

Oppose **HB2827**

Permit changes for North Bosque River Watershed dairies will

- **remove public process rights from private property owners**
- **relax permitting standards and reduce pollution prevention measures for the North Bosque River**
- **harm 200,000+ downstream water users in Clifton, Meridian, Waco and the surrounding region**

Background:

For decades, small family dairy farms throughout the state of Texas have been replaced by larger and larger industrial operations. This shift to massive industrial farming beginning in the 1980s devastated the North Bosque River with an over pollution of manure runoff from concentrated dairy facilities.

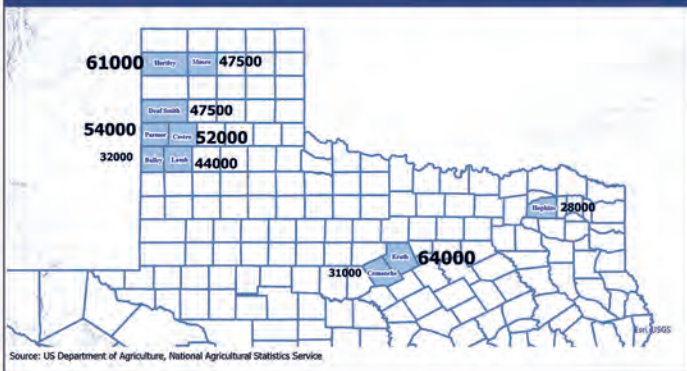
The entire river is still classified as impaired over 25 years later.

Despite claims of over-regulation stifling the industry, the number of dairy farms within the watershed decreased by only 54% from 2002-2017, compared to a 79% decline throughout the rest of the state.

Since the 1990s, Erath County has led the state in dairy cow population. In 2022, Erath County was still #1 for dairy cows among ALL Texas counties, even after years of individual permitting.



Texas Dairy Cows by County, Top 10 Counties, 2022



What's really behind the geographic shift in the Texas dairy industry?

Industrialization of the modern dairy farm

Cheaper land and feed costs and a better climate for dairy cows in the Texas panhandle

Dairy farms are disappearing in Texas BUT the number of dairy cows keeps growing. Industrialization is the cause, NOT over-regulation.

Current regulations WORK to improve and protect water quality:

The North Bosque River watershed in Central Texas is one of the most studied watersheds in the nation. The data is clear - industrial dairies in this watershed are the largest contributor of phosphorus pollution, leading to algae blooms, fish kills, and more. Water quality has improved in recent years thanks to individual permitting and pollution control requirements. However, in 2022, the TCEQ determined more work is needed to address ongoing pollution in the river.

The pollution of the North Bosque river impacts ALL stakeholders. Dairy operators must be responsible for the massive amounts of waste generated by their cattle. Municipalities throughout the watershed have done their part to upgrade wastewater treatment facilities and reduce their phosphorus discharges into the river. Downstream water users draw water from the North Bosque river and Lake Waco and pay to clean up the pollution coming from upstream. The residents, businesses, and other water ratepayers in **Waco spent over \$60 million** to install a pretreatment plant to clean up the massive organic pollution coming into Lake Waco from upstream dairies.

The individual permitting process works in the North Bosque River watershed. Now is not the time to change it.

Private property owners have a voice on the impacts to their land from upstream industrial operators.

The North Bosque River watershed is protected in accordance with Clean Water Act standards.

The dairy industry in Erath County is still alive and well and leading the state.

Protect our river. Protect our lake. Protect private property owners and downstream water users.

Widespread Stakeholder Opposition to HB2827:



CITY OF WACO