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Brazos River Authority and TCEQ Fly the Rivers

A project documenting the status of two major rivers in the state will kickoff next week with the first run of aerial videography through the Brazos River watershed.

A jointly funded effort by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), the Brazos River Authority (BRA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the project will entail a helicopter fly-over of the lower two-thirds of the Brazos as well as all of the North Bosque River. The Brazos River portion will originate at the confluence of the Salt and Double Mountain Forks (located in eastern Stonewall County near Aspermont) and proceed southward to the Gulf Coast.

“The purpose of the documented flights is to obtain a photographic record of the riparian habitat zones along the rivers and lakes,” said John Ellis, PhD. Strategic Planning Manager for the BRA and project manager for the program. “The resulting record will aid both the BRA and TCEQ in their oversight and protection of the water resources of the state.” Brazos Helicopters of Bruceville, Texas will perform the aerial videography.

The initial phase of the project is expected to cost \$220,000, with the final products available in the fall of 2006. Additional flights will take place in the future, covering the John Graves Scenic River portion of the Brazos (located in Palo Pinto and Parker counties). Texas State Senate Bill 1354, authored by State Senator Craig Estes of Wichita Falls and Representative Jim Keffer of Eastland, authorizes biannual documentation of the status of the John Graves Scenic River portion of the Brazos River.

About the Brazos River Authority

The Brazos River Authority, with headquarters in Waco, is the oldest river authority in Texas. Created by the Texas Legislature in 1929, the Authority's 42,000 square-mile territory includes all or part of 70 counties; extending from the Texas-New Mexico border west of Lubbock to the Gulf of Mexico near Freeport.

The Authority built, owns, and operates three reservoirs (Lakes Possum Kingdom, Granbury, and Limestone). In addition to these water supply reservoirs, the Authority contracts with the Corps of Engineers for the water supply storage space at eight Federal multi-purpose flood control and water conservation reservoirs (Lakes Whitney, Belton, Proctor, Somerville, Stillhouse Hollow, Granger, Georgetown and Aquilla).

The Brazos River Authority owns and operates a regional wastewater system for the cities of Temple-Belton. The Authority also operates wastewater treatment plants for Brushy Creek Regional Wastewater System in Round Rock, and the cities of Hutto, Georgetown, Dime Box, Clute-Richwood and Sugar Land.

The Authority owns and operates water treatment systems at Lake Granbury (which supplies potable water to wholesale customers in Hood and Johnson Counties), the City of Taylor and the City of Dime Box. A potable water treatment plant located in Leander is owned jointly by the Lower Colorado River Authority and the Brazos River Authority. The Authority also engages in water quality monitoring activities throughout the Brazos River Basin.

For further information on the Brazos River Authority, please contact Judi Pierce, Public Information Officer at 254-761-3103.