



**JOE A. GONZALEZ**  
COUNTY COMMISSIONER (JAG) PCT. 2

SANDRA SANTOS  
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

NUECES COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
901 LEOPARD STREET, SUITE 303.07  
CORPUS CHRISTI, TX 78401-3689  
(361) 888-0296 • FAX: (361) 888-0239

July 3, 2024

Mr. John E. Valls, Chairman  
and Commissioners  
Nueces County Hospital District  
555 N. Carancahua, Suite 950  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78478

RECEIVED  
JUL 05 2024  
NCHD-ADMINISTRATION

Dear Mr. Valls and Commissioners,

Nueces County is currently embarking on a health, safety and ecosystem mitigation program and is requesting funding assistance. I am currently working on mitigating current deficient septic systems in Nueces County Pct 2 Colonias.


Current research shows that a significant percentage of existing septic systems in colonias are not permitted through Nueces County and/or City of Corpus Christi Health Department. A deficient septic system releases hazardous human waste that conveys via storm water runoff and causes bacterial contamination and illnesses to both humans and animals. Furthermore, this contamination is detrimental to the condition of our bays. (Refer to the attached documentation)

This project will offer free of charge septic system inspections, pump outs, repairs and/or replacement if required. The project is open to homeowners living in Colonia communities located in Nueces County Pct 2. The project outcome will yield properly designed and permitted septic systems, construction, and maintenance in accordance with Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) regulations for Onsite Sewage Facilities (OSSF's).

In conclusion, this project will mitigate health hazards and life safety issues currently present in these colonias by ensuring the septic systems follow state regulations. It will not only improve the residents' quality of life but will aid the health and ecosystem restoration of our creeks, Petronila and Oso Bay, which are of extreme importance to our community.

Nueces County Precinct 2 current investment in this project consists of approximately 2 million. I would humbly request the Hospital District for a match in the amount of 1 million to further continue this project to reach as many households as possible. This request is not a want but a need that will benefit Nueces County and our bays. Your consideration is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully,

  
Joe A. Gonzalez (JAG)  
Nueces County Commissioner Pct 2

xc: Mr. Jonny Hipp ✓  
Nueces County Hospital District Administrator





## Section 319

# NONPOINT SOURCE PROGRAM SUCCESS STORY

# Texas

## Adopting Conservation Tillage and Repairing Septic Systems Improves Water Quality in Oso Bay

### Waterbodies Improved

Low levels of dissolved oxygen (DO) in Texas' Oso Bay caused by high nutrient and organic loading prompted the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to add the bay to the Clean Water Act (CWA) section 303(d) list of impaired waters for failure to support its aquatic life designated use. Extensive implementation of cropland best management practices (BMPs), repair and replacement of failing septic systems, trash cleanups, and education and outreach took place in the watershed and around the bay, leading to decreased nutrient and organic loading and higher DO levels in the bay. As a result, in 2010 TCEQ removed Upper and Lower Oso Bay (segments 2485\_01 and 2485\_03, respectively) from the CWA section 303(d) list.

### Problem

The combined watersheds of Oso Creek and Oso Bay drain an area of approximately 235 square miles in Nueces County, Texas (Figure 1). Oso Bay is a shallow tertiary bay of about 2,963 acres that empties into Corpus Christi Bay. The watershed is dominated by cropland in the western portion and developed residential areas in the eastern portion. Other activities in the watershed include petroleum exploration and refining, manufacturing, and tourism.

Oso Bay is classified as having an *exceptional aquatic life* designated use. To meet state water quality standards, the bay must maintain a 24-hour average for DO above 5.0 milligrams per liter (mg/L), and the daily minimum grab sample may not be below 4.0 mg/L. Portions of Oso Bay were first placed on the CWA section 303(d) list in 1996 for failing to meet the state's DO criteria. Water quality sampling conducted by Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi in 2001 indicated that the lowest recorded DO values in the bay were 1.9 mg/L (in segment 2485\_01) and 0.45 mg/L (in segment 2485\_03). On the basis of these and other similar data, TCEQ added the entire bay to the CWA section 303(d) list for low DO in 2004.

Low DO levels can be caused by elevated nutrient levels, which result in algal blooms and other oxygen-demanding materials decomposing in water. Litter, failing septic systems, and runoff from cropland and urban areas were identified as potential sources of nonpoint source pollution contributing to Oso Bay's impairment.

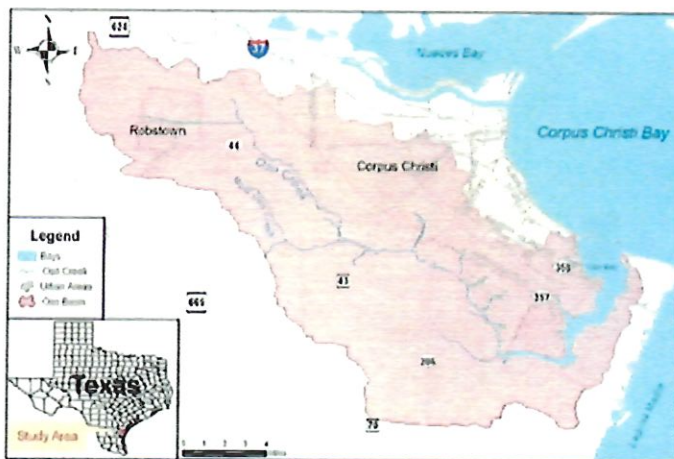


Figure 1. Oso Creek and Oso Bay are in southeast Texas.

### Project Highlights

In September 2002 the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) partnered with the Nueces Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and local landowners to voluntarily implement BMPs on agricultural land in the Oso Bay watershed. Conservation tillage (Figure 2) was one of the main practices used to reduce soil erosion. Through this effort, 56 water quality management plans were developed and implemented on 14,501 acres. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) also developed conservation plans on more than 35,000 acres of agricultural land in the watershed. Education and outreach were provided by the SWCD, TSSWCB, and NRCS through technical assistance to the landowners.





Figure 2. Landowners adopted conservation tillage in the Oso Bay watershed.

TSSWCB also partnered with Texas A&M AgriLife Research and the U.S. Geological Survey to collect and analyze water quality data in the watershed's agricultural areas. These data were collected pre-and post-implementation to determine the effectiveness of BMPs. **The Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program, Nueces County, and TCEQ partnered to repair, replace, or install septic systems in the watershed from 2007 to 2009. The primary area of focus was Tierra Grande colonia (an unincorporated subdivision) and nearby households. Partners helped to install 21 new septic systems on properties with no existing systems or with failed systems. Additionally, 10 systems that were not functioning at optimal capacity were repaired.**

The Coastal Bend Council of Governments partnered with Nueces County, Texas A&M–Corpus Christi, and TCEQ Region 14 to address illegal dumping. As part of an education campaign about illegal dumping, the partners conducted 97 presentations at local schools and community events from 2006 through 2010. In addition, three public service announcements were aired over a six-month period in 2006. The partners also performed litter cleanups, including two events (November 6, 2009, and July 23, 2010) at the State Highway 348 bridge over Oso Bay. The cleanup efforts removed more than four tons of trash and debris. The partners installed four trash cans along the bridge to encourage proper trash disposal. An additional cleanup was conducted in the Tierra Grande colonia on November 3, 2007.

## Results

Water quality monitoring data that were assessed for the 2010 Texas Integrated Report and CWA sec-

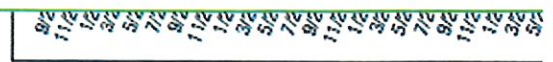


Figure 3. Twenty-four-hour DO monitoring improved DO levels in Lower Oso Bay.

tion 303(d) list showed that the daily minimum sample and 24-hour average for DO levels in and Lower Oso Bay (Figure 3) complied with state's water quality standards. As a result, T removed the Upper and Lower Oso Bay segment from the state's CWA section 303(d) list of waters for DO. The success of this effort is attributed to the voluntary implementation of BMP by landowners and the use of education and outreach through technical assistance. Landowners continued to implement agricultural BMPs with assistance from TSSWCB, Nueces SWCD, and NRCS during the assessment period, along with continued sediment implementation, trash cleanup, and outreach.

## Partners and Funding

Over \$761,100 in CWA section 319 funds and \$27,700 in state funds from TSSWCB, paired with over \$385,600 in non-federal matching funds from Texas A&M AgriLife Research and local landowners, supported efforts to collect and analyze water samples and provide technical and financial assistance for voluntary BMP implementation by agricultural producers in the Oso Bay watershed. Additionally, NRCS provided over \$90,900 in Bill funding for technical and financial assistance to develop watershed conservation plans.

**More than \$180,000 in CWA section 319 funds from TCEQ, combined with \$120,000 in non-federal matching funds from the Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program, the Coastal Bend Council of Governments, and Nueces County, was used to install, replace, or repair septic systems, perform litter cleanups, and provide outreach and education in the Oso Bay watershed.**

## For additional information contact:

**Brian Koch**  
Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board  
979-532-9496 • [bkoch@tsswcb.texas.gov](mailto:bkoch@tsswcb.texas.gov)

**Tim Cawthon**  
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Water  
Washington, DC

EPA 841-F-14-001HH  
June 2014

Thank you,





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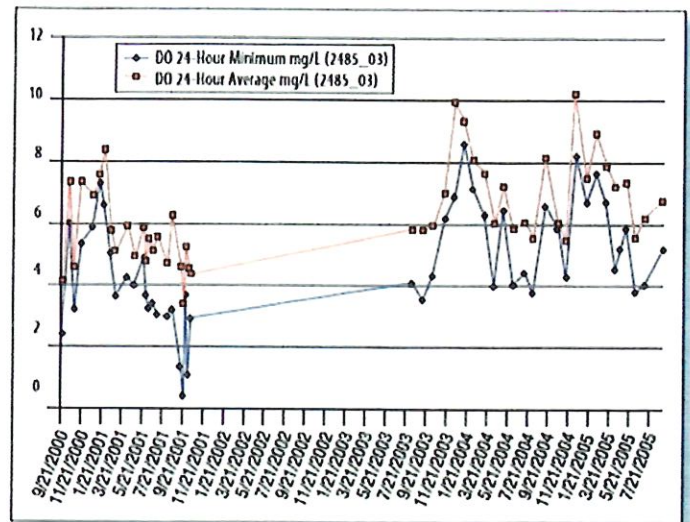


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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Water  
Washington, DC

EPA 841-F-14-001HH  
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**Tim Cawthon**  
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality  
512-239-0845 • [tim.cawthon@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:tim.cawthon@tceq.texas.gov)





Joe A. Gonzalez  
County Commissioner, Precinct 2  
Nueces County Courthouse  
Sandra Santos  
Administrative Assistant

June 17, 2024

Letter and application to be mailed to residents in the Tierra Grande, San Petronila Estates 1 & 2 and Belk Lane in Commissioner Pct 2 areas. Not sure how far our funding will go but will try to repair or replace as many septic systems as possible.

COPY

Dear Resident:

Nueces County has received State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). These funds allow us to improve improperly functioning septic systems that need repair or replacement in the colonia community. An improperly functioning septic system may release bacteria into the ground and surface water causing bacterial contamination and possible illnesses to both humans and animals.

If you wish to be considered for the replacement or repair of your septic system, I have included an application for your consideration. The application needs to be returned to our office no later than July 30, 2024, for evaluation and requirements of federal rules and county policies for this project.

Original applications need to be fully completed and returned via mail to be considered. Copies, faxes or emails will not be considered. A self-addressed, stamped envelope has been provided for your convenience.

Once the applications have been reviewed, a follow up letter will be sent notifying you if your application has been approved.

This is a public improvement project that will benefit the health and safety of local residents and your cooperation is appreciated. If you should have any questions, please contact my office at (361) 888-0296.

*Para explicar en español, por favor llama Sandra Santos (361) 888-0296.*

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe A. Gonzalez".

Joe A. Gonzalez  
County Commissioner, Pct 2

NUECES COUNTY ID#: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE RECEIVED: \_\_\_\_\_ SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 COLONIA ID OR M NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ NC PRECINCT: \_\_\_\_\_

**EXHIBIT A**

<b>HOMEOWNER APPLICATION</b>		<b>NUECES COUNTY Colonias Septic System Improvements Project</b>	
Name of Applicant: _____	Home Phone: _____		
Mailing Address: _____	Other Phone: _____		
City, State: _____	Zip Code: _____		
County: _____	Email Address: _____		
<i>If the mailing address is a post office box, complete the section below for physical location:</i>			
Physical Address: _____	City, State, Zip: _____		
Is the property located within a Nueces County Colonia? Subdivision/ Colonia name: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Yes</b> <b>No</b>
Do you own the property where the septic system is located?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Does the applicant live at the physical address where the septic tank is in need of repair or replacement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the property occupied for the majority of the year (>51% of the time)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>If you answered NO to any of the above questions, do not proceed with this application. Only septic systems attached to a non-seasonal residence within the Nueces County Colonias Septic System Improvement Project Areas qualify for this program.</b>			
How long have you owned this property? _____ Years _____ Months	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will the septic system be repaired or installed at the above physical address?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you currently have electricity in the home? If NO, state the reason you do not have electric services: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>*The septic systems need electricity to operate. Nueces County is not responsible for providing electricity to the applicant address.</b>			
Is there a well located on the property? If YES, is the well currently used as a water source? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Number of Bedrooms: _____ Number of Occupants: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>INCOME – ELLIGIBLE PROPERTIES SHOULD HAVE NO MORE THAN A TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF \$75,000 FOR A FAMILY OF AT LEAST 3 MEMBERS.</b>			
Total Household Income: _____			
<b>CURRENT SEPTIC SYSTEM CONDITION</b>			
Is there currently a septic system on the property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If you answered YES, please complete the following to the best of your knowledge. Describe the current system at your address. (If it is unknown, simply write "unknown".)			
Year installed: _____ Type of System: _____ Size of tank: _____ Concrete <input type="checkbox"/> Metal <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>			
Date of last pumpout or inspection: _____			
Do you currently have a contract with a licensed Maintenance Provider? Provider: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Has the current system been deemed as failing or in need of repair by a licensed installer? In need of repair <input type="checkbox"/> or replacement <input type="checkbox"/> (please check one)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Name of licensed installer: _____			
Additional Information (continue on back if necessary): _____ _____ _____ _____			
Describe the extent of failure, including the length of time the system has been failing, for example: poor drainage, foul odors, water backing up in the toilet, saturated yard, alarms, etc. (continue on the back if necessary). _____ _____ _____			
<b>*Those residents included in CDBG Mit funded projects will not be considered for this project at this time. Funding for CDBG Mit projects has already been allocated and construction, if awarded, will take place at a later date - to be determined.</b>			
Have you already applied for septic system assistance under another program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Program name: _____			