



Nueces River Authority
Steering Committee and Stakeholder Update #1
(1st Quarter of FY 2016-17)
September - November 2015



December 3rd, 2015

Routine Clean River Program (CRP) Monitoring

The Nueces River Authority (NRA) conducted routine water quality monitoring at 9 coastal stations and 31 river stations. All sites were monitored with the exception of Leona River near Uvalde due to a lack of water.

Changes to 2016-17 coordinated monitoring schedule included the moving of a monitoring station on Poesta creek near Beeville. The old station (Station ID 12932) located at the crossing at US 181 in Beeville has been replaced with a site downstream which is located at the crossing of FM-202 (Station ID 12937) east of Beeville. The first site visit observations included clear flowing water and a healthy riparian area.

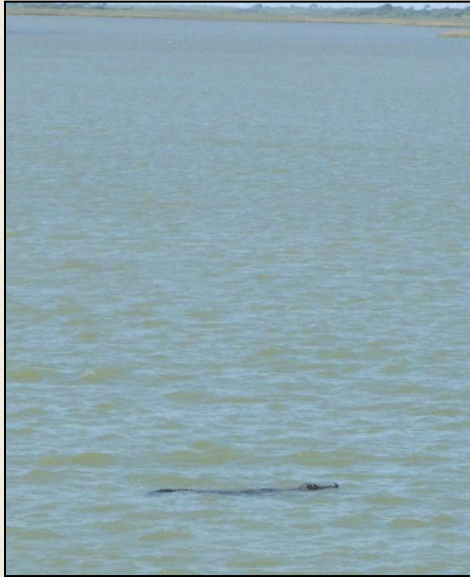


The monitoring station on the Nueces River at Barskdale (Station ID 13005) in the upper Nueces River Basin was replaced with a historic site downstream on the Nueces River at the 19 mile crossing bridge on SH-55 (Station ID 16704). The Nueces River was flowing nicely on the first site visit, around 300 CFS.



Wildlife Observed in the Nueces River Watershed during Q1

On the quarterly site visit to Copano Bay at SH-136 (Station ID 12945), NRA observed a very large american alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*) swimming in the middle of the bay. Salinity levels in the bay were around 11 ppt on the site visit.

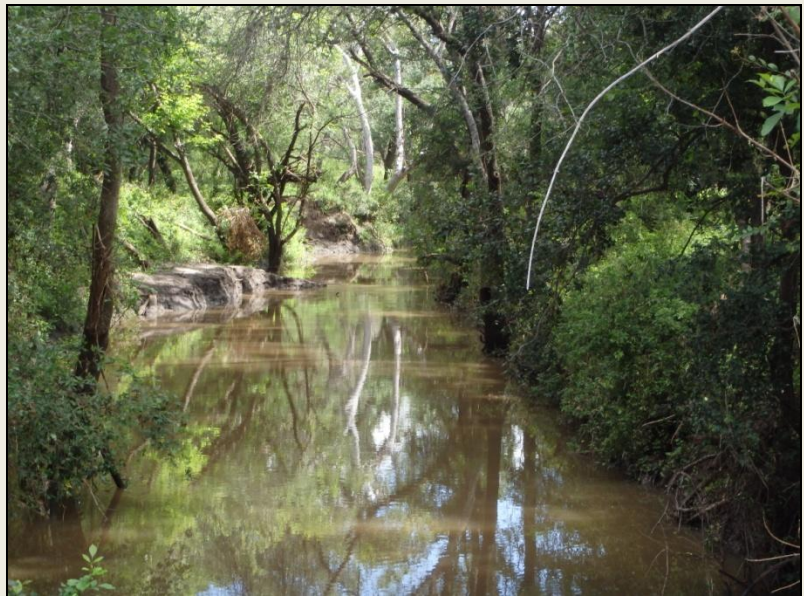


San Miguel Recreational Use Attainability Analysis

In 2006, San Miguel Creek (Segment 2108), which flows 66 miles from Choke Canyon Reservoir in McMullen County to the confluence of Perez Creek and Chacon Creek in Frio County was identified as being impaired for having *E. coli* bacteria concentrations that exceed state water quality standards. To determine if the correct standard is being applied to the water body, the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) contracted with NRA to conduct a Recreational Use Attainability Analysis (RUAA) to determine if recreation is occurring on the stream.

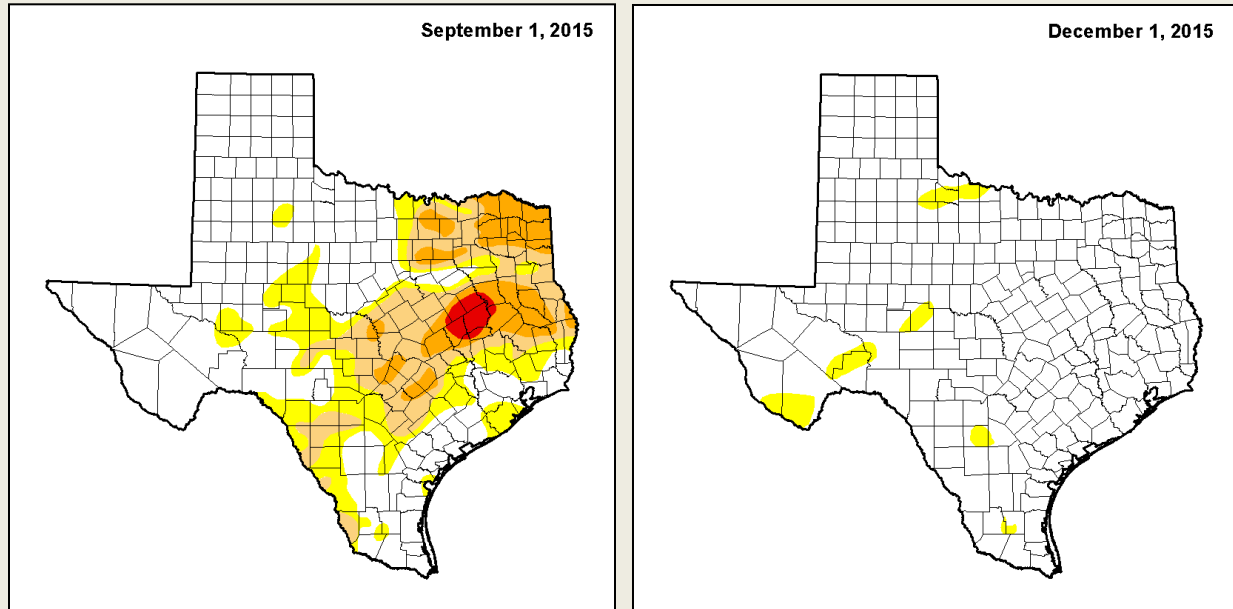
The project kicked off in November 2013. Field surveys took place during the summer of 2015. A public meeting to discuss the second survey results and the draft of the final report occurred on September 16th in Pearsall. The 30 day comment period for the final technical report ends on December 9th, 2015 and can be viewed on the project website.

<https://www.nueces-ra.org/SMC/>.

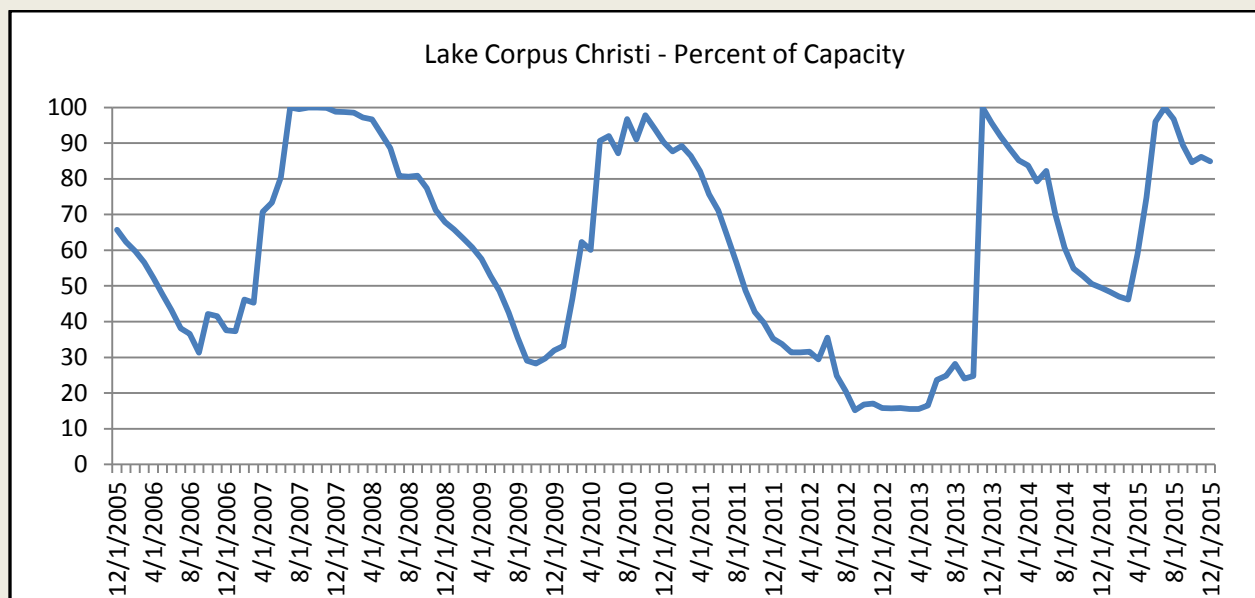


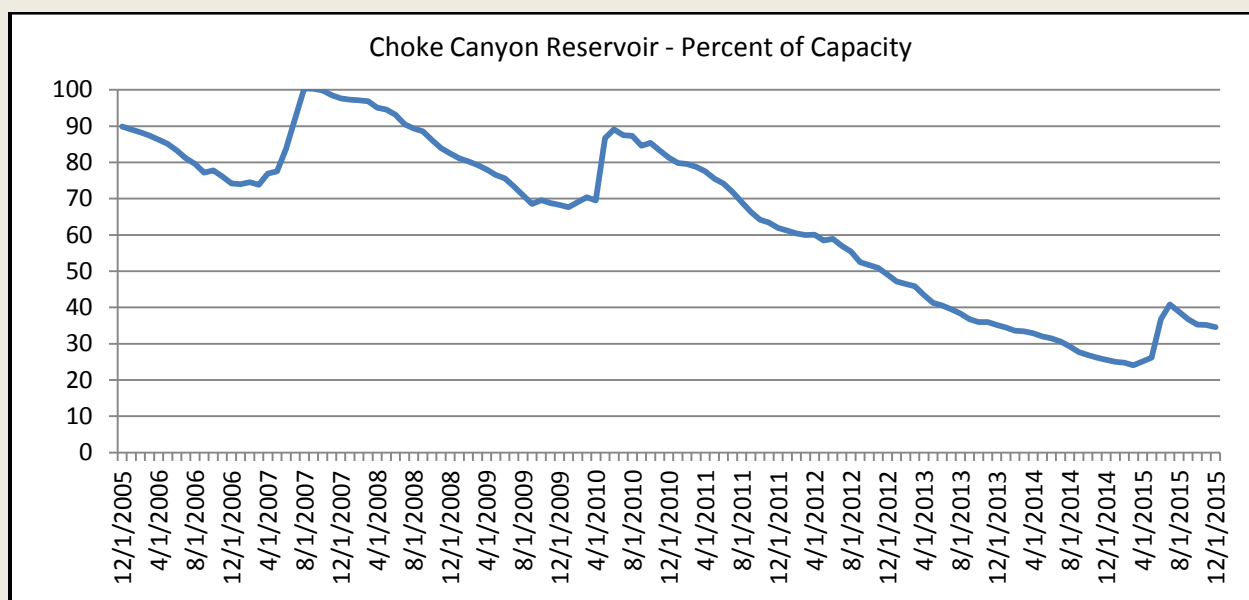
Drought Status in the Nueces River Basin

Drought conditions in the Nueces River Basin have been subsiding for much of the quarter (Sept. – Nov.). A strong El Niño this fall attributed to increased rainfall across the state. The drought index (The US Drought Monitor for Texas) shows an improvement compared with the beginning of the quarter (below). Abnormally dry conditions do remain in portions of Frio, Atascosa, Jim Hogg, and Brooks counties.



At the beginning of the quarter, the combined capacity of the Reservoir System (Choke Canyon + Lake Corpus Christi) was 51.0%. By the end of November, the combined capacity of the reservoir system fell to 48.9%. For the Daily Reservoir System and Pass-Thru Status Report, please visit the website <https://www.nueces-ra.org/CP/CITY/passthru/index.php>.





Red Tide Status

Much of the Texas Gulf Coast experienced a large fish kill in the first quarter due to red tide (*Karenia brevis*). The bloom was first observed on September 13th on Mustang Island and quickly spread. By September 23rd, red tide was observed from Galveston to South Padre Island. TPWD staff reported a diverse assemblage of fish killed. A status update on November 16th indicated that red tide was still observed from Padre Island National Seashore to Boca Chica. For the latest status update on the red tide event, please visit the TPWD website:

<http://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/water/environconcerns/hab/redtide/status.phtml>

Petronila Creek CAMS 731

Nueces River Authority has been maintaining a Continuous Water Quality Monitoring (CWQM) Station on Petronila Creek since 2007 collecting specific conductance, TDS, temperature and depth data. To view the data coming off the instrument (updated on an hourly basis), check the following website:

http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/cgi-bin/compliance/monops/water_daily_summary.pl?cams=731



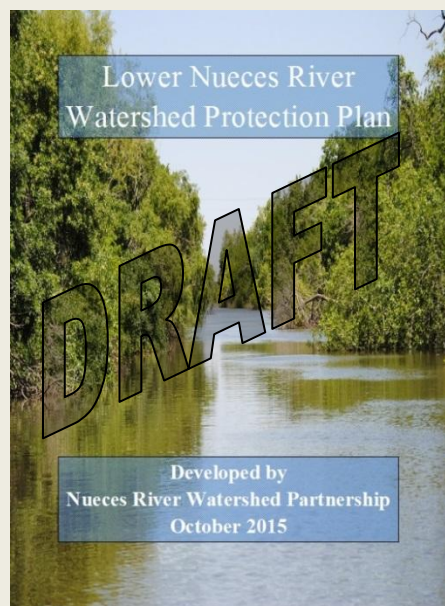
Petronila Creek Tributary Study

Petronila Creek (Segment 2204), is a stream approximately 44 miles long that flows into Alazan Bay, a small bay opening onto Baffin Bay. The creek was listed on the 2000 Texas 303(d) list of impaired water bodies for exceeding the standards for chloride (1,500 mg/l), sulfate (500 mg/l), and total dissolved solids (TDS) (4,000 mg/l). Field investigations identified that excessive chloride, sulfate, and TDS concentrations occur in the downstream section of the creek, southeast of US 77, in an area where man-made nonpoint sources such as produced water, brine pits, and brine injection wells, related to oil and gas production, are most numerous. In support of the Implementation Plan (I-Plan) for Petronila Creek, NRA began a monthly monitoring project that examines the amount of chloride, sulfate, and TDS present in surface waters of Petronila Creek and many of the tributaries that drain into it. Field and lab data collected so far indicates the contribution of salts to be a widespread issue. Monitoring at 7 locations along the main stem and tributaries of Petronila Creek should resume in the second quarter (December 2015 thru February 2016).



Nueces River Watershed Partnership - Development of the Lower Nueces River Watershed Protection Plan

The Draft Lower Nueces River Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) was approved by the Steering Committee at the October 20, 2015 meeting of the Nueces River Watershed Partnership. The public comment period was held from October 26, 2015 through November 25, 2015. After the responses to the received comments are approved by the Steering Committee, the WPP will be submitted to EPA. The Draft WPP is available at <http://www.nuecesriverpartnership.org/pubs.php>. The approved responses to comments will also be posted on this web page. In the meantime, NRA will pursue funding opportunities to address issues identified in the WPP.

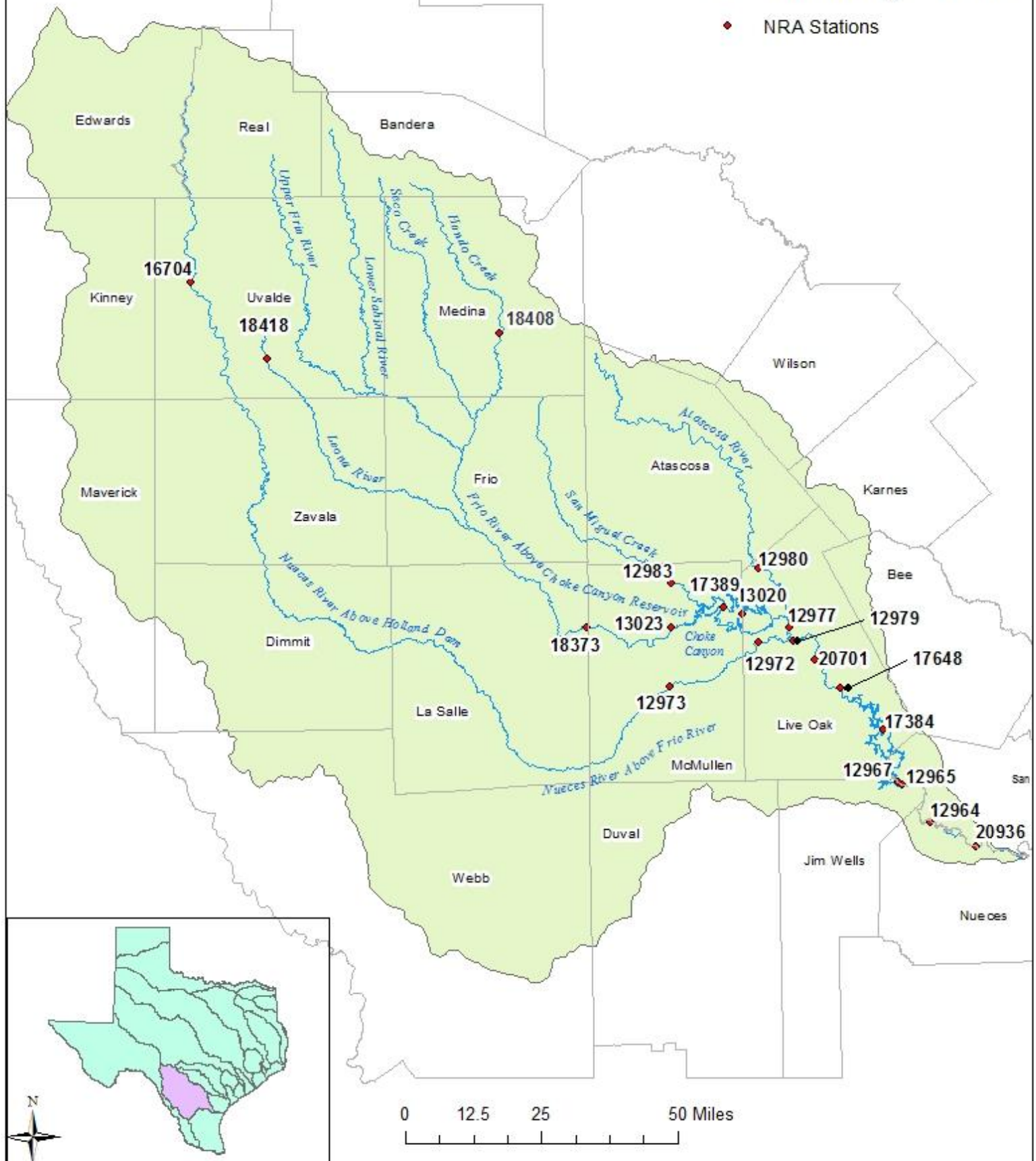


The next meeting of the Nueces River Watershed Partnership will be scheduled after comments are received from EPA. The date will be posted in the 'Announcements, Meetings, and Workshops' section on our homepage, <http://www.nueces-ra.org>. For more information about the Partnership and the WPP, visit <http://www.nuecesriverpartnership.org> or contact Rocky Freund at (361) 653-2110 or rfreund@nueces-ra.org.

Nueces River Basin

NRA Monitoring Stations

◆ NRA Stations



San Antonio-Nueces Coastal Basin



Nueces-Rio Grande Coastal Basin

Monitoring Stations

◆ NRA

