



TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

Monthly Program News and Activities

P.O. Box 658, Temple, Texas (254) 773-2250

<http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us>

April 2008

The TSSWCB produces this monthly update of the agency's activities as an informational service to local soil and water conservation district directors. I hope you find this information helpful, and if you have any questions please don't hesitate to call your local Field Representative or our State Headquarters.

REX ISOM, Executive Director

Budgeting and Accounting

- April 5th was the deadline for submission of the 2010-2011 SWCD Biennial Budget Request
- 2008 allocations for Technical Service Provider grant funding will be distributed by May 1st

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STATE BOARD WORK SESSIONS AND MEETINGS

Scheduled Work Sessions and Meetings

The State Board has tentatively scheduled a Board Work Session for 2:30 p.m. in the Elm Room of the Radisson North Hotel in Austin, Wednesday, May 14, 2008. A formal State Board Meeting is tentatively scheduled for 8:00 a.m. in the Texas Capital on Thursday, May 15, 2008. For more information on State Board Work Sessions and Meetings, visit the agency's website at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/boardmeetings>.

Board Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the March 20, 2008, State Board Meeting will be considered for approval at the meeting tentatively scheduled for May 15, 2008. To view any past Board Meeting minutes visit the agency's website at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/boardmeetings/minutes>

For more information on past and pending State Board Work Sessions and Meetings, please visit the agency's website at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/boardmeetings>, or contact Vicki Davis at (254) 773-2250, ext. 253.

BUDGET AND ACCOUNTING

2010 – 2011 SWCD Biennial Budget

Request:

On January 28th, the TSSWCB mailed instructions for completing and submitting the 2010 – 2011 SWCD Biennial Budget Request. This year the request will be completed electronically and the mailed instructions included a USERID and PASSWORD for each district to use in completing the form. The Budget Request Form and all instructions can be found through the following web address: <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/swcds/request>

The deadline for submission was April 5th.

2008 Statewide District Technical Service Provider Funding

On April 4th, the 2008 Statewide District Technical Service Provider Agreement was executed between the TSSWCB and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). This agreement provides \$450,000 statewide to districts to assist NRCS with delivery of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program in Texas. District allocations will be distributed by May 1.

HUMAN RESOURCES

TSSWCB is currently recruiting for the following position; Engineering Technician IV in Hale Center.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Program Overview

Special Projects is a department within the TSSWCB that provides coordination for the Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation Directors, facilitates open government functions required by the Texas Administrative Procedures Act, and directs the completion of other mandatory

agency responsibilities such as compiling the agency's Semi-Annual Report and rule making.

Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District Directors

The State Meeting for this year is scheduled for September 29-30 and October 1, 2008 in Galveston. Please mark this date and make plans to attend. Everyone's support is needed and welcomed.

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest

The 2008 Soil Stewardship Public Speaking FFA Area contests will be held during May. Scheduled Area contests are as follows: **Area IV and Area IX contest dates and locations are unknown.**

Area I	May 16--Amarillo
Area II	May 16-17--Odessa
Area III	May 8--Brenham
Area V	May 17--Frisco
Area VI	May 17--Gilmer
Area VII	May 13-- San Marcos
Area VIII	May 16-- Waco
Area X	May 15—Kingsville

The theme for this year's contest is "Water is Life" which correlates with the annual NACD Soil Stewardship program.

SWCD District Director and Employee Program Development Workshop

A workshop for district directors and interested district employees is scheduled for July 29-30, 2008. A promotional flyer was sent to all districts on April 22.

Water Quality Management Plan Program Guidance Manual

The Water Quality Management Plan Program Guidance Manual is in draft form and has been submitted to the Regional Offices for review.

SWCD Director Training Resource Project

A specific link is being developed for the TSSWCB website to permit SWCDs to access district related training resource materials. The target date of May 8 has been postponed due to website technicalities.

All materials used in current district director training workshops have been formatted into a uniform look. The purpose of organizing this material into a [Training Resources](#) link will enable field staff to conduct director training on a localized basis as well as provide SWCDs to more easily access materials of specific interest on a as need basis following workshop training.

Priority Education Funding Program

Fifty-two SWCDs have asked for and received approval for funding priority education programs under the Priority Education Funding program. Districts, during this fiscal year have until August 1 to make application for funding. The program is offered to districts through the Association of Texas SWCDs public information/education program.

Regional Wildlife Contests

Regional Wildlife State Contest will be held May 13, 2008 in San Angelo, Texas at the San Angelo State Park.

TSSWCB Conservation Video Library

About The Catalog

There are over 200 conservation-related videos available; the 2008 catalog can be downloaded from the TSSWCB website at

http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/files/contentimages/2008_Video_Library_Catalogue.pdf. The 2008

Catalog includes 18 new titles in DVD format. No rental fees are assessed to those wishing to borrow the videos from the library. However, the borrower is responsible for paying the return postage.

Borrowing privileges are for a length of two weeks and must be returned upon the date specified by the librarian. Videos can be ordered through your local soil and water conservation district or by contacting the Public Information/Education department of the TSSWCB.

How Shipping Works

The Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts' Public Information/Education Committee will pay the first transit postage costs to mail the video(s) to the requester. Postage for returning the video(s) will be the responsibility of the borrower. All videos must be insured upon return.

Ordering a Video

Select a video from the [TSSWCB Conservation Video Catalog](#), then contact Meredith McArthur at mmcarthur@tsswcb.state.tx.us to check it out.

WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN PROGRAM

Program Overview

The passage of Texas Senate Bill 503 (1993) directed the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board to implement water quality management plans (WQMPs) in Texas. A WQMP is a site-specific plan developed through and approved by soil and water conservation districts for agricultural or silvicultural lands. The agency has been implementing WQMPs since the mid 1990s and has completed over 10,000 plans in the State of Texas.



Program News

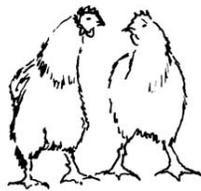
The period for obligating cost-share funds will end on April 30, 2008. Funds not obligated to a plan will revert to the State Board. At their May, 2008 meeting, the State Board will consider requests for supplemental funds from districts within each region. The balance of funds will be transferred to

the Statewide Fund. Districts are making every effort to ensure that FY-06 funds are used prior to August 15, 2008 which is when they will revert to the state treasury. For more information on the Water Quality Management Program, please visit the agency's website at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/wqmp>.

POULTRY WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

Overview

In 2001, the 77th Legislature amended the Texas Water Code to require all persons who own or operate a poultry facility to implement and maintain a



Water Quality Management Plan that is certified by the State Soil and Water Conservation Board. For more information on Poultry WQMPs, please visit <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/poultry>.

Contact the poultry office at (936) 462-7020 if you have questions about the poultry program.

CLEAN WATER ACT, §319(h) GRANTS

Background

Congress enacted §319(h) of the Clean Water Act (CWA) in 1987, establishing a national program to control nonpoint sources (NPS) of water pollution. Through §319(h), federal funds are provided through the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to states for the development and implementation of each state's nonpoint source management program. The §319(h) funding in Texas is divided evenly between the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB). The following report provides an

overview of TSSWCB's §319(h) program status and major ongoing activities.

FY2001 – FY2007 CWA §319(h) Grant Status

There are currently 82 ongoing §319(h) grant-funded projects addressing a wide array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues. Federal funds totaling \$16 million are primarily being used to address NPS pollution from animal feeding operations, prevent atrazine runoff, provide technical assistance, implement best management practices, support various NPS outreach/education programs, develop and implement Watershed Protection Plans (WPPs), and implement the nonpoint source portion of TMDL Implementation Plans.

FY2007 Nonpoint Source Annual Report

In order to receive §319(h) funds, the State of Texas must submit a report on the activities of the Texas NPS Program annually. This report, Managing Nonpoint Source Pollution in Texas, highlights the State's efforts during FY2007 to collect data, assess water quality, implement projects that reduce or prevent nonpoint source pollution, and educate and involve the public to improve and maintain the quality of water resources for current and future generations of Texans. TSSWCB staff and TCEQ staff have completed the report and submitted it to EPA. The 2007 Annual Report is available for distribution and electronically at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/managementprogram> under the heading Program Reports.

Nueces Headwaters Stewardship Program Wins Environmental Award

The Nueces River Authority has won a 2008 Texas Environmental Excellence Award (Education Category) for its Nueces Headwaters Stewardship Program. This education program, initiated and implemented with funding from a TSSWCB CWA §319(h) NPS Grant, was designed to raise the level of public awareness of nonpoint source pollution threatening headwater streams in the Nueces River basin and to encourage their protection. Through this

program Nueces River Authority educated thousands of students, landowners and recreational users on how their activities may contribute to degraded water quality and how they can do their part to protect the unique water quality and biological significance of Nueces River basin headwaters streams. Additionally, through the Up2U Campaign thousands of cubic yards of litter were kept out of the stream. For more information on this project, visit <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/managementprogram/nueces>.

Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and Watershed Planning

Total Maximum Daily Load Program Overview

The federal Clean Water Act (CWA) requires Texas to identify lakes, rivers, streams and estuaries failing to meet or not expected to meet water quality standards and not supporting their designated uses (swimming, drinking, aquatic life, etc.). This list of impaired waterbodies is known as the *Texas 303(d) List* and must be submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for review and approval every two years. The State must then establish a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for certain waterbodies identified on the *303(d) List*. A TMDL defines the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can assimilate on a daily basis and still meet water quality standards. Based on the environmental target of the TMDL, an Implementation Plan (I-Plan) is then developed that prescribes the measures necessary to mitigate anthropogenic (human-caused) sources of that pollutant in that waterbody. Together, the TMDL and the I-Plan serve as the mechanism to reduce the pollutant, restore the full use of the waterbody and remove it from the *303(d) List*. Responsibility to develop and implement TMDLs is shared between the TSSWCB and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). More information on the TSSWCB TMDL Program is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/tmdl>.

Watershed Protection Plan Program Overview

A Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) is a coordinated framework for voluntarily implementing prioritized and integrated water quality protection and restoration strategies driven by environmental objectives. Through the WPP process, TSSWCB encourages stakeholders to holistically address all of the sources and causes of impairments and threats to both surface and ground water resources within a watershed. Developed and implemented through diverse, well integrated partnerships, a WPP assures the long-term health of a watershed with strategies for protecting unimpaired waters and restoring impaired waters. WPPs have a variety of ingredients and can take many forms. TSSWCB-sponsored WPPs are consistent with guidelines promulgated by EPA that describe nine elements fundamental to a potentially successful plan. More information on the TSSWCB WPP Program is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/wpp>.

MOA Coordination with TCEQ

On September 27, 2006, at a joint TSSWCB/TCEQ meeting, a new *Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on TMDLs, I-Plans, and WPPs* was approved by the Board and Commission. This framework for collaboration between the two agencies describes the programmatic mechanisms employed to develop and implement TMDLs and WPPs. TSSWCB staff continue to work with TCEQ staff to implement components of the *MOA*.

Bacteria TMDL Task Force

On June 29, 2007, at a joint TSSWCB/TCEQ meeting in Austin, the Board and Commission approved the recommendations from the joint Bacteria TMDL Task Force. The Board directed TSSWCB staff to work with the staff of the TCEQ to 1) incorporate the principles of the recommendations into an updated joint-agency TMDL guidance document, 2) move diligently to expedite the development of bacteria TMDLs that were paused during the work of the Task Force, and 3) establish a multi-agency bacteria work group to continue examining the scientific research and development needs identified in the Task Force Report. TSSWCB staff continue to work with TCEQ staff to implement these directives.

State Appropriations for TMDL Program Grants

On May 24, 2007, the Board approved a *TSSWCB Policy on TMDLs* which provides guidance to staff on directing state appropriations for the TMDL Program. On July 19,

2007, the Board approved an operating budget for FY2008 that allocated \$1,200,494 to TMDL Program grants. Staff have obligated \$886,728 through five contracts and are working with cooperating entities to develop workplans and budgets to obligate the remaining \$313,766.

EPA Region 6 TMDL Coordinators Workshop

On April 15-16, Donna Long and Aaron Wendt attended an EPA Region 6 TMDL Coordinators meeting in Dallas. The purpose of the meeting was for the Region 6 States and EPA to learn through sharing expertise, providing updated project information, strengthening the regional and national network and coordinating programs through addressing practical and applied solutions to complex TMDL issues. Goals accomplished as a result were the ability to network with the TMDL community on issues of common interest, identification of trends and challenges facing the States and EPA, and the ability to engage in problem-solving on several challenging TMDL issues.

Texas Clean Rivers Program

The Texas Clean Rivers Program (CRP) is a state fee-funded program for water quality monitoring, assessment, and public outreach administered by the TCEQ. CRP is a collaboration of 15 partner agencies who conduct water quality monitoring and assessments in the 23 river and coastal basins in Texas. Each river or coastal basin is assigned to one of the designated CRP partner agencies. Each CRP partner agency has an established steering committee to set monitoring and assessment priorities within its basin. These committees bring together the diverse interests in each basin and are designed to allow local concerns to be addressed through regional solutions. The Texas Water Code requires the TCEQ and CRP partner agencies to coordinate monitoring and assessment activities with local SWCDs through the TSSWCB. The data generated by CRP partner agencies is used to identify significant long-term water quality trends and characterize water quality conditions. Each CRP partner agency develops and publishes an annual *Basin Highlights Report* and a five-year *Basin Summary Report*. The TCEQ also uses CRP-generated data in the biennial assessment conducted for the *Texas Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List*. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/nav/eq/texcleanriver.html>.

On April 1, Mitch Conine attended the Red River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee Meeting in Wichita Falls. More information is available at <http://www.rra.dst.tx.us/>.

On April 1, Mark Cochran attended the Angelina and Neches River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee meeting in Nacogdoches. A presentation was made on the spread of giant salvinia, an invasive aquatic plant, and recent efforts to control small infestations in Lakes Palestine and Sam Rayburn. The draft 2008 Basin Highlights Report was distributed. The effects of the poultry industry on water quality were discussed, including the on-going court case in Oklahoma and various poultry litter composting programs. More information is available at <http://www.anra.org/>.

On April 21, Loren Henley and Pamela Casebolt attended the Brazos River Authority Clean Rivers Program Coordinated Monitoring meeting in Waco. Discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities for FY2009 among various entities collecting data in the Brazos River Basin. More information is available at <http://www.brazos.org/crpHome.asp>.

On April 22, Brian Koch attended the Sabine River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee meeting in Orange, which was the first of three in the basin. Other meetings were held April 23 in Longview and April 24 in Greenville. An overview of the Clean Rivers Program was given, along with a summary of the general water quality in the basin. Also, an update on the Adams and Cow Bayous TMDL was given. The last TMDL stakeholder meeting was in October 2007 and focused on the development of the I-Plan; another meeting is scheduled for June 2008. The regional wastewater study is about 50% complete and is examining taking many homes off of septic systems in response to the TMDL, which identified septic systems as a major source of pollution to Adams and Cow Bayous. Also discussed was the status of the Instream Flow study; there will be public meetings in Orange on May 6 and 7. More information is available at <http://www.sratx.org/srwmp/tcrp/default.asp>.

On April 24, Mitch Conine and Aaron Wendt attended the Northeast Texas Municipal Water District Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee and Coordinated Monitoring meetings in Hughes Springs. Topics of discussion included the status of the Lake O' the Pines TMDL I-Plan, progress on the TSSWCB-funded project

examining the water quality effects of poultry litter application, progress on the development of the Caddo Lake WPP including action on aquatic invasive plants, a report on a site visit to the constructed wetlands at Richland-Chambers Reservoir, and an update on fish consumption advisories for Ellison Creek Reservoir. More information is available at <http://www.netmwd.com/>.

On April 24, Brian Koch attended the San Antonio River Authority Clean Rivers Program Coordinated Monitoring meeting in San Antonio. Discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities for FY2009 among various entities collecting data in the San Antonio River Basin. More information is available at http://www.sara-tx.org/site/water_quality/water_qual_mon/clean_rivers.html.

Galveston Bay Estuary Program

Galveston Bay is an estuary of national importance and, through the federal CWA §320, is included in the National Estuary Program administered by the EPA. The Galveston Bay Council is the stakeholder advisory group that coordinates the implementation of the *Galveston Bay Plan*, which is a Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan developed under the auspices of the National Estuary Program.

On April 16, Brian Koch attended the Galveston Bay Council meeting at Armand Bayou Nature Center in Pasadena. At this meeting, the proposed nominees for Council membership were approved for the 2008-2011 term and forwarded to TCEQ for consideration. Also, FY2009 proposed GBEP projects, including funding for the Bastrop Bayou WPP, and a conference focusing on Sustainable Water Quality were presented and approved. There was a presentation by TCEQ on enforcement of permitted wastewater dischargers, of which there are over 1,000 in the area around Galveston Bay. The focus was on examining a trend in non-compliance beginning in 2003 through the first quarter of 2008, which showed the facilities were decreasing the number of non-compliance reports and enforcement actions. Also, each subcommittee gave a report, and most included information on the proposed projects which were approved. There were several announcements, including the 2009 State of the Bay Symposium, which will be held in January 2009 in Galveston and the Sustainable Water Quality Conference in October 2008 in Houston.

More information is available at <http://www.gbep.state.tx.us/>. The implementation of the *Galveston Bay Plan* affects agricultural and silvicultural operations in watersheds that drain to Galveston Bay in Brazoria, Chambers, Galveston, Harris and Liberty Counties.

Texas Watershed Planning Short Course

Proper training of watershed coordinators and water resource professionals is needed to ensure that WPPs are adequately planned, coordinated and implemented and the results properly assessed and reported. To provide the needed training and promote sustainable proactive approaches to managing water quality throughout the state, this Short Course will provide participants with guidance on stakeholder coordination, education, and outreach; meeting the EPA's nine key elements of a WPP; data collection and analysis; and the tools available for plan development. The planning team, which includes TSSWCB staff, has finalized the course content and agenda and selected the most appropriate lecturers. The first course is scheduled for June 2008 in Bandera. More information is available at <http://watershedplanning.tamu.edu/>.

Arroyo Colorado

On April 9, Aaron Wendt participated in the Arroyo Colorado Water Quality Monitoring Work Group meeting via conference call. Topics discussed included the status of routine water quality monitoring efforts in the Arroyo, several special studies focused on examining the effects of cropland runoff, and an examination of water quality and fish population data collected by TPWD over the past several decades.

On April 24, the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Steering Committee met in Weslaco to hear updates on the various projects implementing components of the WPP.

More information is available at <http://www.arroyocolorado.org/>. This WPP affects farming operations in the Arroyo Colorado watershed in Cameron, Hidalgo and Willacy Counties.

Elm and Sandies Creeks

On April 8, John Foster, Brian Koch, Shari Johnson and Aaron Wendt attended an Elm and Sandies Creeks Bacteria Source Survey development meeting in Cuero. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss known or

suspected sources contributing bacteria to the creeks. The project contractor then will conduct a watershed source survey to examine these sites and other characteristics of the watershed. The source survey, and this meeting to plan the survey, were recommendations made by the joint TSSWCB/TCEQ Bacteria TMDL Task Force for all bacteria TMDL projects. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/31-elmsandies.html>. This TMDL will affect livestock operations in the Elm and Sandies Creeks watershed in Gonzales, DeWitt, Karnes, Wilson and Guadalupe Counties.

Gilleland Creek

On April 25, Pamela Casebolt participated in the Gilleland Creek TMDL I-Plan Education and Outreach meeting via conference call. Discussion centered on progress in developing the education components of the I-Plan. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/69-gillelandcreekbacteria.html>. This TMDL will have limited affect on livestock operations in the Gilleland Creek watershed in Travis County.

Lake Granger

On April 8, Pamela Casebolt and Lee Munz attended a Lake Granger WPP coordination meeting in Bartlett. TSSWCB met with the Little River-San Gabriel SWCD, Brazos River Authority and Texas AgriLife Research to get an update on the development of the Lake Granger WPP. Discussion included the San Gabriel Wastewater Master Plan, failing septic systems, prioritizing best management practices, grade stabilization structures, future funding, and a Texas Watershed Steward workshop scheduled for June 2008. A tentative stakeholder meeting is being planned for May 2008. More information is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/managementprogram/granger>. This WPP will affect farming and livestock operations in the Lake Granger watershed in Williamson and Burnet Counties.

Lake O' the Pines

On April 2, TCEQ approved publishing and soliciting public comment on *An Implementation Plan for One TMDL for Dissolved Oxygen in Lake O' the Pines (Segment 0403)*. The public comment period is April 18 through May 17. A public meeting to receive comments

on the proposed TMDL was held April 29 in Hughes Springs. Comments not submitted at the public meeting must be provided in writing and must be received by the TCEQ no later than May 17. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/19-lakeopines.html>. This TMDL and Implementation Plan affects poultry, dairy and forestry operations in the Lake O' the Pines watershed in Upshur, Camp, Titus, Morris, Cass, Harrison and Marion Counties.

Leon River

On March 19, TCEQ approved publishing and soliciting public comment on *One TMDL for Bacteria in the Leon River below Proctor Lake (Segment 1221)*. The public comment period is April 4 through May 5. A public meeting to receive comments on the proposed TMDL was held April 17 in Hamilton; Pamela Casebolt, Mitch Conine, Don Brandenberger and Charlie Upchurch attended this meeting. Comments not submitted at the public meeting must be provided in writing and must be received by the TCEQ no later than May 5. This TMDL is proceeding in tandem with the TSSWCB-sponsored WPP for the Leon River. More information on the TMDL project is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/34-leonbacteria.html>. Both this TMDL and the WPP will affect livestock operations in the Leon River watershed in Comanche, Coryell, Mills, Erath and Hamilton Counties.

On April 1-2, Pamela Casebolt attended three Leon River WPP Farm and Ranch Focus Group meetings in Gatesville, Hamilton, and Comanche. The Groups were brought together to help direct how the Brazos River Authority should proceed with facilitating the development of the WPP. Discussion centered on stakeholder's sentiments on the TMDL and how they would be critically involved in the development of the WPP, current monitoring data available and a proposed monitoring strategy. Stakeholders addressed a number of issues that were of concern or might enhance their everyday farming and ranching operations. Topics included from feral hog management, filter strips, ponds, septic systems, and alternative watering systems.

On April 2, Pamela Casebolt attended a Leon River WPP Comanche/Erath Dairy Stakeholder Focus Group meeting in Comanche. The Group was brought together to help direct how the Brazos River Authority should proceed with facilitating the development of the WPP.

Discussion centered on stakeholder's sentiments on the TMDL and how they would be critically involved in the development of the WPP, current monitoring data available and a proposed monitoring strategy, and education for permit holders as well as 3rd party manure applicators.

On April 3, Pamela Casebolt attended a Leon River WPP City Stakeholder Focus Group meeting in Hamilton. The Group was brought together to help direct how the Brazos River Authority should proceed with facilitating the development of the WPP. Discussion centered on the implications of the TMDL, the Cities' role in the WPP, current monitoring data available, and a proposed monitoring strategy. The Cities also discussed how they are working to improve their wastewater treatment facilities (conversion to UV or zero discharge), North Fort Hood connecting to Gatesville WWTF, implementing an aggressive sanitary sewer overflow plan, dead animal pickup, and future funding.

On April 3, Pamela Casebolt attended a Leon River WPP County Stakeholder Focus Group meeting in Hamilton. The Group was brought together to help direct how the Brazos River Authority should proceed with facilitating the development of the WPP. Discussion centered on stakeholder's sentiments on the TMDL, their role in the WPP process, current monitoring data available and a proposed monitoring strategy, education for recreational landowners, management of feral hogs, dead animal disposal, and failing septic systems.

On April 3, Pamela Casebolt attended a Leon River WPP Landowner Stakeholder Focus Group meeting in Hamilton. The Group was brought together to help direct how the Brazos River Authority should proceed with facilitating the development of the WPP. Discussion centered on TMDL, the landowners role in the development of the WPP, current monitoring data available and a proposed monitoring strategy, various best management practices to be included in the WPP, and education.

This WPP is proceeding in tandem with the TMDL for the Leon River. More information on the WPP project is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/managementprogram/leonwpp>. Both this TMDL and the WPP will affect livestock operations in the Leon River watershed in Comanche, Coryell, Mills, Erath and Hamilton Counties.

Lower San Antonio River

At their May 7 meeting, the TCEQ intends to consider publishing and soliciting public comment on *One TMDL for Bacteria in the Lower San Antonio River (Segment 1901)*. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/34-lowersanantoniobac.html>. This TMDL will likely affect livestock operations in the Lower San Antonio River watershed in Karnes, Goliad, Refugio, DeWitt, Wilson, Victoria, and Guadalupe Counties.

Peach Creek

On April 2, TCEQ approved publishing and soliciting public comment on *One TMDL for Bacteria in Peach Creek (Segment 1803C)*. The public comment period is April 18 through May 17. A public comment meeting to receive comments on the proposed TMDL was held April 15 in Waelder. Comments not submitted at the public meeting must be provided in writing and must be received by the TCEQ no later than May 17. More information is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/34-peachcreek_group.html. This TMDL will affect livestock operations in the Peach Creek watershed in Gonzales, Bastrop, Fayette and Caldwell Counties.

Upper Oyster Creek

On April 2, TCEQ approved publishing and soliciting public comment on *One TMDL for Dissolved Oxygen in Upper Oyster Creek (Segment 1245)*. The public comment period is April 18 through May 17. A public comment meeting to receive comments on the proposed TMDL was held April 22 in Sugar Land. Comments not submitted at the public meeting must be provided in writing and must be received by the TCEQ no later than May 17. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/25-oystercreek.html>. This TMDL will have no to limited affect on farming and livestock operations in the Upper Oyster Creek watershed in Fort Bend County.

Upcoming Public Meetings

- April 28-30 – Forecast: Climate Change - Texas Water 2008 Symposium (Austin)
- April 29 – Lake O' the Pines I-Plan Public Comment meeting (Hughes Springs)
- April 30 – Dickinson Bayou Watershed Partnership Meeting (Dickinson)

- April 30 – Trinity River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee Meeting (Dallas)
- April 30 – Cedar Creek WPP Steering Committee Meeting (Kaufman)
- May 1 – Houston-Galveston Area Council Natural Resources Advisory Committee (Houston)
- May 5 – TCEQ Surface Water Quality Standards Advisory Workgroup (Austin)
- May 6 – Instream Flow Program for the Sabine River (Orange)
- May 7 – TCEQ Agenda Meeting regarding Lower San Antonio River and Upper Coast Oyster Waters TMDLs (Austin)
- May 7 – Instream Flow Program for the Sabine River (Orange)
- May 8 – Plum Creek Steering Committee Meeting (Lockhart)
- May 13 – NEMO Managing Urban Growth: Quality of Life and Environmental Issues in Plum Creek (Lockhart)
- May 16 – Market Based Conservation – Implications for Future Management (NPLELC Webcast)
- May 30 – Texas Watershed Steward Program Workshop on Bastrop Bayou (Lake Jackson)

COASTAL NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION CONTROL

Program Overview

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) is a member of Texas' Coastal Coordination



Council, which administers the Texas Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program. The TSSWCB manages the agricultural and silvicultural portions of this program. The Texas Coastal Management Program was approved by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) on January 10, 1997. The Texas Coastal Management Program is administered by the Texas Coastal Coordination Council and staff of the Texas General Land Office. Section 6217 of the Coastal

Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments requires each state with an approved Coastal Management Program to develop a federally approvable program to control coastal nonpoint source (NPS) pollution. The program must be submitted within 30 months of Coastal Management Program approval. As a result, the Texas Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program was submitted in December 1998 by the Coastal Coordination Council. The Coastal Management Program recognizes the TSSWCB and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) as holding primary responsibility over the development and implementation of the NPS program. More information is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/coastalnps>.

Program Activities

The next CCC Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for May 15, 2008 in Austin. Meeting information can be found at <http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal/cc.html>

CIAP Program

The State of Texas will receive \$48,591,202.09 for fiscal year 2007 and for fiscal year 2008. Of that amount, \$31,584,281.36 will be allocated to the state and \$17,006,920.73 will be allocated directly to the 18 coastal counties.

Before any funds can be disbursed to the state or the counties, a state CIAP plan must be approved by MMS. This plan will include the recommended projects that have been submitted for funding.

Comments on the Texas Draft Coastal Impact Assistance Plan were received from the public and Minerals Management Service (MMS). Staff from the CIAP agencies are reviewing the comments and preparing the final plan. Upon approval of the Office of the Governor, the final plan will be sent to MMS who has 110 days to review and approve the plan. Grant applications for individual projects will be submitted to MMS after the state plan has been approved. It is anticipated that state projects will be approved for funding by early 2009.

The plan can be found at:

<http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal/ciap/pdf/StatePlan-FinalDraft10-26-07.pdf>

The 2008 CIAP program should begin in May. At least two public meetings will be held on the coast to present the program. Notification of the meetings and project solicitation will be posted on the GLO CIAP Website and sent to all 2007 project nominees and Council and Executive Committee members. Additional information on the CIAP program can be found at:

<http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal/ciap/index.html>

GMP Grant Program

As in the previous grant cycles, the Coastal Coordination Council (CCC) expects to award approximately \$1.8 million for planning, acquisition, construction, education, and research projects in Grant Cycle 14.

The deadline for pre-proposals is June 25, 2008 by 5:00 p.m. (Submission of the pre-proposal is optional and is only necessary if written comments are desired.) The full application is due October 15, 2008 by 5:00 p.m.

Five grant workshops will be on the coast to help potential applicants through the guidance document and application package. All potential applicants were strongly encouraged to attend the workshops.

Information on this grant program is available online:

<http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal/grants/cycle14.html>

WATER SUPPLY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM REPORT

BACKGROUND:

The 80th Legislature continued funding for the Water Supply Enhancement Program by providing \$1,848,927.00 in General Revenue Funds in FY08.

These funds were directed to be used for continuation of water supply enhancement projects designated by the Soil and Water Conservation Board.

Staff Activities

Provided the following SWCDs with Water Supply Enhancement Program Updates or Water Supply Enhancement Assistance

Area 1 Districts

Dawson County SWCD
Upper Colorado SWCD

Area 2 Districts

North Concho River SWCD
Nolan County SWCD
Middle Concho SWCD
Eldorado-Divide SWCD
Tom Green County SWCD
Pedernales SWCD
Mitchell County SWCD
Gillispie County SWCD
Runnels SWCD
Pecos County SWCD
Middle Clear Fork SWCD
Midland SWCD
Trans Pecos SWCD
Sandhills SWCD
Howard County SWCD

Area 3

McMullen County SWCD
Caldwell/ Travis SWCD
Comal/ Guadalupe SWCD

Area 5

Archer County SWCD
Lower Clear Fork/Brazos SWCD

- 4 Landowners assisted with Water Supply Enhancement Contracts
- 15 Landowners assisted with Water Supply Enhancement Certifications

- Assisted Glasscock SWCD with the training of full-time District Employee
- Evaluate pending application from all projects
- Assist TCEQ with Brush rider concerning water yield in State Brush Projects
- Assisted UCRA, Dr. Rainwater, and Dr. Fish in reviewing the monitoring sites on the paired watershed studies in the North Concho River Project
- Evaluated sub-basins in the Twin Buttes and Pedernales watersheds that meet criteria for water enhancement cost share assistance and assess land owner participation
- Assist Comal/ Guadalupe District in reviewing potential areas for Water Enhancement Project
- Assisted U.S. Congressman Henry Cuellar and Congressman Ben Thompson's office in reviewing potential areas to control Arundo Cane on the Rio Grande River
- Assist Dr. Rainwater and Dr. Fish with maps of treated areas in the water enhancement projects throughout the State
- Assisted Dr. Fish and CRMWA in reviewing the activities and progress of the Canadian River Salt Cedar Project

FLOOD CONTROL DAMS

Floodwater retarding dams built by local watershed sponsors under the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) watershed program successfully protected many Texas communities from catastrophic damage during the spring and summer storms of 2007. Floodwaters from 24 storm events caused damages in 14 counties, with some counties being affected multiple times. Floodwater retarding

dams in 19 watershed projects located within these counties reduced flood damages by \$25 million for these storm events.

Statewide, 145 watershed projects provide average annual benefits exceeding \$110 million. This very important infrastructure provides benefits by reducing flood damages to homes, businesses, roads, bridges, and agricultural lands, as well as protects many people's lives.

The NRCS has prepared Watershed fact sheets have for all U.S. Congressional Districts in Texas that have watershed projects. A state-wide fact sheet has also been prepared. You may access the fact sheets from the Texas Watershed Web at:

<http://www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/watersheds/index.htm> The fact sheets and other data from the watershed web may be used in working with your local watershed sponsors on O&M, repair, dam safety, and rehabilitation of watershed project dams.

The TCEQ is in the process of updating Texas' dam safety rules; the goal is to have them posted in the Texas Register for public comment on July 28, 2008 for thirty days of public comment. A public meeting on the proposed rules will be held in August, 2008. The revised rules should be effective January, 2009.

TEXAS GROUNDWATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE

Section 26.403 of the Texas Water Code established the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC), and mandated that the Executive Director (or a designee) of the TSSWCB be a permanent member. The TGPC bridges the gap between state groundwater programs, improves coordination between member agencies and works to protect groundwater as a vital resource.

The Texas Groundwater Protection Committee:

- Improves coordination between State and Federal agencies to protect groundwater.

- Reports on its activities and recommends new protection programs to the Legislature.
- Publishes numerous reports.
- Advises the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality on the development of agricultural chemical plans for groundwater.
- Develops, implements and updates a comprehensive *State Groundwater Protection Strategy* and an annual *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report*.

Meeting information is available on the TGPC website at:

<http://www.tgpc.state.tx.us/meetings/Meetings.htm>

Monthly Program News and Activities is produced by the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) for use by Texas soil and water conservation district directors. If you have any questions regarding its contents, or have information you would like to see in a future issue, please contact Loren Henley (254) 773-2250 or lhenley@tsswcb.state.tx.us.

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) is a state agency that administers Texas' soil and water conservation

law and coordinates conservation and pollution abatement programs throughout the State. Headquartered in Temple, Texas, the TSSWCB offers technical assistance to the state's 217 soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs). The TSSWCB is the lead state agency for the planning, management, and abatement of agricultural and silvicultural (forestry) nonpoint source pollution, and administers the Texas Brush Control Program. The TSSWCB maintains regional offices in strategic locations in the State to help carry out the agency's responsibilities.



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