



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>

November 2007

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

- **October 31st was the deadline for FY 2007. Financial Statements and Audit Notification Forms**

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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., **Wednesday, January 16, 2007**, 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, January 17, 2007**, 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>.

Adopted Minutes

Minutes from the September 20, 2007, State Board Meeting were approved on November 29, 2007, and are available on the agency website at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/boardmeetings/minutes/2000-2007#2007>. Minutes from the November 29, 2007, State Board Meeting will be considered for approval at the meeting tentatively scheduled for January 17, 2007.

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.

Rule Proposals

At their November 29, 2007, meeting, the State Board adopted the following amendment to Rule 31TAC519. The rule amendment was adopted to be effective January 1, 2008.

TITLE 31. NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION
Part 17. TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION
BOARD

Chapter 519 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Subchapter A TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

§519.8 Eligible Pay Rates

The State Board hereby establishes a maximum pay rates of \$15.00 \$10.00 per hour not to exceed a or \$20,773 per year and maximum hours per week of 40 hours per week. With the prior approval of the State Board a district may exceed the maximum pay rate or maximum hours per week. Expenditures for wages or salaries that are above the maximum pay rate or expenditures for hours over the maximum hours per week will not otherwise be eligible for reimbursement.

This agency hereby certifies that the proposal has been reviewed by legal counsel and found to be within the agency's legal authority to adopt.

Mel Davis
Special Projects Coordinator
Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board
Earliest possible date of adoption: September 16, 2007
For further information, please call: (254) 773-2250, x252

Rule Reviews

Consistent with the State Board's Rule Review Plan, the following rules are scheduled for review and publication in the *Texas Register* for review and comment concerning readoption, revision, or repeal:

- 1). Chapter 517, Cost-Share Assistance for Brush Control, Sections 517.22-517.37.
- 2). Chapter 527, Removal of a District Director, Sections 527.1-527.7.

Notice will be sent to the *Texas Register* and a 30-day review and comment period will be available for districts and other interested parties to provide their comments.

Copies of the rules being reviewed may be viewed and downloaded from the agency's website.

BUDGET AND ACCOUNTING

October 31st was the deadline for FY 2007:

- Financial Statements and Audit Notification Forms

December 31st is the deadline for FY 2007:

- Financial Statements to be approved
- Audits

Technical Assistance:

Effective January 1, 2008, the new maximum reimbursable pay rate for Technical Assistance will be \$15.00 per hour. A notification letter will be forthcoming in December.

Director Mileage and Per Diem:

The TSSWCB has increased the Fiscal Year 2008 Director Mileage and Per Diem allocation from \$325,000 to \$408,000. **The allocation increase is for Fiscal Year 2008 only.** The maximum mileage reimbursement rate for District Director Mileage Claims as of September 1, 2007, is now 48.5 cents per mile. A District is not required to pay the maximum rate that is less than 48.5 cents per mile. A notification letter with further instructions will be forthcoming in December.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Current Job Openings

- Natural Resource Specialist IV
Class No. 2684/B11
Starting Annual Salary: \$40,790
Required Travel: As Needed
Location: Dublin, Texas

New Hires

- Meredith McArthur started November 12, 2007 as the Information Specialist I in Temple.
- Kyra Sumerford started November 19, 2007 as the Administrative Assistant I in Temple, Texas.
- Justin Berney started October 1, 2007 as the Natural resource Specialist IV position in Nacogdoches.
- Shari Johnson started October 15, 2007 as the Natural Resource Specialist IV in Gonzales.

Resignation

Irene Perez resigned October 5, 2007 as the Information specialist I position in Temple.
Joe Ballard resigned November 30, 2007 as the Natural Resource Specialist in Dublin.

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 next 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—NACD' Stewardship and Education Committee announced that "Water is Life" will be the theme of

the 2008 Stewardship Week. According to NACD, the materials will be available for purchase in November. As a result, preparations are now underway for developing the 2008 Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest packet which is targeted to be sent to SWCDS and Ag Science teachers in January-February.

Wildlife Alliance for Youth—38 FFA teams with 100 students and 9 4-H teams with 35 students participated in the Region IV Wildlife Contest held on October 31. High point individual in the FFA category was Tommy Marchetti of the Rusk FFA chapter. Hunter Westbrook of the Red River County 4-H team was high point scorer in the 4-H category.

SWCD Director Training Conference— A training conference for district directors is scheduled for January 29-30, 2008 at the TSSWCB's state headquarters in Temple. Correspondence announcing the workshop along with a registration form was sent to all districts the last week in November.

Informational Brochure for New Directors— A letter introducing the new pamphlet for newly elected/appointed directors along with a request form was sent to all districts on September 25. In addition, the new pamphlet will be included with the appointment or election papers sent to a district that has a new director or directors coming on board.

Pocket Calendars—1,000 pocket planners for 2008 were purchased through the Association's Public Information/Education Program for distribution to SWCD directors at the state meeting. Surplus copies will be used in conjunction with exhibits at upcoming trade shows. Attached is a copy.

Cast Conference—The TSSWCB had an exhibit at the annual Conference for the Advancement of Science Teaching on November 15-16 in Austin. CAST has the largest state science conference in the country! A record crowd of over 7,000 Texas science educators and administrators attended the

conference. The TSSWC B promoted its programs and how they can be incorporated into the scientific curriculum. In addition, the video library was promoted as well as summer teacher workshops sponsored by conservation districts.

SWCD Director Training Resource Project—(Formerly referred to as the NASCA project) All agency training materials such as PowerPoint presentations, and other documents used as resources in District Director Training workshops are being consolidated into a specific TSSWCB website link. The purpose of organizing this material into a Training Resources file 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.

TSSWCB Conservation Video Library

About The Catalog

There are over 190 conservation-related videos available; the catalog can be downloaded from the TSSWCB's website at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/files/contentimages/videocat05-06.pdf>. No rental fees are assessed to those wishing to borrow the videos from the library. Borrowing privileges are for a length of two weeks and must be returned upon 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

This resource is available at no charge to the borrower. The Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts' Public Information/Education Committee will pay first transit postage costs to mail the video(s) to the requester. Postage for returning 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](#). Request a video, contact Meredith McArthur at mmcarthur@tsswcb.state.tx.us.

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>.

SB 503 Manual Update—Assistance was requested by the Program Supervisor in the Harlingen Region Office to update the Water Quality Management Program Nonpoint Source Pollution Agriculture/Silvicultural Reference Guide. Following a visit to the regional office, assistance will be provided regarding the printing of a new publication.

Regional Office PI Activities

Wharton Regional Office and Harlingen Regional Office—

Brian Koch, Regional Watershed Coordinator, demonstrated the Watershed Model on October 9, for the Colorado County Ag in the Classroom Event held in Columbus.

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 News

The TSSWCB has filled four Poultry Program positions (Natural Resource Specialist IVs) appropriated to the TSSWCB during the 80th Regular Texas Legislative Session in 2007. The positions are headquartered in Center, Centerville, Nacogdoches, and Gonzales. These positions will continue the TSSWCB's duty to assist poultry producers in meeting state water quality standards through the successful implementation of a Water Quality Management Plan certified by the TSSWCB under §201.026, Agriculture Code.

Program Activities

On December 7, 2007, the TSSWCB will host a staff meeting in Nacogdoches with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, the Texas Cooperative Extension, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service to review rules and requirements that apply to poultry producers

defined as concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFO). TSSWCB is also preparing to conduct six poultry producer meetings in January and February 2008 in cooperation with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and Texas Cooperative Extension. The purpose of the meetings is 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 meetings for producers will start at 6:00 pm on the following dates:

January 10	Mt. Pleasant Civic Center
January 17	Gonzales American Legion Hall
January 24	Center High School Cafeteria
February 7	Nacogdoches Knights of Columbus Hall
February 14	Caldwell Civic Center
February 28	Franklin Pidgeon Center

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 90 ongoing §319(h) grant-funded projects addressing a wide array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues. Federal funds totaling \$20 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. TSSWCB staff and TCEQ staff are currently developing the content of the report. The report will highlight 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. This report must be submitted to EPA in January 2008 to ensure continued funding. For past editions of the annual report, please visit <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/reports> under the heading *Texas Nonpoint Source Management Program*.

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

The FY2008 Request for Proposals will be 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 is February 1, 2008.

Lone Star Healthy Streams

Funded through the FY2006 CWA§319(h) NPS Grant, the Texas Water Resources Institute and Texas Cooperative Extension are developing an educational curriculum that delivers current knowledge training in production and environmental management of grazing lands and their associated watersheds. The project also evaluates and demonstrates the effectiveness of BMPs in reducing bacterial contamination of

streams and waterbodies from grazing lands in two demonstration watersheds (Copano Bay and Plum Creek). This education and demonstration project will contribute to the reduction of levels of bacterial contamination of Texas watersheds from grazing livestock (beef cattle). This project will play a critical role in implementing numerous TMDLs and WPPs across the State.

To guide the statewide development of the Lone Star Healthy Streams curriculum, a Steering Committee has been established. On November 29, 2007, the Lone Star Healthy Streams Steering Committee met at TSSWCB Headquarters in Temple. This group is made up of leaders in the cattle industry, SWCD directors, participants in ongoing TMDLs and WPPs, and representatives from agricultural and natural resource agencies and agricultural industry groups. This group was formed to provide guidance to TCE, TWRI, and TSSWCB on research and education programs needed to help cattlemen throughout Texas address bacteria runoff issues.

TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS & 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 work session, 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*.

On October 17, John Foster, TJ Helton and Aaron Wendt met with TCEQ staff to discuss how the State can better provide guidance to local stakeholder groups on developing WPPs. Discussion centered on programmatic questions related to approval of WPPs, long-term sustainability of WPPs, interaction of WPPs with TMDLs and the appropriate role state and federal agencies should play in facilitating local stakeholder groups.

On October 19, TSSWCB staff hosted a meeting with staff from TCEQ and EPA to discuss the identification of several priority watersheds that are anticipated to achieve water quality improvement over the next few years in order to support EPA program performance measures.

TSSWCB staff have worked with TCEQ staff to review a short list of waterbodies that have been on the 303(d) List for some time and are priority waterbodies for resource allocation to address the listing. TSSWCB staff have committed to taking the lead role in facilitating and funding projects to address the bacteria impairments for 1) Big Cypress Creek and its tributaries between Lake Bob Sandlin and Lake O' the Pines in Camp and Titus Counties, and 2) several tributaries of the Little Brazos River in Robertson County.

TSSWCB staff have provided comments on several sections of the revised TMDL Program Guidance and are continuing to review chapters as they are drafted. The guidance document was developed and last published in 1999.

Bacteria TMDL Task Force

On June 29, 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 are currently working with TCEQ staff to implement these directives.

Specifically, over the past month, TSSWCB staff 1) have worked to resolve issues associated with TCEQ staff response to peer review comments provided on drafts of the TMDL documents for the Leon River and Peach Creek, 2) have provided peer review comments to TCEQ staff on a draft of the TMDL document for the Lower San Antonio River, 3) have facilitated meetings designed to expedite the resumption of public meetings associated with the development of bacteria TMDLs for the Leon River and Copano Bay, and 4) have reviewed draft text developed to revise existing TMDL program guidance necessary to incorporate the adopted recommendations from the Task Force report.

State Appropriations for TMDL Program Grants

On May 24, the Board approved a *TSSWCB Policy on TMDLs* which provides guidance to staff on directing state appropriations for the TMDL Program. On July 19, the Board approved an operating budget for FY2008 that allocated \$1,200,494 to TMDL Program grants. Staff have obligated \$758,024 through three contracts and are working to obligate the remaining monies.

Two contracts were awarded to the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station (TAES) to support the anticipated volume of Bacterial Source Tracking (BST) studies for bacteria TMDLs across the State through 1) increased analytical infrastructure at BST laboratories, 2) development of statewide Standard Operating Procedures for BST methodologies, and 3) further development of the statewide BST known-source library. \$200,279 was dedicated to the TAES BST Laboratory at El Paso

and \$386,579 was dedicated to the TAES BST Laboratory at College Station.

Staff directed \$171,166 to support additional targeted brush control (saltcedar) in the E.V. Spence Reservoir watershed. Combined with an existing CWA §319(h) NPS grant, this further supported the *Implementation Plan for Sulfate and Total Dissolved Solids TMDLs in the E.V. Spence Reservoir*. By leveraging state appropriations with a federal grant, 11,391 acres of saltcedar have been chemically treated in the riparian corridor along the Colorado River and its tributaries through this project.

Staff are currently working with cooperating entities to develop workplans and budgets to obligate the remaining \$442,470. Specifically, staff are working with 1) the Texas A&M University Spatial Sciences Laboratory to develop a workplan that supports the development of several TMDLs and WPPs by conducting a current land use/land cover analysis of several watersheds, 2) the Northeast Texas Municipal Water District to develop a workplan that supports the development of bacteria TMDLs for Big Cypress Creek and its tributaries between Lake Bob Sandlin and Lake O' the Pines, and 3) the Brazos River Authority to develop a workplan that supports the development of bacteria TMDLs for several tributaries of the Little Brazos River in Robertson County.

Texas Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List

TCEQ staff have begun the analysis of water quality data for the *2008 Texas Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List*. TSSWCB staff are providing input on waterbodies where the impairment status may have changed since the last assessment was completed. TCEQ intends to publish the *2008 Inventory and List* for public comment in the near future and will submit to EPA in April 2008. More information is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/compliance/monitoring/water/quality/data/wqm/305_303.html.

Watershed Planning Short Course

On November 20, Aaron Wendt participated in a meeting of the planning team for the Texas Watershed Planning Short Course in College Station. Proper training of watershed coordinators and water 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 is developing the course content and agenda and selecting the most appropriate lecturers. The first course is scheduled for June 2008. More information is available at <http://watershedplanning.tamu.edu/>.

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 November 7, Carl Steffey attended a meeting of the Northeast Texas Municipal Water District Clean Rivers Program Big Cypress Creek Basin Steering Committee in Hughes Springs. More information is available at <http://www.netmwd.com/>.

On November 8, Ben Wilde, Loren Henley and Aaron Wendt attended a meeting of the Lower Colorado River Authority Clean Rivers Program Middle Colorado River Basin Steering Committee in Brady. More information is available at <http://www.lcra.org/water/quality/crp/>.

Bell Bounty Water Symposium

On November 8, Donna Long attended the 7th Annual Bell County Water Symposium sponsored by the Clearwater Underground Water Conservation District in Belton. The symposium featured a variety of topics covering water trends across the state, as well as, simple water conservation practices suitable for the local homeowner. State Representative Aycock was the keynote speaker. Other presentations of interest included Water Planning in Texas, Health of Bell County's Watersheds, Water Conservation Through Brush Control, and Rainwater Harvesting. More information is available at <http://www.clearwaterdistrict.org/>.

Adams and Cow Bayous

On November 10, Brian Koch attended the Clean Bayous Roundtable for Adams and Cow Bayous in West Orange. This meeting was hosted by Texas Watch, and focused on implementing the TMDLs for bacteria, dissolved oxygen and pH in Adams and Cow Bayous. Brian Koch presented

information on implementation of agricultural BMPs through the TSSWCB WQMP Program. Other discussion focused on how to demonstrate that the bayous are an asset to the community and how to build stakeholder buy-in to the I-Plan. Also, meeting participants toured Shangri-La, which is a nature preserve on Adams Bayou used to educate the public on the local ecology and habitat preservation. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/37-orangecounty.html>. These TMDLs will have limited impacts on livestock and forestry operations in the Adams and Cow Bayous watershed in Orange, Jasper and Newton Counties.

Brady Creek

On November 8, Ben Wilde, Loren Henley and Aaron Wendt attended a meeting of the Brady Creek WPP stakeholder group in Brady. An overview of the WPP process was provided and the group discussed local water quality concerns in urban and rural areas within the watershed. The Upper Colorado River Authority explained the roles of a stakeholder and their importance in the WPP process. During the stakeholder meeting a Chair (Joe Mosier) and Vice-Chair (Wendell Moody) were appointed to better ensure a locally driven stakeholder group. A summary of the project workplan was presented to the stakeholders. More information is available at <http://www.ucratx.org/>. This WPP has the potential to impact agricultural operations in the Brady Creek watershed in McCulloch, Concho, San Saba and Menard Counties.

Buck Creek

On November 16, Mitch Conine and Aaron Wendt participated in a Buck Creek WPP video teleconference with project collaborators. Discussion centered on results from the first round of nutrient and bacteria data collection and analysis, next steps to take with the stakeholder group, and modifications to the sampling regime. More information is available at <http://twri.tamu.edu/buckcreek/>. This WPP has the

potential to impact livestock and farming operations in the Buck Creek watershed in Donley, Collingsworth, and Childress Counties.

Caddo Lake

On November 6, Mitch Conine and Aaron Wendt attended a Caddo Lake WPP stakeholder meeting in Jefferson. Discussion centered on results from a recently completed USGS sediment/nutrient study, efforts by TPWD to control aquatic vegetation, and recommendations from an environmental flows regime. A nutrient budget study has concluded that the majority of phosphorus loadings into Caddo Lake are coming from 1) small, ungaged tributaries, 2) Little Cypress Creek, and 3) Big Cypress Creek. About 40% of the phosphorus loadings into Caddo Lake remain in the waterbody. TCEQ staff discussed recommended changes to the water quality standard for pH for Caddo Lake based on two years of continuous monitoring data. Stakeholders voted on prioritizing major concerns and issues to be addressed in the WPP. More information is available at http://www.netmwd.com/Caddo%20Lake%20Protection%20Plan/Caddo_index.html. This WPP has the potential to impact poultry, forestry and other agricultural operations in the Caddo Lake watershed in Upshur, Camp, Titus, Morris, Cass, Harrison, Marion, Wood, Gregg, Franklin, and Hopkins Counties.

Cedar Creek

On November 20, Lee Munz attended a Cedar Creek WPP Economics Workgroup meeting in Temple. The group discussed cost data for proposed BMPs for the WPP and how to best calculate the economic costs and benefits of implementing the WPP. More information is available at <http://nctx-water.tamu.edu/>. This WPP will impact agricultural operations in the Cedar Creek watershed in Henderson, Kaufman, Rockwall and Van Zandt Counties.

Copano Bay and Mission and Aransas Rivers

On November 7, Kendria Ray, Adrian Perez, John Foster, TJ Helton, Mitch Conine and Aaron Wendt facilitated a meeting in Refugio between TCEQ staff and several SWCDs (324, 329 and 346) to discuss their concerns with how the TMDL project is proceeding and how to build stakeholder consensus in order to move forward with the next public meeting. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/mdl/42-copano.html>. This TMDL will impact livestock operations in the Copano Bay and Mission and Aransas Rivers watershed in Bee, Goliad, Refugio, Karnes, Aransas and San Patricio Counties.

Elm and Sandies Creeks

On November 6, Rex Isom, Kendria Ray and John Foster facilitated a meeting with SWCD 339 and TCEQ staff in Austin. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the SWCD's concerns with how the TMDL project is proceeding. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/mdl/31-elmsandies.html>. This TMDL will impact livestock operations in the Elm and Sandies Creeks watershed in Gonzales, DeWitt, Karnes, Wilson and Guadalupe Counties.

Guadalupe River above Canyon Lake

On September 25, the EPA approved *One TMDL for Bacteria in the Guadalupe River Above Canyon Lake, Segment 1806*. Working with local stakeholders, TCEQ will now develop and approve an I-Plan that prescribes the measures needed to achieve the load reductions allocated in the TMDL. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/mdl/65-guadalupeabovecanyon.html>. This TMDL may have limited impacts on livestock operations in the Guadalupe River watershed in Kerr and Kendall Counties.

Lake Houston

Throughout October and November, Jeff Cerny, Lawrence Brown and Brian Koch attended a series of public meetings regarding the Lake Houston bacteria TMDLs. These meetings were designed to introduce stakeholders to the project. Because of the size of the watershed, meetings were held throughout the watershed in Kingwood (October 15), Cypress (October 29), Tomball (October 30), Caney (November 1), Spring (November 6), Conroe (November 7) and Cleveland (November 8). The agenda was the same for all the meetings. An open house was held before the meeting to answer questions from stakeholders, and to introduce them to the responsibilities each entity has in developing TMDLs. The technical portion of the meeting included an overview of the TMDL process and the *Texas Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List*, designated uses, data review and the monitoring plan. Analysis of historic data did not show a trend as far as increases or decreases in bacteria concentrations. Load Duration Curves (LDC) were developed for the single sample maximum criterion, and showed regular bacteria exceedances throughout the watershed. Potential sources include NPS runoff into smaller tributaries and point source discharges on the main stem. There are over 100 TCEQ-permitted dischargers contributing 100% of the flow at base flow (80 cfs). Also, a targeted sampling plan was described that will examine bacteria/sediment re-suspension, regrowth and die-off, wet weather point sources, and library-independent BST. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/mdl/82-lakehouston.html>. These TMDLs have the potential to impact livestock operations in the Lake Houston watershed in Grimes, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, San Jacinto, Walker and Waller Counties.

Leon River

On November 7, the Hamilton County Commissioners Court hosted a meeting of Leon River stakeholders to develop a coordinated set of comments to submit to TCEQ once the TMDL is

published for public comment. This TMDL is proceeding in tandem with the TSSWCB-sponsored WPP for the Leon River. More information is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/34-leon_group.html. This TMDL will impact livestock operations in the Leon River watershed in Comanche, Coryell, Mills, Erath and Hamilton Counties.

North Bosque River

On November 14, Donna Long and Loren Henley attended a workgroup meeting for the North Bosque River TMDL Model Refinement Project in Waco. Various approaches were discussed on how to best simulate TMDL allocations. It was decided that a baseline of reference conditions, from the year 1998, will be run prior to running any allocation scenarios. The first modeling set-up will run a replicate of the original TMDL model with some refinement based on current knowledge of existing BMPs. These BMPs include dairy diet, manure applications rates, manure haul-off, and WWTF controls. An additional modeling run will incorporate the updated NRCS Practice Standard for Nutrient Management (590), new recommendations for third party field applications, recent restrictions to CAFO lagoon size, the possibility of additional floodwater-retarding structure (PL-566 reservoirs) locations, and the inclusion of the new Microgy, Inc. biogas facility. Results of these modeling scenarios will be presented at the next meeting.

More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/06-bosque.html>. This TMDL impacts dairy operations in the North Bosque River watershed in Bosque, Erath, Somervell, Hamilton, Coryell and McLennan Counties.

Pecos River

Throughout November, several SWCDs (213, 224, 231, 235, 237 and 241) hosted public meetings to receive input from landowners on the first draft of the Pecos River WPP. Ben Wilde and Joe Freeman coordinated with the SWCDs and TCE to schedule

these meetings which were held in Fort Stockton (November 5), Pecos (November 6), Sanderson (November 6), Del Rio (November 16), Odessa (November 19) and Ozona (November 20). More information is available at <http://pecosbasin.tamu.edu/>. This WPP will impact 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 November 6, Pamela Casebolt and Loren Henley attended an Outreach and Education Workgroup meeting for the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership in Luling. The focus of this meeting was for stakeholders to provide comments on the Outreach and Education and Measuring Success and Adaptive Management sections of the draft WPP document. Discussion included adding data from Texas Watch, continuous monitoring, and the Plum Creek Conservation District to the project website. Lockhart and Luling ISDs received a grant for 4th and 5th graders to conduct a surface monitoring project on Plum Creek in addition to GBRA's existing elementary school water quality project. Different strategies were discussed to get the general public more involved in the Partnership, including marketing the soil and water testing campaign at local feed stores, targeting youth involved in 4H and FFA, and marrying with other organizations to reach a broader audience.

On November 6, Pamela Casebolt and Loren Henley attended an Agricultural NPS Workgroup meeting for the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership in Lockhart. The focus of this meeting was for stakeholders to provide comments on the Agricultural Management Measures and Measuring Success and Adaptive Management sections of the draft WPP document. Discussion included lowering the on-farm animal unit requirement in the watershed for agricultural exemptions, giving tax breaks as an incentive for land stewards

implementing a WQMP on their land, and looking into wildlife exemptions.

On November 8, Pamela Casebolt and Mitch Conine attended an Urban NPS Workgroup meeting for the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership in Lockhart. The focus of this meeting was for stakeholders to provide comments on the Urban Management Measures and Measuring Success and Adaptive Management sections of the draft WPP document. Discussion included the need to gain the support and involvement of homeowners' associations throughout the watershed, getting letters of support from cities for the WPP, and finding ways to highlight the City of Kyle for their efforts in trying to reduce their impact on Plum Creek. Strategies were discussed on how to find data on dog waste disposal stations. There was also talk of potential funding from TCEQ for storm drain stenciling and the City of Kyle to retrofit two stormwater detention structures and mapping of the storm sewer system.

On November 8, Pamela Casebolt and Mitch Conine attended a Wastewater Workgroup meeting for the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership in Lockhart. The focus of this meeting was for stakeholders to provide comments on the Wastewater Management Measures and Measuring Success and Adaptive Management sections of the draft WPP document. After reviewing data, staff from TCEQ noticed a relatively high, constant bacteria trend in the upper portion of Plum Creek, which can be attributed to effluent or broken pipes. The Workgroup discussed the feasibility of WWTFs voluntarily testing for bacteria and reporting the data to TCEQ to formulate an attainable target based on background conditions, funding daily bacteria testing at the city level, and how the cities and counties would work individually to integrate the WPP into their master plans.

On November 15, Pamela Casebolt and Brian Koch attended a Water Quality and Habitat Workgroup meeting for the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership in Lockhart. The focus of this meeting was for stakeholders to provide comments on the Water

Quality and Habitat section of the draft WPP document. Strategies on Feral Hog reduction were discussed, including bounty fees, feral hog cook-off/awareness/education events, and acquiring funding for abatement activities. Discussion on deer populations included the use of wildlife management cooperatives to get better density and population information on areas that are not surveyed regularly by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Also, land trusts and conservation easements were discussed as strategies for stream buffers in riparian areas.

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

Upper Oyster Creek

On September 28, the EPA approved *One TMDL for Bacteria in Upper Oyster Creek, Segment 1245*. A TMDL for dissolved oxygen is also being developed for Upper Oyster Creek. Working with local stakeholders, TCEQ will now develop and approve an I-Plan that prescribes the measures needed to achieve the load reductions allocated in the TMDL. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/25-oystercreek.html>. This TMDL may have limited impacts on livestock operations in the Upper Oyster Creek watershed in Fort Bend County.

Upper San Antonio River

On September 25, the EPA approved *Three TMDLs for Bacteria in the San Antonio Area, Segments 1910, 1910A, and 1911*. Working with local stakeholders, TCEQ will now develop and approve an I-Plan that prescribes the measures needed to achieve the load reductions allocated in the TMDLs. The I-Plan for these TMDLs will draw heavily upon the Watershed Protection Plan already developed for the Upper San Antonio River. While these TMDLs and their associated I-Plan focus on urban NPS and wastewater treatment issues and will have no impact on livestock operation in the Upper San

Antonio River watershed in Bexar and Wilson Counties, the project is of interest to TSSWCB staff due to the relationship between the TMDL/I-Plan and the WPP and the similar relationship in the Leon River watershed.

More information is available at

<http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/34-uppersanantonio.html>.

Upcoming Public Meetings

December 2-4 – TWDB Water Summit (San Antonio)

December 3-7 – *Essential Elements for Successful Watershed Planning* (Fayetteville, AR)

December 3 – Copano Bay TMDL Public Meeting (Refugio)

December 4 – Texas Watershed Stewards Program (Kyle)

December 5 – Dickinson Bayou Watershed Stakeholder Meeting (Dickinson)

December 6 – Wharton Regional Watershed Coordination Steering Committee (Columbus)

December 6 – *Expressing Daily Loads in TMDLs* (EPA Webcast)

December 10 – Plum Creek Watershed Partnership Steering Committee (Lockhart)

December 12 – Leon River TMDL Public Meeting (Hamilton)

December 13 – GBEP Water and Sediment Quality Subcommittee (Houston)

December 14 – Hickory Creek Watershed Stakeholder Meeting (Denton)

January 8 – TCEQ Water Quality Advisory Work Group meeting (Austin)

January 24 – Texas Watershed Stewards Program (Wellington)

January 24 – Cedar Creek Watershed Stakeholder Meeting (Kaufman)

January 24 – Arroyo Colorado Watershed Partnership Steering Committee (Weslaco)

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

There have been no CCC meetings since the last State Board Meeting. The next CCC meeting will be in Austin, Thursday, December 13 at 1:30 p.m.

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 CIAP staff has prepared a draft plan which was presented to the Coastal Land Advisory Board (CLAB). The CLAB met on November 6 to review the draft plan for FY 07 funding. The draft plan was approved as presented. The CLAB-approved draft plan will be submitted to the Office of Governor for final approval before being posted in the Texas Register for 30 days. After public comments are reviewed, the state plan will be presented at a second CLAB meeting. Upon approval by the CLAB and the Office of the Governor, the plan will be submitted to MMS, who has 90 days to review and approve/disapprove the plan. After the state plan is approved by MMS, grant applications for each selected project will be submitted to MMS for funding approval.

A total of \$145.5 million in proposals was considered, but only \$31.6 million in funding was available. Kleburg County, in partnership with Kleburg-Kenedy SWCD had a \$200,000, "Water Quality Management Plan." However, it was not recommended for funding. The list of projects considered can be found at:
<http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal/ciap/2005/pdf/Scosheet9.27color.pdf>

The 2008 CIAP program will begin in the near future.

Additional information on the CIAP program can be found at:
<http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal/ciap/ciap2005.html>

WATER ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM REPORT

BACKGROUND:

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

Staff has been providing information on water yield to Dr. Rainwater and Dr. Fish for primarily for the Twin Buttes, Pedernales, and Canadian River Watersheds. Provided the following SWCD with Brush Program Updates or Brush 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 Districts

McMullen County SWCD
Caldwell/ Travis SWCD

Area 5 Districts

Archer County SWCD
Lower Clear Fork/Brazos SWCD

Water Enhancement Activities

- 9 Landowners assisted with Brush Contracts
- 10 Landowners assisted with Brush Certifications
- Assisted Mitchell County SWCD with training new District Employee
- Evaluate pending application from all projects
- Evaluate Salt Cedar Contracts for the Pecos and Upper Colorado Projects
- Assist Waters Davis SWCD with Chinese Tallow Project
- Legislative update for Senator Duncan, Rep. Drew Darby, and Rep. Nathan Macias, and Senator Watson
- Assist Webb Co. SWCD
- Assist TCEQ with Brush rider concerning water yield in State Brush Projects
- Met with CRMWA to discuss update on Canadian River Project
- Attend Public meeting on the Canadian River Project in Sanford
- Met with Dr. Rainwater, Dr. Fish, and Senator Duncan's Staff to discuss current water enhancement projects
- Conference call with Congressman Cuellar office about the Laredo Project

FLOOD CONTROL DAMS

Program News

A possible source of funding for pre-disaster mitigation planning and implementation may be available for sponsors. The Governor's Division of Emergency Management (GDEM) has funding available for this type of work. Included in eligible funding is relocation of structures, acquisition of real property for conversion to open space, and repair of public structures (bridges or dams) to meet applicable "building codes" (dam safety rules?). The funding is available through a grant process

which can be found at:

<http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem/pages/index.htm>
Look under "Grants" and "Hazard Mitigation."
Obviously, the most likely projects to qualify for funding would be high hazard dams with critical repair or upgrade needs. This may help local sponsors address some of these needs, including the local sponsor's 35% share of rehabilitation costs.

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*.

The TGPC will meet next on November 6, 2007, at the offices of the TCEQ. This meeting was a work session for the Committee members and their staff to discuss the revision of the *Texas Groundwater Protection Strategy*. 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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