COLE PARK, CORPUS CHRISTI BAY AND A TALE OF CUPS
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Abstract

Cole Park in Corpus Christi, Texas is a popular tourist attraction for fishing and recreational activities along Corpus Christi Bay. The park offers extraordinary views of the City, marine life, and estuary directly next to Corpus Christi Bay. Cole Park is a part of the City’s Baldwin-Louisiana drainage sub-basin and on-occasion will have significant discharges of floatable pollutants from the outfall at Cole Park into Corpus Christi Bay.

The City of Corpus Christi is a large municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) and has been negotiating their MS4 permit with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). As a large MS4, the City has a floatables control program, along with other minimum control measures to minimize stormwater pollution through street sweeping and public education/outreach. The City is also required to address water bodies where water quality impairments have been identified and implementation plans are being developed through Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) studies. Corpus Christi Bay has a bacteria water quality impairment with a draft implementation plan that is expected to be approved by the TCEQ.

To address the floatables issue, the City conducted a special study to 1) investigate the potential sources of floatables; 2) develop strategies to capture and control the floatables and 3) determine if a floatables control structure could be used to reduce bacteria loadings. The strategies included short- and long-term measures that could be deployed immediately to curb public relation concerns and others that may take longer to implement. The evaluations for floatable controls considered source control (upstream), in-line permanent floatables control structure (mid-stream), and potential “end-of-pipe” or outfall control (downstream) strategy.

The presentation will focus on the City’s floatable issues at Cole Park; evaluations, strategies, and performance of the floatables control measures implemented; any effects on bacteria to Corpus Christi Bay and the City’s future plans for a more holistic view on floatables control.

Key Words: stormwater management, floatables control, water quality, TPDES, MS4
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