



Texas Stream Team

Texas Watch is now **Texas Stream Team, *Caring for Our Waters***

For several months, the state Texas Watch office has been exploring a new brand and they recently finalized the decision. Effective immediately, the new name is Texas Stream Team, with a tagline, “Caring for Our Waters”. The Houston-Galveston Area Council’s Clean Rivers Program will now be referred to as a Texas Stream Team Partner.

This is a big change for many around the state in water quality monitoring programs. Texas Watch has been around since 1991. Due to a series of fish kills along the Pecos River from 1985 to 1988, an organization known as Pecos River Watch was established. By 1991 the Texas Water Commission and Texas Parks & Wildlife decide the program should be statewide. The Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission (now Texas Commission on Environmental Quality) established TEXAS WATCH to involve citizen in certified water quality monitoring and coordinated through Southwest Texas State University (now Texas State University).

Many of you may wonder, with such a tried and true name as Texas Watch, what would motivate the program to change it? There are two major reasons. First, there are other organizations using the name Texas Watch that have different missions and constituencies than water quality monitoring. Second, in some circles the “Watch” component of the Texas Watch name has created the impression that the program targets suspected polluters. As we all know, however, the Texas Watch program’s scientific and standardized protocols were established to prevent biased sampling and “vigilante science”.

When Texas Watch moved to the university’s River Systems Institute in 2006, they began working to identify a brand that was both unique in Texas and expressed more accurately the program’s goals and mission. Texas Stream Team fits these criteria. The tag line “Caring for Our Waters” expresses our understanding that streams are only one component of a life-sustaining system that includes aquifers, springs, rivers, estuaries and oceans. It also reflects the programmatic mission to care for these water resources. As an added benefit, the name Texas Stream Team will facilitate opportunities for greater collaboration as more organizations turn their focus increasingly to impaired and threatened water resources. Now, more than ever, it is critical that we work together for the sake of our future water resources.

If you are interested in the Texas Stream Team program or to become a certified Water Quality Monitor in the H-GAC Region, please contact Gayla Stock, Texas Stream Team Coordinator, at gayla.stock@h-gac.com.