

SUPPORT

SB-1747 & HB-4146

PROTECT

TOURISM ECONOMIES
AND PROPERTY VALUES

SAVE

THE LAST PRISTINE
STREAMS IN TEXAS



WE ARE ASKING FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN KEEPING WASTEWATER OUT OF THE LAST PRISTINE STREAMS IN TEXAS.

Not all rivers are created equally. The most pristine streams, meeting the highest level of purity, require unique protections to ensure the health of the aquatic ecosystems and the local economies of many rural communities that depend on them.

Fair and balanced regulation prevents wastewater discharge when reasonable and viable alternatives exist—and protects Texas' last pristine streams.

SB-1747 deserves your support, in order to:

- Protect the unique natural resources that Texans have enjoyed for generations
- Protect the local economies of rural communities
- Protect the property values of private lands in Texas
- Protect the plants and wildlife that depend on stable and healthy aquatic ecosystems

THE PROBLEM

Over the last few years, a number of applications have sought discharge permits into Nueces basin headwater streams. So far, all the applicants have changed their plans and chosen alternative means of disposal. *No permits have yet been granted, authorizing discharge in the clear and clean Nueces headwaters, but there is currently no regulatory protection against this.* **Currently, it is difficult for TCEQ to deny a permit that would allow wastewater to be discharged into our last pristine streams.**

Streams like those in the Nueces headwaters contain almost no Total Phosphorus and they are hypersensitive to its addition. The absence of Phosphorus is an indicator of pristine water quality. Clear sparkling streams with pristine water quality are the cornerstone of local tourism economies and key to continued healthy aquatic systems.

THE SOLUTION

TCEQ is the regulatory agency in charge of issuing discharge permits, and they currently have no clear means of denying permit applications that would discharge wastewater into pristine streams like those in the Nueces Headwaters, including the Frio River.

The proposed legislation will prohibit TCEQ from issuing new and amended discharge permits to the identified pristine streams. **This legislation would help TCEQ help Texas.**

SUPPORT SB-1747 FOR CLEAR RIVERS

KEEP THEM PURE.

Today, only a few streams in Texas meet the highest level of purity. This proposed legislation is our last best hope for keeping them that way. Texas' most pristine streams naturally contain no or very low concentrations of phosphorus. A wastewater discharge permit within or above these stream segments would change everything. Even highly treated wastewater carries levels of phosphorous and other nutrients that far exceed the natural levels found in these Texas streams—where experience has taught us, discharge assures degradation.



ECONOMIES DEPEND ON IT.

Clean, clear, pristine waters in Texas support the state's vibrant visitor and recreation-based economy. Common sense dictates that property values are supported where water runs clean and pure—while values, habitats, and opportunities are lost when water is degraded. Prohibition of discharge into ultra-pure natural waters is a true win-win for tourism economies, property values, healthy aquatic systems, and the people of Texas.

THERE ARE ALTERNATIVES.

Using wastewater to degrade pristine streams makes no sense. The Texas Land Application Permit (TLAP) allows for the disposal of treated wastewater by land application where soil microbes and green plants can utilize the phosphorus and avoids degrading streams. Treated wastewater is a valuable water resource and TCEQ allows its beneficial reuse through its Chapter 210 Reuse Authorization.

Once the legislation is passed, applicants who formerly might have proposed to discharge wastewater into pristine streams would be directed to instead apply for a TLAP permit and consider the addition of a 210 Reuse authorization for one or more other beneficial uses. This change produces a win-win result. Texas' supply of drinking water is conserved, and wastewater can be used for beneficial use to the advantage of those applicants.

This legislation gives TCEQ all the right reasons to say NO to the degradation of pristine streams, and instead, to require very doable and reasonable means of disposal through land application, irrigation, and beneficial reuse.

THE HIGH COST TO TEXAS WITHOUT THIS LEGISLATION:

In addition to the detrimental effect on the health of the aquatic systems, these permits come at a great cost. Without this legislation, private landowners must organize at great personal expense, to contest each individual discharge permit application, in order to protect water quality in their creeks and rivers, as well as the value of their properties. Even the best-treated wastewater contains phosphorus and other nutrients in far higher concentrations than has existed in these pristine waters, and if wastewater is discharged to them it will result in algal blooms, fish kills, interrupt recreational use, and ultimately degrade many of our natural resources as well as rural economies.

