

Executive Summary

Draft 2014 Texas Integrated Report for Clean Water Act Sections 305(b) and 303(d)

Background

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) in keeping with its mission to protect the state's natural resources regularly monitors the condition of the state's surface waters and assesses water quality. The *Texas Integrated Report for Clean Water Act, Sections 305(b) and 303(d)* is a statewide report on the status of state surface waters and is prepared and submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) every two years. The report is also published on the TCEQ Web site.

The report describes the condition of the surface water bodies of the state that were evaluated for the given assessment period. The data are gathered by many different organizations that all operate according to approved quality assurance guidelines and sample collection procedures. The quality of waters described in the Integrated Report represents a periodic snapshot of conditions over 7-10 years.

Requirements for the Integrated Report are codified in the Federal Clean Water Act, Sections 305(b) and 303(d). Further requirements are set out in state law in Chapter 26 of the Texas Water Code, Title 30 of the Texas Administrative Code (30 TAC), and guidance established by the TCEQ.

The guidance used to prepare the Integrated Report is based on a set of methods that apply the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards (30 TAC §307) to ambient water quality data. These methods are developed by the TCEQ with the advice of a diverse group of stakeholders, and are detailed in the *Guidance for Assessing and Reporting Surface Water Quality in Texas*.

TCEQ accepted public comments on the 2014 Integrated Report from December 19th, 2014 through February 2nd, 2015. Summaries of the comments and the TCEQ's responses are included with the submittal of the Integrated Report and are available on the agency website. Following review of the documentation, the Commission adopts the draft report and submits the information to EPA for approval.

Focus for the 2014 Assessment

The TCEQ has prepared a comprehensive assessment in 2014 by evaluating 1,410 water bodies (1,065 of these water bodies had sufficient data to provide an evaluation of the use attainment status). The Commission relied on cooperators such as, local, state, or federal agencies, and water program staff who provided additional information for this assessment. The TCEQ included data collected during the most recent seven-year period (December 1, 2005 to November 30, 2012). If needed, up to ten years of data were included to attain a minimum number of samples for assessment.

Categories Indicate Water Quality Status

The Integrated Report describes the water quality status of Texas surface water management strategies to the public, EPA, and internal agency programs. The five-part categorization of waters (see table below) is an important tool for water quality management throughout the State. Within this framework, higher category numbers correspond to the increased levels of effort required to manage water quality.

Water bodies in Category 1 are meeting all their uses, and simply require routine monitoring and preventive action. Water bodies identified in Category 5, called the 303(d) List, represent situations where water quality criteria are not attained and water quality management actions are needed to address the issue. Alternatively, these could also represent situations where water quality standards revisions may be needed in a specific area to better reflect ambient water quality conditions.

Categories included in the Texas Integrated Report

Category	Definition
1	Attaining the water quality standard and no use is threatened.
2	Attaining some of the designated uses; no use is threatened; and insufficient or no data and information are available to determine if the remaining uses are attained or threatened.
3	Insufficient or no data and information to determine if any designated use is attained. Many of these water bodies are intermittent streams and small reservoirs.
4	Standard is not supported or is threatened for one or more designated uses but does not require the development of a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). All TMDLs have been completed and approved by EPA. Other control requirements are reasonably expected to result in the attainment of all standards. Nonattainment is shown to be caused by pollution , not by pollutants and that the water quality conditions cannot be changed by the allocation and control of pollutants through the TMDL process.
5	The water body does not meet applicable water quality standards or is threatened for one or more designated uses by one or more pollutants. TMDLs are underway, scheduled, or will be scheduled for one or more parameters. A review of the standards for one or more parameters will be conducted before a management strategy is selected, including a possible revision to the water quality standards. Additional data or information will be collected and/or evaluated for one or more parameters before a management strategy is selected.

Each water body is assigned uses and criteria (or parameters) consistent with the Texas Water Quality Standards that are evaluated against ambient water quality data for determining support or attainment of the use. When included in Categories 4 or 5, the combination of the water body, use, and the pollutant or condition of concern is called an *impairment*. For example, the concentration of dissolved oxygen is one of the criteria used to determine the support of the aquatic life use. If the assessment of dissolved oxygen data in a specific water body indicates that concentrations are lower than the assigned criteria, this would represent a single impairment of the aquatic life use.

Summary of the 2014 Integrated Report

The 2014 Integrated Report includes a comprehensive water quality evaluation of 1,409 classified and unclassified water bodies throughout the State (freshwater streams, reservoirs, tidal streams, bays, estuaries, and the Gulf of Mexico). All readily available data of known quality was evaluated.

The attachment summarizes the results for the impaired water bodies identified in Category 5 (303(d) List) of the 2014 Integrated Report. The number of impairments increased in 2014 by 21 as compared to 2012. A total of 589 impairments are now included in Category 5.

Impairments due to elevated bacteria represented the highest percentage (43%) included in Category 5. Dissolved oxygen and organics in fish tissue had the next highest percentages (16% and 19% respectively).

For More Information

The Texas Integrated Report for Clean Water Act Sections 305(b) and 303(d) is compiled and published on the TCEQ Web site page at:

http://www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/assessment/305_303.html

The water quality management program and role of the Integrated Report in agency planning is described in the publication “Preserving and Improving Water Quality”, available on the TCEQ Web site at:

http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm_exec/forms_pubs/pubs/gi/gi-351.html

Attachment

Summary 2014 Texas Integrated Report for Clean Water Act, §305(b) and §303(d)

		Water Bodies Evaluated	2012	2014	
		Water Bodies Assessed	1330	1409	
			1041	1065	
			(segments)	(segments)	
Impairment Parameters by Type	Media	Use	2012 Total Number of Segment Impairments	2014 Total Number of Segment Impairments	Change
Bacteria	In water	Recreation	257	243	-14
		General Use	0	2	2
	In shellfish	Oyster Waters	15	8	-7
	Beaches	Beach Use	1	2	1
Dissolved Oxygen	In water	Aquatic Life	90	96	6
Toxicity	In ambient water	Aquatic Life	2	2	0
	In ambient sediment		6	6	0
Organics	In water	Fish Consumption, Aquatic Life	0	0	0
	In fish/shellfish		99	114	15
Metals (except Mercury)	In water	Fish Consumption, Oyster Waters, Aquatic Life	4	6	2
	In fish/shellfish		0	0	0
Mercury	In water	Fish Consumption, Oyster Waters, Aquatic Life	1	1	0
	In fish/shellfish		23	24	1
Dissolved Solids	Chloride	General	11	17	6
	Sulfate		9	12	3
	Total dissolved solids		14	18	4
Temperature	In water	General	0	1	1
pH	In water	General	17	17	0
Nutrients - Nitrogen	In water	General, Public Water Supply	0	0	0
Biological	Habitat, macrobenthos community, or fish community	Aquatic Life	19	20	1
		Totals	568	589	21
		Total AUs	940	986	46