

Topic	Comment	Response
2014 Assessment Summary/ 2016 Goals and Process	Participant - Did TCEQ assess fish tissue or just rely on fish advisories?	TCEQ - Only Texas Department of State Health Services advisories were used.
Water Quality Standards Update	Participant - How are spring flow dominated streams identified?	TCEQ - The Water Quality Standards Implementation Team has a process for this when establishing permit limits, which can be located in Appendix C of the Procedures to Implement the WQS.
	Participant - How did you define spring flow dominated streams?	TCEQ-We will look into that. <i>Update: The flow characteristics of perennial streams with known spring sources (and USGS gage stations) are evaluated to assess whether a stream is "dominated" by spring flow. The 7Q2 and lower percentile flow statistics of candidate streams are compared to determine what percentage of the time flows are less than the 7Q2 flow. Streams with flows less than the 7Q2 occurring on a frequent basis (greater than or equal to about 15 percent of the time) may not be adequately protected using the 7Q2 statistic. These are identified as spring-flow dominated and included in the Implementation Procedures. Stakeholders can nominate perennial streams for TCEQ to evaluate and potentially add to the list.</i>
	Participant - Will you be using EPA recommendations for selenium in the next revision of the standards?	TCEQ - EPA released their recommendations today and we will review them for consideration.
Implementation of the Clean Water Act 303(d) Program Vision	Participant - Will any other parameters be used in the future besides Contact Recreation parameters?	TCEQ - There are no other planned at this time.
	Participant - Will modeling be involved in the development of the new Impairment Plans"?	TCEQ - Not extensively but yes, some modeling may be involved.
	Participant - Will current and ongoing TMDLs be completed?	TCEQ - We are currently evaluating this.
	Participant - Is there a web site that will provide information on the projects as they develop?	TCEQ - Yes, the same web site TMDL currently maintains will be used.

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Nutrient Assessment in Texas Reservoirs	Participant - Is flow or residence time considered when assessing nutrients in a reservoir?	TCEQ - To account for variability in data due to changes from inflow, seasonality and reservoir management; the long-term median of monitoring data will be used in assessment.
	Participant - Since limits of quantitation (LOQ) have greatly improved in the last 10 years and some are now at 2 µg/L, why have a minimum criteria for chlorophyll a as high as 5 µg/L?	TCEQ - We would like to discuss this topic, and the possibility of extending the period of record to revise criteria for select reservoirs, more during the next nutrient criteria development advisory stakeholder meeting.
	Participant: What sorts of information did EPA consider when acting upon TCEQ's 2010 chlorophyll a criteria for nutrients?	TCEQ-EPA used a weight of evidence approach to evaluate the criteria. They considered information such as: trends in the Carlson's Trophic status reports and occurrence of nutrient-related concerns and impairments documented during multiple Integrated Report cycles; values from the scientific literature; algal impacts to drinking water supplies; existing trends for nutrient-related water quality parameters; and data from the National Lakes Assessment.
	Participant: Why are cyanobacteria not being considered as part of the weight of evidence approach?	TCEQ - We have very little data for cyanobacteria. What little data we do have was collected as part of the National Lakes Assessment. Acknowledging this, we are developing a project in FY16-17 with USGS to collect more of these data and look at different methodologies for analysis. We could potentially consider HAB reports from data collectors or reservoir managers, and maybe photographic evidence of cyanobacteria scums on the water surface. Some groups in Texas, like the US Army Corps of Engineers in the Tulsa District, are developing HAB related reports for reservoirs they manage.
	Participant - How did EPA take into account the management of reservoirs for fisheries and other high nutrient uses when reviewing the proposed criteria from 2010?	TCEQ - EPA acknowledged Texas has many warm water reservoirs which can and are being managed for fisheries, but also recognized comments made during the public comment period which stated hypereutrophic lakes are often difficult to manage. The trophic status of reservoirs they approved range from oligo-mesotrophic to eutrophic lakes, but any hypereutrophic lakes were disapproved.

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Nutrient Assessment in Texas Reservoirs <i>(continued)</i>	Participant - How much Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen (TKN) data is in the database that was reported at the lower Limit of Quantitation of 0.2 mg/L?	TCEQ - Since the lower limit of quantitation for TKN has been in place since approximately 2010, much of the current data is reported at this lower level.
	Participant - When working through the weight of evidence flow chart, we would like to see concerns be identified when chlorophyll a criteria are exceeded and other response thresholds are as well.	TCEQ - We can certainly evaluate that and will consider your comment.
	Participant - How can any reservoir be identified as fully-supporting when chlorophyll a criteria are exceeded?	TCEQ - Chlorophyll a criteria were established to protect existing levels of water quality and multiple designated uses (recreation, aquatic life, and public water supply), and prevent degradation caused by excessive nutrients. Exceedance of the long-term chlorophyll a criteria may not indicate impairment of a designated use when exceeded. Additional analyses are needed to evaluate when elevated concentrations of chlorophyll a, caused by nutrients, may impact these designated uses. Participant-You have to remember that these criteria serve as anti-degradation measures, and may not be indicative of actual use impairment. This is especially true in instances when the chlorophyll a criterion is very low, often at the level of detection.
	Participant - Will exceedances of thresholds used in the procedure, particularly those for total nutrients be reported?	TCEQ - Since we know this information is valuable for stakeholders, we will consider ways to report exceedances of each threshold/criteria used in the weight of evidence approach.
	Participant - Are you considering impairments and concerns for Dissolved Oxygen (DO) from other portions of the reservoir, or just near the dam station?	TCEQ - We are considering DO impairments and concerns from other portions of the reservoir (other assessment units), not just those reported at the dam station.
	Participant - Would you consider including trend analyses as part of this approach?	TCEQ - We have considered it, and can continue to look at ways to reasonably include trend analyses into reservoir assessments.
	Participant - What is the difference between the 30 µg/L and 40 µg/L chlorophyll a thresholds in the flow chart to assess narrative nutrient criteria?	TCEQ - When chlorophyll a thresholds carried over from 2010 standards revision were greater than 30 µg/L, these values were capped at 30 µg/L. So, no site-specific threshold is greater than 30 µg/L for any reservoir. In addition, when the median of chlorophyll a sample data from any reservoir is greater than 40 µg/L, a lower burden of proof for identifying a concern in these reservoirs is used in the assessment.

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Drought Monitoring	Participant- Are you looking into the impacts of upstream drought on downstream water quality?	TCEQ- We are currently looking into the effect just within a segment, but for 4C justification we would look at the impacts on a watershed scale.
	Participant- For a system where the effluent is sustaining a water body, what does the treated effluent mean for downstream impacts?	TCEQ- The 4C justification would have to indicate that the drought was the only change (i.e. no change to effluent) that coincides with the increase in the specific parameters identified to likely be affected by drought.
	Participant (follow up to above)- If waste discharges of TDS are higher due to drought (because the water body they draw from have higher TDS) then how does that preclude movement to 4C (i.e. High TDS is due to drought not water supply)?	TCEQ- Any kind of effluent rules out 4C.
	Participant (follow up to above) - If modeling during 4C justification shows that the impairment is not related to effluent (i.e. increases in parameter indicate it's not waste-water), you could still make the assumption that effluent isn't influencing it and it's drought.	TCEQ- For 4C justification, we would need to show that it is natural causes alone. We will need to monitor regularly after listed as 4C to monitor whether natural conditions recover then it will be delisted. We expected to delist after recovery from the drought.
	Participant- How does the new 7Q2 rule (ensuring flow is above 0.1 CFS) affect this process? Does it still go through the assessment, but as 4c not 5c?	TCEQ- If a drought related parameter is identified as a new impairment for that segment, then it will go through the 4C process.
Biological Assessments	Participant - Are index and critical period samples combined for biological assessments, and are you seeing more variability in samples collected during the critical period?	TCEQ - Yes, according to guidance one sample from each time period is required for assessment in order to account for variability. Indices of biotic integrity have been calculated for both index and critical period samples and no real difference could be determined between them.
	Participant - Are the ecoregion specific coefficients of variation (CV) available in the Surface Water Quality Monitoring Procedures Manual?	TCEQ - The ecoregion specific CVs are available in Appendix D of the Guidance for Assessing and Reporting Surface Water Quality in Texas.
	Participant - Will you be using the new regionalized benthic Index of Biotic Integrity (IBI) for the 2016 assessment?	TCEQ - No, the regionalized benthic IBIs, revised CV tables, and assessment of variability using the CV need to be finalized and presented at the 2018 Guidance Advisory Work Group meeting, and will be proposed for use in the 2018 assessment.

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General Questions/Other	Participant - Will the talks be on your website?	TCEQ - Yes
Guidance Issues	Participant - The general water quality has improved across the state but how are you assessing compliance with aesthetic water quality standards, namely trash?	TCEQ - The TCEQ is not currently assessing trash and has not developed a reliable method that would assess trash in a water body. Qualitative assessment is very difficult versus quantitative.