

Managing Inflows to the Nueces Estuary – A Timeline

Early 1930's	City of Corpus Christi builds first reservoir on the Nueces River near Mathis
1935	City of Corpus Christi builds La Fruta Dam on the Nueces River to meet growing demand for water
April 1958	Completion of Wesley Seale Dam on the Nueces River creating what we now know as Lake Corpus Christi (storage capacity = 242,241 ac-ft)
July 1976	Priority date for water rights held by City of Corpus Christi and Nueces River Authority for waters to be stored (political/legal battles ensue)
June 1982	Completion of Choke Canyon Reservoir on the Frio River near the town of Three Rivers (storage capacity = 695,271 ac-ft)
May 1984	Certificate of Adjudication #21-3214 issued to City of Corpus Christi and Nueces River Authority for Choke Canyon Dam and Reservoir
June 1987	Choke Canyon Reservoir filled to capacity triggering Special Condition 5B
Dec. 1989	Coalition About Restoration of Estuaries (CARE) files letter of complaint with Texas Water Commission that inflows to the estuary are not being made (5B)
May 1990	TWC convenes a Technical Advisory Committee to advise the commission on establishing final "operational procedures" to satisfy Special Condition 5B
1992	TWC issues an Agreed Order establishing a monthly release schedule and creates the Nueces Estuary Advisory Council (NEAC) to further advise the Commission. The '92 Agreed Order required releases from storage w/o regard to current inflows
1994	Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program established
April 1995	A new Agreed Order is approved that changes the operating procedure from a monthly required "release from storage" to a monthly "pass-through of current inflows" strategy
Oct 1995	US Bureau of Reclamation cuts Nueces Overflow Channel between the Nueces River and the Rincon Bayou in the Nueces River Delta (Channel closed in 1999)
Sept 1998	Mary Rhodes Pipeline goes on-line providing 42,000 ac-ft/yr from Lake Texana
1999	City of Corpus Christi purchases senior water rights from the Garwood Irrigation Company for 35,000 ac-ft/year of water from the Colorado River (but no pipeline)
April 2001	A new Agreed Order is issued that incorporates drought provisions and the reopening of the Nueces River Overflow Channel and the construction of a diversion pipeline capable of delivering 3,000 ac-ft/month directly into the delta
2002	Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program begins buying acreage in the Nueces Delta for conservation purposes (CBBEP currently owns > 5,400 acres in the delta)
Oct 2008	It stops raining in the Nueces/Frio watershed
Fall 2008	City of Corpus Christi completes diversion pipeline to Rincon Bayou
July 2009	Still No Rain!