

# **Meeting the Needs of the Brazos Basin**

## **The Strategic Plan of the Brazos River Authority**

### **Mission Statement**

The Brazos River Authority (BRA) exists to develop, manage, and protect the water resources of the Brazos River basin.

### **Guiding Principles**

Quality People – The right people for the right job

Integrity and Respect

Commitment to Service and Stewardship

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

## **Goals, Objectives and Strategies:**

### **I. The BRA will develop water resources, including both surface and groundwater.**

- a. Support the development of surface water projects based on economic feasibility, environmental sensitivity and customer needs
  - 1. System Operation Permit
  - 2. Allens Creek Reservoir
  - 3. United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Reservoir Re-allocation Assessment Projects
  - 4. Additional surface water opportunities
- b. Develop groundwater responsibly and efficiently
  - 1. Trinity Wells
  - 2. Brazos Alluvium Research
  - 3. Monitor groundwater regulation, development, and opportunities
  - 4. Participate in groundwater/surface water interface studies
- c. Support reuse and conjunctive use to increase benefit of existing water resources
  - 1. System Operation Permit
  - 2. East Williamson County Regional Water System

3. Bell County Water Conservation and Improvement District #1 Reuse Project at Stillhouse Hollow
  4. Other reuse and conjunctive use opportunities
- d. Support the development of economically feasible alternative water sources, such as Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR), and seawater and/or brackish groundwater desalination treatment technology
1. Williamson County Aquifer Storage and Recovery
  2. Bell County Aquifer Storage and Recovery
- e. Research and develop infrastructure for the conveyance/transportation of water from areas of surplus to areas of need
1. Lake Belton-Stillhouse Hollow Pipeline
  2. Williamson County Regional Raw Water Line
  3. Integrated Water Resources Planning

**II. The BRA will manage water resources as a service to BRA customers and to support beneficial use by citizens of the Brazos River basin.**

- a. Manage water resources as a system
  1. System Operation Permit and Water Management Plan
  2. Possum Kingdom – Granbury Water Management
  3. East Williamson County Regional Water System
- b. Operate and maintain BRA water supplies and associated infrastructure in a safe, responsible manner in compliance with water right permits, water supply contracts, and other applicable regulatory requirements
  1. Long-term preventive maintenance of BRA Dams and Reservoir facilities
    - i. Possum Kingdom Lake
    - ii. Lake Limestone
    - iii. Lake Granbury
  2. Develop Risk-Based Asset Capital Management Program
  3. Manage floodwater releases from BRA reservoirs
  4. Williamson County Regional Raw Water Line
  5. Brazos Watermaster Program
  6. Emergency Action Plans

- c. Protect water supply and treatment facilities and proactively plan for continuous improvement of security measures
  - 1. *American Water Infrastructure Act of 2018* All-Hazards and Emergency Response Plan Development for use by customers in the water supply component of local plans
  - 2. Update site security analyses for all facilities and incorporate information into future capital improvements
  - 3. Advance physical and cyber security measures
- d. Encourage water conservation strategies to address projected water shortages in the basin
  - 1. Support efforts to accomplish water conservation goals within the Regional and State Water Plans
  - 2. Assist in achievement of water conservation
- e. Manage water treatment plant (WTP) and wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) operations
  - 1. East Williamson County Regional Water Supply System
  - 2. Sandy Creek WTP Operations
  - 3. Hutto WWTP Operations
  - 4. Clute/Richwood WWTP Operations

5. Sugar Land WWTP Operations
  6. Temple/Belton WWTP Operations
  7. Doshier Farm WWTP Operations
- f. Explore new water and wastewater treatment plant opportunities

**III. The BRA will protect water resources, and where possible improve water quality and habitat, to support responsible and efficient use of the Brazos River basin's natural resources.**

- a. Monitor and assess water quality throughout the basin for compliance with applicable regulatory requirements
  1. Clean Rivers Program and Water Quality Initiatives
  2. Environmental Flow Standards
  3. Support water supply development
  4. Participate in State sponsored advisory groups related to water quality standards development and revision, water quality monitoring protocol development, and development of the Texas Integrated Report of Surface Water Quality
- b. Monitor and assess stream and reservoir biology and morphology to determine the effectiveness of instream flows and other programs in maintaining healthy riparian areas and aquatic life conditions
  1. Baseline instream flow monitoring and biological assessment to inform on SB3 environmental flow standards
  2. Candidate-listed aquatic species population and recruitment assessments
  3. Reservoir Habitat Improvement Program
  4. Participate with State and federal agencies on issues related to Threatened and Endangered Species and/or Invasive Species

- i. Freshwater Mussel Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances (CCAA) Implementation
    - ii. Brazos Water Snake Study
    - iii. Texas Parks and Wildlife Invasive Species Interlocal Agreement
- c. Provide for environmental flows through reservoir operations and participate in statewide instream flow initiatives
  - 1. Participate in state sponsored advisory groups related to environmental flow standard development and revision
  - 2. Donation of long-term firm water to Texas Water Trust
- d. Participate in local watershed protection management efforts
  - 1. Bureau of Land Management Joint Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Resource Management Plan (RMP) for Texas
  - 2. Lake Limestone Downstream Riparian Restoration
  - 3. Develop Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) permit application review protocols to identify applications that potentially pose a potential threat to the water quality of drinking water sources
- e. Support development of new water supplies through environmental impact studies
  - 1. Allens Creek 404 Permit
  - 2. Lake Belton-Stillhouse Hollow Pipeline

- f. Manage BRA-owned properties and administer rules and regulations relative to State and federal programs for the protection of water resources, aquatic life, and overall water quality
  - 1. United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Section 10 permitting
  - 2. Aquatic Resource Relocation Plans
- g. Identify conservation/restoration opportunities on BRA property and at key locations across the basin where such activities would contribute to the protection of drinking water supplies, improve water quality conditions, contribute to the preservation of aquatic habitat of sensitive species, and/or provide mitigation opportunities for BRA projects
  - 1. Integrated Water Resources Plan
  - 2. BRA Properties Master Plan

**IV. The BRA will proactively engage in strategic planning and effective resource management.**

- a. Support the development of strategies to meet the needs of the Water Supply System with a sensitivity to the System Water Rate
  - 1. Involvement in State Water Planning and Flood Planning Processes
  - 2. Integrated Water Resources Plan
  - 3. Long Range Financial Plan
  - 4. Strategic Plan
  - 5. BRA Properties Master Plan
  
- b. Support the development of strategies that improve assessment of operational efficiency and physical condition of assets and that improve capital renewal of assets
  - 1. Improve electronic data management platform options for collection and evaluation of physical condition, operating performance and environmental data
  - 2. Develop a risk-based asset management framework for planning of capital renewal and rehabilitation

**V. The BRA will maintain communications and public relations efforts to support the BRA's mission and service to the Brazos River basin communities.**

- a. Ensure transparency through proactive public information efforts to support the BRA's mission and goals including:
  - 1. Speaker's Bureau
  - 2. Website and Social Media Programs
  - 3. BRA email newsletter
  - 4. Water school section of website
  - 5. Major Rivers Educational Program
  - 6. Brazos Basin Now
  - 7. Educational events
- b. Allow public access to BRA records and information in compliance with Freedom of Information Act and Texas Open Government provisions
  - 1. Open records requests via the BRA website
- c. Develop positive working relationships with legislators, local elected officials, customers, and other stakeholders in order to strategically position BRA to accomplish its goals
  - 1. Meetings and briefings held to provide information and updates
  - 2. Act as a source of information for policy discussions
  - 3. Manage local issues as needed for elected officials

4. Annual regional customer meetings
  5. Create local stakeholder groups to facilitate dialogue where possible and appropriate
- d. Maintain transparency in BRA's finances and operations by providing timely posting of reports on BRA website including:
1. Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR)
  2. Annual Operating Plan (Budget)
  3. Annual Retirement Financial Report
  4. Quarterly Financial Reports
  5. Quarterly Investment Reports
  6. Annual Debt Information
  7. Long Range Financial Plan (last updated in FY 2011)
  8. Utility Consumption Reporting
- e. Ensure accountability to our customers, the legislature, and the public by cooperatively participating in statutorily required external audits and review processes
1. 5-year Management audits as needed
  2. Sunset Review process
  3. Annual network penetration testing to identify and correct potential vulnerabilities

**VI. The BRA will develop and retain employees to support the BRA's strategic vision, enhance diversity and inclusion in the workforce, and prepare the BRA to accomplish its mission.**

- a. Recruit, develop and retain the right people for the right job
  - 1. Attend job fairs and recruiting events to promote BRA employment opportunities
  - 2. Enhance recruiting efforts by building relationships with community organizations, colleges and multicultural groups, and by utilizing diverse social media outlets
  - 3. Invest in employee training and development programs, compensate for critical skills, and provide growth and advancement opportunities
  - 4. Promote diversity of thoughts, ideas, and approaches to increase employee engagement, encourage inclusion, and inspire innovation
  - 5. Maintain equitable compensation system
  - 6. Provide a secure retirement benefit
- b. Promote an organizational culture that values employee contributions, encourages collaboration, supports diversity and recognizes achievements
  - 1. Foster positive employee relations
  - 2. Service and Safety Award Program
- c. Ensure operational efficiency throughout programs and processes

1. Improve Project Management Program through increased training and enhancement of processes and procedures
  2. Implementation of Microsoft 365 to ensure high availability of data and facilitate efficient archiving and searching of data
  3. Continue development of internal and external applications to support business needs
- d. Improve internal communication and coordination between functional groups
1. Utilize Staff Summary Sheets
  2. Development of Project Management Guidelines
  3. Training of audio and video conferencing software and tools
- e. Conduct business with a customer service focus
1. Educate customers and the public on BRA reservoir operations, drought and flooding conditions, and system operations issues.
  2. Enhance secure electronic collaboration and sharing of information with external entities
- f. Encourage a healthy workforce through programs and initiatives
1. Holistic wellness initiative that includes health and wellness training, annual health fairs, access to fitness and health-related materials, and alternative work schedules to allow time for exercise and annual wellness visits

- g. Ensure a safe working environment, promote a safety conscious attitude in all employees and facilitate the implementation of proactive steps to reduce accidents and incidents
  - 1. Deploy a comprehensive program to continuously improve culture of health and safety at home, in public, and in personal lives
  - 2. Conduct monthly employee safety training
  - 3. Effectively implement and utilize Engineering and Administrative Controls and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
  - 4. Conduct a Needs Assessment to identify potential solutions to space and functional limitations of the current space dedicated to the Environmental Services Department