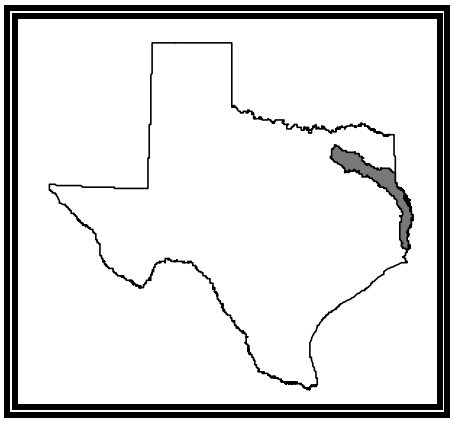
Basin 05

Sabine River



Sabine River Basin Narrative Summary

The Sabine River is formed by three tributaries which arise in Collin and Hunt counties. The Sabine River flows eastward and is joined by the South Fork Sabine River. The river then turns southward and becomes the Texas-Louisiana boundary near Logansport, Louisiana, and continues southward to Sabine Lake on the Gulf Coast. Total basin drainage area is 9,756 square miles, of which 7,426 square miles are in Texas. The Sabine River has the largest water discharge at its mouth of any Texas river.

The economy is diversified throughout the basin and is based principally on mineral production, agriculture, manufacturing, recreation, and tourism. The Port of Orange serves as a distribution and shipping center for many of the products produced in the Sabine River Basin.

The Sabine River Basin has been divided into 15 classified segments, including ten stream segments encompassing 496 stream miles and five reservoirs encompassing 253,798 acres. In addition, 21 unclassified water bodies were evaluated for the year 2002 assessment, including 19 stream segments encompassing 249.5 stream miles and two reservoirs encompassing 6,260 acres. There are 80 active monitoring stations in the Sabine River Basin.

Low dissolved oxygen concentrations occur in three classified segments and five unclassified water bodies. Point source discharges of treated wastewater, coupled with natural organic loading and sluggish flow, contribute to this problem. pH values that do not conform to criteria ranges occur in one classified segment. Elevated fecal coliform levels occur in four classified segments and nine unclassified water bodies. Chronic toxicity in water occurs in two unclassified water bodies. Concerns exist for nutrients in one classified segment and four unclassified water bodies, and for excessive algal growth in two classified segments.

The Texas Department of Health has issued fish consumption advisories for one classified segment due to elevated levels of mercury in fish tissue (Toledo Bend Reservoir), and for two unclassified water bodies due to elevated levels of selenium in fish tissue (Brandy Branch and Martin Creek reservoirs). The advisories apply to largemouth bass and freshwater drum in Toledo Bend, and to all species in Brandy Branch and Martin Creek reservoirs.