July 27, 2012

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Arlington Ecological Services Field Office

2005 NE Green Oaks Boulevard, Suite 140

Arlington, Texas 76006

Attn: Mr. Tom Cloud, Field Supervisor

Re: Request for Information on the Sharpnose and Smalleye Shiners

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) is providing information relative to the sharpnose and smalleye shiners that occur in the upper Brazos River watershed of Texas in response to the request for data and information on the website of the Arlington Ecological Services Field Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). It is our understanding that USFWS is considering proposing to list these shiners as threatened or endangered.

As you review all the available literature and information relative to these species, the TCEQ urges you to consider existing states efforts to address these species and that you continue to work with the State Comptroller and other interested parties in Texas.

For purposes of water quality management, the TCEQ divides major waterways in the state into designated segments. In the upper Brazos River watershed, the following four designated segments overlap with the reported existing range of the sharpnose and smalleye shiners:

* Segment 1208 – Brazos River above Possum Kingdom Lake (up to the confluence with Double Mountain Fork and Salt Fork of the Brazos River);
* Segment 1238 – Salt Fork Brazos River;
* Segment 1239 – White River from the Salt Fork up to White River Lake Dam;
* Segment 1241 – Double Mountain Fork Brazos River.

All four segments are designated for high quality aquatic life in the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards (Title 30, Chapter 307 of the Texas Administrative Code).

Every two years, TCEQ evaluates and reports on the long-term water quality for each major water body in the state. For each monitoring station, approximately seven years of monitoring data is consolidated and analyzed to determine if water quality standards are being attained. The latest evaluation is in the 2010 Integrated Report. Numerical data summaries for this evaluation for each Brazos River segment are available in the TCEQ 2010 Integrated Report, at [http://www.tceq.texas.gov/assets/public/compliance/monops/water/10twqi/2010 basin12.pdf](http://www.tceq.texas.gov/assets/public/compliance/monops/water/10twqi/2010%20basin12.pdf).

The upper Brazos River appears to be maintaining high water quality; and the moderate numbers of permitted wastewater discharges in the watersheds of concern are effectively regulated and protective of aquatic life.

The TCEQ appreciated the opportunity to provide input on the consideration of possible listing of the sharpnose and smalleye shiners. If you have any questions on these matters, please contact Todd Chenoweth, at (512) 239-4483, or by e-mail at todd.chenoweth@tceq.texas.gov.

Sincerely,

Zak Covar, Executive Director

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality