

# TMDL Stakeholder Process

Redeveloping the Process in Texas

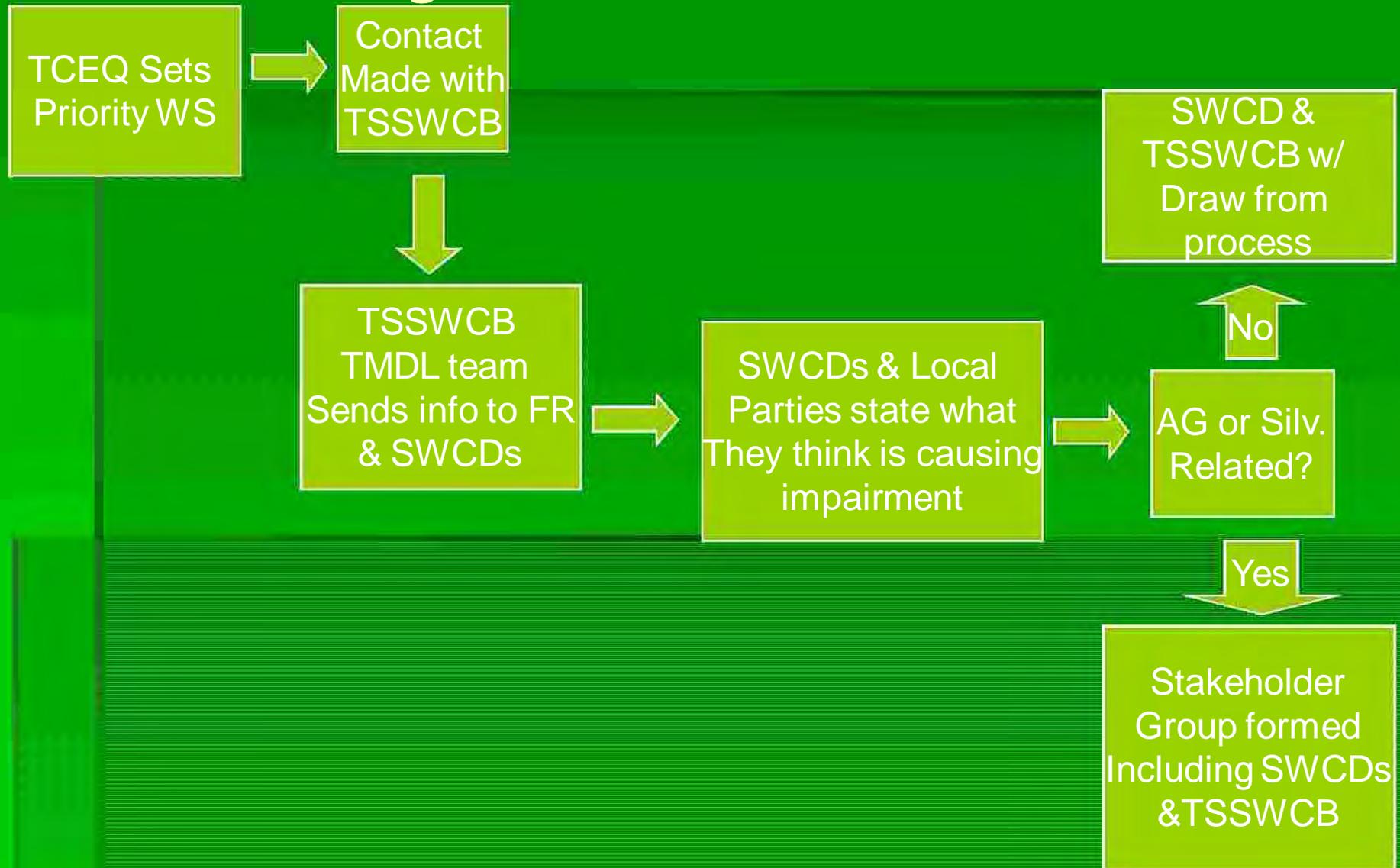
# Legislation-----

- § Law states that the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) is the “...lead agency for the abatement of agricultural and silvicultural non-point source pollution.”
- § The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) is the State’s regulatory environmental agency

# The Way it Was....

- § Prior to the 2003 State Legislative Session
  - Annually, the TCEQ TMDL team contacted the TSSWCB TMDL team with a list of priority watersheds for that year
  - The TSSWCB TMDL team would then contact the field rep and SWCDs in those watersheds and determine what was causing the impairment
  - If there was an agricultural or silvicultural component to the cause of the impairment, the SWCD would invite stakeholders to attend meetings and form stakeholder groups

# The Way it Was (contd)..



# The process was---

- § Stakeholder/landowner friendly
- § Voluntary efforts to implement BMPs to reduce ag or silvicultural contributions to the impairment
- § SWCDs and local landowners understood where/what/why/how about the TMDL process

# The Way it Has Been since 2003

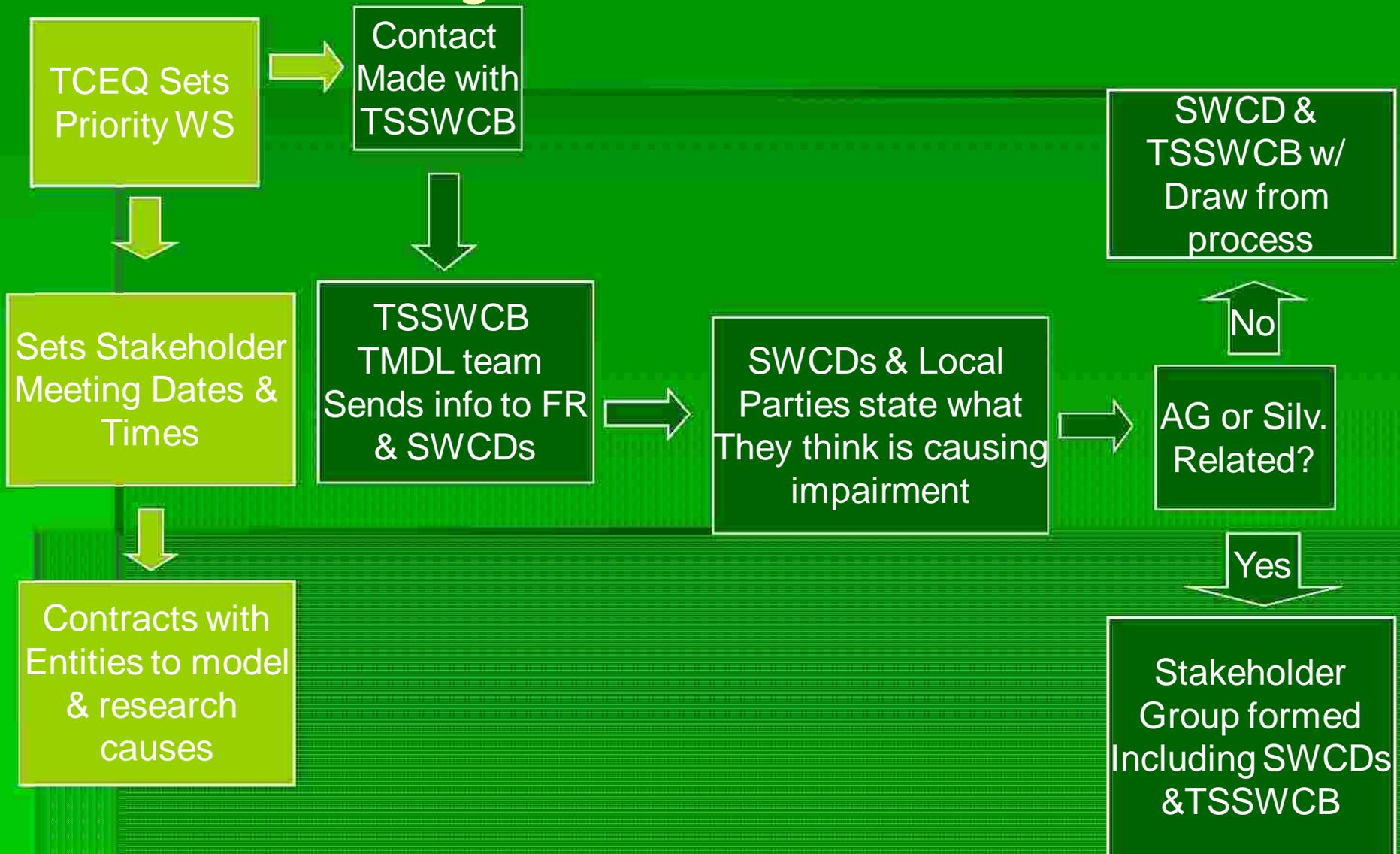
- § Because of the 2003 State legislative session, TSSWCB received major cuts to HQ staff
- § The TMDL team lost several key employees
- § Agency went through a reorganization process
- § Communication with TCEQ broke down as a result



# Currently.....

- § Starting in 2005-2006, notices of stakeholder meetings were being sent to TSSWCB
- § No communication with SWCDs, TSSWCB or stakeholders prior to initial meetings being held
- § Many times landowners were not informed until second or third meetings were being held

# Currently.....



# Currently.....

- § Results in low meeting turn out
- § Landowners feel unfairly blamed
- § Modeling is only as good as it's inputs, and inputs were weighted towards agriculture being the cause
- § Entire TMDL process was "fast-forwarded", often stakeholders couldn't understand the process

# Resolution??

- § Joint meeting between TCEQ & TSSWCB will be held
- § Hoping to put in place protocol for how to handle those TMDLs that have the potential to impact agriculture and/or silviculture
- § Increased interagency communication is mandatory for stakeholder involvement
- § SWCDs must be involved for implementation plans to be successful