

**Section 7**  
**Consistency with Long-Term Protection**  
**of the State's Water Resources, Agricultural**  
**Resources, and Natural Resources**  
**[31 TAC §357.7(a)(13) and §357.7(2)(C)]**

The 2006 Coastal Bend Regional Water Plan (2006 Plan) is consistent with long-term protection of the state's water resources, agricultural resources, and natural resources and is developed based on guidance principles outlined in the Texas Administrative Code Chapter 358-State Water Planning Guidelines. The 2006 Plan was produced with an understanding of the importance of orderly development, management, and conservation of water resources and is consistent with all laws applicable to water use for the state and regional water planning areas. Furthermore, the plan was developed according to principles governing surface water and groundwater rights. The 2001 TCEQ Agreed Order governing freshwater pass-throughs to the Nueces Estuary was strictly adhered to for current surface water supply projects and future water management strategies. For groundwater, the 2006 Plan also recognized principles for groundwater use in Texas and the authority of groundwater conservation districts within the Coastal Bend Region. The rules of groundwater conservation districts in the region and regional drawdown constraints developed by the Coastal Bend Groundwater Advisory Panel were followed when determining groundwater availability. The CBRWPG recognizes the need to protect groundwater quality and recommends routine water quality monitoring near in situ uranium mining and deep well injection operations.

The 2006 Plan identifies actions and policies necessary to meet the Coastal Bend Region's near and long-term water needs by developing and recommending water management strategies to meet their needs with reasonable cost, good water quality, and sufficient protection of agricultural and natural resources of the state. The Coastal Bend Region recommended water management strategies that considered public interest of the state, wholesale water providers, protection of existing water rights, and opportunities that encourage voluntary transfers of water resources while balancing economic, social, and ecological viability. When needs could not be met economically with water management strategies, a socioeconomic impact analysis was performed to estimate the economic loss associated with not meeting these needs (Appendix F).

The 2006 Plan considered environmental information resulting from site-specific studies and ongoing water development projects when evaluating water management strategies. Cumulative effects of water management strategies on Nueces River instream flows and inflows to the Nueces estuary were considered, as summarized in Appendix L. A list of endangered and threatened species in the Coastal Bend Region for each county was obtained from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and these possible habitats were considered for each water management strategy (Section 4C). The 2001 Agreed Order includes operational procedures for Choke Canyon Reservoir and Lake Corpus Christi and requires passage of inflows to the Nueces Bay and Estuary based on maximum harvest studies and inflow recommendations to maintain the health of the Nueces Estuary.

Due to most areas having an underlying impervious clay layer, there has not been much opportunity for springs to form in the Coastal Bend Region.

The 2006 Plan consists of initiatives to respond to drought conditions, such as the City of Corpus Christi Drought Management Plan, which included modifying the operation of the CCR/LCC System during drought conditions as required by the Agreed Order to conserve water. As a further drought protection provision, the Coastal Bend Region adopted use of safe yield analyses for purposes of determining water supply. The use of safe yield analyses anticipates that a future drought may occur that is greater in severity than the worst drought of record and reserves a certain amount of water in storage (i.e., 7 percent of CCR/LCC System) for such an event. Use of safe yield for the major water supplies in the Nueces River Basin is justified based on previous droughts in the basin over the past 70 years. Figure 7-1 shows how 3-year average annual inflows for the major reservoir system have been reduced for each of the past four significant droughts.

The Coastal Bend Region conducted numerous meetings during the 2006 planning cycle, with meetings open to the public and decisions based on accurate, objective, and reliable information. The Region coordinated water planning and management activities with local, regional, state, and federal agencies and participated in interregional meetings with the South Central Texas Region (Region L) to identify common needs and worked together with Region L to develop interregional strategies in an open, equitable, and efficient manner. The Coastal Bend Region considered recommendations of stream segments with unique ecological value by Texas Parks and Wildlife and sites of unique value for reservoirs. At this time, the Coastal Bend Region

recommends that no stream segments or reservoir sites with unique ecological value be designated. The Planning Group developed policy recommendations for the 2006 Plan including protection of water quality, consideration of environmental issues, interbasin transfers, groundwater management, request for additional studies for water supply projects (such as desalination), and continued funding for regional water planning efforts.

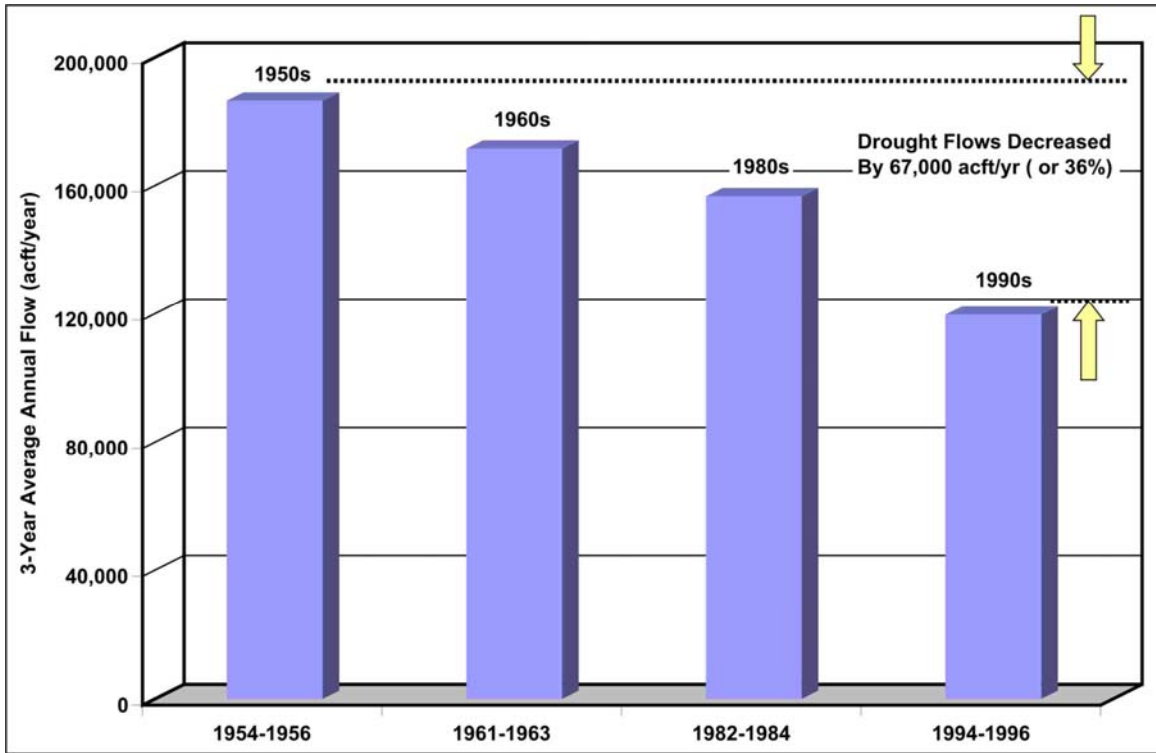


Figure 7-1. 3-Year Reservoir Inflows

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