

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 url posted in the chat box for attendees to click and fill out.

Hillebrandt Bayou TSD

An overview about TMDLs and the information covered in the Hillebrandt Bayou Technical Support Document.

Michael Schramm began the presentation by providing a brief background about 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 and load duration curve 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 account for the fact that zero flows are unexpected in Hillebrandt Bayou. In regards to indicator bacteria, the sampling station is well upstream from the downstream gates, and water quality actually improves downstream of the assessment unit. Terry Steely asked a followup 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 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 and load duration curve 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 |