
Agenda Item 3. Public Information/Education Report**INFORMATION ITEMS**

Media Outreach:

- Weekly routing monitoring and database updating of clipping service news articles published in state weekly and daily papers
- Sent skeleton news release regarding board of director appointments to Limestone Falls, Parker County, Upper Sabine, Lower Neches, Dewitt County and Llano County SWCDs.
- Sent Board Meeting summary from September Board Meeting to all districts
- Sent the following press releases to newspapers in Texas:
 - *TSSWCB Postpones Adoption of Proposed Changes to Brush Control Program Rules*
 - *Keeping Soil In Place Keeps Water Pure & Clean*
 - *State Soil and Water Conservation District Directors to Meet in Corpus Christi*
 - *Graford Student Presented FFA Soil and Water Stewardship Public Speaking Award*
 - *Coolidge High School Student Presented State Conservation Essay Award*
 - *Montgomery County SWCD Presented Outstanding District Award*
 - *Port Lavaca Middle School Teacher Receives State Conservation Teacher Award*
 - *Teague Junior High School Student Awarded State Conservation Poster Award*
 - *Agricultural Leaders Gather in Corpus Christi for the 62nd Annual State Meeting of Texas Soil and Water Conservation District Directors*
 - *Chad Reed Named TSSWCB Regional Office Manager for Hale Center*
 - *TSSWCB Names Mark Cochran Director of Conservation Programs*
 - *TSSWCB to Participate in Bacterial Sources Project*

Conferences/Contests/Workshops/Meetings:

- Met with EPA in Dallas to discuss Nonpoint Source Annual Report
- Met with TCEQ in Austin to discuss joint duties for writing the NPS Annual Report
- Represented the agency for a presentation of the watershed model at Haynes Elementary in Killeen
- Represented the agency at Children's Field Day in Thrall; demonstrated Watershed Model and Rainfall Simulator

Video Library:

- Sent out requested videos to various groups as needed (Sept. - 16, Oct. - 41)

Other:

- Forwarded state conservation poster winners to NACD National Competition
- Attended meeting with staff from Governor Perry, Lt. Governor Ratliff, Speaker Laney, Rep. Turner, Rep. Swinford and Sen. Duncan's offices regarding updates on proposed brush control rules and LAR.
- Represented the agency in Austin at the Ad-Hoc Advisory Council Meeting, Riparian Invasive Species Committee meeting and the Texas Water Advisory Council Meeting
- Attended Texas Constitutional Law Seminar in Austin
- Hired Avery Buckholt as Information Specialist II.
- Mailed copies of completed SWCD Fact Sheets to districts for final review before distribution.
- Attended Texas Water Law Seminar in Austin
- Sent thank you letters to all district directors and other individuals that attended the State Meeting in Corpus Christi.
- Sent congratulatory letter to all the district directors that received service awards at the State Meeting in Corpus Christi.

PR Outreach

TITLE OF ARTICLE	# SENT	# PUBLISHED	%
TSSWCB Names Mark Cochran Director of Conservation Programs	18		0%
TSSWCB to Participate in Bacterial Sources Project	513		0%
Chad Reed Named TSSWCB Regional Office Manager for Hale Center	20		0%
Graford Student Presented FFA Soil and Water Stewardship Public Speaking Award		1	
Coolidge High School Student Presented State Conservation Essay Award		1	
Montgomery County SWCD Presented Outstanding District Award			
Travis Middle School Teacher Receives State Conservation Teacher Award		1	
Teague Junior High Student Awarded State Conservation Poster Award			
Agricultural Leaders Gather in Corpus Chirsti for 62nd Annual State Meeting of TSWCDD	513	3	1%
State Soil and Water Conservation District Directors to Meet in Corpus Christi	513	12	2%
Keeping Soil In Place Keeps Water Pure & Clean	513	32	6%
TSSWCB Postpones Adoption of Proposed Changes to Brush Control Program Rules	513	20	4%
Sign-Up Deadline Nears for Upper Colorado River Brush Control Program	10	1	10%
Sign-Up Deadline Nears for Twin Buttes Reservoir Brush Control Program	5		0%
Sign-Up Deadline Nears for Pedernales Brush Control Program	14	1	7%
TSSWCB Plans Public Hearings on Proposed Rule Changes to the Brush Control Program	513	34	7%
Sign-Up Dates for the Twin Buttes Reservoir Brush Control Program	5	2	40%
Sign-Up Dates for the Upper Colorado River Brush Control Program	5	5	100%
TSSWCB Considers Basin Wide Funding Proposals for Brush Projects	509	12	2%
Sign-Up Dates Released for the Pedernales Brush Control Program	11	3	27%
Locally Led Conservation is the Best Approach	513	28	5%
Cooperative Composting	58	4	7%
Brush Control Project Offers Assistance to Agricultural Producers' Watersaving Efforts in the Pedernales Watersheds	513	1	0%
TSSWCB Members Elect Officers	174	6	3%
TSSWCB Chooses New Executive Director	509	12	2%
Wildlife Alliance for Youth State Contest Winners	421		0%
TSSWCB Works to Reduce Atrazine Runoff	509	8	2%
TSSWCB Board Members Re-elected	132	5	4%
May is "Water Month"	509	25	5%

PR Outreach, cont'd

Governor Proclaims Soil & Water Stewardship Week For April 29-May 5	509	52	10%
Wildlife Alliance for Youth Offers Rewards for Students	509	20	4%
TSSWCB Offers Learning Resources to Districts, Schools, Public Organizations	509	45	9%
TSSWCB Announces New Web Site	509	13	3%
Texas Brush Control Project Funds Allocated for Upper Colorado/Twin Buttes and Pedernales Watersheds	509	2	0%
TSSWCB Executive Director Announces Retirement	509	1	0%

PRESS CLIPPINGS GENERATED BY TSSWCB - SEPTEMBER 2002

TOTAL ARTICLES

AREA 1	4
AREA 2	4
AREA 3	6
AREA 4	0
AREA 5	5

TOTALS:	19
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PRESS CLIPPINGS GENERATED BY TSSWCB - OCTOBER 2002

TOTAL ARTICLES

AREA 1	15
AREA 2	11
AREA 3	14
AREA 4	1
AREA 5	12

TOTALS:	53
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PRESS CLIPPING TOTALS - SEPTEMBER 2002

	<u>TOTAL ARTICLES</u>	<u>CIRCULATION TOTALS</u>
AREA 1	7	83,506
AREA 2	14	61,842
AREA 3	16	44,850
AREA 4	5	15,217
AREA 5	20	105,603
TOTALS:	62	311,018

PRESS CLIPPING TOTALS - OCTOBER 2002

	<u>TOTAL ARTICLES</u>	<u>CIRCULATION TOTALS</u>
AREA 1	35	62,266
AREA 2	34	208,781
AREA 3	36	139,853
AREA 4	14	127,083
AREA 5	50	142,733
TOTALS:	169	680,716



**Texas State Soil & Water
Conservation Board**

News Release

For Immediate Release
October 14, 2002

CONTACT: Amber Preston
Phone: 254/773-2250
apreston@tsswcb.state.tx.us

Teague Junior High School Student Awarded State Conservation Poster Award

On Wednesday, October 9, 2002, 7th grader, Dixon Knouse, from Teague Junior High School in Teague, was awarded with the State Conservation Poster Award at the 62nd Annual State Meeting of Texas State Soil and Water Conservation District Directors in Corpus Christi.

Mr. Knouse's poster received the top honor for its effectiveness in expressing the theme "Habitat for Life", using vibrant colors and an array of wildlife to express the importance of all species in an aquatic habitat. He was sponsored by the Freestone County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD).

Over 750 agricultural leaders from essentially every county in Texas, including soil and water conservation district directors, their spouses, districts employees, employees of USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and other state and federal employees were in attendance at the State Meeting.

As the lead agency for the State of Texas in addressing agricultural and silvicultural forms of nonpoint source pollution, the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board works closely with state's 216 SWCDs to reduce nonpoint source pollution from various agricultural activities.



Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

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Travis Middle School Teacher Receives State Conservation Teacher Award

On Wednesday, October 9, 2002, at the 62nd Annual State Meeting of the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board District Directors in Corpus Christi, Mrs. Sherrie Krause, an 8th grade science at Travis Middle School in Port Lavaca for 14 years, received the State Conservation Teacher Award.

A high school student from Illinois wrote to his teacher, " Hard work, dedication and desire don't guarantee you a thing, but without them you don't stand a chance." Sherrie Krause knows that even though a goal is attainable, there can be a very long road to reach it. Mrs. Krause received the award as a result of her outstanding work in the area of conservation education.

Mrs. Krause and her class are constantly drawn to conservation projects. Monitoring and planting wetland grasses at the Tejano Prairie Wetland Project, clearing up water at the Little Chocolate Bayou Park Improvement Area, and using water testing kits with Texas Watch are only a few projects in which Mrs. Krause's classes are involved.

After a full day of teaching, Mrs. Krause is also involved as a 4-H leader, in the YMCA as an environmental program volunteer, began a chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist, and has begun hand-digging a wetland pond in the school courtyard.

In 2001, Mrs. Krause was awarded a grant of \$5000 from Intel to make her classroom a model classroom with the latest technology including Webcom.

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Montgomery County SWCD Presented Outstanding District Award

On Wednesday, October 9, 2002, the Outstanding District Award was presented at the 62nd Annual State Meeting of Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board District Directors in Corpus Christi to the Montgomery County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD).

The Montgomery County SWCD was established in 1995 and has led the way to a better quality of life for citizens in Montgomery County. The district participates in many environmental community education projects, such as co-sponsoring a booth at the Houston Livestock Show, Hay Shows, Pasture Workshops, and Wildlife Clinics. One of the most effective ways that the Montgomery County SWCD reaches the population is through the distribution of a publication entitled, "Tips on Management for Small Acreages in Southeast Texas."

The district is actively involved in many resource concerns in Montgomery County. Issues such as critical erosion, forestland management, and water quality are top concerns, which the district have identified and effectively managed through strong leadership of the board and cooperation with landowners.

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Coolidge High School Student Presented State Conservation Essay Award

On Wednesday, October 9, 2002, Heather Wilson, a sophomore at Coolidge High School was awarded the 2002 State Conservation Essay Award Winner during the 62nd Annual State Meeting of the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board District Directors in Corpus Christi.

Miss Wilson's essay was chosen because of its effectiveness in promoting the soil and water conservation ethic that an individual needs to possess. As she said in her essay, "The land is free, but not without working for it."

Her essay was sponsored by the Limestone-Falls SWCD.

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Graford Student Presented FFA Soil and Water Stewardship Public Speaking Award

On Wednesday, October 9, 2002, Kelsey Wolfe of Graford, Texas, presented her speech entitled, "The Gift of Trees," at the 62nd Annual State Meeting of the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board District Directors in Corpus Christi, as she was awarded the FFA Soil and Water Stewardship Public Speaking Award.

In her speech, Miss Wolfe says, "I have realized that trees truly are a gift left to me by the intentional effort of some person in the past." Miss Wolfe will also receive a scholarship from the Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts to be used toward a college or university of her choice.

Over 750 agricultural leaders from essentially every county in Texas, including soil and water conservation district directors, their spouses, districts employees, employees of USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and other state and federal employees were in attendance at the State Meeting.

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Miss Wolfe, a senior at Graford High School, plans to attend Texas Tech University in August 2003.



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Agricultural Leaders Gather in Corpus Christi for the 62nd Annual State Meeting of Texas Soil and Water Conservation District Directors

Last week approximately 750 conservation leaders gathered in Corpus Christi on October 7-9, 2002, to attend the 62nd Annual State Meeting of Texas Soil and Water Conservation District Directors.

The first General Session began on Tuesday, October 8, 2002 with opening remarks from the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) Executive Director James Moore.

Moore commenced the meeting with positive remarks in the direction that the Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), District Directors, and others involved in natural resource conservation, are making great accomplishments in conservation and preservation in Texas.

"We should all begin to develop a proactive approach to conservation," Moore said. Noting that the future begins today, he said, "If we all work together, there is nothing we can't accomplish."

Senator David Bernsen from Senate District 4, also candidate for General Land Commissioner, began his speech at Tuesday's General Session by saying that, "water is the number one issue no matter where I go." He further commented that the future of Texas is directly related to the water, as the resource touches every facet of our state. Urging citizens to join together toward the common conservation goal, Bernsen said, "Water is not republican or democrat, it is Texan because we all use it."

Representative Vilma Luna of House District 33 also spoke during Tuesday's General Session. She complimented Texas soil and water conservation efforts. However, Luna told District Directors and others present that many people do not know enough about TSSWCB and districts and their involvement with natural resource conservation. She stated, "It should be our mission to let [the people] know why the [Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board] is so important." Luna also mentioned population growth, volunteerism, and Legislative knowledge as important points in the future of conservation in Texas.

Jerry Patterson, candidate for General Land Commissioner, also spoke to the crowded room at Tuesday's General Session. Patterson, speaking about protecting rural Texas, said, "We must question the efficiency of our past practices," pointing out that conservation is the key to the future.

Tomas Dominguez, Acting State Conservationist for the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), informed those at Tuesday's General Session that NRCS has plans to reinstate District Conservationists into every NRCS office in Texas. This information came as a pleasant surprise to many, since District Conservationists had been removed from many NRCS offices due to lack of funding. For producers, the announcement means there will be much more

technical assistance in the field, aiding in the engineering, advising and planning of certified conservation plans. James Moore, Executive Director of the TSSWCB, said, "This will provide districts a much closer relationship with NRCS and will accommodate the provisions technical assistance even better."

After planning to step aside as President of the Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts, José Dodier announced his intentions to stay on board due to the fact that he "will not allow the Farm Bill to slip away from us."

The Second General Session at the 62nd Annual Meeting of the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board District Directors began on Wednesday morning, October 9, 2002 with an address from Texas Agriculture Commissioner Susan Combs.

Combs began by addressing the District Directors and other natural resource leaders from across the state of Texas on the issue of the 1944 U.S.-Mexico Water Treaty, which Mexico has largely ignored since 1992. Combs pointed out that the state of Chihuahua in Mexico has stockpiled over 2.5 million acre feet of water, keeping much of the valuable resource from reaching many South Texas farms, ranches, and homes.

"Two-thirds of the water is supposed to be going to Mexico, and one-third is supposed to go to the U.S., but that is not happening," Combs said. She explained the conflict comes from the Governor of Chihuahua, Patricio Martinez, who has not complied to the treaty due to political conflicts with President of Mexico Vicente Fox.

Combs also mentioned brush control as a concern in Texas, stating, "The key to being successful is brush control."

State Representative Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa of House District 40 was also in attendance at Wednesday's General Session. Hinojosa spoke on the criticism that farmers and districts across Texas are receiving from their urban counterparts. Emphasizing the unrecognized importance of agriculture to all of society, Hinojosa said, "People tend to criticize farmers with a mouth full of food."

United States Department of Agriculture-Natural Resource Conservation Service Chief Bruce Knight highlighted the importance of a strong working relationship between urban and rural populations. Knight also addressed the status of the Farm Bill in relation to local soil and water conservation districts. He stated that the new Farm Bill, "rewards landowners who either practice or wish to practice good conservation practices." Knight also stressed partnership and collaboration among Texans. "The most important work doesn't happen in Washington," he said. "Local leadership is the key to conservation."

Over 750 agricultural leaders from essentially every county in Texas, including soil and water conservation district directors, their spouses, districts employees, employees of USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and other state and federal employees were in attendance at the State Meeting. The meeting is conducted each year to provide those in attendance with an opportunity for an in-depth look at the issues facing them in their quest to strengthen soil and water conservation programs in Texas.

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**Texas State Soil & Water
Conservation Board**

News Release

For Immediate Release
October 30, 2002

CONTACT: Amber Preston
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apreston@tsswcb.state.tx.us

Chad Reed Named TSSWCB Regional Office Manager for Hale Center

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) has named Stephen (Chad) Reed of Lubbock manager of the agency's Panhandle and South Plains regional office located in Hale Center.

Prior to being named regional manager, Reed worked for the TSSWCB as the Natural Resource Specialist in Hale Center providing technical services and conservation planning assistance to the area's farmers and ranchers for the abatement of agricultural nonpoint source pollution through provisions of the Senate Bill 503 Water Quality Planning Program.

Reed has been employed by the agency since 1994. Prior to his employment with the Hale Center regional office, Reed was the Engineer Technician at the Agency's regional office in Wharton.

The TSSWCB is the lead agency in Texas for planning, implementing, and managing programs and practices for abating agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source pollution.



Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

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For Immediate Release
October 30, 2002

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TSSWCB to Participate in Bacterial Sources Project

TEMPLE, Texas -- The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB), in cooperation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Texas Water Resources Institute, has funded a project aimed at identifying the specific sources of *E. coli* coliform bacteria in certain bodies of water in Texas.

The focus of the project, "Development of Bacterial Source Tracking Libraries and Assessment of Bacterial Sources Impacting Lakes Waco and Belton," is to identify the specific sources of *E. coli* coliform bacteria, which may originate in human and animal wastes. The project is especially important because high numbers of fecal coliform bacteria have been reported as a water quality problem in several regions of Texas. However, the method now used to identify *E. coli* and other fecal coliform bacteria does not provide information on whether the sources of pollution is from sewage, runoff of animal wastes, failing septic tanks, or other sources.

According to Texas Agricultural Extension Service (TAES) scientist Dr. George Di Giovanni, a new method is needed to differentiate between specific sources of *E. coli* so that we can know the origin of the pollutants. By developing reference information on many different specific types of *E. coli* bacteria, better insights could be developed about what factors are causing the pollution and strategies could be crafted about how to best prevent future contamination. In this project, the information will be ultimately assembled into a reference library that could be used to identify pollutants found in the field.

The interest of the TSSWCB in this project stems from the agency's position as being the state's primary agency for dealing with and abating agricultural and silvicultural forms of nonpoint source (NPS) pollution. The TSSWCB audits labs, coordinates contracts, oversees the program, and makes sure that the data is being collected.

NPS pollution originates from different sources that cannot be traced to any single point, such as a pipe. It is normally associated with agricultural and silvicultural runoff, urban stormwater and runoff from construction sites.

According to Dr. Di Giovanni, the importance of this project is that it will help water resource managers develop strategies to protect water quality. If the sources of fecal pollution can be accurately and precisely identified, then measures can be taken to reduce those sources of pollution. At the same time, this effort will develop one of the most comprehensive bacterial source tracking databases in the nation that contains multiple assay data on numerous strains of *E. coli* isolates from different sources of contamination.

TAES scientists George Di Giovanni and Suresh Pillai, as well as Joanna Mott of Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi, are leading the project. Texas Farm Bureau will be responsible for field sampling via sub-contracts with Parsons Engineering, Inc. of Austin and the City of Waco Drinking Water Laboratory.

For questions regarding this project, please contact Donna Long at (254) 773-2250, ext. 228 or Jason McAlister at (254) 773-2250, ext. 233 at TSSWCB Headquarters in Temple.



Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

News Release

For Immediate Release
October 30, 2002

CONTACT: Amber Preston
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apreston@tsswcb.state.tx.us

TSSWCB Names Mark Cochran Director of Conservation Programs

TEMPLE, Texas – Mark Cochran of Mount Pleasant has been named Director of Conservation Programs effective November 1, 2002 for the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) in Temple.

Since January 1998, Mark has been with the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board as the Natural Resource Specialist in the Mount Pleasant Regional Office. He has worked with landowners, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service to produce and certify Water Quality Management Plans through programs authorized by Texas S.B. 503 and Section 319 of the Federal Clean Water Act.

Mark was born in Dallas, Texas and graduated from Lewisville High School. He completed a Bachelor of Science degree in geology with a minor in forestry at Stephen F. Austin (SFA) State University in Nacogdoches, Texas. After more than eight years in the natural gas pipeline industry in Houston, Texas, he returned to SFA and completed a Master of Science in Forestry degree. During that course of study, he worked as research assistant and project coordinator on a research project sponsored by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Texas Clean Rivers Program to determine the impact land-applied poultry litter has on pastured watersheds versus non-impacted forested watersheds. He co-authored several publications about the project, including a final report to TNRCC.

The TSSWCB is a state agency that administers Texas' soil and water conservation law and coordinates Texas' soil and water conservation programs around the state.

For more information about the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board, please visit our website at www.tsswcb.state.tx.us.