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Texas NRCS Welcomes AAQTF Meeting College Station, Texas

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Why does air quality matter to Texans?



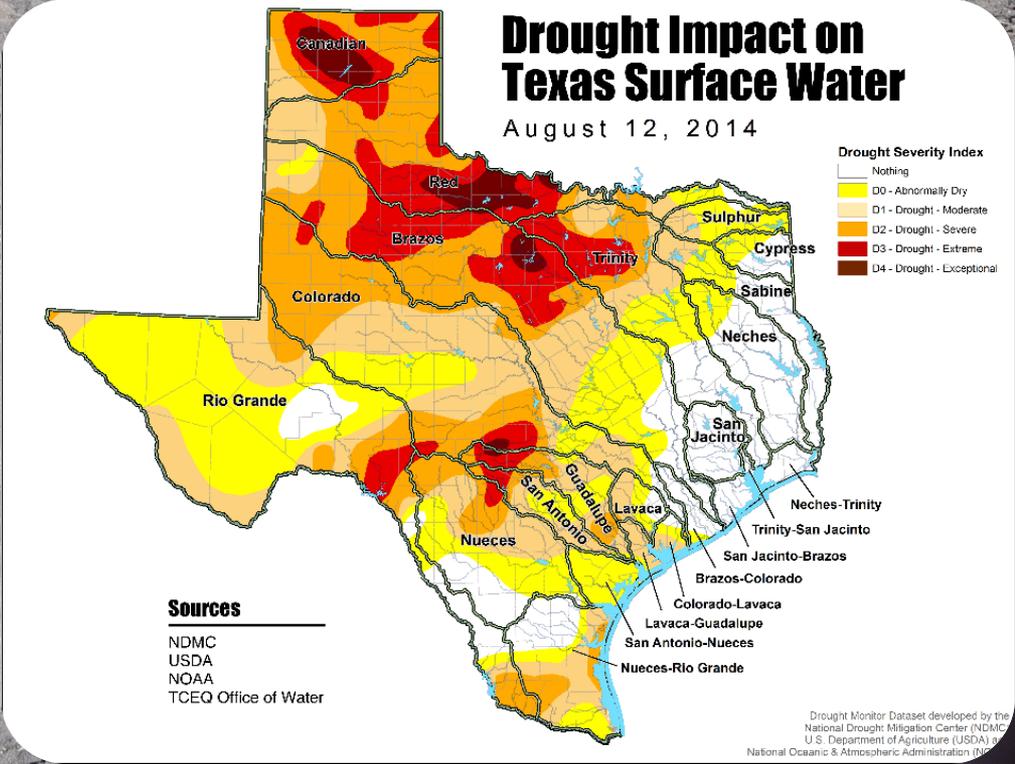
- Population growth - 26,448,193 million people living in Texas (2013 census)
- Top five Texas metroplexes are Dallas/Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio, Austin, El Paso
- Dallas/Fort Worth and Houston rank in the top ten nationally
- Tremendous impact on the state's natural resources as population trend increases
- Farmers and ranchers are at the front line of implementing conservative practices that address air quality concerns
- Over 95 percent of lands are privately owned



Challenges to addressing air quality concerns

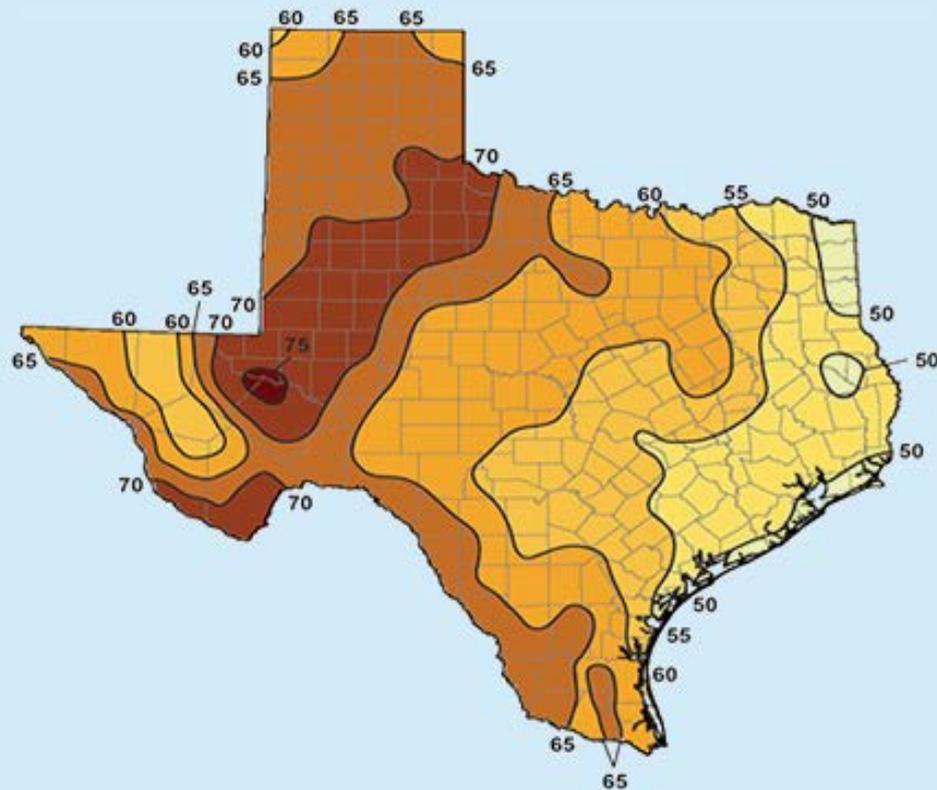
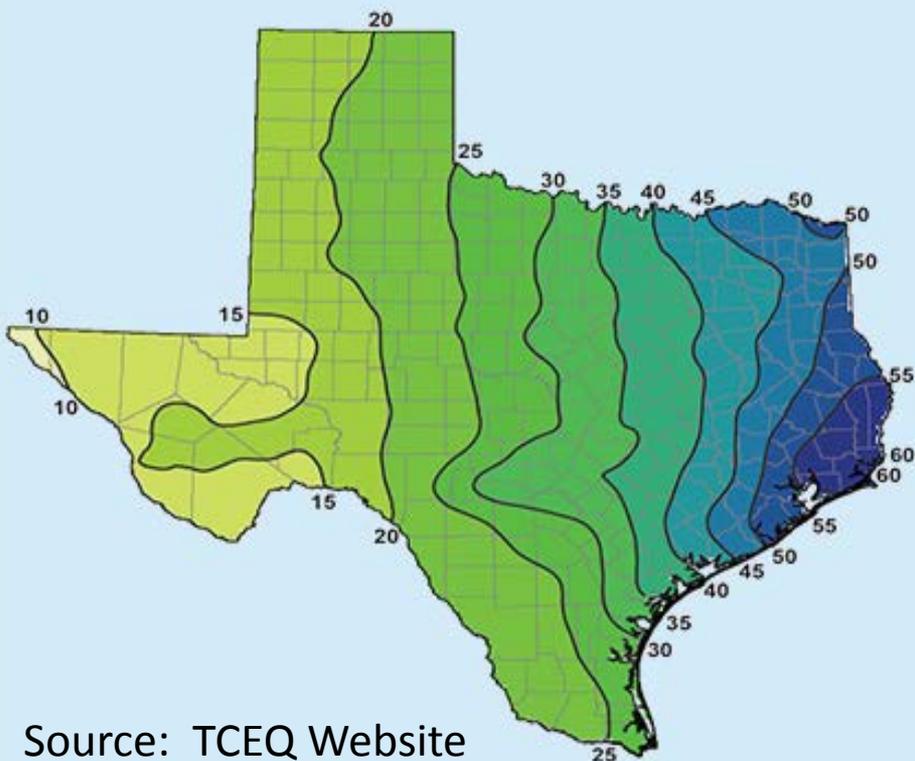
- Encroachment of urban sprawl on traditional agriculture communities
- Land fragmentation
- Uninformed population concerning farming, ranching and CAFO/AFO practices
- Vocal opponents of livestock animal waste practices
- Urban population concerns over dust control
- Absentee landowners
- Drought





Texas personifies extremes in rainfall, climate, temperatures and ecosystems

Texas Rainfall and Evaporation



Source: TCEQ Website

Texas nonattainment areas

- 22 Texas counties exceed air quality standards for either particulate matter (PM), excessive ozone, greenhouse gases or a combination of the above.
- These 22 counties are impacted by the state's large metroplexes.

For example:

El Paso – PM

Dallas/Fort Worth – Ozone

Houston, Brazoria and Galveston – Ozone



NRCS responds

National Air Quality Initiative (AQI)

- Provides Farm Bill support through the agency's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to producers that address air quality concerns on their operations
- Help producers meet air quality compliance requirements
- Meet state and national goals for consistent delivery of program benefits





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Conservation practices affecting air quality



Wind Breaks

Conservation practices affecting air quality



Conservation tillage

Conservation practices affecting air quality



Dust suppression

Conservation practices affecting air quality



Prescribed grazing



Partnerships - a key to success

- Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board
- Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Texas Water Resources Institute
- USDA Agricultural Research Service
- Texas AgriLife Extension
- MillerCoors Brewing Company
- The Sand Foundation
- Tarrant Regional Water District
- Others



Cleaner air for all Texans

- On the ground conservation – making positive strides toward improved air quality
 - Results in reduced PM, greenhouse gases and ozone levels
 - Federal, state and local agencies and groups partnering together to meet air quality compliance requirements
 - National AQI addresses resource concerns in counties surrounding targeted high-population metro areas
 - Through conservation practices applied on the land, agriculture producers are improving air quality in Texas



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Thank you

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