



## Environmental Flows Allocation Process: Bay/Basin Expert Science Teams



### *The Bay/Basin Expert Science Teams*

These teams will work with technical support from state agencies and academic institutions to develop environmental flows recommendations based solely on the best available science. Recommendations are presented to Bay/Basin Stakeholder Group, Environmental Flows Advisory Group, and TCEQ. These recommendations will be the first building block the Stakeholder Group uses in coming up with its environmental flow recommendations that will consider both science and policy.

### *More about the Bay/Basin Expert Science Teams*

The Bay/Basin Expert Science Teams will perform a fundamental role in the Environmental Flows Allocation Process. This page includes more detail about these teams, including:

- *The makeup of the Bay/Basin Expert Science Teams*
- *What is involved in being a Science Team member?*
- *What is the Science Team nomination process?*
- *For more information*

### *The makeup of the Bay/Basin Expert Science Teams*

Eleven Bay/Basin Expert Science Teams will be created, one for each area that is shown on the statewide map shown here: <http://www.texaswatermatters.org/flows.htm>. The Bay/Basin Stakeholder Group for each area will be responsible for establishing a Bay/Basin Science Team for their area. The dates for forming these teams will vary depending on the area, but the **Sabine & Neches Rivers/Sabine Lake area** and the **Trinity & San Jacinto Rivers/Galveston Bay area** teams will be created first, by December 1, 2008.

The Science Teams must be composed of **technical experts** with special expertise regarding the river basin and bay system or regarding the development of environmental flow regimes. A person **may serve on more than one** Bay/Basin Expert Science Team at the same time.

### *What is involved in being a Science Team member?*

A substantial **dedication of time and effort** will be required of those serving on a Bay/Basin Science Team. Because the scientific recommendations put forward by these teams will be the

**building blocks** for the rest of the Environmental Flows Allocation Process, the contributions made by members will be **forever reflected in Texas' river and bay ecosystems**. It is essential to the success of the process that these Science Teams are made up of dedicated and effective individuals who are committed to the team's important task.

Members of a Bay/Basin Expert Science Team will serve **five-year terms**. A vacancy is filled by an individual chosen by the area's Stakeholder Group to serve the remainder of the unexpired term. The location or frequency of meetings is yet to be determined. All meetings are to be open to the public. Members of the Science Teams will receive some level of reimbursement and compensation for their travel expenses and participation at a rate yet to be determined.

The primary task of each Bay/Basin Science Team will be to **develop environmental flow analyses and a recommended environmental flow regime** for the river basin and bay system for which the team is established. The team will use a collaborative process designed to achieve a **consensus**. In developing the analyses and recommendations, the science team must consider all reasonably available science, without regard to the need for the water for other uses. The science team's recommendations must be **based solely on the best science available**.

The Bay/Basin Science Teams will have **one year** to finalize environmental flow regime recommendations and submit them to their Bay/Basin Stakeholder Group, the Environmental Flows Advisory Group, and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

After submitting its scientific recommendations, one additional task the Science Teams are charged with is assisting the Stakeholder Groups in developing 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 Science Team nomination process?*

Ultimately, each Bay/Basin Stakeholder Group will establish their area's Bay/Basin Expert Science Team and develop their own nomination process for doing so. Information on the first two Stakeholder Groups' nomination processes is now available on the TCEQ's website.

For the Sabine bay/basin:

[http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water\\_supply/water\\_rights/eflows/sabinenechessabinelakebay.html](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water_supply/water_rights/eflows/sabinenechessabinelakebay.html)

For the Trinity bay/basin:

[www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water\\_supply/water\\_rights/eflows/trinsanjacgalbaystake.html](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water_supply/water_rights/eflows/trinsanjacgalbaystake.html)

### *For more information:*

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