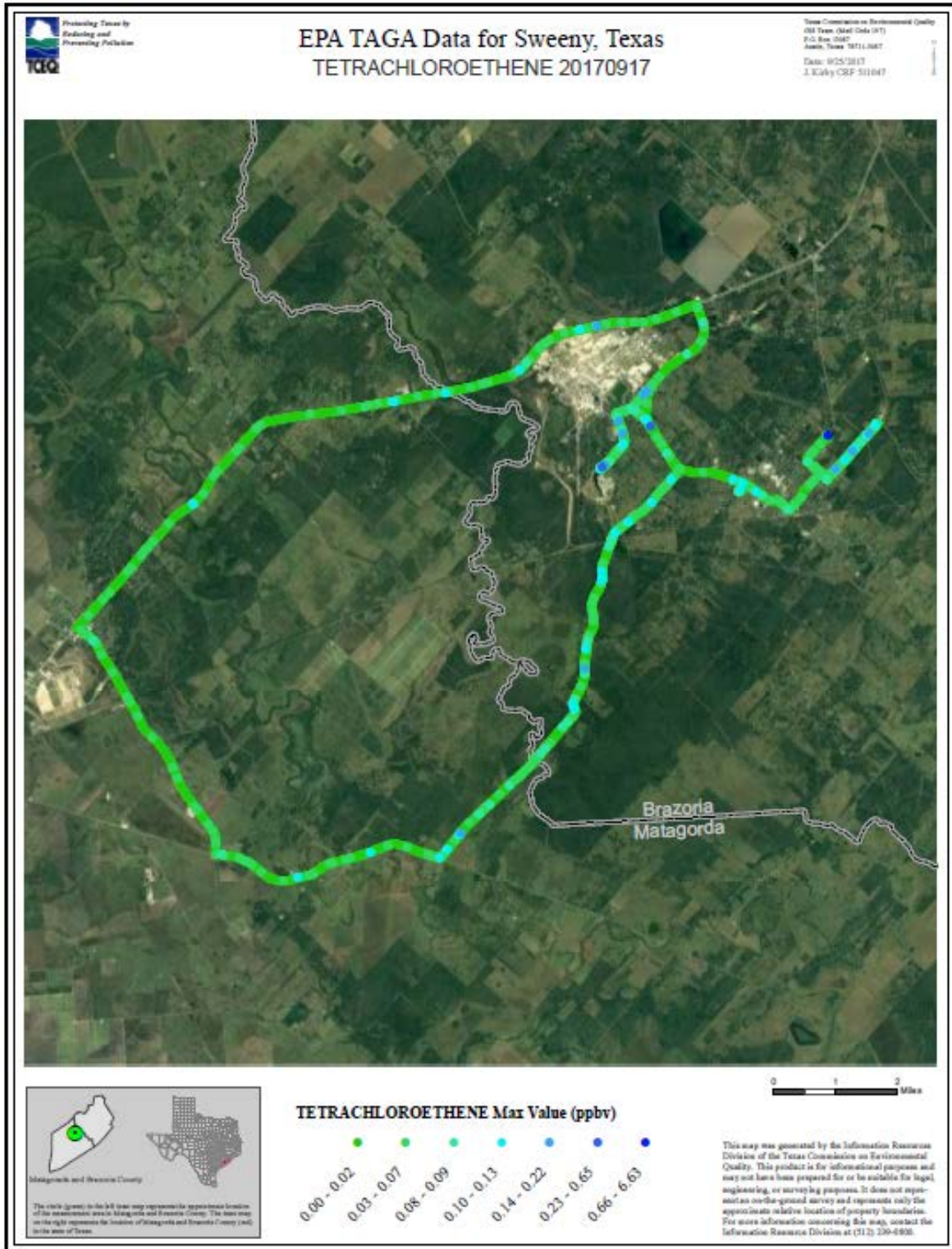


**Sweeny Monitoring Study – Sept. 17, 2017**

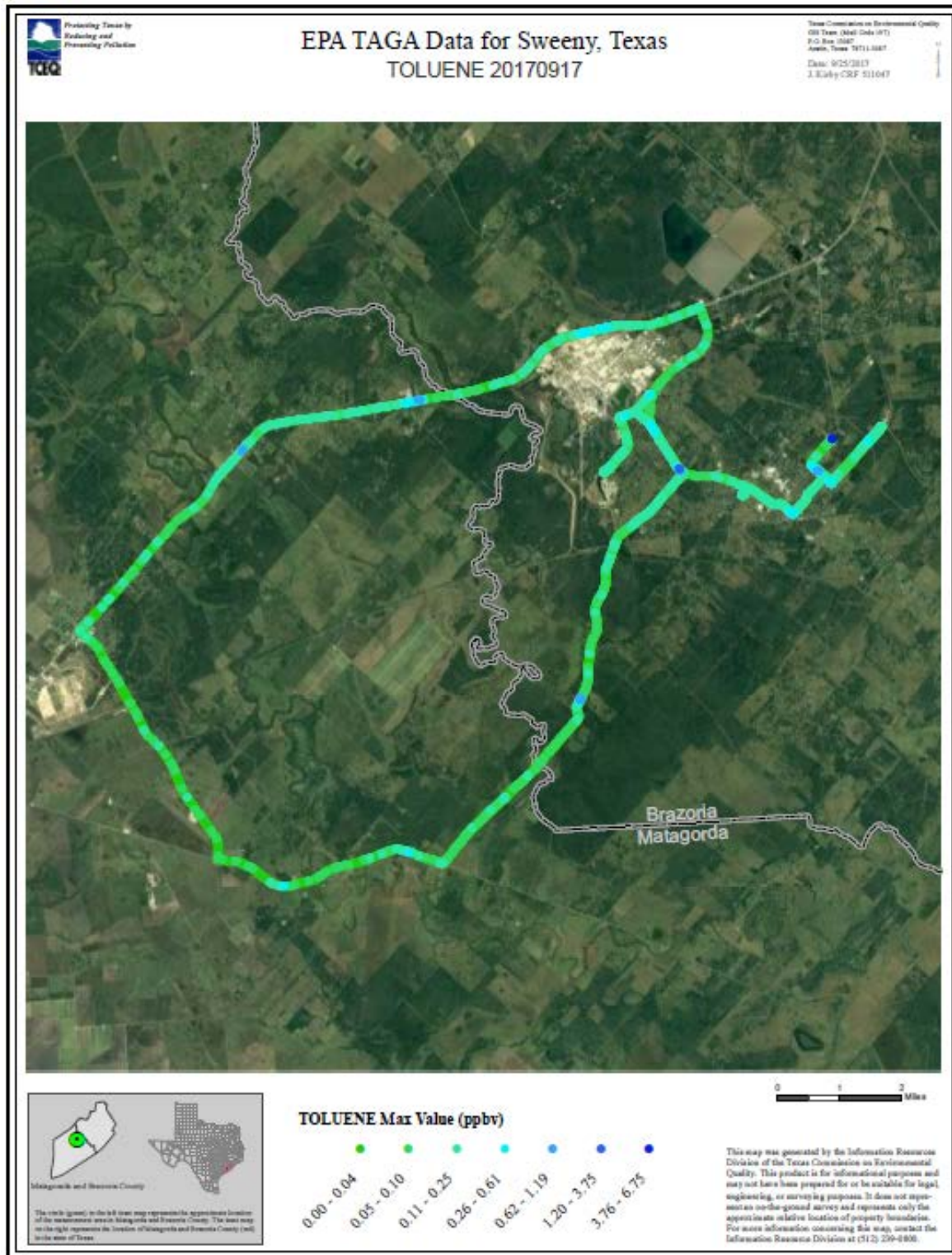


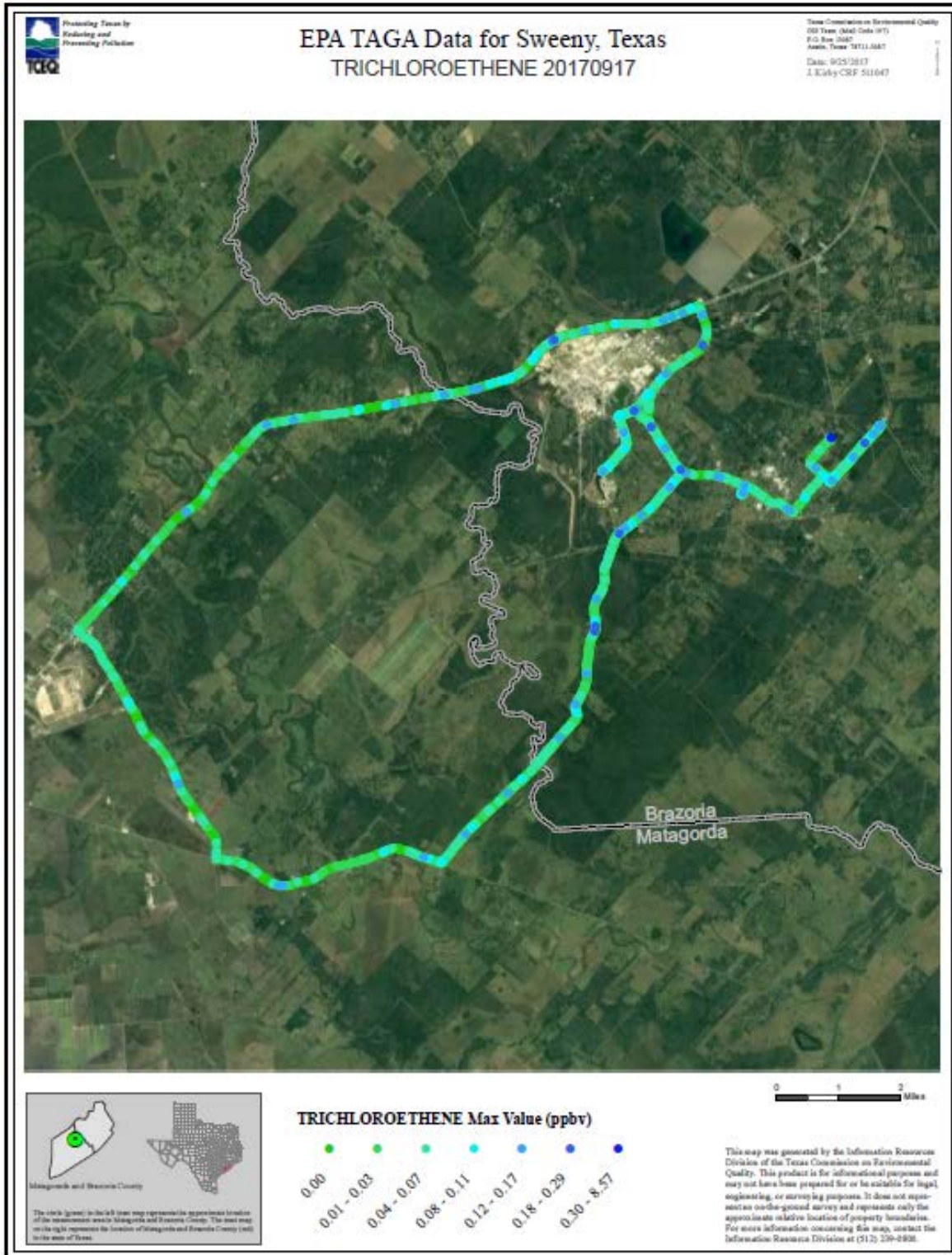




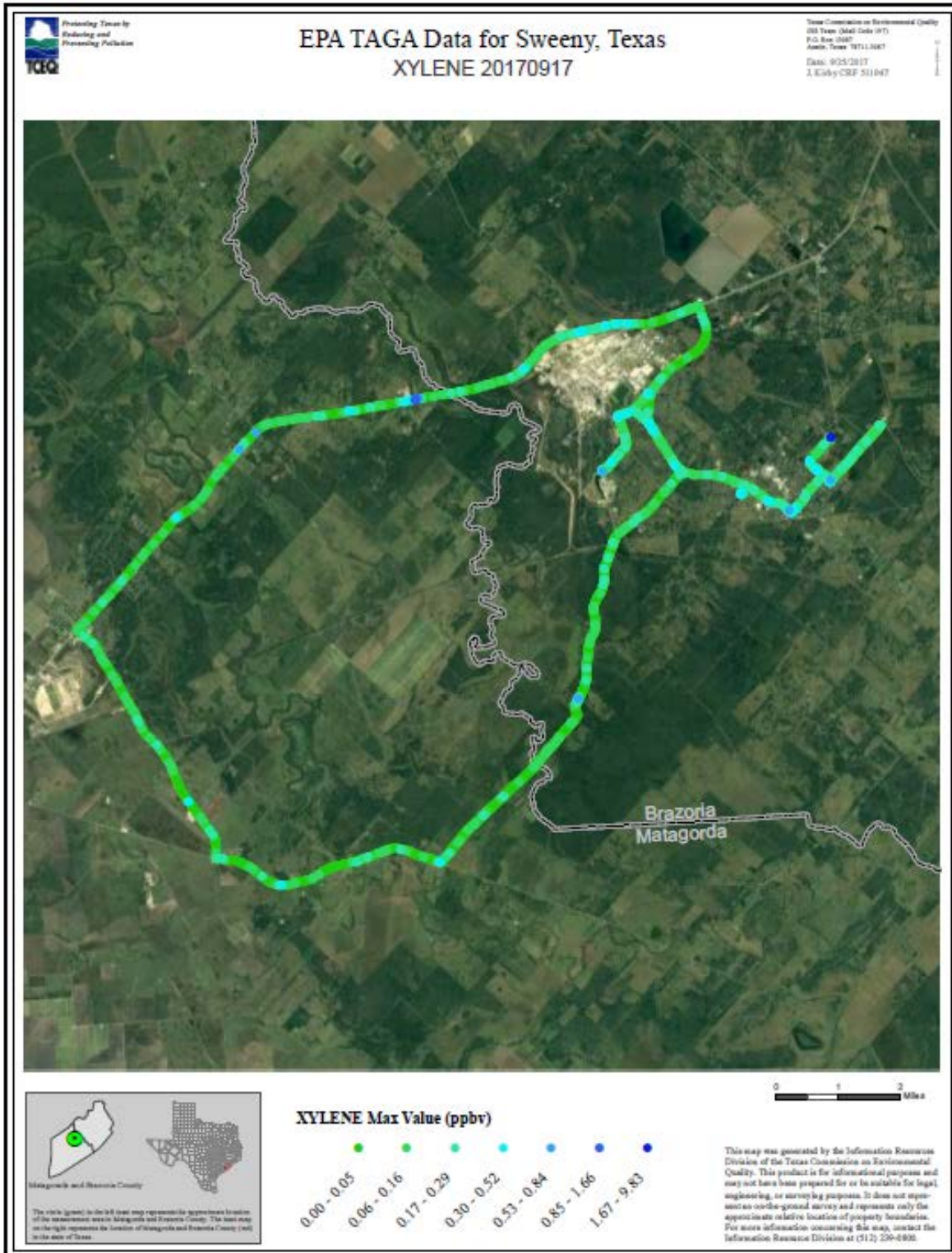




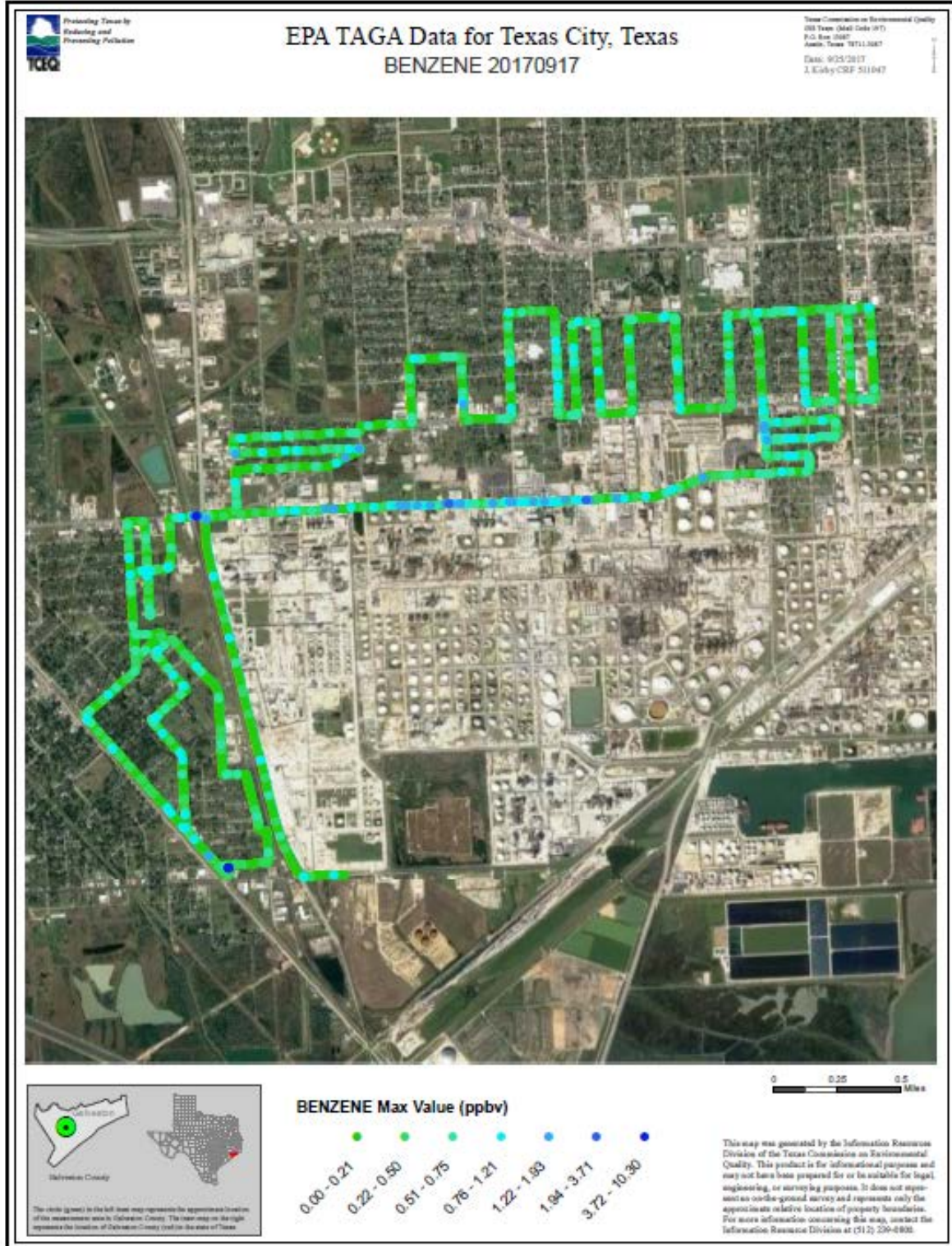




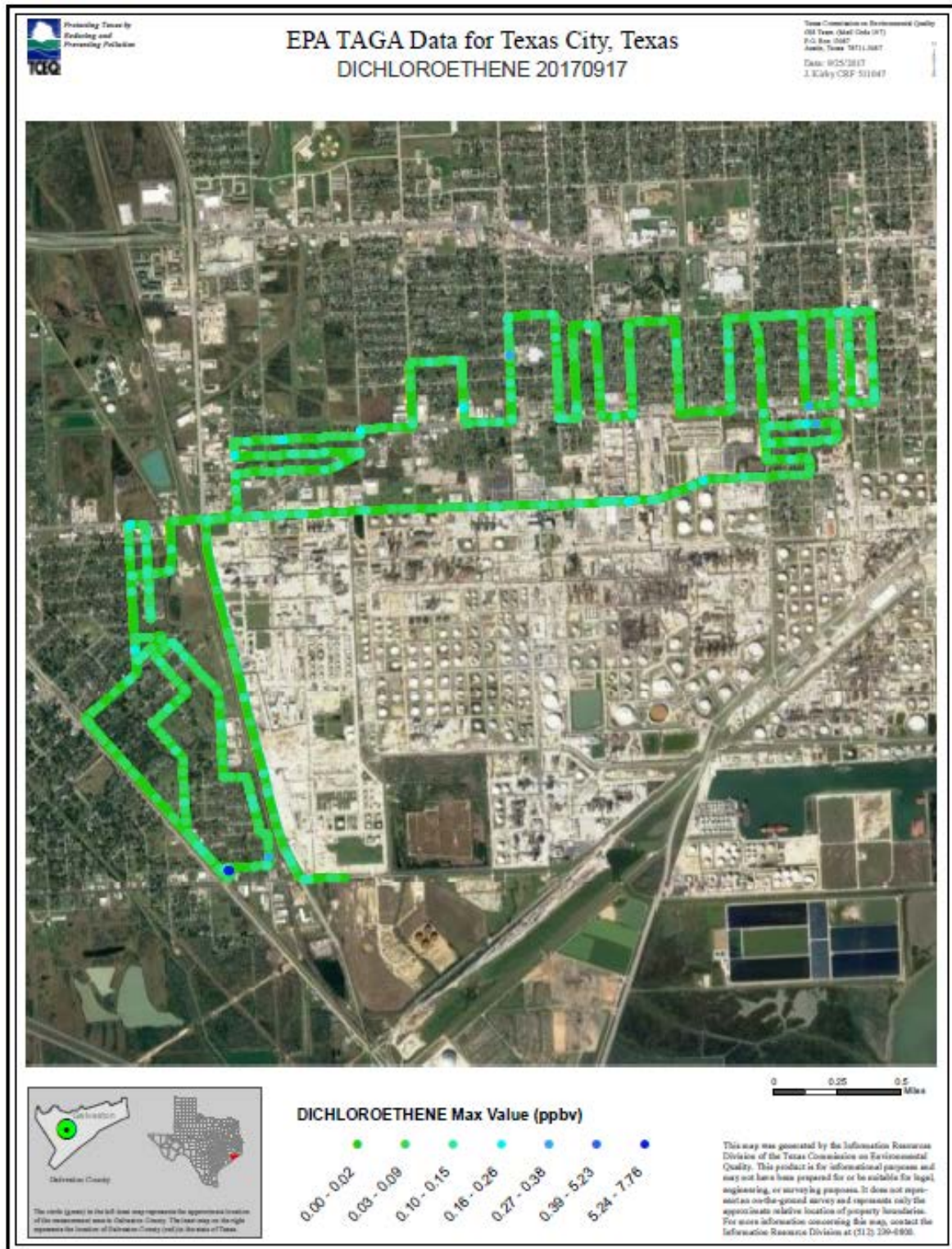




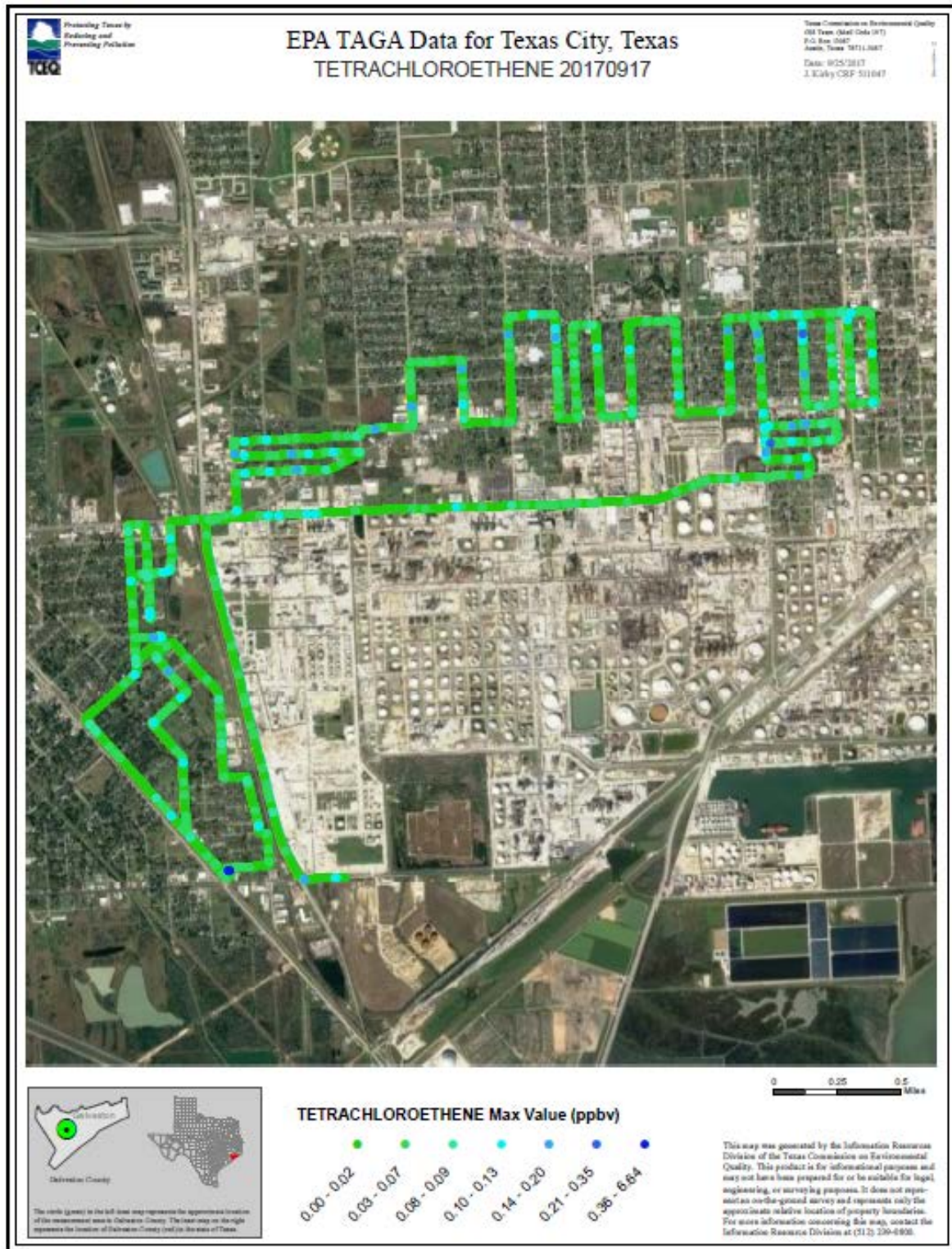
**Texas City Monitoring Study – Sept. 17, 2017**



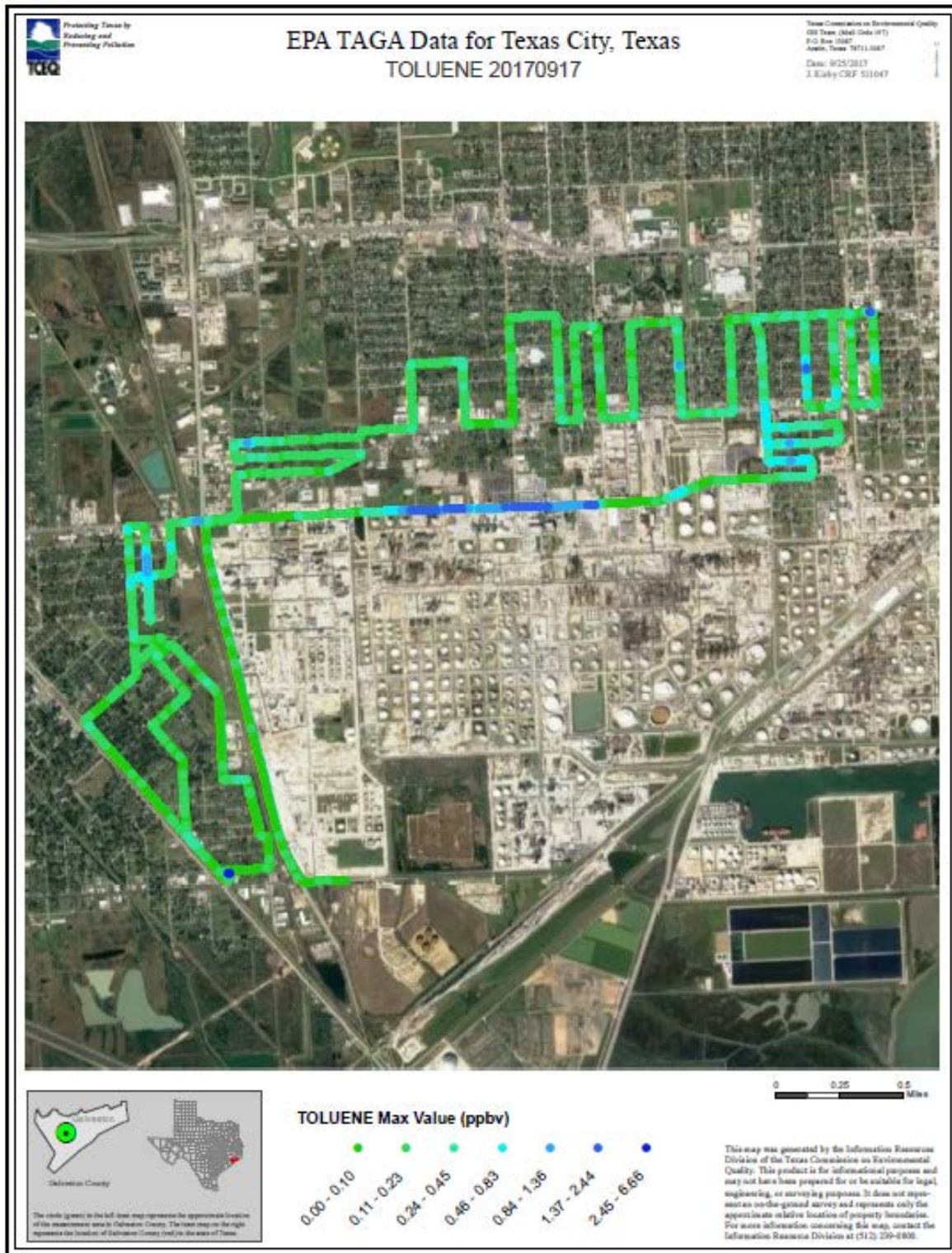








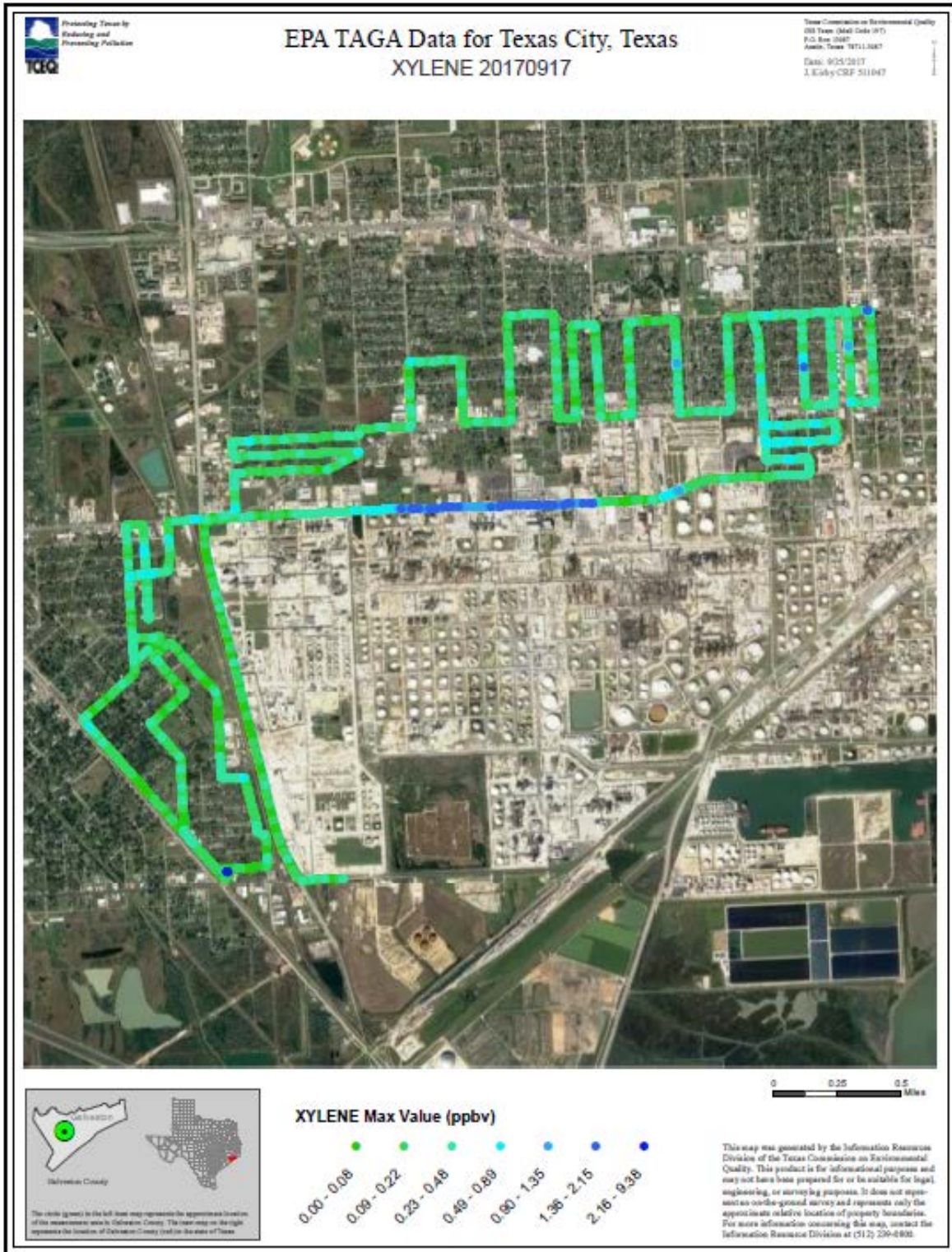












**Port Arthur Monitoring Study 1 – Sept. 18, 2017**











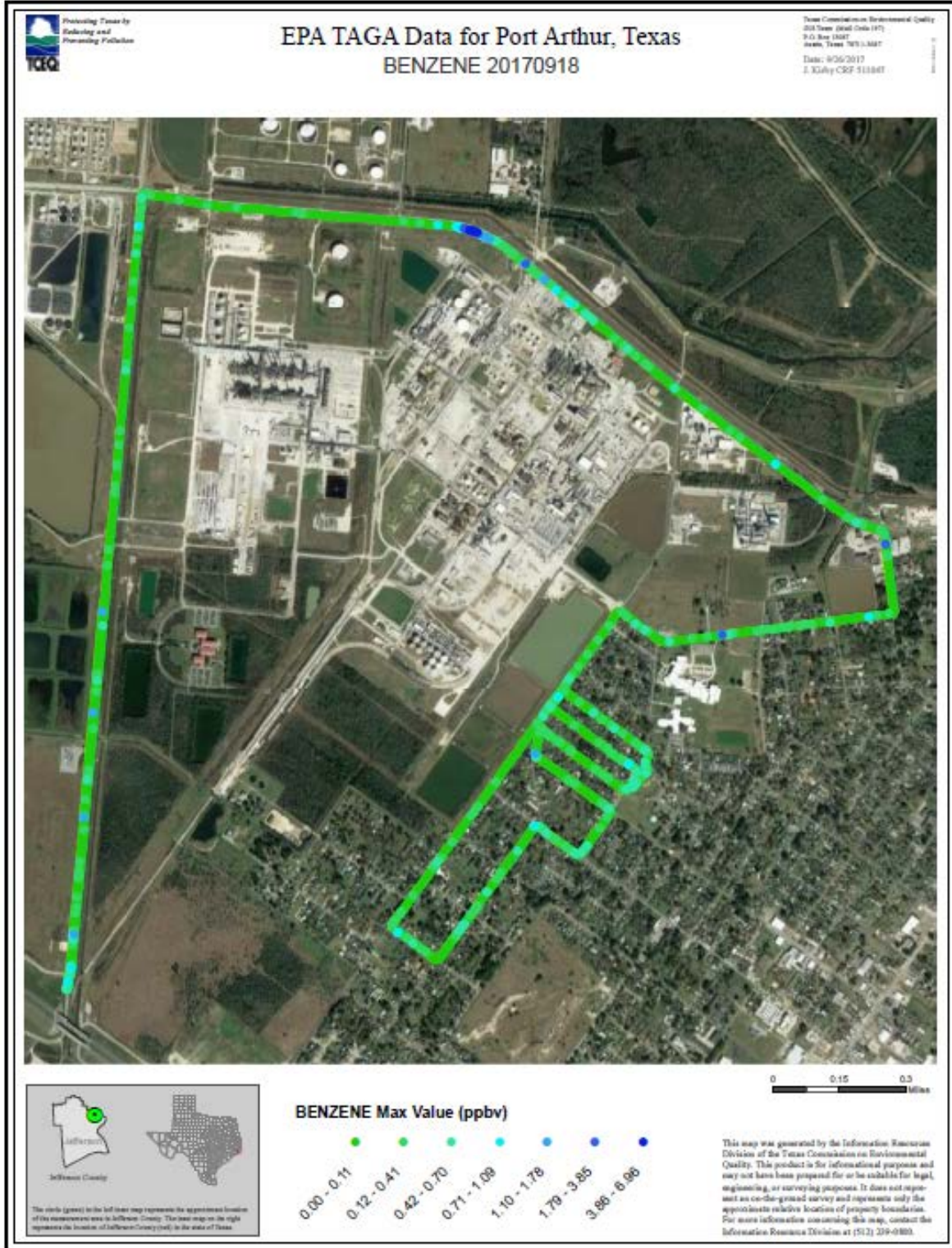






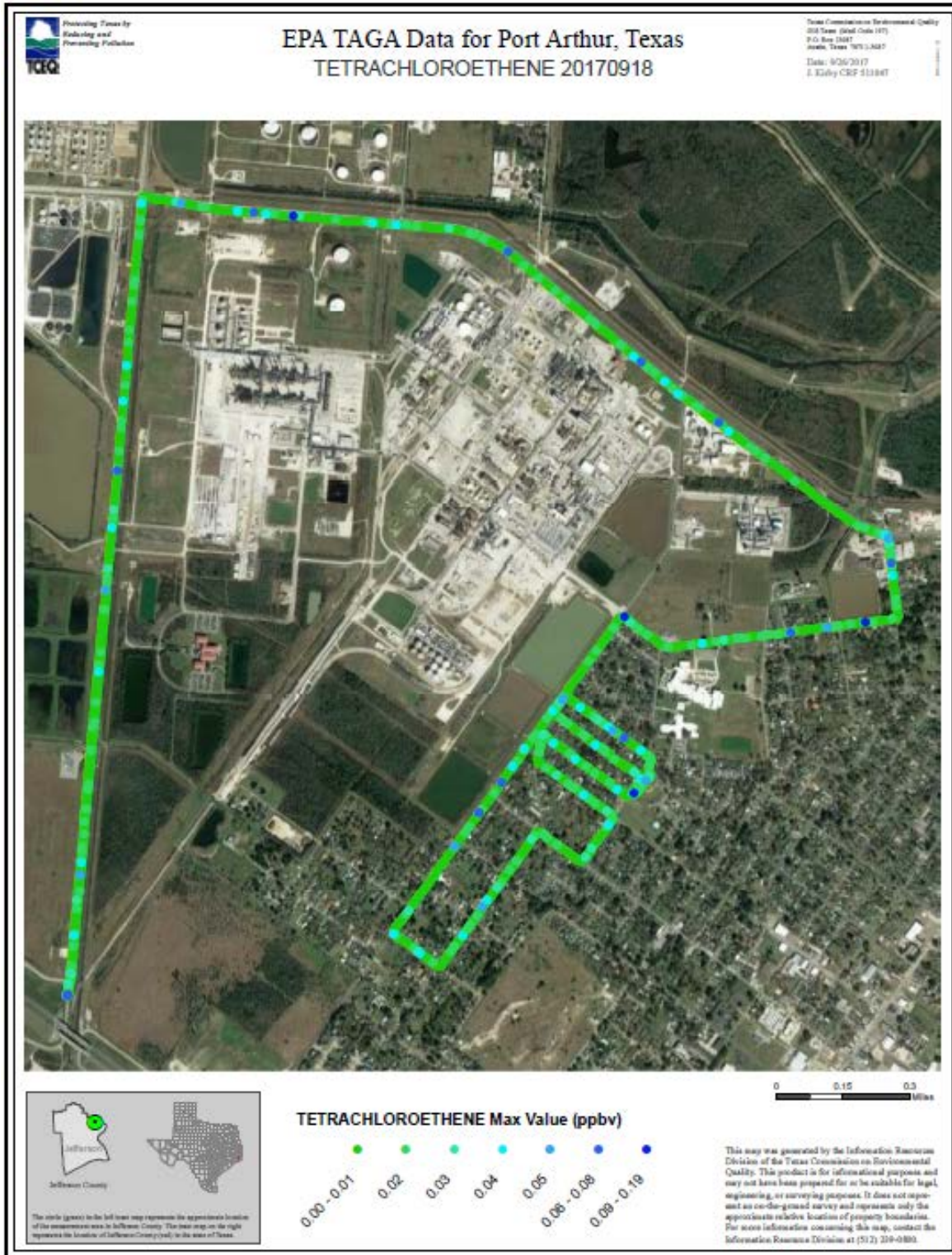


**Port Arthur Monitoring Study 2 – Sept. 18, 2017**

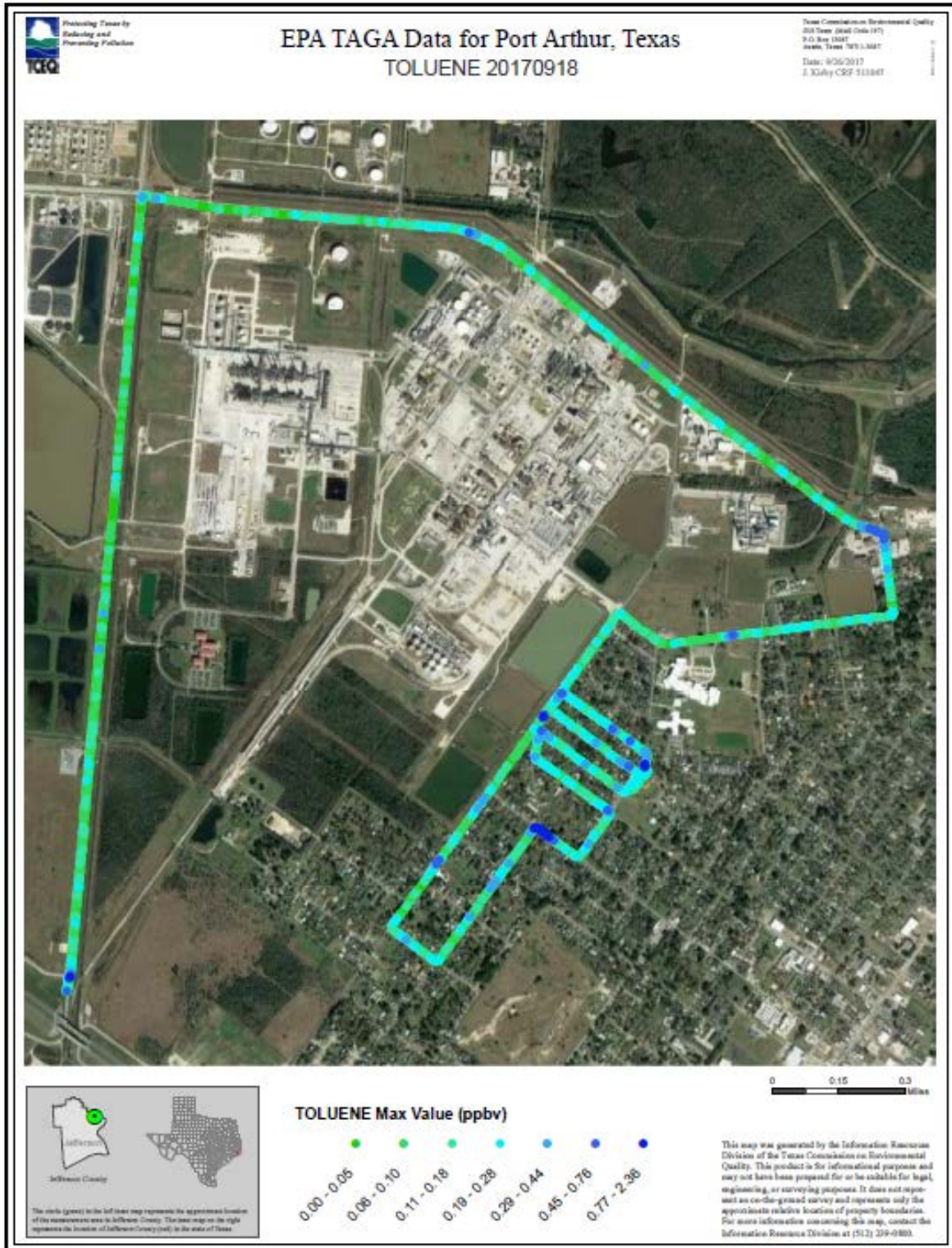


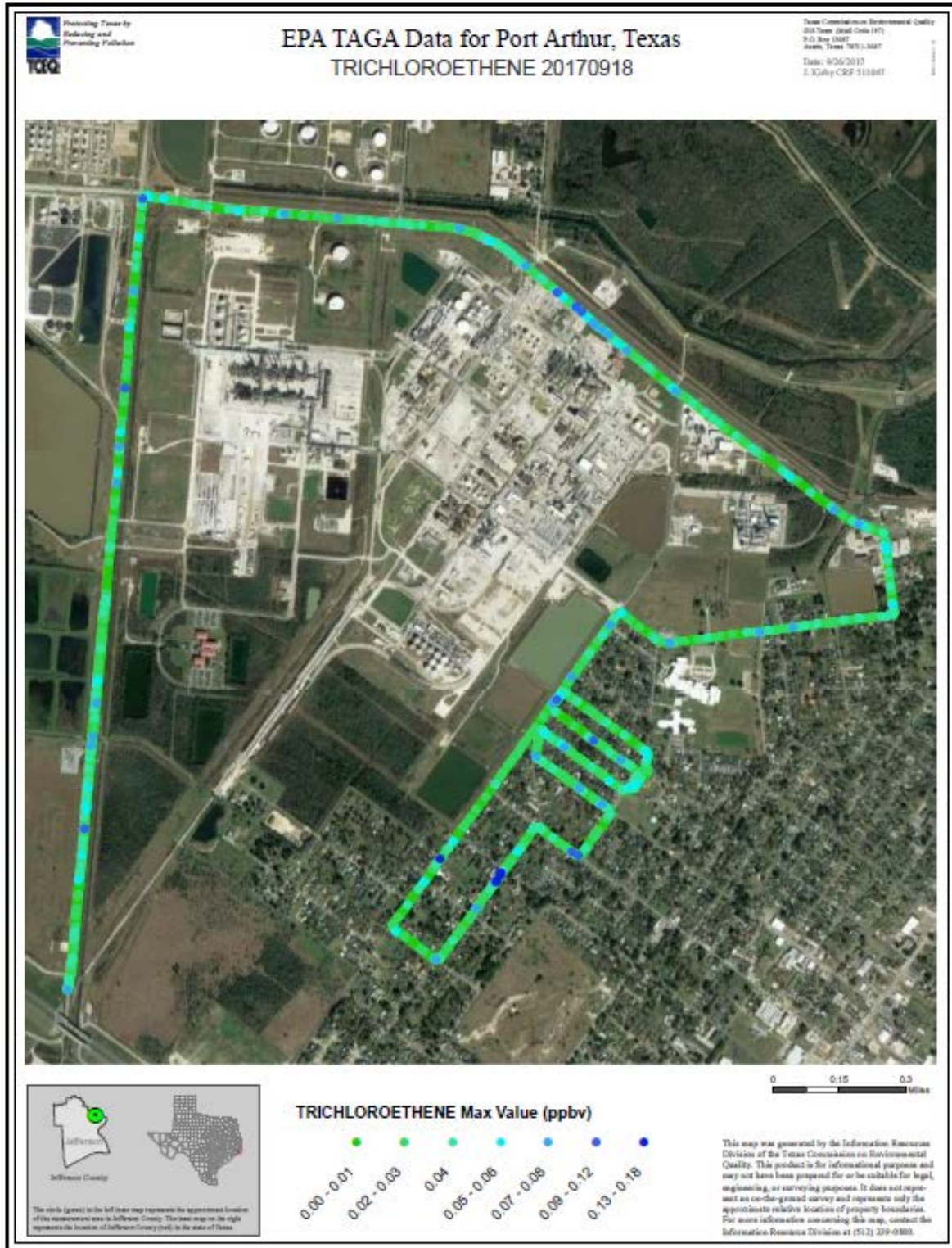




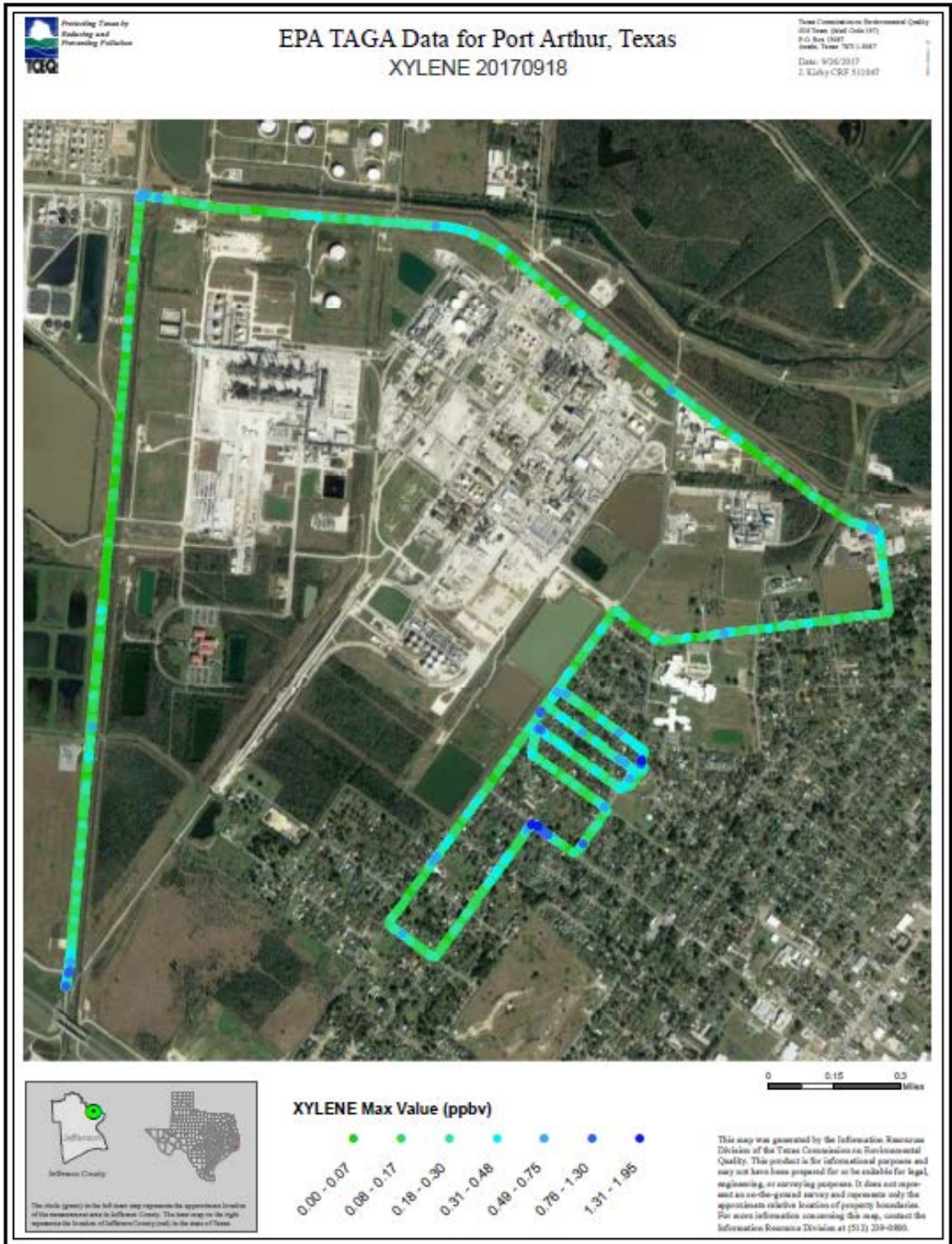










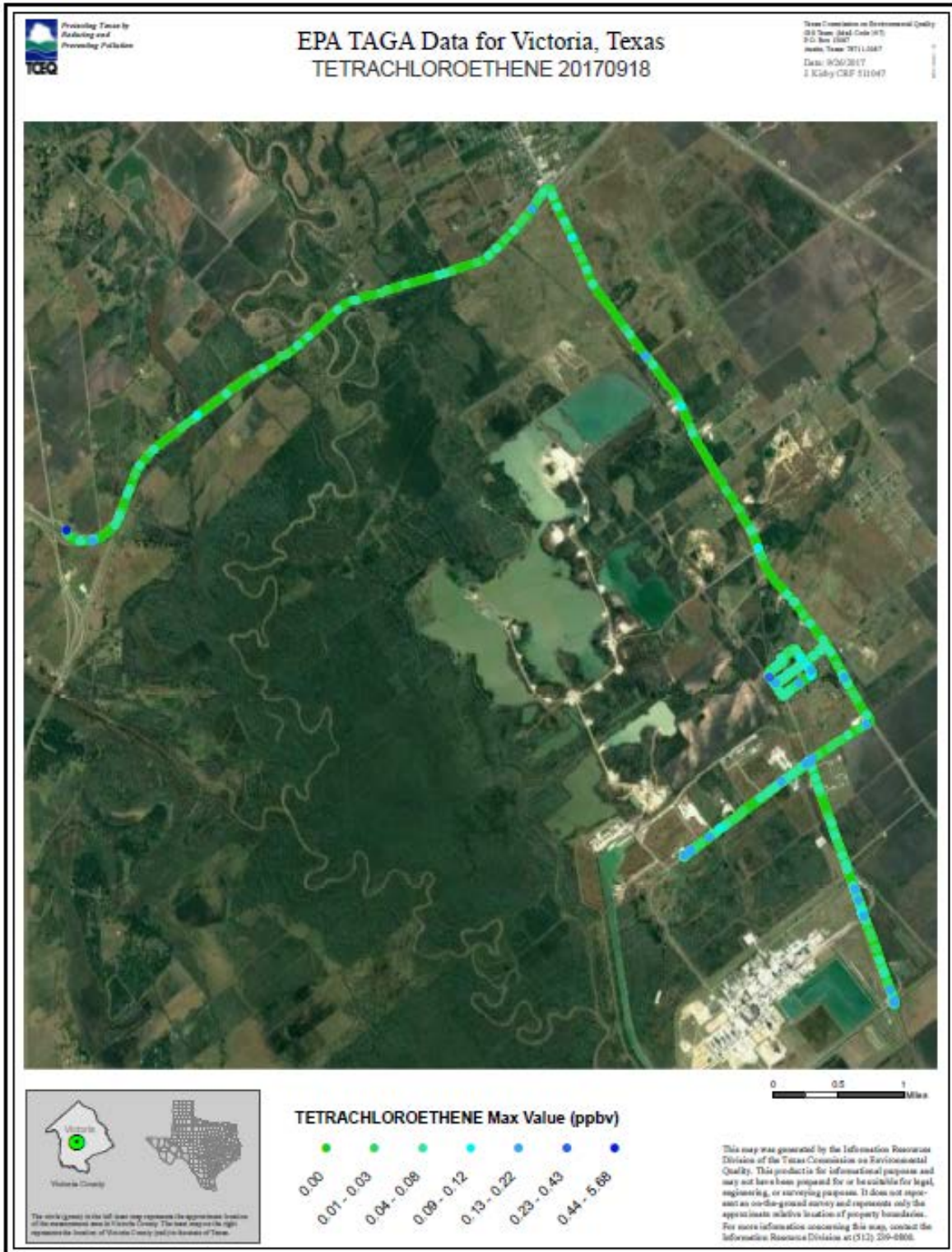


**Victoria Monitoring Study – Sept. 18, 2017**











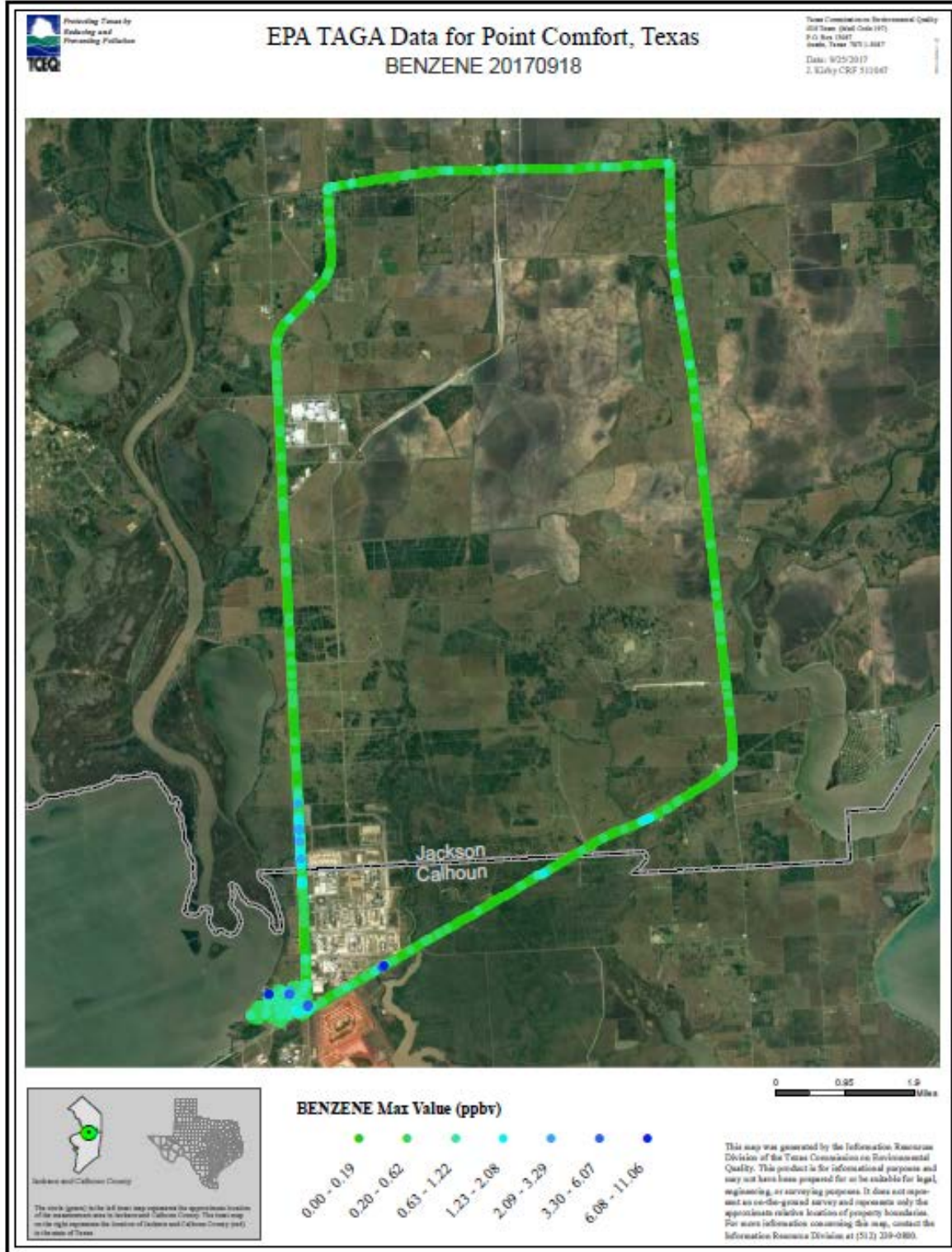




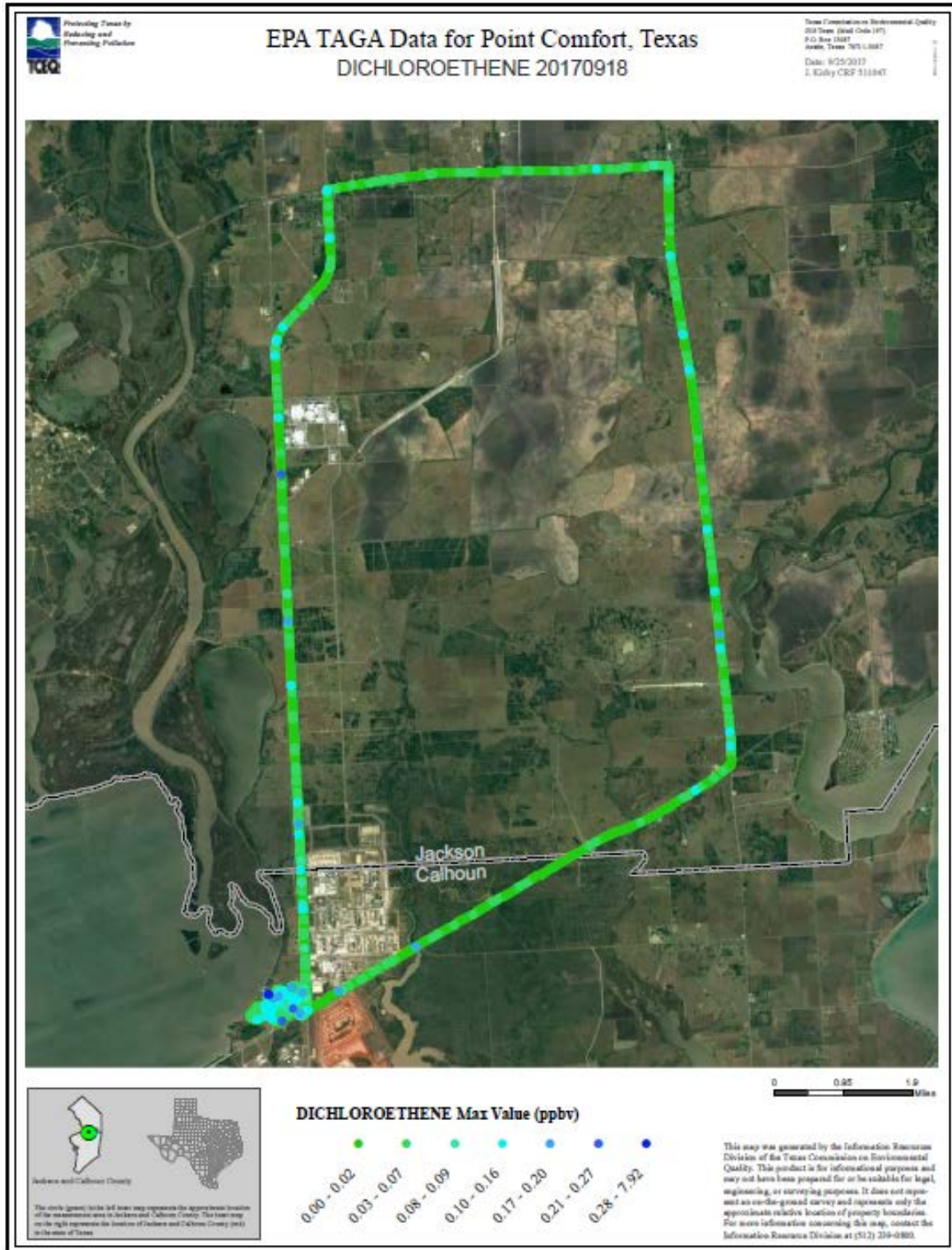


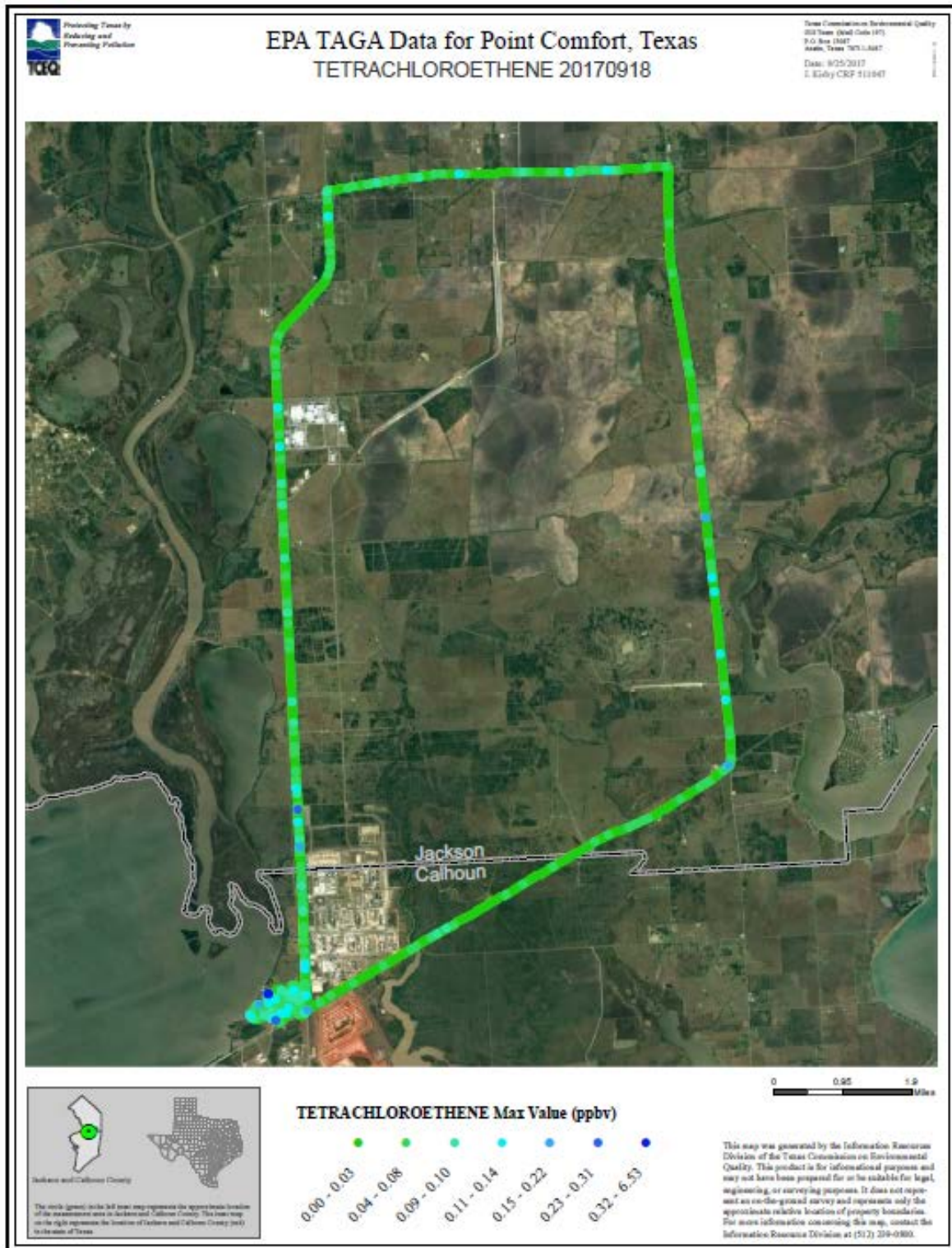


**Point Comfort Monitoring Study – Sept. 18, 2017**

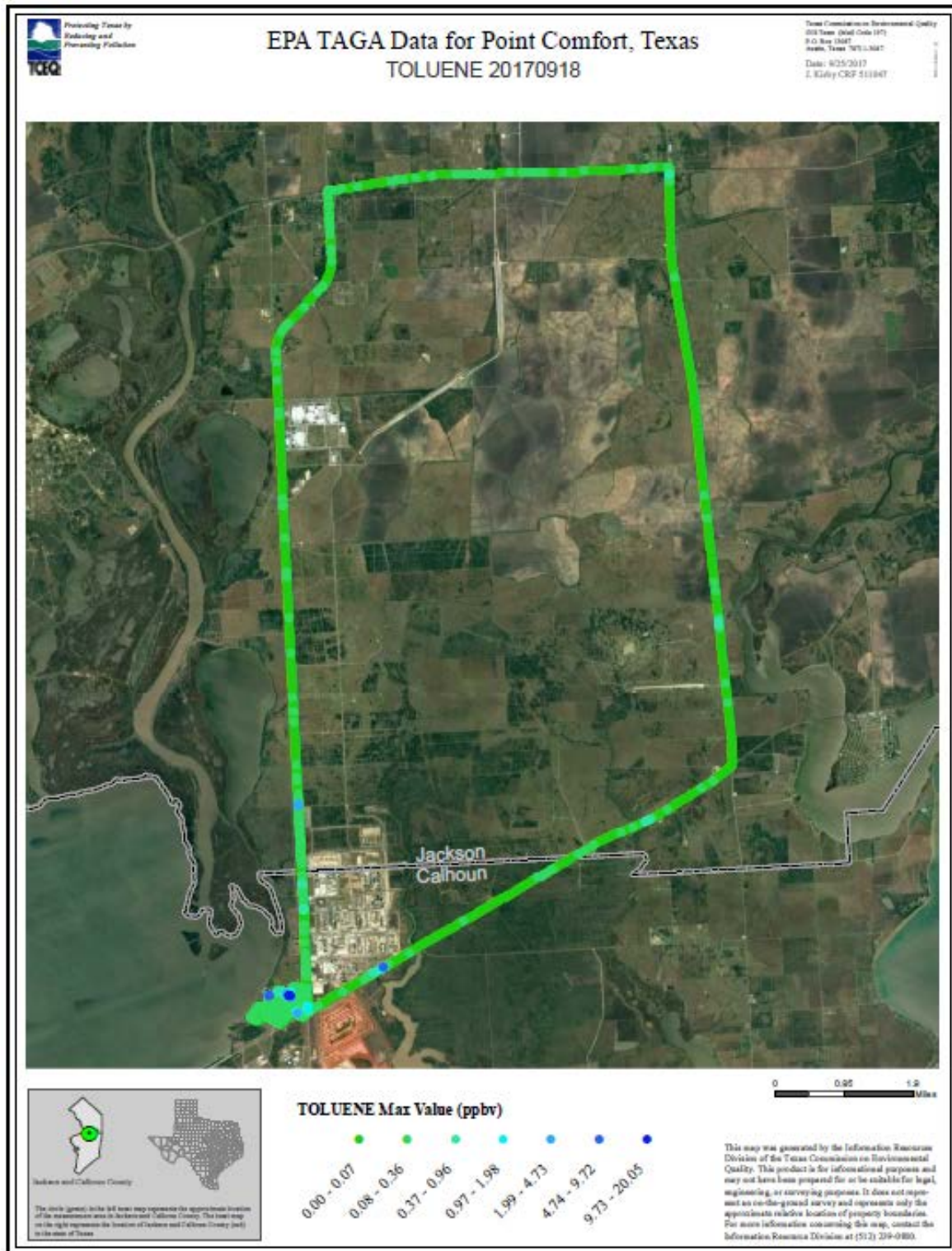


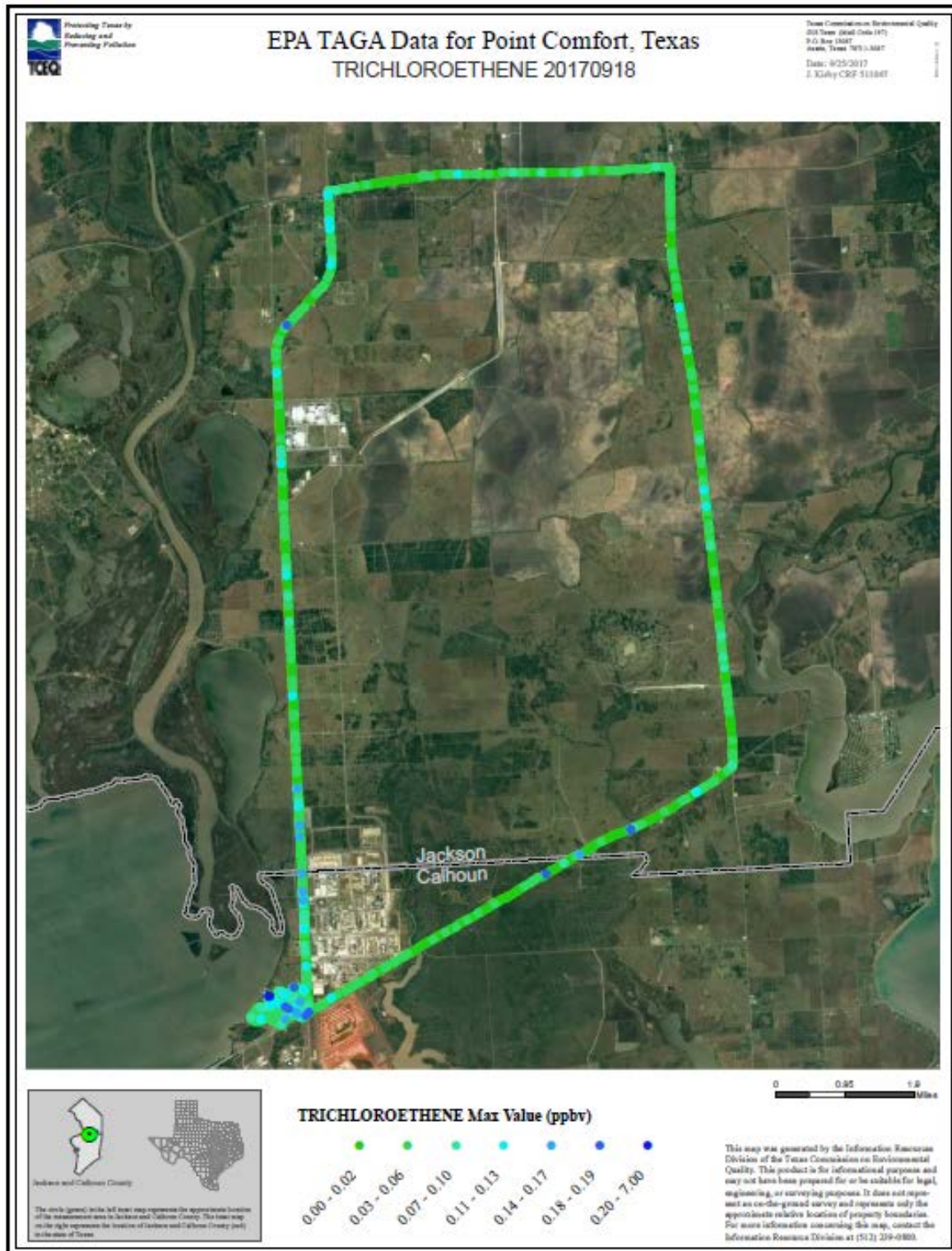




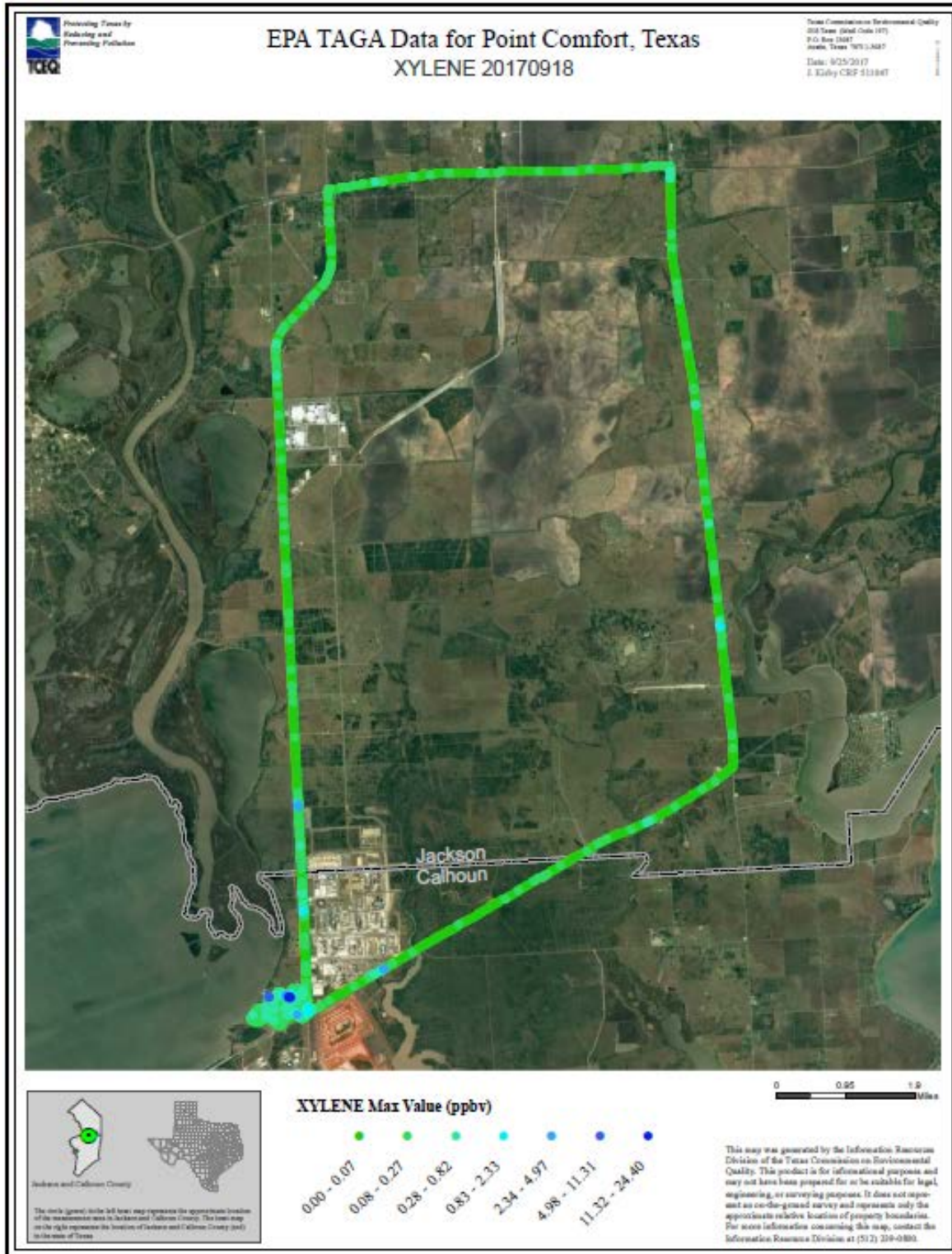




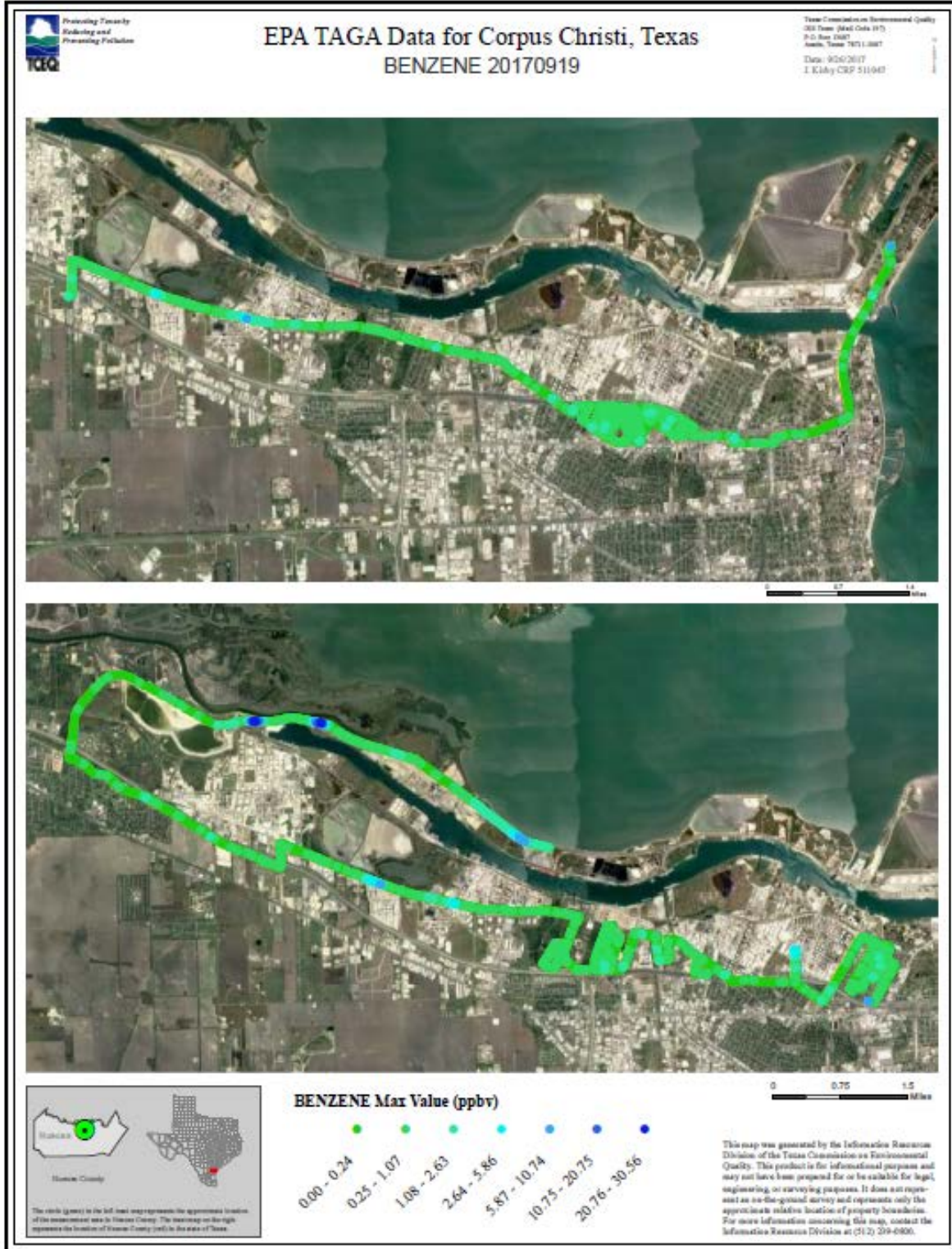




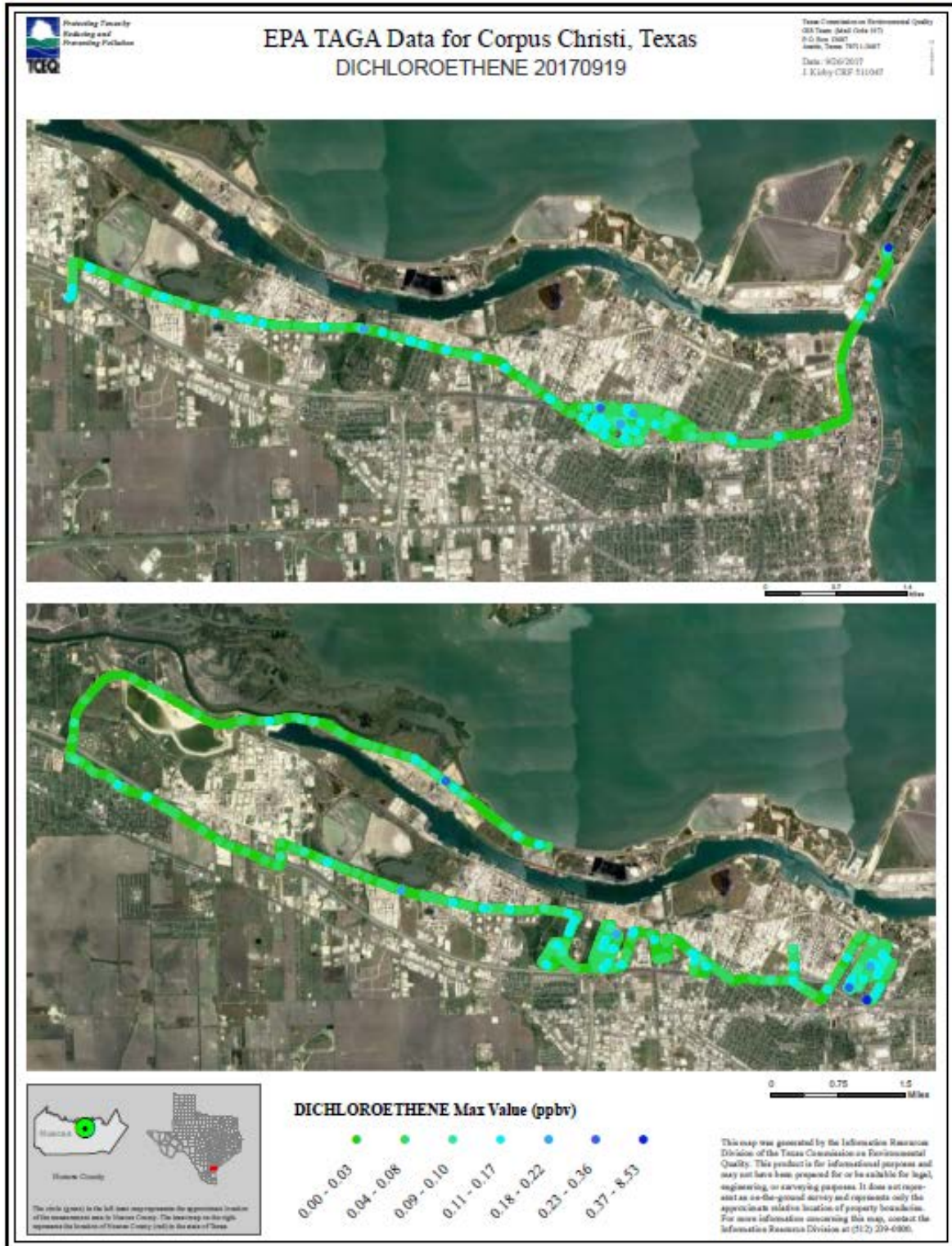




**Corpus Christi Monitoring Study 1 – Sept. 19, 2017**



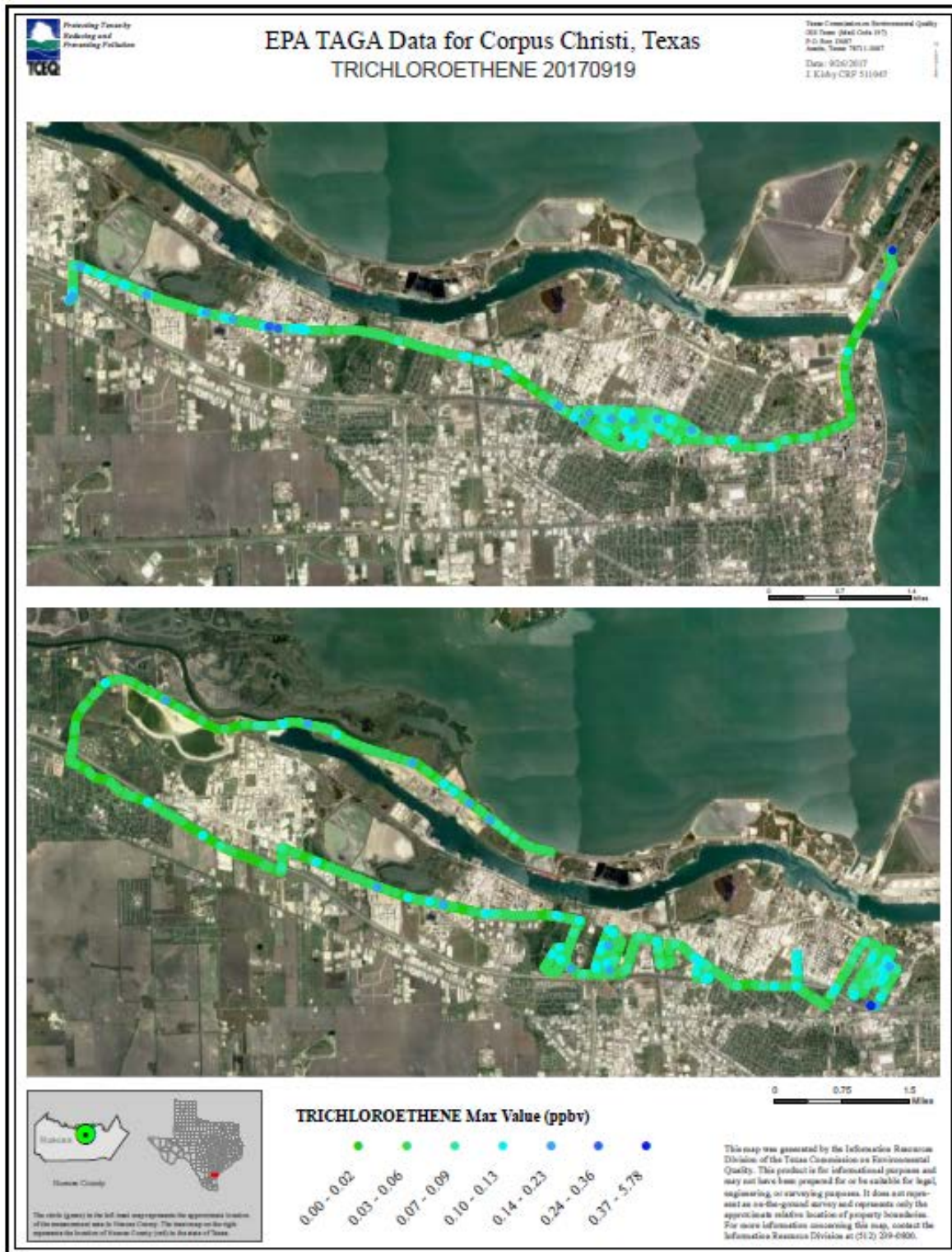




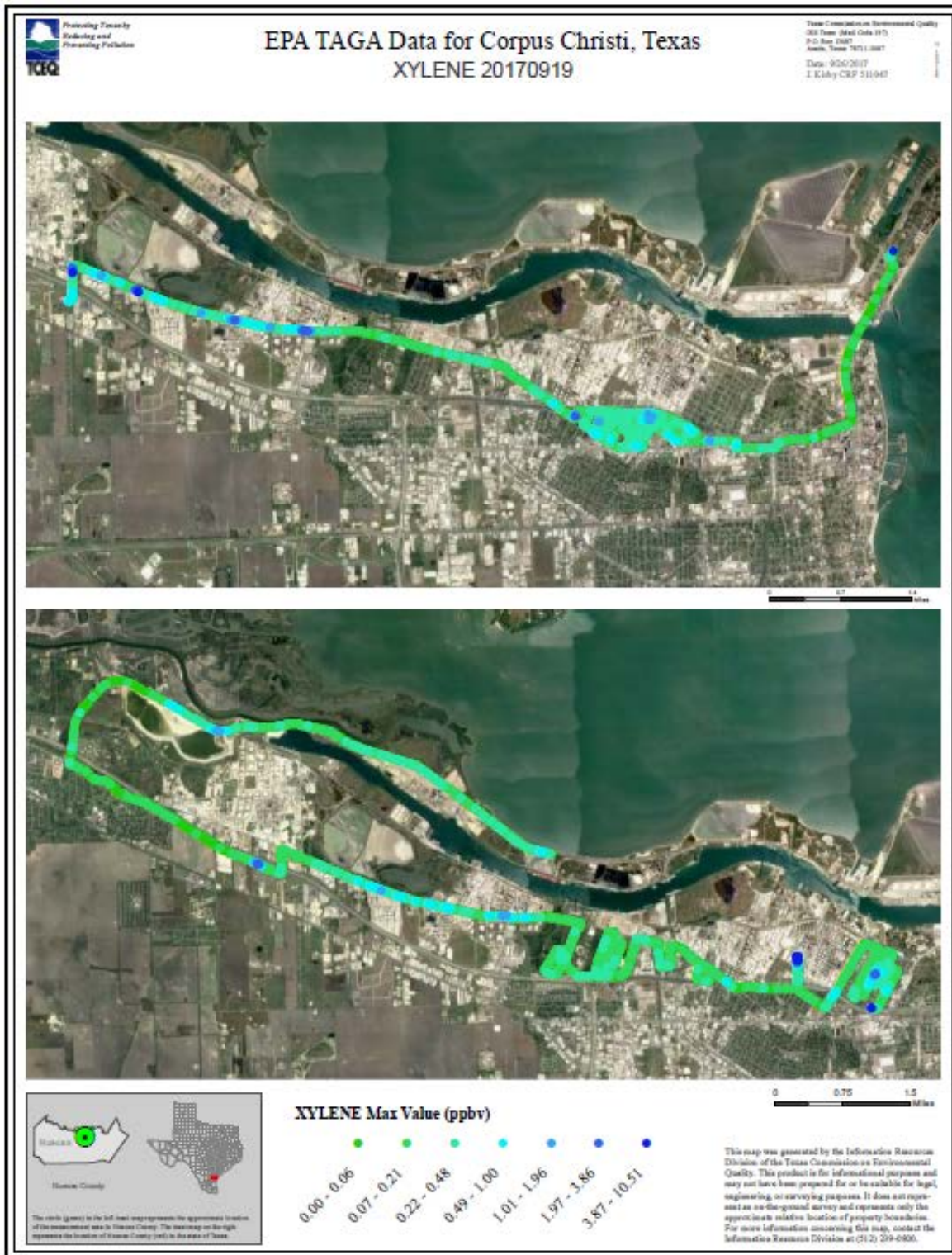












**Corpus Christi Monitoring Study 2 – Sept. 19, 2017**

