



# Texas Stream Team Newsletter

Houston-Galveston Area Chapter  
Working to Protect Our Waterways



Volume 2021, Issue 1: February 2021

## Monitor's Corner

### Skills Check: Check Your Reagents

Although it may not seem like a "skill", making sure you are using non-expired reagents in your Texas Stream Team testing is an important part of making sure your data meets quality control standards. To make sure your data meet standards, check the dates each month and mark your data sheet to indicate your reagents are not expired.

With ongoing COVID-related issues, it is also important to note any upcoming expiration dates to make sure you have time to replace the reagents - looking several months ahead can make this much easier.

The Data Checklist to meet quality control standards is available in the Texas Stream Team 2019 Core Water Quality Monitoring Manual on page 49. You can download digital versions of the 2012 and 2019 manuals on [H-GAC's Texas Stream Team web page](#).



As always you can review videos for monitoring procedures on the Texas Stream Team YouTube page.

[YouTube Review](#)

As we were unable to hold QA sessions in 2020, watching the YouTube videos or re-reading the manual are great ways to refresh your memory and double-check your monthly monitoring procedures.

### Safety Briefing: Animal Hazards

It may be hard to believe after last week's freezing temperatures, but spring in Houston isn't too far off. As we start to thaw and re-emerge with warmer weather, so will some of the critters who live in or near our waterways. Increased activity from them means you need to keep a look out for some of the critters that could be dangerous or painful with a close encounter.

## CAUTION!



Watch for snakes, alligators or harmful insects



Avoid contact with any wild animals

As always, it is recommended to sample

- Insects - be careful where you step and set your supplies, check your area for fire ants, wasp nests, etc.
- Snakes - mating occurs in the spring; don't reach or step where you can't see the ground (including over a log), and use a stick or tool if you need to move a log or debris;
- Alligators - keep a cautious eye out for alligators on the banks or in the water, especially between March - May which is their peak time for breeding and nesting;

with a partner or take someone with you for safety (with COVID-19 precautions this might mean someone from your household). If you do sample by yourself, tell someone where you are going and when you expect to return.

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## Technical Territory: Targeted Bacteria Monitorign

H-GAC is partnering with the Bayou Preservation Association to complete a Targeted Bacteria Monitoring Project, with support from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program.

Through this project, Bayou Preservation interns are trained in collecting and analyzing *E. coli* samples using Texas Stream Team protocols. Samples are taken at outfalls that are exhibiting flow after a minimum 72-hour period without rainfall. The assumption is that during dry weather, flows should only be coming from approved discharge sources like Wastewater Treatment Facilities, so others might be illicit discharges and potential bacteria sources.

This project focuses its efforts on 6 Assessment Units (AUs) on the [Bacteria Implementation Group's Top 10 Most Wanted List](#) - streams in the Houston area with some of the highest bacteria levels. These include: Plum Creek, Pine Gully, Berry Bayou, Country Club Bayou, Little White Oak Bayou, and an unnamed tributary to Buffalo Bayou.

Any potential sources identified are reported to local jurisdictions for further investigation and corrective action.



Monitoring of Plum Creek was completed in December 2020, and findings included four outfalls with extremely high *E. coli* levels, and a Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO) pictured here.

If you see SSOs or other issues in the City of Houston, you can report it to [Houston 311 online](#), by phone or smartphone app to help address pollution faster.

[Applications for the second round of internships](#) for this project are now open through the Student Conservation Association. The internship will take place over 8 weeks between mid-April to early June.

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## Monitor Spotlight: Thanks to the Whole Team!

Normally we like to highlight one of our amazing volunteers in each newsletter. However, with the craziness, frustration, challenges, and more that our community faced in 2020 and now 2021, we want to take a moment to thank all of the Texas Stream Team monitors who have continued to take time each month to help us keep tabs on our waterways.

We hope to be able to bolster your ranks with more trainings later in 2021, but thanks to your dedication our program and the data it provides have continued this past year.

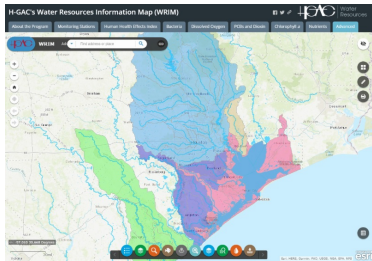
H-GAC's Texas Stream Team program wouldn't be possible without you!

TO OUR TEXAS STREAM TEAM  
MONITORS,

THANKS FOR  
ALL YOU DO!

We appreciate your efforts to keep monitoring  
our area waterways in 2020!

## Monitor Resources



### View Your Data On The WRIM

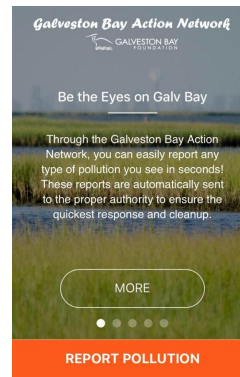
The Water Resources Information Map (WRIM) displays H-GAC's Clean Rivers Program and Texas Stream Team water quality data. An advanced tab allows for improved search functionality by specific site. Texas Stream Team data is updated on the 15th of each month. Please check out your site and email [stream.team@h-gac.com](mailto:stream.team@h-gac.com) if you find any issues.

Visit the WRIM

### TWPD Kills & Spills

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Kills and Spill Team (KAST) investigates fish and wildlife kills resulting from pollution and natural events. To report a Kill or Spill call (512) 389-4848.

Learn More



### Report Pollution with GBAN

The Galveston Bay Action Network (GBAN) makes it easy to report pollution using a laptop, desktop, or mobile device. Download the mobile app or visit the Galveston Bay Foundation website.

Visit GBAN online

### Meadows Center Resources

The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment has general Texas Stream Team resources, a state-wide data map, and several publications that monitors might find interesting.

Learn More

# Upcoming Events



Core Water Quality Citizen Science Training



## Texas Stream Team Core Water Quality Trainings

All H-GAC Texas Stream Team trainings are currently on hold. Trainings will resume when it is safe for trainers and participants. Please contact [stream.team@h-gac.com](mailto:stream.team@h-gac.com) with any questions.

To view trainings held by partners across the state you can view the Meadow Center's [calendar of events](#).

[Learn More](#)

## Parks and Natural Areas Roundtable Monday, March 8, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

The next [Parks and Natural Areas Roundtable](#) will include presentations about the re-imagined virtual 2021 Trash Bash and Trash Free Texas' Adopt-A-Spot project.

[Registration](#) is required.

## Spring Creek Watershed Partnership Public Meeting Thursday, April 8, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

The [Spring Creek Watershed Partnership](#) is holding a public meeting to discuss community-driven strategies for water quality improvement in preparation for the development of a Watershed Protection Plan.

[Registration](#) is required. Contact [Rachel Windham](#) at 713-993-2497 for information.

## Clean Rivers Program Basin Steering Committee Meeting Wednesday, June 2, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

H-GAC's Clean Rivers Program is hosting its second Basin Steering Committee Meeting of 2021. Topics will include a look at the draft 2021 Basin Summary Report.

[Registration is required.](#)

## Get More Involved With Partners

[Adopt-a-Beach](#)

[Artist Boat](#)

[Bayou Land Conservancy](#)

[Bayou Preservation Association](#)

[Buffalo Bayou Partnership](#)

[Cypress Creek Flood Control Coalition](#)

[Exploration Green Conservancy](#)

[Friends of the River San Bernard](#)

[Galveston Bay Estuary Program](#)

[Galveston Bay Foundation](#)  
[H-GAC Clean Waters Initiative](#)  
[Keep American Beautiful](#)  
[Keep Texas Beautiful](#)  
[Take Care of Texas](#)  
[Trash Free Texas](#)  
[Turtle Island Restoration Network](#)  
[The Woodlands Township](#)



## Partner News

### Trash Bash 2021 Goes Virtual!

The River, Lakes, Bays 'N Bayous Trash Bash is being re-imagined for 2021 to protect volunteers and their families. You can join families across the watershed as we clean from backyard to bay. Just because we can't gather together doesn't mean you can't still "Clean It Like You Mean It !" with us March 26-28, 2021.

Trash Bash hopes to welcome everyone back in person in 2022.

[More Information](#)



### Trash Free Texas Adopt-A-Spot

H-GAC is partnering with the Meadows Center and the North Central Texas Council of Governments on a project to help prevent trash from entering our waterways. Part of this project includes promoting and expanding the [Trash Free Texas Adopt-A-Spot tool](#) into the Houston region to help connect volunteers with places that need litter cleanup.

[More Information](#)

**TRASH  
FREE  
TEXAS**

### Buffalo Bayou Partnership - Art Installation on Display

Buffalo Bayou Partnership (BBP) is pleased to announce Estructuras Monumentales, a major exhibition of outdoor sculptures by 105-year-old artist Carmen Herrera (b. 1915, Havana, Cuba). Featuring four newly-created sculptures that were first envisioned nearly five decades ago, Estructuras Monumentales is Herrera's first public art exhibition in Houston and only the second time that these large scale works have been presented globally. Visit the exhibition in Fondren Foundation Meadow in Buffalo Bayou Park until April 23, 2021.

[More Information](#)

# Water Quality Projects & Plans

## Clean Rivers Program

### Basin Highlights Reports

Each year the Clean Rivers Program produces a report outlining the state of water quality in the region that is submitted to the TCEQ. The [Basin Highlights Reports](#) include the status and trends of water quality, as well as a brief overview of the previous year's activities.

Contact Todd Running at 713-993-4549 for more information about the [Clean Rivers Program](#).



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## Total Maximum Daily Load Projects

### Big Creek TMDL

H-GAC is currently working with stakeholders to complete technical analyses on the extent of fecal waste pollution in the Big Creek Watershed of Fort Bend County. The project's technical support document is expected to be finalized in the near future, and a public process to identify solutions will lead to an eventual Implementation Plan to address this pollutant. Contact [Steven Johnston](#) at 832-681-2579 for information.

### Upper Oyster Creek TMDL

Stakeholders in the Upper Oyster Creek watershed of Fort Bend County have been working for several years to implement solutions for fecal waste pollution in the area. An Annual Meeting to discuss progress and refine approaches was held on July 23. While pollutant levels remain an issue in the waterway, local partners have made appreciable effort to address them and other local concerns as part of a broad mix of regulated and voluntary solutions. Contact [Justin Bower](#) at 713-499-6653 for more information.

Learn more about [TMDL projects](#) in the H-GAC region.

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## Watershed Protection Plans

### Cypress Creek

The Cypress Creek Watershed Partnership is beginning to develop its watershed protection plan document for Cypress Creek. A mix of fecal waste sources, including a large volume of dog waste, is currently causing elevated levels of fecal waste in the Creek and its tributaries. The Partnership is finalizing its recommendations for voluntary solutions to address this and other water quality issues in Cypress Creek, and coordinating their work with flood mitigation efforts in the area. Contact [Justin Bower](#) at 713-499-6653 for more information.

### Spring Creek

The Spring Creek Watershed Partnership is a stakeholder group supported by the TCEQ and H-GAC. Voluntary membership gives community members access to direct involvement in the discussion, development and implementation of a Watershed Protection Plan to address water quality concerns in Spring Creek and its tributaries. Contact [Rachel Windham](#) at 713-993-2497 for more information.

Learn more about [watershed protection plans](#) in the H-GAC region.

## About the Newsletter

**Newsletter Content Survey:** please complete this short [3-question survey](#) to let us know what you would like to see in the newsletter. Email [stream.team@h-gac.com](mailto:stream.team@h-gac.com) or call 713-993-2469 with questions, comments, calendar items, or suggestions. You can also [view previous issues of our newsletter](#).

[Join the H-GAC Texas Stream Team mailing list.](#)

H-GAC is the regional organization through which local governments consider issues and cooperate in solving area-wide problems. We invite you to subscribe to the [Community and Environmental Update](#), a monthly e-newsletter to keep you informed about the many community planning, economic development, and environmental planning programs at H-GAC.

[Texas Stream Team at The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment](#) at Texas State University is dedicated to understanding and protecting the 191,000 miles of Texas waterways. For more information, contact [TxStreamTeam@txstate.edu](mailto:TxStreamTeam@txstate.edu).

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Houston-Galveston Area Council

[Stream.Team@h-gac.com](mailto:Stream.Team@h-gac.com)

[www.H-GAC.com](http://www.H-GAC.com)