Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Major Program Responsibilities

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Major Programs

- SWCD Assistance
- SWCD Information & Education
- Water Supply Enhancement Program (State Brush Control Program)
- TSSWCB Statewide Nonpoint Source Management Program

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

SWCD Assistance

- Matching Funds Program
- Technical Assistance (TA) Grants
- SWCD Agricultural Water Conservation
- Technical Service Provider (TSP) Grants
- TSSWCB Field Representatives

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Matching Funds Program

- 1969
- Conservation Funding
- Matching Basis
- Match must be from sources other than State Appropriations from the Texas Legislature

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Technical Assistance (TA) Grants

- 1984
- Conservation Technical Assistance (Not NRCS “CTA”)
- For use by SWCDs to employ a technician to assist landowners with developing and implementing conservation plans

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

SWCD Agricultural Water Conservation Grants

- 1985
- Agriculture Code Chapter 201, Subchapter H
- Agricultural Soil & Water Conservation Account No. 563
- Senate Bill 1053, 78th Texas Legislature
- Texas Water Development Board Agricultural Water Conservation Program
- Competitive grant program
- TSSWCB now applies for the funding and administers the same program when granted

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Technical Service Provider (TSP) Grants

- Another form of technical assistance grants
- Funding is acquired through cooperative agreement between NRCS and TSSWCB
- Funding must be put toward technical assistance associated with Farm Bill Programs

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

TSSWCB Field Representatives

- Meet with SWCDs monthly
- Advice and consultation on local, state, and federal laws and issues
- Open meetings
- Public Information
- Financial and program information
- Primary means of communication between state and local government

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

SWCD Information & Education

- Teacher Workshops
- Soil & Water Stewardship Public Speaking Contest
- Texas Conservation Awards Poster Contest
- Texas Conservation Awards Essay Contest
- TSSWCB Video Library Catalog
- Conservation Education Models
- Wildlife Alliance For Youth

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Water Supply Enhancement Program (State Brush Control Program)

- Established in the mid-1980s
- First Funded in 1999 by the Texas Legislature
- Operates much the same way as the WQMP Program
- Requires a conservation plan and includes cost-share funding

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

State Brush Control Program

- First Pilot Project was in the North Concho
- Approximately 10 other project areas funded since 1999
- Watershed selection based on feasibility studies
- Objective of the program is water supply enhancement, rather than water quality

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Brush Control Annual Report

- 2007 activities at a glance
- Brush Controlled on 745,585 Acres during Fiscal Year 2000 through 2007
- 8 Mesquite and Juniper Projects
- 4 Salt Cedar Projects

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

TSSWCB Statewide Nonpoint Source Management Program

- A component of the overall Texas Nonpoint Source Management Program
- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and TSSWCB are co-administrators of the overall program
- TSSWCB focuses on agricultural and silvicultural NPS pollution
- TCEQ focuses on urban and “other” sources
- Overall program has many partners

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

TSSWCB Program Includes

- Water Quality Management Plan Program
- 319(h) Grant Program
- Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Program
- Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) Program
- Comprehensive Nutrient Management Planning in the North Bosque River Watershed
- Environmental Data Quality Management
- Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Water Quality Management Plan Program

- 1993, Senate Bill 503 added language to Texas Agriculture Code, §201.026
- Designated the TSSWCB as the lead agency in the state responsible for abating nonpoint source pollution from agricultural and silvicultural activities
- Created the WQMP Program
- Created the associated cost-share program

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

What is a Water Quality Management Plan?

- a site-specific plan developed through and approved by soil and water conservation districts for agricultural or silvicultural lands
- includes appropriate land treatment practices, production practices, management measures, technologies or combinations thereof
- to achieve a level of pollution prevention or abatement determined by the TSSWCB, in consultation with local soil and water conservation districts, to be consistent with state water quality standards

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

What criteria must the WQMP meet?

- NRCS Field Office Technical Guide
- Covers entire operating unit
- Conservation cropping sequence and residue management should be considered for cropland
- Proper grazing use is a vital consideration for a good WQMP on rangeland
- Various grazing systems will be examined and a sustainable system will be implemented
- A WQMP on pastureland/hayland will have water facility considerations
- Forested land and wildlife are not to be excluded from the WQMP operating unit

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

WQMP Criteria, cntd...

- Nutrient management must be outlined if nutrients are applied
- Pesticide management must also be considered
- If an animal feeding operation is involved (such as a dairy or poultry operation), an animal waste management system will be a sub-component of the WQMP
- Waste utilization will be considered when agricultural wastes are applied
- WQMPs also have subcomponents for irrigation waters, erosion control, and are flexible enough to cater to a wide range of operating systems

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

How to Obtain a WQMP

- Step one – contact the local SWCD
- Producers can also contact one of the TSSWCB Regional Offices
- SWCDs that are not allocated cost-share through the WQMP Program are NOT excluded from the Program
- TSSWCB holds back a Statewide pot of funding for certain situations (complaints, emergencies, etc.)
- Cost-share is not required to get a plan

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

How Much Does a WQMP cost?

- Nothing!

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

What Does A Plan Contain?

- A District-Cooperator Agreement
- Written request for planning assistance
- Soil map of the area with appropriate interpretations
- Conservation plan map
- Narrative record of decisions (including all practices needed for a WQMP)
- Implementation schedule indicating the year practices are to be applied
- Worksheets used during the inventory and/or planning phase of WQMP
- Signature sheet to verify individual's privacy

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

5 Step WQMP Participation Process

1. An individual requests planning assistance through the local Soil and Water Conservation District.
2. The plan is developed with NRCS and TSSWCB assistance.
3. The WQMP is certified.
4. The individual implements the WQMP on his/her land.
5. The WQMP is subject to annual status reviews.

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Cost-Share Assistance

- Funding is appropriated to the TSSWCB by the Texas Legislature to serve as incentives for fully implementing a WQMP
- The State Board has set a $10,000 limit on the amount that anyone individual can receive for a single operating unit, and the cost-share rate cannot exceed 75% (75% state / 25% landowner), although some SWCDs use lower rates
- The TSSWCB allocates this cost-share funding to approximately 80 SWCDs across the State based on a priority system approved by the State Board.

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Regional Offices

- Hale Center
- Mount Pleasant
- Harlingen
- Wharton
- Dublin
- Nacogdoches (Poultry Only)

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Poultry WQMPs

- Senate Bill 1339, 2001, required all persons who own or operate a poultry facility to implement and maintain a WQMP that is certified by the TSSWCB
- Staggered-schedule of deadlines by which each producer, depending on their initial date of operation, must have requested the development of a WQMP from their local Soil and Water Conservation District
- Nearly all poultry facilities in Texas currently operate under a certified Water Quality Management Plan
- The TSSWCB maintains a Poultry WQMP Office in Nacogdoches to service East Texas, although the agency's regional offices in Mount Pleasant, Wharton, and Dublin provide assistance to the poultry industry as well

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Water Quality Complaints

- The TSSWCB is responsible for investigating and resolving water quality complaints resulting from agricultural or silvicultural (forestry) nonpoint sources (unregulated)

- Water Quality complaints originating from a regulated (permitted) entity, or a nonagricultural or nonsilvicultural activity, are handled by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Water Quality Complaints

- The agency's Regional Offices coordinate all complaint investigations for the TSSWCB, although many times the initial contact is made through the agency's head quarters in Temple
- Complaints filed with the TCEQ that concern a violation of a water quality management plan (WQMP) certified by the TSSWCB under Agriculture Code §201.026 and complaints concerning a violation of a law or rule relating to agricultural or silvicultural nonpoint source pollution are referred to the TSSWCB
- Once referred, the TSSWCB and the appropriate local soil and water conservation district (SWCD) investigate the complaint

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Water Quality Complaints

- On completion of the investigation, the TSSWCB and local SWCD make a determination that further action is not warranted, or the responsible party must develop and implement a corrective action plan to address the complaint

- In most cases, the corrective action plan results in a modification to an existing WQMP, a new WQMP being developed, or an emphasis being placed on the management of the existing WQMP with consequences communicated to the responsible party

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Water Quality Complaints

- These consequences could include being forced to return financial aid furnished through the TSSWCB for assistance in originally implementing the WQMP, or the removal of certification upon a subsequent violation

- If the person about whom the complaint has been made fails or refuses to take corrective action, the TSSWCB will refer the complaint to the TCEQ

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

319(h) Grant Program

- Clean Water Act, Section 319(h)
- Federal NPS Grant from Environmental Protection Agency
- Funding is split evenly in Texas between TCEQ and TSSWCB

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

319(h) Grant Program

- TSSWCB publishes a Request for Proposals annually for project ideas
- TSSWCB initiates some projects based on needs identified by staff
- Currently approximately 70 projects being managed by TSSWCB across Texas
- BMP Implementation, Demonstration, Education, and Assessment

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Program

- Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act requires Texas to identify waterbodies failing to meet or not expected to meet water quality standards and not supporting their designated uses

- The State must then establish a TMDL that defines the maximum amount of a pollutant that the waterbody can assimilate on a daily basis and still meet water quality standard and allocates pollutant loads between point sources and nonpoint sources

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Program

- Based on this environmental target, an Implementation Plan (I-Plan) is developed that prescribes the measures necessary to mitigate anthropogenic (human-caused) sources of that pollutant in that waterbody

- Together, the TMDL and the I-Plan serve as the mechanism to reduce the pollutant, restore the full use of the waterbody.

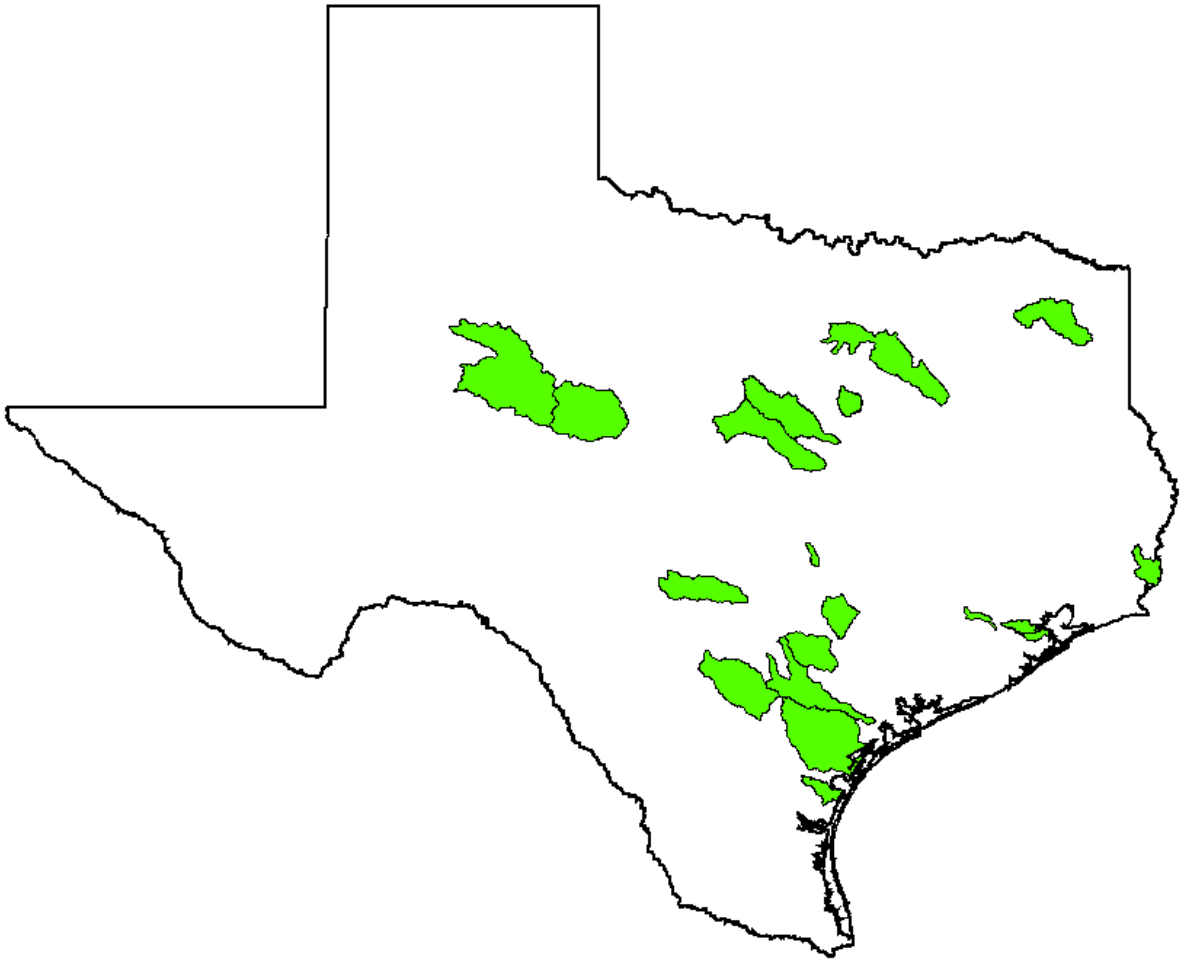
Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

TMDLs the TSSWCB is Actively Involved in

- Adams and Cow Bayous - bacteria, dissolved oxygen, and pH
- Atascosa River - bacteria
- Clear Creek - bacteria
- Copano Bay and Aransas and Mission Rivers - bacteria
- Dickinson Bayou - dissolved oxygen
- Elm and Sandies Creeks - bacteria and dissolved oxygen
- Gilleland Creek - bacteria
- Guadalupe River above Canyon Lake - bacteria
- Leon River below Proctor Lake - bacteria
- Lower San Antonio River - bacteria
- Oso Bay - dissolved oxygen
- Oso Creek - bacteria
- Peach Creek - bacteria
- Upper Oyster Creek - bacteria and dissolved oxygen
- Upper Trinity River – bacteria

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

TSSWCB TMDL Watersheds



Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) Program

- WPPs are watershed-based plans that provide a *coordinated* framework for implementing water quality protection and restoration strategies driven by environmental objectives
- Heavily driven by stakeholder decisions through well organized meetings
- EPA requires certain expenditures through 319(h) grants to be in accordance with a WPP

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

9 Key Elements to a WPP

a) Identification of the causes that will need to be controlled to achieve the load reductions described in (b)
b) Estimate of the load reductions expected for the management measures described in (c)
c) Description of management measures that will need to be implemented to achieve the load reductions described in (b)
d) Estimate of technical and financial assistance needed to implement this plan
e) Information/education component that will be used to enhance public understanding of this plan
f) Schedule for implementing management measures described in (c)
g) Description of interim, measurable milestones for determining whether management measures described in (c) are being implemented
h) Set of criteria that can be used to determine whether load reductions described in (b) are being achieved
i) Water quality monitoring component to evaluate effectiveness of implementation measured against the established criteria described in (h)

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

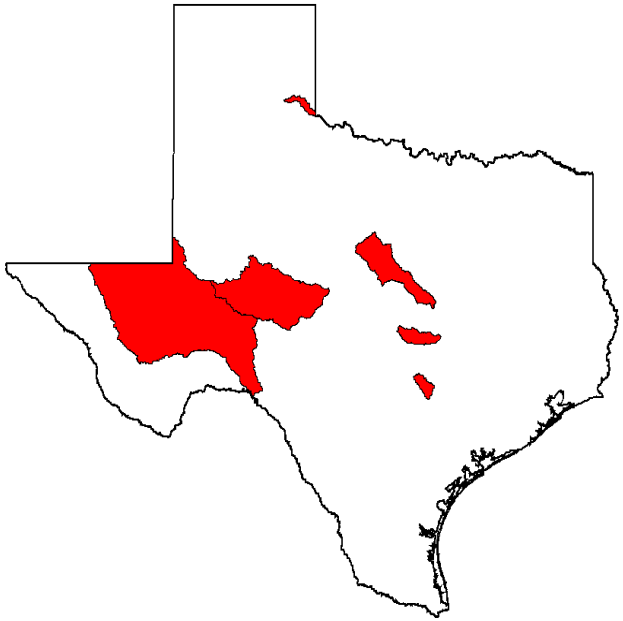
WPPs

- WPP efforts in Texas can be coordinated through the TSSWCB, TCEQ, or third-parties

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

TSSWCB WPPs

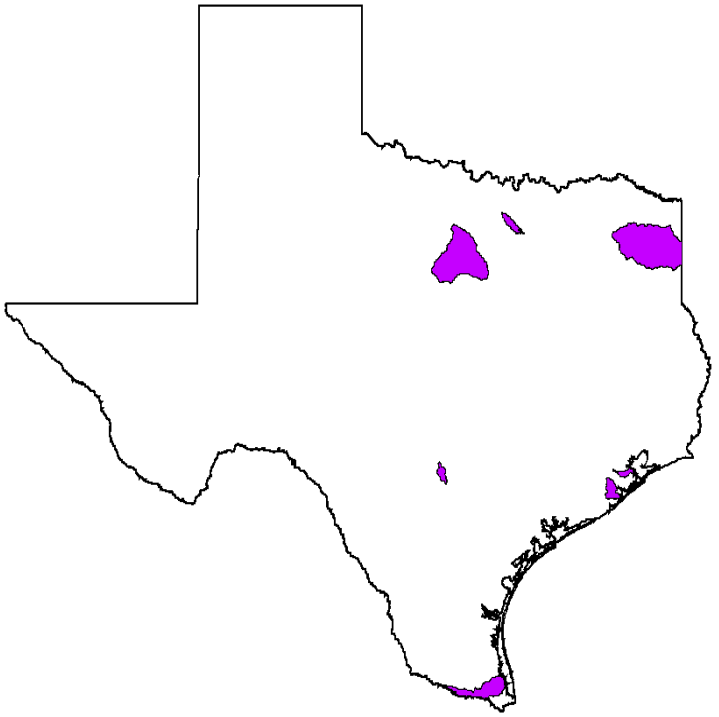
- Buck Creek - Texas Water Resources Institute
- Concho River - Upper Colorado River Authority
- Lake Granger - Brazos River Authority
- Leon River - Brazos River Authority
- Pecos River - Texas Water Resources Institute
- Plum Creek - Texas AgriLife Extension
- Lampasas River – Texas AgriLife Research



Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

TCEQ WPPs

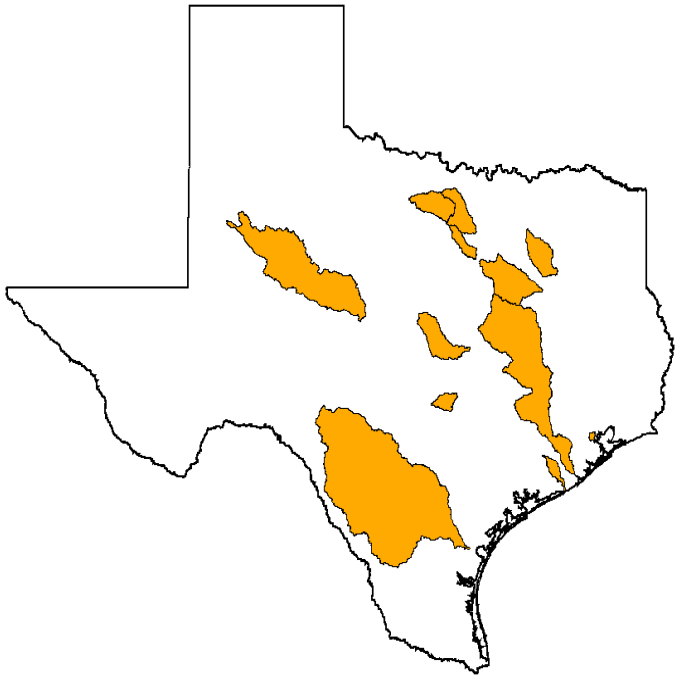
- Arroyo Colorado - Texas Water Resources Institute
- Bastrop Bayou - Houston-Galveston Area Council
- Caddo Lake - Northeast Texas Municipal Water District
- Dickinson Bayou - Texas Sea Grant
- Lake Granbury - Brazos River Authority
- Hickory Creek - City of Denton
- Upper San Antonio River San Antonio River Authority



Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

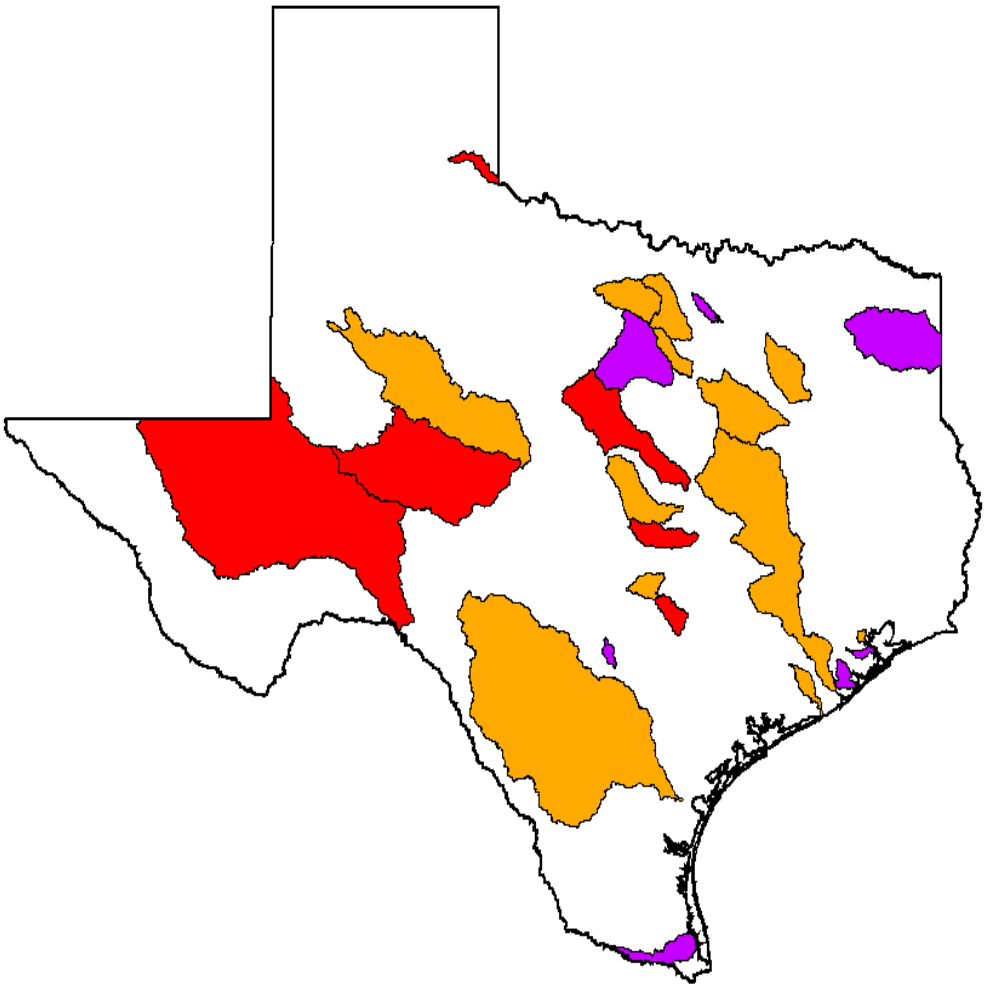
3rd Party Facilitated WPPs

- **Armand Bayou** - Texas Sea Grant and Trust for Public Land
- **Barton Springs** - Lower Colorado River Authority and Texas Water Development Board
- **Benbrook Lake** - Texas Water Resources Institute and Tarrant Regional Water District
- **Lower and Middle Brazos River** - Brazos River Authority
- **Bridgeport Reservoir** - Texas Water Resources Institute and Tarrant Regional Water District
- **Caney Creek** - Caney Creek Conservation Foundation
- **Cedar Creek Reservoir** - Texas Water Resources Institute and Tarrant Regional Water District
- **Upper Colorado River** - Colorado River Municipal Water District
- **Eagle Mountain Reservoir** - Texas Water Resources Institute and Tarrant Regional Water District
- **Nueces River** - U.S. Army Corps of Engineer
- **Richland-Chambers Reservoir** - Texas Water Resources Institute and Tarrant Regional Water District
- **Stillhouse Hollow Lake** - Lake Stillhouse Hollow Cleanwater Steering Committee, Inc.



Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Combined WPP Coverage



Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Comprehensive Nutrient Management Planning (CNMPs)

- CNMP is conservation plan for Animal Feeding Operations
- Basically a WQMP, but customized with a few additional and/or different technical requirements
- Dairy Operations
- North Bosque River (Leon River also)
- Developed by 3rd Party Consultants
- Reviewed by NRCS and TSSWCB

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Environmental Data Quality Management

- Many 319(h) projects generate environmental data (water quality, soil loss, etc)
- EPA requires this data be collected in accordance with sound quality assurance and quality control practices
- TSSWCB has an approved Quality Management Plan
- Quality Assurance Project Plans for all projects that result in environmental data being collected

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program

- The TSSWCB is a member of Texas' Coastal Coordination Council (CCC)
- CCC administers the Texas Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program
- The TSSWCB manages the agricultural and silvicultural portions of this program

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Coastal Program Activities

- TSSWCB Allocates cost-share funding for WQMP implementation in the counties on the Gulf Coast
- Actively applies for federal grant funding to pass through to SWCDs
- Provides SWCDs information on coastal issues