



TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

Monthly Program News and Activities

311 North 5th Street, Temple, Texas (254) 773-2250

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

February 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 1 is the deadline for submission of the 2010-2011 SWCD Biennial Budget Request**

CONTENTS

State Board Work Sessions and Meetings	Page 01
Budget and Accounting	Page 02
Human Resources	Page 02
Special Projects	Page 02
Public Information and Education	Page 02
Water Quality Management Plan Program	Page 03
Poultry Water Quality Management Plans	Page 03
Clean Water Act, §319(h) Grants	Page 04
Total Maximum Daily Loads and Watershed Planning	Page 04
Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control	Page 08
Water Enhancement Program	Page 09
Flood Control Dams	Page 10
Texas Groundwater Protection Committee Activities	Page 10

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., **Wednesday, March 19, 2008**, in the Hearings Room at the agency's state headquarters in Temple. A formal State Board Meeting is tentatively scheduled for 8:00 a.m. on **Thursday, March 20, 2008**, at the same location. 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 January 17, 2008, State Board Meeting will be considered for approval at the meeting tentatively scheduled for March 20, 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 is April 1st.

HUMAN RESOURCES

There are currently no job openings.

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 Contest packets were sent both electronically and in hard copy to SWCDs and Ag Science teachers during the first two weeks in February. Area contests to determine area winners will be held in late spring.

Water Quality Management Plan Program Guidance Manual

Work continues to complete and update the Water Quality Management Plan Program Guidance Manual. A meeting was held on February 28 with representatives from several regional offices to make final edits to the publication.

Priority Education Funding Program

Districts are advised that if they have a special education project that they would like some financial assistance with, they should consult with their State Board field representative.

Some funding for such programs is available through the Association of Texas' Public Information Program. However districts are reminded that requests for financial assistance must be coordinated through their respective field representative.

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.

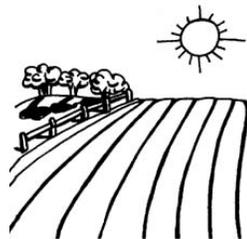
Ordering a Video

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.



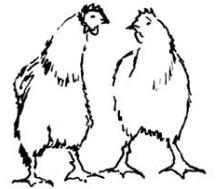
Program News

Between September 1, 2007 and April 30, 2008, districts in priority areas will be busy developing water quality management plans and obligating cost-share funds to these plans. Another priority will be to ensure that FY-06 funds are utilized prior to August 31, 2008 after which they will be cancelled. 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>.



Program Activities

TSSWCB conducted six poultry producer meetings in January and February 2008 in cooperation with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and Texas AgriLife Extension Service (formerly known as Texas Cooperative Extension). The purpose of the meetings was to familiarize poultry producers that meet the federal and state definition of a CAFO with water and air quality requirements that are in addition to their Water Quality Management Plan. The TSSWCB has prepared a new guidance document that should make these additional requirements as unobtrusive as possible.

The TSSWCB staff will soon begin conducting inspections of poultry CAFO facilities to ensure they are meeting all the necessary requirements. In addition, existing WQMPs are being reviewed and updated and plans are being developed for newly constructed farms. **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 87 ongoing §319(h) grant-funded projects addressing a wide array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues. Federal funds totaling \$25 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. The report highlights the State's efforts during 2007 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. The 2007 Annual Report has been completed and submitted to EPA.

FY2008 CWA §319(h) NPS Grant Request for Proposals

The FY2008 Request for Proposals (RFP) was published in the Texas Register on December 7th, posted on the TSSWCB's website, and emailed to all soil and water conservation districts and cooperating entities on our contact list. The deadline for proposal submission was February 1, 2008. The TSSWCB received 18 proposals during the RFP. TSSWCB staff are currently reviewing and ranking the proposals.

TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS 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*. Specifically, on February 21, TJ Helton and Aaron Wendt met with TCEQ staff to discuss the development of State guidance on the development of WPPs.

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. Recently, TSSWCB staff have met with TCEQ staff to discuss peer review comments on the draft TMDL for Lower San Antonio River and have provided comments on a second draft of the updated TMDL Program Guidance which incorporates the Task Force recommendations.

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 \$858,024 through four contracts and are working with cooperating entities to develop workplans and budgets to obligate the remaining \$342,470.

Texas Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List

At their March 19 meeting, the TCEQ intends to consider submitting to EPA the *2008 Texas Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List*. This report describes the status of the state's waters, as required by the federal CWA. It summarizes the status of the state's surface waters, including concerns for public health, fitness for use by aquatic species and other wildlife, and specific pollutants and their possible sources. The *List* identifies those waterbodies not attaining water quality standards as impaired. More information on the *Inventory and List* is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/compliance/monitoring/water/quality/data/08twqi/twqi08.html>. The draft March 19 TCEQ agenda is available at

http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm_exec/agendas/comm/comm_agendas.html.

Bastrop Bayou

On February 26 and 28, Brian Koch attended two public meetings for the Bastrop Bayou WPP. The first meeting was held in Angleton, and the second meeting was held in Lake Jackson. The purpose of these meetings was to increase awareness of the project and identify interested people to develop a stakeholder group. Brian Koch presented information on WPPs in general, the TSSWCB WQMP Program, and the Texas Watershed Steward Program, which is a Texas AgriLife Extension program funded by the TSSWCB. On May 14, there will be a TWS workshop in the Bastrop Bayou watershed. Also, the Houston-Galveston Area Council presented background information on Bastrop Bayou and results from a bacteria risk assessment conducted 2006. More information is available at http://www.h-gac.com/community/water/watershed_protection/default.aspx. This WPP has the potential to affect livestock and farming operations in the Bastrop Bayou watershed in Brazoria County.

Lake Granbury

On February 20, Pamela Casebolt attended the Lake Granbury WPP stakeholder meeting in Granbury. An overview of the water quality modeling peer review process was provided, which led into the modeling update. Modeling results were presented for *E. coli* and dissolved oxygen for the areas surrounding Lake Granbury and potential locations for the septic system dye test and circulation studies. Stakeholders voted on literature values for bacteria sources that best represented Lake Granbury. Updates were also given on duck counts, Bacterial Source Tracking (BST), land use and water quality standards. An update on educational programs in the watershed was provided. Water quality fact sheets and septic system publications have been developed and presentations to local homeowners associations have been made. Public educational programs for rainwater harvesting,

groundwater management, small acreage landowners, and septic system installers have been hosted. A scientist with Texas A&M University, explained his findings on golden algae after monitoring 10 in-lake sampling stations, described the timing of algal blooms, and the relationship between golden algae and blue-green algae as a result of a proportion experiment on Lake Whitney and Lake Waco. More information is available at <http://www.brazos.org/gbWPP.asp>. This WPP has the potential to affect agricultural operations around Lake Granbury in Hood and Parker Counties

Leon River

At their March 19 meeting, the TCEQ intends to consider publishing and soliciting public comment on *One TMDL for Bacteria in the Leon River below Proctor Lake for Segment 1221*. More information on the TMDL project is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/34-leon_group.html. The draft March 19 TCEQ agenda is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm_exec/agendas/comm/comm_agendas.html. This TMDL will affect livestock operations in the Leon River watershed in Comanche, Coryell, Mills, Erath and Hamilton Counties.

Little Brazos River Tributaries

On February 13, Loren Henley and Aaron Wendt hosted a meeting in Temple with the Brazos River Authority and Texas Water Resources Institute to discuss proposed work on several tributaries of the Little Brazos River that are impaired for elevated bacteria. Waterbodies of interest are Walnut Creek, Mud Creek, Pin Oak Creek, Spring Creek and Campbells Creek. This project has the potential to affect livestock operations in these five watersheds in Robertson County.

Pecos River

On February 19-21, Joe Freeman, Ben Wilde, and Mitch Conine attended public comment meetings on the Pecos River WPP in Pecos, Imperial, Iraan,

Ozona and Del Rio. Changes made to the 2nd draft of the WPP were discussed with landowners and they had positive comments on the changes made so far. Comments on the 2nd draft will continue to be accepted through March 10. More information, including the draft of the WPP, is available at <http://pecosbasin.tamu.edu/>. This WPP will affect agricultural operations in the Pecos River watershed in Andrews, Brewster, Crane, Crockett, Culberson, Ector, Jeff Davis, Loving, Pecos, Presidio, Reagan, Reeves, Terrell, Upton, Val Verde, Ward and Winkler Counties.

Plum Creek

On January 31, Brian Koch, Pamela Casebolt, and Aaron Wendt attended the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership Steering Committee meeting in Lockhart. Lockhart and Luling ISD students opened the meeting with a presentation on their surface water quality monitoring project on Plum Creek. Discussion followed on the public comment received on the WPP. Thirty-nine sets of written or verbal comments were received for a 58% response rate among involved participants. An update was given on the December 4, 2007 Texas Watershed Steward workshop held in Kyle, which yielded 42 participants. The status of grant applications submitted to TSSWCB and TCEQ for WPP implementation were also discussed.

On February 19, Brian Koch, Pamela Casebolt, and Aaron Wendt attended the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership Steering Committee meeting in Lockhart. The Steering Committee met to finalize and sign the WPP and authorize the submittal of the WPP for state and federal consistency review. The meeting was a celebration of the time and effort stakeholders had put into the development of the WPP. Steering Committee members were recognized for their leadership.

More information is available at <http://pcwp.tamu.edu/>. This WPP will affect livestock and farming operations in the Plum Creek watershed in Caldwell and Hays Counties.

Upper Coast Oyster Waters

On February 27, Brian Koch attended a public meeting on the Upper Coast Oyster Waters Bacteria TMDL project in Hankamer. This was the first of three public meeting for the project. Similar meetings were held in Clear Lake on February 28 and in Galveston on February 29. This TMDL focuses on the entire Galveston Bay system, including East Bay, West Bay, and Trinity Bay. The bacteria criterion established to protect oyster waters use was established by the National Shellfish Sanitation Program, and is mandatory for all 50 states, and is compliant with Food and Drug Administration guidelines. The standard is a median of 14 cfu/100mL of fecal coliform, or no more than 10% of samples exceeding 43 cfu/100mL. Sampling locations are determined by shoreline and hydrographic surveys that help identify potential pollutant sources and movement of pollutants. Currently, there are 92 sampling stations in the Galveston Bay complex. Potential sources identified septic systems, wastewater treatment facilities, wildlife, and marinas. Load reductions are based on the 10% single sample criteria, and range from 12% to 67% at isolated sampling locations. Currently, the draft TMDL is being developed and is expected to be released for public comment later this year. More information is available at

<http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/74-uppercoastoyster.html>. There is little potential for this TMDL to affect livestock operations around the Galveston Bay complex in Chambers, Harris, Galveston or Brazoria Counties.

Upcoming Public Meetings

March 3 – Lower San Antonio River TMDL Public Meeting (Goliad)

March 5 – Lower San Antonio River TMDL Public Meeting (Karnes City)

March 6 – TSSWCB Wharton Regional Watershed Coordination Steering Committee (Columbus)

March 6 – Clear Creek TMDL Public Meeting (Clear Lake)

March 9-15 – *National Groundwater Awareness Week*
 March 12 – Upper Trinity River TMDL Public Meeting (Arlington)
 March 13 – Galveston Bay Estuary Program Water and Sediment Quality Subcommittee (Houston)
 March 20 – Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee Meeting (Seguin)
 March 21 – *Pharmaceuticals in Animal Manure - Potential Impacts and Management* (NLPELC Webcast)
 March 25 – Texas Watershed Steward Workshop on Gilleland Creek (Pflugerville)
 March 25 – Red River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee Meeting (Amarillo)
 March 25 – Nueces River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee Meeting (Uvalde)
 March 27 – Brazos River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee Meeting (Waco)
 March 27 – Nueces River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee Meeting (Corpus Christi)
 April 1 – Red River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee Meeting (Wichita Falls)
 April 1 – Angelina and Neches River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee Meeting (Nacogdoches)
 April 2 – Texas Watershed Steward Workshop on Brady Creek (Brady)

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 CCC Executive Committee met in Austin, Thursday, February 7 at 1:30 p.m. The next CCC meeting is scheduled for March 20, 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.

The Texas Draft Coastal Impact Assistance Plan was posted for public comment on the GLO CIAP Website for 30 days. The document was also

provided to Minerals Management Service (MMS) for comment. Staff from the CIAP agencies are reviewing the comments and preparing the final plan. Upon approval of the Coastal Land Advisory Board and the Office of the Governor, the final plan will be sent to MMS, who has 120 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 before the end of the year.

A total of \$145.5 million in proposals was considered, but only \$31.6 million in funding was available. The plan can be found at:
<http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal/ciap/pdf/StatePlan-FinalDraft10-26-07.pdf>

The 2008 CIAP program will begin in the near future. At least two public meetings will be held on the coast to present the program. Notification of public 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>

WATER ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM REPORT

WATER ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM STATUS REPORT

The 80th Legislature continued funding for the Water Enhancement Program by providing \$1,848,927.00 in General Revenue Funds in FY08. These funds were directed to be used for continuation of brush control projects designated by the Soil and Water Conservation Board.

Staff Activities

Provided the following SWCD with Water Enhancement Program Updates or Water Enhancement Program 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

Area 5

Archer County SWCD
Lower Clear Fork/Brazos SWCD

- 7 Landowners assisted with Brush Contracts
- 10 Landowners assisted with Brush Certifications
- Assisted Mitchell County SWCD with training new District Employee
- Assisted Glasscock SWCD with the training of full-time District Employee
- Evaluate pending application from all projects
- Evaluate Salt Cedar Contracts for the Pecos and Upper Colorado Projects
- Assist Webb Co. SWCD with certification on Arundo Cane
- Assist TCEQ with Brush rider concerning water yield in State Brush Projects

- Met with UCRA to discuss update on O.C. Fisher 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
- Met with Texas TWRI to develop a meeting with A&M to determine changes that need to be made to address water enhancement program
- Dr. Rainwater has received contract to study water yield in the state brush program, and we are looking at means of assisting him.
- Assist U.S. Congressman Henry Cuellar's office pertaining to field day to review control of Arundo Cane on the Rio Grande

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.html>

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. Richard Egg with TSSWCB and Bobby Wilson with Navarro SWCD participated in an advisory group meeting at TCEQ on Feb. 22 where proposed rule changes were discussed. The proposed rules are scheduled to be published for public comment in July of 2008.

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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