



Watershed Protection Plans State Perspective

Texas Watershed Planning Short Course
June 2, 2008
Bandera, TX

State and Federal Perspectives on WPPs (Rush/Wendt)

1. goals and importance of WPPs,
2. how WPPs fit into state and federal objectives and interact with other state and federal programs, and
3. current issues affecting watershed planning efforts.

Water Quality in Texas

- Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB)
 - Agricultural and Silvicultural NPS
- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
 - Point Source Permitting
 - All other forms of NPS



Texas Nonpoint Source Management Program



Texas Commission on
Environmental Quality



Texas State Soil and
Water Conservation Board

SPS-NDH

December 2001



What is a WPP?

- Coordinated framework for implementing prioritized and integrated water quality protection and restoration strategies
- Addresses complex water quality problems that cross multiple jurisdictions
- Developed and implemented through diverse, well integrated partnerships
- Specific geographic watershed focus large enough so that its implementation holistically address all of the sources and causes of impairments and threats to water resources
- Assures the long-term health of the watershed through strategies for protecting unimpaired waters and restoring impaired waters
- Tools to better leverage the resources of local governments, state and federal agencies, and non-governmental organizations
- Voluntary, proactive approach
- Needed for CWA §319(h) Grant funding



Nine Elements

- a. Identification of the causes
- b. Estimate of the load reductions
- c. Description of management measures
- d. Estimate of financial assistance needed
- e. Information/education component
- f. Schedule for implementing
- g. Description of interim, measurable milestones
- h. Set of criteria to determine achievement
- i. Monitoring component



Texas WPP Program



- Through CWA §319(h) grant funds, entities are sponsored to facilitate the WPP process in a specific watershed
- TSSWCB and TCEQ staff provide technical assistance to local stakeholder groups in developing and implementing WPPs to ensure consistency with the nine elements



Watershed Planning Short Course



- Proper training is needed to ensure WPP efforts are adequately planned, coordinated, implemented and results properly assessed and reported
- Collaborative effort to develop training course
- Focused on the nine elements
- Use Texas WPPs in progress as examples
- <http://watershedplanning.tamu.edu/>

WPPs in Texas

TSSWCB Sponsored

- Buck Creek – TWRI
- Concho River – UCRA
- Lake Granger – BRA
- Lampasas River - TAES
- Leon River – BRA
- Pecos River – TWRI and TCE
- Plum Creek – TSSWCB and TCE

3rd Party Sponsored

- Armand Bayou – TSG and TPL
- Barton Springs – BSEACD
- Caney Creek - CCCF
- Lower and Middle Brazos River – BRA
- North Central Texas (5) – TWRI and TRWD
- Nueces River – USACE
- Stillhouse Hollow Lake – LSHCSC
- Trinity River – IRNR & TWRI
- Upper Colorado River – CRMWD

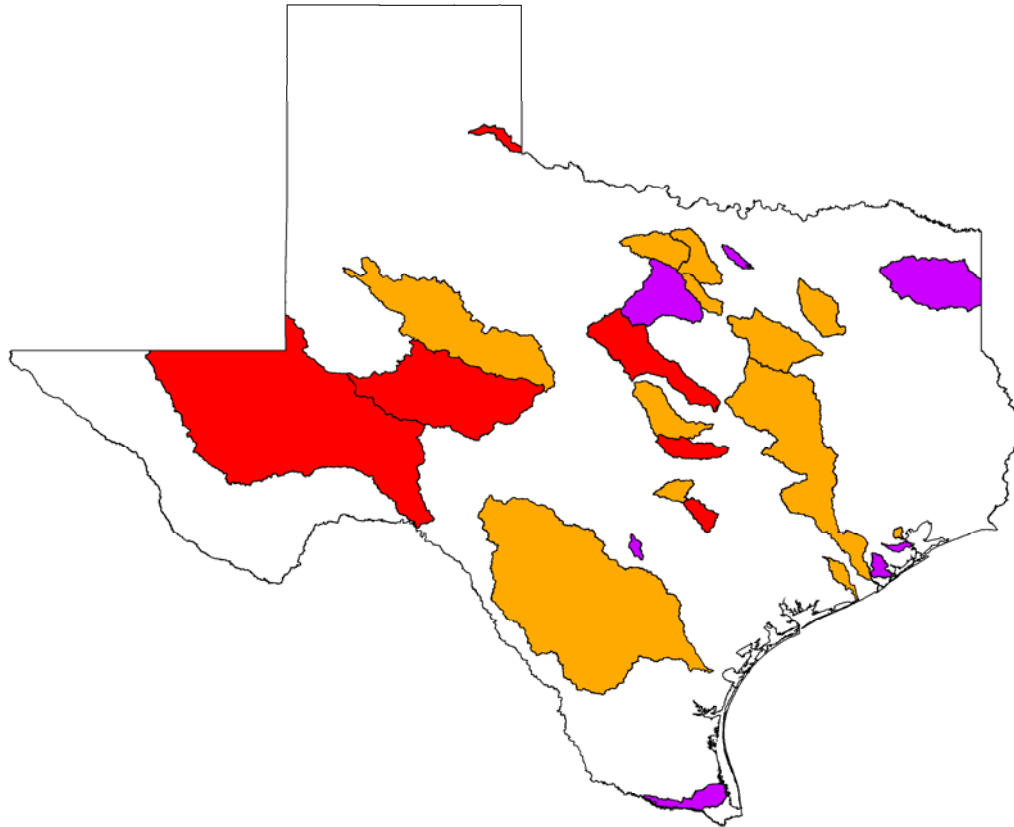
TCEQ Sponsored

- Arroyo Colorado – TWRI
- Bastrop Bayou – HGAC
- Brady Creek - UCRA
- Caddo Lake – NETMWD
- Cypress Creek - RSI
- Dickinson Bayou – TSG
- Hickory Creek – City of Denton
- Lake Granbury – BRA
- Upper San Antonio River – SARA

3rd Party Sponsored WPPs

- Not sponsored by TSSWCB or TCEQ
- CWA §319(h) monies not used for development
- May or may not satisfy all the nine elements → may or may not get CWA §319(h) monies for implementation

Texas WPPs



Stakeholder Led Process

- Stakeholder, Landowner, Citizen, NGOs, local government, state and federal agencies
- Decision-making throughout development and implementation

Watershed Steward



- Provides science-based, watershed education to help citizens identify and take action to address local water quality impairments
- Enhances stakeholder involvement in the WPP development process by organizing and educating the local stakeholder group
- Educate stakeholders about the nature and function of watersheds, potential impairments and strategies for watershed protection
- Leads to increased knowledge and understanding by individuals within the watershed including homeowners, agricultural producers, decision-makers, and community leaders
- Curriculum will be tailored to address the potential impairments of each watershed
- <http://tw.s.tamu.edu/>

Relationship to Major Water Quality Programs In Texas

- Texas Nonpoint Source Management Program
- Texas Coastal NPS Pollution Control Program
- Surface Water Quality Monitoring and Texas Clean Rivers Program
- Texas Water Quality Inventory & 303(d) List
- TMDLs
- MOA between TCEQ and TSSWCB regarding TMDLs, I-Plans, & WPPs
- CWA §319(h) NPS Grant
- State Water Plan
- Groundwater Management
- Instream Flows

What is a TMDL?

- Total Maximum Daily Load
- Determine the amount (or load) of a pollutant that a body of water can receive and still support its designated uses
- Allowable load is allocated among all the potential sources of pollution within the watershed – point and nonpoint sources
- Requires state and federal approval

What is an I-Plan?

- Implementation Plan
- Based on TMDL
- Measures to reduce pollutant loads
- Requires only state approval

TCEQ – TSSWCB MOA



- All WPPs, whether developed before, after, or simultaneously with the development of a TMDL for one or more of the same waters, will be written or modified to be consistent with the load reductions described in the TMDL and the implementation strategies described in the I-Plan.
- Neither agency will fund activities to develop a load allocation for a Category 5a impairment through a WPP.
- That priority consideration should be given for the development of WPPs in watersheds containing Category 5c impairments where a TMDL has not been initiated. In this way, progress towards achieving water quality standards is initiated even before a TMDL is established.
- That a WPP under development or implementation will not preclude the initiation, development, and establishment of a TMDL.
- That the TCEQ has a legal responsibility to establish TMDLs in impaired water bodies and to do so in a timely manner. WPPs to address impairments on the 2006 and future 303(d) lists should be developed within six years after the impairment is listed to allow for the development of a TMDL within the mandated timeframe, should one be necessary.



Interaction between TMDLs and WPPs

- Where a TMDL for the affected waters has already been developed and approved or is being developed, the WPP must be designed to achieve the load reductions called for in the TMDL. However, where a TMDL has not yet been developed and approved or is not yet being developed for the waters, a WPP may be developed in the absence of the TMDL. If a TMDL is completed and approved, the WPP must be modified as appropriate to be consistent with the load allocation contained within the TMDL
- Process to use WPPs as mechanism for reclassifying waterbodies from Category 5 to Category 4b



How WPPs and TMDLs Interact

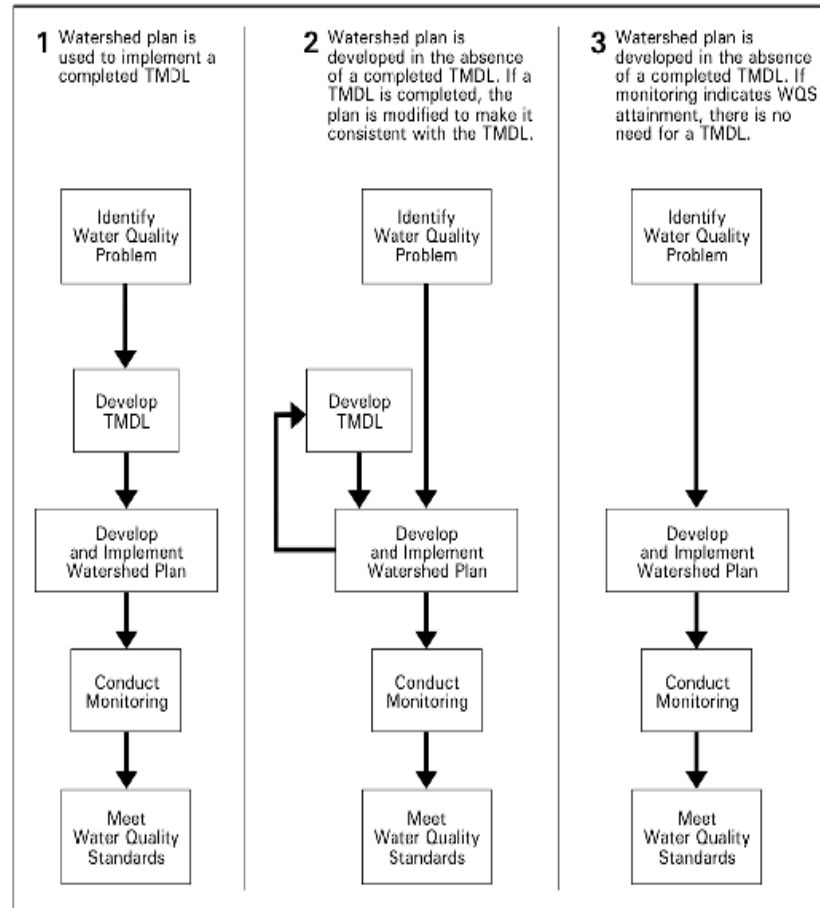


Figure 2-2. Potential relationships between TMDLs and watershed plans.

EPA R6 Process for Review of WBPs in lieu of TMDLs

2006 IR Guidance	NPS Program Guidance
1) A statement of the problem causing the impairment	1) Identify causes and sources needed to be controlled to achieve estimated load reductions, and the estimated extent to which they are present in the watershed 2) An estimate of load reductions expected)
2) Description of the implementation strategy and controls necessary to achieve water quality standards, including the point and nonpoint source loadings, that when implemented, will assure attainment of all applicable water quality standards	3) Description of NPS management measures needed to achieve loads reductions, an identification of critical areas to achieve greatest reduction 4) Estimate of technical and financial assistance needed to implement plan 5) Information and education component for improving understanding of the need for management measures that control nonpoint sources)
3) An estimate of the time frame to meet water quality standards	8) Criteria to determine whether load reductions are being achieved and progress is being made to attain standards, and if not, whether plan needs to be revised, or if TMDL needs to be revised)

EPA R6 Process for Review of WBPs in lieu of TMDLs

4) Reasonable schedule for implementation of control measures	6) Schedule for implementing management measures that is reasonably expeditious)
5) Description of, and schedule for, monitoring milestones for tracking and reporting progress to EPA on implementation of BMPs	7) Interim, measurable milestones for determining whether NPS management measures or other control actions are being implemented 9) Monitoring component to evaluate implementation efforts measured against #8)
6) A commitment to revise, if necessary, the implementation strategy if it is determined that progress in meeting water quality standards is not satisfactory	See 8) above

Bacteria WPPs and TMDLs/4b

- Joint TCEQ/TSSWCB Bacteria TMDL Task Force
- Three Tier Approach to bacteria TMDL and I-Plan development
- Joint agency TMDL Development Guidance

Issues

- Sustainability
 - Watershed Coordinator
 - Diversity of funding sources
- Tracking and reporting successes and opportunities for improvement (PAMs, 303(d), 4b)
- Adaptive management
- Joint agency WPP Policy Guidance forthcoming



Websites



<http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/wpp>

<http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/compliance/monitoring/nps/mgmt-plan/watershed-pp.html>

http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/watershed_handbook/

