



Bacteria Implementation Plan for Dickinson Bayou Watershed

Located in Galveston and Brazoria counties, the Dickinson Bayou watershed encompasses approximately 100 square miles of land that drains



water into the bayou. Dickinson Bayou is classified as impaired by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), which means higher than acceptable levels of bacteria have been consistently measured in the bayou. The bayou is made up of two types of waters: saltwater (tidal) and freshwater (above-tidal). For each type of water, an “indicator

bacteria” is used to determine the quality of the water. In saltwater the bacteria used is *Enterococci* and in freshwater the bacteria used is *E.coli*.

Why does Dickinson Bayou need an Implementation Plan?

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) has drafted a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) document for bacteria in Dickinson Bayou and Three Tidal Tributaries: Benson’s Bayou, Borden’s Gully and Giesler Bayou. TMDL documents

Watershed Protection Plan (WPP)

This document, created by stakeholders, outlines a voluntary approach to improving water quality.

The WPP focuses on a single water body (Dickinson Bayou) its tributaries and the surrounding land that drains into it. This plan focuses not only on water quality, but also on bigger picture goals for the future of the watershed.

Total Maximum Daily Load Document (TMDL)

This document, created by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, identifies the water quality issues in a single waterbody (Dickinson Bayou), and the likely sources of pollution. This document presents data, calculations and mathematical models that describe the amount of bacteria a waterbody can accept without being impaired.

Implementation Plan (I-Plan)

This document, created by stakeholders, outlines actions necessary to improve water quality based on an approved TMDL document; in this case, the reduction of bacteria to an acceptable level outlined in the Bacteria TMDL document. I-Plans have a regulatory component enforceable by state, federal and local agencies responsible for managing natural resources.

