



Environmental Flows Allocation Process: Bay/Basin Stakeholder Groups



Bay/Basin Stakeholder Group

Seventeen stakeholder categories will be represented by the citizens on this group, each with an interest in environmental flows in their bay/basin area. Armed with the scientific recommendations of their Bay/Basin Science Team, the Stakeholder Group comes up with flows recommendations, based on considerations of both science and policy, and provides them to TCEQ as well as to the Environmental Flows Advisory Group.

More about the Bay/Basin Stakeholder Groups

The Bay/Basin Stakeholder Groups will play a key role in the Environmental Flows Allocation Process. This page includes more detail about these groups, including:

- *The makeup of the Bay/Basin Stakeholder Groups*
- *What is involved in being a Stakeholder?*
- *What is the Stakeholder Group nomination process?*
- *For more information*

The makeup of the Bay/Basin Stakeholder Groups

Eleven Bay/Basin Stakeholder Groups will be created, seven for each of Texas' major bays and the rivers that feed each bay and four more for the river basins that don't have bays associated with them. The Environmental Flows Advisory Group will appoint citizens to serve on each of these Stakeholder Groups. Appointment dates vary by area, but members for the **Sabine & Neches Rivers/Sabine Lake area** and the **Trinity & San Jacinto Rivers/Galveston Bay area** are to be appointed first. See www.texaswatermatters.org/flows.htm for a statewide map showing the eleven bay/basins areas, when the process starts for each area, and to view a more detailed process timeline for each specific area.

Each Bay/Basin Stakeholder Group must consist of **at least 17 members**, reflecting a fair and equitable balance of **interest groups** concerned with the particular river basin and bay system for which the group is established. The interest groups that **must be represented** by stakeholders, if present in the bay/basin, are:

1. **Agriculture: Irrigation**
2. **Agriculture: Free Range Livestock**
3. **Agriculture: CAFO**
4. **Recreational Water Users: Coastal Recreation/Anglers**
5. **Recreational Water Users: Businesses Supporting Water Recreation**
6. **Municipalities**
7. **Soil and Water Conservation Districts**
8. **Industrial Water Users: Refining**
9. **Industrial Water Users: Chemical Manufacturing**
10. **Industrial Water Users: Electric Generation**
11. **Industrial Water Users: Paper Prod. Productions/Timber**
12. **Commercial Fishing**
13. **Public Interest**
14. **Regional Water Planning Groups**
15. **Groundwater Conservation District**
16. **River Authority and other Conservation and Reclamation District with jurisdiction over surface water**
17. **Environmental Interests**

What is involved in being a Stakeholder?

Serving as a member of a Stakeholder Group is likely to be a **significant commitment** of time and effort. However, the contributions made by members will play a **vital role** in determining **what the future will hold** for Texas' rivers and bays and all that depend on them. Therefore, it is essential to the success of the process that Stakeholder Groups are made up of dedicated and effective individuals who are committed to the group's important task.

Members of a Bay/Basin Stakeholder Group serve **five-year terms**. If a vacancy occurs, the remaining members of the group will appoint a member to serve the remainder of the unexpired term by majority vote. The location or frequency of meetings is yet to be determined. All meetings are to be open to the public. Service on a Stakeholder Group is an unpaid position.

One of the first charges of the Stakeholder Groups is to **establish their Bay/Basin Expert Science Team**. The area's Science Team will then, based solely on existing science, develop environmental flow analyses and a recommended environmental flow regime for the area, and submit this to their Stakeholder Group and others.

The Stakeholder Group is then to review the environmental flow regime recommendations submitted by their Science Team and **consider these in conjunction with water management policies**. The Stakeholder Group then **develops their own recommendations** regarding environmental flow standards **and strategies to meet them**. These recommendations will be submitted to the Environmental Flows Advisory Group and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. The science-only recommendations from the Science Team and the science and policy based recommendations from the Stakeholder Group will then be **used by the state to adopt legal standards and strategies for environmental flows needs for the area**. In developing its recommendations, the Stakeholder Group is to operate on a **consensus basis** to the maximum extent possible.

After submitting its recommendations and strategies to meet environmental flow needs, one additional task the Stakeholder Group will complete is a **work plan to address adaptive management** issues, such as periodic review and refinement of the environmental flow regime recommendations, standards and strategies.

What is the Stakeholder Group nomination process?

The Environmental Flows Advisory Group appoints individuals to serve on the eleven Bay/Basin Stakeholder Groups. Stakeholders have already been appointed for the first two bay/basin areas to be addressed by the process—the Sabine & Neches Rivers/Sabine Lake area and the Trinity & San Jacinto/Galveston Bay area. Details on the official nomination process for upcoming areas can be found here: www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water_supply/water_rights/eflows/group.html or here: www.texaswatermatter.org/flows.htm.

For more information

- See the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's website on the process: www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water_supply/water_rights/eflows/group.html
- See our website on the process: www.texaswatermatter.org/flows.htm
- Contact **Jennifer Ellis** of National Wildlife Federation at **512-476-9805** or ellis@nwf.org

