



TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

Monthly Program News and Activities

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The TSSWCB produces this monthly update of the agency's activities as an informational service to local SWCD Directors. I hope you find this information helpful, and if you have any questions please don't hesitate to call your local field representative or our state headquarters.

REX ISOM, Executive Director

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STATE BOARD WORK SESSIONS AND MEETINGS

The State Board has scheduled a Work Session on **Wednesday, May 25, 2011** and a formal State Board Meeting on **Thursday, May 26, 2011** in Temple. For more information on past and pending State Board Work Sessions and Meetings, please visit <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/boardmeetings>, or contact Karen Preece at (254) 773-2250, ext. 245.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Appropriations

Both the House and Senate versions of the General Appropriations Act were introduced identically and included significant reductions to most agency program areas.

Funding levels are proposed to be reduced for the TSSWCB by \$18.7 million. The recommended reductions are:

- Flood Control Program – reduced to zero - (\$13.4 million)
- Conservation Implementation Assistance (\$0.7 Million)
- Water Supply Enhancement Program (\$4.3 million)
- Poultry WQMP Program (\$230,000)
- Indirect Administration (\$138,000)
- Employees (3.4)

The TSSWCB has testified before the House Appropriations (February 14, 2001 and February 25, 2011) and Senate Finance Committees (February 28, 2011), and in both cases requested that funding from the current fiscal year be made available during the next biennium to address engineering design and inspection services associated with on-going flood control structural repair projects. The construction funds for these projects are secured into the next biennium through contracts with local SWCDs; however, the continuing engineering needs are not funded beyond August 31, 2011. State agencies may not contract for professional services, such as engineering, beyond the fiscal year for which the services are provided.

Sunset Legislation

Legislation needed to continue the TSSWCB's existence beyond August 31, 2011 and implement the recommendations of the Sunset Advisory Commission has been filed in both the House and Senate (House Bill 1808 – Rep. Cook, Senate Bill 645 – Sen. Nichols).

House Bill 1808 was reported favorably from the committee on Senate Government Organization on April 29, 2011. As of the date of this publication, the bill had not been scheduled on the Senate Intent Calendar.

BUDGET AND ACCOUNTING

- The deadline for submitting approved Audits was February 1, 2011. SWCDs that do not have an approved Audit are on hold status and need to be cleared as soon as possible.

- February 28, 2011 was the deadline to file W2 and 1099 forms with IRS.
- May 15, 2011 is the deadline to submit ¾ Matching Funds claims for FY2011.

For more accounting and budgeting information, contact Kenny Zajicek at (254) 773-2250 or zajicek@tsswcb.state.tx.us.

HUMAN RESOURCES

TSSWCB is currently recruiting for the following position:

- Engineering Technician IV in Hale Center

For additional information on posted vacancies or to download an application, visit <https://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/employment>.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Program Overview

Special Projects is a department within the TSSWCB that provides coordination for the Annual State Meeting of SWCD 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.

Annual State Meeting of Texas SWCD Directors

The 71st Annual State Meeting is scheduled for October 24-26, 2011, in San Antonio at the Hyatt Regency Hill Country Hotel and Resort. For reservations call (210) 647-1234 or (800) 233-1234.

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

Program Development Workshop

The next Program Development Workshop for SWCD Directors and employees is scheduled for June 28-29, 2011 in Temple. New NRCS District Conservationists will also be invited to attend the training. Reminder flyers will continue to be sent to all SWCDs. A special letter inviting newly elected or appointed Directors to attend the training will be mailed during the first week in May. A general letter of invitation to all Directors will be sent during the last week of May.

State Board Member Elections

SWCDs in State Districts I, III, and V will elect a Member to the TSSWCB on Tuesday, May 3, 2011. The time and location of the elections are:

- State District I election will be held at 6 p.m. in the Pete and Nelda Laney Activities Center on the campus of Wayland Baptist University in Plainview
- State District III election will be held at 5 p.m. in the Victoria Community Center in Victoria
- State District V election will be held at 6 p.m. in the Student Development Center on the campus of Tarleton State University in Stephenville

Teacher's Workshop at Franklin Ranch

A Teacher's Workshop on Conservation of Natural Resources will be held at the Franklin Family Ranch in Blanco. The workshop, sponsored by the Pedernales SWCD, will be held June 7-9, 2011. Teachers can earn 16 hours of professional continuing education units.

The workshop is an opportunity for teachers to receive valuable training and resources they can take to their classrooms. Topics covered will be soils, the water cycle, plants in the Texas Hill Country, prescribed burning, wildlife habitat, energy conservation, and more. The cost is \$200 and covers lodging, meals, and materials. Scholarships may be available through SWCDs to cover the cost.

Registration information and a promotional flyer can be found at

<http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/infoed/summerworkshop> or by contacting Katy Murrah at (830) 868-7237 ext. 3 or pedernalesswcd@tx.nacdn.net. Registration closes May 31, 2011, and this workshop will fill up quickly!

Youth Range Workshop

The 57th consecutive annual youth range workshop will be conducted June 19-24, 2011 at the Texas Tech University campus in Junction. The workshop is sponsored by the Texas Section Society for Range Management.

The purpose of the workshop is to recognize outstanding youth, develop leadership skills, and provide advanced training to 4-H and FFA youth interested in practical range ecology, ranch, and natural resource management. A goal of the workshop is that youth participants will return to their local communities to serve as leaders to educate other youth and audiences about the value and management of rangeland resources.

The workshop curriculum is structured to provide knowledge and understanding in the following areas: land stewardship, range ecology, plant growth, plant-soil-water relations, primary and secondary plant succession, watershed management, livestock and wildlife needs, tools of range and natural resource management, prescribed burning, and the impact of management decisions on range resources.

A total of 40 youth will be accepted to the 2011 workshop. For more information on this youth workshop, visit <http://www.rangelands.org/texas/youtheducation.htm>.

Wildlife Alliance for Youth (WAY)

Contests

Local wildlife contests have been held in preparation for the upcoming regional and state events. Regions I, II, III and V held their annual wildlife career development events on April 12, 2011. The state contest will be held May 10, 2011 at the MT7 Ranch located near Breckenridge.

Regional winners are:

FFA		
Region	Teams/ Participants	Winners
I	9 teams 36 participants	High Point Individual <i>Chase Addington</i> <i>Frenship FFA Chapter</i> High Point Team <i>Follett FFA</i>
II	34 teams 100 participants	High Point Individual <i>Garrett Deike</i> <i>Johnson City FFA Chapter</i> High Point Team <i>Ingram FFA</i>
III	25 teams 89 participants	High Point Individual <i>Bradley Kubecka</i> <i>Flatonia FFA Chapter</i> High Point Team <i>Schulenburg FFA</i>
V	48 teams 100 participants	High Point Individual <i>Thomas Sikes</i> <i>Brownwood FFA Chapter</i> High Point Team <i>Jacksboro FFA</i>

4-H		
Region	Teams/ Participants	Winners
II	4 teams 11 participants	High Point Individual <i>Garrett Scitern</i> <i>Jones County 4-H</i> High Point Team <i>Jones County 4-H</i>
III	2 teams 7 participants	High Point Individual <i>Garrett Barnett</i> <i>Brazoria County 4-H</i> High Point Team <i>Brazoria County 4-H</i>
V	4 teams 17 participants	High Point Individual <i>Brady Skinner</i> <i>McLennan County 4-H</i> High Point Team <i>McLennan County 4-H</i>

The contests operate under the rules and guidelines of the Wildlife Alliance for Youth. The Alliance consists of the TSSWCB, Association of Texas SWCDs, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Texas AgriLife Extension 4-H, Welder Wildlife Foundation, Texas Education Agency, Texas A&M University Instructional Materials Service, Texas FFA Association, and Texas Wildlife Association.

Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contests

The 2011 FFA soil stewardship public speaking area contests have been scheduled. The dates for the contests are:

Area	Date
I	To be announced
II	May 13
III	May 12
IV	May 14
V	May 14
VI	To be announced
VII	May 17
VIII	May 13
IX	To be announced
X	May 12

First and second place winners in the respective area contests will compete for top honors in the state contest which will be held in July at the state FFA convention in Lubbock.

First, second, and third place winners in the state level soil stewardship public speaking contests will receive scholarships. First place winner will receive a \$3,000 scholarship; second place winner will receive a \$2,000 scholarship and the third place winner will receive a \$1,000 scholarship.

The theme of this year's contest is "Forests for People – More than you can imagine!" The contest is a cooperative effort of Texas FFA, TSSWCB, and the Association of Texas SWCDs. The theme of the contest is based on the National Association of Conservation Districts' annual soil stewardship program.

Texas Envirothon

The 2011 Texas Envirothon was held March 26-28, 2011 at the Eastman Nature and Wildlife Habitat Center in Longview. Thirteen teams participated in the event.

Students participating in the Texas Envirothon prepared themselves for testing in wildlife biology, forestry, aquatic science, soil science, and current environmental issues. The 2011 Current Issue was "Salt and Fresh Water Estuaries".

Teams of five students were tested not only on their basic knowledge of the main topic areas, but also on their ability to apply that knowledge to solving real-life problems. In the final event of the contest, students prepared and delivered a presentation on an assigned topic. Winners at the state level will have an opportunity to compete at the national contest and win substantial scholarships and gifts.

The Association of Texas SWCDs is a sponsor of the state event.

TSSWCB Conservation Video Library

About the Library

There are over 200 conservation-related videos available; the 2011 catalog can be downloaded at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/infoed/videolibrary>.

Ordering a Video

Select a video from the TSSWCB Conservation Video Catalog, then contact Mel Davis at mdavis@tsswcb.state.tx.us to check it out. The Association of Texas SWCDs will pay the first transit postage costs to mail the video(s) to the requester. Postage for returning the video(s) will be the responsibility of the borrower. All videos must be insured upon return.

WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN PROGRAM

Program Overview

The passage of Texas Senate Bill 503 (1993) directed the TSSWCB to implement water quality management plans (WQMPs) in Texas. A WQMP is a site-specific plan developed through and approved by SWCDs that reduces the amount of pollution that may enter surface waters from activities on agricultural or silvicultural lands. The agency has been implementing WQMPs on private lands since the mid 1990s and has certified over 14,000 plans. The TSSWCB identifies areas of the state where water quality is being negatively impacted by agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source water pollution and allocates funding to those areas to serve as financial incentives to

increase participation in the program. More information about the WQMP Program is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/wqmp>.

A total of 657 WQMPs were certified by the TSSWCB in FY2010. The yearly goal was 620 plans.

Allocations of financial incentive funding for FY2011 were approved by the State Board in July 2010. The deadline for obligating FY2011 funds was April 30, 2011.

The lapsed fund report for the FY2008 funding cycle was presented at the State Board meeting in September 2010. Between the FY2003 and FY2008 funding cycles, lapsed funds have been reduced by 73%.

POULTRY WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

Program 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 WQMP certified by the TSSWCB.

In 2009, the 81st Texas Legislature 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. An odor control plan may be required for those farms. The new law also requires all poultry producers and most receivers of poultry litter to keep records of poultry litter usage.

Program Activities

TSSWCB continues to conduct inspections of poultry CAFO facilities to ensure they are meeting all the necessary requirements. In addition, staff continues to review and update existing WQMPs and develop plans for newly constructed farms.

For more information on Poultry WQMPs, please visit <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/poultry> or contact the Poultry Program Office at (936) 462-7020.

WATER CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Program Overview

Recognizing the importance of water conservation in meeting our future demand, the 80th Texas Legislature in 2007, via the passage of Senate Bill 3 and House Bill 4, directed the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) to appoint the members of the newly created Water Conservation Advisory Council (WCAC). The WCAC was created to provide the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Legislature, TWDB, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), political subdivisions, and the public with the resource of a select council with expertise in water conservation.

According to the legislation, the WCAC is composed of 23 members appointed by the TWDB. At their August 27, 2007 meeting, the TWDB appointed one member to represent each of the 23 entities or interest groups. The TSSWCB is a statutorily-authorized member of the WCAC.

Duties of the WCAC include:

- Monitoring trends in water conservation implementation and new technologies for possible inclusion as BMPs
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the statewide water conservation public awareness program and developing and implementing a state water management resource library
- Developing and implementing a public recognition program for water conservation
- Monitoring the implementation of water conservation strategies by water users included in regional water plans
- Monitoring target and goal guidelines for water conservation to be considered by the TWDB and TCEQ

- Evaluating the desirability of requiring certification of water conservation training facilities, entities, and programs that provide assistance to retail public utilities in developing water conservation plans

Recent Activities

On March 17, 2011 the TWDB considered the appointment of a person to fill the Agricultural Interest Group position on the WCAC. There were six qualified nominees for this position. After due consideration of the nominees, the Board appointed Hughes Abell of Austin to the position for a term ending August 31, 2013.

Upcoming Activities

The WCAC recently reorganized its workgroups and is developing plans for upcoming activities. The WCAC has established four workgroups to work on water conservation issues: agricultural, municipal, industrial, and public awareness.

The agricultural workgroup, over the next biennium, will be reviewing the state's agricultural water conservation BMPs that were developed by the Water Conservation Task Force (2003 – 2005). The workgroup will determine if each BMP is still appropriate as is, or if it needs updating or removal. The agricultural workgroup will also review current methods of reporting irrigation water use (e.g., gal/ac, gal/ton) to evaluate if current methods are appropriate, or if more efficient methods should be developed and used.

The workgroups do not make any decisions, but make recommendations to the WCAC for any required decisions. Non-council members are welcome and encouraged to participate as members of the various workgroups. If anyone is interested in becoming a workgroup member, please contact Richard Egg at (254) 773-2250 ext. 246 or regg@tsswcb.state.tx.us.

The next WCAC meeting is scheduled for June 8, 2011 in Austin.

More information on the WCAC is available at <http://www.savetexaswater.org/>.

TEXAS NONPOINT SOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Program Overview

The federal Clean Water Act (CWA) requires states to develop a program to protect the quality of water resources from the adverse effects of nonpoint source (NPS) water pollution. The *Texas NPS Management Program* is the State's 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 Management Program* is jointly administered by the TSSWCB and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

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

Implementation of the *Texas NPS Management Program* involves partnerships among many organizations. With the extent and variety of NPS issues across Texas, cooperation across political boundaries is essential. SWCDs are vital partners in working with landowners to implement best management practices (BMPs) that prevent and abate agricultural and silvicultural NPS water pollution.

More information on the *Texas NPS Management Program*, including the *2010 Annual Report*, is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/managementprogram>.

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

Watershed Approach

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

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

The TSSWCB applies the Watershed Approach to managing NPS pollution by channeling its efforts to restore and protect water quality through the development and implementation of watershed protection plans (WPPs) and total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) in those watersheds where agricultural and/or silvicultural NPS pollution is contributing to a water quality impairment or concern to an extent which TSSWCB believes is sufficient to justify expenditure of agency resources. A list of these watersheds, including links to on-going restoration projects within those watersheds, is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/watersheds>. Summaries of the TSSWCB's activities within specific watersheds are provided in the *Water Quality Planning and Implementation* section of this report.

FY2010 Nonpoint Source Annual Report

On March 1, 2011, TSSWCB staff distributed the *2010 Annual Report on Managing Nonpoint Source Water Pollution in Texas* to all SWCDs; the report is jointly published by the TSSWCB and the TCEQ.

In order to continue receiving CWA §319(h) funds, the State must annually report to EPA on success in achieving the goals and objectives of the *Texas NPS Management Program*. The report highlights the State's efforts during FY2010 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. The *2010 Annual Report* is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/reports#nps>.

Nonpoint Source Grant Program

The NPS Grant Program is administered by the TSSWCB for the purpose of providing funding as grants to cooperating entities for activities that address the goals and objectives stated in the *Texas NPS Management Program*. The Texas Legislature and the U.S. Congress (through the EPA) provide funding to the TSSWCB to administer the agricultural and silvicultural components of the *Texas NPS Management Program* through the TSSWCB NPS Grant Program.

Agricultural and silvicultural NPS pollution prevention and abatement activities that can be funded through the NPS Grant Program include: implementation of WPPs and the NPS portion of TMDL Implementation Plans (I-Plans), surface water quality monitoring, demonstration of innovative BMPs, technical assistance and financial incentives for the development and implementation of TSSWCB-certified WQMPs, public outreach and education, development of WPPs, and monitoring activities to determine the effectiveness of specific pollution prevention methods.

Summaries of the TSSWCB's activities within specific watersheds funded through this NPS Grant Program are available in the *Water Quality Planning and Implementation* section of this report.

Clean Water Act §319(h) Grant Funding

Background

Congress enacted §319(h) of the CWA in 1987, establishing a national program to control NPS water pollution. Through §319(h), federal funds are provided annually through the EPA to States for the implementation of each State's NPS Management

Program. The §319(h) funding in Texas is divided equally between the TCEQ and the TSSWCB. Over the past several years, the State's allocation has been approximately \$9 million.

FY2004 – FY2010 CWA §319(h) Grant Status

There are currently 52 on-going §319(h) grant-funded projects addressing a wide array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues. Unliquidated federal funds for these 52 on-going projects total approximately \$15 million and are primarily being used to implement BMPs to abate NPS pollution from animal feeding operations, grazing livestock operations and row crop operations; provide technical assistance through SWCDs for the development of WQMPs; provide financial incentives for implementing certain BMPs prescribed in WQMPs; support various targeted educational programs; develop and implement WPPs and implement the NPS portion of TMDL I-Plans.

State General Revenue Grant Funding

Background

The 80th Texas Legislature appropriated general revenue funds to the TSSWCB for the purpose of planning, implementing, and managing programs and practices for preventing and abating agricultural and silvicultural NPS water pollution in impaired watersheds; the 81st Texas Legislature renewed this appropriation.

TSSWCB is committed to funding projects encompassing monitoring, assessment, modeling, planning, education, and implementation that address the goals and objectives stated in the *Texas NPS Management Program*. The Board has approved operating budgets for FY2009, FY2010, and FY2011 that allocated a total of \$3.79 million in state general revenue to the NPS Grant Program. On September 17, 2009, the Board approved a revised *TSSWCB Policy on TMDLs and Watershed Planning, Assessment, and Implementation Activities* which provides guidance to SRM staff on directing these state appropriations for the NPS Grant Program. This *Policy* is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/managementprogram#StateGR>.

FY2009 – FY2011 State General Revenue Grant Status

There are currently 13 on-going general revenue-funded projects addressing an array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues. Unliquidated state funds for these 13 on-going projects total approximately \$2.3 million and are primarily being used to implement agricultural NPS components of TMDL I-Plans; conduct recreational use attainability analyses (RUAAAs); provide technical assistance for the development of WQMPs on agricultural lands; support increased analytical infrastructure at public bacterial source tracking (BST) laboratories; demonstrate innovative BMPs on animal feeding operations and grazing lands; and collect and analyze water quality data for watersheds with impaired waterbodies.

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 Implementation Plan (I-Plan) is then developed that prescribes the measures necessary to mitigate anthropogenic (human-caused) sources of that

pollutant in that waterbody. The I-Plan specifies limits for point source dischargers and recommends BMPs for nonpoint sources. It also lays out a schedule for implementation. Together, the TMDL and the I-Plan serve as the mechanism to reduce the pollutant, restore the full use of the waterbody, and remove it from the *303(d) List*. EPA must approve the TMDL, but the I-Plan only requires State approval.

TSSWCB shares responsibility with the TCEQ for the development and implementation of TMDLs. 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 development and implementation. Summaries of the TSSWCB's activities within specific watersheds are available in the *Water Quality Planning and Implementation* section of this report.

Watershed Protection Plan Program

Background

Watershed Protection Plans (WPPs) are locally-driven mechanisms for voluntarily addressing complex water quality problems that cross multiple jurisdictions. WPPs are coordinated frameworks for implementing prioritized water quality protection and restoration strategies driven by environmental objectives. Through the watershed planning process, TSSWCB encourages stakeholders to holistically address all of the sources and causes of impairments and threats to both surface and ground water resources within a watershed.

WPPs serve as tools to better leverage the resources of local governments, state and federal agencies, and non-governmental organizations. WPPs integrate activities and prioritize implementation projects based upon technical merit and benefits to the community, promote a unified approach to seeking funding for implementation, and create a coordinated public communication and education

program. Developed and implemented through diverse, well integrated partnerships, a WPP assures the long-term health of the watershed with solutions that are socially acceptable and economically viable which achieve environmental goals for water resources. Adaptive management is used to modify the WPP based on an on-going science-based process involving monitoring and evaluating strategies and incorporating new knowledge into decision-making.

TSSWCB-sponsored WPPs are consistent with guidelines promulgated by the EPA in 2003. These guidelines describe nine elements fundamental to a potentially successful plan. TSSWCB provides technical and financial assistance to local stakeholder groups to develop and implement WPPs to address significant agricultural or silvicultural NPS issues. EPA requires certain expenditures through CWA §319(h) grants to be in accordance with a WPP. While WPPs sponsored by TCEQ have significant water quality issues related to urban NPS pollution or wastewater treatment, most, to varying degrees, have agricultural or silvicultural NPS pollution components. There are several other watershed planning projects across the state which are funded and sponsored by entities and agencies other than TSSWCB or TCEQ. These third-party WPPs may or may not adequately satisfy EPA's nine elements. More information on WPPs is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/wpp>.

The TSSWCB's efforts to restore water quality are channeled through WPP development and implementation. Summaries of the TSSWCB's activities within specific watersheds are available in the *Water Quality Planning and Implementation* section of this report.

Coastal NPS Pollution Control Program

Background

The Texas Coastal Management Program (CMP) was created to coordinate state, local and federal programs for the management of Texas coastal resources. The CMP improves the management of the State's coastal resources to ensure the long-term ecological and economic productivity of the coast. The CMP focuses on five primary issues of concern

to coastal communities – coastal hazards; wetland protection; water quality and quantity; dune protection; and shoreline access. 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, oversees the implementation of 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 of state government 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 federal Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments (CZARA) §6217 requires each State with an approved CMP to develop a federally approvable program to control coastal NPS pollution. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the EPA jointly administer §6217 at the federal level. In Texas, the TSSWCB and the TCEQ hold primary responsibility for the development and implementation of the *Texas Coastal NPS Pollution Control Program*.

More information on the CMP is available at <http://www.glo.texas.gov/what-we-do/caring-for-the-coast/grants-funding/cmp/index.html>.

Conditional Approval Status of Coastal NPS Program

Texas submitted the *Texas Coastal NPS Pollution Control Program* to EPA and NOAA in December 1998. In July 2003, NOAA and EPA issued conditional approval of the *Texas Coastal NPS Pollution Control Program*. NOAA identified five

areas the State must strengthen or correct; the agricultural and silvicultural portions of the program were approved without conditions. Texas had five years to meet the remaining conditions to gain full approval. States that fail to submit an adequate program (full approval) face penalties including loss of EPA and NOAA funds, including CWA §319(h) NPS grant monies.

In July 2008, the CCC again responded to the remaining conditional approval findings of NOAA and EPA. It was anticipated that this response would address the remaining conditions resulting in a fully-approved program. However, in May 2009, GLO received comments from NOAA and EPA which concluded that enough progress had been made to lift only one of the conditions.

On March 22, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Richard Egg, TJ Helton] participated in a conference call with staff from TCEQ, GLO, and EPA. The group reviewed TCEQ's September 2010 draft letter that describes the State's approach to address the remaining conditional approval findings.

Coastal Coordination Council (CCC)

The CCC was reviewed by the Sunset Advisory Commission this biennium. Sunset legislation has been filed (SB656 and HB2250) that would abolish the CCC and transfer its functions to the GLO. The bills also require establishment of a Coastal Coordination Advisory Committee to advise the Land Commissioner on matters related to the CMP. This Advisory Committee would include a representative of the TSSWCB designated by the Chairman of the State Board.

The next CCC meeting is on May 3, 2011. More information on the CCC is available at <http://www.glo.texas.gov/GLO/boards-and-commissions/coastal-coordination-council/ccc-meetings.html>.

CMP Grant Program

Application information for Grant Cycle 17 was distributed in April 2011. The CCC expects to award approximately \$1.8 million for planning, acquisition, construction, education, and research projects during Grant Cycle 17. The deadline for

pre-proposals is June 22, 2011. The full application is due October 12, 2011. Submission of the pre-proposal is only necessary if applicants would like written comments on their pre-proposals.

The CCC will accept applications for both construction and non-construction projects that address any of the following funding categories:

- Coastal Natural Hazards Response
- Critical Areas Enhancements
- Shoreline Access
- Waterfront Revitalization and Ecotourism Development
- Permit Streamlining/Assistance, Governmental Coordination and Local Government Planning Assistance
- Water Sediment Quantity and Quality Improvements

Five grant workshops will be held on the coast to inform potential applicants about the changes made to the grant program and to discuss potential project application submissions. All potential applicants are strongly encouraged to attend the workshops. The schedule for the Grant Cycle 17 workshops is:

- May 3, 2011, 10:30 a.m., Port Lavaca, City Hall
- May 5, 2011, 10:30 a.m., Port Arthur, City Hall
- May 11, 2011, 9:30 a.m., Port Isabel, Port Isabel Housing Authority
- May 17, 2011, 10 a.m., Corpus Christi, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
- May 25, 2011, 9:30 a.m., Galveston, Galveston County Courthouse

More information on the CMP grant program can be found at <http://www.glo.texas.gov/what-we-do/caring-for-the-coast/grants-funding/cmp/index.html>.

Texas Groundwater Protection Committee

Background

Established by the Texas Legislature in 1989, the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) bridges the gap between State groundwater programs, improves coordination between member agencies, and works to protect groundwater as a

vital resource; the TSSWCB is a statutorily-authorized member of the TGPC.

The Texas Water Code sets non-degradation of the State's groundwater resources as the goal for all State programs and asserts that groundwater 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.

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

Water Quality Coordination Activities

Coordination with TCEQ

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

Coordination with Texas Water Development Board

On March 30, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Aaron Wendt] attended a public awareness and outreach coordination meeting in Austin. TWDB has assembled this group of state and federal agencies to improve the effectiveness of outreach for various water issues in Texas including water conservation

and water quality; this group identifies opportunities for agencies to partner to conduct and improve outreach efforts. Keep Texas Beautiful staff discussed the Texas Waterway Cleanup Program which helps communities establish waterway cleanups and litter prevention activities to improve and maintain the quality of waterbodies. USDA-NRCS staff discussed the Water Grows the Texas Economy website (<http://www.watergrowsjobs.org/>) which is sponsored by the Texas Corn Producers Board and is a public information campaign on water conservation and agricultural irrigation.

On April 4, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Aaron Wendt] joined TCEQ staff in a meeting in Austin with staff from the TWDB to discuss coordination between the three agencies. TWDB manages the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) which is a federal CWA program administered by EPA. The CWSRF provides loans at interest rates lower than the market to political subdivisions to be used for planning, design, and construction of wastewater treatment facilities; sewer collection systems; and NPS pollution control projects. Discussion focused on increasing the use of the CWSRF for NPS projects designed to implement WPPs and TMDLs. The group discussed proposals received through the TWDB solicitation for projects for FY2011 CWSRF funding, including one project designed to implement portions of the Plum Creek WPP.

Coordination with U.S. Geological Survey

On April 8, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Aaron Wendt] attended the USGS Central Texas Regional Cooperators meeting in Austin. This meeting was held to update and inform cooperators about the USGS water quality and quantity programs and studies affecting Central Texas. USGS presented information on their online water data, which allows public access to over 100 years of water data compiled by USGS and includes historical and real time data. The website is <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/>. Another presentation focused on ongoing studies in Central Texas including the Fate and Transport of Nutrients in the Barton Springs Zone, the Regional Groundwater Availability Study of the Edwards-

Trinity Aquifer in Pecos County, Brush Control Modeling in the Upper Guadalupe River Watershed. Information on these and other studies can be found at <http://pubs.usgs.gov>.

Coordination with Texas Forest Service

On April 4-5, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Ashley Alexander] attended a meeting of the Texas Forest Service Wetland/BMP Coordinating Committee in Seagoville. A tour of the East Fork Wetlands project and the John Bunker Sands Wetland Center commenced on the first day with a complete overview of the constructed wetlands whose main purpose is for water reuse. The following day, participants discussed current issues and projects related to Texas water, wetlands, and forests. Members from various organizations and agencies attended including, but not limited to, Trinity Basin Conservation Foundation, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Texas Water Resources Institute, Texas AgriLife Extension Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

New Watershed Action Planning Process

TCEQ staff have been working to develop a document that describes a new Watershed Action Planning approach to the State's water quality management programs.

The document will illustrate Watershed Action Planning and describe the approach including an overview of the state water quality planning programs, the role of stakeholders, and the options available to address water quality impairments. The Watershed Action Planning process recognizes a range of tools and options for addressing impaired waterbodies on the *303(d) List*. The Watershed Action Planning process provides for a stakeholder-led evaluation of watershed-specific circumstances and a deliberative and collective decision as to what tool to apply to move forward with addressing the listing.

TCEQ will maintain a database of information gathered during the Watershed Action Planning process, such as the waterbody, the impairment or priority interest, the date it was first listed on the

303(d) List, the management strategy to address the impairment (e.g., UAA, TMDL, WPP), the timeline for completing the management strategy, the responsible agency, and interim performance measures.

Watershed Action Planning will increase the transparency of the State's water quality management programs by presenting the list of impaired waters in such a manner as to communicate activities and intentions collectively to the public at large. Watershed Action Planning is key to providing for the collaboration being called for and the coordination necessary to achieve the goal of clean water for Texan.

Throughout February and March 2011, TCEQ staff provided information to TSSWCB SRM staff on the draft recommended Watershed Action Planning options for each impaired waterbody on the *303(d) List*. Input has been solicited on these options from other state, regional, and federal agencies throughout March and April 2011 at Coordinated Monitoring meetings hosted by the Clean Rivers Program Partners across the state.

Recreational Use Attainability Analyses

The recently adopted revisions to the Surface Water Quality Standards establish a four tier approach to recreation use including primary contact recreation, secondary contact recreation 1, secondary contact recreation 2, and noncontact recreation. In order to change the presumed level of recreation use of a waterbody (i.e., primary contact) to any of the other 3 tiers and the associated bacteria criterion, a recreational use attainability analysis (RUAA) must be completed for each waterbody and approved by TCEQ and subsequently EPA.

The purpose of an RUAA is to ascertain the actual recreation occurring on a waterbody, establish or verify a presumed use, and, if necessary, assign a more appropriate use. During an RUAA information is collected on water recreation activities, stream flow type, and stream depth; additionally, interviews from users who are present during surveys and those familiar with the waterbody are conducted and a review of historical information is completed. If the results of the

RUAA indicate that a different, more appropriate use is warranted, the resulting change in the associated bacteria criterion may result in the waterbody no longer being identified on the 303(d) List as impaired, thus negating the need to adopt a TMDL.

The TCEQ is in the process of conducting RUAAs on over 110 waterbodies across the state; TSSWCB is taking the lead on conducting RUAAs on another 12 waterbodies. TCEQ contractors were asked to coordinate communication with SWCDs through TSSWCB SRM staff. After the RUAAs are conducted, TCEQ will evaluate the information and again consult with stakeholders regarding potential site-specific revisions to the Surface Water Quality Standards for each waterbody.

Summaries of RUAA activities on waterbodies where TMDLs and/or WPPs are also on-going are available in the *Water Quality Planning and Implementation* section of this report.

More information on RUAAs is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water_quality/wq_assessment/standards/ruaas/index. These RUAAs affect livestock operations in scores of watersheds across the state.

Texas Clean Rivers Program

The Texas Clean Rivers Program (CRP) is a state fee-funded program for water quality monitoring, assessment, and public outreach administered by the TCEQ. CRP is a collaboration of 15 partner agencies who conduct water quality monitoring and assessments in the 23 river and coastal basins, plus bays and estuaries, in Texas.

Each river or coastal basin is assigned to one of the designated CRP partner agencies. Each CRP partner agency has an established steering committee to set monitoring and assessment priorities within its basin. These committees bring together the diverse interests in each basin and are designed to allow local concerns to be addressed through regional solutions.

The Texas Water Code requires the TCEQ and CRP partner agencies to coordinate monitoring and

assessment activities with local SWCDs through the TSSWCB.

The data generated by CRP partner agencies is used to identify significant long-term water quality trends and characterize water quality conditions. Each CRP partner agency develops and publishes an annual *Basin Highlights Report* and a five-year *Basin Summary Report*. The TCEQ also uses CRP-generated data in the biennial assessment conducted for the *Texas Integrated Report*.

More information on CRP is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/nav/eq/texcleanriver.html>.

On March 22, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Mitch Conine] attended a CRP Red River Basin Steering Committee meeting hosted by the Red River Authority in Amarillo. Discussion focused on the development of nutrient criteria standards, presentation of the Basin Highlights Report, and an overview of water quality projects on-going in the Rolling Plains. A presentation was provided to the group from the Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District on the state of groundwater in the panhandle. More information is available at <http://www.rra.dst.tx.us>.

On March 29, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Mitch Conine] attended a CRP Steering Committee meeting hosted by the Northeast Texas Municipal Water District in Hughes Springs. An update was given on the special study that is on-going. The draft Basin Highlights Report was presented. TCEQ's new Watershed Action Planning process was discussed. A brief overview was given on the current TSSWCB-funded Big Cypress Creek Bacteria Assessment project. More information is available at <http://www.netmwd.com>.

On March 29, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Mitch Conine] attended a Coordinated Monitoring meeting hosted by the Northeast Texas Municipal Water District in Hughes Springs. Discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities planned for FY2012 among various entities collecting data in order to avoid overlap and maximize resources in the Cypress

Creek Basin. More information is available at <http://www.netmwd.com>.

On March 29, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) Coordinated Monitoring meeting in Houston. Discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities for FY2012 among various entities collecting data in order to avoid overlap and maximize resources in the H-GAC service area. More information is available <http://www.h-gac.com/>.

On March 30, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Mitch Conine] attended a Coordinated Monitoring meeting hosted by the Red River Authority in Wichita Falls. Discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities planned for FY2012 among various entities collecting data in order to avoid overlap and maximize resources in the Canadian River and Red River Basins. More information is available at <http://www.rra.dst.tx.us>.

On March 30, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Loren Warrick, Ashley Alexander, Brian Koch] attended a Coordinated Monitoring meeting hosted by the Nueces River Authority in Corpus Christi. Discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities planned for FY2012 among various entities collecting data in order to avoid overlap and maximize resources in the Nueces River Basin. More information is available at <http://www.nueces-ra.org/>.

On March 31, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Loren Warrick, Pamela Casebolt, Jana Baker] attended a CRP Basin Steering Committee meeting hosted by the Brazos River Authority in Waco. An overview of current water quality impairments throughout the basin was provided, as well as, planned monitoring for FY2012. Updates were provided on the status of the Lampasas River, Leon River, and Lake Granbury WPPs, as well as the Carters and Burton Creeks TMDL. Other topics discussed included an update on the SB2 and SB3 environmental flows assessment in the basin, new requirements for pesticide applications in water, and information on the Texas Stream Team. TCEQ discussed various program updates including the new Watershed

Action Planning process. More information is available at <http://www.brazos.org/>.

On April 5, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a San Antonio River Authority Coordinated Monitoring meeting in San Antonio. Discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities planned for FY2012 among various entities collecting data in order to avoid overlap and maximize resources in the San Antonio River Basin. More information is available at <http://www.sara-tx.org/>.

On April 7, 2011, SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended the CRP Steering Committee and Coordinated Monitoring meetings for the Lower Colorado River Basin in Bay City. The CRP Steering Committee meeting had presentations focused on water quantity, specifically environmental flows in the Colorado River and the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) Water Management Advisory Group. There was also a presentation on zebra mussels by LCRA and TCEQ presented information on water quality impairments and improvement projects, including the new Watershed Action Planning process. For the Coordinated Monitoring meeting, the discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities planned for FY2012 among various entities collecting data in order to avoid overlap and maximize resources in the lower basin of the Colorado River. More information is available at <http://www.lcra.org/water/quality/crp/index.html>.

On April 14, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Aaron Wendt] participated in a Coordinated Monitoring meeting hosted by the International Boundary and Water Commission, U.S. Section. Discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities planned for FY2012 among various entities collecting data in order to avoid overlap and maximize resources in the Rio Grande River Basin below Falcon Reservoir. More information is available at <http://www.ibwc.state.gov/CRP/Index.htm>.

On April 18, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a Sabine River Authority CRP Steering Committee and Coordinated Monitoring

meeting in Orange. The Steering Committee meeting covered the 2010 Basin Highlights Report, which summarized the water quality conditions in the basin, the status of the Adams and Cow Bayous TMDL and I-Plan, and the coordinated monitoring schedule. The Coordinated Monitoring meeting was held to coordinate surface water quality monitoring activities planned for FY2012 among various entities collecting data in order to avoid overlap and maximize resources in the Sabine River Basin. TCEQ staff also presented information concerning the new Watershed Action Planning process. Identical CRP meetings were also held in Longview on April 19, 2011 and in Greenville on April 20, 2011. More information is available at <http://www.sra.dst.tx.us/>.

On April 21, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Loren Warrick, Aaron Wendt] attended a Brazos River Authority Coordinated Monitoring meeting in Waco. Discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities for FY2012 among various entities collecting data in order to avoid overlap and maximize resources in the Brazos River Basin. More information is available at <http://www.brazos.org/>.

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 (CCMP) developed under the auspices of the National Estuary Program. The TSSWCB is a named member of the Galveston Bay Council. On April 4, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended the Budget and Priorities Subcommittee Meeting for the Galveston Bay Council in Houston. Program updates from the different subcommittees were discussed, as well as, logistics for the State of the Bay Symposium which will be held March 1-2, 2012. The State of the Bay report will be published in May or June 2011. The Subcommittee also prioritized projects for funding for the GBEP FY2012 workplan. Two of the projects were related to supporting the development

of WPPs, Cedar Bayou and Double Bayou, which are either being funded or will likely be funded by TSSWCB with CWA §319(h) grants. Other projects included marsh and shoreline restoration, public awareness and education, and NPS water quality implementation. Texas Sea Grant presented information on freshwater wetlands and their relationship to the bay.

On April 20, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a Galveston Bay Council meeting at the Armand Bayou Nature Center in Houston. Nominations for the Council for 2011-2015 were discussed; there will be some new faces on the Council due to retirements and replacements. The Council approved GBEP's proposed FY2012 workplan, which included state and federal funding for existing and proposed projects on and around Galveston Bay. During the roundtable discussion, Brian Koch reported on TSSWCB activities, including the status of the FY2011 CWA §319(h) proposals. During the roundtable there was a report on oysters from the Texas Department of State Health Services. This in turn spurred discussion and led to the formation of an Oyster Task Force made up of members of the Natural Resource Uses and Monitoring and Research subcommittees. There were also presentations on the Gulf Restoration Task Force and freshwater wetlands and their interaction with Galveston Bay.

More information is available at <http://www.gbep.state.tx.us/>. The implementation of the *Galveston Bay Plan* affects agricultural and silvicultural operations in watersheds that drain to the Galveston Bay complex in Brazoria, Chambers, Galveston, Harris and Liberty Counties.

San Antonio Bay Estuary Program

On April 15, 2011 TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a steering committee meeting for the San Antonio Bay Partnership (SABP) in Victoria. This meeting was held to update the steering committee on activities pertaining to the Partnership. The SABP was recently awarded a Coastal Management Program grant for \$100,000 to develop a comprehensive management plan for the bay. Also provided during the meeting were updates on status and trends reports and the contract with

TAMU-Corpus Christi to do a wetlands inventory for the San Antonio Bay estuary. The wetlands inventory will cover San Antonio, Mesquite, Carlos, Espiritu Santo, and Guadalupe Bays. The Partnership is also looking for implementation projects along and around the bay to help build stakeholder interest.

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

Upcoming Public Meetings

- May 2, 2011 – Riparian Landowner Workshop, Nueces River Authority (San Marcos)
- May 3, 2011 – Upper Oyster Creek TMDL I-Plan Agriculture and Wildlife Work Group (Sugar Land)
- May 3, 2011 – Coastal Coordination Council (Austin)
- May 3, 2011 – Riparian Landowner Workshop, Nueces River Authority (Del Rio)
- May 3, 2011 – Coastal Management Program Grant Workshop (Port Lavaca)
- May 3, 2011 – Paso del Norte Watershed Council (El Paso)
- May 4, 2011 – Riparian Landowner Workshop, Nueces River Authority (Rio Frio)
- May 4, 2011 – Lower Colorado River Authority Clean Rivers Program Upper Basin Steering Committee (San Angelo)
- May 4, 2011 – Mid Pecan Bayou RUAA Stakeholder Meeting (Brownwood)
- May 5, 2011 – Plum Creek Watershed Partnership Steering Committee (Lockhart)
- May 5, 2011 – Tarleton State University Southwest Regional Dairy Center Grand Opening Ceremony (Stephenville)
- May 5, 2011 – Riparian Landowner Workshop, Nueces River Authority (Uvalde)
- May 5, 2011 – Coastal Management Program Grant Workshop (Port Arthur)

- May 6, 2011 – Riparian Landowner Workshop, Nueces River Authority (San Patricio)
- May 10, 2011 – Houston-Galveston Area Council Clean Rivers Program Basin Steering Committee (Houston)
- May 10, 2011 – Upper Oyster Creek TMDL I-Plan Coordinating Committee (Sugar Land)
- May 11, 2011 – Upper Guadalupe River TMDL I-Plan Public Comment Meeting (Kerrville)
- May 11, 2011 – Coastal Management Program Grant Workshop (Port Isabel)
- May 12, 2011 – Texas Watershed Steward Workshop for the Lower Nueces River Watershed (Corpus Christi)
- May 17, 2011 – Coastal Management Program Grant Workshop (Corpus Christi)
- May 19, 2011 – Angelina and Neches River Authority Clean Rivers Program Basin Steering Committee (Lufkin)
- May 19, 2011 – Luling Foundation Field Day (Luling)
- May 23, 2011 – Big Cypress Creek RUAA Stakeholder Meeting (Mount Pleasant)
- May 25, 2011 – Coastal Management Program Grant Workshop (Galveston)

Water Quality Planning and Implementation

The TSSWCB applies the Watershed Approach to managing NPS pollution by channeling its efforts to restore and protect water quality through the development and implementation of WPPs and TMDLs. A list of watersheds including links to on-going restoration projects within those watersheds is available at

<http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/watersheds>; more detailed information on all watersheds described below is available at this website.

Carters and Burton Creeks

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

On March 29, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Ashley Alexander, Jana Baker] attended a Texas Watershed Steward workshop in College Station. 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 Texas Water Resources Institute and TCEQ in the Carters and Burton Creeks watershed. More information on the Texas Watershed Steward Program is available at <http://tws.tamu.edu/>.

More information is available at <http://cartersandburton.tamu.edu/> and <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/85-carterscreek.html>. This TMDL will affect livestock operations in the Carters Creek watershed in Brazos County.

Lake Houston

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

The Bacteria Implementation Group (BIG) is focused on implementing bacteria TMDLs in the greater Houston area, including Lake Houston, Buffalo and Whiteoak Bayous, Clear Creek and others. The BIG is responsible for receiving input, establishing workgroups, facilitating communications, developing recommendations, and providing oversight in the development of the I-Plan designed to achieve the load reductions called for in these TMDLs.

On April 6, 2011, TCEQ adopted as final *Fifteen TMDLs for Indicator Bacteria in Watersheds Upstream of Lake Houston (Segments 1004E, 1008, 1008H, 1009, 1009C, 1009D, 1009E, 1010, and 1011)*. These TMDLs allocate maximum pollutant loadings of bacteria between point sources and nonpoint sources in order to achieve the water quality criterion, and effectively necessitate a 41-81% overall annual load reduction (depending on the particular waterbody) to restore attainment of primary contact recreation use. For each of these

TMDLs, TCEQ selected the highest flow condition as the critical period which necessitates an 81-96% reduction (depending on the particular waterbody) during these wet-weather events in order to achieve the overall annual reduction. These TMDLs must be approved by EPA before they are effective.

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 affect livestock operations in the Lake Houston watershed in Grimes, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, San Jacinto, Walker and Waller Counties.

Lampasas River

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

On March 24, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Pamela Casebolt] attended the Lampasas River Watershed Partnership Agriculture and Wildlife Work Group in Lampasas. Discussion centered on broad-based and targeted outreach and education programs and outlining a long-term water quality monitoring regime for the Lampasas River and its tributaries. Examples of education and outreach programs to be included in the WPP will include Texas Watershed Stewards, Lone Star Healthy Streams, feral hog management workshops, tributary and roadway signage, soil and water testing campaigns, and field days. The work group identified 14 monitoring sites for long-term monthly water quality monitoring and a bacteria source survey was recommended for the site that originally caused the Lampasas River to be listed on the *303(d) List* for elevated bacteria.

On March 25, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Pamela Casebolt] attended the Lampasas River Watershed Partnership Urban Issues Work Group in Killeen. Discussion centered on broad-based and targeted outreach and education programs and outlining a long-term water quality monitoring regime for the

Lampasas River and tributaries. TCEQ presented on their NPS grant program and urban projects they have funded utilizing CWA §319(h) funds.

Examples of education and outreach programs to be included in the WPP will include Texas Watershed Stewards, illegal dumping campaign, water quality in the classroom, septic system workshops for homeowners, and household hazardous waste collection days. The work group identified 14 monitoring sites for long-term monthly water quality monitoring and a bacteria source survey was recommended for the site that originally caused the Lampasas River to be listed on the *303(d) List* for elevated bacteria.

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.

Leona River

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

On April 5, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Loren Warrick] and field staff [Adrian Perez] attended a Winter Garden SWCD #326 meeting in Crystal City and a Frio SWCD #325 meeting in Pearsall. At these meetings the *Assessment of Water Quality and Watershed Planning for the Leona River* project was introduced. In attendance to explain the project objectives was the Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Research and the Nueces River Authority. These entities are responsible for facilitating stakeholder involvement in the project. Major project tasks include collecting water quality monitoring data, conducting bacterial source tracking (BST) and computer modeling, and performing an RUAA.

More information is available at

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

Lower Nueces River

Impairment: None
Concern: Chlorophyll-a, Nutrients, Sediment
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: Third Party

On April 6, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Aaron Wendt] and regional office staff [Andy Garza] attended a Lower Nueces River Agriculture Work Group meeting in Robstown. The group discussed the degree of BMP implementation occurring on cropland and rangeland in the watershed, current programs including USDA Farm Bill programs and the TSSWCB WQMP Program, and challenges facing agricultural operations in the watershed.

On April 14, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Aaron Wendt] attended a Lower Nueces River River Steering Committee meeting in Corpus Christi. The group discussed progress made by the various work groups including Education and Outreach, Water Quality, Utilities, and Agriculture. Additionally, changes to the water quality monitoring regime were discussed including new sites and parameters.

More information is available at

<http://www.nuecesriverpartnership.org/>. This WPP has the potential to affect livestock and farming operations in the Lower Nueces River watershed below Lake Corpus Christi in Jim Wells, Nueces, and San Patricio Counties.

Paso del Norte

Impairment: Bacteria
Concern: Nutrients, Salinity
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: Third Party

On March 31, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Aaron Wendt] attended a Paso del Norte Watershed Council meeting in El Paso. In collaboration with the New Mexico Environment Department and the New Mexico Department of Agriculture, this group is developing a WPP for the Rio Grande between Las Cruces, NM and El Paso, TX. This subwatershed of the Rio Grande Basin is known as the Paso del Norte. At the meeting, the group discussed the current water quality monitoring

regime and progress to engage landowners in the watershed planning process.

More information is available at <http://www.pdnwc.org/>. This WPP has the potential to affect agricultural operations in the Paso del Norte watershed in El Paso County.

Upper Guadalupe River

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

On April 6, 2011, TCEQ approved publishing and soliciting public comment on a draft *I-Plan for One TMDL for Bacteria in Guadalupe River Above Canyon Lake (Segment 1806)*. The public comment period is through May 23, 2011. A public meeting to receive comments on the proposed I-Plan is scheduled for May 11, 2011 in Kerrville. Comments not submitted at the public meeting must be provided in writing and must be received by TCEQ no later than May 23, 2011. A response to comments received will be developed by TCEQ staff and, if appropriate, the draft I-Plan may be revised. This I-Plan must be approved by TCEQ before it is effective. Based on the environmental target of the TMDL (adopted by TCEQ in July 2007 and approved by EPA in September 2007), this I-Plan prescribes the measures necessary to mitigate anthropogenic (human-caused) sources of bacteria in order to restore the primary contact recreation use of this portion of the Guadalupe River. The I-Plan specifies limits for point source dischargers and recommends BMPs for nonpoint sources. It also lays out a schedule for implementation.

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

Upper Oyster Creek

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

On April 12, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a stakeholder meeting for the Upper Oyster Creek I-Plan in Sugar Land. This I-Plan will be designed to implement the TMDLs for indicator bacteria (adopted by TCEQ in 2007) and dissolved oxygen (adopted by TCEQ in 2010). At this meeting, a stakeholder coordinating committee was formed, workgroups and subcommittees were established, and ground rules were set. TCEQ presented information on their NPS Grant Program. The group discussed a variety of bacteria sources, including urban NPS runoff, wastewater treatment facilities, and agricultural NPS.

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

Water Supply Enhancement Program

Program Overview

Administered by the TSSWCB, the goal of the program is to enhance the state's quantity of water resources in selected aquifers, streams, and reservoirs through the selective control of brush species. The 81st Texas Legislature continued funding for the Water Supply Enhancement Program by providing \$4,503,641 in General Revenue Funds in FY2011.

These funds were directed to be used for continuation of brush control projects designated by the TSSWCB. Since the beginning of the program in 1999, there has been over 741,000 acres of brush treated in priority watersheds throughout the state. The following SWCDs were provided Water Supply Enhancement Program Updates, Water Supply Enhancement Program Certifications and/or Contracts:

Area 2 Districts

- Middle Concho SWCD
- Eldorado-Divide SWCD
- Tom Green SWCD

- Pedernales SWCD
- Gillespie County SWCD
- Kerr County SWCD
- Kendall SWCD

Area 3 Districts

- McMullen County SWCD
- LaSalle County SWCD
- Caldwell-Travis SWCD
- Comal-Guadalupe SWCD
- Webb SWCD
- Frio SWCD

Area 5 Districts

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

Currently the Water Supply Enhancement Program is administrating 14 projects throughout the State. Listed below are the projects in their respective areas and the project's contact person.

- Twin Buttes Reservoir – Tuffy Wood
- O.C. Fisher Reservoir – Tuffy Wood
- Pedernales River – Melissa Grote
- Guadalupe River – Melissa Grote
- Edwards Aquifer (Bandera County) – Melissa Grote
- Fort Phantom Hill Reservoir – Cody York
- Nueces River – Adrian Perez
- Frio River – Adrian Perez
- Lower Guadalupe River – Tuffy Wood
- Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer – Tuffy Wood
- Palo Pinto Reservoir – Cody York
- Bosque River – Cody York
- Little Wichita River (Archer and Clay Counties) – Cody York
- Lake Brownwood – Cody York

Evaluating watersheds are based on the following criteria as per Texas Agriculture Code §203.053:

In ranking areas under the brush control plan, the TSSWCB 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,
- (5) any other criteria that the TSSWCB considers relevant to assure that the brush control program can be most effectively, efficiently, and economically implemented.

Staff Activities

- Evaluate all current projects
- Assisted landowners in Twin Buttes, Pedernales, Pecan Bayou, Lake Arrowhead, Lake Kickapoo, Bosque River, Kendall and Blanco Counties with Brush Certifications
- Assisted landowners in Twin Buttes, Pedernales, Pecan Bayou, Lake Arrowhead, Lake Kickapoo and Bosque River with Brush Contracts
- Assist the Frio and Nueces Projects with contracts and certifications
- Assist with Senate Finance Hearing, House Agriculture and Livestock Hearing, and House Appropriations Hearing
- Begin coordinating meetings with SWCDs to begin application on projects
- Assisted Nueces and Frio Project with Brush 005

FLOOD CONTROL DAM PROGRAMS

Program Overview

Nearly 2,000 floodwater retarding structures, or dams, have been built over the last 60 years within 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 USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. They were built with the understanding that the private property owner would provide the land, the federal government would provide the technical design expertise and the funding to construct them,

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

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

Due to the passage of time and difficulty in raising adequate funds locally, many sponsors approached the Texas Legislature with their concerns over the amount of needed O&M and structural 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.

More information on these Flood Control Programs is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/floodcontrol>.

O&M Grant Program

Below is a summary of the Flood Control O&M Program for FY2010 and FY2011 as of April 25, 2011.

FY10 Contracted \$555,129		FY11 Allocation \$2,472,009	
Original O&M	Original Admin	Original O&M	Original Admin
\$528,652	\$26,477	\$2,354,636	\$117,373
Spent O&M	Spent Admin	Spent O&M	Spent Admin
\$412,216	\$19,136	\$1,202,929	\$59,882
Remaining O&M	Remaining Admin	Remaining O&M	Remaining Admin
\$117,841	\$5,892	\$1,151,706	\$57,409
Total FY10 Remaining \$123,733		Total FY11 Remaining \$1,209,196	

Structural Repair Grant Program

TSSWCB staff is finalizing decisions on applications submitted for FY2011 grant funding and will be contacting potential grantees in the near future.

Monthly Program News and Activities is produced by the TSSWCB for use by Texas SWCD Directors. If you have any questions regarding its contents, or have information you would like to see in a future issue, please call (254) 773-2250.



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The TSSWCB administers Texas' soil and water conservation law and coordinates conservation and nonpoint source water pollution abatement programs throughout the State. Headquartered in Temple, the TSSWCB delivers coordinated natural resource conservation programs to agricultural producers through the state's 216 individual SWCDs. The agency is governed by a seven-member State Board composed of two Governor appointees and five individuals elected from across Texas by 1,080 Directors of local SWCDs. The TSSWCB is the lead state agency for the planning, management, and abatement of agricultural and silvicultural (forestry) nonpoint source water pollution, administers a water supply enhancement program through the targeted control of brush species in areas in need of water conservation, and provides operation, maintenance, and structural repair grant funds to local government sponsors of the state's network of 2,000 flood control dams.