

Conclusions

The residents of the Guadalupe River and Lavaca-Guadalupe Coastal basins have greatly benefited from the monitoring provided by the Clean Rivers Program. The partner relationship of GBRA, UGRA, MCWE, and WVWA under the Texas Clean Rivers Program has generated an incredible amount of quality assured data that is made available to the public and state regulators. The data generated by CRP has been used by invested stakeholders to develop watershed protection plans to improve water quality in the Plum Creek watershed, Geronimo & Alligator Creek watershed, Cypress Creek watershed, the Dry Comal Creek & Comal River watershed, and the Upper San Marcos River watershed. The CRP data has also been used by state regulators to identify water quality impairments and target Total Maximum Daily Load Studies on the Guadalupe River above Canyon Lake, Sandies Creek, Elm Creek, and Peach Creek. These regulatory activities include several success stories, such as the Guadalupe River in Kerr and Kendall counties, where water quality improvements have resulted in the attainment of designated stream uses. The public outreach opportunities provided by the Clean Rivers Program have increased public knowledge and involvement with the waters of the river basin through public outreach, volunteer monitoring training, and school programs.

Recommendations for the Future

Funding Recommendations

The Clean Rivers Program is a state mandated program that generates invaluable data in support of TCEQ’s water quality programs and decision-making processes. The standard bi-annual funding amount allocated to GBRA for this program has remained unchanged since GBRA first became a CRP partner more than three decades ago. However, over that time costs have continued to increase; these include monitoring supplies, field equipment, laboratory fees, personnel time, and travel. Over the years, GBRA has increased its number of monitoring locations throughout the basin in response to stakeholder concerns and to collect ample quality assured data for use in regulatory decisions by TCEQ. To make this possible in conjunction with rising costs, GBRA has reallocated the majority of salary expenses to other budgets so that CRP funds can continue to cover water quality monitoring costs. GBRA is hopeful that additional funding can be allocated, so that the statewide Clean Rivers Program can remain viable and continue to provide vital quality assured data.

Basin Recommendations

Population increase, land use changes, demands on water availability, and invasive species are some of the biggest challenges facing the Guadalupe River Basin. To address these challenges, the following recommendations are made:

- Expanded water quality data collection efforts, to provide ample quality assured data to help guide future decision making and prioritize management efforts
- Proactive planning for future infrastructure needs, with an emphasis on the inclusion of best management practices to minimize and mitigate impacts on water quality
- Continued education and outreach, through watershed protection plans or other means, to educate the public on the importance of preserving and improving water quality
- Invasive species prevention and management to help minimize the impacts of invasive species on water resources

Additionally, aquatic life use impairments and concerns have increased in recent years throughout the basin. Many new impairments and concerns are on segments that had limited assessment data prior to recent data collection events. These new impairments and concerns highlight a need for increased research into the existing conditions in these segments to determine if the current standards are most applicable, or if reassessment is warranted.

This report was sent to stakeholders, requesting input. No additional recommendations were provided.