

Water Quality Updates from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

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Texas Clean Rivers Program



Updates

Texas Surface Water Quality Standards

Water Quality Assessment

Watershed Action Planning



Texas Surface Water Quality Standards

The TCEQ approved proposed revisions to the Surface Water Quality Standards (TSWQS) in June 2010.

The TCEQ has submitted the proposed TSWQS to the U.S. EPA.

Major proposed revisions include:

- Updating toxic criteria to protect human health
- Adding numerical criteria for chlorophyll *a* for 75 reservoirs
- Adding more levels of use for contact recreation
- Adding and revising site-specific standards for individual water bodies



Changes in the Guadalupe Basin

- Canyon Lake – Chlorophyll a set at 5 ug/L at the dam
 - Calculated using the long term median; majority of the data is < 5 ug/L
- Comal River – Temperature changed from 80 to 78 deg F
- Upper San Marcos River
 - Temperature changed from 80 to 78 deg F (from Loop 82 to Sessom's Ck)
- All streams retain the primary contact recreation criteria
 - Calculated using the long term geometric mean (< 126 cfu/100mL)
- Lower San Marcos, Upper Blanco, and North Fork Guadalupe
 - Critical low flows are calculated based on 5th percentile of all flows
- Upper San Marcos and Comal Rivers
 - Critical low flows are calculated using the 0.1 percentile value
- Camp Meeting Creek
 - minimum dissolved oxygen changed from 5mg/L to 1 mg/L and 2 mg/L from July through September



Use Attainability Analyses

- **Aquatic Life Use**
 - dependent on sensitivities of aquatic communities, and local physical and chemical characteristics.
 - Six subcategories of aquatic life use are established: minimal, limited, intermediate, high, and exceptional aquatic life and oyster waters.
- **Contact Recreation Use**
 - See hand-out



Implementation Procedures - Wastewater Permitting

- Proposed revisions include updates to:
 - minimum analytical levels for pollutant analysis of wastewater effluent
 - Whole effluent toxicity testing procedures
 - Critical low-flows in streams to determine standards applicability
 - New procedures to evaluate the need for nutrient effluent limits for wastewater discharges
 - Dechlorination requirements for new and amended permits with discharges >500,000 gpd.



Nutrient Criteria Development

- Evaluating existing total phosphorus and total nitrogen data
- Investigating different methods for measuring coverage of attached algae
- Analyzing relationships between nutrients and aquatic life/drinking water/recreational uses
- Focus on streams and estuaries, possibly revisit reservoirs as time permits



Water Quality Assessment

- A statewide water quality assessment is conducted every two years by TCEQ and is called the:
 - Texas Integrated Report for Clean Water Act Sections 305(b) and 303(d)
- Data for the assessment is collected by:
 - Clean Rivers Program partners
 - TCEQ Region Office Staff
 - Other data providers that meet TCEQ quality assurance protocols
- Period of record for the next assessment is:
 - December 1, 2003 through November 30, 2010



2010 Water Quality Assessment

- Topics for the Assessment Guidance Advisory Workgroup may include:
 - Incorporating the new water quality standards, if approved
 - Options for assessing bacteria concentrations
 - Handling data that is below detection limits

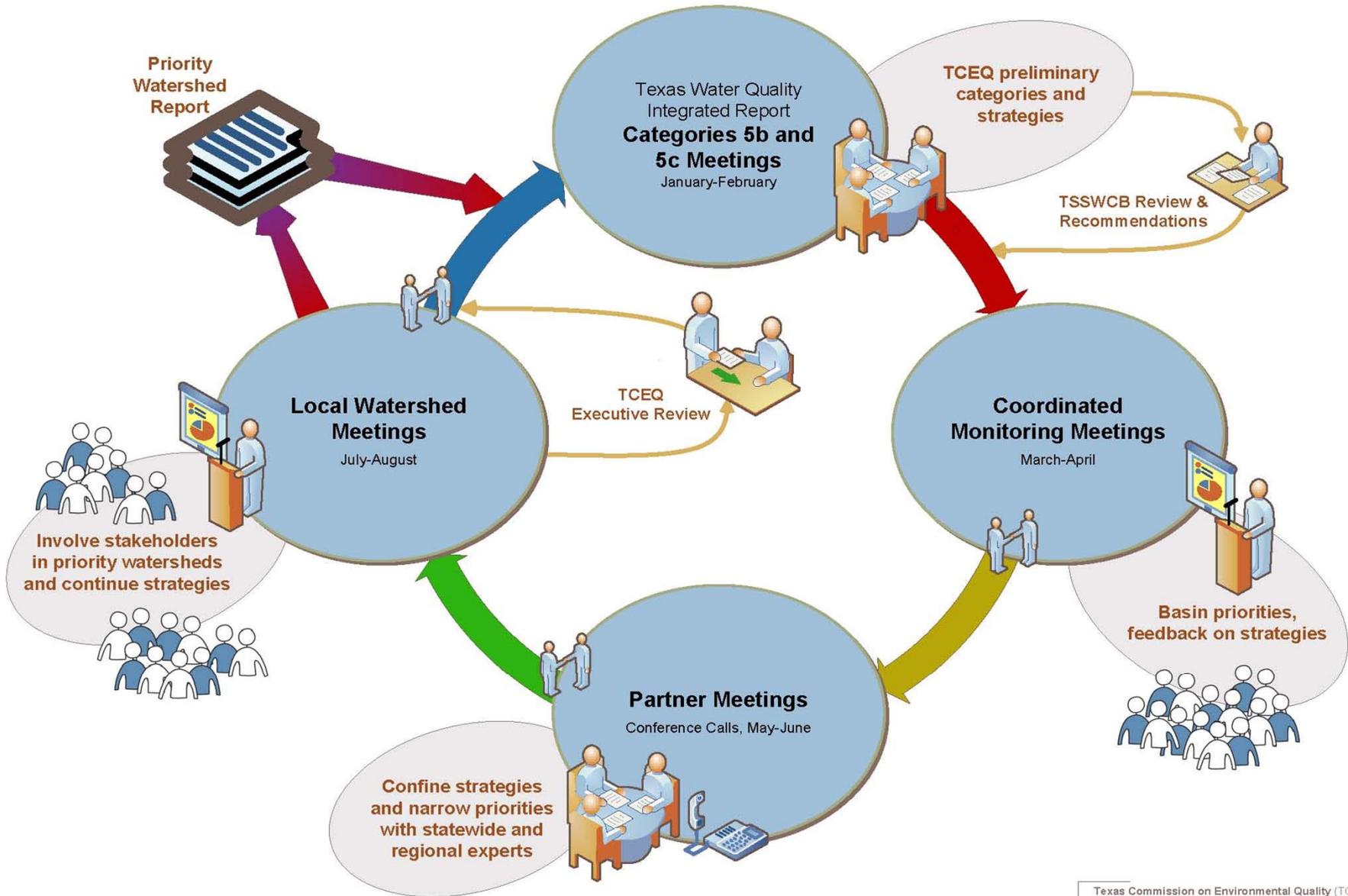


Watershed Action Planning

- A coordinated approach to select and coordinate strategies to address water quality impairments
 - Tool to consolidate information from all involved to track actions taken
- Meet with local stakeholders after initial review at state level to get input on strategies for priority water bodies



Annual Watershed Action Planning Process



Questions/Comments?

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For more information on the Assessment and/or Standards go to www.texascleanrivers.org and click on the links to the Water Quality Standards and the Surface Water Quality Monitoring Program near bottom of page.

