



# TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

## Monthly Program News and Activities

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November 2009

The TSSWCB produces this monthly update of the agency's activities as an informational service to local soil and water conservation district directors. I hope you find this information helpful, and if you have any questions please don't hesitate to call your local Field Representative or our State Headquarters.

**REX ISOM, Executive Director**

### Budgeting and Accounting

- December 31st is the deadline for submitting Audits and Financial Statements to be approved for Fiscal Year 2009.
- January 31st is the deadline for Audits to be approved for Fiscal Year 2009.
- January 31st is the deadline for Internal Revenue Service W-2 and 1099 forms to be mailed to recipients for Calendar Year 2009

Texas Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program	9
Texas Groundwater Protection Committee	10
Upcoming Meetings	14
Water Quality Planning & Implementation	14
Water Supply Enhancement Program	22
Flood Control Dams	24

### CONTENTS

State Board Work Sessions and Meetings	1
Budget and Accounting	2
Human Resources	2
Special Projects	2
Public Information and Education	3
Water Quality Management Plan Program	4
Poultry Water Quality Management Plans	5
Texas Nonpoint Source Management Program	5
Clean Water Act, §319(h) NPS Grant Program	6
State Funded NPS Grant Program	8
Total Maximum Daily Load Program	8

### STATE BOARD WORK SESSIONS AND MEETINGS

The State Board has scheduled a Board Work Session for 1:00 p.m. on **Wednesday, January 20, 2010**. A formal State Board Meeting is scheduled for 8:00 a.m. on **Thursday, January 21, 2010**. A location for these meetings has not been determined.

For more information on past and pending State Board Work Sessions and Meetings, please visit the agency's website at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/boardmeetings>, or contact Karen Preece at (254) 773-2250, ext. 245.

## Board Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the November 19, 2009, State Board Meeting will be considered for approval at the meeting scheduled for January 21, 2010. To view any past Board Meeting minutes visit the agency's website at

<http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/boardmeetings/minutes>

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## BUDGET AND ACCOUNTING

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## HUMAN RESOURCES

TSSWCB is currently recruiting for the following position:

- Engineer III – Wharton
- Accountant I– Temple

For more information on TSSWCB employment please visit the link below:

<http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/en/employment>

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## SPECIAL PROJECTS

### Program Overview

Special Projects is a department within the TSSWCB that provides coordination for the Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation Directors, facilitates open government functions required by the Texas Administrative Procedures Act, and directs the completion of other mandatory agency responsibilities such as compiling the agency's Semi-Annual Report and rule making.

## 70th Annual State Meeting of Texas Soil and Water Conservation District Directors

The 70<sup>th</sup> Annual State Meeting is scheduled for October 25-27, 2010 in Lubbock.

### Adopted Rule Amendment (31 TAC §523.3) – Water quality management plans for poultry facilities.

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board has adopted a rule amendment. The rule amendment pertains to 31 TAC, Chapter 523.3. The proposed rule amendment concerns water quality management plans for poultry facilities. Senate Bill 1693 passed by the 81<sup>st</sup> Legislature requires the State Board to promulgate rules to assess the siting and construction of certain new or expanding poultry facilities.

The adopted rule amendment will become final the middle of December 2009.

### Adopted Rule Amendment (31 TAC §525) – Audit Requirements for Soil and Water Conservation Districts

The State Board adopted amendments to 31 TAC §525 concerning the requirements for soil and water conservation districts to have an audit, compilation and review or annual financial statement. The adopted rule will become final the middle of December 2009.

### Proposed Amendments of Adopted New Rule (31 TAC §529, Subchapter A) – Flood Control O&M Grant Program

The State Board proposes to amend the new rule 31 TAC §529, Subchapter A with amendments that make some typographical corrections, clarification of intent, and expanding the definition of O&M to stipulate that maintenance of roads within the

ement may be considered as in-kind contribution of match.

The proposed rule amendment will be published in the Texas Register for review and comment.

### **Proposed New Rule (31 TAC §529, Subchapter B) – Flood Control Structural Repair Grant Program**

The State Board proposes new §529, Subchapter B, relating to Flood Control Structural Repair on flood control dams.

The proposed new rule will be published in the *Texas Register* for review and comment.

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## **PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION**

### **1<sup>st</sup> Annual Small Land Owner’s Workshop**

The Colorado Soil and Water Conservation District #333 is co-hosting the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Small Land Owner’s Workshop on Saturday, January 23, 2010 at St. Roch’s Parish Hall in Mentz. Co-host includes Colorado County Farm Bureau. The cost of the workshop is \$20 per person and a BBQ meal is included. The deadline to register is January 15, 2010.

Sessions include: *Pesticide Law and Regulations* – Eugene Hinze, Senior Pesticide Inspector – 1 Laws and Regs CEU, *Feral Hog Management* – T.J. Muir, Wildlife Damage Management Biologist – 1 IPM CEU, *Water Management*, speaker to be announced -1/2 general CEU, *The Rules of the Road*, Trooper Patrick Zatopek, Corporal V, Commercial Vehicle Enforcement, Texas Department of Public Safety – 1 Laws and Regs, *Control of Unwanted Plants in Pasture and Range Land*, Andy Carriger, senior R&P Specialist, Dow AgroSciences – 1 IPM CEU and *How to Qualify for Ag/Wildlife Exemptions*, Bill Mitchell, Chief Appraiser, Colorado County Central Appraisal District – ½ general CEU.

For more information, please call the District secretary Beverly Tuck at 979.732.9565 Monday – Thursday or any time - cell 979.732.7277 or email coloradoswcd333@att.net.

### **Program Development Workshop**

Two advance notices have been sent to all SWCDs announcing the director-employee program development workshop scheduled for January 26-27, 2010 in Temple at the Hilton Garden Inn. Though the workshop is open to all directors, newly elected or appointed directors were sent a letter of invitation November 16 to give them an opportunity to have first registration options before the information is sent to all districts in the state. Working in cooperation with NRCS, a select number of new District Conservationists will also be attending the training. A letter of invitation including registration information will be sent to all districts in mid-December.

### **Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest**

Preparation of the 2010 Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest materials will begin in December. Texas Ag teachers expect to receive the materials on or shortly after February 1. The theme of the public speaking contest materials is based on the annual NACD Soil Stewardship theme. The 2010 theme is “Conservation Habits = Healthy Habitats”.

### **Region IV Wildlife Contest**

Tommy Marchetti, of Rusk and a member of the Rusk FFA chapter was high point individual in the FFA division at the Region IV Wildlife Career Development Event held November 4, at the Stephen F. Austin Experimental Forest located near Nacogdoches. Marchetti earned a total score of 125 out of possible 135-150 points.

Amanda Reynolds of the Angelina County 4-H chapter was high point individual with a top score of 100 points in the 4-H division.

The top scoring FFA chapter in the event was the Rusk chapter from Rusk. The team earned a collective score of 351 points. The Angelina

County 4-H chapter from Lufkin earned a collective team score of 262 in its division.

In respective order, the second place high scoring individual in the FFA division was John Tromza who is a member of the Queen City FFA chapter from Queen City High School. Third place high scoring individual was Josh Fountain, a member of the Lindale FFA chapter from Lindale High School.

Second and third place high scoring teams in the FFA division was the Avery FFA chapter from Avery and Grand Saline FFA chapter from Grand Saline.

In the 4-H division, Justin Carpenter, a member of the Angelina County 4-H team, earned second place honors. Third place honors were claimed by Sawyer Means who is a member of the Van Zandt County 4-H team.

Second place high point scoring team honors went to the Avery 4-H team from Avery while the Grand Saline 4-H team from Grand Saline earned third place honors.

100 youth representing 49 FFA teams and 40 youth representing 10 4-H teams participated in the regional event.

The students and teams will be eligible to participate in the state contest which will be held at the Stephen F. Austin Experimental Forest near Nacogdoches. The state contest will be held on May 11, 2010.

## TSSWCB Conservation Video Library

### About The Catalog

There are over 200 conservation-related videos available; the 2009 catalog can be downloaded from the TSSWCB website at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/files/docs/infoed/2009VideoLibraryCatalogue.pdf>. The 2009 Catalog includes 30 new titles in DVD format. No rental fees are assessed to those wishing to borrow the videos from the library. However, the borrower is responsible for paying the return postage.

Borrowing privileges are for a length of two weeks and must be returned upon the date specified by the librarian. Videos can be ordered through your local SWCD or by contacting the Public Information/Education department of the TSSWCB.

### How Shipping Works

The Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts' Public

Information/Education Committee will pay the first transit postage costs to mail the video(s) to the requester. Postage for returning the video(s) will be the responsibility of the borrower. All videos must be insured upon return.

### Ordering a Video

Select a video from the [TSSWCB Conservation Video Catalog](#), then contact Meredith Whitley at [mwhitley@tsswcb.state.tx.us](mailto:mwhitley@tsswcb.state.tx.us) to check it out.

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## WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN PROGRAM

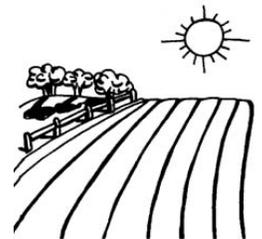
### Program Overview

The passage of Texas Senate Bill 503 (1993) directed the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board to implement water quality management plans (WQMPs) in Texas. A WQMP is a site-specific plan developed through and approved by SWCDs for agricultural or silvicultural lands. The agency has been implementing WQMPs since the mid 1990s and has completed over 10,000 plans in the State of Texas.

<http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/wqmp>.

A total of 753 WQMPs were certified by the State Board in FY2009. This is 21.5% greater than the yearly goal.

District cost-share fund allocations for FY2010 have been approved by the State Board. The



period for obligating FY2010 cost-share funds goes from September 1, 2009 to April 30, 2010.

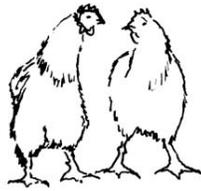
Lapsed cost-share funds have been reduced by 69% in the last five years. Approximately 8.3% of total cost-share funds are being lapsed statewide at the present time. The lapsed fund report for FY-07 was completed in September, 2009.

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## POULTRY WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

### Overview

In 2001, the 77th Texas Legislature amended the Texas Water Code to require all persons who own or operate a poultry facility to implement and maintain a Water Quality Management Plan that is certified by the State Soil and Water Conservation Board. In 2009, the 81<sup>st</sup> Texas Legislature has amended the Texas Water Code to require TSSWCB to assess whether the siting and construction of all new poultry farms or existing farms that expand by more than 50% within ½ mile of permanently inhabited residences, businesses, or places of worship is likely to cause a persistent nuisance odor. Rules pertaining to this requirement were published in the Texas Register for a 30-day public comment period. No comments were received. The State Board adopted the rule at its November 19, 2009 meeting. The new law also requires all poultry producers and most receivers of poultry litter to keep records of poultry litter usage. For more information on Poultry WQMPs, please visit:



<http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/poultry>.

### Program Activities

TSSWCB continues to conduct inspections of poultry Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation facilities to ensure they are meeting all the necessary requirements. In addition, staff continues

to review and update existing WQMPs and develop plans for newly constructed farms.

For more information on the Poultry Program contact the poultry office at (936) 462-7020.

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## TEXAS NONPOINT SOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

### Program Overview

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

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

Implementation of the Texas NPS Program involves partnerships among many organizations. With the extent and variety of NPS issues across Texas, cooperation across political boundaries is essential. Many local, regional, state, and federal agencies play an integral part in managing NPS pollution, especially at the watershed level. They provide

information about local concerns and infrastructure and build support for the kind of pollution controls that are necessary to prevent and reduce NPS pollution. SWCDs are vital partners in working with landowners to implement best management practices (BMPs) that prevent and abate agricultural and silvicultural NPS water pollution. By establishing coordinated frameworks to share information and resources, the State can more effectively focus its water quality protection efforts.

For more information on the *Texas Nonpoint Source Management Program*, visit our website at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/managementprogram>.

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

#### **Texas Nonpoint Source Management Program 2010 Revision Status**

TSSWCB SRM staff and TCEQ staff are in the process of updating the *Texas NPS Management Program* document. Staffs from both agencies are currently reviewing the revised, draft chapters of the 2010 program publication. Specifically, on November 2, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Donna Long, TJ Helton, Aaron Wendt] met with TCEQ staff to discuss progress on the revision. A completed draft is expected by the end of January 2010. After which, staff intend to circulate the draft document to affected entities for preliminary review and comments. The revised program publication must be submitted to EPA by December 2010 to ensure continued CWA §319(h) funding.

#### **FY2009 Nonpoint Source Annual Report Status**

TSSWCB SRM staff and TCEQ staff are currently developing the content of the *2009 Annual Report on Managing NPS Water Pollution in Texas*. Staff from both agencies met on October 16, 2009 and again on November 2, 2009 to discuss the structure and content of the report. In order to continue

receiving CWA §319(h) funds, the State must annually report on success in achieving the goals and objectives of the *Texas NPS Management Program*. The report will highlight the State's efforts during FY2009 to collect data, assess water quality, implement projects that reduce or prevent NPS pollution, and educate and involve the public to improve and maintain the quality of water resources. This report must be submitted to EPA in January 2010 to ensure continued funding.

## **CLEAN WATER ACT §319(h) NONPOINT SOURCE GRANT PROGRAM**

### **Background**

Congress enacted §319(h) of the CWA in 1987, establishing a national program to control NPS water pollution. Through §319(h), federal funds are provided through the EPA to States for the development and implementation of each State's NPS Management Program. The §319(h) funding in Texas is divided equally between the TCEQ and the TSSWCB.

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

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

For groundwater management, the geographic focus is on aquifers rather than watersheds. Otherwise, the approach is the same. Wherever interactions between surface and ground water are identified, management activities will support the quality of both resources.

The TSSWCB and TCEQ apply the Watershed Approach to managing NPS pollution by supporting the development and implementation of watershed protection plans (WPPs). WPPs are locally-driven projects that serve as a mechanism for voluntarily addressing complex water quality problems that cross multiple jurisdictions. WPPs are coordinated frameworks for implementing prioritized and integrated water quality protection and restoration strategies driven by environmental objectives. Through the WPP process, TSSWCB encourages stakeholders to holistically address all of the sources and causes of impairments and threats to both surface and ground water resources within a watershed. More information on WPPs is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/wpp>.

The development of WPPs is supported by §319(h) funding to varying extents; however, a WPP that meets EPA's criteria is required to be completed in order to utilize §319(h) funding to implement portions of WPPs.

The TSSWCB's efforts to restore water quality are channeled through Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) and WPP development and implementation and are summarized in the *Water Quality Planning and Implementation* section of this report.

### **FY2010 Request for Proposals**

TSSWCB SRM staff published the FY2010 Request for Proposals (RFP) for the NPS Grant Program on October 2, 2009. The RFP was published in the *Texas Register*, posted on the TSSWCB website, and all SWCDs and cooperating entities were notified of this funding opportunity. SRM staff identified priority areas and activities for this funding cycle based on the *Texas NPS Management Program* and the *2008 Texas Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List*. The deadline for proposal submission was November 16, 2009. Proposals will be reviewed by SRM staff based on the published ranking criteria and selected for funding. Projects receiving federal funding must be

submitted to EPA in spring 2010 for review and approval.

### **FY2008 CWA §319(h) Grant Application Status**

On August 14, 2008, TSSWCB SRM staff were informed that EPA was not going to approve the workplan submitted to begin implementing components of the Pecos River WPP and the \$1,499,859 dedicated to that project would be withheld from the agency's FY2008 CWA §319(h) grant award. On August 28, 2008, EPA assured the TSSWCB that the funding for this project was not in jeopardy of being lost, but an adequate review of the Pecos River WPP would need to be completed by EPA prior to the funding being awarded. On February 17, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff met with EPA staff to discuss the preliminary federal consistency review of the Pecos River WPP. On April 30, 2009, EPA notified TSSWCB that they had completed the federal consistency review of the Pecos River WPP. Ultimately EPA concluded that, contingent on the TSSWCB allocating a portion of the agency's FY2009 CWA §319(h) grant award to conduct modeling to better understand the causes and sources of the dissolved oxygen impairment in the Pecos River, the WPP sufficiently satisfied the nine elements to justify EPA finally awarding the remaining \$1.5M from the TSSWCB's FY2008 grant allocation. On October 7, 2009, EPA approved the scope of work.

### **FY2003 – FY2009 CWA §319(h) NPS Grant Status**

There are currently 61 ongoing §319(h) grant-funded projects addressing a wide array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues. Unliquidated federal funds for these 61 ongoing projects total approximately \$19 million and are primarily being used to address NPS pollution from animal feeding operations, prevent atrazine runoff, provide technical assistance, implement BMPs, support various NPS outreach/education programs, develop and implement WPPs, and implement the NPS portion of TMDL I-Plans. Summaries of the TSSWCB's activities within specific watersheds funded through these grants are available in the

*Water Quality Planning and Implementation* section of this report.

## **STATE FUNDED NONPOINT SOURCE GRANT PROGRAM**

### **Background**

The 80<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature appropriated \$3.1 million dollars in general revenue funds, for the biennium, to the TSSWCB for the purpose of planning, implementing, and managing programs and practices for preventing and abating agricultural and silvicultural NPS water pollution in impaired watersheds. TSSWCB is committed to funding projects encompassing monitoring, assessment, modeling, planning, education and implementation. On May 24, 2007, the Board approved a *TSSWCB Policy on TMDLs* which provides guidance to staff on directing state appropriations for the State Funded NPS Grant Program. Summaries of the TSSWCB's activities within specific watersheds funded through this grant program are available in the *Water Quality Planning and Implementation* section of this report

### **FY2008 Grant Status**

On July 19, 2007, the Board approved an operating budget for FY2008 that allocated \$1,200,494 in state appropriations to the NPS Grant Program. There are currently two ongoing projects associated with the Little Brazos River Tributaries Bacteria Assessment Project. Five projects have been completed.

### **FY2009 Grant Status**

On July 17, 2008, the Board approved an operating budget for FY2009 that allocated \$1,200,494 in state appropriations to the NPS Grant Program. There are currently thirteen ongoing projects that support implementation of agricultural NPS components of TMDL I-Plans, technical assistance for the development of WQMPs on agricultural lands, and the collection and analysis of water quality data for watersheds with impaired waterbodies.

### **FY2010 Grant Status**

On July 16, 2009, the Board approved an operating budget for FY2010 that allocated \$1,200,494 in state appropriations to the NPS Grant Program. SRM staff are in the process of developing workplans and budgets with collaborating entities for various projects.

## **TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOAD PROGRAM**

### **Background**

The CWA requires Texas to identify lakes, rivers, streams and estuaries failing to meet or not expected to meet water quality standards and not supporting their designated uses (swimming, drinking, aquatic life, etc.). This list of impaired waterbodies is known as the *Texas 303(d) List* and must be submitted to the EPA for review and approval every two years.

The State must then establish a (TMDL) for certain waterbodies identified on the *Texas 303(d) List*. A TMDL defines the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can assimilate on a daily basis and still meet water quality standards. The pollution reduction goal set by the TMDL is necessary to restore attainment of the designated use of the impaired waterbody. The maximum amount of a pollutant is determined by conducting a detailed water quality assessment that provides the information for a TMDL to allocate pollutant loads between point sources and nonpoint sources. It also takes into account a margin of safety, which reflects uncertainty and future growth.

Based on the environmental target of the TMDL, an (I-Plan) is then developed that prescribes the measures necessary to mitigate anthropogenic (human-caused) sources of that pollutant in that waterbody. The I-Plan specifies limits for point source dischargers and recommends BMPs for nonpoint sources. It also lays out a schedule for implementation. Together, the TMDL and the I-Plan serve as the mechanism to reduce the pollutant, restore the full use of the waterbody and remove it

from the 303(d) List. EPA must approve the TMDL, but the I-Plan only requires State approval.

With authority as the lead agency in Texas for planning, implementing, and managing programs and practices for preventing and abating agricultural and silvicultural NPS water pollution, TSSWCB shares responsibility with the TCEQ for the development and implementation of TMDLs. TSSWCB is committed to funding and collaborating with TCEQ on TMDL projects encompassing monitoring, assessment, modeling, planning, education and implementation. More information on TMDLs is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/tmdl>.

The TSSWCB's efforts to restore water quality are channeled through TMDL and WPP development and implementation. Impaired waters may be addressed through either mechanism depending on the specific situation. Summaries of the TSSWCB's activities within specific watersheds are available in the *Water Quality Planning and Implementation* section of this report.

## **TEXAS COASTAL NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION CONTROL PROGRAM**

### **Background**

The Texas Coastal Management Program (CMP) was created to coordinate state, local, and federal programs for the management of Texas coastal resources. The program brings in federal Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) funds to Texas to implement projects and program activities for a wide variety of purposes. The Texas General Land Office (GLO) is responsible for coordinating activities associated with the CMP. The Coastal Coordination Council (CCC), established by the Texas Legislature, administers the CMP; the TSSWCB is a statutorily-authorized member of the CCC.

The CCC is charged with adopting uniform goals and policies to guide decision-making by all entities regulating or managing natural resource use within the Texas coastal area. The CCC reviews significant

actions taken or authorized by state agencies and subdivisions that may adversely affect coastal natural resources to determine consistency with CMP goals and policies. In addition, the CCC oversees the CMP Grants Program and the Small Business and Individual Permitting Assistance Program.

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

More information on the CMP is available at <http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal.html>.

### **Conditional Approval Status of Coastal NPS Program**

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

In July 2008, the CCC responded to the remaining conditional approval findings of NOAA and EPA. It was anticipated that this response would address the remaining conditions resulting in a fully approved program.

On May 29, 2009, GLO received e-mail comments from NOAA and EPA which stated, in part, that:

“NOAA and EPA find that enough progress has been made to lift only the hydromodification condition. For several urban management measures, Texas identifies planned activities to meet the conditions. While those activities may result in the measures being met in the future, NOAA and EPA must evaluate the actual activities, rather than a plan for future actions, in order to lift the conditions.”

### **Coastal Coordination Council (CCC)**

Passed by the 81<sup>st</sup> Texas Legislature, House Joint Resolution 102 proposed to effectively make the Open Beaches Act part of the Texas Constitution. This proposed constitutional amendment would protect the right of the public to access and use public beaches; this was approved as Proposition 9 in the statewide election on November 3, 2009.

The next CCC meeting is scheduled for February 11, 2010.

CCC meeting information is available at <http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal/ccc.html>.

## **TEXAS GROUNDWATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE**

### **Background**

Established by the Texas Legislature in 1989, the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) bridges the gap between State groundwater programs, improves coordination between member agencies and works to protect groundwater as a vital resource; the TSSWCB is a statutorily-authorized member of the TGPC.

The Texas Water Code sets non-degradation of the State's groundwater resources as the goal for all State programs and asserts that groundwater be kept reasonably free of contaminants that interfere with its present and potential uses. The TGPC implements the State's groundwater protection policy which:

- requires that pollution discharges, waste disposal and other regulated activities not

harm public health or impair current or potential groundwater use,

- recognizes the variability between aquifers,
- acknowledges the importance of water quality,
- balances the protection of the environment and the long-term economic health of the state, and
- recognizes the use of the best professional judgment of the responsible state agencies to implement the policy.

The Texas Groundwater Protection Committee:

- Reports on its activities and recommends new protection programs to the Legislature.
- Publishes numerous reports.
- Advises the TCEQ on the development of agricultural chemical plans for groundwater.
- Develops, implements and updates a comprehensive *Texas Groundwater Protection Strategy* and an annual *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report*.

More information on the TGPC is available at <http://www.tgpc.state.tx.us/>.

On October 26, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Donna Long] attended a TGPC meeting in Austin. Reports were given on the status and developments within each of the subcommittees: Agricultural Chemicals, Data Management, Public Outreach and Education, and Groundwater Research. A presentation of the *History of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee* was given in honor of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the legislative establishment of the TGPC. Updates were given on Groundwater Management Areas, Regional Water Planning, Groundwater Availability Modeling, National Groundwater Initiatives, the Drought Status in Texas, and National Groundwater Monitoring Program. There was roundtable discussion where Committee members deliberated the Texas groundwater protection strategy, took action on approval of a letter of support for the TWDB *Major Rivers* school-based water education program, and

approved the revised *Landowner's Guide to Plugging Abandoned Water Wells*.

On October 26, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Donna Long] attended a TGPC Agricultural Chemicals Subcommittee meeting in Austin. The Subcommittee met to discuss recent notices from EPA summarizing the agency's plans to re-assess the risks of atrazine on human health and the environment. Four meetings of the EPA independent Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP) are planned during 2010, which will focus on reviewing former Administration decisions concerning atrazine and how to effectively utilize newer research and reports by using scientific resources in a new and more aggressive way. The SAP will assess whether to change regulations on atrazine, and whether to require additional monitoring and reporting. Additionally, the Subcommittee coordinates the development of state management plans (SMP) for the prevention of pesticide contamination. EPA's proposed Pesticides and Groundwater State Management Plan Regulation would restrict the use of certain pesticides identified as probable or possible human carcinogens that can leach into groundwater. The state would be required to have a generic plan for pesticides and groundwater as well as pesticide-specific plans for certain identified pesticides. Without an approved SMP, these identified pesticides would be removed from manufacturing, sales and use in Texas. The TCEQ is tasked, with the advice of the Committee, to develop SMPs for pesticides that pose a potential threat to groundwater.

On October 26, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Donna Long] attended a TGPC Groundwater Research Subcommittee meeting in Austin. The Subcommittee met to discuss potential funding sources and proposals, current progress on recently initiated white papers, the difficulties of designing projects to fit within the current priorities of the Texas NPS Management Program and development of a more detailed groundwater priority system to submit in the upcoming Texas NPS Management Program revision. The Groundwater Research Subcommittee works to identify interagency

research needs and provide a coordinated approach for discussion with potential funding sources. The Subcommittee works to identify projects where shared resources could support research to solve problems that are common to all committee members, utilize expertise from many different subject areas in a multi-disciplinary approach, identify opportunities for cooperatively applying to federal agencies for pass-through monies, and facilitate communication between research organizations when research initiatives overlap.

## **WATER QUALITY COORDINATION ACTIVITIES**

### **MOA Coordination with TCEQ**

On September 27, 2006, at a joint meeting, the TSSWCB and the TCEQ approved a new *Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on TMDLs, I-Plans, and WPPs*. This framework for collaboration between the two agencies describes the programmatic mechanisms employed to develop and implement TMDLs and WPPs. TSSWCB staff continue to work with TCEQ staff to implement components of the MOA. The MOA is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/tmdl#moa>.

### **Surface Water Quality Standards Triennial Review**

Major revisions to the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards are being drafted by TCEQ, including the establishment of numeric nutrient criteria for reservoirs and modifications to contact recreation use and bacteria criteria.

TCEQ staff are working to incorporate comments received after the January 2009 Advisory Work Group meeting. The draft rule (Standards) will be proposed in the *Texas Register* for public comment. TCEQ adoption of any changes to the Standards is not expected until the end of 2009 or early 2010. EPA must also approve any changes.

More information on this Standards review process is available at [http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water\\_quality/stakeholders/swqsawg.html](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water_quality/stakeholders/swqsawg.html).

### **Texas Clean Rivers Program**

The Texas Clean Rivers Program (CRP) is a state fee-funded program for water quality monitoring, assessment, and public outreach administered by the TCEQ. CRP is a collaboration of 15 partner agencies who conduct water quality monitoring and assessments in the 23 river and coastal basins in Texas. Each river or coastal basin is assigned to one of the designated CRP partner agencies. Each CRP partner agency has an established steering committee to set monitoring and assessment priorities within its basin. These committees bring together the diverse interests in each basin and are designed to allow local concerns to be addressed through regional solutions. The Texas Water Code requires the TCEQ and CRP partner agencies to coordinate monitoring and assessment activities with local SWCDs through the TSSWCB. The data generated by CRP partner agencies is used to identify significant long-term water quality trends and characterize water quality conditions. Each CRP partner agency develops and publishes an annual *Basin Highlights Report* and a five-year *Basin Summary Report*. The TCEQ also uses CRP-generated data in the biennial assessment conducted for the *Texas Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List*. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/nav/eq/texcleanriver.html>.

### **Galveston Bay Estuary Program**

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

### **EPA 19th Annual Quality Assurance Conference**

On October 19-22, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Donna Long] attended the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual EPA

Region 6 Quality Assurance Conference in Dallas. This conference was brought environmental professionals together for continuing education in the fields of air, water, and policy. Conference topics were geared toward new technologies, emerging contaminants, laboratory protocols, and upcoming policy changes. Next year's conference will include a 20-year anniversary celebration in addition to the standard conference agenda and is scheduled for October 2010.

### **Lone Star Healthy Streams Steering Committee**

On October 19, 2009, TSSWCB Board Member Larry Jacobs and TSSWCB SRM staff [Mitch Conine, John Foster, TJ Helton, Aaron Wendt] attended the Lone Star Healthy Streams Steering Committee meeting in Arlington. The meeting was held in conjunction with the 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of SWCD Directors. AgriLife Extension delivered the Lone Star Healthy Streams education program to the Steering Committee for final review and comment. The BMP Resource Manual was also provided to the Committee for review and comment. Once final comments are incorporated, both the presentation and resource manual will be finalized and delivered to the TSSWCB, EPA and landowners throughout the state. Results from the grazing demonstration sites were presented to the Committee as well. The data collected from the 2S Ranch shows cattle were spending 50% less time near the stream when alternative water was present. At the Welder Wildlife Refuge and USDA ARS Riesel site, conditions are improving; however, no runoff has been received at the Welder Wildlife Refuge due to the drought conditions, hampering data collection efforts. An update was given on the status of the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards revision. Funded by the TSSWCB with CWA §319(h) grants, the Lone Star Healthy Streams project will benefit livestock operations throughout Texas. More information is available at <http://grazinglands-wq.tamu.edu/>.

### **TDA Feral Hog Task Force**

On September 23, 2009, TSSWCB staff [Mel Davis, Aaron Wendt] attended a Feral Hog Task Force meeting hosted by Agriculture Commissioner

Staples in Austin. The 81<sup>st</sup> Texas Legislature appropriated \$1M over the FY2010-2011 biennium to the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) for feral hog abatement research, landowner education and outreach, and cooperative funding projects for actual abatement work. The Commissioner reconvened this Task Force to provide direction on a long-term statewide feral hog abatement strategy and to recommend appropriate projects to fund over the FY2010-2011 biennium.

At this meeting, the Task Force reviewed and discussed responses TDA received from their Request-for-Information (RFI) on existing and proposed feral hog abatement projects. Additionally, TDA had polled all 254 counties about any ongoing feral hog abatement activities each county was funding and participating in; only 46 counties responded. Responses to the RFI and the county poll helped the Task Force focus in on the type of projects that should be funded over this biennium. The Task Force also continued discussions on crafting a statewide feral hog abatement strategy. It was recommended that the strategy be designed as a model approach that can be implemented on a local county or watershed basis. The statewide strategy would include a section that clearly describes the breadth of ongoing abatement and research activities. The model approach would focus on working with landowners on actual abatement of feral hogs combined with an education component about feral hog management.

Many of the bacteria-related TMDLs and WPPs that the TSSWCB is involved in have demonstrated that since feral hogs spend a significant amount of time in the riparian corridor, they are significant contributors of pollutant loadings (bacteria, nutrients, sediment) to waterbodies. TSSWCB SRM staff intend to work with TDA to discuss how best to leverage their feral hog abatement monies with the TSSWCB NPS Grant Program to achieve the feral hog abatement goals in numerous WPPs and TMDLs, such as the Plum Creek WPP.

Based on the discussions by the Task Force, TDA staff recently published an RFP soliciting projects

for a one-year grant program to implement a long-term statewide feral hog abatement strategy. TDA may award up to \$500,000 for the term of the grant. Proposals must be submitted by December 9, 2009. The full RFP is available at <http://www.texasagriculture.gov/>.

On October 29, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Pamela Casebolt, Mitch Conine, TJ Helton, Aaron Wendt] attended a feral hog planning meeting with Texas Water Resources Institute, Texas AgriLife Extension Service, and Texas Wildlife Services in Bastrop. Discussion centered on feral hog abatement in the Buck Creek and Plum Creek watersheds, which are currently in the development and implementation phase of a WPP, respectfully. The goal of the meeting was to coordinate a study to assess the effectiveness of feral hog abatement activities on reducing fecal contamination and restoring water quality. TWS has committed to aerial hunting in both watersheds.

On November 6, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Pamela Casebolt, Mitch Conine] participated in a feral hog planning meeting with Texas Water Resources Institute, Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas Wildlife Services, and Texas AgriLife Research via conference call. The meeting expanded on the discussion held on October 29, 2009. The BMP effectiveness study would include both a feral hog abatement component and a water quality monitoring component. The use of BST to quantify the relative magnitude of bacteria loadings from feral hogs was discussed. A project timeline was discussed as well as associated tasks. TWS is planning on conducting aerial hunting in the late winter or early spring (February-March 2010) in the Buck Creek and Plum Creek watersheds. AgriLife Extension and TWS will begin contacting landowners in these watersheds and getting permission to conduct abatement activities on their property. In order to evaluate the effects of feral hog abatement, TWRI and AgriLife Extension will need to begin monitoring water quality in a pre-selected subwatershed soon and continue throughout the study period.

## Upcoming Public Meetings

- December 1, 2009 – Pecos River WPP Public Meeting (Pecos)
- December 1, 2009 – Pecos River WPP Public Meeting (Imperial)
- December 1, 2009 – *An Urgent Call to Action: Nutrient Innovations Task Group Report* (EPA Webcast)
- December 2, 2009 – Pecos River WPP Public Meeting (Ozona)
- December 3, 2009 – Pecos River WPP Public Meeting (Irmaan)
- December 3, 2009 – Texas Watershed Steward workshop focused on Caddo Lake (Jefferson)
- December 3, 2009 – Southeast and South Central Texas Regional Watershed Coordination Steering Committee (Columbus)
- December 4, 2009 – Lampasas River Watershed Technical Advisory Group (Temple)
- December 8, 2009 – Red River Pathogen Education Workshop (Eisenhower State Park)
- December 9, 2009 – Red River Transboundary Work Group (Wichita Falls)
- December 9, 2009 – Red River Pathogen Education Workshop (Wichita Falls)
- December 10, 2009 – Galveston Bay Council Water and Sediment Quality Subcommittee (Houston)
- December 14, 2009 – Bastrop Bayou WPP Public Meeting (Angleton)
- December 15, 2009 – Applications Due for EPA FY2010 Environmental Education Grants Program
- December 15, 2009 – Bacteria Implementation Group Steering Committee (Houston)
- December 17, 2009 – Bastrop Bayou WPP Public Meeting (Lake Jackson)

- January 6, 2010 – Texas Groundwater Protection Committee Public Outreach and Education Subcommittee (Austin)
- January 11, 2010 – *Funding Your Water Research/Education Program* (College Station)
- January 12, 2010 – Geronimo Creek Watershed Partnership Steering Committee (Seguin)
- January 14, 2010 – Lampasas River Watershed Steering Committee (TBD)
- January 16, 2010 – Water for People and the Environment Conference (Houston)
- January 19, 2010 – Bacteria Implementation Group Steering Committee (Houston)
- January 20, 2010 – Galveston Bay Council (TBD)
- January 20, 2010 – Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (Austin)
- January 20, 2010 – Texas Groundwater Protection Committee Agricultural Chemicals Subcommittee (Austin)
- January 20, 2010 – Texas Groundwater Protection Committee Groundwater Research Subcommittee (Austin)
- January 21, 2010 – Texas Watershed Steward workshop focused on San Bernard River (West Columbia)
- January 21, 2010 – Arroyo Colorado WPP Steering Committee (Weslaco)
- January 21, 2010 – Arroyo Colorado WPP Agricultural Issues Workgroup (Weslaco)
- January 27, 2010 – Texas Watershed Coordinator Roundtable (Georgetown)
- January 28, 2010 – Buck Creek WPP Public Meeting (Wellington)
- January 28, 2010 – *Getting In Step Workshop* (Georgetown)

## WATER QUALITY PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

### Adams and Cow Bayous

Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen, pH

Mechanism: TMDL, I-Plan

Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/37-orangecounty.html>. These TMDLs have limited affect on livestock and forestry operations in the Adams and Cow Bayous watershed in Orange, Jasper and Newton Counties.

### **Arroyo Colorado**

Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen  
Concerns: Nutrients, Sediment  
Mechanism: WPP, TMDL, I-Plan  
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at <http://www.arroyocolorado.org/>. This WPP affects farming operations in the Arroyo Colorado watershed in Cameron, Hidalgo and Willacy Counties.

### **Atascosa River**

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

On November 5, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Aaron Wendt] attended a public meeting regarding the Atascosa River UAA projects in Pleasanton. TCEQ provided a summary of the proposed revisions to the Surface Water Quality Standards and described why a recreational UAA would now need to be completed for the Atascosa River. Previous data collection efforts had only focused on quantifying bacterial pollutant loadings for a TMDL, rather than the extent of actual contact recreation. TIAER staff described the data collection process for both a recreational UAA and an aquatic life UAA. Previous aquatic life UAA data collection focused only on a small portion of the river, but data is needed on the entire segment to adequately assess the health of the aquatic community. AgriLife Research and TIAER staff emphasized the need for stakeholder involvement in the UAA process and solicited private access points to the river from landowners. The Atascosa County SWCD provided information on available technical assistance,

provided through a CWA §319(h) grant to the SWCD from TSSWCB, to help livestock producers develop and implement WQMPs. Additionally, the SWCD discussed the availability of financial assistance through the USDA-NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) State Resource Concern for Water Quality in South Central Texas.

More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/31-atascosa.html>. This TMDL will affect livestock operations in the Atascosa River watershed in Atascosa, Bexar, Frio, Karnes, Live Oak, McMullen, Medina and Wilson Counties.

### **Bastrop Bayou**

Concern: Bacteria  
Mechanism: WPP  
Lead: TCEQ

The WPP is posted for comments at:

[http://www.hgac.com/community/water/watershed\\_protection/bastrop\\_bayou.aspx](http://www.hgac.com/community/water/watershed_protection/bastrop_bayou.aspx)

More information is available at <http://www.bastropbayou.org/>. This WPP has the potential to affect livestock and farming operations in the Bastrop Bayou watershed in Brazoria County.

### **Brady Creek**

Impairment: Dissolved Oxygen  
Mechanism: WPP  
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at <http://www.ucratx.org/NPSBrady.html>. This project has the potential to affect agricultural operations in the Brady Creek watershed in McCulloch, Concho, San Saba and Menard Counties.

### **Buck Creek**

Impairment: Bacteria  
Mechanism: WPP  
Lead: TSSWCB

On October 27, 2009, TSSWCB Field staff [Jack Foote] and TSSWCB SRM staff [Mitch Conine]

attended the Buck Creek WPP public meeting in Wellington. Updates were given on the progress of water quality sampling, and the status of the WPP document. Texas AgriLife Research discussed the final results of the BST. Sampling will continue through the end of the project. The results of the SELECT model for each sampling site were presented to the stakeholders as well as model results for the whole watershed and each of the assessment units. These results will be used to target general areas where BMPs could be implemented to help reduce bacterial loading to Buck Creek. The draft WPP is scheduled to be released for comment at the next stakeholder meeting.

More information is available at <http://twri.tamu.edu/buckcreek/>. This WPP has the potential to affect livestock and farming operations in the Buck Creek watershed in Donley, Collingsworth, and Childress Counties.

#### **Buffalo and Whiteoak Bayous**

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

More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/22-buffalobayou.html>. This TMDL will have limited affect on livestock operations in the Buffalo and Whiteoak Bayous watershed in Harris, Fort Bend and Waller Counties.

#### **Caddo Lake**

Impairment: Dissolved Oxygen, pH  
Mechanism: WPP  
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at [http://www.netmwd.com/Caddo%20Lake%20Protection%20Plan/Caddo\\_index.html](http://www.netmwd.com/Caddo%20Lake%20Protection%20Plan/Caddo_index.html). This WPP has the potential to affect poultry, forestry and other agricultural operations in the Caddo Lake watershed in Upshur, Camp, Titus, Morris, Cass, Harrison, Marion, Wood, Gregg, Franklin, and Hopkins Counties.

#### **Cedar Creek Reservoir**

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

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

#### **Clear Creek**

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

More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/68-clearcreekbacteria.html>. This TMDL has limited affect on livestock operations in the Clear Creek watershed in Galveston, Harris, Brazoria and Fort Bend Counties.

#### **Concho River**

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

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

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

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

More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/42-copano.html>. This TMDL will affect

livestock operations in the Copano Bay and Mission and Aransas Rivers watershed in Bee, Goliad, Refugio, Karnes, Aransas and San Patricio Counties.

### **Cypress Creek**

Concerns: Dissolved Oxygen, Bacteria  
Mechanism: WPP  
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at <http://www.cypresscreekproject.org/>. This WPP has the potential to affect livestock and farming operations in the Cypress Creek watershed in Hays County.

### **Dickinson Bayou**

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

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

### **Eagle Mountain Reservoir**

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

More information is available at <http://nctx-water.tamu.edu/>. This WPP has the potential to affect agricultural operations in the Eagle Mountain Reservoir watershed in Clay, Jack, Montague, Parker, Tarrant and Wise Counties.

### **Elm and Sandies Creeks**

Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen  
Mechanism: TMDL, I-Plan

Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/31-elmsandies.html>. This TMDL will affect livestock operations in the Elm and Sandies Creeks watershed in Gonzales, DeWitt, Karnes, Wilson and Guadalupe Counties.

### **Galveston Bay**

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

More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/74-uppercoastoyster.html>. This TMDL has limited affect on livestock operations around the Galveston Bay complex in Chambers, Harris, Galveston and Brazoria Counties.

### **Geronimo Creek**

Impairment: Bacteria  
Mechanism: WPP  
Lead: TSSWCB

On November 4, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a public meeting in Geronimo for a flood planning study being performed on Geronimo Creek. The purpose of this meeting was to inform citizens in the Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Watershed of the study and ask the public for input that would be used to conduct the study through surveys, questions and testimony. The study will also update existing flood maps which were developed in the 1970s. This was the first of four public meetings on the study, which is being funded by the Texas Water Development Board and local entities. GBRA and Texas AgriLife Extension Service provided an overview of the WPP for the creeks and discussed the importance of both studies complimenting each other. The flood study is scheduled to be completed in August 2010.

On November 10, 2009, nearly 80 people attended a Texas Watershed Steward workshop in Seguin. Sponsored by TSSWCB and facilitated by the

Texas AgriLife Extension Service, the training discussed what it is to be a watershed steward, watershed impairments, managing urban and rural lands through the use of BMPs, and how to get involved in community-driven watershed protection and management. The training also involved interactive displays such as a rainfall simulator. The workshop was held in support of on-going watershed assessment and planning efforts being facilitated by the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority in the Geronimo and Alligator Creeks watershed. More information on the Texas Watershed Steward Program is available at <http://tw.s.tamu.edu/>.

More information is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/watersheds#geronimocreek>. This WPP has the potential to affect ranching and farming operations in the Geronimo Creek watershed in Guadalupe and Comal Counties.

#### **Gilleland Creek**

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

More information on the Creekside Conservation Program is available at <http://www.lcra.org/community/conservation/creekside.html>. More information on the TMDL is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/69-gillelandcreekbacteria.html>. This TMDL has limited affect on livestock operations in the Gilleland Creek watershed in Travis County.

#### **Lake Granbury**

Concern: Bacteria  
Mechanism: WPP  
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at <http://www.brazos.org/gbWPP.asp>. This WPP has the potential to affect agricultural operations around Lake Granbury in Hood and Parker Counties.

#### **Lake Granger**

Impairment: Bacteria  
Concern: Sediment  
Mechanism: WPP  
Lead: TSSWCB

More information is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/managementprogram/granger>. This WPP will affect farming and livestock operations in the Lake Granger watershed in Williamson and Burnet Counties.

#### **Hickory Creek**

Concern: Nutrients, Sediment  
Mechanism: WPP  
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at <http://www.cityofdenton.com/pages/mygovernormentalwater319grant.cfm>. This WPP has the potential to affect farming and livestock operations in the Hickory Creek watershed in Denton County.

#### **Lake Houston**

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

More information on the greater Houston area Bacteria Implementation Group (BIG) is available at <http://www.h-gac.com/community/water/tmdl/BIG/default.aspx>. More information on the Lake Houston TMDLs is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/82-lakehouston.html>. These TMDLs have the potential to affect livestock operations in the Lake Houston watershed in Grimes, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, San Jacinto, Walker and Waller Counties.

#### **Lake O' the Pines**

Impairment: Dissolved Oxygen  
Mechanism: TMDL, I-Plan  
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/19-lakeopines.html>. This TMDL and I- Plan affect poultry, dairy and forestry operations in the Lake O' the Pines watershed in Upshur, Camp, Titus, Morris, Cass, Harrison and Marion Counties.

### **Lampasas River**

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

On November 10, 2009, SRM staff [Aaron Wendt, Pamela Casebolt] attended the Lampasas River Watershed Partnership Steering Committee meeting in Lampasas. Discussion centered on water quality monitoring and the formation of the Partnership. The Brazos River Authority presented information and answered questions regarding historical and current water quality monitoring efforts in the watershed. The TCEQ discussed a recently initiated bacteria water quality sampling and analysis project that is collecting data on a single location in the impaired reach of the Lampasas River. The framework for the Partnership was discussed and the Partnership ground rules were approved. A Steering Committee was formalized and five topical Work Groups were formed, including Agricultural Issues, Wastewater Infrastructure, Outreach and Education, Urban/ Suburban Issues, and Habitat and Wildlife.

More information is available at <http://www.lampasasriver.org/>. This WPP will affect livestock operations in the Lampasas River watershed in Bell, Burnet, Hamilton, Lampasas and Mills Counties.

### **Leon River**

Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen  
Mechanism: WPP, TMDL, I-Plan  
Lead: TCEQ (TMDL), TSSWCB (WPP)

More information on the postponed bacteria TMDL is available at [http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/t](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/34-leonbacteria.html)

[mdl/34-leonbacteria.html](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/34-leonbacteria.html). More information on the WPP is available at <http://www.brazos.org/LeonRiverWPP.asp>. Both the WPP and the TMDL will affect livestock operations in the Leon River watershed in Comanche, Coryell, Mills, Erath and Hamilton Counties.

### **Little Brazos River Tributaries**

Impairment: Bacteria  
Mechanism: Assessment  
Lead: TSSWCB

More information is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/watersheds#littlebrazosriver>. This project will affect livestock and poultry operations in the Walnut, Pin Oak, Campbells, Mud and Spring Creek watersheds in Robertson County.

### **Lower San Antonio River**

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

More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/34-lowersanantoniobac.html>. This TMDL will affect livestock operations in the Lower San Antonio River watershed in Karnes, Goliad, Refugio, DeWitt, Wilson, Victoria, and Guadalupe Counties.

### **North Bosque River**

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

More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/06-bosque.html>. This TMDL affects dairy operations in the North Bosque River watershed in Bosque, Erath, Somervell, Hamilton, Coryell and McLennan Counties.

### **Oso Bay and Oso Creek**

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

More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/67-osobaybacteria.html>. This TMDL may affect livestock and farming operations in the Oso Bay/Creek watershed in Nueces County.

### **Peach Creek**

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

More information is available at [http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/34-peachcreek\\_group.html](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/34-peachcreek_group.html). This TMDL will affect livestock operations in the Peach Creek watershed in Gonzales, Bastrop, Fayette and Caldwell Counties.

### **Pecos River**

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

On October 30, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Mitch Conine, John Foster, Aaron Wendt] attended a meeting in Austin regarding salinity in the Pecos River. The meeting was called by the Pecos River Compact Commission for the purpose of discussing what activities are currently on-going to addressing salinity in the Pecos River and to coordinate a strategy of identifying the source of salt intrusion into the Pecos River from the Texas State line to the Rio Grande. TWRI gave an update on the status of the TSSWCB-sponsored WPP and the upcoming implementation projects which have been funded with CWA §319(h) monies.

On November 3, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Mitch Conine, Lee Munz] attended the Upper Pecos SWCD meeting in Pecos. SRM staff briefed the SWCD on implementing some of the highest

priority practices recommended in the WPP as a means to improve the quality of water in the Pecos River and to improve the health of the watershed. Through funding provided by the TSSWCB with a CWA §319(h) grant, the SWCD will hire a technician to support chemical saltcedar treatments along the riparian corridor and to encourage landowners to voluntarily implement recommended BMPs on their land. Technical and financial assistance will be provided to landowners to develop and implement WQMPs to reduce nutrient and sediment loss and consequently affect dissolved oxygen levels. Educational programs will also be provided to landowners in the watershed.

More information is available at <http://pecosbasin.tamu.edu/>. This WPP will affect agricultural operations in the Pecos River watershed in Andrews, Brewster, Crane, Crockett, Culberson, Ector, Jeff Davis, Loving, Pecos, Presidio, Reagan, Reeves, Terrell, Upton, Val Verde, Ward and Winkler Counties.

### **Plum Creek**

Impairment: Bacteria  
Concerns: Nutrients  
Mechanism: WPP  
Lead: TSSWCB

On November 12, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Pamela Casebolt] attended the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership Steering Committee meeting in Lockhart. Discussion centered on the Salt Branch at Salt Flat Road oil spill and clean-up and long-term sustainability of the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership. On September 15, 2009, Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority staff discovered a 2-inch water pipe spraying oily water into the Salt Branch of Plum Creek. GBRA promptly notified the Railroad Commission of Texas, which oversaw the pipe repair and stream clean-up. Texas AgriLife Extension Service facilitated the discussion on the future and long-term sustainability of the Partnership. Steering Committee members identified a number of entities and strategies for AgriLife Extension to pursue and determine the feasibility of those mechanisms.

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

### **Rio Grande below Falcon Reservoir**

Impairment: Bacteria  
Mechanism: WPP  
Lead: TCEQ

This project has the potential to affect livestock operations in Starr, Jim Hogg and Hidalgo Counties.

### **San Bernard River**

Impairment: Bacteria  
Mechanism: WPP  
Lead: Third party

On October 28, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] met with the Colorado County SWCD in Columbus to discuss the San Bernard River WPP and how the watershed planning process may affect District Cooperators.

On November 9, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a meeting about the San Bernard River WPP at the Attwater Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge near Eagle Lake. The meeting was called by the Austin County SWCD to inform District Cooperators and others, including landowners and business representatives from Colorado and Austin Counties, of the WPP and to encourage stakeholder involvement in the process.

On November 10, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a public meeting in Wharton to kick-off the San Bernard River WPP. This WPP is being facilitated by the Houston-Galveston Area Council and is funded by American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (stimulus) funding by EPA through TCEQ. The focus of this meeting was to encourage stakeholder involvement in the watershed planning process. The San Bernard River is on the 303d List for elevated bacteria levels and low dissolved oxygen; there are also nutrient concerns for the river. Brian Koch presented

information on WPPs and discussed TSSWCB's role in NPS pollution abatement across the state. This was the first of three public meetings across the watershed to kick-off the WPP.

More information is available at:

[www.h-gac.com/go/sanbernard](http://www.h-gac.com/go/sanbernard) and <http://www.sanbernardriver.com/>. This project has the potential to affect farming and livestock operations in the San Bernard River watershed in Austin, Brazoria, Colorado, Fort Bend and Wharton Counties.

### **Lake Somerville**

Impairment: pH, Dissolved Oxygen  
Mechanism: Assessment  
Lead: TCEQ

This project has the potential to affect farming and livestock operations in the Lake Somerville watershed in Bastrop, Burleson, Lee, Milam, Washington, and Williamson Counties.

### **South Llano River**

Impairment: None  
Mechanism: Assessment and Planning  
Lead: Third party

More information is available at <http://www.texaswatermatters.org/southllanoriver.htm>. This project has the potential to affect farming and livestock operations in the South Llano River watershed in Edwards, Kerr, Kimble, Real and Sutton Counties.

### **Upper Cibolo Creek**

Impairment: bacteria  
Concern: dissolved oxygen, nutrients  
Mechanism: WPP  
Lead: TCEQ

On November 12, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Aaron Wendt] attended a public meeting for the Upper Cibolo Creek WPP in Boerne. This was the first meeting to introduce stakeholders to watershed planning. This WPP is being facilitated by the City of Boerne with funding from TCEQ and EPA.

Water quality data from the watershed was highlighted and stakeholders were encouraged to sign-up to serve on the Steering Committee. Aaron Wendt presented information on the watershed planning process and provided examples from WPPs across the state.

More information is available at <http://www.ci.boerne.tx.us/>. This WPP has the potential to affect livestock operations in the Upper Cibolo Creek watershed in Kendall County.

### **Upper Guadalupe River**

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

On November 4, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Aaron Wendt] attended a public meeting focused on developing the I-Plan for the bacteria TMDL in Kerrville. A draft of the I-Plan was circulated to stakeholders for review and comment. Proposed management measures include monitoring at wastewater treatment facilities, work to improve sewer collection lines, inspection of septic systems, management and reduction of waterfowl and bridge-nesting bird populations, and education programs for livestock producers.

More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/mdl/65-guadalupeabovecanyon.html>. This TMDL has limited affect on livestock operations in the Upper Guadalupe River watershed in Kerr County.

### **Upper Oyster Creek**

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

More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/mdl/25-oystercreek.html>. This TMDL will have limited affect on farming and livestock operations in the Upper Oyster Creek watershed in Fort Bend County.

### **Upper Trinity River**

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

More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/mdl/66-trinitybacteria.html>. These TMDLs will have limited affect on livestock operations in the Upper Trinity River watershed in Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Henderson, Kaufman, Navarro and Tarrant Counties.

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## **Water Supply Enhancement Program Status Report**

The 81<sup>st</sup> Legislature continued funding for the Water Supply Enhancement Program by providing \$4,503,641.00 in General Revenue Funds in FY2010. These funds were directed to be used for continuation of brush control projects designated by the TSSWCB.

- Provided the following SWCDs with Water Supply Enhancement Program Updates, Water Supply Enhancement Program Certification, and /or Contracts

#### **Area 1 District**

Donley County SWCD

#### **Area 2 Districts**

Middle Concho SWCD

Eldorado-Divide SWCD

Tom Green County SWCD

Pedernales SWCD

Gillespie County SWCD

Kerr County SWCD

Kendall SWCD

#### **Area 3**

McMullen County SWCD

LaSalle County SWCD

Caldwell/ Travis SWCD

Comal/Guadalupe SWCD

Webb County SWCD

Frio SWCD

## Area 5

Archer County SWCD  
Lower Clear Fork/Brazos SWCD  
Pecan Bayou SWCD  
Bosque SWCD  
Little Wichita SWCD

### Current Water Supply Enhancement Projects throughout the State and Project Managers:

- Canadian River Project- Rod Goodwin  
Canadian River Municipal Water Authority
- Greenbelt Water Authority – Bob Gruner
- Twin Buttes- Tuffy Wood
- Little Wichita River (Archer and Clay Counties)- Cody York
- Pedernales Project- Melissa Grote
- Guadalupe River Project- Melissa Grote
- Edwards Aquifer Project (Bandera County)-  
Melissa Grote
- Lake Brownwood Project- Cody York
- Nueces River Project- Tuffy Wood
- Bosque Project- Cody York
- Lower Guadalupe River – Kendria Ray
- Frio River Watershed – Adrian Perez
- Fort Phantom Hill- Cody York
- Palo Pinto- Cody York

### Evaluating Watersheds are based on the following criteria as per Chapter 203.053:

In ranking areas under the plan, the board shall consider:

- (1) the location of various brush infestations;
- (2) the type and severity of brush infestations;
- (3) the various management methods that may be used to control brush;
- (4) the amount of water produced by a project and the severity of water shortage in the project area; and

any other criteria that the board considers relevant to assure that the brush control program can be most effectively, efficiently, and economically implemented

### Evaluating Limits on Cost Share Participation as per Chapter 203.154

- (a) Not more than 70 percent of the total cost of a single brush control project may be made available as the state's share in cost sharing.
- (b) A person is not eligible to participate in the state brush control program or to receive money from the state brush control program if the person is simultaneously receiving any cost-share money for brush control on the same acreage from a federal government program.
- (c) The board may grant an exception to Subsection (b) if the board finds that joint participation of the state brush control program and any federal brush control program will:
  - (1) enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of a project;
  - (2) lessen the state's financial commitment to the project; and
  - (3) not exceed 80 percent of the total cost of the project.
- (d) A political subdivision is eligible for cost sharing under the brush control program, provided that the state's share may not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of a single project.
- (e) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Section, 100 percent of the total cost of a single project on public lands may be made available as the state's share in cost sharing.

### Staff Activities

- Evaluate pending application sub basin criteria from all projects
- Assisted landowners in Twin Buttes, Pedernales, Pecan Bayou, Lake Arrowhead, Lake Kickapoo, Bosque River with Brush Certifications
- Assisted landowners in Twin Buttes, Pedernales, Pecan Bayou, Lake Arrowhead, Lake Kickapoo, Bosque River with Brush Contracts

- Prepare Sunset Evaluation Report concerning Water Supply Enhancement Program for TSSWCB
- Assisted Victoria SWCD with Huisache proposal on Water Enhancement Program in the Lower Guadalupe Watershed
- Assisted Gonzales County SWCD with Water Enhancement Project on the Carrizo Wilcox Aquifer
- Assisted Palo Pinto SWCD with Water Enhancement Project on the Palo Pinto Reservoir Watershed and attended workgroup
- Assisted Johnson City with computer setup in new office
- Assisted Johnson City with FY2010 District budget and Cooperative Agreement
- Assisted with State meeting in Arlington
- Assist Sunset Commission on Water Enhancement Program
- Assist Dr. Conner and GBRA with feasibility study
- Assisted UCRA with the Twin Buttes lake basin project
- Assisted Greenbelt with mapping
- Updated State Brush control Plan

then units of local government would be responsible for maintaining them into the future.

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

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

The State Board met on Thursday, November 19, 2009, and took the following actions on Flood Control Program items:

### Technical Standards

The State Board considered the adoption of technical standards for certain operation and maintenance (O&M) activities, which if adopted, would require that those activities be performed to the extent specified in the technical standard prior to reimbursement being made. This is a function that the State Board could exercise under §529.8 of the adopted program rules. Specifically, the appropriate method for addressing large trees and stump removal was discussed. During the Board meeting, agency staff recommended against adopting any technical standards at this time. Due to the variability of conditions across the state, the State Board decided that the most effective approach for an O&M activity would best be known

## FLOOD CONTROL DAM PROGRAMS

### Background

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

at the local level. The State Board chose to leave the method and quality assurance of all O&M activities to the discretion of the local soil and water conservation district (SWCD) and dam sponsors. No technical standards were adopted.

### **Standard Rates for In-Kind Match**

In accordance with §529.3(g) of the adopted program rules, the State Board is required to establish standard rates for assigning values to in-kind contributions performed by non-state entities when those in-kind contributions are used as match for a reimbursed O&M activity. On September 17, 2009, the State Board adopted an initial set of rates. On November 19, 2009, the State Board made additions to the rates based on agency staff recommendations. The following new standard rates were added to the list:

- 1.01C-Removal of woody brush or other undesirable vegetation from dam embankments, spillways, and plunge basins (**Mowing / Shredding Only**). \$50.00 / Acre
- 1.06B-Repairing soil erosion damage on dam embankments and spillways resulting from lack of vegetative cover (**includes the use of a dump truck**). \$ 300.00 / Hour
- 1.10B-Minor earth shaping and establishment of vegetation to repair a slope slide on a dam embankment (**includes the use of a dump truck**). \$ 300.00 / Hour
- 1.11B-Repair of wave erosion requiring minor earthwork and establishment of vegetation (**includes the use of a dump truck**). \$ 300.00 / Hour
- 1.12B-Repair of minor erosion from livestock and wildlife trailing on dam embankments or spillways (**includes the use of a dump truck**). \$ 300.00 / Hour
- 1.13B-Repair of erosion from vehicles on dam embankments or spillways (**includes the use of a dump truck**). \$ 300.00 / Hour

- 1.15B-Repair of erosion in auxiliary (emergency) spillway from minor storm damage or livestock/wildlife trailing (**includes the use of a dump truck**). \$ 300.00 / Hour

All of the above additions are subcategories of existing O&M activities. Mowing/Shredding was added as 1.01 “C,” and the use of a dump truck was added to existing 1.06, 1.10, 1.11, 1.12, 1.13, and 1.15 in the form of “B” to each item. The originally adopted standard rates for these activities WITHOUT the use of a dump truck are still in effect. The new standard rates are now available and are retroactive for all work performed subsequent to September 1, 2009. If you have previously submitted an in-kind match report, please contact the TSSWCB immediately to modify your in-kind match balance with the agency.

### **Structural Repair Grant Program Rules**

Rules for the Structural Repair Grant Program were approved by the State Board on November 19, 2009 to be published in the Texas Register for a 30-day public comment period. While we do not know at this time when the Texas Register will publish the rules, the TSSWCB has already made these proposed rules [available on the agency website for review](#). Once published in the Texas Register, the TSSWCB will send you notification that the public comment period has begun.

### **O&M Grant Program Rules**

The State Board adopted rules for the O&M Grant Program on September 17, 2009. In order to make references between the adopted O&M program rules and the newly proposed structural repair program rules clear and more understandable, agency staff recommended the State Board propose minor changes to the O&M program rules. Included in these proposed changes are a few typographical corrections, amendments to language to improve clarity of existing intent, and one substantive change relating to the addition of one definition. Staff recommended the definition of operation and maintenance (O&M) be expanded to include minor maintenance of roads within an

easement used in gaining access to a flood control dam for the purpose of performing O&M. The expanded definition stipulates that such maintenance of roads would not be reimbursed by the State Board, but may be considered as an in-kind contribution of match. The State Board approved these proposed amendments to be published in the Texas Register for a 30-day public comment period. While we do not know at this time when these proposed amendments will be published in the Texas Register, both the proposed amendments to the O&M rules and the proposed new repair rules should be published in the same edition of the Texas Register with the same comment period. The proposed amendments to the O&M rules may be downloaded from the TSSWCB's website until they are formally published in the Texas Register. The TSSWCB will send you a notification when the rules are published in the Texas Register.

#### **Flood Control Program Document Updates**

The O&M Program Reimbursement Request Form and the In-Kind Match Reporting Form have been updated and made available on the TSSWCB's website. Please begin using the updated versions of these forms immediately.

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

The NRCS has prepared Watershed fact sheets for all watershed projects in Texas. A state-wide fact sheet has also been prepared. You may access this information at:  
<http://www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/watersheds/index.htm>.

The fact sheets and other data from the watershed web may be used in working with your local watershed sponsors on O&M, repair, dam safety, and rehabilitation of watershed project dams.

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The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) is a state agency that administers Texas' soil and water conservation law and coordinates conservation and pollution abatement programs throughout the State. Headquartered in Temple, Texas, the TSSWCB offers technical assistance to the state's 216 soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs). The TSSWCB is the lead state agency for the planning, management, and abatement of agricultural and silvicultural (forestry) nonpoint source pollution, and administers the Texas Brush Control Program. The TSSWCB maintains regional offices in strategic locations in the State to help carry out the agency's responsibilities.



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