



Texas faces numerous issues related to water use and water quality. The State of Texas water plan documents increasing pressures on water supplies, and more than 300 Texas water bodies failed to meet state water quality standards. Addressing these water resources challenges has never been more critical. The Office of Strategic Water Issues under the Texas Water Resources Institute helps policy makers and stakeholders resolve these issues. The OSWI brings together government agencies and interest groups to seek solutions and advise decision makers regarding the critical water resources issues facing the State.

Relevance and Background

Texas faces many issues of water supply and quality that challenge existing policies and threaten economic development. Some of these include:

- Providing high-quality water supplies for economic development.
- Protecting our aquifers from overdraft and contamination.
- Managing vegetation and watersheds to sustain adequate base flows and reduce flooding.
- Purifying and using the State's extensive brackish and saline water resources.
- Protecting surface water quality and sustaining adequate stream flows for the environment.



Many state, federal, and local agencies and stakeholder groups have interests in meeting these complex environmental challenges. As a result, it can be difficult for legislators, regulators, and other decision makers to obtain unbiased advice concerning complex economic, societal, and environmental consequences of their policy and management decisions.

Objectives

Provide policy and decision makers with non-biased, science-based, analyses of critical water resources issues facing Texas by:

- Creating an Advisory Committee of legislative staff, state and federal agency staff, university water resources leaders and the private sector.
- Soliciting and responding to requests for white papers and analyses of critical and contentious water resources issues in Texas (3-6 per biennium).
- Inviting experts from regulatory agencies, interest groups, and universities to analyze the issues, considering best available science and most effective policies.
- Developing consensus recommendations regarding the issues.
- Communicating with policy makers, regulators, interest groups, and the public.
- Helping secure resources needed to resolve issues and solve problems.

