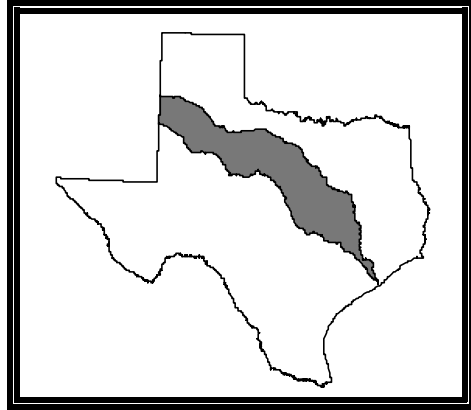


Basin 12

Brazos River



Brazos River Basin Narrative Summary

The Brazos River Basin has the largest drainage area of all basins between the Rio Grande and the Red River in Texas. Total basin drainage area is 45,573 square miles, of which approximately 43,000 square miles are in Texas, the remainder, in New Mexico. The headwaters of the Brazos are formed by three forks-the Double Mountain Fork, South Fork, and Clear Fork. Principal tributaries to the Brazos downstream of the Clear Fork are Yegua Creek, Bosque River, Little River (formed by the confluence of the Leon, Lampasas, and San Gabriel Rivers) and the Navasota River.

According to the 2000 Census, there are seven cities (Waco, Abilene, Lubbock, Bryan, College Station, Missouri City and Sugarland), in the Brazos River Basin with populations greater than 100,000. Predominant land uses in the basin include agricultural, industrial, and urban.

For monitoring purposes, the Brazos River Basin has been divided into 124 segments, which consist of 4,174 stream miles, and 26 reservoirs which encompass 168,906 acres. Presently there are 228 active surface water quality sites, which are monitored on a routine basis throughout the basin.

Elevated bacteria is the most common water quality problem in the Brazos River Basin. The contact recreation standard is not supported in eight classified segments and thirty-one unclassified segments. Confined animal feeding operations, agricultural and urban runoff, and domestic wastewater treatment plants contribute to elevated bacteria densities. Depressed dissolved oxygen levels occur in five classified segments and four unclassified segments. Depressed dissolved oxygen often occurs during warm summer months, especially in smaller intermittent streams. General uses are not supported in three segment due to total dissolved solids (TDS), sulfate and chloride levels, and one segment due to pH. Concerns exist for nutrients and/or excessive algae in nineteen classified segments and seventeen unclassified segments, and for toxic substances in sediment in two unclassified segments.

Forty-six of the fifty-seven classified segments in the Brazos River Basin serve as domestic water supplies. There are public water supply concerns for elevated TDS, sulfate, and chloride levels in five classified segments. High concentrations may be partially due to extreme drought conditions experienced in the basin, as well as naturally occurring mineral content of soils. The public water supply use is not supported in two classified segments due to elevated atrazine and/or alachlor concentrations.

There are no fish consumption advisories for any segments in the Brazos River Basin.