



# TEXAS STATE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

## Monthly Program News and Activities

4311 South 31st Street, Suite 125, Temple, Texas 76502  
 PO Box 658, Temple, Texas 76503  
 (254) 773-2250

<http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov>

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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, May 23** in Temple and a formal State Board Meeting on **Thursday, May 24** in Waco. More information is available at <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/boardmeetings>, or by contacting Karen Preece at (254) 773-2250, ext. 245 or [kpreece@tsswcb.texas.gov](mailto:kpreece@tsswcb.texas.gov).

### BUDGET AND ACCOUNTING

- The deadline to claim 2/3 of the matching fund allocation for 2012 is May 15.
- The deadline to claim 2/3 of the second EQIP allocation for 2012 is June 15.

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

## HUMAN RESOURCES

TSSWCB is currently not recruiting for any state employee positions at this time.

TSSWCB does intend to engage the services of **contracted** conservation planners to provide services including recruitment of landowners and/or agricultural land operators and the development of conservation plans, in the specified sub-watersheds inside Wilson, Karnes, and Goliad counties. This initiative is a component of the United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service’s (USDA-NRCS) overall San Antonio River Watershed Protection Plan Implementation Conservation Initiative. Interested individuals should visit [http://esbd.cpa.state.tx.us/bid\\_show.cfm?bidid=98000](http://esbd.cpa.state.tx.us/bid_show.cfm?bidid=98000) for more information. **These positions will be independent contractors and will NOT be state employees.**

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 SWCD Directors

Mark your calendars for October 29 - 31, 2012 and plan on attending the 72<sup>nd</sup> Annual State Meeting held at Bastrop. Reservations for the Hyatt Lost Pines Resort are currently sold out. We will start a waiting list August 1<sup>st</sup>.

## Rule Changes

The State Board adopted revised rules on Chapter 517; Cost Share Assistance for Brush Control. The adopted revisions change the Chapter to Cost Share Assistance for Water Supply Enhancement and revise the rules to be consistent with the new direction of the program. The amendments were published in the February 17 issue of the *Texas Register*.

## Conservation Awards Banquets

Districts in Areas II and IV will have Election Conventions which will take place Tuesday, May 1 in both areas to elect State Board Members.

Conservation Awards Banquets are scheduled for:

Area	Date	Location
Area I	May 8	Plainview
Area II	May 1	Wall
Area III	May 2	Refugio
Area IV	May 1	Jacksonville
Area V	May 10	Stephenville

## PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

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<http://www.facebook.com/tsswcb>

<http://www.linkedin.com/company/968674>



### 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](mailto: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 for SWCD directors, employees and new NRCS district conservationist has been set for June 26-27. The training will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn in

Temple. Recently appointed district directors have been sent advanced registration information. Letters of invitation with registration information will be sent to all SWCDs on May 22.

### Soil Stewardship Contests

Texas FFA students participating in the 2012 Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest are preparing for competition in their respective area contests. Both the first place and second place winner in each area will compete at the state contest, held in conjunction with the Texas FFA convention. The dates and location for each of the FFA area contests are shown in the following table.

Area	Date	Location
Area I	May 18	Amarillo
Area II	May 18	Sweetwater
Area III	May 19	Brenham
Area IV	May 12	Mineral Wells
Area V	May 12	Ponder
Area VI	May 12	Mt. Pleasant
Area VII	May 18	Judson
Area VIII	May 12	Waco
Area IX	May 21	Nacogdoches
Area X	May 18	Kingsville

The theme of this year's speaking contest is **Soil to Spoon**.

### State Wildlife Alliance for Youth Contests

The state wildlife contest was held April 16 at Childress. Contest results are as follows:

#### High Point FFA Teams

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Tomball FFA
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – Bellville FFA
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Marion FFA

#### High Point FFA Individuals

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Connor Lowden, Marion FFA
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – Tucker Long, Bellville FFA
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Jacob Lampman, Marion FFA

#### High Point 4-H Teams

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Harris County 4-H
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – McLennan County 4-H
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Shackelford County 4-H

### High Point 4-H Individuals

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Hunter Rhone, Harris County 4-H
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – Curtis Phillips, Harris County 4-H
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Brook Bodle, Harris County 4-H

The contests operate under the rules and guidelines of the Wildlife Alliance for Youth. The alliance consists of the Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board, Association of Texas Soil & Water Conservation Districts, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Texas AgriLife Extension, Welder Wildlife Foundation, Instructional Materials Service, Texas A&M University, Texas FFA Association and Texas Wildlife Association.

The winning FFA and 4-H teams in each regional contests received a \$200 cash award through the ATSWCDs Public Information/Education program. At the state contest, the winning teams in both the FFA and 4-H division earned a \$500 cash award, second place teams earned a \$300 cash award and the third place teams earned a \$200 cash award.

### Texas Envirothon

The Texas Envirothon was held April 14-16, 2012 at the Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches. The contest is an academic, extra-curricular environmental and natural resources education program/competition designed for high school students.

Teams of five students work together to answer questions focusing on five areas of study: aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife and the current environmental issue. In addition to the field experience, students also participate in an oral component focusing on a real-world environmental problem.

Five schools for a total of eight teams participated in the competition. Those included were: Academy of Science and Technology (The Woodlands – Teams A & B); The John Cooper School (The Woodlands – Teams A & B); Klein Collins High School (Spring); Richardson High School (Richardson); and Rio Hondo High School (Rio Hondo – Teams A & B). The overall winner of the 2012 Texas Envirothon was the Academy of

Science and Technology Team B. Students on the winning team were: Xinyi Wang, Emily Eichelberger, Surabhi Reddy, Sebastian Munoz and Rachel Reid. The Academy of Science and Technology Team A was second place, while The John Cooper School Team A took third place. Academy of Science and Technology Team B will represent Texas at the Canon Envirothon competition in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania on July 22- July 28.

Sponsors of the 2012 Texas Envirothon included: Eastman Chemical Company, Enbridge Inc., Entergy Corporation, Lyondell Basell, University of Houston-Clear Lake, Environmental Institute of Houston, Canon USA, Gulf Coast Waste Disposal Authority, Texas Association of Environmental Professionals, Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Texas Association for Environmental Education, Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, Harris County SWCD, Montgomery County SWCD, San Patricio SWCD, Walker County SWCD, Bosque SWCD and Upshur-Gregg SWCD.

### **Texas Conservation Awards Program**

TSSWCB Executive Director has appointed a committee to study the status of the regional programs and develop a survey that will be sent to all SWCDs to gather local input regarding the future of the program. Districts can expect to receive their survey within the month.

### **Annual Youth Range Workshop**

The 58th annual youth range workshop will be held on June 24 - June 29 at Texas Tech University, Junction. The purpose of the workshop is to recognize outstanding youth, develop leadership skills and provide advanced training to 4-H and FFA youth interested in practical range ecology, ranch and natural resource management. A goal of the workshop is for youth participants to return to their local communities and serve as leaders to educate youth and other audiences about the value and management of natural resources. A total of 40 youth will be accepted to the 2012 workshop.

The workshop curriculum is structured to provide knowledge and understanding in the following

areas: land stewardship, range ecology, plant growth, plant-soil-water relations, primary and secondary plant succession, watershed management, livestock and wildlife needs, tools of range and natural resource management, prescribed burning, the impact of management decisions on the range resource and the landowner.

Hands-on activities will include visual examples and opportunities to learn skills in plant identification, plant collecting, plant species composition, total resource planning, stocking rate determinations, estimating forage standing crops and estimating brush densities and ecological trends. Special sessions on water and range health will provide the participants with skills for teaching youth and adults in their home communities.

### **Area Association Meetings**

#### **Hill Country Association of SWCDs**

The Hill Country Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts will meet May 9 at the American Legion Hall in Rocksprings for its annual spring tour and business meeting. The meeting will begin at 10 a.m. followed by an after lunch tour of the award winning Llano Springs Ranch.

Llano Springs Ranch, Ltd. is a 4,650 acre family owned and operated ranch located at the headwaters of the South Llano River near Junction, Texas. Owned and operated by the Tom Vandiver family, the ranchland and game have been intensively managed for the production of trophy whitetail deer since 1994. A herd of Axis and Fallow deer also thrive on the ranch.

Llano Springs Ranch was awarded the *Lone Star Land Steward Award* by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department in 2007 for the Edwards Plateau Region. In 2008, Llano Springs Ranch was awarded the *Leopold Conservation Award* for Texas by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Sand County Foundation as a part of the Lone Star Land Steward Awards program.

## 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](mailto: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.

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## 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 10,063 plans on 3,895,919 acres as of April 12, 2012. All agriculture and silviculture producers in the state are eligible to have a water quality management plan developed. 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 priority areas to serve as financial incentives to increase participation in the program. However, all animal feeding operations are considered to be high priority and are eligible to receive financial incentives to install needed practices in their WQMP through their priority area or statewide assistance program. More information about the WQMP Program is available at <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/wqmp>.

To date, TSSWCB has certified Water Quality Management Plans on 1,682 animal feeding operations (AFO) and concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFO) across the state. The break down is as follows:

Type of Operation	Number of WQMPs
Beef Cattle	27
Swine	8
Sheep/Goats	5
Poultry	1,244
Turkeys	41
Dairies	348
Auction Barns	4
Horses	5

According to the latest research results, WQMPs implemented in FY2011 have had a significant effect on reducing nutrient and sediment loadings to the waters of the state. Results show that WQMPs implemented in 2011 reduced nitrogen by 303,640 pounds, phosphorus by 61,087 pounds and sediment by 20,764 tons.

FY2012 allocations of financial incentive funding for priority SWCDs were 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.

SWCD requests for supplemental water quality management plan funding is due in the Dublin regional office no later than May 14, 2012.

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## POULTRY WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

### Program Overview

In 2001, the 77<sup>th</sup> 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 81<sup>st</sup> 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.

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## **WATER CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

### **Program Overview**

Recognizing the importance of water conservation in meeting our future demand, the 80<sup>th</sup> 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 best management practices (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**

Meeting agendas and minutes are available on the WCAC's web site: <http://www.savetexaswater.org>.

### **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](mailto:regg@tsswcb.texas.gov). More information on the WCAC is available at <http://www.savetexaswater.org/>.

### **Water Conservation Report**

The TSSWCB and TWDB released the report "An Assessment of Water Conservation—Report to the

82<sup>nd</sup> Legislature.” This report is mandated to be written and released every five years in conjunction with the State Water Plan. The report assesses the status of water conservation in Texas and makes recommendations to the Legislature on policies that could enhance the adoption of water conservation practices.

The report is available online at:

[http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/files/docs/waterconservation/TWDBTSSWCB\\_82nd.pdf](http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/files/docs/waterconservation/TWDBTSSWCB_82nd.pdf)

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## 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 comprehensive strategy 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 *2011 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.

### **Texas Nonpoint Source Management Program – Revision Status**

The State of Texas must have a federally approved Management Program in order to continue receiving CWA §319(h) grant monies from the EPA. The “Texas NPS Management Program” was last approved in December 2005 for a five-year planning period. Since that time, significant events have occurred in the program and the State must now update the Management Program to provide for new initiatives and to specify program goals for the upcoming planning period.

The draft *2012 Texas NPS Management Program* document has been developed consistent with regulatory guidance from EPA to satisfy requirements of the federal CWA. Informal comments on the draft document were solicited from a statewide stakeholder group. The draft document incorporates EPA's nine components of an effective program; establishes long- and short-term goals for the program; provides for the coordination of NPS-related programs and activities conducted by federal, state, regional, and local entities; and prioritizes assessment, planning, and implementation activities in priority watersheds and aquifers.

TCEQ and TSSWCB staff are finalizing comments received through the public comment process. The *Management Program* document will be proposed to the State Board on May 24, 2012 and the Commission on May 30, 2012 for their approval.

The draft document is available at <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/managementprogram#revision>.

### **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.

In November 2011, EPA submitted *A National Evaluation of the Clean Water Act Section 319 Program* to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). This national program evaluation was conducted by EPA to improve understanding of how States currently utilize and leverage §319(h) grant funds to achieve NPS management program goals and to identify opportunities for improvement of the §319(h) program. Recommendations for programmatic improvement included in the report may be used by EPA, OMB, the Administration, or Congress to improve accountability and effectiveness of the §319(h) grant program. The report is available at <http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/pdf/319evaluation.pdf>.

#### **FY2007 – FY2011 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 \$13.6 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.

### **FY2012 Request for Proposals**

TSSWCB 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. TSSWCB SRM staff is working with EPA to negotiate scopes of work and budgets for proposals that were selected for funding.

## **State General Revenue Grant Funding**

### **Background**

The 80<sup>th</sup> 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 81<sup>st</sup> and 82<sup>nd</sup> Texas Legislatures 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 – FY2012 State General Revenue Grant Status**

There are currently 10 on-going general revenue-funded projects addressing an array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues. Unliquidated state funds for these 10 on-going projects total approximately \$2.9 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.

TSSWCB SRM staff are in the process of finalizing workplans and budgets with collaborating entities to obligate remaining FY2012 allocated funds.

## **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.

On January 26, 2012, GLO submitted the State's approach to resolving one of the remaining conditions (associated with on-site sewage facilities) to NOAA and EPA for review and approval.

### **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.

The general structure of the coastal program 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**

Through the CMP, GLO awards approximately \$1.8 million of the federal §306/§306A coastal management grant funds received from NOAA to local governments and other entities along the coast for planning and implementation of projects that address environmental problems affecting the coastal area and that promote sustainable economic development.

GLO distributed Grant Cycle 18 application information in April 2012.

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 Public Outreach & Education Subcommittee meeting is set for June 12, 2012. More information on the TGPC is available at <http://www.tgpc.state.tx.us/>.

## 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>.

### 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](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water_quality/stakeholders/2010standards.html).

### Watershed Action Planning Process

Watershed Action Planning (WAP) is a new process for coordinating, documenting, and tracking the State's water quality management programs. The WAP process coordinates planning and activities among TCEQ, TSSWCB, the Texas Clean Rivers Program partners, and stakeholders at the watershed level. The process can have significant implications for regional and local residents. The major objectives of WAP are to:

- engage stakeholders more fully in determining strategies that restore water quality,

- improve access to state agencies' water quality management decisions and increase transparency of decision-making, and
- improve accountability of state agencies' commitments to improve water quality

The WAP process recognizes a range of tools and options for addressing impaired waterbodies on the *303(d) List*. The WAP 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 impairment. A major product of the WAP process is a comprehensive strategy for improving the quality of impaired waters and protecting waterbodies of special interest. Those strategies are summarized in the *WAP Strategy Table* which is maintained by TCEQ. The *WAP Strategy Table* will be updated as frequently as needed to meet the objectives of this evolving process. The *WAP Strategy Table* lists:

- impaired and special interest waterbodies
- the recommended strategies to improve water quality in impaired segments or to protect waterbodies of special interest
- the status of each strategy
- the lead agency and program for tracking each strategy

On January 13, 2012, TCEQ published the first iteration of the *WAP Strategy Table* (December 2011). During 2011, participating agencies initiated this complex cycle and recommended strategies for nearly 1,190 impairments and over 30 special interest waterbodies.

WAP 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. WAP is key to providing for the collaboration being called for and the coordination necessary to achieve the goal of clean water for Texas. More information on WAP is available at

<http://www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/planning/wap/>.

### **Recreational Use Attainability Analyses**

The recently adopted revisions to the Texas 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](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 Integrated Report for CWA §§305(b) and 303(d)**

The *Texas Integrated Report* (IR) summarizes the status of the State's surface waters, including concerns for public health, fitness for use by aquatic species and other wildlife, and specific pollutants and their possible sources, as required by CWA §305(b). The IR also identifies waterbodies not attaining water quality standards (i.e., impaired), as required by CWA §303(d).

On November 18, 2011, EPA approved the *2010 Texas 303(d) List of Impaired Waters*. TCEQ had approved the *2010 Texas Integrated Report* for submission to EPA on August 25, 2010. A total of 1,012 impairments are identified on 438 waterbody segments. Impairments due to elevated bacteria associated with recreation use and oyster waters use continue to dominate the list. A significant achievement for the State is EPA's conclusion that the *Rationale for Reclassifying Plum Creek (Segment 1810) from Category 5 to Category 4b on the Texas Integrated Report* adequately demonstrates how other pollution control requirements (i.e., the Plum Creek WPP) will lead to water quality standards attainment in a reasonable period of time. This is the first successful submission of a WPP in lieu of a TMDL. EPA's approval letter to TCEQ is available at [http://www.epa.gov/region6/region-6/tx/tx\\_303d.html](http://www.epa.gov/region6/region-6/tx/tx_303d.html).

More information on the *Texas Integrated Report*, including the 305(b) Assessment and 303(d) List, is available at [http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/compliance/monitoring/water/quality/data/wqm/305\\_303.html](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/compliance/monitoring/water/quality/data/wqm/305_303.html).

### **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*.

On March 22, 2012, TSSWCB SRM staff [Loren Warrick, Jana Lloyd] attended a CRP Coordinated Monitoring hosted by Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority in Seguin. Discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities for FY2013 among various entities collecting data in order to avoid overlap and maximize resources in the Guadalupe River Basin and the Lavaca-Guadalupe Coastal Basin. More information is available at <http://www.gbra.org/>. On March 22, 2012, TSSWCB SRM staff [Loren Warrick, Jana Lloyd] attended a CRP Basin Steering Committee meeting hosted by Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority in Seguin. More information is available at <http://www.gbra.org/>.

On March 27, 2012, TSSWCB SRM staff [Aaron Wendt] attended a CRP Coordinated Monitoring meeting hosted by the Lower Colorado River Authority in San Angelo. Discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities planned for FY2013 among various entities collecting data in order to avoid overlap and maximize resources in the Upper Colorado River Basin. More information is available at <http://www.lcra.org/water/quality/crp/index.html>.

On March 27, 2012, TSSWCB SRM staff [Mitch Conine] attended a CRP Basin Advisory Committee meeting hosted by the Red River Authority in Wichita Falls. Discussion focused on the presentation of the Basin Highlights Report, current monitoring activities, a presentation on management strategies for irrigated crop production, drought, Zebra Mussels and Golden Algae. More information is available at <http://www.rra.dst.tx.us>.

On March 28, 2012, TSSWCB SRM staff [Mitch Conine] attended a CRP Coordinated Monitoring meeting hosted by the Red River Authority in Wichita Falls. Discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities planned for FY2013 among various entities collecting data in order to avoid overlap and maximize resources in the Red River Basin. More information is available at <http://www.rra.dst.tx.us>.

On March 29, 2012, TSSWCB SRM staff [Loren Warrick] attended a CRP Basin Steering Committee meeting hosted by the Brazos River Authority in Waco. This meeting was held to update CRP stakeholders on the program in the Brazos River area. The 2012 Draft Basin Highlights Report was reviewed, highlighting the drought and its related effects on the water quality and quantity situation in the region. Updates on many projects were given including several WPPs such as, Lake Granbury, Leon River, and Lampasas River. More information is available at <http://www.brazos.org/>.

On April 10, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch, Ashley Alexander] attended a CRP Coordinated Monitoring meeting hosted by H-GAC in Houston. Discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities for FY2013 among various entities collecting data in order to avoid overlap and maximize resources in the H-GAC service area. There was also discussion of WAP priorities in H-GAC's region, including TMDLs, I-plans, and WPPs. More information is available <http://www.h-gac.com/community/water/rivers/>.

On April 11, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch, Mitch Conine] attended a CRP Coordinated Monitoring meeting hosted by the Angelina &

Neches River Authority and the Lower Neches Valley Authority (LNVA) in Brookeland. Discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities for FY2013 among various entities collecting data in order to avoid overlap and maximize resources in the Neches River Basin and the Neches-Trinity Coastal Basin. There was also discussion of WAP priorities in LNVA's region, which included UAAs and other special studies. More information is available at <http://www.anra.org/> and <http://www.lnva.dst.tx.us/>.

On April 12, 2012, TSSWCB SRM staff [Aaron Wendt, Jana Lloyd] attended a CRP Coordinated Monitoring meeting hosted by the Lower Colorado River Authority in Austin. Discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities planned for FY2013 among various entities collecting data in order to avoid overlap and maximize resources in the Middle Colorado River Basin. The newly funded Upper Llano WPP project monitoring task was also discussed. More information is available at <http://www.lcra.org/water/quality/crp/index.html>.

On April 17, 2012, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a CRP Coordinated Monitoring meeting hosted by San Antonio River Authority in San Antonio. Discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities planned for FY2013 among various entities collecting data in order to avoid overlap and maximize resources in the San Antonio River Basin. There was also discussion of WAP priorities and the WAP table. More information is available at <http://www.sara-tx.org/>.

On April 18, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Ashley Alexander] and TSSWCB Regional Office staff [Ronnie Ramirez] attended a CRP Coordinated Monitoring meeting hosted by the International Boundary and Water Commission, U.S. Section (USIBWC). Discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities planned for FY2013 among various entities collecting data in order to avoid overlap and maximize resources in the Rio Grande River Basin below Falcon Reservoir. There was also discussion of WAP priorities and the WAP table. More information is

available at

<http://www.ibwc.state.gov/CRP/Index.htm>.

On April 18, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Ashley Alexander] and TSSWCB Regional Office staff [Ronnie Ramirez] attended a Basin Advisory Committee (BAC) meeting, which was held in conjunction with the USIBWC Lower Rio Grande Citizen's Forum and hosted by the USIBWC. The objective of the BAC meeting was to update the public and stakeholders on local water quality issues and monitoring activities in the Lower Rio Grande Basin and to provide a forum for discussion. The Commissioner from the USIBWC gave the introduction to the meeting. An annual water quality update for the Rio Grande was given by USIBWC CRP staff. Other presentations given and topics discussed included an introduction and update on the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Protection Plan and Conceptual Plans to Reduce Flood Impacts to the region. More information is available at <http://www.ibwc.state.gov/CRP/Index.htm>.

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

### **San Antonio Bay Estuary Program**

On April 17, 2012, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a San Antonio Bay Partnership meeting in Victoria. This meeting was held to update the Board and Steering Committee on the CMP grant and the second phase of the Critical Site and Public Access (CSPA) study, which was formerly known as the wetland inventory. The Partnership expects to have a status and trends report completed this summer, and the CSPA study will be identifying more critical habitat for preservation/restoration.

On April 18, 2012, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a Texas Watershed Steward workshop in Victoria. Over 35 people attended the workshop that was sponsored by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service and TSSWCB, in coordination with the San Antonio Bay Partnership, Coastal Bend, Bays and Estuaries Program. The training, focused on the San Antonio Bay watershed, 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://tw.s.tamu.edu/>.

More information is available at <http://www.sabaypartnership.org/>. The development of a Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for San Antonio Bay has the potential to affect agricultural and silvicultural operations in watersheds that drain to the San Antonio Bay complex in Aransas, Calhoun, Goliad, Refugio, and Victoria Counties.

### **Galveston Bay Estuary Program**

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

On March 29, 2012, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended the Water and Sediment Quality Subcommittee Meeting of the Galveston Bay Council in Houston. This meeting featured updates for several projects, including WPPs, TMDLs, and implementation projects in the Galveston Bay Watershed. There were also project ideas given for the FY 2013 funding from GBEP; these projects will later be scored and ranked in order to receive funding.

On April 4, 2012, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a Budget and Priorities Subcommittee Meeting for the Galveston Bay Council in Houston. This meeting featured discussion on *The Path to 2015*, which will mark 20 years since the Galveston Bay Plan began implementation. Discussion focused on using

adaptive management to help implement the plan and make adjustments on the parts of the plan that have not yet been fully implemented. Next, discussion was held on the next State of the Bay Symposium which is currently not scheduled, but is likely to be held in early 2014. This discussion focused on how to incorporate *The Path to 2015* into the Symposium. The final discussion was on projects for FY 2013 followed by questions and answers.

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.

### Upcoming Public Meetings

- April 30, 2012 – Trinity River Authority CRP Steering Committee Meeting (Dallas)
- April 30, 2012 – Attoyac River Watershed Protection Plan Steering Committee Meeting (Nacogdoches)
- May 3, 2012 – Plum Creek Watershed Partnership Steering Committee Meeting (Lockhart)
- May 3, 2012 – Brady Creek Watershed Protection Plan public meeting (Melvin)
- May 4, 2012 – Feral Hog Workshop (Kemp)
- May 8, 2012 – MOA Coordination Meeting (Austin)
- May 9, 2012 – Texas Watershed Steward Program for Paso del Norte watershed (El Paso)
- May 17, 2012 – Carters Creek TMDL Public Comment Meeting (College Station)
- May 22, 2012 – Bacteria Implementation Group Annual Stakeholder Meeting (Houston)
- May 22, 2012 – San Antonio Bay Partnership Meetings (Victoria)
- May 24, 2012 – Nueces River Authority CRP Corrdinated Montoring Meeting (Corpus Christi)
- May 25, 2012 – Surface Water Quality Standards Advisory Workgroup meeting (Austin)

- May 30, 2012 – TCEQ Agenda Meeting regarding *2012 Texas NPS Management Program* (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 April 13, 2012, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended an Agriculture and Forestry Workgroup I-plan meeting for Adams and Cow Bayous in Orange. This meeting featured discussion on management measures and schedules for implementing BMPs and education for cattle grazing and logging operations in the Adams and Cow Bayou watersheds. The implementation includes establishing WQMPs and forestry BMPs along the bayou.

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.

#### Cedar Bayou

Impairment: Bacteria, Macroenthic Community  
Mechanism: WPP  
Lead: TSSWCB

On April 5, 2012, TSSWCB SRM staff [Ashley Alexander] attended the Cedar Bayou Watershed Partnership meeting in Baytown. The meeting was

opened by Blake Hopper from U.S. Representative Poe's office. To begin the meeting, action was taken by the Steering Committee to approve an additional member. A motion from the Steering Committee approved the addition of a member from the Harris County Flood Control District. Presentations from the H-GAC followed with topics ranging from Partnership business to discussion of the macrobenthic impairment. Other meeting discussion included Workgroup recommendations for bacteria best management practices.

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.

#### **Cedar Creek Reservoir**

Impairment: pH  
Concerns: Nutrients  
Mechanism: WPP  
Lead: Third party

On March 23, 2012, TSSWCB SRM staff [Loren Warrick, TJ Helton, and Aaron Wendt] attended a meeting with TWRI-Urban Solutions, Tarrant Regional Municipal Water District, and US EPA to discuss WPP efforts in the Cedar Creek Reservoir. The group was updated on the progress towards completion and the efforts being made to implement parts of the WPP.

More information is available at <http://nctx-water.tamu.edu/>. This WPP affects agricultural operations in the Cedar Creek watershed in Henderson, Kaufman, Rockwall and Van Zandt Counties.

#### **Concho River**

Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen, Macroinvertebrate Community  
Mechanism: WPP  
Lead: TSSWCB

On March 23, 2012, over 35 people attended a Texas Watershed Steward workshop in San Angelo. The workshop was sponsored by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service and TSSWCB, in coordination

with the City of San Angelo, Upper Colorado River Authority. The training, focused on the Concho River watershed, 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://tw.s.tamu.edu/>.

More information is available at [http://www.ucratx.org/CRiverRest\\_UCRA.html](http://www.ucratx.org/CRiverRest_UCRA.html). This WPP affects farming and livestock operations in the Concho River watershed in Coke, Concho, Crockett, Glasscock, Howard, Irion, Menard, Midland, Reagan, Runnels, Schleicher, Sterling, Tom Green, and Upton Counties.

#### **Copano Bay and Mission and Aransas Rivers**

Impairment: Bacteria  
Mechanism: TMDL, UAA  
Lead: TCEQ

On April 18, 2012, TSSWCB SRM staff [Jana Lloyd, Brian Koch] and Field Staff [Adrian Perez] attended the Bee SWCD #344 meeting in Beeville. Discussion centered on updating the SWCD on activities related to the Aransas Creek recreational use attainability analysis, as well as gaining input regarding future sampling locations.

More information on the TMDL is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/42-copano.html> and on the RUAA at <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/managementprogram/aransaruaa>. This TMDL will affect livestock operations in the Copano Bay and Mission and Aransas Rivers watershed in Bee, Goliad, Refugio, Karnes, Aransas and San Patricio Counties.

## **Gilleland Creek**

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

On March 25, 2012, TSSWCB SRM staff [Rusty Ray] participated in the Gilleland Creek I-Plan meeting in Round Rock. TCEQ staff gave a presentation on the progress made in the first year of the I-Plan implementation and planned activities for the coming year.

More information on the TMDL is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/69-gillelandcreekbacteria.html>. This TMDL and I-Plan affect livestock operations in the Gilleland Creek watershed in Travis County.

## **Leona River**

Impairment: Bacteria  
Concern: Nutrients  
Mechanism: Assessment  
Lead: TSSWCB

On April 3, 2012, TSSWCB SRM staff [Loren Warrick] and TSSWCB Field Representative [Adrian Perez] attended the Winter Garden and Frio SWCD meetings in Crystal City and Pearsall. The districts were updated on the Leona River Water Quality Assessment project.

More information is available at <http://www.leonariver.org/>. This project affects livestock operations in the Frio, Uvalde, and Zavala Counties.

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## **WATER SUPPLY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM**

The 81<sup>th</sup> 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 HB 1808 and the Sunset Commission recommendations.

### **Staff Activities**

- The Water Supply Enhancement Program working committee comprised of John Foster, Mel Davis, Johnny Oswald, Tuffy Wood,

Melissa Grote, Kendria Ray, Ben Wilde, Charlie Upchurch, Tony Franklin, Cody York, Don Brandenberger and Rex Isom met in Austin to discuss the Water Supply Enhancement Project.

- Staff began working on new policies and procedures for the Water Supply Enhancement Project.
- Staff met with Dr. Rainwater and Dr. Fish to discuss the Water Supply Enhancement Program in Lubbock.

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## **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.

In response to this appropriation, the TSSWCB assembled a representative stakeholder group and began the process of developing programs to deliver the funds to the sponsors of flood control dams during the Summer of 2009. It was determined that the most efficient and effective way to proceed was to develop two separate grant programs, one to address O&M, and the other to address structural repairs, due to their difference in complexity.

### **O&M Grant Program Update**

In FY10, \$2,472,008 was allocated to 84 SWCDs and co-sponsors to conduct O&M activities on flood control dams. Currently, there is a balance of \$17,437 to be utilized by June 29, 2012.

In FY11, \$2,472,008 was allocated to 84 SWCDs and co-sponsors to conduct O&M activities on flood control dams. Currently, there is a balance of \$277,764 to be utilized by August 31, 2012.

### **Structural Repair Grant Program Update**

In FY10, \$4,055,471 in program funds were obligated to conduct structural repairs on 18 flood control dams. The TSSWCB and local SWCDs partnered and leveraged resources through the USDA-NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program for disaster recovery and provided funding for structural repair activities on five of these dams. To date, all needed repairs have been completed on 12 of the 18 flood control dams and the remaining six are under construction.

In FY11, \$2,823,166 in program funds was obligated to conduct structural repairs on seven flood control dams. The TSSWCB and local SWCDs continued to partner and leverage resources through the USDA-NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program for disaster recovery and provided funding for structural repair activities on one of these dams. To date, all needed repairs have been completed on one of the seven flood control dams and the remaining six are under construction.

In FY12 the TSSWCB's budget was reduced from \$7.5 million per fiscal year to \$2 million per fiscal year. Due to this reduction in funding the TSSWCB is currently only able to fund two flood control dam repair projects. Currently, \$1,364,836 of FY12 program funds has been obligated.

For more information on these programs, please visit the TSSWCB's website at:

<http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/en/floodcontrol>.

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4311 SOUTH 31<sup>ST</sup> STREET, SUITE 125  
TEMPLE, TEXAS 76502  
(254) 773-2250

<http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov>

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.