

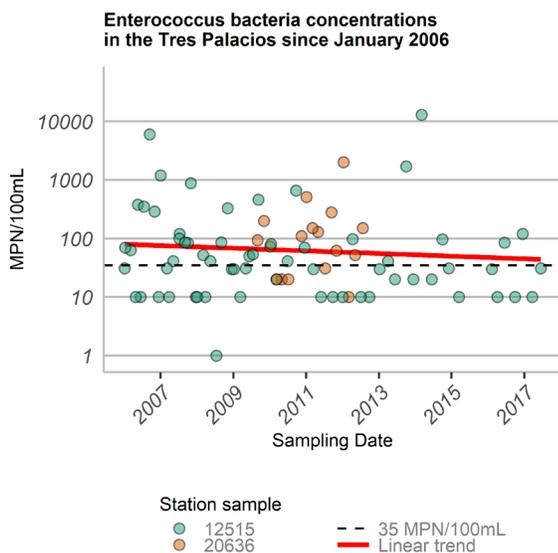
# TRES PALACIOS

## Watershed Protection Plan

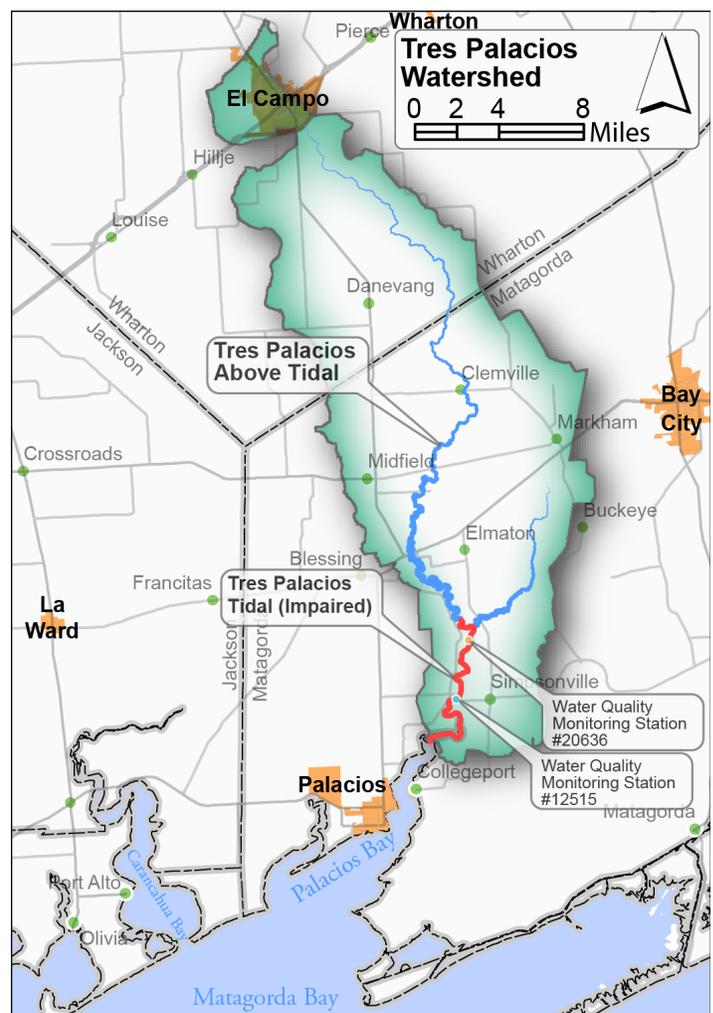
The Tres Palacios watershed includes 268 square miles of largely agricultural land that provides important freshwater inflows to Tres Palacios Bay. The land and water resources of this watershed contribute to vital agricultural, fishery and recreational industries.

The tidal portion of the Tres Palacios, however, suffers from elevated levels of bacteria and low dissolved oxygen. These water quality parameters are established by Texas to ensure water bodies are safe for recreation and aquatic life. Swimmers and other recreational users in water bodies with high levels of fecal bacteria, such as Tres Palacios, have an increased risk of contracting a gastrointestinal illness. Low dissolved oxygen can negatively impact the types and abundance of aquatic species in the water body.

In 2015, the Texas Water Resources Institute, part of the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Service, began working with local stakeholders to develop a plan of action to improve water quality. The resulting watershed protection plan outlines eight voluntary management practices local stakeholders can implement to improve water quality over the next five years. Because the recommendations in the plan are strictly voluntary, the Tres Palacios is relying on everyone to do what they can to improve water quality.



*Enterococcus* bacteria sampling since 2006 indicates a slightly declining trend in elevated bacteria concentrations. The dotted line shows the 35 MPN/100 mL water quality standard for recreation.



Tres Palacios Watershed

## Recommended Voluntary Actions

**Septic Systems** – Repair or replace 25 failing septic systems

**Livestock** – Enroll 45 operations into conservation plans

**Feral hogs** – Decrease the feral hog population by 20%

**Illegal dumping** – Reduce trash and carcass disposal in streams

**Stormwater runoff** – Treat 50 acres with stormwater BMPs

**Pet waste** – Increase proper pet waste disposal and install pet waste stations

**Wastewater treatment** – Develop wastewater reuse capabilities

**Sanitary Sewer Overflows** – Continue testing and replacing aging wastewater infrastructure



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For more information or to become involved in improving the Tres Palacios watershed, please contact Michael Schramm: [michael.schramm@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:michael.schramm@ag.tamu.edu) or visit: <http://matagordabasin.tamu.edu/tres-palacios/>