

THE WATER IN THE RIO GRANDE

supports a diverse range of aquatic organisms, such as:



Fish



Mussels



Turtles



Crayfish



Macroinvertebrates



Birds

IN THE RIO GRANDE, WATER QUALITY IS A BIG DEAL!

Many local, state, and federal groups are working to collect data and address water quality issues in the Rio Grande.

To find out more about what's being done or what you can do, please visit our website:

<http://www.ibwc.gov/CRP/Index.htm>



Or contact us:

Texas Clean Rivers Program,
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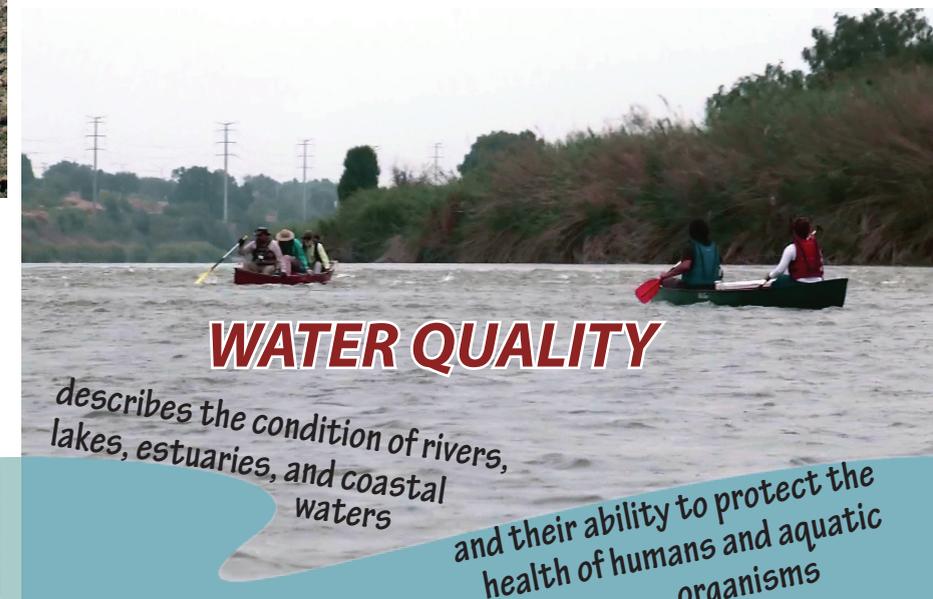
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WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL ABOUT



WATER QUALITY IN THE RIO GRANDE BASIN?



WATER QUALITY

describes the condition of rivers, lakes, estuaries, and coastal waters

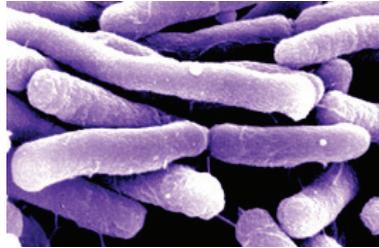
and their ability to protect the health of humans and aquatic organisms

POLLUTANTS

There are many kinds of pollutants that affect water quality in the Rio Grande, such as:



Chemicals



Bacteria



Trash



Salts



Sediment



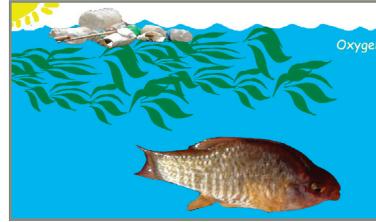
Excess Nutrients



Metals

EFFECTS OF POLLUTANTS

Pollutants can negatively affect humans and aquatic organisms. For example:



Since fish and other aquatic organisms breathe oxygen dissolved in the water, pollution and excess nutrients can cause algal growth and limit the available oxygen.

Sediment from erosion can cause turbidity and also lower the oxygen available to fish.



Salt can negatively impact irrigation of farmland.

Water with high bacteria can have pathogens present, so swimming or fishing in polluted water can sometimes be unsafe



Certain pollutants, such as metals and pesticides, can cause health issues for people and children.

ADDRESSING POLLUTANTS

There are two main ways that pollutants enter a waterway:

Point Sources

From specific points, such as through pipes and permitted discharges (treated wastewater)

Non-Point Sources

From a variety of sources that are not easy to pin-point, such as runoff from streets or farmland during rain events into stormwater drains

THE CLEAN WATER ACT

In 1972, the United States passed the Clean Water Act to protect the nation's waters.

The Clean Water Act:

- supports the “**protection and propagation of fish, shellfish, and wildlife and recreation in and on the water.**”
- is the major regulatory framework for addressing **point source** pollution by **requiring permits** to discharge into waters of the U.S.
- requires states to set **water quality standards** and to **monitor waterbodies routinely** to ensure they are protecting humans and aquatic organisms

