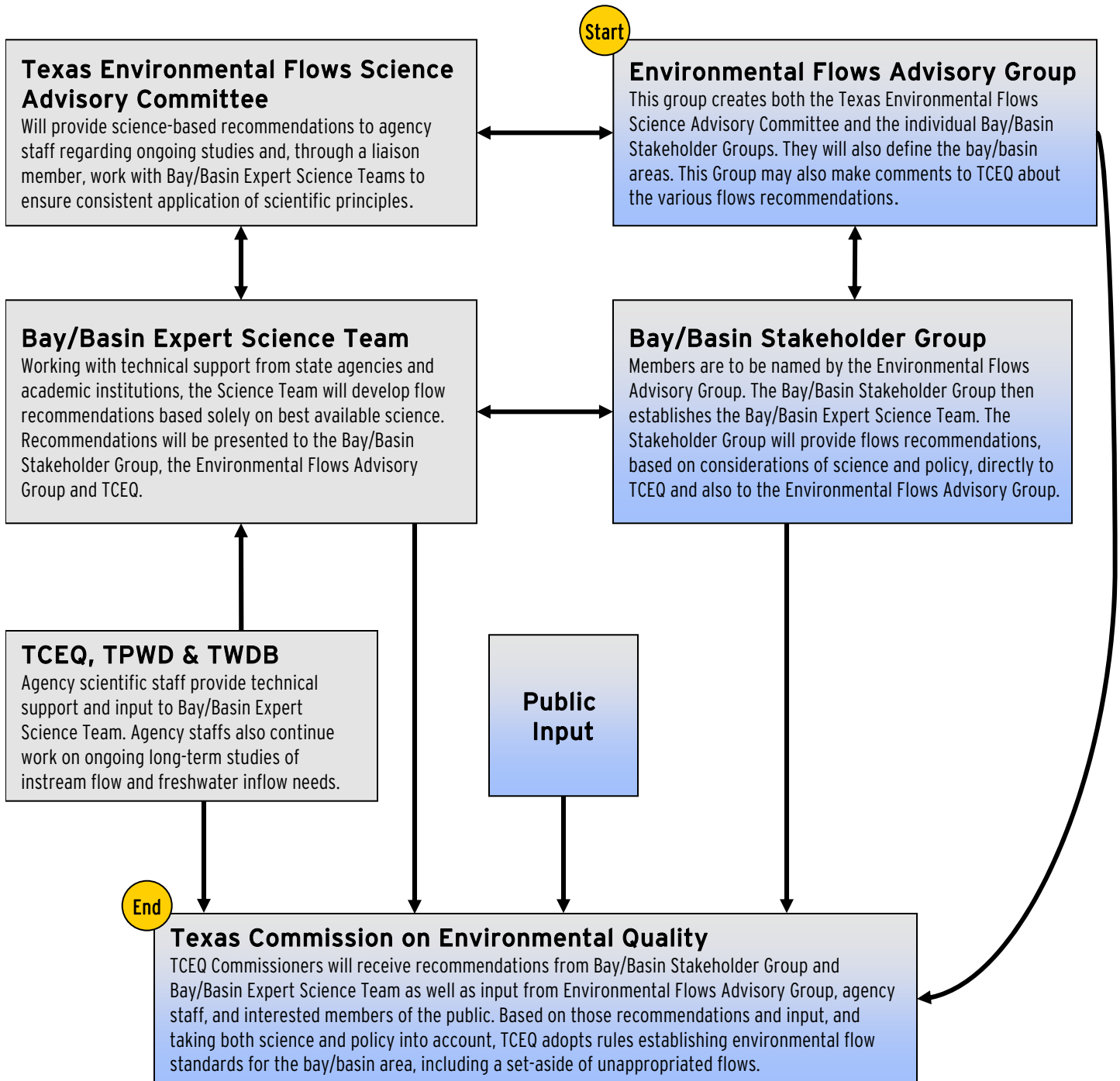


An Overview of the Environmental Flows Allocation Process

Fall 2007



Gray boxes indicate scientific consideration only



Gray to Blue shaded boxes indicate scientific and policy consideration

Please turn over for a description of the process

THE PROCESS



Interaction of Bay/Basin Stakeholder Groups & Bay/Basin Science Teams

1. **The Bay/Basin Stakeholder Group establishes Bay/Basin Science Team.** Science Team is made up of scientists and technical experts with knowledge of region-specific issues and of scientists and technical experts with experience in developing environmental flow recommendations.
2. **Stakeholder Group makes arrangements with state agencies and academic institutions to provide technical support** for Stakeholder Group and for Science Team. Technical support would consist of efforts like performing literature reviews, undertaking water availability calculations using state water availability models, and helping to compile available information for use by the Stakeholder Group and Science Team. However, technical support would NOT include responsibility for developing the actual recommendations, which will be undertaken collectively by the Science Team.
3. Neither technical support contractor nor Science Team will be expected to undertake new substantive studies. **Best available science will be used based on existing studies.** Recommendations from the Science Team should note critical uncertainties and should identify information gaps that need to be addressed through future studies to help inform adaptive management process.
4. **Bay/Basin Science Team develops its recommendations for a flow regime that, based solely on best available science, would be adequate to protect a sound ecological environment and to maintain the productivity, extent, and persistence of key aquatic habitats in and along the affected water bodies.** The Texas Environmental Flows Science Advisory Committee provides input, as appropriate. Because the Science Team would be meeting and working locally, Stakeholder Group will be able to observe process to help inform subsequent stakeholder decisions.
5. **Stakeholder Group then develops their own set of recommendations by considering the science-based recommendations in conjunction with important water policy considerations.** The resulting Stakeholder recommendations will include proposals for the extent to which recommended flows should be provided through set aside of unappropriated flow.
6. **TCEQ receives science-only recommendations from Bay/Basin Science Team, and science and policy combined recommendations from Bay/Basin Stakeholder Group.** TCEQ also receives input from Environmental Flows Advisory Group, agency staff, and interested members of the public. Having separate science-based recommendations ensures that policy tradeoffs are transparent and helps to ensure a better informed TCEQ rulemaking process.
7. **TCEQ adopts rules establishing environmental flow standards for the bay/basin area** based on these recommendations and input, taking both science and policy into account. These rules will include a set-aside of unappropriated flows.

