



Improving Water Quality in the San Jacinto River Basin A TMDL Project to Restore Recreational Uses

East Fork San Jacinto River, West Fork San Jacinto River, Crystal Creek, and Lake Houston are water bodies located in the San Jacinto River Basin. High concentrations of bacteria, which are found in both human and animal waste, have been observed in these water bodies. The presence of these bacteria may indicate a health risk to people who swim or wade in them—activities referred to as contact recreation.

In response to this condition, the TCEQ initiated a *total maximum daily load* (TMDL) project to determine the measures necessary to improve water quality in these water bodies.

A TMDL is like a budget for pollution—it determines the amount (or load) of a pollutant that a body of water can receive and still be suitable for all its uses. The allowable load is then allocated among categories of sources within the watershed. Stakeholders work with the state to develop a plan to implement TMDLs (I-Plan) with measures that reduce pollution.

Learn more about water quality standards and management by reading *Preserving and Improving Water Quality*, available on our website at www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/tmdl/.

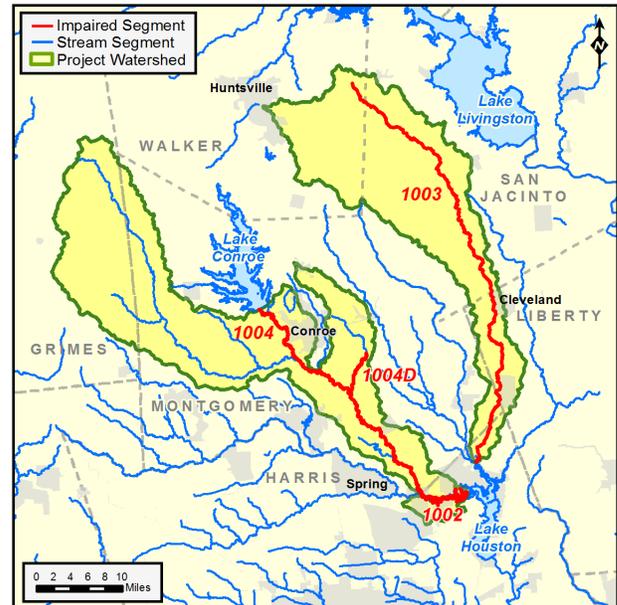
Project Watershed

The project watershed (which is within the Lake Houston watershed of the San Jacinto River Basin) is located primarily within Montgomery and San Jacinto counties, but also includes portions of Grimes, Harris, Liberty, and Walker Counties. The total drainage area for the Lake Houston watershed is about 2,850 square miles.

The segments and assessment units (AUs) included in the TMDL project are:

- 1002 - Lake Houston, AU 1002_06
- 1003 - East Fork San Jacinto River, AUs 1003_01, 1003_02, 1003_03
- 1004 - West Fork San Jacinto River, AUs 1004_01, 1004_02
- 1004D - Crystal Creek, AU 1004D_01

Land use varies throughout the watershed. The western portion has a greater percentage of pasture and hay lands whereas forest and wetlands domi-



nate the northern and eastern portions of the watershed. The south-central portions of the watershed are more heavily developed and urbanized.

Public Participation

In all its projects, the TCEQ gathers opinion and information from people who represent government, permitted facilities, agriculture, business, environmental, and community and private interests in the watershed. The TCEQ solicits advice and comment from these stakeholders at meetings and through print and electronic media notices.

The Houston–Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) is coordinating public participation in this project. A Coordination Committee was developed to make decisions regarding implementation of the TMDLs. The Committee chose to petition the Bacteria Implementation Group (BIG) to join the BIG I-Plan, which was approved by the TCEQ in January 2013. It addresses bacteria impairments in many water bodies in the greater Houston area, and covers an area directly adjacent to this project’s watershed. The BIG voted to accept this petition in September 2015.

For More Information

Contact one of the people listed, or visit the project website at:

< www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/tmdl/82-sanjacintobacteria >

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TMDL Development

Start Date: September 2012

Projected End Date: August 2016

TMDL and I-Plan Development: Percent Complete

	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
TMDL Development	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
TMDL Adoption	■	■	■	■						

Highlights

- The Houston–Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) is coordinating public participation in development of this TMDL and its I-Plan.
- In October 2014, the Coordination Committee voted to petition the BIG to join its I-Plan.
- In September 2015, the BIG voted to accept this petition and include this project’s watershed in their implementation efforts.

Visit our website at: <www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/tmdl/>