



# RICHLAND-CHAMBERS WATERSHED

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## **RICHLAND-CHAMBERS WATERSHED**

Known for its seemingly endless shoreline and as a destination for sport fishing, boating, and other recreational activities, this reservoir is also an important water supply for north central Texas. Streams in the watershed such as Waxahachie Creek, Chambers Creek, and Richland Creek feed several smaller lakes including Lake Waxahachie, Bardwell Reservoir, and Navarro-Mills Lake. These creeks and lakes are also popular destinations for fishing, swimming, boating, bird watching, and other outdoor activities.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF THE WATERSHED**

The quality of a water body is controlled largely by what happens in its watershed, or drainage area. Even activities that happen far upstream can affect the amount and quality of water in a creek or lake, as well as the plants, animals, and people who depend on it. Maintaining high quality creeks, rivers, and lakes means maintaining clean and healthy watersheds.

Creeks and lakes in the Richland-Chambers watershed are challenged by the combined effects of years of agricultural practices and more recent urban land use changes that increase the amount of hard surfaces and erosion. Population growth has also increased the number of wastewater treatment plants and

the amount of wastewater discharged to creeks and lakes in the watershed. According to the Texas Water Development Board, populations in the counties that contribute to the Richland-Chambers watershed are anticipated to grow significantly over the next 50 years, increasing stress on the watershed.

## **WATERSHED PROTECTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT**

Recently, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) has identified several water quality issues in local creeks and lakes in Ellis and Navarro Counties, and within the Richland-Chambers Reservoir. These include increasing levels of nitrogen, phosphorus, and chlorophyll-a, as well as low oxygen. While the report doesn't identify specific causes, it may indicate increasing stresses in the watershed and





growing threats to local creeks, lakes, and the Richland-Chambers Reservoir.

The water quality issues identified by TCEQ reflect the size and complexity of the Richland-Chambers watershed and will require a collaborative approach to resolve. Tarrant Regional Water District and Texas A&M AgriLife Research are leading the effort to address water quality issues in the Richland-Chambers watershed by facilitating the development and implementation of a Watershed Protection Plan.

Watershed planning is a voluntary process that aims to restore and protect water resources by identifying and mitigating controllable sources of pollutants and stresses in the watershed. During this process, a diverse set of stakeholders, such as landowners, residents, elected officials, and agency representatives, will work together to develop a comprehensive plan to reduce pollutants in local water bodies. Participation in the process and resulting watershed plan are strictly voluntary.

## WATERSHED PLANNING STEPS

The six steps of the watershed planning process include:

1. Build partnerships
2. Characterize the watershed
3. Develop goals and identify measures
4. Design an implementation plan
5. Implement the plan
6. Measure progress and make adjustments.

Public participation and stakeholder involvement is carried out through a series of public meetings. Input from stakeholders is critical to the development of a sustainable plan, as well as for continued implementation and re-evaluation in future years.

Visit [www.trwd.com/watersheds](http://www.trwd.com/watersheds) or scan the QR code on the front to learn more about our work in the Richland-Chambers watershed. Sign up for our newsletter at [eepurl.com/dG7s2j](http://eepurl.com/dG7s2j) to receive meeting invitations and other important watershed news.

# Richland-Chambers Watershed

