

Meeting Notes

Neches Tidal and Hillebrandt Bayou TMDL and I-Plan Meeting

Date: August 14, 2020

Time: 10:00 am – 11:05 am

Location: Online via Zoom

Meeting Summary

Welcome and Introductions

Michael Schramm (TWRI) began the meeting with brief housekeeping/instructions for remote sign in and how questions will be handled during the online session. Roundtable style introductions were skipped due to the nature of the meeting. Sign-ins were requested via a Google form with the web URL posted in the chat box for attendees to click and fill out.

Hillebrandt Bayou Technical Support Document (TSD)

An overview about Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and the information covered in the Hillebrandt Bayou TSD.

Michael Schramm began the presentation by providing a brief background about Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and explained what the TSDs cover and how to utilize them. The rest of the section described the characterization of the watershed (population, land cover, permitted sources, unregulated sources), the flow duration curve (FDC) and load duration curve (LDC) development, and the TMDL allocations. The FDC/LDC process used a slightly modified approach to estimate flows in Hillebrandt Bayou due to differences between the gaged and ungaged watersheds. The TMDL and allocations were based on the 5% streamflow exceedance calculated for Hillebrandt Bayou.

Dania Grundmann (TCEQ) provided some follow up to explain why some of the unregulated potential sources are described but are not assigned specific load allocations in the TMDL.

Terry Stelly about how the operation of the saltwater barriers in Taylor Bayou would impact flows and indicator bacteria. Michael responded that multiple stream gages were utilized to obtain estimated streamflows like Hillebrandt Bayou, since one of the gaged streams had zero flows, unlike Hillebrandt Bayou. Regarding indicator bacteria, the sampling station for Hillebrandt Bayou (AU 0704_02) is well upstream from the downstream gates, and the downstream assessment unit (AU) is meeting the contact recreation standard. Terry Steely asked a follow-up question if we had any ideas about how often the gates are open or closed and how lateral flow flooding might relate to this project. Michael responded that we don't account for Taylor's Bayou in the project and we don't have a way to calculate impacts with the method used. However, discussing management options is appropriate for the TMDL Implementation Plan (I-Plan) and should be discussed if it is a feasible management option that could have positive impact on water quality.

Neches River Tidal TSD

An overview about the information covered in the Neches River Tidal Technical Support Document.

Michael Schramm described the characterization of the watershed (population, land cover, permitted sources, unregulated sources), the flow duration curve (FDC) and load duration curve (LDC) development, and the TMDL allocations. A modified LDC process was used to calculate the amount of freshwater and tidal saltwater in the Neches River. The TMDL and allocations were based on the 5% streamflow exceedance.

Dale Parish asked how much of the Big Thicket was in the watershed. Michael said he did not know of the top of his head. Lucas Gregory (TWRI) pointed out that the National Park Service map should a small amount of the Big Thicket is in the upper part of the segment near the Pine Bayou confluence.

The meeting was closed out with information about the next steps in the planning process and the upcoming meeting. Dania Grundmann also provided more information about what will be covered in the next meeting, including more detailed discussion of how regulated load allocations are developed in the TMDL.

Adjournment

Attendees

Attendee	Organization
Mac Martin	Texas Forest Service
Billy Ted Smith	Jasper County Emergency Management/Floodplain Adm
Jess Liao	City of Beaumont
Tim Cawthon	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
Jodie Goff	Texas Farm Bureau
Dulce Garcia	City of Beaumont
Ellen Buchanan	Sierra Club-Golden Triangle
Nicole Reed	TCEQ
Mary Bernard	Big Thicket Biosphere Reserve
Jeannie Bowlen	Lower Neches Valley Authority
Brian Koch	TSSWCB
Carla Ethridge	ANRA
Dale Parish	Lower Sabine-Neches Soil & Water Conservation District #446
Jeremiah Poling	ANRA
Dawn Cole	Lion Elastomers
Molly Villareal	City of Beaumont
Terry Stelly	Southeast Texas Clean Air & Water
Anna Gitter	TWRI
Cozmo	
	2 users via phone or did not sign in