

Scientist team to determine future of Trinity & San Jacinto Rivers, Galveston Bay

(November 14, 2008) Yesterday in Conroe, fifteen scientists were assigned the task of recommending how much water is needed to keep Galveston Bay and the streams and rivers in the Houston area healthy.

An innovative water law passed last session calls for a team of scientists in each region of the state to examine the issue and make recommendations to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). This is one step in a comprehensive process that will establish legal guidelines for how much water should remain flowing in Texas's rivers and into the state's coastal bays.

“This group of scientists, which includes representatives from area universities, consulting firms, river authorities, and federal agencies, will play a key role in determining the future of Galveston Bay and the Trinity and San Jacinto rivers,” said Myron Hess, manager of Texas Water Programs for the National Wildlife Federation.

“The scientists, along with the group of stakeholders that selected them, are implementing an unprecedented new process designed to ensure that future generations of Texans have healthy rivers and coastal bays to enjoy. We appreciate the willingness of these scientists and stakeholders to take on this role,” added Hess.

The Trinity and San Jacinto Rivers, which flow into Galveston Bay, will be among the first rivers in the state to be addressed through the new process.

According to Hess, “This is a group of well-qualified scientists embarking on a critical task. Recognizing the importance of the effort, the Legislature directed that this be an open process designed to come up with consensus recommendations. Folks interested in the future of Galveston Bay and area streams and rivers should follow the process closely and make their voices heard. There may not be another chance to protect these natural wonders and the economic benefits they supply.”

The scientists will have until December 2009 to examine the scientific literature, consult with other experts, and come up with their recommendations to TCEQ.

For more information:

- <http://www.texaswatermatters.org/flows.htm>
- http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water_supply/water_rights/eflows/trinsanja_cgalbaystake.html

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