



# Memo

**To:** BBASC  
**From:** Matt Phillips  
**Date:** 7/18/2012  
**Re:** Development of Strategies

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In order to begin the process of developing strategies for meeting environmental flow needs in the basin, I took a look at the Colorado-Lavaca strategies section. From that section, I pulled the recommended strategies and summarized them below. This was done in an effort to not “re-invent the wheel” in terms of strategies development. There are several recommended strategies in the Colorado-Lavaca report that could be used in the Brazos basin for our report.

The recommended strategies consist of basin-wide strategies as well as strategies that are specific to areas of the basin (i.e. upper, middle, lower). My initial thought is that many of the general, basin-wide strategies recommended in the Colorado-Lavaca report will likely work for the Brazos, and our efforts could be spent recommending and fine-tuning strategies for specific areas of the basin.

One area to note is that the Colorado-Lavaca group recognized that much more work needed to be done on strategies as part of the work plan development, which is probably correct and should also likely be acknowledged in our report. They also recognized that with very little un-appropriated water in the basins, many of the flow regimes would have to be met through voluntary mechanisms and funded privately or through grants.

The Colorado-Lavaca committee recommended the following basin-wide strategies:

- Net benefit to e-flows of IBT’s-- Require net benefit to e-flows in basin of origin for IBT’s/allow net benefit to be achieved through purchase and conversion of water rights to e-flows protection.
- Dedicating cancelled water rights to e-flows.
- Using tax incentives to encourage donation of water rights.
- Work with local governments to have developers coordinate with local entities and perform pre-development studies to ensure adequate water is available for developments.
- Consider incentives for new appropriations to dedicate portions of return flows to e-flows.
- Encourage donations to the Texas Water Trust or private water trusts
- Obtain grants or donations or state or federal funding to purchase or lease water rights for e-flows
- Promoting landowner water stewardship practices—similar to legislation considered by 82nd legislature—adding land-based, water stewardship activities to list of things for which a landowner can get an agricultural valuation, including donating water rights to the TX water trust.
- Conservation—
  - not allowing cancellation of water right for surface water saved through installation of water efficient technology;

- Promoting EQIP contract awards for water conservation practices (federal NRCS money);
- Obtain grants, donations or state or federal funding for riparian restoration;
- Develop incentive programs such as funding for entities that promote conservation and dedicate conserved water to e-flows;
- PR campaign to promote municipal conservation through rate structures that incentivize conservation
- Explore ways to improve water availability information for prospective land purchasers (not sure what this one is actually)
- Promote direct reuse (using treated effluent for supply) where there is a benefit to e-flows
- Explore incentives for graywater use
- Explore conjunctive use to benefit e-flows
- Participate in GMA process to ensure DFC's are adopted that benefit e-flows
- Encourage studies to determine groundwater pumping levels that impair stream or spring flow
- Encourage diversion point relocation to improve delivery efficiencies

The Colorado-Lavaca committee then had site specific recommendations, such as brush control for salt cedar and salt clean-up on land in the Upper Colorado basin, state funding or tax incentives for nuisance vegetation including invasives in the Lower Colorado basin and state funding for sediment control in the Lavaca-Navidad.

In terms of next steps for our July 30-31 meeting, I think it makes sense to concentrate on developing consensus on which strategies work in the Brazos basin. We can add more strategies if the stakeholder committee feels it is necessary. Again, my initial thought is that most of the basin-wide strategies could be used for the Brazos basin, especially the incentive based practices.

As for site specific recommendations, I think we can focus our discussion on developing 1-3 recommended strategies for the upper, middle, and lower basins, respectively.

Once consensus is developed on both basin-wide strategies and site-specific strategies, the strategies subcommittee would write a strategies section for the report that lists the strategies and explains them in more detail.