

NONPOINT SOURCE SUMMARY PAGE
FY04 319(H)
04-7

1. **Title of Project:** Technical Assistance and Implementation in the West Fork of the Trinity River Watershed
2. **Project Goals/Objectives:** (1) Provide technical assistance to landowners in developing and implementing WQMPs within the West Fork of the Trinity River Watershed.
3. **Project Tasks:** (1) Program Coordination and Management, (2) Development and Implementation of WQMPs, (3) Mapping and Itemized listing of the location and types of BMPs.
4. **Measures of Success:** Implementation of 10 WQMPs for the West fork of the Trinity River watershed; 20 to 30% reduction in NPS loadings from agricultural lands that have implemented WQMPs.
5. **Project Type:** Statewide (); Watershed (X); Demonstration ()
6. **Waterbody Type:** River (X); Groundwater (); Other ()
7. **Project Location:** Segment 0812 of the West Fork of the Trinity River Watershed
8. **NPS Management Program Reference:** State of Texas Agricultural/Silvicultural Nonpoint Source Management Program approved November 1999.
9. **NPS Assessment Report Status:** Impaired (X); Impacted (); Threatened (); Other ()
10. **Key Project Activities:** Hire Staff (); Monitoring (); Regulatory Assistance (); Technical Assistance (X); Education (); Implementation (X); Demonstration (); Other ()
11. **NPS Management Program Elements:** Milestones No. 15, 17, 20, 22, 24
12. **Project Costs:** Federal (\$100,000); Non-Federal Match (\$20,000); Total Project (\$120,000)
13. **Project Management:** Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board
Cooperating entities: Jack SWCD, Natural Resources Conservation Service
14. **Project Period:** 3 years from start date

Technical Assistance and Implementation in the West Fork of the Trinity River Watershed

Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board
FY04 CWA Section 319(h)

WORK PLAN

Problem/Need Statement:

The basis for this project is to expand the efforts and activities of the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) and local Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) to reduce Nonpoint source (NPS) pollution loadings into the West Fork of the Trinity River from agricultural activities. In the 1999 303(d) List, segment 0812 in the West Fork of the Trinity River Watershed have been identified as a NPS pollution concern.

- In stream segment 0812 above Lake Bridgeport, the bacteria level is too high for normal recreational use. Chloride levels are too high and dissolved oxygen levels are too low. The stream segment's impairment is low and the stream is not supporting its normal uses.

As the lead agency for the State of Texas in abating agricultural NPS pollution, the State Board works closely with local SWCDs to reduce NPS pollution from various agricultural activities. The State Board addresses the prevention or abatement of NPS pollution through the Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) program. A WQMP is a site-specific plan, which includes appropriate land treatment practices, production practices, technologies and combinations thereof, and an implementation schedule. This program is administered by the TSSWCB and provides agricultural producers in priority areas such as the West Fork of the Trinity River Watershed an opportunity to comply with State water quality laws through traditional voluntary incentive-based programs. The TSSWCB oversees and is responsible for the cost-share component of the program. The local SWCD are required to provide or arrange for technical assistance to applicants to develop WQMPs.

In Texas, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) works cooperatively with local SWCDs in providing technical assistance on various soil and water conservation issues including NPS pollution. In many of the SWCDs in Texas the NRCS provides technical assistance in the development of WQMPs. However, the ability of the NRCS to provide technical assistance and other services to SWCDs has been stretched due to reductions in personnel and additional Federal program mandates.

Ten years ago there were 1000 NRCS personnel available to assist SWCDs in addressing local soil and water conservation concerns. Today there are 650 NRCS personnel available to address these same concerns. The roles and responsibilities of the NRCS have also greatly increased with the addition of Federal mandates such as the Food Security Act. This decrease in NRCS personnel and the addition of Federal program mandates has strained the ability of the NRCS to provide technical assistance to local SWCDs in the development and implementation of WQMPs.

General Project Description:

This proposed project will consist of TSSWCB working cooperatively with local SWCD in the West Fork of the Trinity River Watershed to provide technical assistance to landowners in the implementation of WQMPs. The primary focus of the 319(h) program is to provide funds to States to implement BMPs that abate or reduce NPS pollution. The use of 319(h) funds will greatly improve and enhance the abilities of local SWCD to provide technical assistance to landowners in the implementation of WQMPs.

In this project, the Jack SWCD will provide technical assistance to landowners within the West Fork of the Trinity River Watershed to develop and implement WQMPs. The SWCD will create a Technician position which will provide 100% effort in developing and implementing WQMPs. Technical assistance is best provided by local SWCD because it will allow for greater local buy in or support from local landowners in the implementation of WQMPs.

The objective of WQMP implementation is to achieve a level of pollution prevention or abatement determined by the State Board in consultation with the local SWCD to be consistent with State water quality standards. Highest priority is given to the implementation of the most cost-effective and most needed pollution abatement practices. Local SWCDs determine which landowners receive technical assistance for the development and implementation of WQMPs based on a two-tier system. The two tier system consist of the following:

- 1st priority Dryland cropland
- 2nd priority Range and pastureland

A tier system is used in prioritizing landowners that will implement practices to help in the remediation of the impaired segment. Landowners that are dryland cropland producers that implement practices such as terraces, grass waterways and filter strips will receive the highest determination for BMP implementation. Landowners who are range and pastureland producers that implement practices such as critical area planting, fencing, range and pasture planting and brush management will receive a lower determination for BMP implementation. By using this tier system the project will fund producers that implement the most affective BMPs to reduce TDS within the impaired segment. To obtain a WQMP, landowners and operators must first make a request to the local SWCD. The SWCD then determines the priority of plan preparation, arranges technical assistance for the landowner and arranges for cost-share assistance provided through State funds. The TSSWCB will then certify the plan provided it is consistent with State water quality standards.

Once a landowner submits a request for a WQMP, the district will review the request and assign a priority and number to each request. Upon approval of the request by the SWCD, the technician will work with the landowner to develop the WQMP. WQMPs that are developed will be done according to the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide. Some of the activities that the technician will work on include:

- Developing Conservation Plan Maps showing boundaries, field, land use, acres and Facilities
- Acquire soil maps with appropriate interpretations
- Developing an implementation schedule (years practices are to be applied)
- Completing worksheets used during the planning phases (forage inventories, grazing

plans, erosion worksheets, engineering notes and designs)

Once the technician completes the WQMP, the District will send it to the TSSWCB Regional Office in Dublin for technical review and certification. Upon certification of the WQMP by the State Board, the technician will work with the landowner in taking the appropriate steps needed to implement the WQMP. If the landowner does not implement the WQMP

According to the conditions established in the plan, then the State Board will decertify the plan, If the State Board decertifies the WQMP and the landowner is not in compliance with State water quality standards, the landowner may be referred to TCEQ for enforcement action.

The Dublin Regional office will provide technical review of developed WQMPs during this project to ensure that the WQMPs are consistent with TSSWCB specifications and procedures.

The SWCD technician will work with landowners to develop and implement WQMPs within the watershed. Information will be compiled on the location and types of BMPs implemented for each WQMP. It is anticipated that there will be a 20 to 30% reduction in NPS loadings from agricultural lands that have implemented WQMPs.

Tasks, Objectives, Schedules, and Estimated Costs

Task 1: Program Coordination and Management

Costs: \$0 (Federal), \$15,000 (State), \$15,000 (Total)

Objective: Organize an integrated team among the multiple agencies and groups involved with the project to efficiently and effectively achieve project goals.

Subtask 1.1: The Jack SWCD, will hire a technician to provide technical assistance to producers and develop WQMPs (Month 1 to month 4)

Subtask 1.2: Prepare quarterly and final reports. The final Report will be submitted to the TSSWCB, via CD, at the culmination of the project. The TSSWCB project manager will set dates for the reports. (Month 1 to Month 36)

Subtask 1.3: Attend monthly SWCD board meetings to discuss technical assistance activities, project schedule, lines of responsibility, communication needs, and other required tasks with project participants. (Month 1 through month 36)

Deliverables

- Quarterly and final reports documenting project status.
- Copies of monthly meeting agendas.

Task 2: Development and Implementation of WQMPs

Costs: \$100,000 (Federal), \$0 (State), \$100,000 (Total)

Objective: Encourage agricultural landowners to comply with state water quality laws through a traditional voluntary based incentive program and assistance to producers in developing and implementing WQMPs.

Subtask 2.1: The Jack SWCD, will prioritize the WQMP applications and rank landowners based on greatest need of BMP implementation. (Month 1 to Month 36)

Subtask 2.2: The SWCD technician will provide landowners information on appropriate BMPs and will work with the TSSWCB Regional Office in developing and implementing WQMPs. (Month 1 to Month 36)

Subtask 2.3: The Jack SWCD technician will develop approximately 10 WQMPs. The SWCD technician will complete all WQMPs with assistance from the NRCS, and the TSSWCB Regional Office as needed. (Month 1 to Month 36)

Subtask 2.4: The TSSWCB Dublin regional office will provide technical review and certification of WQMPs. During this process, The TSSWCB Dublin regional office will certify all WQMPs and ensure that they are consistent with state water quality standards (Month 1 to Month 36)

Subtask 2.5: The SWCD technicians will conduct annual status reviews on all WQMPs developed to ensure that the implementation schedule is followed and funds are properly administered. (Month 1 to Month 36)

Deliverables:

- 10 WQMPs developed and implemented within the Jack SWCD.
- Annual status reviews will be submitted to the TSSWCB.

Task 3: Mapping and Itemized listing of the location and types of BMPs.

Costs: \$0 (Federal), \$5,000 (State), \$5,000 (Total)

Objective: To compile and document locations and types of BMPs implemented

Subtask 3.1: The technician will compile information on the location, numbers, and types of BMPs implemented within the watershed. (Month 1 to Month 36)

Deliverables:

Map and spreadsheet showing the location, numbers and types of BMPs that were implemented.

Coordination, Roles and Responsibilities:

Participating organizations and agencies along with their roles in this project include:

- **Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board** – Project Lead – Responsible for technical review and certification of WQMPs. Work with and assist as needed local SWCDs in the implementation and development of WQMPs. Also assist the district in inventorying current BMPs and land use practices and the implementation of WQMPs
- **Jack SWCD** – Responsible for developing and implementing WQMPs within the West Fork of the Trinity River Watershed. Also responsible for compiling information on the location, numbers, and types of BMPs implemented within the watershed.
- **Natural Resources Conservation Service** – Work with and assist as needed local SWCDs in the implementation and development of WQMPs

Public Participation:

This is an internal TSSWCB project with the Jack SWCD and NRCS. This project will provide technical assistance to landowners within the West Fork of the Trinity River Watershed in the implementation of WQMPs.

Measures of Success:

- Implementation of 10 WQMPs in the targeted watershed
- 20 to 30% reduction in NPS loadings from WQMPs that have implemented BMPs on agricultural lands.

Project Lead:

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