The Lampasas Watershed Protection Plan’s objective is to protect and enhance water resources of the Lampasas River Watershed in an environmentally responsible manner. This objective is being fulfilled through project goals and activities that emphasize public awareness, community education, stakeholder consensus, and watershed protection plan development and implementation. Funding and support of LWPP comes from Texas AgriLife Research, Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Project partners include Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Brazos River Authority, the Soil and Water Conservation Districts, area Underground Water Districts, Texas Stream Team, Central Texas Stream Team, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and municipal and county governments.

The Lampasas River (segment 1217 in the Brazos River Basin), rises in western Hamilton County 16 miles west of Hamilton and flows southeast, passing through Lampasas, Burnet, and Bell counties. In Bell County the river turns east and is dammed five miles southwest of Belton to form Stillhouse Hollow Lake (segment 1216). Texas requires that water quality in the Lampasas River be suitable for contact recreation and a healthy aquatic ecosystem. This “swimmable and fishable” designated use is not fully supported. The Lampasas River above Stillhouse Hollow Lake is listed as impaired on the Texas Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List due to elevated bacteria levels. Surface water quality monitoring also indicates a dissolved oxygen impairment on North Fork Rocky Creek.

The water quality team from Texas AgriLife Research at Blackland Research and Extension Center (BREC) along with collaborators from Texas A&M University’s Spatial Sciences Lab and Texas AgriLife Extension Service are addressing the Lampasas River water quality issues through a watershed planning approach. This is a flexible framework for managing water resources based on management actions supported by sound science and appropriate technology.

The watershed planning process uses a series of cooperative, iterative steps driven by stakeholder decision making, to characterize existing conditions, identify and prioritize problems, define management objectives, develop and implement protection or remediation strategies. The final product in the process is a living document, specific for the Lampasas River Watershed. Strategies in this toolbox will periodically be revisited and adapted, including the most current water resources analyses, triggers, actions, participants, and resources related to developing and implementing the plan.