

TEXAS STREAM TEAM NEWSLETTER

HOUSTON-GALVESTON AREA COUNCIL CHAPTER

WORKING TO PROTECT OUR WATERWAYS



THE MEADOWS CENTER
FOR WATER AND THE ENVIRONMENT
TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

TEXAS STREAM TEAM



Volume 2025, Issue 1: May 2025

Monitor's Corner

Skills Check: Total Depth



Total Depth is a key measurement that helps us understand the physical characteristics and resilience of a waterbody, and must be collected at all monitoring sites. Wherever possible the total depth should be collected in the centroid of the flow just like the bucket grab. If collecting your sample from a bridge, this should be as simple as dropping a secchi disk down into the stream. Likewise, if a stream is narrow or shallow, you can likely use either a meter stick or your secchi tube.

However, in our area we have many wide and/or deep streams, and some monitoring sites do not have a bridge or pier to help with access. At these sites, it may be possible to get a mid-stream sample with your bucket toss, but to not be able to get total depth at that point.

If you are unable to collect a total depth measurement from mid-stream at a site, please consider the following options:

1. Take a depth measurement where possible and note in the comments that mid-stream of flow is inaccessible.
2. See if a flow or flood gage is located at or near your site that could provide a depth value.
3. Relocate the site within the 400 m buffer, if a nearby location is accessible and still representative of the waterbody. Please contact stream.team@h-gac.com to discuss if you think this is necessary.
4. Contact stream.team@h-gac.com if you do not think it is possible to collect a total depth measurement, and we can discuss finding another location.

Total depth should be recorded in meters. As a tip, if you are using a secchi disk record the secchi value before total depth. The secchi disk should disappear before it hits the bottom of the stream, and you can use the water line on the rope to confirm your measurement. However, if you collect total depth first the water line will be higher than your secchi reading.

The newest updated version of the [Standard Core Water Quality Manual](#) is available on the Texas Stream Team website.

You can also review Texas Stream Team monitoring videos on YouTube.

[YouTube Review](#)

Watching the YouTube videos or re-reading the manual are great ways to refresh your memory and double-check your monthly monitoring procedures between QA sessions. Always review the newest updated manual.

Safety Briefing: Post-Storm Caution

As we approach Hurricane season, many of us know the [steps needed to prepare](#) for potential storms. However, if a storm does impact our area, caution is also needed after it passes, especially along our waterways. Whether it is a hurricane, a derecho, or just severe storms, these weather events can impact our streams in ways that require extra caution when approaching or conducting monitoring.

- Flood water may be out of its banks, and you should not attempt to walk through it.
- Debris may pile up at or on the way to your site, making accessibility unsafe.
- Power lines may be down in the area - if you notice this you should leave the area and contact CenterPoint energy.
- Structures like bridges, piers, docks, etc. may have been damaged. For piers and docks in public parks, you should confirm with the park that they are safe before utilizing them.
- Wildlife may have been displaced, so be alert for signs of critters like alligators and snakes even if you don't normally see them.

If you have any doubt about the safe condition of your monitoring site after a storm, or at any other time, please do not proceed with monitoring. If possible, you can fill out an observations only form, otherwise just email stream.team@h-gac.com to let us know the status of the site.



As always, it is recommended to monitor with a buddy for safety. Whether they are also a Texas Stream Team Community Scientist or not, having another person with you improves your safety. If you do choose to monitor by yourself, please let someone know where and when you are going and when you expect to be back.

Upcoming Trainings

Texas Stream Team Standard Core Water Quality Trainings

Texas Stream Team Standard Core Water Quality Community Science Trainings



Standard Core Water Quality Trainings:

H-GAC is planning to hold a Standard Core training in the Greens Bayou watershed in June or July. [Visit the H-GAC website](#) for updates.

The Galveston Bay Foundation is holding a Standard Core Phase I and II training.

Saturday, June 28, 9am-4pm
Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Center
1724 Market Street
Baytown, TX 77520

This training is oriented toward tidally-influenced sites. Participants will need to separately complete Phase III. For more information or to register, [visit the Galveston Bay Foundation website](#).

Quality Control Sessions for Current Community Scientists:

As a reminder, active Texas Stream Team monitors need to complete a Quality Control Session every two years. H-GAC is working to get a more consistent schedule of opportunities and active monitors will be notified when QC-specific sessions are scheduled. Attending part of a Standard Core training may be an alternative, email stream.team@h-gac.com to confirm.

Join H-GAC's Training Notification List

View the Statewide Training Calendar of Events

Monitor Resources

Community Scientist Resources

The Texas Stream Team webpage includes a section for monitor resources, including downloadable manuals, cheat sheets, links to

Electronic Monitoring Form Available

The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment continues to update the data forms and

video tutorials, and instructions for submitting and viewing data. It is a great first place to check if you have any questions about your Texas Stream Team monitoring.

[Visit the Website](#)

resources available for Texas Stream Team, and now those resources include an electronic monitoring form! Just like with the PDF form, make sure to fill out all necessary fields, and mark your group as H-GAC.

[View the Form](#)

TWPD Kills & Spills

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Kills and Spill Team (KAST) investigates fish and wildlife kills resulting from pollution and natural events. To report a Kill or Spill call **(512) 389-4848**.

[Learn More](#)

Galveston Bay Action Network

The Galveston Bay Action Network allows you to be the eyes around Galveston Bay. You can report various types of pollution throughout the Galveston Bay watershed, and GBAN will help make sure it gets reported to the appropriate jurisdiction.

[Learn More](#)

Water Quality Projects & Plans

Clean Rivers Program

2025 Basin Highlights Report to be released soon

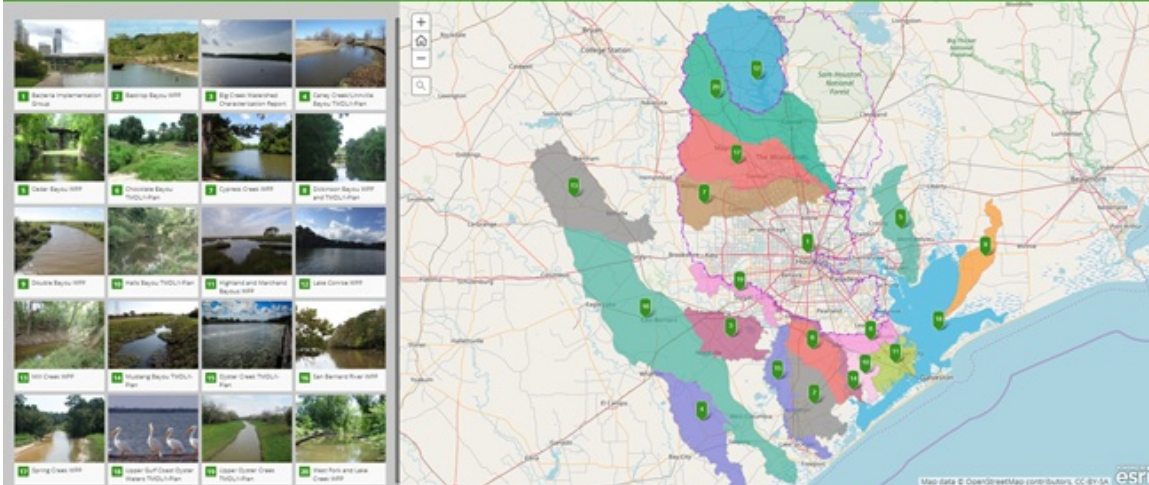
The [Basin Highlights Report](#) for 2025 is in its final stages of review and should be available soon in an online interactive format. The Basin Highlights Reports include the status and trends of water quality in the region. Every five years a larger Basin Summary Report is produced that provides a more detailed analysis of the region's water quality.

Contact Todd Running at 713-993-4549 for more information about the [Clean Rivers Program](#).



Watershed Based Plans

H-GAC and other local partners help facilitate the development of watershed-based plans to improve water quality in the region, including both Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Plans (I-Plans) and Watershed Protection Plans (WPPs). H-GAC has an interactive story map showing the locations of ongoing and completed projects in the region. If you are interested in learning more about a specific project or getting on the mailing list for stakeholder meetings, please email the contact for that project.


[View the Story Map](#)

Ongoing Project Updates

[Bacteria Implementation Group \(BIG\) watersheds](#)

Status: Watersheds throughout Harris and Montgomery Counties under implementation.

Contact: [Steven Johnston](#)

Upcoming Meeting: June 3, 2025

[Big Creek watershed](#)

Status: The TMDL is going through TCEQ approvals. The draft I-Plan is going through final TCEQ approvals. Stakeholders are beginning implementation efforts.

Contact: [Steven Johnston](#)

Upcoming Meeting: July 3, 2025

[Brays Bayou & Sims Bayou watersheds](#)

Status: A WPP is in the beginning stages, with stakeholder meetings kicking off Fall 2025.

Contact: [Cornell Evans Jr.](#)

Upcoming Meeting: Fall 2025, TBD

[Caney Creek/Linville Bayou watersheds](#)

Status: The TMDL was adopted by the TCEQ. The I-Plan is approved, and stakeholders have begun implementation.

Contact: [Steven Johnston](#)

Upcoming Meeting: July 31, 2025

[Chocolate Bay watershed](#)

Status: The Chocolate Bayou TMDL has been approved. The Mustang and Halls Bayou TMDLs are going through the approval process. The Chocolate Bay I-Plan was submitted to TCEQ. The I-Plan will be presented to stakeholders for their approval.

Contact: [Steven Johnston](#)

Upcoming Meeting: August 7, 2025

[Cotton Bayou](#)

Status: A TMDL addendum is being drafted to add the above tidal segment and will be presented to stakeholders. The I-Plan was submitted to TCEQ and is going through final approvals. Stakeholders are beginning implementation.

Contact: [Cornell Evans Jr.](#)

Upcoming Meeting: June 18, 2024

[East Fork San Jacinto River watershed](#)

Status: The WPP was accepted by the EPA in November 2024.

Contact: [Rachel Windham](#)

Upcoming Meeting: To be determined

[Galveston Bay Coalition of Watersheds](#)

Status: Texas Community Watershed Partners, part of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, coordinate WPP implementation efforts in Bastrop, Dickinson, Highland, and Jarbo Bayou watersheds

Contact: [Celina Lowry](#)

[Greens Bayou watershed](#)

Status: The WPP draft in development with stakeholder input.

Contact: [Rachel Windham](#)

Upcoming Meeting: To be determined

[Oyster Creek watershed](#)

Status: The TMDL has been approved. The draft I-Plan is going through final TCEQ approvals. Stakeholders are beginning implementation efforts.

Contact: [Steven Johnston](#)

Upcoming Meeting: July 17, 2025

[Upper Oyster Creek watershed](#)

Status: Watershed in implementation phase.

Contact: [Steven Johnston](#)

Upcoming Meeting: August 21, 2025

[West Lake Houston Basin Implementation](#)

Status: H-GAC is working with local stakeholders to implement strategies in the EPA accepted watershed protection plans for West Fork San Jacinto River and Lake Creek, Cypress Creek, and Spring Creek.

Contact: [Rachel Windham](#)

Get More Involved With Partners

[Adopt-a-Beach](#)
[Artist Boat](#)
[Bayou Land Conservancy](#)
[Bayou Preservation Association](#)
[Buffalo Bayou Partnership](#)
[Cypress Creek Flood Control Coalition](#)
[Exploration Green Conservancy](#)
[Friends of the River San Bernard](#)
[Galveston Bay Estuary Program](#)

[Galveston Bay Foundation](#)
[Jesse H. Jones Park & Nature Center](#)
[Keep Texas Beautiful](#)
[River, Lakes, Bays 'N Bayous Trash Bash](#)
[SPLASH](#)
[Trash Free Texas](#)
[Turtle Island Restoration Network](#)
[The Woodlands Township](#)
[White Oak Bayou Association](#)

About the Newsletter

Newsletter Content Survey: Looking for different content? Complete this [3-question survey](#) to let us know what you would like to see in the newsletter.

Email stream.team@h-gac.com or call 713-993-2469 with questions, comments, or suggestions. You can also [view previous issues of our newsletter](#).

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