TEXAS STATE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

Monthly Program News and Activities

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November 2011

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

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STATE BOARD WORK SESSION AND MEETING

The State Board has scheduled a Work Session on **Wednesday, January 18, 2011** and a formal State Board Meeting on **Thursday, January 19, 2011** in Temple. More information is available at http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/boardmeetings, or by contacting Karen Preece at (254) 773-2250, ext. 245.

BUDGET AND ACCOUNTING

- Supplemental Director Mileage and Per Diem, Matching Fund, and Technical Assistance claims for Fiscal Year 2011 were paid on November 1st.Annual Financial Statements for Fiscal Year 2011 were due on October 31st. Districts that have not submitted an Annual Financial Statement are on Hold.
- Audits and Reviews for Fiscal Year 2011 are due on December 31st.

For more budget and accounting information, contact Kenny Zajicek at (254) 773-2250 ext. 236 or zajicek@tsswcb.texas.gov.

HUMAN RESOURCES

TSSWCB is currently recruiting for the following positions:

- Engineering Technician- Hale Center

For additional information on posted vacancies or to download an application, visit https://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/employment

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Program Overview

The TSSWCB Special Projects department provides coordination for the Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Directors, facilitates open government functions required by the Texas Administrative Procedures Act, and directs the completion of other mandatory agency responsibilities such as publishing the agency's Semi-Annual Report and coordinating rule-making functions.

Annual State Meeting of Texas SWCD Directors

The 71st Annual State Meeting was held on October 24-26, 2011, in San Antonio at the Hyatt Regency Hill Country Hotel and Resort. Final registration participants totaled 660.

Mark your calendars for October 29-31, 2012 and plan now to attend the 72nd Annual State Meeting planned for Bastrop.

In their November meeting, the State Board authorized publishing Chapter 520, Subchapter A, Election Procedures in the *Texas Register* for rule review as to determine if the rule needs readopting, revision or repeal. We believe the need for the rule still exist and is necessary to have procedures that direct fair and consistent elections. The rule may be reviewed at: http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/agencyrules/31TAC17#RULE520A.

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

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Conservation News

Conservation News is a collection of readily available current news and information regarding natural resource issues. TSSWCB periodically distributes Conservation News via email to those interested. To subscribe, send an email to conservation-news-subscribe@tsswcb.texas.gov. Conservation News is also available at http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/news.

Program Development Workshop

A Program Development Workshop has been scheduled for January 31 - February 1, 2012, for district directors, employees and new NRCS district conservationists. The training workshop will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn in Temple, TX. Promotional literature about the workshop has been sent to districts in October and the first of November.

Wildlife Alliance For Youth

The Region Four wildlife contest was held November 2, 2011 at the Stephen F. Austin State University Experimental Forest near Nacogdoches. The results of the contest are shown in the tables below.

High Point Individual (FFA Division)	FFA Chapter	Top Scoring FFA Chapter
Hunter Westbrook Score: 139	Avery	Avery #1
Adam Tuppen Score: 134	DeKalb	Rusk #2
Hunter Morris Score 133	Avery	Dekalb #3

High Point Individual (4-H Division)	4-H Club	Top Scoring 4-H Team
David Clark Score: 116	Angelina County	Bowie County #1
Ethan Lann Score: 102	Bowie County	Angelina County #2
Devin Vick Score: 101	Bowie County	Trinity County #3

All of the noted individuals and teams will compete at the state contest to be held in the spring of 2012.

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Conservation Video Library

About the Library
There are over 200 conservation-related videos available; the 2011 catalog can be downloaded at http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/infoed/videolibrary. No rental fees are assessed to those wishing to borrow videos from the library.

Ordering a Video
Select a video from the Conservation Video Catalog, then contact Mary Jo Schooler at mschooler@tsswcb.texas.gov to check it out. The Association of Texas SWCDs 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.

WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN PROGRAM

Program Overview

With the passage of Senate Bill 503 in 1993, the Texas Legislature directed the TSSWCB to implement water quality management plans (WQMPs) to abate agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source water pollution. A WQMP is a site-specific plan developed through and approved by SWCDs. The agency has been implementing WQMPs on private lands since late 1993 and has certified over 14,000 plans. The TSSWCB identifies areas of the state where water quality is being negatively impacted by agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source water pollution and allocates funding to those areas to serve as financial incentives to increase participation in the program. More information about the WQMP Program is available at http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/wqmp.

The TSWCB certified 542 WQMPs and processed 287 water quality treatment grants during the 2011 fiscal year.

FY2012 allocations of financial incentive funding for priority SWCDs was approved by the State Board in July 2011. The FY2012 fiscal year began on September 1, 2011 and the deadline for obligating FY2012 funds is April 30, 2012.

POULTRY WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

Program Overview

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

In 2009, the 81st Texas Legislature amended the Texas Water Code to require TSSWCB to assess whether the existing and construction of all new poultry farms or existing farms that expand by more than 50% within ½ mile of permanently inhabited residences, businesses, or places of worship is likely to cause a persistent nuisance odor. An odor control plan may be required for those farms. The new law also requires all poultry producers and most receivers of poultry litter to keep records of poultry litter usage.

Program Activities

TSSWCB continues to conduct inspections of poultry CAFO facilities to ensure they are meeting all the necessary requirements. In addition, staff continues to review and update existing WQMPs and develop plans for newly constructed farms.

For more information on Poultry WQMPs, please visit http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/poultry or contact the Poultry Program Office at (936) 462-7020.

WATER CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Program Overview

Recognizing the importance of water conservation in meeting our future demand, the 80th Texas Legislature in 2007, via the passage of Senate Bill 3 and House Bill 4, directed the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) to appoint the members of the newly created Water Conservation Advisory Council (WCAC). The WCAC was created to provide the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Legislature, TWDB, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), political subdivisions, and the public with the resource of a select council with expertise in water conservation.

According to the legislation, the WCAC is composed of 23 members appointed by the TWDB. At their August 27, 2007 meeting, the TWDB appointed one member to represent each of the 23 entities or interest groups. The TSSWCB is a statutorily-authorized member of the WCAC.

Duties of the WCAC include:

- Monitoring trends in water conservation implementation and new technologies for possible inclusion as BMPs
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the statewide water conservation public awareness program and developing and implementing a state water management resource library
- Developing and implementing a public recognition program for water conservation
- Monitoring the implementation of water conservation strategies by water users included in regional water plans
- Monitoring target and goal guidelines for water conservation to be considered by the TWDB and TCEQ
- Evaluating the desirability of requiring certification of water conservation training facilities, entities, and programs that provide assistance to retail public utilities in developing water conservation plans

Recent Activities

The WCAC has developed water conservation awards in three categories: agricultural, municipal, and industrial. The Blue Legacy Award for agricultural water conservation award is available to farmers and ranchers. If you know of someone who has effectively integrated water conservation into his or her operation, consider nominating him or her for this award. You may also nominate yourself. The nomination packet for the Blue Legacy Award in agriculture is available online at: http://www.savetexaswater.org/awards/. The deadline for nominations is November 2, 2011.

Upcoming Activities

The agricultural workgroup, over the next biennium, will be reviewing the state's agricultural water conservation BMPs that were developed by the Water Conservation Task Force (2003-2005). The workgroup will determine if each BMP is still appropriate as is, or if it needs updating or removal. The agricultural workgroup will also review current methods of reporting irrigation water use (e.g., gal/ac, gal/ton) to evaluate if current methods are appropriate, or if more efficient methods should be developed and used.

The workgroups do not make any decisions, but make recommendations to the WCAC for any required decisions. All interested persons are welcome and encouraged to participate as members of the various workgroups. If anyone is interested in becoming a workgroup member, please contact Richard Egg at (254) 773-2250 ext. 246 or regg@tsswcb.texas.gov.

The next WCAC meeting is scheduled for November 2, 2011, at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Field Office in Austin.

More information on the WCAC is available at http://www.savetexaswater.org/.

TEXAS NONPOINT SOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Program Overview

The federal Clean Water Act (CWA) requires states to develop a program to protect the quality of water resources from the adverse effects of nonpoint source (NPS) water pollution. The *Texas NPS Management Program* is the State's official roadmap for addressing NPS pollution. The program publication is updated every five years. The most recent revision was submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by the Governor in December 2005. The *Texas NPS Management Program* is jointly administered by the TSSWCB and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

The *Texas NPS Management Program* utilizes baseline water quality management programs and regulatory, voluntary, financial, and technical assistance approaches to achieve a balanced program. NPS pollution is managed through assessment, planning, implementation, and education. The TCEQ and TSSWCB have established goals and objectives for guiding and tracking the progress of NPS management in Texas. Success in achieving the goals and objectives are reported annually in the *Annual Report on Managing NPS Water Pollution in Texas*, which is submitted to the EPA in accordance with the CWA.

Implementation of the *Texas NPS Management Program* involves partnerships among many organizations. With the extent and variety of NPS issues across Texas, cooperation across political boundaries is essential. SWCDs are vital partners in working with landowners to implement best management practices (BMPs) that prevent and abate agricultural and silvicultural NPS water pollution.

More information on the *Texas NPS Management Program*, including the *2010 Annual Report*, is available at http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/managementprogram.

The following is a compilation of relevant information pertaining to the multiple water quality programs and functions administered by and/or coordinated through the TSSWCB Statewide Resource Management (SRM) group that collectively represent the agency's efforts in supporting the goals and objectives of the *Texas NPS Management Program*.

Watershed Approach

Protecting the State's rivers, streams, lakes, bays, and aquifers from the impacts of NPS pollution is a complex process. Texas uses a Watershed Approach to focus efforts on the highest priority water quality issues of both surface and ground water. The Watershed Approach is based on the following principles:

- Geographic focus based on hydrology rather than political boundaries;
- Water quality objectives based on scientific data;
- Coordinated priorities and integrated solutions; and,
- Diverse, well-integrated partnerships.

The TSSWCB applies the Watershed Approach to managing NPS pollution by channeling its efforts to restore and protect water quality through the development and implementation of watershed protection plans (WPPs) and total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) in those watersheds where agricultural and/or silvicultural NPS pollution is contributing to a water quality impairment or concern to an extent which TSSWCB believes is sufficient to justify expenditure of agency resources. A list of these watersheds, including links to on-going restoration projects within those watersheds, is available at http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/watersheds. Summaries of the TSSWCB's activities within specific watersheds are provided in the *Water Quality Planning and Implementation* section of this report.

Nonpoint Source Grant Program

The NPS Grant Program is administered by the TSSWCB for the purpose of providing funding as

grants to cooperating entities for activities that address the goals and objectives stated in the *Texas NPS Management Program*. The Texas Legislature and the U.S. Congress (through the EPA) provide funding to the TSSWCB to administer the agricultural and silvicultural components of the *Texas NPS Management Program* through the TSSWCB NPS Grant Program.

Summaries of the TSSWCB's activities within specific watersheds funded through this NPS Grant Program are available in the *Water Quality Planning and Implementation* section of this report.

Clean Water Act §319(h) Grant Funding

Background

Congress enacted §319(h) of the CWA in 1987, establishing a national program to control NPS water pollution. Through §319(h), federal funds are provided annually through the EPA to States for the implementation of each State's NPS Management Program. The §319(h) funding in Texas is divided equally between the TCEQ and the TSSWCB. Over the past several years, the State's allocation has been approximately $9 million.

FY2006 – FY2010 CWA §319(h) Grant Status

There are currently 42 on-going §319(h) grant-funded projects addressing a wide array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues. Unliquidated federal funds for these 42 on-going projects total approximately $12.5 million and are primarily being used to implement BMPs to abate NPS pollution from animal feeding operations, grazing livestock operations and row crop operations; provide technical assistance through SWCDs for the development of WQMPs; provide financial incentives for implementing certain BMPs prescribed in WQMPs; support various targeted educational programs; develop and implement WPPs; and implement the NPS portion of TMDL I-Plans.

FY2011 CWA §319(h) Grant Application Status

TSSWCB submitted the FY2011 CWA §319(h) grant application to EPA on July 1, 2011 requesting $4,578,700 for 10 projects. On October 6, 2011, TSSWCB received notification that EPA approved 9 projects for $4,091,740.

FY2012 Request for Proposals

On September 2, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff issued the FY2012 Request for Proposals (RFP) for the NPS Grant Program. The RFP was published in the Texas Register, posted on the TSSWCB website, and all SWCDs and cooperating entities were notified of this funding opportunity. SRM staff identified priority areas and activities for this funding cycle based on the *Texas NPS Management Program* and the *2010 Integrated Report*. The deadline for proposal submission was October 14, 2011. TSSWCB received 28 proposals requesting a total of $11,040,653 in federal funds. Received proposals have been reviewed by SRM staff based on the published ranking criteria and are being selected for funding. Projects receiving federal funding must be submitted to EPA in spring 2012 for review and approval.

State General Revenue Grant Funding

Background

The 80th Texas Legislature appropriated general revenue funds to the TSSWCB for the purpose of planning, implementing, and managing programs and practices for preventing and abating agricultural and silvicultural NPS water pollution in impaired watersheds; the 81st Texas Legislature renewed this appropriation.

The State Board has approved operating budgets for FY2010, FY2011 and FY2012 that allocated a total of $3.77 million in state general revenue to the NPS Grant Program. On September 17, 2009, the Board approved a revised *TSSWCB Policy on TMDLs and Watershed Planning, Assessment, and Implementation Activities* which provides guidance to SRM staff on directing these state appropriations for the NPS Grant Program. This *Policy* is available at http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/managementprogram#StateGR.

FY2010 – FY2011 State General Revenue Grant Status
There are currently 8 on-going general revenue-funded projects addressing an array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues. Unliquidated state funds for these 8 on-going projects total approximately $2 million and are primarily being used to implement agricultural NPS components of TMDL I-Plans; conduct recreational use attainability analyses (RUAAs); support increased analytical infrastructure at public bacterial source tracking (BST) laboratories; demonstrate innovative BMPs on animal feeding operations and grazing lands; and collect and analyze water quality data for watersheds with impaired waterbodies.

FY2012 State General Revenue Grant Status
On July 21, 2011, the Board approved an operating budget for FY2012 that allocated $1.26 million in state general revenue to the NPS Grant Program. SRM staff is in the process of developing workplans and budgets with collaborating entities for various projects.

Total Maximum Daily Load Program

Background
The 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 EPA for review and approval every two years.

The State must then establish a TMDL for certain waterbodies identified on the *Texas 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. The pollution reduction goal set by the TMDL is necessary to restore attainment of the designated use of the impaired waterbody. The TMDL allocates pollutant loads between point sources and nonpoint sources. It also takes into account a margin of safety, which reflects uncertainty and future growth.

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. The I-Plan specifies limits for point source dischargers and recommends BMPs for nonpoint sources. It also lays out a schedule for implementation. 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*. EPA must approve the TMDL, but the I-Plan only requires State approval. TSSWCB shares responsibility with the TCEQ for the development and implementation of TMDLs.

More information on TMDLs is available at http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/tmdl. Summaries of the TSSWCB's activities within specific watersheds are available in the *Water Quality Planning and Implementation* section of this report.

Watershed Protection Plan Program

Background
Watershed Protection Plans (WPPs) are locally-driven mechanisms for voluntarily addressing complex water quality problems that cross multiple jurisdictions. WPPs are coordinated frameworks for implementing prioritized water quality protection and restoration strategies driven by environmental objectives. Through the watershed planning 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.

WPPs integrate activities and prioritize implementation projects based upon technical merit and benefits to the community, promote a unified approach to seeking funding for implementation, and create a coordinated public education program. Developed and implemented through diverse, well integrated partnerships, a WPP assures the long-term health of the watershed with solutions that are socially acceptable and economically viable which achieve environmental goals for water resources. Adaptive management is used to modify the WPP

based on an on-going science-based process that incorporates new knowledge into decision-making.

TSSWCB provides technical and financial assistance to local stakeholder groups to develop and implement WPPs to address significant agricultural or silvicultural NPS issues. EPA requires certain expenditures through CWA §319(h) grants to be in accordance with a WPP. While WPPs sponsored by TCEQ have significant water quality issues related to urban NPS pollution or wastewater treatment, most, to varying degrees, have agricultural or silvicultural NPS pollution components. There are several other watershed planning projects across the state which are funded and sponsored by entities and agencies other than TSSWCB or TCEQ.

More information on WPPs is available at http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/wpp. Summaries of the TSSWCB's activities within specific watersheds are available in the *Water Quality Planning and Implementation* section of this report.

Coastal NPS Pollution Control Program

Background

The Texas Coastal Management Program (CMP) was created to coordinate state, local and federal programs for the management of Texas coastal resources. The CMP improves the management of the State's coastal resources to ensure long-term ecological and economic productivity of the coast. The CMP brings in federal Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) funds to Texas to implement projects and program activities for a wide variety of purposes. The Texas General Land Office (GLO) and the Land Commissioner are responsible for coordinating activities associated with the CMP. The Coastal Coordination Advisory Committee (CCAC), established by the Texas Legislature, advises the Land Commissioner on matters related to implementation of the CMP; the TSSWCB is a statutorily-authorized member of the CCAC.

The GLO is charged with adopting uniform goals and policies to guide decision-making by all entities regulating or managing natural resource use within the Texas coastal area. The GLO reviews significant actions taken or authorized by state agencies and subdivisions of state government that may adversely affect coastal natural resources to determine consistency with CMP goals and policies. In addition, the GLO oversees the CMP Grants Program and the Small Business and Individual Permitting Assistance Program.

The federal Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments (CZARA) §6217 requires each State with an approved CMP to develop a federally approvable program to control coastal NPS pollution. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the EPA jointly administer §6217 at the federal level. In Texas, the TSSWCB and the TCEQ hold primary responsibility for the development and implementation of the Texas Coastal NPS Pollution Control Program.

More information on the CMP is available at http://www.glo.texas.gov/what-we-do/caring-for-the-coast/grants-funding/cmp/index.html.

Conditional Approval Status of Coastal NPS Program

Texas submitted the Texas Coastal NPS Pollution Control Program to EPA and NOAA in December 1998. In July 2003, NOAA and EPA issued conditional approval of the Texas Coastal NPS Pollution Control Program. NOAA identified five areas the State must strengthen or correct; the agricultural and silvicultural portions of the program were approved without conditions. Texas had five years to meet the remaining conditions to gain full approval. States that fail to submit an adequate program (full approval) face penalties including loss of EPA and NOAA funds, including CWA §319(h) NPS grant monies.

In July 2008, the State again responded to the remaining conditional approval findings of NOAA and EPA. It was anticipated that this response would address the remaining conditions resulting in a fully-approved program. However, in May 2009, GLO received comments from NOAA and EPA which concluded that enough progress had been made to lift only one of the conditions. TCEQ is finalizing a letter to NOAA and EPA that describes

the State's approach to address the remaining conditional approval findings.

Coastal Coordination Advisory Committee
The Coastal Coordination Advisory Committee (CCAC) was reviewed by the Sunset Advisory Commission this biennium. Sunset legislation (SB656) has been signed by the Governor. The act abolishes the CCC and transfers its functions to the Land Commissioner and the GLO. The legislation also requires establishment of a Coastal Coordination Advisory Committee to advise the Land Commissioner on matters related to the CMP. This Advisory Committee includes a representative of the TSSWCB designated by the Chairman of the State Board. The act took effect September 1, 2011.

TSSWCB staff met with GLO staff on August 10, 2011 to discuss the new administration of the coastal program. The general structure will be work groups from the agencies and governor appointees to focus on specific projects, modeled on the grants workgroup. The main function of the Advisory Committee will be to provide consistency review of federal projects and actions, and to provide support to the work groups.

More information on the CCAC is available for a limited time at http://www.glo.texas.gov/GLO/boards-and-commissions/coastal-coordination-council/index.html.

CMP Grant Program
Application information for Grant Cycle 17 was distributed in April 2011. The GLO expects to award approximately $1.8 million for planning, acquisition, construction, education, and research projects during Grant Cycle 17. The deadline for applications was October 12, 2011.

The CCAC accepted applications for both construction and non-construction projects that addressed any of the following funding categories:

- Coastal Natural Hazards Response
- Critical Areas Enhancements
- Shoreline Access
- Waterfront Revitalization and Ecotourism Development
- Permit Streamlining/Assistance, Governmental Coordination, and Local Government Planning Assistance
- Water Sediment Quantity and Quality Improvements

More information on the CMP grant program can be found at http://www.glo.texas.gov/what-we-do/caring-for-the-coast/grants-funding/cmp/index.html.

Texas Groundwater Protection Committee

Background
Established by the Texas Legislature in 1989, the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) bridges the gap between State groundwater programs, improves coordination between member agencies, and works to protect groundwater as a vital resource; the TSSWCB is a statutorily-authorized member of the TGPC.
The Texas Water Code sets non-degradation of the State's groundwater resources as the goal for all State programs and asserts that groundwater is kept reasonably free of contaminants that interfere with its present and potential uses. The TGPC implements the State's groundwater protection policy which:

- Requires that pollution discharges, waste disposal and other regulated activities not harm public health or impair current or potential groundwater use;
- Recognizes the variability between aquifers;
- Acknowledges the importance of water quality;
- Balances the protection of the environment and the long-term economic health of the state; and,
- Recognizes the use of the best professional judgment of the responsible state agencies to implement the policy.

Activities of the TGPC and Subcommittees
The next committee meeting is scheduled for January 18, 2012.

More information on the TGPC is available at http://www.tgpc.texas.gov/.

Water Quality Coordination Activities

Coordination with TCEQ

On September 27, 2006, at a joint meeting, the TSSWCB and the TCEQ approved a new *Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on TMDLs, I-Plans, and WPPs*. This framework for collaboration between the two agencies describes the programmatic mechanisms employed to develop and implement TMDLs and WPPs. TSSWCB SRM staff continue to work with TCEQ staff to implement components of the MOA including meeting regularly to discuss the status of the NPS Management Program and its related projects. The MOA is available at http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/tmdl#moa.

Coordination with EPA

On October 26, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Pamela Casebolt, Aaron Wendt], participated in a nationwide conference call with EPA and the States to discuss the current status of the NPS Program Study being conducted by EPA. EPA has addressed comments made by the States on the draft report and are currently working to finalize the study. The conference call focused on recommendations from the EPA/State Water Division Director Workgroup Regarding Section 319 NPS Program Improvements. Recommendations included 1) Use Satisfactory Progress Provision to Strengthen and Update State NPS Management Program and Improve Accountability; 2) Regional Competition/Reallocation of (a) funds that have not been expended by the end of the grant period and (b) a portion of new fiscal year funds; 3) Achieving Environmental Results and Improving Program Management; 4) Increase Use and Leveraging of Clean Water State Revolving Funds and/or Other Sources of State Funding; 5) Measuring Success and Improving Program Accountability, and Improve Partnership; and 6) Collaboration with Federal Agencies Such as USDA, U.S. Department of the Interior, and Others to More Effectively Tackle NPS Pollution. The final report, including the recommendations, will be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget for consideration.

Coordination with Texas Water Development Board

On October 27, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Pamela Casebolt, Aaron Wendt] joined TCEQ staff in a meeting in Austin with staff from the TWDB to discuss coordination between the three agencies. TWDB manages the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) which is a federal CWA program administered by EPA. The CWSRF provides loans at interest rates lower than the market to political subdivisions to be used for planning, design, and construction of wastewater treatment facilities; sewer collection systems; and NPS pollution control projects. Discussion focused on the national 2012 Clean Water Needs Survey and how to provide TWDB with information to include in the survey related to agricultural NPS projects.

Surface Water Quality Standards Revision

On June 30, 2010, the TCEQ adopted major revisions to 30 Texas Administrative Code Chapter 307, Texas Surface Water Quality Standards (Standards), and the *Procedures to Implement the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards, RG-194* (IPs). These major revisions to the Standards include the establishment of numeric nutrient criteria for large reservoirs and significant modifications to contact recreation use and associated bacteria criteria. The adopted Standards became effective as a State rule on July 22, 2010. TCEQ submitted the revised Standards and IPs to EPA on August 4, 2010. EPA must now take action to approve these changes to the Standards in accordance with the federal CWA.

On June 29, 2011, EPA notified TCEQ of action taken on the water quality standards revisions. EPA approved the changes to recreation use and bacteria criteria. However, the high flow exemption was disapproved.

More information on the revisions to the Standards is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water_quality/stakeholders/2010standards.html.

Watershed Action Planning Process

TCEQ staff has been working to develop a document that describes a new Watershed Action

Planning approach to the State's water quality management programs.

The document will illustrate Watershed Action Planning and describe the approach including an overview of the state water quality planning programs, the role of stakeholders, and the options available to address water quality impairments. The Watershed Action Planning process recognizes a range of tools and options for addressing impaired waterbodies on the *303(d) List*. The Watershed Action Planning process provides for a stakeholder-led evaluation of watershed-specific circumstances and a deliberative and collective decision as to what tool to apply to move forward with addressing the listing.

TCEQ will maintain a database of information gathered during the Watershed Action Planning process, such as the waterbody, the impairment or priority interest, the date it was first listed on the *303(d) List*, the management strategy to address the impairment (e.g., UAA, TMDL, WPP), the timeline for completing the management strategy, the responsible agency, and interim performance measures.

Watershed Action Planning will increase the transparency of the State's water quality management programs by presenting the list of impaired waters in such a manner as to communicate activities and intentions collectively to the public at large. Watershed Action Planning is key to providing for the collaboration being called for and the coordination necessary to achieve the goal of clean water for Texas.

On October 21, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Loren Warrick, Aaron Wendt, Pam Casebolt, Jana Baker] met with staff from TCEQ and the Red River Authority and Sulphur River Basin Authority to discuss and select Watershed Action Planning strategies for impaired waterbodies and other waterbodies of special interest in the Red, Canadian, and Sulphur River Basins.

On October 28, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch, Pam Casebolt, Aaron Wendt, Mitch Conine] met with staff from TCEQ and the Lower Neches Valley Authority and Angelina and Neches River Authority to discuss and select Watershed Action Planning strategies for impaired waterbodies and other waterbodies of special interest in the Neches River Basin and Neches-Trinity Coastal Basin.

On November 4, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Pam Casebolt, Mitch Conine, Aaron Wendt] met with staff from TCEQ and the Northeast Texas Municipal Water District to discuss and select Watershed Action Planning strategies for impaired waterbodies and other waterbodies of special interest in the Cypress Creek Basin.

On November 10, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Pam Casebolt, Mitch Conine, Aaron Wendt, Brian Koch] met with staff from TCEQ and the Sabine River Authority and Trinity River Authority to discuss and select Watershed Action Planning strategies for impaired waterbodies and other waterbodies of special interest in the Sabine and Trinity River Basins.

Recreational Use Attainability Analyses

The recently adopted revisions to the Surface Water Quality Standards establish a four tier approach to recreation use including primary contact recreation, secondary contact recreation 1, secondary contact recreation 2, and noncontact recreation. In order to change the presumed level of recreation use of a waterbody (i.e., primary contact) to any of the other 3 tiers and the associated bacteria criterion, a recreational use attainability analysis (RUAA) must be completed for each waterbody and approved by TCEQ and subsequently EPA.

The purpose of an RUAA is to ascertain the actual recreation occurring on a waterbody, establish or verify a presumed use, and, if necessary, assign a more appropriate use. During an RUAA information is collected on water recreation activities, stream flow type, and stream depth; additionally, interviews from users who are present during surveys and those familiar with the waterbody are conducted and a review of historical information is completed. If the results of the RUAA indicate that a different, more appropriate use is warranted, the resulting change in the associated bacteria criterion may result in the waterbody no longer being identified on the *303(d)*

List as impaired, thus negating the need to adopt a TMDL.

The TCEQ is in the process of conducting RUAAs on over 90 waterbodies across the state; TSSWCB is taking the lead on conducting RUAAs on another 12 waterbodies. TCEQ contractors were asked to coordinate communication with SWCDs through TSSWCB SRM staff. After the RUAAs are conducted, TCEQ will evaluate the information and again consult with stakeholders regarding potential site-specific revisions to the Surface Water Quality Standards for each waterbody.

Summaries of RUAA activities on waterbodies where TMDLs and/or WPPs are also on-going are available in the *Water Quality Planning and Implementation* section of this report.

More information on RUAAs is available at http://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/water_quality/wq_assessment/standards/ruaas/index. These RUAAs affect livestock operations in scores of watersheds across the state.

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, plus bays and estuaries, 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 Integrated Report*.

More information on CRP is available at http://www.tceq.texas.gov/nav/eq/texcleanriver.html.

Galveston Bay Estuary Program
On October 26, 2011, TSSWCB SRM Staff [Brian Koch] attended a quarterly Galveston Bay Council meeting in Pasadena. This meeting featured presentations on the Trinity River restoration and GBEP's Armand Bayou Implementation Project at University of Houston- Clear Lake (UH-Clear Lake), and included a site visit to the stormwater wetland on the campus. Texas AgriLife Extension presented information on the Middle Trinity Restoration Project, which is a project that engages landowners along the Trinity River, focusing on conservation to improve habitat on their land that also helps improve water quality. The next presentation focused on the GBEP implementation project on Armand Bayou. The project is on the UH-Clear Lake campus, and is a stormwater detention pond retro-fitted to a stormwater wetland. After the presentation, the meeting participants were invited to visit the wetland site.

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 the Galveston Bay complex in Brazoria, Chambers, Galveston, Harris and Liberty Counties.

Lone Star Healthy Streams
On October 24, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Mitch Conine, Aaron Wendt and Rusty Ray] attended the Lone Star Healthy Streams Program Steering Committee meeting in San Antonio. This group of livestock industry representatives and agency technical staff met to discuss progress in building the grazing cattle component of the Lone Star Healthy Streams curriculum. Discussion focused on the status of bacteria water quality standards (State

& Federal), bacterial impairments, and TMDLs in Texas. There were also presentations on the Evaluation of Methods to Reduce Bacterial Contamination of Surface Water from Grazing Lands and the Effects of Agriculture Management, Land Use, and Watershed Scale on *E. coli* Concentrations. A brief update was provided on the status of the Lone Star Healthy Stream manuals (beef cattle, dairy cattle, poultry, feral hog, and horse bacteria projects).

Sheldon Lake State Park Wetland Field Day
On October 27, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Ashley Alexander, Brian Koch] attended a Wetland Field Day at Sheldon Lake State Park in Houston. The field day, which was presented as *A Case Study in Freshwater Coastal Prairie Wetland Restoration*, provided attendees the opportunity to learn about the unique methods used at this site for wetland restoration. Presentations were given by Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and Native American Seed on Prairie Wetland Restoration and the restoration methodology used at Sheldon Lake State Park. The presentations on restoration methodology provided detailed background and development of the methods, plants and seeding used on site. A field tour followed which included walkthroughs of the wetland restoration and concluded with a view from the new observation tower. Wetlands restoration work and Sheldon Lake State Park and this field day were funded, in part, through a CWA §319(h) grant from TSSWCB. More information is available at http://www.urban-nature.org/urbanwet/sheldon.htm.

H-GAC Clean Waters Initiative
On November 2, 2011 TSSWCB SRM Staff [Brian Koch] attended a Clean Waters Initiative workshop in Houston. The topic of the workshop was constructed wetlands, one method is to retrofit existing stormwater detention ponds and another is to construct wetlands where there is a need for water treatment in a natural manner. The workshop focused on existing projects and projects under construction, and also guidelines for building wetlands. H-GAC hosts several Clean Waters Initiatives throughout the year focusing on water quality and water quality improvement in the Houston area. More information about the Clean Waters Initiative can be found at http://www.h-gac.com/community/water/cwi/.

Drought Public Hearing
On November 2, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Rusty Ray] attended a public hearing (Interim Charge 1) of the House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources focusing on the state-wide drought. Specifically, the charge of the meeting was to learn more about current drought conditions, look for viable solutions and ways to fund the State Water Plan.

Presentations were made by various river authorities, water districts, municipalities and counties, ground water districts, and state agencies describing the impact of the drought on their areas. Topics mainly focused on municipal use, water rights, looking into "new" sources of water (desalination) and the severity of the current drought and into the future.

Bayou Preservation Association Symposium
On November 4, 2011 TSSWCB SRM Staff [Brian Koch] attended a Water Quality Stewardship Symposium, hosted by Bayou Preservation Association in Houston. The symposium focused on the current and historical water conditions in Houston and the surrounding areas. Presentations ranged from a history lesson on Buffalo Bayou, to historical flooding and strategies to handle it, and presentations focusing on water quality and best management practices to resolve water quality issues.

Texas Watershed Steward Program
Two Texas Watershed Steward Workshops took place in the city of Dallas on November 9 and 10, 2011. Sponsored by the Texas AgriLife Extension Services and the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board in coordination with the City of Dallas, the training discussed what it is to be a watershed steward, watershed impairments, managing urban and rural lands through the use of BMP's and how to get involved in community driven watershed protection management. Over 130 participants from across the City of Dallas attended these workshops. The workshop included an

overview of water quality and watershed management in Texas and primarily focused on water quality issues relating to the Dallas area. The training also involved interactive displays such as a rainfall simulator. More information on the Texas Watershed Steward Program is available at http://tws.tamu.edu.

Texas Watershed Planning Short Course
On November 14-18, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Aaron Wendt, Ashley Alexander, Jana Lloyd, Rusty Ray] attended, as participant and instructor, the fifth offering of the Texas Watershed Planning Short Course in Bandera. The Short Course provides participants with guidance on stakeholder coordination, education, and outreach; meeting the EPA's nine key elements of a Watershed Protection Plan; data collection and analysis; and the tools available for plan development. Over twenty individuals responsible for watershed protection and restoration participated, including employees with federal, state, regional, and local agencies; universities; consulting firms; and non-governmental organizations. While the majority of participants were from Texas, a few were from New Mexico and Oklahoma. The Short Course was developed by the Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI), with CWA §319(h) funding from the TCEQ. TSSWCB SRM staff is on the project planning team.

Upcoming Public Meetings

- December 1, 2011 – Southeast and South Central Watershed Coordination Steering Committee (Columbus)
- December 1, 2011 – Texas Groundwater Protection Committee Public Outreach & Education meeting (Austin)
- December 1, 2011 – Cedar Bayou Public Meeting (Baytown)
- December 6, 2011 – Paso del Norte Watershed Council (La Mesa, NM)
- December 7, 2011 – Mini Watershed Planning Workshop (Houston)
- December 8, 2011 – Attoyac Bayou WPP Stakeholder Meeting (Nacogdoches)
- December 12-14, 2011 – Cypress Basin Environmental Flows Workshop (Jefferson)
- December 13, 2011 – Upper Oyster Creek TMDL I-Plan Group (Sugar Land)
- December 15, 2011 – Texas Water Development Board Clean Water State Revolving Fund 2013 Intended Use Plan Informational Workshop (Austin)

Water Quality Planning and Implementation

The TSSWCB applies the Watershed Approach to managing NPS pollution by channeling its efforts to restore and protect water quality through the development and implementation of WPPs and TMDLs. A list of watersheds including links to on-going restoration projects within those watersheds is available at http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/watersheds; more detailed information on all watersheds described below is available at this website.

Adams and Cow Bayous
Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen, pH
Mechanism: TMDL, I-Plan
Lead: TCEQ

On October 24, 2011, 30 people attended a Texas Watershed Steward workshop in Orange. The workshop was sponsored by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service and TSSWCB, in coordination with the Sabine River Authority and TCEQ. The training, focused on the Adams and Cow Bayous watersheds, discussed what it means to be a watershed steward, watershed impairments, managing urban and rural lands through the use of BMPs, and how to get involved in community driven watershed protection and management. The training also involved interactive displays such as a rainfall simulator. The workshop included an overview of water quality and watershed management in Texas. More information on the Texas Watershed Steward Program is available at http://tws.tamu.edu/.

More information on the Adams and Cow Bayous TMDL and I-Plan is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/37-orangecounty.html. These TMDLs affect

livestock and forestry operations in Orange, Jasper and Newton Counties.

Arroyo Colorado

Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen
Concerns: Nutrients, Sediment
Mechanism: WPP, UAA
Lead: TCEQ

On October 19, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Ashley Alexander] and TSSWCB Regional Office staff [Ronnie Ramirez, Luis Pena] attended the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Partnership Agricultural Issues Workgroup meeting in Harlingen. The meeting highlighted three presentations, all of which presented various aspects of projects funded by TSSWCB with CWA §319(h) grants. First, Texas A&M University-Kingsville discussed preliminary results from the subwatershed monitoring performed. The results showed that drainage ditches do provide some attenuation of pollutant loading, but more comparison with edge-of-field data is needed. Secondly, AgriLife Extension gave an educational presentation covering Arroyo Colorado agricultural NPS pollution. This presentation will be given to landowners in the watershed, and therefore feedback from the Workgroup was solicited. Thirdly, preliminary results from the BMP effectiveness study were presented by AgriLife Research. The study concluded that nutrient management and irrigation management programs should be implemented to reduce the amount of nutrients applied, as well as the amount of water applied onto the land. Finally, local landowners from Willacy and Kleberg Counties discussed their involvement in conservation programs.

On October 20, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Ashley Alexander] and TSSWCB Regional Office staff [Ronnie Ramirez] attended the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Partnership Habitat Issues Workgroup meeting in Weslaco. Discussion centered on Arroyo Colorado WPP and workgroup updates, as well as, opportunities for future grants and potential studies. Texas Sea Grant gave a presentation on Red Tide, which the Laguna Madre is currently experiencing.

On October 20, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Ashley Alexander] and TSSWCB Regional Office staff [Ronnie Ramirez] attended the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Partnership Steering Committee meeting in Weslaco. Discussion centered on workgroup updates, long-term Partnership sustainability, as well as, opportunities for future implementation funding.

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.

Cedar Bayou

Impairment: Bacteria, Macrobenthic Community
Concern: Dissolved Oxygen
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB

On October 19, 2011, TSSWCB SRM Staff [Brian Koch] attended the Lower Trinity SWCD #435 meeting in Liberty. The purpose was to discuss and promote the Cedar Bayou WPP and provide information from the first meeting held in September.

On November 3, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Ashley Alexander, Aaron Wendt, Brian Koch] attended the Cedar Bayou Watershed Partnership meeting in Baytown. The meeting was opened by a City of Baytown Councilman. A presentation from the Houston-Galveston Area Council followed with a recap of the project status, which included details about the water quality monitoring strategy. Other presentations included: the Cedar Bayou Watershed Partnership Ground Rules, Steering Committee Nominations and Selection, Workgroups, the Technical Advisory Group, as well as potential sources and concerns.

More information is available at http://www.cedarbayouwatershed.com. This WPP will affect livestock operations in the Cedar Bayou watershed in Harris, Liberty, and Chambers Counties.

Dickinson Bayou
Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen
Mechanism: WPP, TMDL, I-Plan, UAA
Lead: TCEQ

On August 31, 2011, the TCEQ approved publishing and soliciting public comment on *Eight TMDLs for Indicator Bacteria in Dickinson Bayou and Three Tidal Tributaries (Segments 1103, 1103A, 1103B, 1103C, and 1104).* A public meeting to receive comments on the proposed TMDLs was held on September 29, 2011 in Dickinson. Comments not submitted at the public meeting must have been provided in writing and received by TCEQ no later than October 17, 2011. A response to comments received will be developed by TCEQ staff and, if appropriate, the draft TMDLs may be revised. These TMDLs must be adopted by TCEQ and approved by EPA before they are effective.

This WPP is proceeding in tandem with the on-going TMDLs for bacteria and dissolved oxygen. More information on the bacteria TMDL and the RUAA is available at http://www.tceq.texas.gov/implementation/water/tmdl/80-dickinsonbayoubacteria.html and more information on the dissolved oxygen TMDL is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/17-dickinson.html. More information on the WPP is available at http://www.dickinsonbayou.org/. Both the WPP and the TMDLs will affect farming and ranching operations in the Dickinson Bayou watershed in Galveston and Brazoria Counties.

Eagle Mountain Reservoir
Impairment: Bacteria
Concerns: Nutrients, Bacteria
Mechanism: WPP, UAA
Lead: Third party (WPP), TCEQ (UAA)

On November 2, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Aaron Wendt] attended an Eagle Mountain Reservoir WPP stakeholder meeting in Azle. At this meeting, the group was provided an update on modeling pollutant loading (phosphorus and sediment) from the watershed and impacts to the reservoir. Additionally, the group discussed an economic analysis of the cost-effectiveness of BMPs in relation to the potential pollutant reductions that could be achieved. BMPs selected for inclusion in the WPP were based on the pollutant loading modeling and the economic analysis. Information was presented on a new USDA-NRCS initiative to provide targeted conservation planning assistance to agricultural producers in specific subwatersheds in the Eagle Mountain Reservoir watershed.

More information on the WPP is available at http://nctx-water.tamu.edu/. More information on the RUAA is available at http://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/water_quality/wq_assessment/standards/ruaas/ruaastrinity. This WPP has the potential to affect agricultural operations in the Eagle Mountain Reservoir watershed in Clay, Jack, Montague, Parker, Tarrant and Wise Counties.

Galveston Bay
Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: TMDL, I-Plan
Lead: TCEQ

On November 15, 2011 TSSWCB SRM Staff [Brian Koch] attended a meeting focusing on the Implementation Plan for the Upper Coast Oyster Waters TMDL in Clear Lake. Information on the project background was presented including workgroup leaders presenting on the specific sources they are focused on. Sources include, WWTFs, OSSFs, and boater discharge, and there is a workgroup focused on Science and Monitoring behind the project. The I-plan is being developed by the Galveston Bay Foundation.
More information is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/74-uppercoastoyster.html. This TMDL has limited affect on livestock operations around Galveston Bay in Chambers, Harris, Galveston and Brazoria Counties.

Geronimo Creek
Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB

On November 2, 2011, AgriLife Extension and GBRA hosted a mini watershed tour for the Partnership. The first stop was in the upper end of the watershed where attendees heard about some proposed urban best management practices. The next stop was to learn about agricultural best management practices and feral hog control measures. The final tour stop was at Oak Village North Subdivision near Seguin, where attendees learned about the ongoing project to take the neighborhood off of septic systems and provide sanitary sewer service to the homes.

More information is available at http://geronimocreek.org/. This WPP will affect ranching and farming operations in the Geronimo Creek watershed in Guadalupe and Comal Counties.

Pecos River
Impairment: Dissolved Oxygen
Concern: Salinity
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB

On October 19-20, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Aaron Wendt] participated in a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Rio Grande Basin Water Resources Workshop in Austin. At this multi-state meeting, local, state, and federal agencies discussed collaborative solutions to mitigating the impacts of salt on Texas-New Mexico water supplies in the Rio Grande Basin, including the Pecos River watershed. Data collection and research projects in the Basin were discussed by the U.S. Geological Survey and the Corps discussed various Congressional authorities and programs they could bring to bear in the Basin. Participants broke into workgroups and worked through a facilitated process to identify opportunities and challenges to moving forward with a watershed management program for the entire Basin.

On October 21, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Mitch Conine] and field staff [Ben Wilde] attended the Pecos River Water Quality Coalition Summit at the Capital. Multiple activities were discussed at the meeting. Presentations included local needs, coalition building, activities currently ongoing in New Mexico, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Pecos River Reconnaissance Study, Pecos River WPP update, an update on the Malaga Bend Project, water quality monitoring in the Pecos, and potential funding from Texas Water Development Board.

More information is available at http://pecosbasin.tamu.edu/. This WPP affects 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
Impairment: Bacteria
Concerns: Nutrients
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB

On November 10, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Jana Lloyd, Aaron Wendt, Brian Koch, Pamela Casebolt] and Field Staff [Tony Franklin] attended the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership Steering Committee meeting in Lockhart. Discussion centered on the update of the Watershed Protection Plan. Updates were given on the new Implementation Project, the City of Kyle's CWA §319(h) Implementation Grant and Water Reuse Feasibility Study, as well as, Plum Creek Feral Hog Education, and implementation of agricultural BMPs. Also discussed were the strategies for re-engaging the public, landowners, and citizens of the watershed. The Plum Creek Watershed Partnership is implementing components of the Plum Creek WPP in an effort to restore water quality within the Plum Creek watershed.

More information is available at http://plumcreek.tamu.edu/. This WPP affects livestock and farming operations in the Plum Creek watershed in Caldwell and Hays Counties.

San Bernard River
Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: WPP, UAA
Lead: TCEQ

On October 18, 2011 SRM Staff [Brian Koch], attended a town hall meeting in Wharton, to discuss the San Bernard River WPP. The meeting focused on progress achieved so far in the watershed plan development, including what has been written, modeling results, and water quality information. There was also time allowed for questions fielded by HGAC staff. Similar meetings are scheduled for Sealy and West Columbia.

More information is available at http://www.h-gac.com/go/sanbernard. This WPP affects farming and livestock operations in the San Bernard River watershed in Austin, Brazoria, Colorado, Fort Bend and Wharton Counties.

WATER SUPPLY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

The 81th Legislature continued funding for the Water Supply Enhancement Program by providing $2,135,413.00 in General Revenue Funds in FY12. Staff has begun implementing SB 1808 and the Sunset Commission recommendations.

Feasibility Study
The Science Advisory group has come up with a preliminary list of requirements for computer modeling for Water Yield Predictions. This memorandum is the first step in generation of detailed guidance for application of appropriate computer models for feasibility studies that predict water yield resulting from proposed brush control projects. Effective applications must demonstrate significant increases in post-treatment water yield as compared to the pretreatment conditions. This memorandum provides preliminary description of the watershed characterization, hydrologic data collection, and simulation steps to accomplish this goal. A more detailed guidance manual will be compiled over the next few months to insure consistent procedures are applied for each proposed project.

Watershed Description
The following list summarizes the input information necessary to characterize the target property under consideration for brush control within its watershed. All digital maps must be georeferenced with sufficient metadata to allow overlays with other digital map layers.

- Watershed delineation. The contributing drainage area that includes the target treatment area can be identified using those delineated in the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) and confirmed by a digital elevation model (DEM).

- Topographic information. Ten-meter DEMs are available from the USGS National Elevation Dataset (NED) and will likely require mosaic assembly to contain the area of interest.

- Surface water bodies and stream and river channels. Appropriate data from the NHD and analysis of the DEM can confirm the locations of channels, impoundments, and reservoirs within the area of interests.

- Soils distribution. The U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) database provides polygon-type maps that demonstrate the variations in soil type and other physical parameters that impact runoff and infiltration across the area of concern. These maps must also be joined in a mosaic form.

- Analysis of vegetation and land use. The USGS National Land Cover Dataset (NLCD) 2006 provides up to 16 different land cover classifications at 30 m resolution. For more recent land use description as well as vegetation description, digital orthoquads can be obtained from the USDA website and assembled as a mosaic to envelop the area of interest. Images from 2008 are available, and more recent images from 2010 are coming online. Ground-truth site visits are necessary to confirm vegetation types and locations.

- Roads and highways map. The ESRI datasets include linear features such as streets, county

roads, highways, and freeways that may affect local watershed behavior.

Staff Activities
Meetings were held in the following Projects to discuss and develop implementation plans;

- Pedernales Watershed Project
- Guadalupe Watershed Project
- Lake Brownwood Project
- Edwards Aquifer Project

The Water Supply Enhancement Program also formed a working committee made up John Foster, Mel Davis, Johnny Oswald, Tuffy Wood, Melissa Grote, Kendria Ray, Ben Wilde, Charlie Upchurch and Tony Franklin to help establish new rules for the Water Supply Enhancement Project. A meeting was held in San Antonio to discuss a draft copy of the new rules which should be ready for final TSSWCB approval at the January 2012 meeting.

Staff has been working with the Science Advisory Committee to develop requirements for feasibility studies as outlined in SB 1808.

Staff has been working with Region N Water Planning Group to implement Brush as a strategy in their Region Water Plan.

Staff has been working with the Upper Colorado River Authority to determine the highest water yielding areas in the Twin Buttes Watershed.

Staff has been assisting Texas Tech Water Resource Institute with gather shapefiles for the Carrizo Wilcox Aquifer.

Staff has been working with USGS and UGRA on the Upper Guadalupe Watershed computer model.

FLOOD CONTROL DAM PROGRAMS

Background
Nearly 2,000 floodwater retarding structures, or dams, have been built over the last 60 years within the State of Texas. The primary purpose of the structures is to protect lives and property by reducing the velocity of floodwaters, and thereby releasing flows at a safer rate. These are earthen dams that exist on private property, and were designed and constructed by the United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS). They were built with the understanding that the private property owner would provide the land, the federal government would provide the technical design expertise and the funding to construct them, and then units of local government would be responsible for maintaining them into the future.

Local sponsors of the dams were required before a federal project was begun. Local sponsors signed a watershed agreement which outlined the duties and responsibilities of the federal and local sponsors. In general, local sponsors are required to obtain and enforce easements, conduct operation and maintenance (O&M) inspections, maintain the structures, and implement land treatment measures in the watershed. SWCDs are one of the local sponsors in all watershed projects. Other local sponsors include counties, cities, and Water Control and Improvement Districts (WCIDs).

Due to the passage of time and difficulty in raising adequate funds locally, many sponsors approached the Texas Legislature with their concerns over amount of needed O&M and repairs. In recognition that these dams will continue to serve as a critical protection for our state's infrastructure, private property, and lives, the Legislature appropriated $15 million dollars to the TSSWCB for grants to local SWCDs during the 2010-2011 biennium for O&M and structural repairs.

O&M Grant Program Update
The following table shows a summary of the Flood Control O&M Program for FY 2010 and FY 2011 as of 11/10/2011.

FY 10 Contracted $555,129		FY 11 Contracted $1,070,998	
Original O&M	Original Admin	Contracted O&M	Contracted Admin
$528,653	$26,477	$1,019,762	$51,236
Spent O&M	Spent Admin	Spent O&M	Spent Admin
$505,825	$23,816	$581,771	$28,994
Remaining O&M	Remaining Admin	Remaining O&M	Remaining Admin
$24,233	$1,212	$437,990	$22,242
Total FY 10 Contract Remaining		Total FY11 Contracted Remaining	
$25,444		$460,232	

Structural Repair Grant Program Update
A total of 18 flood control dams received state grant funding from FY2010. Five of these dams received funding through the USDA-NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program for disaster recovery; the TSSWCB provided 95% of the non-federal match requirement (25%) for these dams. All repairs needed on these dams are complete. Of the 13 remaining dams that received state grant funds providing 95% of the total cost of each of these projects, 6 dams have had repairs completed and the remaining 7 are under construction. In total, $3,915,471 of FY 2010 state repair grant funds have been obligated.

In FY 2011, a total of seven flood control dams received state grant funding. One of these dams received funding through the USDA-NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program for disaster recovery; the TSSWCB provided 95% of the non-federal match requirement (25%) for this dam. All repairs needed on this dam are complete. Of the 6 remaining dams that received state grant funds providing 95% of the total costs of each of these projects, All 6 are under construction. In total, $2,463,166.47 of FY 2011 state repair grant funds have been obligated.

In FY 2012 the TSSWCB's budget was cut from $7.5 million a year to $2 million. Due to this cut in funding the TSSWCB was only able to fund one dam repair project. In total, $692,949 of FY 2012 state repair funds have been obligated.

For more information on these programs, please visit the TSSWCB's website at: http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/en/floodcontrol

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Established in 1939, the TSSWCB administers Texas' soil and water conservation law and delivers coordinated natural resource conservation programs to agricultural producers through the State's 216 individual SWCDs. The agency is governed by a seven-member State Board composed of two Governor appointees and five individuals elected from across Texas by 1,080 Directors of local SWCDs. The TSSWCB is the lead state agency for planning, implementing, and managing programs for preventing and abating agricultural and silvicultural (forestry) nonpoint sources of water pollution; administers a water supply enhancement program through the targeted control of brush species in areas in need of water conservation; provides operation, maintenance, and structural repair grant funds to local government sponsors of the State's network of 2,000 flood control dams; and facilitates the Texas Invasive Species Coordinating Committee