



P.O. Box 13231, 1700 N. Congress Ave.  
Austin, TX 78711-3231, [www.twdb.texas.gov](http://www.twdb.texas.gov)  
Phone (512) 463-7847, Fax (512) 475-2053

## AGENDA ITEM MEMO

**BOARD MEETING DATE:** October 2, 2025

**TO:** Board Members

**THROUGH:** Bryan McMath, Executive Administrator  
Ashley Harden, General Counsel  
Matt Nelson, Deputy Executive Administrator, Office of Planning

**FROM:** Temple McKinnon, Director, Water Supply Planning

**SUBJECT:** Confirmation of the existing regional water planning area boundaries

### **ACTION REQUESTED**

Consider confirming the existing boundaries of the 16 regional water planning areas without change.

### **BACKGROUND**

Texas Water Code (TWC) §16.053(b) directs the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) to designate the areas for which regional water plans shall be developed. The Board is required to review and update as necessary regional water planning area boundaries at least every five years in accordance with TWC §16.053(b) and 31 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §357.11(a). The last review was confirmed at the February 25, 2021, Board meeting where the originally established boundaries were confirmed without change.

In designating boundaries, the Board is to take into consideration such factors as:

- river basin and aquifer delineations,
- water utility development patterns,
- socioeconomic characteristics,
- existing regional water planning areas,
- political subdivision boundaries,
- public comment, and
- other factors the Board deems relevant.

### **KEY ISSUES**

The process by which the TWDB reviews and updates the boundary designations is outlined in 31 TAC §357.11. To initiate TWDB's review process, regional water planning group stakeholders were notified on May 16, 2025, via email and publication of notice in the

<b>Our Mission</b>	<b>Board Members</b>
Leading the state's efforts in ensuring a secure water future for Texas	L'Oreal Stepney, P.E., Chairwoman   Tonya R. Miller, Board Member Bryan McMath, Executive Administrator

*Texas Register*, of the opportunity to provide comment on the regional water planning area boundaries. The public comment period was open for 45 days and 183 written comments were received. These are summarized as follows:

- Three comments suggesting specific changes to boundaries, including:
  - The elimination of Region J by redistributing the planning area into Regions E, L, and M to better align major river watersheds and connected groundwater aquifers in rapid population growth and development areas.
  - Alignment of the regional water and flood planning areas where possible to lower the technical and administrative burden on communities to engage in planning.
  - Modification of boundaries to remove all county splits.
- Two general comments suggesting factors be considered other than those identified in statute, including groundwater conservation district boundaries, transboundary sources, and environmental needs.
- 174 comments supporting no changes to the boundaries.
- Four comments were not considered relevant to the boundary review process.

The factors for designating the boundaries, as well as the comments received, were given consideration in developing the Executive Administrator's recommendation.

- Regarding the comment to eliminate of Region J, no significant revisions to river basin or aquifer delineations have occurred since the initial establishment of the planning area boundaries. All water providers and water users are fully planned for in the water planning process regardless of whether a utility service area occurs within one or multiple regional water planning areas. While political subdivision boundaries and water utility development patterns continue to develop around population growth, the Executive Administrator is not aware of any shifts that warrant changing planning area boundaries.
- Regarding the comment to align water and flood planning areas, the flood planning area boundaries are solely and appropriately aligned directly with river basins, while the water planning area boundaries must take into account many other factors including, for example, aquifers, many of which run perpendicular to and across multiple river basins.
- Regarding the comment to modify boundaries to remove all county splits, there are certain water planning data reporting requirements, including at river basin level. This basin-level data collection is one reason for the existence of split counties.
- Regarding the general comments to consider other factors than those identified in statute, such as groundwater conservation districts, transboundary sources, and environmental needs, the administrative rules for the water supply planning process outline factors considered statewide.

Changes to the regional water planning area boundaries would result in changes to the planning data collected and reported. There would be potential significant impacts to agencywide data sets and applications and changes would also reduce or eliminate the ability to make comparisons in the impacted regional plans from one planning cycle to the next. Based on the factors discussed, the Executive Administrator is unaware of any specific issues that merit revising the regional water planning area boundaries.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Executive Administrator recommends confirming the existing regional water planning area boundaries without change.