

TEXAS STATE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

Agency Strategic Plan

Fiscal Years 2007-2011 Period



Prepared
July 2006



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AGENCY STRATEGIC PLAN

FOR THE FISCAL YEARS 2007-2011 PERIOD

BY THE

TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

JULY 2006

Signed: 
Charles "Rex" Isom
Executive Director

Approved: 
Aubrey Russell
Chairman

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TEXAS STATE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

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STATEWIDE VISION AND MISSION

Texas State Government must be limited, efficient, and completely accountable. It should foster opportunity and economic prosperity, focus on critical priorities, and support the creation of strong family environments for our children. The stewards of the public trust must be men and women who administer State government in a fair, just, and responsible manner. To honor the public trust, State officials must seek new and innovative ways to meet State government priorities in a fiscally responsible manner.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF TEXAS STATE GOVERNMENT

The task before all state public servants is to govern in a manner worthy of this great state. We are a great enterprise, and as an enterprise we will promote the following core principles:

- First and foremost, Texas matters most. This is the overarching, guiding principle by which we will make decisions. Our state, and its future, is more important than party, politics, or individual recognition.
- Government should be limited in size and mission, but it must be highly effective in performing the tasks it undertakes.
- Decisions affecting individual Texans, in most instances, are best made by those individuals, their families, and the local government closest to their communities.



- Competition is the greatest incentive for achievement and excellence. It inspires ingenuity and requires individuals to set their sights high. And just as competition inspires excellence, a sense of personal responsibility drives individual citizens to do more for the future and the future of those they love.
- Public administration must be open and honest, pursuing the high road rather than the expedient course. We must be accountable to taxpayers for our actions.
- State government has a responsibility to safeguard taxpayer dollars by eliminating waste and abuse, and providing efficient and honest government.
- Finally, state government should be humble, recognizing that all its power and authority is granted to it by the people of Texas, and those people who make decisions wielding the power of the state should exercise their authority cautiously and fairly.

STATEWIDE FUNCTIONAL GOAL

Priority Goal: To provide leadership and policy guidance for state, federal, and local initiatives that conserve and protect Texas' natural resources (air, water, land, wildlife, and mineral resources), in a consistent manner that encourages sustainable economic development while minimizing harmful effects to these resources.

Benchmarks:

- Increase water conservation through decreased water per-capita consumption, increased water reuse, and increased brush control
- Increase Texas waters that meet or exceed safe water quality standards
- Increase consistency with tracking and reporting environmental violations and improvements
- Focus on environmental results instead of numbers of permits or fines assessed
- Ensure that land is preserved and accessible through continuation of public and private natural and wildlife areas
- Enhance and protect state assets through prudent and innovative management
- Utilize sound science for environmental decision making
- Enhance collaboration among the state's agencies charged with managing natural resources
- Implement new technologies to provide efficient, effective, and value-added solutions for a balanced Texas ecosystem

TSSWCB MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

Agency Mission

It is the mission of the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board, working in conjunction with local soil and water conservation districts, to encourage the wise and productive use of natural resources. It is our goal to ensure the availability of those resources for future generations so that all Texans' present and future needs can be met in a manner that promotes a clean, healthy environment and strong economic growth.

Agency Philosophy

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board will act in accordance with the highest standards of ethics, accountability, efficiency, and openness. We affirm that the conservation of our natural resources is both a public and a private benefit, and we approach our activities with a deep sense of purpose and responsibility. We believe the existing unique organizational structure of soil and water conservation districts, whereby owners and operators of the state's farm and grazing lands organize and govern themselves through a program of voluntary participation, is the most realistic and cost effective means of achieving the State's goals for the conservation and wise use of its natural resources.

EXTERNAL/ INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Overview of Agency Scope and Functions

Statutory Basis and Historical Perspective

National Background

In the early history of the United States, the conservation of soil and water resources was not often considered by those involved in agriculture. Quite the contrary was true in fact. Land was cleared and put into farm production. When the land quit producing at a profitable level, the farmers merely moved on to new land farther west and started the process over again. There was no need to be concerned with soil conservation, as there was a seemingly unlimited supply of virgin land waiting to be tilled. This process continued through the 1800s and into the early 1900s. With the outbreak of World War I, farmers in the Great Plains states were encouraged to break out native grassland to grow wheat and other foodstuffs to feed the nation and the world. As a result of these and other unwise management practices, and the fact that the farmlands were experiencing long periods of drought, the 1930s produced some of the worst dust storms the nation had ever seen. Clouds of dust rolled across the plains states sending dust storms through the south and into the nation's capitol. At the same time, the nation was in the midst of a great economic depression. The federal government, seeking ways to put people back to work and encourage conservation, created the Civilian Conservation Corps and Soil Erosion Service. Through these mechanisms, demonstration projects were initiated to train technicians and to educate the public in ways to conserve soil



resources. These programs were successful in putting people back to work, but lacked the local ties to establish lasting conservation programs.

One of the early day leaders in the national effort to control soil erosion was Hugh Hammond Bennett from North Carolina. After graduation from the University of North Carolina in 1903, Hugh Bennett took a job with the Bureau of Soils in the United States Department of Agriculture. Because of his experience, scientific knowledge and leadership ability, he was put in charge of the Soil Erosion Service when it was created in 1933. In 1935, P.L. (Public Law) 46 was passed creating the Soil Conservation Service within the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Hugh Bennett became the first Chief of the agency. He soon became internationally known for his accomplishments in conservation work.

With the help of Congressman Buchanan from Columbus, Texas, Hugh Bennett was able to persuade President Franklin Roosevelt that the soil resources of this nation were being wasted. He convinced the President that a Model Soil Conservation

Act should be developed and sent to the governors of each state for passage by their state legislatures. The purpose of this Model Act would be to develop programs at the state and local level to control soil erosion.

In 1936, such a Model Act was sent to the governors with the endorsement of President Roosevelt. The Model Act, developed in Washington, was patterned after the Texas Wind Erosion Act, the Grass Conservation Acts in the Northern High Plains and certain water conservation district law.

The Effort Begins in Texas

In 1937 legislation was introduced in the Texas Legislature based on this Model Act. It is reported that as many as 25 different versions of this soil conservation law were considered before a final version was passed. There was much heated discussion of the proposed legislation. When the final version was adopted, the bill contained many undesirable features. The law would have set up Soil Conservation Districts automatically on a county basis and made County Commissioners Courts the governing body. A portion of the county tax was to be used to finance the program and county agricultural agents were to be the administrative officers.

A number of agricultural leaders from across the state had, by this time, become concerned about the newly passed legislation. It was their opinion that, if the responsibility for installing and maintaining conservation measures lay in the hands of the land owners, the control of such a program should also be in their hands. As a result of these and other concerns, a group of landowners led by V.C. Marshall of Heidenheimer, Texas, convinced the Governor to veto the 1937 legislation.

Hard feelings among agricultural leaders resulted from the attempt to pass this soil conservation law. Under the leadership of Mr. Marshall, a concerted effort was made during the interim between legislative sessions to heal the old wounds and to put together a version of a law that would be generally accepted by the farmers and ranchers of Texas. Mr. Marshall organized a committee of leaders from across the state to promote the passage of a new Soil Conservation Law. He traveled many miles at his own expense seeking the views of agricultural leaders and promoting the idea of the Soil Conservation District Program.

The key points Mr. Marshall felt should be included in the new law were that (1) farmers and ranchers should determine whether or not a Soil Conservation District was needed and hold a local option election prior to the establishment of the district; (2) the program should be controlled by landowners; and (3) the Soil Conservation Districts should have no taxing authority or the power of eminent domain.

In 1939 the Texas Legislature passed H.B. (House Bill) 20 which incorporated those features and was the first Soil Conservation Law for the state. The law created the State Soil Conservation Board and allowed for the creation of the Soil Conservation Districts. Mr. Marshall was elected as the first Chairman of the Soil Conservation Board and later resigned to become the first Executive Director of the agency.

The First Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts

On April 30, 1940, the Secretary of the State issued Certificates of Organization for the first 16 Soil Conservation Districts paving the way for the program we now operate. Today, Texas has 217 local soil and water

conservation districts that encompass more than 99% of the state.

As previously mentioned, the Model Act endorsed by President Roosevelt was in part patterned after the Texas Wind Erosion Act. Texas was already making attempts to address soil conservation as a result of the “Dust Bowl” days of the 1930s. The 44th Legislature in 1935 passed legislation authorizing the establishment of Wind Erosion Conservation Districts. This law provided for the creation of districts to “conserve the soil by prevention of unnecessary erosion caused by winds, and the reclamation of lands that have been depreciated or denuded of soil by reasons of winds.” Although a number of Wind Erosion Conservation Districts were created, the passage of the Soil Conservation District Law in 1939 resulted in those districts becoming dormant.

The TSSWCB Gains New Responsibilities

In 1975, Governor Dolph Briscoe, by Executive Order, designated the TSSWCB as lead agency to assume the planning and management responsibility for control of agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source pollution as required by the Federal Water Pollution Control Act.

In 1981, the 67th Legislature passed H.B. 1436, which for the first time codified the agricultural laws of Texas. Title 7, Chapter 201 of this code contains the portion pertaining to Soil and Water Conservation.

In 1985, the 69th Legislature passed S.B. 1083 creating a Brush Control Program in Texas and granting new powers and responsibilities, without funding, to the TSSWCB and Soil and Water Conservation Districts under Chapter 203 of the Agriculture Code. In 1999, the TSSWCB received its first appropriation in the FY00-

01 biennium to control water-depleting brush and trees, such as cedar and mesquite. The program received \$9.1 million to establish a pilot project in the North Concho Watershed.

In 1993, the 73rd Legislature passed S.B. 503 which named the TSSWCB the lead agency to address water quality issues relating to runoff from diffused, or nonpoint sources resulting from agricultural and forestry operations. In 1999, the Legislature expanded the TSSWCB’s environmental mission and appropriated money to address water pollution from nonpoint sources under a separate, federally mandated program.

The leaders who framed the Texas Soil and Water Conservation Law in 1939 recognized that landowners and operators of private land constitute the basic resource for the conservation of our renewable natural resources. Without the support and willing participation of private landowners and operators in the development and implementation of soil and water conservation programs there is little hope of success. Local soil and water conservation districts led by farmers and ranchers who know the land and the local conditions and problems have the means to develop conservation plans that address each acre of land specific to its needs to solve or reduce the severity of its problems.

Affected Populations

The services and programs provided by the TSSWCB target rural Texas farmers and ranchers, but the results of these services benefit all Texans. For example, many of the flood control structures maintained by soil and water conservation districts serve to protect heavily populated areas from flood damage, and also prevent sediment from building up in suburban drinking water supplies. Another example is the use of best

management practices, implemented through TSSWCB-certified water quality management plans, to prevent pesticides, nutrients, and other contaminants from impairing Texas waters.

Main Functions

Agency Responsibilities

The agency is responsible for numerous natural resource conservation efforts, the most prominent of which is serving as the lead state agency for the prevention, management, and abatement of nonpoint source pollution resulting from agricultural and silvicultural, or forestry-related, activities. As a result, the majority of the agency's programs and services aim to improve and protect water quality. The TSSWCB is also responsible for water conservation, or water quantity. The major existing program addressing water conservation is the Texas Brush Control Program, although the agency has been asked to perform preliminary work toward a proposed comprehensive water conservation program to be patterned after the existing Water Quality Management Plan Program. Other responsibilities include prevention of soil erosion, control of floods, maintaining the navigability of waterways, the preservation of wildlife, protection of public lands, and providing information to landowners regarding the jurisdictions of the TSSWCB and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) related to nonpoint source pollution. The TSSWCB has no regulatory functions; all of the agency's programs and services are voluntary in nature.

Water Quality Management Plan Program

The main conservation planning program the TSSWCB administers, which results from the nonpoint source mandate, is the

Water Quality Management Plan Program. This program, and the mandate in general, comes from Senate Bill 503 of the 73rd Legislative Session in 1993. This program is administered through a partnership between the 217 soil and water conservation districts in Texas and the TSSWCB. It is a voluntary program that emphasizes implementation of the management practices contained within the United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) Field Office Technical Guide. Landowners may apply for cost-share assistance through this program. The cost-share funding for this program is available through annual appropriations from the Texas Legislature. By voluntarily participating in this program, landowners demonstrate their concern for natural resource conservation and intent to be protective of water quality standards.

Total Maximum Daily Loads

Another program the TSSWCB administers is the Total Maximum Daily Load, or TMDL, Program. The TMDL effort in Texas is primarily administered by the TCEQ because it usually results in regulatory limits being placed on the amount of a particular pollutant that can safely be assimilated into a waterbody. We work very closely with the TCEQ, and actually take a lead role in cases where the primary pollutant of concern results from an agricultural nonpoint source. Many of the TMDLs being developed and implemented involve nonpoint sources from agricultural and forestry related activities, therefore the TSSWCB works to make sure those interests are represented and are given a voice during this process. The TSSWCB's goal is to ensure TMDLs are fair and equitable and that implementation plans are reasonable and achievable.

Nonpoint Source Grants

The TSSWCB receives half of the dollars annually provided to Texas through the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Clean Water Act, Section 319(h) grant program. These funds are used for a variety of projects and programs to educate, implement, demonstrate, and assess technologies and practices that protect Texas water quality from nonpoint sources of pollution. The TCEQ receives the other half of the funding and uses it to address urban nonpoint sources. We currently manage 66 special projects across the State, and through this program we have established partnerships with entities such as state and federal agencies, departments and institutes within Texas Universities, river authorities, municipalities, water districts, private entities such as the Texas Farm Bureau, and many soil and water conservation districts.

Watershed Protection Plan Program

This program provides guidance and technical assistance to local stakeholder groups in developing and implementing Watershed Protection Plans. These projects are designed to protect unimpaired surface waters from nonpoint source water pollution threats and restore impaired surface waters polluted by nonpoint source water pollution. These locally-driven projects serve as a mechanism for addressing complex water quality problems that cross multiple jurisdictions. The goal is to protect unimpaired surface waters from nonpoint source water pollution threats and restore impaired surface waters polluted by nonpoint source water pollution. Watershed protection planning serves as a tool to better leverage the resources of local governments, state and federal agencies, and non-governmental organizations. The planning process integrates activities and prioritizes implementation projects based upon technical merit and benefits to the

community, promotes a unified approach to seeking funding for implementation, and creates a coordinated public communication and education program. Watershed Protection Plans have a variety of ingredients and can take many forms. TSSWCB watershed protection planning projects utilize guidelines promulgated by the US EPA in 2003. These guidelines describe nine elements fundamental to a potentially successful plan. The nine elements fundamental to Watershed Protection Plans are: (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). Watershed protection planning projects currently sponsored by TSSWCB are all funded through CWA §319(h) grants to various entities. Active watershed projects include:

- Concho River - Upper Colorado River Authority
- Lake Granger - Brazos River Authority

- Little Wichita River - Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Research
- North Bosque River - Brazos River Authority
- Pecos River - Texas Cooperative Extension
- Plum Creek - TSSWCB Wharton Regional Office

Additionally, TSSWCB is funding two pilot projects which support the Watershed Protection Plan process:

- Coordinated Watershed Protection in Southeast and South Central Texas - TSSWCB Wharton Regional Office
- Texas Watershed Steward Program - Texas Cooperative Extension

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) sponsors Watershed Protection Plans based on EPA's guidelines as well:

- Arroyo Colorado - Texas Sea Grant
- Caddo Lake - Northeast Texas Municipal Water District
- Dickinson Bayou - Texas Sea Grant
- Hickory Creek - City of Denton
- Lake Granbury - Brazos River Authority
- Upper San Antonio River - San Antonio River Authority

There are several other watershed planning projects across the state which are funded and sponsored by other agencies. These other watershed plans may or may not accommodate EPA's nine elements:

- Amand Bayou - Texas Sea Grant and Trust for Public Land
- Bastrop Bayou - Houston-Galveston Area Council
- Lower and Middle Brazos River - Brazos River Authority

- North Central Texas - Texas Water Resources Institute
- Upper Colorado River - Colorado River Municipal Water District

Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program

The TSSWCB is a member of Texas' Coastal Coordination Council which administers the State's Coastal Management Program (CMP). One part of the CMP is the *Texas Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program*. We are responsible for implementing the agricultural and silvicultural portions of this program. This is accomplished by developing water quality management plans through the fifteen coastal soil and water conservation districts using their annual cost-share allocations made under our Senate Bill 503 Water Quality Management Plan Program. Prior to 2004, many of the coastal districts were successful in receiving grant funds through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to supplement the State cost-share funding. The federal funding was made available through NOAA's grant program under Section 6217 of the Coastal Zone Act and Reauthorization Amendments of 1990. However, new guidance for the program was issued by NOAA in March, 2004. This guidance disallowed the use of NOAA's funds for implementation of agricultural management measures on private lands. Currently, the State cost-share is the only funding available for carrying out the Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program. As a result of the recent Energy Bill, Texas will receive approximately \$60 million in each of the next four years totaling approximately \$240 million for the Coastal Impact Assistant Program (CIAP). Of that amount, 35 percent will be directly allocated to coastal counties based on a formula

established by the Federal Government. The remainder (\$39 million per year) will be administered and distributed by the State. The funds go to coastal states to mitigate the impacts of oil drilling in the outer continental shelf.

Details of the program have not been finalized. But this is another potential source of federal funding for implementing the Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program that we will pursue when the program guidance is finalized.

Texas Brush Control Program

Under our water supply enhancement responsibilities, we administer the Texas Brush Control Program. The Texas Brush Control Program is designed to enhance water availability and water conservation through effective land stewardship by removing water-depleting brush and trees, such as juniper, mesquite, and salt cedar, which have invaded many areas of the state and created critical water shortages. In 1985, the Legislature directed the TSSWCB to administer a program that included developing management strategies and the designation of areas where brush control is most needed. The TSSWCB currently has brush control projects in twelve watersheds in West and Central Texas. State appropriations for brush control are being utilized to leverage federal funds from USDA and EPA to the fullest. Landowners have treated 628,000 acres with cost-share money and contributed approximately \$13,000,000. Response monitoring of the brush removal efforts are indicating a return to the pre-brush hydrologic conditions. Once dry springs and tributaries are beginning to flow.

Water Conservation Planning

Although the TSSWCB does not currently administer a certification program

exclusively for water conservation, or water quantity, many best management practices that protect water quality also play a role in enhancing water availability. We took an aggressive role in the Water Conservation Implementation Taskforce created during the 78th Regular Legislative Session. The Task Force's report to the Legislature included a recommendation that a water conservation plan including cost-share for the implementation of best management practices be considered within the TSSWCB. On October 19, 2005, the House Committee on Agriculture and Livestock and the House Committee on Natural Resources were issued the joint interim charge to determine if a new comprehensive water conservation program was needed within the TSSWCB. On May 5, 2006, the TSSWCB testified before a joint hearing of both Committees related to this need. The TSSWCB is currently in the process of examining the scope and various additional complexities of such a program, and is expected to provide this information to both Committees at a later date.

Water Conservation Grants

Another aspect of our water conservation activities includes what was previously known as the Texas Agriculture Code, Chapter 201, Subchapter H funding technical assistance related to water conservation land improvement measures. This funding was appropriated to the TSSWCB on an annual basis and was provided to soil and water conservation districts to provide conservation implementation assistance to landowners. Senate Bill 1053, 78th Legislature, Regular Session, consolidated Agricultural Soil and Water Conservation Account No. 563 into Agricultural Water Conservation Fund No. 358 affecting the agency's Sub Chapter H water conservation program. The TSSWCB must apply to the Texas Water Development

Board (TWDB) to continue future funding for this important program. In Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005 the TWDB approved proposals to continue technical assistance activities under the previous program's framework. During the current fiscal year, the TSSWCB and local soil and water conservation districts partnered with Texas Cooperative Extension to submit a proposal for an irrigation management certification program. This proposal was approved by the TWDB and is in the preliminary stages of development and implementation.

Soil and Water Conservation Assistance

In order to provide soil and water conservation assistance, the TSSWCB currently employs field representatives around the State that meet with districts at their monthly meetings. These field representatives provide districts with advice and consultation on various state and federal laws applicable to all districts and assist them by keeping them informed of important issues. Field representatives furnish assistance in such areas as the Texas Open Meetings and Record Acts, audits and financial reporting, wage and hour laws, and in coordinating programs carried out in neighboring districts. Field representatives are the primary means of communication between local districts and the TSSWCB.

In 1969, the 61st Texas Legislative Session resulted in a program through which funds are appropriated to the TSSWCB for allocation to soil and water conservation districts on a matching basis. To receive money under this Conservation Assistance Program, a district must raise funds from sources other than the State or earnings from State funds. Also, since 1984, the Texas Legislature has appropriated funds annually to the TSSWCB for the purpose of assisting districts in their efforts to provide conservation implementation assistance to

agricultural producers. This funding may be used to pay technical employees for performing the duties of a district soil conservation technician. These soil conservation technicians work with owners and operators of agricultural or other lands on the installation and maintenance of conservation practices.

In 2006 the TSSWCB entered into a Contribution Agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to deliver conservation technical assistance and help implement conservation cost-share programs of mutual interest. Through this program the TSSWCB and NRCS jointly provide funding to local soil and water conservation districts to assist with the design, installation, and checkout of conservation practices across the state. The TSSWCB was successful in leveraging existing appropriations for conservation implementation assistance as the state's contribution to this agreement.

The TSSWCB also performs a public information and education function. The TSSWCB seeks to maintain an open and relevant relationship between districts, agricultural interest groups, and the general public by sponsoring and assisting with soil and water stewardship contests, conservation awards programs, maintaining a conservation video library, supporting teacher workshops, and providing conservation education models for school children. Because more and more of the issues that we address through our programs are beginning to focus on the rural and urban interface, we intend to focus more of our efforts on the general public so that we can better educate them on the critical nature of the work these districts perform. There is no other organized form of government closer to local landowners that can convey this

message more effectively than soil and water conservation districts.

TSSWCB Special Initiatives and Accomplishments

The TSSWCB also currently administers several initiatives that involve multiple agency programs coming together for special emphasis on specific resource concerns. These program initiatives may be regional efforts developed and implemented to address one specific resource concern within a single watershed, or they may be statewide efforts addressing multiple resource concerns relating to a specific agricultural industry.

Bacterial Water Quality Impairments and Livestock Production

The TSSWCB is the lead agency in Texas responsible for the prevention, abatement, and management of nonpoint source pollution from agricultural activities. As such, the recent notoriety related to water quality impairments from excessive bacteria attributed to livestock production has resulted in a marked increase in the number of education, assessment, demonstration, and implementation projects initiated by the TSSWCB. In an aggressive attempt to ensure the most accurate science is available to appropriately engage stakeholders during the total maximum daily load process, the TSSWCB and various partners has initiated, or soon will be initiating, the following projects funded through State appropriations and/or the Clean Water Act, Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Grant Program.

Leon River Watershed Protection Plan (Pending)

The Leon River has been listed on the Texas 303(d) List of Impaired Waters due to excessive numbers of bacteria. During stakeholder meetings conducted by the

TCEQ Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Team, many stakeholders have questioned the validity of the assumptions related to livestock contributions made during the computer modeling phase. The purpose of this project, which will be administered by the Brazos River Authority, is to use a locally-driven, stakeholder process to develop a Watershed Protection Plan for the Leon River Watershed above Lake Belton that will enhance data collection efforts to support and facilitate implementation activities. Through this process, local stakeholders will be better equipped to provide the TSSWCB and the TCEQ with recommendations on implementation strategies that can be incorporated into the TMDL Implementation Plan. This project will provide an overall assessment of the Leon River Watershed above Lake Belton.

Buck Creek Water Quality Sampling / Assessment Project (Phase I) (Active)

Buck Creek, a small stream located in the Texas panhandle, has been included on the Texas 303(d) List of impaired waters for excessive amounts of bacteria. In response to concerns over the source of this bacteria, which has been identified by the TCEQ as livestock, the TSSWCB, the Texas Water Resources Institute, and the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station have initiated this project to foster coordinated water quality monitoring and sampling for the total maximum daily load being developed for Buck Creek. Additionally, the project will increase informational activities for cattle raisers. Other partners in the project include the Childress, Salt Fork , and Donley SWCDs, as well as the Red River Authority (RRA) and the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station in El Paso.

Watershed Protection Plan Development for Buck Creek (Phase II) (Pending)

In addition to the educational and monitoring activities funded through Phase I of this project, Phase II will provide the means for the development of a watershed protection plan to restore the waterbody through a stakeholder driven process. Identification of the specific sources of the bacteria in Buck Creek through bacterial source tracking (BST) will also be carried out. Additionally, this project will facilitate the evaluation of potential management alternatives for restoring the waterbody.

Development of BST Library and Assessment of Bacterial Sources Impacting Lakes Waco and Belton (Complete)

As a major resource to the TSSWCB's current and future efforts to ensure livestock producers are not unfairly burdened with more than their share of activities during TMDL implementation, the agency joined forces with the Texas Farm Bureau and the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station (TAES) to develop a publicly available, comprehensively characterized genetic fingerprint and antibiotic resistance library of unique *E. coli* isolates for determining the animal or human nonpoint source contamination of surface water. *E. coli*, a bacteria commonly found in the digestive tracks of animals, is the indicator organism used to establish the water quality standard for bacteria. As a result of this project, the TAES in El Paso was provided the equipment necessary to carry out bacterial source tracking (BST) by applying the library to *E. coli* isolates from ambient water samples from Lake Waco and Lake Belton and their main tributaries, the Bosque and Leon Rivers.

Copano Bay and Mission and Aransas Rivers (Pending)

Copano Bay and the Mission and Aransas Rivers have been listed on the Texas 303(d) List of Impaired Waters due to excessive numbers of bacteria. During stakeholder meetings conducted by the TCEQ Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Team, many stakeholders have questioned the validity of the assumptions related to livestock contributions made during the computer modeling phase. The Nueces River Authority will provide routine and targeted water quality monitoring of main stem and tributary stations for field, conventional, flow and bacteria parameters. This augmentation of the current monitoring schedule is necessary to more accurately identify load reductions. This data will support the current TMDL modeling efforts.

Water Quality Monitoring to Support Plum Creek WPP Development (Pending)

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority will provide routine and targeted water quality monitoring of main stem and tributary stations for field, conventional, flow and bacteria parameters. This augmentation of the current monitoring schedule is necessary to more accurately identify load reductions. This data will support the development of a Watershed Protection Plan for the Plum Creek Watershed.

Lone Star Healthy Streams (Pending)

The goal of this project is to reduce the levels of bacterial contamination of Texas watersheds from grazing livestock (beef cattle). To accomplish this goal, the Texas Water Resources Institute will develop an educational curriculum that delivers current knowledge training in production and environmental management of grazing lands and their associated watersheds as part of the Long Star Healthy Streams program. Additionally, the project provides for

evaluating and demonstrating the effectiveness of value-added BMPs for reducing bacterial contamination of streams and water bodies from grazing lands.

Monitoring and Educational Programs Focused on Fecal Coliform Bacteria and Nutrient Runoff on Dairy Operations in the Leon Watershed (Pending)

The purpose of this project, which is jointly administered by Texas Cooperative Extension and the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, is to evaluate the presence of E. coli bacteria and nutrients on livestock operations and determine the risks of movement of E. coli and nutrients to surface waters. The project will also help to educate livestock producers about best management practices to decrease E. coli bacteria and nutrients in runoff from livestock operations.

The Impact of Proper Organic Fertilizer Management in Production of Agriculture (Active)

This project, administered by Texas Cooperative Extension, will focus on reaching several groups including 3rd party applicators of dairy and other manures and other producers considering using animal manures in their fertilizer programs. Both major land uses in the basin (cultivated agriculture and pasture/range) will be addressed in an effort to expand the number of potential application sites.

Plan for Tomorrow: Poultry Litter Application on New Sites (Active)

The overall watershed-wide objective of this project, administered by Texas Cooperative Extension, is to educate 3rd party applicators of poultry litter to the environmental benefits of using proper application management techniques beginning on day-one of application on new sites.

Peach Creek Water Quality Improvement Project (Active)

This project will provide agricultural producers in the Peach Creek watershed with an opportunity to participate in water quality educational activities, technical assistance, and financial assistance for the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs), in order to improve water quality. The Gonzales Soil and Water Conservation District and Texas Cooperative Extension are partnering to administer this project.

North Bosque River

Our North Bosque River Watershed Initiative includes watershed plan development, and cost-share assistance for best management practices through the Water Quality Management Plan Program and through a new planning program involving Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans, or CNMPs. Also in this initiative, we have the Dairy Manure Export Support Project, or DMES Project. This program, which utilizes both state and federal funding, provides incentive payments to commercial manure haulers to offset the cost of the haul-out requirements placed on dairy operators in the watershed by the North Bosque TMDL. These facilities then work to sell the compost to end-users such as the Texas Department of Transportation, who can then apply for a back-end incentive provided through the TCEQ. We also have other special projects to evaluate emerging technologies that may provide on-farm practices to reduce nutrient losses to the North Bosque stream system, to establish additional urban and agricultural markets for compost use, to increase communication between the various involved parties, and to improve the nutrient management planning tools available to technical service providers that work with the watershed's dairy industry.

Poultry

We also receive annual appropriations from the Texas Legislature to administer a Poultry Initiative. This initiative involves assisting Texas poultry producers with meeting the requirements of the 77th Legislative Session's Senate Bill 1339. This law requires all poultry producers in Texas to obtain a TSSWCB – certified Water Quality Management Plan in accordance with a schedule provided in the legislation. To date, we have certified over 1,300 water quality management plans on poultry operations. A recent modification to federal law regulating Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations pertaining to poultry has resulted in the TSSWCB working cooperatively with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. This modification now requires that dry-litter poultry operations be regulated under the federal Clean Water Act, and since the TSSWCB and the State have already invested significant resources in implementing many of the same management practices required under the new law, the existing work will serve to substitute for many of the federal requirements. We have also strengthened our Poultry Initiative by funding research and assessment efforts aimed at finding alternative uses for poultry litter that can improve nutrient management practices and improve the resulting water quality of receiving waters. In addition to the many soil conservation technicians the TSSWCB funds through local districts specifically for poultry WQMPs, we have recently initiated contracts with two additional districts where approximately 100 new poultry farms will be initiated in response to the major expansion of Sanderson Farms, Incorporated.

Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) on Fort Hood, Texas

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) and the Hamilton-Coryell Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) have proposed to cooperatively work with U.S. Army Garrison Fort Hood (Fort Hood) on an Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB). Eventual participation by TSSWCB and the Hamilton-Coryell SWCD is contingent on the terms of the proposal when finally approved by the Department of the Army (DA). The ACUB Proposal is currently in the evaluation and approval process with Installation Management Agency (IMA) and the DA. The purpose of this ACUB proposal is to minimize incompatible land use practices that could conflict with critical military training activities conducted on Fort Hood. Maintaining the current land use surrounding the installation boundary, primarily rural agricultural lands, will prevent potential conflicts from arising with future forces training conducted on Fort Hood. The main concerns arising from incompatible land use practices developing adjacent to the installation boundary are the restrictions that could be imposed upon the heavy military training activities conducted on Fort Hood. These restrictions could result from noise (from ground maneuver, aviation, and live fire training), night training, pyrotechnics use, and air quality degradation (from the use of training smoke, pyrotechnics, and maneuver generated dust). An ACUB program at Fort Hood will minimize the necessity to establish internal buffers needed to conduct required training and ensure residential and commercial development does not encapsulate Fort Hood training land boundaries. The TSSWCB has proposed to partner with Fort Hood to enroll willing private landowners into term agreements that maintain compatible open space and conserve natural

resources. Agreement terms would be a minimum of 10 years, with longer terms preferred. These agreements are with the individual landowner and include no real property interest. The provisions in these term agreements are as follows: Annual administrative cost of \$100,000 to TSSWCB; Landowner buyout clause that would allow the landowner to cancel their term agreement and buyout any remaining years on the contract; Landowner death clause that allows termination of the agreement upon landowner death. Once the ACUB Proposal has been formally approved, the next steps will involve confirming the TSSWCB's legal justification for participating in a project as described in the approved proposal, development of a cooperative working agreement between DA and TSSWCB, and the development of an agreement that would serve as the "contract" between the TSSWCB and participating landowners.

e-Life! Environmental Life Through the Power of a Television *Envirocast*

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) is responsible for administering one half of the Federal Clean Water Act (CWA), §319(h) Nonpoint Source Pollution Grant that Texas receives each year (The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality administers the other half of the grant, and jointly manages the State's overall Nonpoint Source Management Program with the TSSWCB). The Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provides this grant to states to abate, prevent, and manage nonpoint source pollution through educational, demonstration, implementation, and water quality assessment projects. Through the CWA§319(h), the TSSWCB has chosen to award the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) a \$390,000

Federal grant for a project entitled *Envirocast®: Increasing Nonpoint Source Pollution Prevention Through Watershed Awareness in the Upper Trinity River Watershed, or e-Life*, as it is being publicized. The Trinity River watershed encompasses the largest population center in Texas, and according to NCTCOG's population estimates the 16-county planning region surpassed the 6.2 million mark as of January 2006. The Dallas-Fort Worth region is the 7th largest TV Designated Market Area (DMA) in the nation according to the Nielsen Ratings. The project potential to provide NPS pollution prevention information to over 2.3 million TV viewing households in 31 counties. The NCTCOG will be working with StormCenter Communications, Inc., a Dallas-Fort Worth TV station (KTVT CBS-11), and an extensive network of local partners to conduct the e-Life project. The principal goal of this project is to improve water quality in the Upper Trinity River watershed by initiating a local public education process to dramatically increase awareness about local environmental conditions and the individual, voluntary measures that the public can take to prevent nonpoint source (NPS) pollution. This effort is designed to initiate systemic change in the attitude and behavior of citizens through a unique blend of media, utilizing environmental science and meteorological expertise. e-Life will introduce on-the-air environmental news and information at the local level specifically designed to raise citizen's understanding, appreciation, and treatment of environmental issues at the local watershed level. The project is expected to make environmental science accessible to a significantly greater audience than any previous education program in the North Central Texas region and the Upper Trinity River watershed. To complement information provided on-the-air, a

specialized e-Life web site about the Upper Trinity River watershed contains in-depth educational resources and tools for the public. The e-Life Project website, <http://ktvt.iewatershed.com> is prominently featured on KTVT CBS-11's home page. The e-Life website includes maps, satellite imagery, real-time data, animated fly-overs of the watershed and more – all designed to engage visitors to experience their watershed and learn about their its environmental profile. Topics covered in the web site include water quality, floods, droughts, wildfires, agriculture, forestry, soil erosion, urbanization, and other related watershed topics.

What is the Public's Perception of the TSSWCB?

Until recently, the TSSWCB was not a high-profile agency. Increasing public concerns over regional water quality and an intense statewide focus on agricultural water conservation have placed the agency in the forefront. For five decades, soil and water conservation districts worked diligently at the local level to conserve natural resources and protect the environment. The TSSWCB mainly served in a coordination and oversight role for soil and water conservation districts. The 1990s saw the agency receive several sources of funding that enabled the TSSWCB to more actively and effectively deliver conservation assistance. For example, the agency began receiving half of the State's annual Clean Water Act, Section 319(h) grant in 1994, and was appropriated funding to conduct brush control activities in 1999. In 1994 cost-share funding through the Water Quality Management Plan Program became available. The TSSWCB's responsibilities increased during this time as well. With the mandate to establish the Water Quality Management Plan Program and the agency's

designation as the lead agency for the abatement of agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source pollution, came the need to take on additional water quality responsibilities such as Total Maximum Daily Loads and the Nonpoint Source Coastal Management Program.

The public's overall perception of the agency is generally split between rural Texans and Urban Texans. Rural Texans generally have a positive and well-informed perception. This is to be expected, because they are the obvious intended target of our services and programs and are the population from which the 1,085 elected soil and water conservation district directors originate. Urban Texans generally do not have a good understanding of the agency or the need for the services the agency provides, although they are without doubt the largest beneficiaries of the results. The TSSWCB recognizes the need to carry out a more vigorous awareness campaign in the increasingly urbanized areas of the State in order to prevent future natural resource concerns from being overlooked until serious problems arise.

Organizational Aspects

The State Board

When originally created in 1939, the TSSWCB was set up to be governed by five board members elected by delegates from each of five regions of the State's 217 local soil and water conservation districts. The Texas Legislature enacted Senate Bill 1828 during the 78th regular session, which created two additional positions on the State Board. Elections for the five original positions continue to occur annually at regional conventions of the local soil and water conservation districts, with members serving two-year staggered terms.

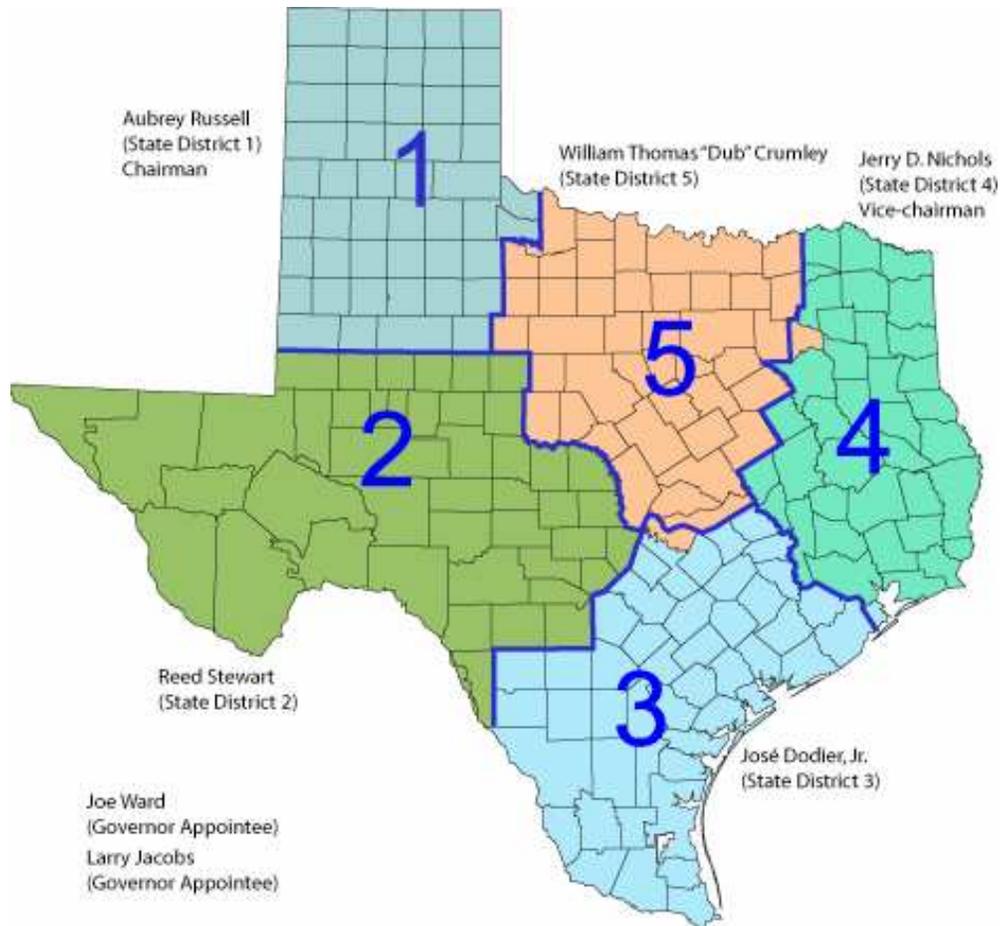


Figure 1. State Board Regions

Elected State Board members must be 18 years of age or older; hold title to farmland or rangeland; and be actively engaged in farming or ranching. The Governor appointees must be actively engaged in the business of farming, animal husbandry, or other business related to agriculture and wholly or partly own or lease land used in connection with that business; and may not be a member of the board of directors of a conservation district.

The State Board elects its own Chair and generally meets every other month, unless specific programs or issues require more immediate action. The following list shows the current Board members and shows which TSSWCB Area they represent.

- Area I – Aubrey Russell
- Area II – Reed Stewart
- Area III– José Dodier, Jr.
- Area IV – Jerry D. Nichols
- Area V – W.T. ‘Dub’ Crumley
- Appointed – Joe L. Ward
- Appointed – Larry D. Jacobs

The TSSWCB Staff

Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board's workforce plan describes each major program of the agency and its associated workforce planning. The workforce plan can be found in Appendix E of this document. Administrative Services is composed of an Executive Director, an Administrative Coordinator, along with an Administrative Assistant. Administrative Services directs the administrative affairs of the TSSWCB including the execution of rules, guidelines, decisions, and directives of the TSSWCB to ensure the efficient and effective operation of the agency.

Fiscal Affairs responsibilities include the development and oversight of TSSWCB's overall budget, revenue and expenditures, strategic planning, performance measures, cost recovery efforts, and the proper expenditure of grants, both federal and state. Responsibilities also include managing TSSWCB's general ledger and ensuring the proper processing of cash, communicating and implementing state and federal cash management practices, monitoring and processing expenditures in accordance with state and federal statutes and regulations, and information technology.

Information Technology (IT) installs and maintains network services including: local area networks; wide area network; internet services; local application support; infrastructure security; implements and maintains web-based technology; and trains staff on the use of applications and services. IT also configures, secures and maintains both wired and wireless local area network environments and troubleshoots computing-hardware and software problems for local and remote staff in all agency departments. The program audits and tracks the use of hardware and software deployments; serves as the agency Information Resource

Manager and Security Officer, working with the Department of Information Resources to ensure agency compliance with state IT law; develops, maintains, and enforces policies regarding security, the acceptable use of IT infrastructure, and disaster recovery and works with agency purchaser on the procurement of IT software and hardware.

All **purchasing** efforts for the agency are accomplished in accordance with state and federal requirements, the minority procurement program and vendor recruitment requirements.

The Nonpoint Source Team carries out the agency's mandate for addressing agricultural and silvicultural (forestry) nonpoint source pollution (NPS) abatement. The program is funded by the State and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to demonstrate and implement activities that control and abate NPS pollution. Work is carried out with other state and federal agencies to address NPS issues as they relate to Water Quality Standards and Criteria, Total Maximum Daily Loads, and Coastal Zone Protection. Texas receives approximately \$10 million annually from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through the federal Clean Water Act, Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Program.

Inter-Agency Communications facilitates interaction between the TSSWCB and other agencies, entities, and individuals on matters pertaining to agency programs and services. Inter-Agency Communications serves as an initial point of contact and ensures appropriate TSSWCB personnel are engaged in matters involving inter-agency cooperation. Inter-Agency Communications ensures various agency programs are coordinated in such a way that they support one another and collectively work toward the agency's mission, goals, objectives, and

are in accordance with state and federal statute and agency rules.

Special Projects/Public Information and Education responsibilities include: planning and coordinating the Annual State Meeting for Soil and Water conservation District Directors; coordinating agency rules; coordinating various agency reports; coordinating request for public information; coordinating the complaint process; and maintaining an open and relevant relationship between districts, agricultural interest groups, and the general public. Sponsored activities include: Soil and Water stewardship contests; Texas Conservation Awards Programs; Wildlife Conservation workshops; maintaining a conservation video library; supporting teacher workshops; providing conservation education demonstration models for schools; and coordinating district director training.

Human Resources responsibilities include: overseeing all personnel matters including benefits administration, state classification plan, payroll, leave accounting, employment, managerial, developmental and safety training. Human Resources also ensures that TSSWCB personnel practices are in compliance with state and federal regulations. Human Resources serves as a strategic partner with Executive

Management and also consults and advises managerial staff regarding human resource matters.

Brush Control is a voluntary program in which landowners may contract with the state for cost-share assistance to remove water-depleting brush and enhance water availability. Working through local soil and water conservation districts, landowners develop resource management system plans addressing brush control, soil erosion, water quality, wildlife habitat and other natural resource issues.

Soil and Water Conservation District Program Support provides assistance to SWCDs and their employees through programs it administers and through TSSWCB field representatives that meet regularly with the SWCDs to provide guidance, training and consultation. The field staff also coordinates the activities of districts and provides a direct link between the TSSWCB and districts.

The **Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) Program** assists agricultural and silvicultural producers in meeting the state's water quality goals and standards through a voluntary, incentive-based program. There are special requirements regarding Poultry WQMPs.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts

The TSSWCB performs many of its activities in coordination with the state’s 217 local soil and water conservation districts. These local districts are political subdivisions of the state, established through local option elections of agricultural landowners. Districts generally reflect county boundaries, but may also follow river basin or watershed boundaries, depending on the desires of the local landowners.

The following soil and water conservation district map shows the current 217 local districts that cover almost the entire state. The portion of the state not in a soil and water conservation district is in Kenedy County and contains the privately owned King Ranch. The map also shows the grouping of the districts into the five State Board Districts that respectively elect a State Board member and shows the field staff that is assigned to work with each district within a specific area.

Landowners within these local districts elect the five district directors that comprise the district’s governing body or board of directors. This board of directors administers the programs and activities of the district. Representatives of the districts within each region then elect the members of the State Board through a series of convention style-elections.

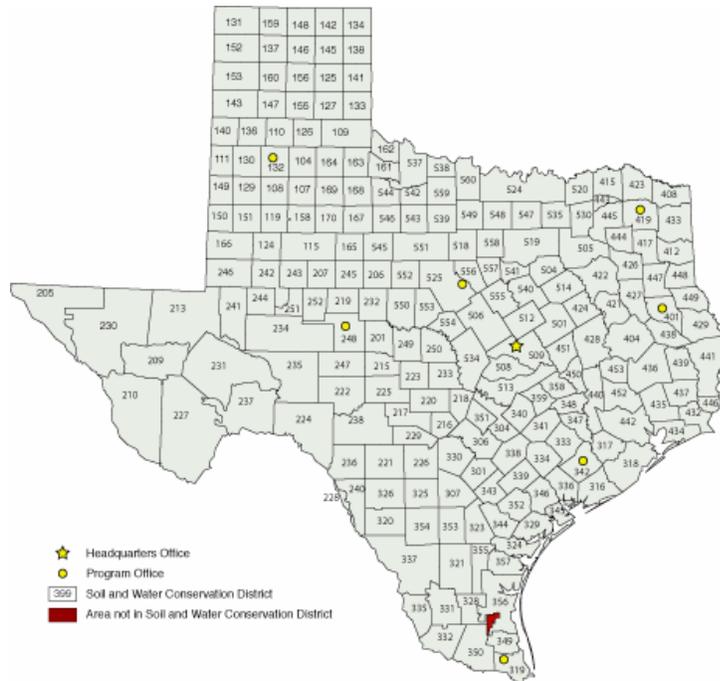


Figure 2. Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Districts do not have taxing authority and rely on locally generated funds from various activities and programs, federal assistance, county assistance, and state assistance from the TSSWCB. The USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) provides most of the federal assistance available to districts and through cooperative agreements provide technical assistance to farmers and ranchers requesting assistance from the district.

Fiscal Aspects

The 2004-05 and 2006-07 biennial appropriations for the TSSWCB total \$27 Million and \$26 Million respectively. The methods of finance for these appropriations include General Revenue, Interagency Agreements, and Federal Funds (Figure 3). Items of appropriation include District Assistance programs, Nonpoint Source Pollution Abatement Programs, Water Supply Enhancement programs, and Indirect Administration (Figure 4).

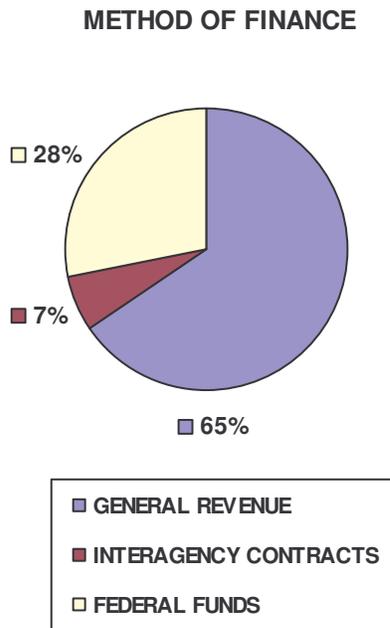


Figure 3. Method of Finance

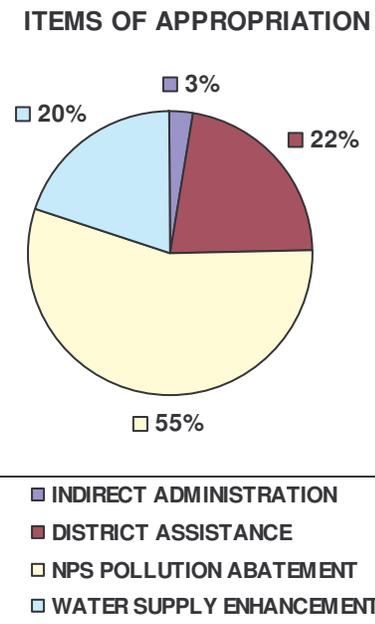


Figure 4. Items of Appropriation

The 2006-07 GAA, 79th Legislature has several significant changes in the agency's bill. Rider 4 requires that all technical assistance funds appropriated to Soil and Water Conservation Districts be distributed on a reimbursement basis during the fiscal year when the expenditures are incurred. Rider 7 includes an additional \$152,000 in General Revenue to be used in the development and implementation of a manure compost project in the Bosque River and Leon River Watersheds. Rider 8 provides the legislative intent that conservation assistance grants awarded on a matching basis to soil and water conservation districts will remain permanent property of the soil and water conservation districts. The bill also includes capital budget authority in the amount of \$48,200. This authority is necessary for the acquisition of information resource technologies to replace existing technologies based on their critical nature and normal life cycle. Due to past appropriation reductions, the agency full-time employee (FTE) cap is reduced from 66 to 62 FTEs. In addition to these changes, the bill also increased the compensation cap for board member per diem expenses to 12,600 per year. This increase was necessary to accommodate the board's expansion from five to seven members.

**Capital and/or Leased Needs
of the TSSWCB include:**

Property

Temple Headquarters
311 North 5th Street
Temple, Texas 76501
\$ 5,309.10 monthly

Wharton Reg. Office
1120 Hodges Lane
Wharton, Texas 77488
\$ 1,398.40 monthly

Harlingen Reg. Office
1826 West Jefferson
Harlingen, Texas 78550
\$ 1,063.37 monthly

Hale Center Reg. Office
1201 Avenue E
Hale Center, Texas 79041
Extension granted
\$ 916.66 monthly

Mt. Pleasant Reg. Office
1809 W. Ferguson, Ste. B
Mt. Pleasant, Texas 75455
\$ 500.00 monthly

Dublin Reg. Office
611 East Blackjack
Dublin, Texas 76446
\$ 550.00 monthly

Brush Control Project Office
622 South Oaks, Suite H-2

San Angelo, Texas 76903
\$ 1,022.35 + electricity monthly

Nacogdoches Poultry Program Office
2200 NW Stallings
Nacogdoches, Texas 75964
\$580.00 monthly

Equipment

Konica Copier
Temple Headquarters
311 North 5th Street
Temple, Texas 76501
\$1,110.42 + excess copies chg \$.0103

Service Population Demographics

During this time period, the State has seen changes in land ownership. For many years, the number of people involved in agricultural production has been on the decline, and the average size of agricultural enterprises has grown. The percentage of the population involved in the production of food and fiber has steadily decreased. This has, to a large degree, been the result of economic forces making it more and more difficult to acquire and maintain economically viable agricultural operations. These same economic forces have required producers to scrutinize investments made in resource protection and conservation activities more closely.

Changes in land ownership impact conservation programs in three ways. First, each individual landowner may have different management objectives and techniques. As ownership changes, conservation plans and practices often change to adapt to changes in management. Second, changes in ownership often result in increased absentee ownership, where the landowner does not live on or have a direct hand in operation of the land unit. In such cases, those administering conservation programs must not only deal with landowners who may live long distances away, but must become involved in and sensitive to landowner/tenant relationships. The third impact that changes in land ownership can have on conservation programs is to decrease the number of people qualified to serve as district directors. As absentee landownership increases, the number of producers who do not own land increases. Several areas in the state now have significant numbers of agricultural producers who do not own land.

Present trends indicate that society's expectations will continue to increase in the areas of natural resource conservation and agricultural pollution abatement. At a time when the influence of Texas' rural interests in the political process is decreasing, the public's awareness of environmental issues, particularly issues involving agricultural activities, is intensifying.

While Texas is a large state with a vast wealth of natural resources, the capability of its land resources is limited. As the state's population continues to grow, pressure on these resources for production of food and fiber will continue to increase. This expanding pressure will necessitate more active resource conservation and pollution prevention efforts.

Successful voluntary resource conservation programs will become more and more complex in the future. Securing voluntary cooperation from private property owners will require increased efforts. Media influence on issues impacting TSSWCB programs and increased government involvement in resource management coupled with inherent fear of regulation by impacted citizenry complicates conservation programs. Voluntary programs will continue to be the most efficient and effective means of conserving and protecting the state's natural resources.

Economic Variables

The promotion of soil and water resource conservation is significantly impacted by technological developments. As advanced farm machinery design becomes the norm in the industry, some changes in conservation practices or programs may be necessary to maintain conservation's acceptable image with agricultural producers. This points out the importance of maintaining close coordination with research entities to assure

that the level and direction of research is appropriate from both the economic and the resource conservation view.

Looking at economic factors which affect Texas soil and water conservation programs, one must first begin with the human resources who in effect put conservation programs on the ground and who are most affected by state and national economic trends. The agricultural producers, i.e., the farmers, ranchers, and timber producers are traditionally conservationists, but that does not necessarily mean they are carrying out the soil and water conservation practices they espouse. To explain, one must understand that agricultural producers, like all of society, face a constant level of inflation in the cost of goods they purchase, but without the advantage of an offsetting rise in the price of goods they sell.

To put the argument into perspective, agriculture provides the foundation for an impressive array of Texas businesses, all of which make their own contributions to the state's economy. Manufacturers, food processors, the packaging industry, transportation, wholesalers and retailers all rely on the raw materials produced on Texas farms and ranches. All graduated costs from the time a raw product leaves the land until a specific product reaches the consumer is paid for by the consumer. This market system creates and generates jobs and dollars.

In contrast, agriculture in the State as well as the Nation, is composed of individual entrepreneurs who pay market prices for supplies, machinery and services. In addition, they gamble on the weather and government policy and take what is offered on the open market for their products. This system does not permit adding the cost of implementing soil and water conservation to

the prices of food, fiber and fuel; however, the products of the land are used by all consumers. It is therefore only reasonable that the public bear a part of the investment to protect the soil and water resource base.

In our continuing efforts to adequately feed and clothe the world, dependency on soil resources will continue to cause a need for soil and water conservation. An effective program to meet that need requires a financial commitment in relative proportion to the production levels being attempted. In reality, the priorities of all government functions are limited by economic factors on the international, national and state levels.

International policies aim to protect self-interest and artificially limit market opportunities thereby limiting agricultural income and government revenues that could proportionally be allocated for soil and water conservation programs. National policies aimed at stabilizing and providing an affordable market create the same limitations. However, stable and affordable agricultural markets help consumers to have spendable income for other purchases that contribute to the overall economy and the generation of government revenues.

Texas is fortunate in many ways. The geography of the state provides a great diversity in its climate and land resource base. The agricultural land resource base provides the opportunity for many agricultural products to be generated. This diversity of products opens the door to many markets and reduces dependence on the variables of a few select markets. By the same token, the various climates of the state affords the opportunity to produce a variety of products. The size of Texas helps to further reduce the impact of adverse climatic events or conditions which tend to be local or regional in their effect. This contributes to

the chances that most areas of Texas will be able to market an agricultural product. It also provides an opportunity to give special attention to those areas significantly impacted by a climatic event or condition so that those affected land resource areas may be adequately treated for continued agricultural production.

Impact of Federal Statutes/Regulations

Federal statutes and regulations have major impacts on agriculture in general and very specific and important impacts on soil and water resource conservation programs. These statutes and regulations not only determine many of the resources available for use in conservation programs, but in many cases place requirements on the agricultural industry to which conservation programs must be able to adapt.

Historically, most of the resources available for use by conservation programs have come from the federal government. Technical assistance to agricultural producers has been provided through districts primarily by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The agency's delivery of technical assistance has been dramatically reduced over the last 30 years due to reduction in budget and staffing levels, resulting in the need for developing alternative ways to provide technical assistance.

The 1985 Federal Farm Bill changed relationships between conservation programs and other farm commodity programs. Since then, under certain conditions, conservation requirements have been placed on producers as a prerequisite for eligibility in farm commodity programs. Although subsequent Farm Bills have seen significant increases in program funding, these conservation requirements remain.

Federal statutes other than the Farm Bill also impact soil and water conservation programs in Texas. In the forefront of these is the Clean Water Act, which requires the development and implementation of nonpoint source pollution management programs, of which agriculture and silviculture are the responsibility of the TSSWCB. So far, requirements under the Clean Water Act have been satisfied with voluntary programs. However, future revisions of the Act are expected to include more stringent requirements. Requirements in the Clean Water Act for development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) for water bodies not meeting state water quality standards have been highlighted by lawsuits in other states. Texas has an aggressive TMDL development and implementation program in which the TSSWCB is responsible for agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source components. The reauthorization of the Coastal Zone Management Act placed into law nonpoint source management requirements based on enforceable mechanisms at the state level. Regardless of what type of nonpoint source management programs are instituted, it is clear that the TSSWCB's workload in this area will multiply in the future.

Other federal statutes and regulations which impact conservation programs are those dealing with wetlands and endangered species. Not only do they generate a need for assistance to agricultural landowners, but also in many cases, conservation program planning must take them into account to avoid conflicts.

While federal statutes and regulations impact conservation programs in many ways, they are also a source of funding. Currently, the TSSWCB receives federal funds through the Clean Water Act. The

greatest impediment to securing federal funds is the requirement in most programs that they be matched by varying percentages of non-federal funds. Limited state appropriations have and will continue to limit efforts to obtain federal funding.

Increased public awareness of environmental issues and pressure for government involvement in environmental protection will undoubtedly result in increased state and federal legislation. Programs implementing environmental laws and those dealing with natural resource management will be expected to do more to assure that the environment is protected. The conservation and protection of soil, water and related resources will be central to these efforts. Agricultural activities, which have been more or less exempted from environmental laws and regulations, are sure to be a major focus of upcoming legislation. It is anticipated that the TSSWCB, because of its institutional make-up, will be experiencing continuously increasing responsibilities and workload.

Other Legal Issues

In response to changes made by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to the federal regulations for concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs), the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) adopted similar state rules for CAFOs in Texas. Because the State of Texas has been delegated the responsibility for administering the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting program under the Clean Water Act (CWA), TCEQ was required to adopt rules consistent with the federal regulations.

Two of the changes made by EPA included (1) requiring poultry operations that do not use a liquid waste handling system to obtain permit coverage under NPDES by April 13

2006, and (2) requiring that all CAFOs develop and implement a nutrient management plan (NMP) in accordance with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) guidelines by December 31, 2006. Prior to this rule change, neither the State of Texas nor the EPA required poultry operations that do not use a liquid waste handling system, or dry litter poultry operations, to obtain permit coverage.

On February 28, 2005, in *Waterkeeper Alliance, et al. v. EPA*, the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in New York, NY, ruled that the final rule for CAFOs signed by the Administrator of the EPA on December 15, 2002, and published in the Federal Register on February 12, 2003, contained some aspects that were “arbitrary and capricious” under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) and were in violation of the CWA. The Second Circuit ruled that although the CWA gives EPA authority to regulate the discharge of pollutants through the development of effluent limitations and the issuance of NPDES permits, the definition of “discharge of any pollutant” does not include “potential” discharges. The Second Circuit held that EPA couldn’t require CAFOs to apply for a NPDES permit unless they are actually discharging pollutants. In their decision, the Second Circuit states, “unless there is a discharge of any pollutant there is no violation of the Act, and point sources are, accordingly, neither statutorily obligated to comply with EPA regulations for point source discharges, nor are they statutorily obligated to seek or obtain an NPDES permit.”

As a result of the Second Circuit’s action, the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) submitted a letter on September 26, 2005, to the TCEQ

requesting that action be taken to implement the Second Circuit's decision.

In early December 2005, the EPA finally began to address the Second Circuit's decision by proposing an extension to the compliance deadlines for dry litter poultry to obtain permit coverage and for all CAFOs to develop NMPs. This proposal is now final and both deadlines have been moved to a date in July 2007. In response to this federal action, the TCEQ has adopted a change to the Texas CAFO rules to move the deadline to July 2007 as well.

Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Plan

Pursuant to Government Code, Section 2161.123, each agency must prepare, and include as part of its Strategic Plan, a written plan for its use of historically underutilized businesses (HUBs) in purchasing and public works contracts.

HUB Mission

To encourage and effectively promote the utilization of Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUB's) by our agency, and to report this to the Texas Building and Procurement Commission.

HUB Goal. The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board participates in the Texas HUB Program for minority and women-owned businesses. Our goal is to provide maximum opportunity to HUB's to participate in our agency's procurement in the awarding of contracts and subcontracts.

HUB Objectives

- Report expenditures and payment information regarding HUB utilization during each fiscal year.
- To include historically underutilized businesses in at least 25 percent of the total value of contracts and subcontracts awarded annually by the agency in purchasing and public works contracting by fiscal year 2007.
- Agency HUB Coordinator attend HUB forums

HUB Strategy

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board will encourage the use of HUB's for any and all purchasing needs of our agency. We will also encourage any and all contractors to use historically underutilized businesses as partners and subcontractors.

HUB External/Internal Assessment

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board has in good faith used HUB's in the past, and will continue to use HUB's when purchasing commodities or services, or when entering into contracts. The agency's budget is rather small, and there is a limited number of HUB's in our area. Our agency has contacted HUB's in nearby areas, but have met with little success. We plan to persist in this effort, and will continue to monitor the HUB listing published and maintained by the Texas Building and Procurement Commission, and will keep seeking to solicit participation from HUB's in and around our local and statewide area.

HUB Planning Elements

Goal

We participate in the Texas HUB Program for minority and women-owned businesses. Our goal is to provide maximum opportunity to HUB's to participate in our agency's procurement in the awarding of contracts and subcontracts.

A.1. Objective

To include historically underutilized businesses in at least 25 percent of the total value of contracts and subcontracts awarded annually by the agency in purchasing and public works contracting by fiscal year 2007.

Outcome Measure

Percentage of Total Dollar Value of Purchasing and Public Works Contracts and Subcontracts Awarded to HUB's.

A.1.1 Strategy

Develop and implement a plan for increasing the use of historically underutilized businesses through purchasing and public works contracts and subcontracts.

Output Measures

1. Number of HUB Contractors and Subcontractors Contacted for Bid Proposals
2. Number of HUB Contracts and Subcontracts Awarded
3. Dollar Value of HUB Contracts and Subcontracts Awarded

Self Evaluation and Opportunities for Improvement

Because the TSSWCB is a bridge between locally elected officials and State Government, we recognize how vital effective communication is when administering statewide programs and services. The TSSWCB's goal is to consistently look for opportunities to improve existing communication between the agency, the Legislature, soil and water conservation districts, other state and federal agencies, as well as the general public. The TSSWCB especially intends to concentrate our future communication efforts on the urban sector of Texas in order to increase their understanding of the important work soil and water conservation districts perform

across the state. The more urbanized areas of Texas are the largest beneficiaries of the soil conservation and water quality improvement efforts that take place on rural lands.

The TSSWCB also recognizes the importance of utilizing federal funding to augment state funding when possible. In the past we have relied on the Clean Water Act, Section 319(h) grant the agency receives from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a sole source of external funding. However, recently the TSSWCB has begun competing for additional EPA grants such as the funding available under the Clean Water Act, Section 104(b)(3). We have also begun contract talks with the United State Department of Agriculture-Natural

Resources Conservation Service regarding an arrangement whereby the TSSWCB would receive compensation for serving as a Technical Service Provider by assisting with the implementation of Farm Bill programs.

Because water availability has become the major future resource concern for Texas, the TSSWCB has taken a proactive and aggressive role in this area. The TSSWCB is a member of the Water Conservation Taskforce created by Senate Bill 1094 during the 78th Regular Legislative Session. We are also participating on the Agriculture Subgroup which is responsible for identifying and developing best management practices for the overall taskforce to recommend to the Legislature. The TSSWCB is also working on a new service to Texas landowners that will provide them with the tools they need to conserve water resources by increasing irrigation efficiencies. We have been working with the Texas NRCS on a Water Conservation Plan program specifically focusing on water quantity. We plan to pattern this program after the Water Quality Management Plan

Program so that we can take advantage of that program's delivery system. We believe a program like this could fit perfectly into any water conservation demonstration initiative in the state.

Because of the ever increasing need to report on the environmental impacts of the conservation work we facilitate, the TSSWCB recognizes the need to develop a comprehensive database that can not only track the amount of funding used to implement management practices, but also a measure of the improvement in water quality resulting from those management practices.

The TSSWCB sees these challenges as opportunities to better improve the service the agency provides to all Texans. Through effective communication and cooperation with landowners, soil and water conservation districts, state and federal agencies, the Texas Legislature, and the general public, the TSSWCB looks forward to addressing the State's most pressing natural resource concerns.



GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

Goal A—SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE

To protect and enhance Texas natural resources (water, land and wildlife) by providing education, outreach, and information to agricultural and silvicultural operations, district directors, and the general public on water quality improvement measures, water yield enhancement, and soil and water conservation and ensuring that a quality conservation program is available and being applied in all soil and water conservation districts in Texas.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Support Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Provide a level of financial assistance, technical guidance, and administrative support to all districts allowing them to identify 100% of their soil and water resource needs; develop and manage conservation plans and programs to meet district needs.

Outcome Measures:

01-01.01 Percent of District Financial Needs Met by Soil and Water Conservation Board Grants

01-01-01 – Program Management, Financial and Conservation Implementation Assistance

Provide program expertise, technical guidance and conservation implementation assistance, and financial assistance on a statewide basis in managing and directing conservation programs

Output Measures:

01-01-01.01 Number of Grant Related Claims Processed

Efficiency Measures:

01-01-01.01 Average Number of Days to Process Grant Related Claims

Explanatory Measures:

01-01-01.01 Percent of Districts Receiving Technical Assistance Funds

01-01-02 –Rural and Urban Conservation Outreach

Design and implement outreach programs which effectively communicate and promote proper stewardship of the state’s natural resources

Output Measures:

01-01-02.01 Number of Contacts with Districts to Provide Conservation Education Assistance

01-01-02.02 Number of District Meetings Attended

GOAL B – NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION ABATEMENT

To effectively administer a program for the abatement of nonpoint source pollution caused by agricultural and silvicultural uses of the state's soil and water resources

OBJECTIVE 1 – Reduce Nonpoint Source Pollution

Reduce the potential loadings from agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint sources by designing and implementing pollution prevention programs in each area with identified problems and concerns within four years of identification

Outcome Measures:

02-01.01 Percent of Projects Addressing 303(d) List Impaired Water Bodies

02-01.02 Percent of Identified Problem Areas with Certified Plans

02-01-01 – Statewide Management Plan Implement and update as necessary a statewide management plan for the control of agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source water pollution

Output Measures:

02-01-01.01 Number of Proposals for Federal Grant Funding Evaluated

02-01-02 – Pollution Abatement Plans

Develop and implement pollution abatement plans for agricultural/silvicultural operations in identified problem areas

Output Measures:

02-01-02.01 Number of Pollution Abatement Plans Certified

02-01-02.02 Number of Water Quality Treatment Grants Made

Efficiency Measures:

02-01-02.01 Average Number of Days to Certify Pollution Abatement Plans

Explanatory Measures:

02-01-02.01 Number of NPS Complaints Investigated

GOAL C – WATER SUPPLY ENHANCEMENT

To protect and enhance water supplies in Texas by ensuring that a quality conservation program is available and that funds are being used effectively to increase water conservation and enhance water yields in targeted areas

OBJECTIVE 1 – Conserve and enhance water supplies for the state of Texas; manage and direct water conservation and water yield programs in targeted areas

Outcome Measures:

03-01.01 Percent Eligible Acres in Brush Control Areas Treated and Cleared

03-01-01 – Water Conservation and Enhancement

Provide program expertise, technical guidance and conservation implementation assistance, and financial assistance for brush control and other means to conserve water and enhance water yields in targeted areas

Output Measures:

03-01-01.01 Number of Acres of Brush Treated

03-01-01.02 Number of Acres of Brush under a Resource Management Plan

Efficiency Measures:

03-01-01.01 Average Cost per Acre of Mechanical Brush Clearing

03-01-01.02 Average Cost per Acre of Chemical Brush Clearing

***GOAL D – INDIRECT
ADMINISTRATION***

**OBJECTIVE 1 – Indirect
Administration**

04-01-01 – Indirect Administration

APPENDIX A

DESCRIPTION OF AGENCY PLANNING PROCESS

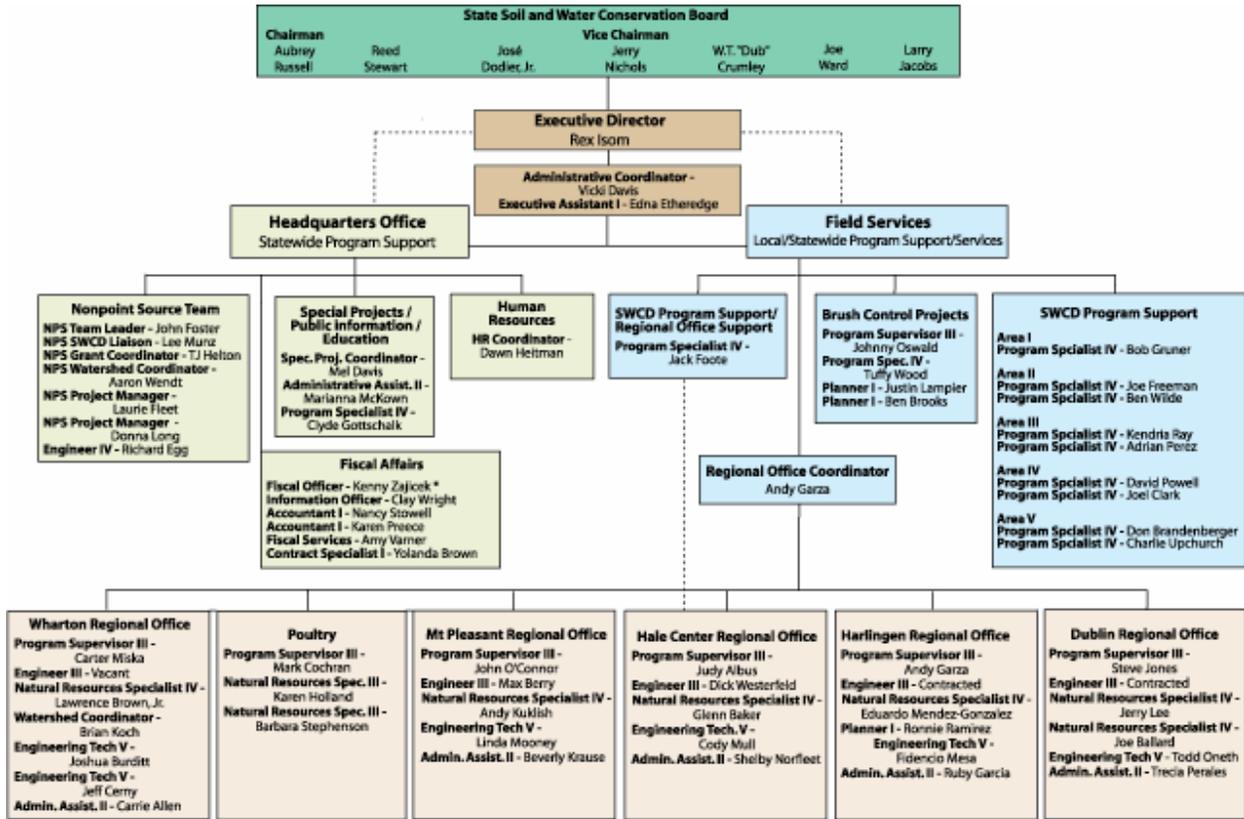
The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) began the process of developing the agency strategic plan by soliciting input from all agency staff during the spring of 2006. On April 24, 2006, a planning session was conducted between all interested employees. All suggestions and comments were documented and referred to appropriate staff for consideration within their specific agency functions and responsibilities.

During the regularly scheduled State Board meeting conducted on May 18, 2006, a progress report on the development of the agency strategic plan was presented. Agency staff identified the remaining activities and information that was in the process of being included in the plan, and subsequently submitted the final draft of the plan to the State Board for a final comment period.

In July 2006, the final material was provided to agency staff that began assembling the final document in accordance with the strategic planning guidance. The proposed strategic plan was completed on July 7, 2006, and was then distributed to the appropriate agencies and individuals.

APPENDIX B

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



APPENDIX C

FIVE -YEAR PROJECTIONS FOR OUTCOMES

	TITLE	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
1	Percent of District Financial Needs Met by Soil and Water Conservation Board Grants	33.00%	33.00%	33.00%	33.00%	33.00%
2	Percent of Eligible Acres in Brush Control Areas Treated and Cleared	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
3	Percent of Problem Areas with Certified Plans	13.00%	13.00%	13.00%	13.00%	13.00%
4	Percent of Projects Addressing 303(d) List Impaired Water Bodies	50.00%	50.00%	50.00%	50.00%	50.00%

APPENDIX D

PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND DEFINITIONS—FISCAL YEAR 2004

OBJECTIVE OUTCOME 01-01.01

Percent of District Financial Needs Met by Soil and Water Conservation Board Grants

Short Definition: The total amount of grant payments and other direct payments to districts to meet financial needs as requested by districts in their biennial budget request divided by the total projected financial needs of districts as requested in their district biennial budget request with the quotient being expressed as a percent.

Purpose/Importance: This measure addresses the number of direct payments to the districts in the form of grant funds as allocated with state revenues.

Source/Collection of Data: The data is collected via program guidelines for report and payment procedures and biennial budget requests submitted by districts. The field staff is kept apprised of program reporting adherence by districts and grant payments processed by districts.

Method of Calculation: Dollar amount of grant payments and other direct payments to districts to meet financial needs as requested by districts in their biennial budget request are divided by total projected financial needs of districts as requested in their district biennial budget request. Expressed as a percentage.

Data Limitation: Measure is considered to offer reliable information on financial program support to districts but is restricted by total allocated funds available for allocation to districts.

Calculation Type: Non-Cumulative.

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target.

OBJECTIVE OUTCOME 03-01.01

Percent eligible acres in brush control areas treated and cleared

Short Definition: The total amount of eligible acreage as determined by the Feasibility Studies for the watersheds. Ex: Of the 2.3 million acres in the watershed 1.35 million acres are eligible for brush control treatment and clearing. Measure evaluates the amount of eligible acres treated and cleared as compared to the eligible acres.

Purpose/Importance: This measure addresses the level of activities ongoing in evaluating the end objective of the project. Of the actual acres of brush that have been treated and cleared this measure indicates where the program activities stand in comparison to what is eligible to be treated.

Source/Collection of Data: Collected from information contained in the Feasibility Studies for the projects and project objectives in conjunction with landowner input. Actual acreage treated and cleared information is collected from Performance Certifications submitted by landowners from cost share reimbursement.

Method of Calculation: Tabulated from Performance Certifications submitted for reimbursement, Feasibility Study assessment of eligible acres and local assessment of land use.
Data Limitation: Measure limited in scope only by on ground activities to clear and treat brush, funding constraints, unfavorable weather conditions and economic downturn in agricultural activities.
Calculation Type: Non Cumulative
New Measure: No
Desired Performance: Higher than target

OBJECTIVE OUTCOME 02-01.01

Percent of projects addressing 303(d) list impaired water bodies

Short Definition: The percent of approved and active projects addressing 303(d) listed impaired or impacted water bodies with federal grant funds.

Purpose/Importance: Tabulates the percent of TSSWCB projects funded with federal grant dollars addressing impaired or impacted water bodies as listed on the 303(d) list. Projects are focused on nonpoint source abatement for the control of agricultural and silvicultural source water pollution. CWA 319(h) grant funds can be utilized in the 305(b) listed water bodies of the State and Assessment Projects. The TSSWCB has directed that the majority of funds be directed at impaired or impacted water bodies already showing problems.

Source/Collection of Data: Collected from the proposals accepted and funded under contract by the TSSWCB

Method of Calculation: The number of federally funded, approved, and active projects addressing 303(d) listed impaired or impacted water bodies is divided by the total number of federally funded, approved, and active projects with the resultant quotient being expressed as a percentage.

Data Limitation: Limited by the amount of funds received by the TSSWCB per grant year and grantor guidance.

Calculation Type: Non-Cumulative.

New Measure: Yes

Desired Performance: Higher than target.

OBJECTIVE OUTCOME 02-01.02

Percent identified problem areas with certified plans

Short Definition: The number of agricultural/silvicultural operations identified as having a potential to cause nonpoint source pollution with certified water quality management plans divided by the total number of agricultural/silvicultural operations identified as having a potential to cause nonpoint source pollution in problem areas designated by the TSSWCB with the quotient expressed as a percent.

Purpose/Importance: Tabulates the agricultural/silvicultural operations with water quality management plans versus operations without water quality management plans in problem areas designated by the TSSWCB.

Source/Collection of Data: Tabulated from data collected from Regional Offices, CWA Grant program and internal database containing certified water quality management plans.

Method of Calculation: Operations identified as having a potential to cause nonpoint source pollution with certified plans divided by total operations identified as having a potential to cause nonpoint source pollution in problem areas designated by the TSSWCB.

Data Limitation: Data limited only by ability to identify operations having a potential to cause nonpoint source pollution.

Calculation Type: Non-Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target

EFFICIENCY 01-01-01.01

Average number of days to process grant related claims

Short Definition: Using a representative sample of all claims processed, and dividing the total days spent in processing those claims by the number of claims in the sample, calculate the average time spent in processing expressed as calendar days.

Purpose/Importance: Evaluates the agency's performance relating to processing of grant payments.

Source/Collection of Data: Submitted to agency via Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Method of Calculation: Using a representative sample of all claims processed, and dividing the total days spent in processing those claims by the number of claims in the sample, calculate the average time spent in processing expressed as calendar days.

Data Limitation: Limited only by the number of claims received from Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Calculation Type: Average

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Lower than target

EXPLANATORY 01-01-01.01

Percent of districts receiving technical assistance funds

Short Definition: The number of districts participating in the Technical Assistance program divided by the total number of Soil and Water Conservation Districts with the resulting quotient expressed as a percent.

Purpose/Importance: Addresses the resource needs of the Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Source/Collection of Data: Information collected from Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Method of Calculation: The number of districts participating in the Technical Assistance program divided by the total number of Soil and Water Conservation Districts with the resulting quotient expressed as a percent.

Data Limitation: Limited by the number of requests received from Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Calculation Type: Non-Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target

OUTPUT 01-01-02.01

Number of contacts with districts to provide conservation education assistance

Short Definition: The total number of district directors and district employees contacted by TSSWCB staff through personal contacts, seminars, workshops, and other conservation program related functions.

Purpose/Importance: Tracks the number of contacts and assistance districts are receiving from TSSWCB staff.

Source/Collection of Data: Information tabulated from staff reports.

Method of Calculation: Tabulated from actual numbers documented by staff.

Data Limitation: Limited only by reporting accuracy. Contacts are obtained via personal interaction and phone conversations.

Calculation Type: Cumulative.

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target.

OUTPUT 01-01-01.01

Number of grant related claims processed

Short Definition: The total number of claims for grant funds from Soil and Water Conservation Districts processed for payment by TSSWCB staff.

Purpose/Importance: Tracks the requests of grant funds.

Source/Collection of Data: Tabulated from data collected from Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Method of Calculation: Collected and tabulated by TSSWCB staff as requests are evaluated.

Data Limitation: Limited by requests received from Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target

OUTPUT 01-01-02.02

Number of District Meetings Attended

Short Definition: The total number of district board meetings, district functions that are posted and a quorum is present, and district elections attended by the TSSWCB staff

Purpose/Importance: Identifies the conservation outreach and district assistance efforts of the TSSWCB staff

Source/Collection of Data: Events are tabulated and categorized for reporting by TSSWCB staff

Method of Calculation: Total number of events are recorded and tabulated.

Data Limitation: Limited only by accuracy of reporting of district meetings, district functions that are posted and a quorum is present, and district elections.

Calculation Type: Cumulative.

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target.

EFFICIENCY 03-01-01.01

Average cost per acre of mechanical brush clearing

Short Definition: The total cost per acre for mechanical brush clearing to yield additional water for the State.

Purpose/Importance: Tabulates the cost per acre where brush control treatment is mechanically applied.

Source/Collection of Data: Collected from the Brush Control Performance Certification form as submitted for payment by the landowner and the Soil and Water Conservation District.

Method of Calculation: Tabulated from actual dollars per acre verified and checked by TSSWCB staff from the Brush Control Performance Certification form.

Data Limitation: Limited by the number of landowners utilizing mechanical brush clearing methods.

Calculation Type: Non-Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Lower than target

EFFICIENCY 03-01-01.02

Average cost per acre of chemical brush clearing

Short Definition: The total cost per acre for chemical treatment of brush clearing to yield additional water for the State.

Purpose/Importance: Tabulates the cost per acre where brush control treatment is chemically applied.

Source/Collection of Data: Collected from the Brush Control Performance Certification form as submitted for payment by the landowner and the Soil and Water Conservation District.

Method of Calculation: Tabulated from actual dollars per acre cost verified and checked by TSSWCB staff from the Brush Control Performance Certification form.

Data Limitation: Limited by the number of landowners utilizing chemical brush clearing methods.

Calculation Type: Non-Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Lower than Target

OUTPUT 03-01-01.01

Number of acres of brush treated

Short Definition: The total number of acres treated (where brush control work has been performed and the State has issued reimbursement) under the Brush Control Program to increase water yield for the State of Texas.

Purpose/Importance: Tabulates the number of acres of brush control work has been performed and the State has issued reimbursement.

Source/Collection of Data: Collected from the "Actual Acres" column on the Performance Certifications submitted under Landowner contracts and approved by the Soil and Water Conservation Districts for reimbursement payment.

Method of Calculation: Tabulated from actual numbers verified and checked by TSSWCB staff from a Performance Certification form.

Data Limitation: Limited by the number of claims processed via Performance Certification.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than Target

OUTPUT 03-01-01.02

Number of acres of brush under resource management plan

Short Definition: The total number of acres treated while managed under a Resource management Plan as developed by the Soil and Water Conservation District.

Purpose/Importance: Tabulates the number of acres where brush control treatment is part of a Resource Management Plan covering the entire land unit. The Resource Management Plan addresses the total operating land unit with conservation planning guidance and technical expertise. The acres planned for brush clearing and control address only one function in the overall total management plan.

Source/Collection of Data: Collected from the Application Contract form signed by the Soil and Water Conservation District and landowner.

Method of Calculation: Tabulated from actual numbers verified and checked by TSSWCB staff from the Brush Control Application Contract.

Data Limitation: Limited by the number of landowners seeking Resource Management Plans within the watershed.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than Target

OUTPUT 02-01-01.01

Number of proposals for federal grant funding evaluated

Short Definition: The number of proposals for federal grant funding evaluated by TSSWCB staff.

Purpose/Importance: Identifies direction of agency's funding initiatives.

Source/Collection of Data: Generated through proposals received, internal and external recommendations, and assessment of potential sites.

Method of Calculation: Collected and tabulated by TSSWCB staff as requests are evaluated.

Data Limitation:

Calculation Type: Cumulative.

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target.

OUTPUT 02-01-02.01

Number of pollution abatement plans certified

Short Definition: The number of plans developed and certified to satisfy compliance requirements of the state's water quality standards.

Purpose/Importance: Demonstrates need of water quality management plans and major area of work and funding for agency.

Source/Collection of Data: Submitted to agency via Soil and Water Conservation Districts and TSSWCB Regional Offices for certification signature. Maintained in agency database.

Method of Calculation: Tabulated from submitted plans for certification during quarter.

Data Limitation: Limited by requests and the availability of planning assistance at the district level.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target

EFFICIENCY 02-01-02.01

Average number of days to certify pollution abatement plans

Short Definition: The total time required to certify pollution abatement plans divided by the number of plans developed with the quotient expressed in terms of calendar days with time tracked from the date plan is received by TSSWCB through date of plan certification.

Purpose/Importance: Evaluates agency's efficiency and turnaround time upon receipt of applications from field.

Source/Collection of Data: Generated by Regional Offices and headquarters staff involved in application process.

Method of Calculation: The total time required to certify pollution abatement plans divided by the number of plans developed with the quotient expressed in terms of calendar days with time tracked from the date plan is received by TSSWCB through date of plan certification.

Data Limitation: Limited only by timeframe in process and plans developed for the quarter.

Calculation Type: Non - Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Lower than target

OUTPUT 02-01-02.02

Number of water quality treatment grants made

Short Definition: The number of grants made to cooperators to defray part of the cost of installing water quality management plans.

Purpose/Importance: Shows the amount of need in the field for cost share assistance.

Source/Collection of Data: Generated internally by payments processed.

Method of Calculation: Tabulated from applications for cost share and payment process.

Data Limitation: Limited only by requests.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target

APPENDIX E

WORKFORCE PLAN

AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) was created by the Texas Legislature in 1939. The TSSWCB is charged with overall responsibility for administering and coordinating the state's soil and water conservation program with the state's soil and water conservation districts (districts). Title 7, Chapters 201 and 203 of the Agriculture Code of Texas contains the provisions of law pertaining to soil and water conservation. The TSSWCB is named as the agency responsible for implementing constitutional provisions and state laws relating to conservation and protection of soil resources. Within this framework of law, Section 201.026 gives the TSSWCB responsibility for planning, implementing and managing programs and practices for abating agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source pollution. It is through this, that water quality management planning is incorporated into conservation planning methodologies. Chapter 203 creates the State Brush Control Program, designates the TSSWCB as the implementing agency, funds the State Brush Control program and provides for delegation of certain powers and duties to soil and water conservation districts.

Passage of the Texas Soil Conservation Law makes it possible for local landowners to organize and manage their own districts. Each local district develops a Long-Range Program and Plan of Work and an Annual Plan of Operations that guide the district in solving its conservation problems. These district programs and plans of work are updated regularly to recognize and evaluate changes in agriculture, economy and natural resources. Farmers and ranchers desiring to use a conservation program on their land receive assistance from their local district. Currently there are 217 local soil and water conservation districts that cover almost the entire state.

Since their creation conservation districts have effectively administered conservation programs based on the voluntary application of conservation practices. The voluntary approach, incorporating the basic philosophy prevalent throughout the farming and ranching industry, has proven successful. That philosophy recognizes private land as property of the owner and management a responsibility of ownership. Most Texas landowners have great respect for natural resources including water quality. With appropriate education, these landowners readily recognize the desirability of implementing suitable management practices. These management practices are what constitute conservation plans and water quality management plans.

The current network of 217 districts into which Texas is organized is the logical vehicle to provide the necessary local leadership and the appropriate information as to what practices are best for individual farming or ranching operations. The State Soil and Water Conservation Board is responsible for coordinating the programs of districts through advice and consultation.

The agency structure consists of seven State Board members (five Board members are elected by soil and water conservation districts, two Board members are Governor appointed) and staff. The staff is organized into Executive Administration, seven program areas (Fiscal Affairs, Nonpoint

Source Pollution, Human Resources, Special Projects/Public Information/Education, Brush Control (administered out of San Angelo), Soil and Water Conservation District Program Support (administered by Field Representatives), and Water Quality Management Plan Program (administered by Regional Offices). See Organization Chart (Appendix B of agency strategic plan).

The TSSWCB is currently staffed by 63 (61.6 FTEs) employees and has a current operating budget of approximately \$26 million for the biennium. Twenty (18.6 FTEs) employees are centrally located in Temple, Texas in close proximity to the state headquarters of the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, a federal agency that is a partner in the statewide conservation program. The other 43 employees are located throughout the state. Six regional water quality offices have a total staff of 29 employees. In addition, there are two contract employees who work in regional offices. Ten field staff employees serve their assigned districts from a designated headquarters location. One brush manager administers the North Concho Brush Control Program in San Angelo. The office consists of a total 4 employees. One regional water quality office specializes as a poultry office

OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS

Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board's workforce plan describes each major program of the agency and its associated workforce planning. Administrative Services is composed of an Executive Director, an Administrative Coordinator, along with an Administrative Assistant. Administrative Services directs the administrative affairs of the TSSWCB including the execution of rules, guidelines, decisions, and directives of the TSSWCB to ensure the efficient and effective operation of the agency.

Fiscal Affairs responsibilities include the development and oversight of TSSWCB's overall budget, revenue and expenditures, strategic planning, performance measures, cost recovery efforts, and the proper expenditure of grants, both federal and state. Responsibilities also include managing TSSWCB's general ledger and ensuring the proper processing of cash, communicating and implementing state and federal cash management practices, monitoring and processing expenditures in accordance with state and federal statutes and regulations, and information technology.

Information Technology (IT) installs and maintains network services including: local area networks; wide area network; internet services; local application support; infrastructure security; implements and maintains web-based technology; and trains staff on the use of applications and services. IT also configures, secures and maintains both wired and wireless local area network environments and troubleshoots computing-hardware and software problems for local and remote staff in all agency departments. The program audits and tracks the use of hardware and software deployments; serves as the agency Information Resource Manager and Security Officer, working with the Department of Information Resources to ensure agency compliance with state IT law; develops, maintains, and enforces policies regarding security, the acceptable use of IT infrastructure, and disaster recovery and works with agency purchaser on the procurement of IT software and hardware.

All **purchasing** efforts for the agency are accomplished in accordance with state and federal requirements, the minority procurement program and vendor recruitment requirements.

The Nonpoint Source Team carries out the agency's mandate for addressing agricultural and silvicultural (forestry) nonpoint source pollution (NPS) abatement. The program is funded by the State and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to demonstrate and implement activities that control and abate NPS pollution. Work is carried out with other state and federal agencies to address NPS issues as they relate to Water Quality Standards and Criteria, Total Maximum Daily Loads, and Coastal Zone Protection. Texas receives approximately \$10 million annually from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through the federal Clean Water Act, Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Program.

Inter-Agency Communications facilitates interaction between the TSSWCB and other agencies, entities, and individuals on matters pertaining to agency programs and services. Inter-Agency Communications serves as an initial point of contact and ensures appropriate TSSWCB personnel are engaged in matters involving inter-agency cooperation. Inter-Agency Communications ensures various agency programs are coordinated in such a way that they support one another and collectively work toward the agency's mission, goals, objectives, and are in accordance with state and federal statute and agency rules.

Special Projects/Public Information and Education responsibilities include: planning and coordinating the Annual State Meeting for Soil and Water conservation District Directors; coordinating agency rules; coordinating various agency reports; coordinating request for public information; coordinating the complaint process; and maintaining an open and relevant relationship between districts, agricultural interest groups, and the general public. Sponsored activities include: Soil and Water stewardship contests; Texas Conservation Awards Programs; Wildlife Conservation workshops; maintaining a conservation video library; supporting teacher workshops; providing conservation education demonstration models for schools; and coordinating district director training.

Human Resources responsibilities include: overseeing all personnel matters including benefits administration, state classification plan, payroll, leave accounting, employment, managerial, developmental and safety training. Human Resources also ensures that TSSWCB personnel practices are in compliance with state and federal regulations. Human Resources serves as a strategic partner with Executive Management and also consults and advises managerial staff regarding human resource matters.

Brush Control is a voluntary program in which landowners may contract with the state for cost-share assistance to remove water-depleting brush and enhance water availability. Working through local soil and water conservation districts, landowners develop resource management system plans addressing brush control, soil erosion, water quality, wildlife habitat and other natural resource issues.

Soil and Water Conservation District Program Support provides assistance to SWCDs and their employees through programs it administers and through TSSWCB field representatives that meet regularly with the SWCDs to provide guidance, training and consultation. The field staff

also coordinates the activities of districts and provides a direct link between the TSSWCB and districts.

The **Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) Program** assists agricultural and silvicultural producers in meeting the state's water quality goals and standards through a voluntary, incentive-based program. There are special requirements regarding Poultry WQMPs.

WORKFORCE PROFILE

Information from the State Auditor's Office (SAO) Human Resources Analysis System annual average headcount report shows the agency had 59.25 employees during fiscal year 2005. Of the average 59.25 headcount, 17.5 employees were female and 41.75 were male.

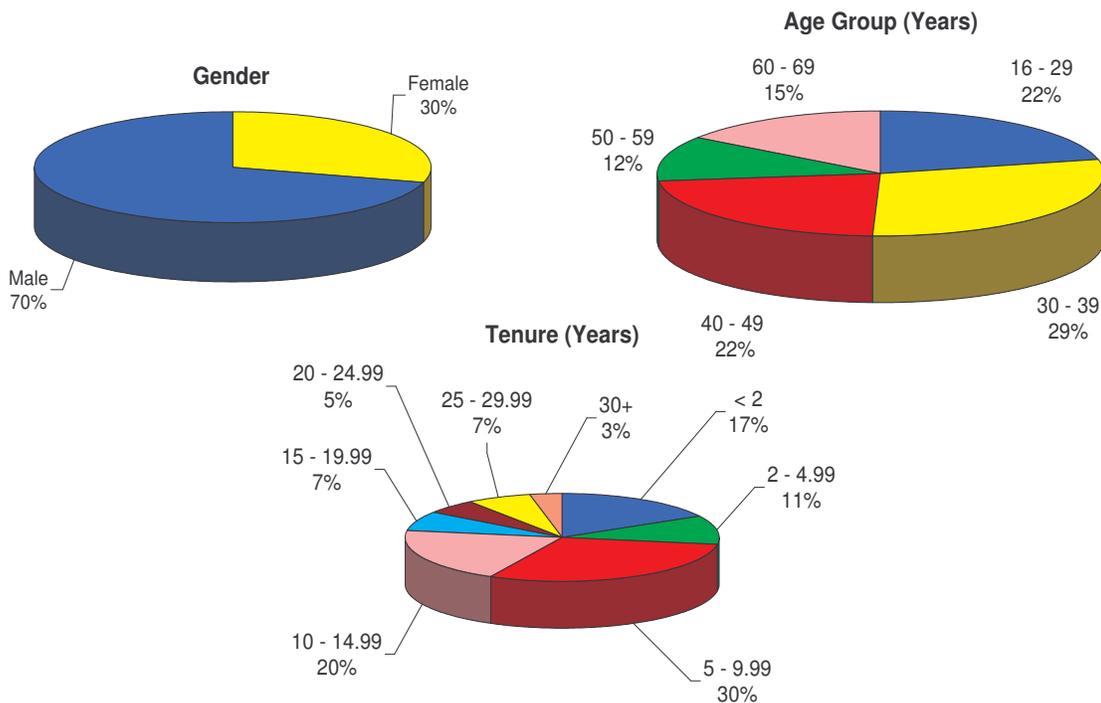
Critical Workforce Skills

Although the TSSWCB has qualified employees, there are several critical skills that are important to the agency's ability to operate. Without these skills, the TSSWCB could not provide basic services. These skills are listed below:

- Developing and promoting voluntary approaches
- Conservation Planning
- Database development and maintenance
- Providing a liaison with districts
- Providing technical assistance
- Project/Contract management
- Developing Water Quality Management Plans
- Coordinating activities of districts
- Strategic Planning
- Customer service
- Interpreting legal statutes
- Educating clientele

Workforce Demographics

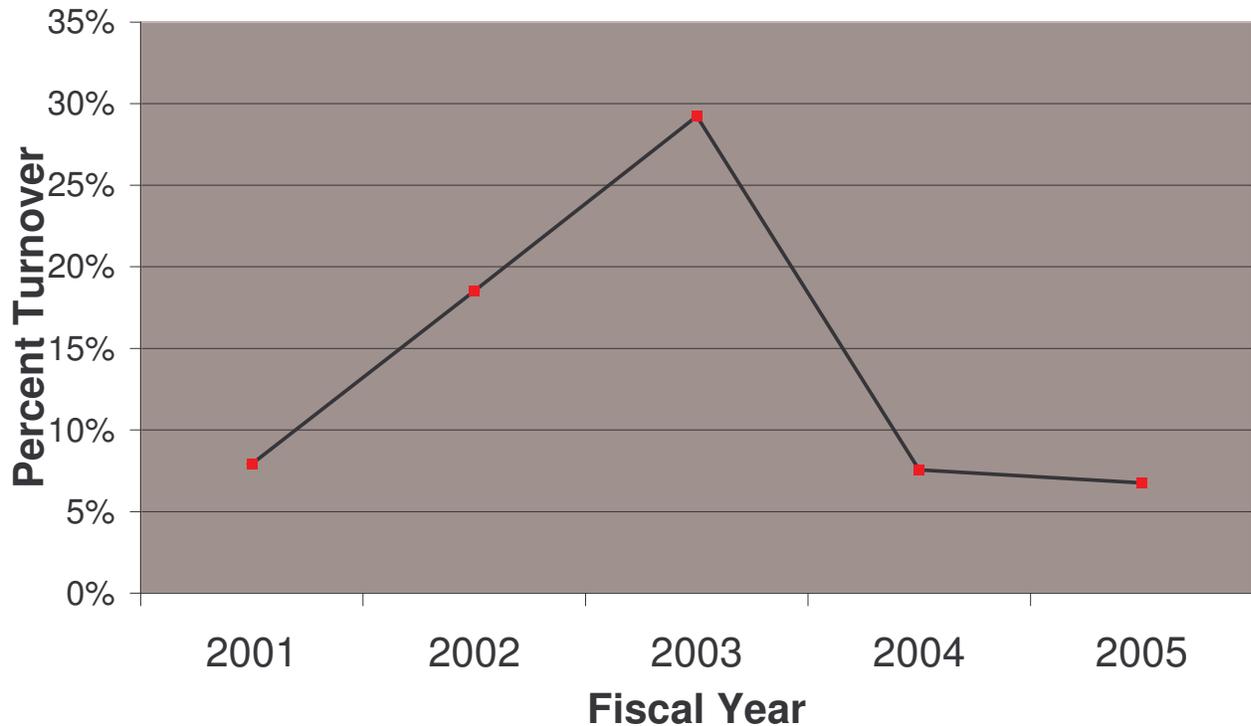
The following charts profile TSSWCB's workforce for fiscal year 2005. The average headcount was 59.25. Of that figure, 41.75 employees were male and 17.5 were female. Almost 50 percent of TSSWCB's employees are over the age of 40. Sixty-seven percent of employees have less than 10 years of service. These employees have the potential for continued service with the agency. Thirty-three percent of employees have over 10 years of service and have the ability to serve as mentors to the other staff. TSSWCB was created in 1939, therefore it is reasonable to have a substantial number of tenured staff.



Employee Turnover

Turnover is an important issue in any agency, and TSSWCB is no exception. During the last five years, TSSWCB has seen an increase from 7.9 percent in fiscal year 2001 to 29.2 percent in fiscal year 2003. This turnover rate is higher than the State average. The following graph compares the TSSWCB turnover to that of the State over the last five fiscal years. Before 2002, TSSWCB's employee turnover rate was lower than the State percentage. In fiscal year 2002, an increase in turnover was due to voluntary separations along with retirement. In fiscal year 2003, TSSWCB had to eliminate a substantial number of positions due to budget restraints. This accounted for the 29.2 percent in turnover. As the chart demonstrates, turnover has significantly decreased since fiscal year 2003 to 7.5 percent in fiscal year 2004 and has decreased even lower in fiscal year 2005 to 6.7 percent. The turnover rate has been lower than the State average for the last 2 fiscal years. For the future, TSSWCB anticipates turnover to be below state average.

Employee Turnover



Attrition

TSSWCB has not experienced attrition for the last 2 fiscal years.

Retirement Eligibility

Since over 25 percent of TSSWCB's employees are 50 years of age or older, retirement accounts for a considerable part of employees leaving the agency. Because almost 25 percent of the agency's employees are between the ages of 40 and 49, in the next 1 to 2 years, retirement will become increasingly significant. By fiscal year 2007, the agency could experience a potential loss of 10 employees, 8 of which are eligible for retirement in fiscal year 2006 alone. These employees have helped to further establish and improve the agency, and it is important to ensure that this knowledge and organizational experience is not lost.

FUTURE WORKFORCE PROFILE

The ultimate goal is to ensure continuity of task performance in each area and program at TSSWCB. Employees approaching retirement eligibility should work with management to develop a succession plan for their program area.

TSSWCB workforce changes are anticipated to be driven by goals, strategies, performance measures, technology, work, workloads, work processes, program related federal grants, and federal contract programs.

The knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to perform specific functions and tasks within the agency requires an educated staff that has extensive information technology, project management, managerial and professional training. Written and verbal proficiency is essential in all agency positions. Individual skill development will also need to be accommodated to recruit, retain, train and motivate workers.

Projected future workforce knowledge needed includes the following:

- Negotiation and facilitation
- Strategic planning
- Project/Contract management
- Performance management
- Conservation planning

TSSWCB recognizes the need to maintain and improve current skill levels and anticipates projected future workforce skills needed includes the following:

- Knowledge of legislative processes
- Accounting services
- Technical planning
- Computer technology
- Decision making
- Communication
- Engineering services
- Database maintenance
- Customer service
- Public service

The strategic vision anticipates annual technological advances requiring knowledge and skill improvement. TSSWCB anticipates information will be processed faster and more accurately allowing for smooth transitions during staff changes.

TSSWCB foresees more electronic document exchange, more accountability and more reporting requirements.

TSSWCB also projects an increase in involvement addressing agriculture, silvicultural, and nonpoint source pollution concerns, water enhancement, and contracting to provide technical services for federal agriculture programs.

It is also recognized that additional future changes to strategies and goals are contingent on legislative activities, new initiatives defined by the TSSWCB and changes in state and federal laws. Economic trends in the marketplace would dictate our ability to retain and recruit employees with competitive job skills.

Changes we anticipate in our workforce:

Critical Functions

- Expansion of water conservation/enhancement activities
- Addressing mandated deadlines/requirements for Poultry operations

Expected Workforce Changes

- More direct relation with producers
- Increased use of technology to revise, increase efficiencies, streamline work processes enabling better communication between mobile staff members and an increasing mobile public
- Employees cross-trained in functional areas
- Increased number of Grant Managers, Project Managers, Contract Managers, Natural Resource Specialists, and Planners

Anticipated Increase/Decrease in Number of Employees Needed to Do the Work

- Expect current staff to remain static
- Increased demands to be addressed by reallocation of workload within the agency

Gap Analysis

The projected retirement or loss of employees in technical and professional areas has the potential to create a shortage of expertise in various areas. Mentoring, coaching, cross training and succession planning along with improved on-the-job training must take on greater importance. The increased alliance on information technology requires lifetime learning for all employees.

Strategy Development

Our strategies to address gaps in our workforce agency-wide include: (dependent upon budget constraints) adequate salary; merit increases; monetary and non-monetary rewards for performance; flex time and/or telecommute opportunities; career, leadership and professional development; cross training, contract workers; and increased participation in agency programs. When possible, a mentoring process whereby replacement employees are hired prior to the current employee-retiring, contingent upon FTE issues is utilized as needed.

A continual review of the agency's Workforce Plan is conducted as business goals change.