



Improving Water Quality in the Navasota River A Project to Protect Recreational Uses

In the Navasota River, Segment 1209, concentrations of bacteria are sometimes too high. High concentrations of bacteria such as *E. coli*, which are found in both human and animal waste, may indicate a health risk to people who swim or wade in the streams—activities called “contact recreation” in the state’s standards for water quality.

In response to these conditions, TCEQ is developing a total maximum daily load (TMDL) project to determine the pollutant reductions necessary to restore water quality in the river. The goal of a TMDL is to determine the amount (or load) of a pollutant that a body of water can receive and still support its designated uses. The allowable load is then allocated among categories of sources within the watershed, and stakeholders work with the state to develop an implementation plan (I-Plan) with measures that reduce pollutant loads.

Learn more about water quality standards, monitoring, and TMDLs by reading [Preserving and Improving Water Quality](#)¹, available on our website and in print.

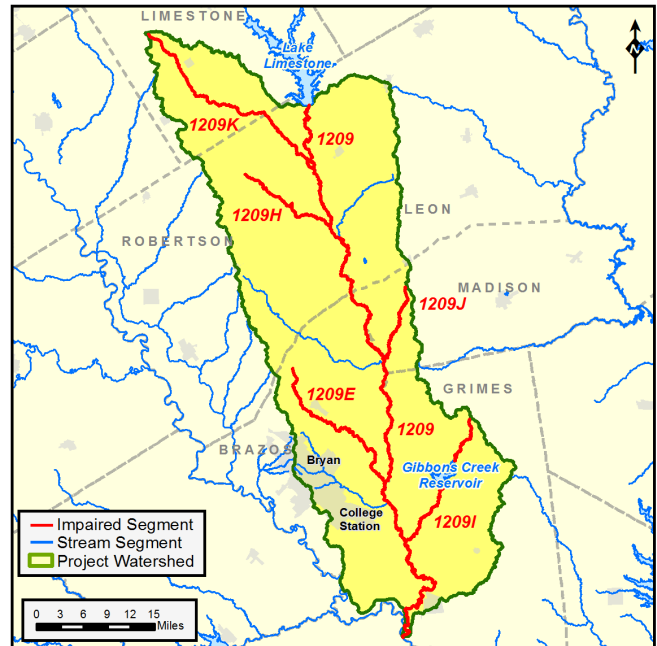
Watershed Description

Segment 1209 of the Navasota River begins below Lake Limestone and flows until it connects with the Brazos River southwest of the town of Navasota. The watershed drains portions of Brazos, Grimes, Leon, Limestone, Madison, and Robertson counties in east-central Texas.

It is a predominately rural watershed that encompasses portions of the Northern Blackland Prairie, Southern Post Oak Savanna, San Antonio Prairie, and Flood Plains and Low Terraces. Much of the land cover in the watershed includes mixed forests and managed pastures or rangelands. Limited amounts of cropland and urban area exists in the watershed. The cities of Bryan and College Station are the largest urban areas.

Project Development

The Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI) worked under contract with the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) and TCEQ to develop a better understanding of the sources of bacteria found in the stream. This included gathering existing information regarding the watershed and pairing it with intensive water quality monitoring to support a subsequent water quality assessment. TWRI then conveyed



their assessment to stakeholders to inform them about water quality issues in the watershed. Stakeholder and TWRI developed an I-Plan to improve water quality in their watershed. Stakeholders and TWRI also completed a Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) to address additional water quality concerns in the river.

Public Participation

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

TWRI coordinated public participation in development of the TMDL, I-Plan, and WPP. TWRI formed a stakeholder group and a Coordination Committee to advise TCEQ on development of the TMDL and to develop the I-Plan and WPP. TWRI continues to work with stakeholders to coordinate implementation activities of the I-Plan and WPP.

¹ <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/publications/gi/gi-351>

For More Information

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

www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/tmdl/nav/navasotariver/111-navasota-river-bacteria.

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TMDL Status

Adopted by TCEQ: August 28, 2019

EPA Region 6 Approval: October 25, 2019

I-Plan Status

Approved by TCEQ: August 28, 2019

Project Highlights

- TWRI completed a technical support document based on their investigations, as well as a draft TMDL.
- Stakeholders completed a WPP and a draft I-Plan. EPA accepted the WPP in September 2017.
- TCEQ accepted public comments on the draft TMDL and I-Plan from February 18 through March 19, 2019.
- The commission adopted the TMDLs and approved the I-Plan on August 28, 2019. EPA approved the TMDLs on October 25, 2019.

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