



# TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

## Monthly Program News and Activities

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February 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

#### Deadlines:

- 2008 W2 & 1099s to reach IRS if filing manually- February 28th

|                                         |    |
|-----------------------------------------|----|
| Water Quality Planning & Implementation | 13 |
| Water Supply Enhancement Program        | 20 |
| Flood Control Dams                      | 22 |

## CONTENTS

|                                                         |    |
|---------------------------------------------------------|----|
| State Board Work Sessions and Meetings                  | 1  |
| Budget and Accounting                                   | 2  |
| Human Resources                                         | 2  |
| Special Projects                                        | 2  |
| Public Information and Education                        | 2  |
| Water Quality Management Plan Program                   | 4  |
| Poultry Water Quality Management Plans                  | 4  |
| Texas Nonpoint Source Management Program                | 4  |
| Clean Water Act, §319(h) NPS Grant Program              | 6  |
| Total Maximum Daily Load Program                        | 7  |
| Texas Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program | 8  |
| Texas Groundwater Protection Committee                  | 9  |
| Upcoming Meetings                                       | 12 |

## STATE BOARD WORK SESSIONS AND MEETINGS

### Scheduled Work Sessions and Meetings

The State Board has tentatively scheduled a Board Work Session for 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., in Austin, Texas at the Radisson Hotel on **Thursday, March 12, 2009**. A formal State Board Meeting is tentatively scheduled for 1:00 p.m. in Austin, Texas at the Radisson Hotel on **Thursday, March 12, 2009**. For more information on State Board Work Sessions and Meetings, visit the agency's website at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/boardmeetings>.

### Board Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the January 15, 2009, State Board Meeting will be considered for approval at the meeting tentatively scheduled for March 12, 2009. To view any past Board Meeting minutes visit the agency's website at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/boardmeetings/minutes>

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 Vicki Davis at (254) 773-2250, ext. 253.

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## BUDGET AND ACCOUNTING

On February 18th, the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board provided testimony to the Senate Finance Committee on the agency budget, current financial condition, and exceptional item requests for 2010 -11.

On February 24th, the agency provided testimony to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government on the same topics.

2008 W2 & 1099s to reach IRS if filing manually- February 28th

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## HUMAN RESOURCES

TSSWCB is currently not recruiting for any positions at this time.

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.

## 69th Annual State Meeting of Texas Soil and Water Conservation District Directors

The state meeting this year is scheduled for October 19-21, 2009 in Arlington. Please save the date and plan to attend.

### January 1, 2009 Semiannual Report Available

The latest semiannual report is available for viewing at:

[http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/files/docs/admin/semiannualreports/FINALJan09Semiannual\\_Report.pdf](http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/files/docs/admin/semiannualreports/FINALJan09Semiannual_Report.pdf)

## State Board Member Elections

State Board Member elections will occur in State Districts I; III; and V this year on May 5, 2009.

State District I will have their election at 6:00p.m. in Room 205 of the Pete & Nelda Laney Activities Center, corner of Vernon & 8<sup>th</sup> Street at Wayland Baptist University in Plainview, Texas.

State District III will have their election at 5:00 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Victoria Community Annex, 2905 North Street in Victoria, Texas.

State District V will have their election at 6:00 p.m. in Room 219 of the Student Development Center at Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas.

Districts in those three State Districts must have their delegates selected and certified by April 1, 2009 to participate in the election.

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## PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

### Wildlife Alliance for Youth

Local wildlife contests have begun, FFA and 4H teams are preparing for the Regional Contests which will be held in April, 2009. Contests recently held include the following:

February 20: San Antonio Livestock and Exposition Event

- Fifty-seven teams comprised of 100 individuals competed in the event. Top scoring team in the event was the Weimar FFA chapter. Jonathan Treptow was the high point scoring individual with a top score of 128.

February 21: Texas A&M University at Kingsville

- Twenty Four teams comprised of 74 individuals competed in the event. Top scoring team in the event was the Johnson City FFA chapter. Garrett Deike was the high point scoring individual with a top score of 94.

February 21: San Angelo

- Fifteen teams comprised of 50 individuals competed in the event. Top scoring team in the event was the Marion FFA chapter. Dalton Foster was the high point scoring individual with a top score of 142.

### **Texas Newspaper Data Base**

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board completed the development of a data base which lists 80 daily and 420 weekly newspapers. The daily published papers have a circulation of 2.8 million subscribers while the weekly publications have a circulation of 947,000.

The data base has been categorized into the five regions of the state as well as categorized into the 13 Association of Texas SWCD areas. The data base is also categorized by counties. These categorizations will enable the State Board to provide more timely news stories to targeted geographic areas that would have an interest in the article.

### **SB 503 Reference Guide**

Final editing has been completed to update the reference guide for the program. TSSWCB regional managers will be reviewing the document before publishing.

### **TSSWCB Regional Office Events**

Harlingen: Staff members of the Harlingen Regional Office spoke to the Harlingen Citizens Police Alumni on February 3. Ronnie Ramirez, planner at the office, talked to the group about the role and responsibilities of the TSSWCB in the 503 program. He also briefed the group on other agency related programs that are ongoing in the area.

Ramirez and Fidencio Mesa, engineering technician represented the TSSWCB at a career day on February 20 for the third and fourth graders of Austin Elementary in Harlingen. “We spoke about our role as employees of the state board and who we serve. Over 85 students came through our class room”.

### **TSSWCB Conservation Video Library**

#### **About The Catalog**

There are over 200 conservation-related videos available; the 2008 catalog can be downloaded from the TSSWCB website at

[http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/files/contentimages/2008\\_Video\\_Library\\_Catalogue.pdf](http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/files/contentimages/2008_Video_Library_Catalogue.pdf) . The 2008

Catalog includes 18 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 soil and water conservation district 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 McArthur at [mwhitley@tsswcb.state.tx.us](mailto:mwhitley@tsswcb.state.tx.us) to check it out.

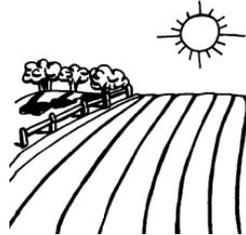
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## WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN PROGRAM

### 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 soil and water conservation districts 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>.



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## POULTRY WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

### Overview

In 2001, the 77th 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. For more information on Poultry WQMPs, please visit

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

## Program Activities

TSSWCB has begun conducting 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.

**Contact the poultry office at (936) 462-7020 if you have questions about the poultry program.**

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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 staff and TCEQ staff are in the initial stages of updating the program publication. On February 18, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Donna Long] met with TCEQ staff to discuss timelines, responsibilities, and content.

### **FY2008 Nonpoint Source Annual Report Status**

TSSWCB SRM staff and TCEQ staff are completing a final review of the annual report. The

report will highlight the State's efforts during FY2008 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 for current and future generations of Texans.

### **TSSWCB/TCEQ Joint EPA End of Year Review**

On February 12, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [TJ Helton, Donna Long, Aaron Wendt] met with staff from TCEQ and EPA in Austin. Discussion centered on increased collaboration on programs and projects to more effectively and efficiently implement the Texas NPS Program.

### **National Nonpoint Source Meeting for State and EPA Program Managers**

On February 24-26, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Aaron Wendt, Pamela Casebolt] attended the *National Nonpoint Source Meeting for State and EPA Program Managers* in San Diego, California. A total of 38 states and 2 tribes were represented along with numerous regional EPA Program Managers. Attendance at the meeting was a requirement to ensure continued CWA §319(h) funding. National and state NPS program coordinators gathered to share information on emerging issues facing watershed managers at the national, state and local levels. The meeting began with two days of interactive discussion focused on the efforts being made nationwide to effectively implement, evaluate, and monitor the control of nonpoint source pollution at the watershed level. The meeting allowed state, tribal, and federal Program Managers to discuss their respective programs, share ideas, and find ways to work together to improve and restore water quality. On the last day, meeting participants took a field tour of the Otay and Tijuana River watersheds. The field tour focused on water quality and the nonpoint source challenges of southern San Diego and the International Border.

# 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.

## **FY2002 – FY2008 CWA §319(h) NPS Grant Status**

There are currently 60 ongoing §319(h) grant-funded projects addressing a wide array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues. Unliquidated federal funds for these 60 on-going projects total approximately \$16 million 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 Implementation Plans. Details on some of these projects are summarized in the *Water Quality Planning and Implementation* section of this report.

## **FY2009 CWA §319(h) NPS Grant Program Request for Proposals Status**

The FY2009 Request for Proposals was published in the *Texas Register* on October 3, 2008, posted on the TSSWCB website, and e-mailed to all SWCDs and cooperating entities on our contact list. The deadline for proposal submission was November

21, 2008. The TSSWCB received 22 proposals for FY2009 funds. TSSWCB SRM staff are currently reviewing and ranking the proposals.

## 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 Total Maximum Daily Load (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.

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.

### FY2008 TMDL Grant Status

On July 19, 2007, the Board approved an operating budget for FY2008 that allocated \$1,200,494 in state appropriations to TMDL Program grants. There are currently 4 on-going projects that support increased analytical infrastructure at public bacterial source tracking (BST) laboratories and the collection and analysis of water quality data for watersheds with impaired waterbodies. Three projects have been completed.

### FY2009 TMDL Grant Status

On July 17, 2008, the Board approved an operating budget for FY2009 that allocated \$1,200,494 in state appropriations to TMDL Program grants. TSSWCB SRM staff have obligated \$560,957 through six 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. TSSWCB SRM staff are in the process

of developing workplans, budgets and contracts with collaborating entities to obligate the remaining funds (\$639,537).

## **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 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 coastal zone management program (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.

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.

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

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

The next CCC meeting will be March 5, 2009 in Austin. Meeting information can be found at <http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal/cc.html>.

### **Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP)**

The State of Texas will receive \$48,591,202 for FY2007 and for FY2008. Of that amount, \$31,584,281 will be allocated to the State and \$17,006,921 will be allocated directly to the 18 coastal counties.

Before any funds can be disbursed to the State or the counties, a State CIAP plan must be approved by Minerals Management Service (MMS), a bureau in the U.S. Department of the Interior. This plan will include the recommended projects that have been submitted for funding.

The plan can be found at <http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal/ciap/fy2007.html>.

Additional information on CIAP can be found at <http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal/ciap/index.html>.

The MMS has approved the Texas CIAP Plan. Grant applications for individual projects (FY2007) are being submitted to MMS for funding approval.

Grant applications for FY2008 state CIAP funding have been reviewed by Coastal Land Advisory

Board staff. Recommendations for funding will be submitted to the Coastal Land Advisory Board in the near future. All grant applicants will be notified at that time regarding projects recommended for funding.

## **Gulf of Mexico Alliance**

The Gulf of Mexico Alliance is a governor-initiated partnership of the states of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas, with the goal of significantly increasing regional collaboration to enhance the ecological and economic health of the Gulf of Mexico.

The Alliance released the *Governors' Action Plan for Healthy and Resilient Coasts*, which challenged the partnership to make tangible, short-term progress between March 2006 and March 2009. The *Governors' Action Plan* intended to serve as a dynamic starting point for effective regional collaboration, and set the stage for a long-term regional partnership that can address an expanded suite of issues.

The Alliance has recently released the draft *Action Plan II* which covers the next five years. Six priority issues are identified in the draft plan:

- Water Quality for Healthy Beaches and Shellfish Beds
- Habitat Conservation and Restoration
- Environmental Education
- Ecosystem Integration and Assessment
- Reducing Nutrient Impacts
- Coastal Community Resilience

The public is invited to comment on the draft *Action Plan II*. The comment period closes March 13, 2009. The draft and a short survey are available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/allianceplan.html>.

More information on the Gulf of Mexico Alliance is available at <http://www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org/>.

## **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/>.

## 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>.

On February 6, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [John Foster, TJ Helton, Aaron Wendt, Lee Munz, Loren Henley, Pamela Casebolt, Mitch Conine, Donna Long] met with TCEQ staff in Austin to coordinate efforts among the two agencies. TCEQ recently completed an internal reorganization of water quality staff and this was the first opportunity for TSSWCB SRM staff to discuss programmatic issues with the complete management structure of the new TCEQ Division. Discussion centered on the water quality standards revision, recreational use attainability analyses (UAAs), the TMDL program and associated projects, the CWA §319(h) NPS Grant program and associated projects, and issues related to developing WPPs.

### Task Force on Bacteria TMDLs

On June 29, 2007, at a joint meeting, the TSSWCB and the TCEQ approved the recommendations from the joint Task Force on Bacteria TMDLs. The Board directed TSSWCB staff to work with the staff of the TCEQ to 1) incorporate the principles of the recommendations into an updated joint-agency TMDL guidance document, 2) move diligently to expedite the development of bacteria TMDLs that were paused during the work of the Task Force, and 3) establish a multi-agency bacteria work group to

continue examining the scientific research and development needs identified in the Task Force Report. More information is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/tmdl#taskforce>.

TSSWCB staff continue to work with TCEQ staff to implement these directives.

Specifically, staff have completed a full draft of the revised TMDL Program Guidance that incorporates the Task Force recommendations on bacteria TMDLs. Progress on finalizing the guidance document has been suspended while TCEQ completes an internal staff reorganization. TSSWCB SRM staff have also worked with TCEQ staff to resume work on the development of TMDLs paused during the Task Force process, including holding public stakeholder meetings and collecting and analyzing data; although, progress on the development of several of these TMDLs has been further suspended by TCEQ as proposed revisions to the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards may affect the water quality target of those TMDLs.

### Texas Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List

The *Texas Water Quality Inventory* summarizes the status of the State's surface waters, including concerns for public health, fitness for use by aquatic species and other wildlife, and specific pollutants and their possible sources. The *2008 Texas 303(d) List* identifies waterbodies not attaining water quality standards (i.e., impaired), as required by the federal CWA. Over 830 waterbody-pollutant combinations are described. Bacteria impairments (contact recreation and oyster waters) continue to dominate the list with 48% of waterbody-pollutant combinations. Excessive levels of pollutants in fish tissue constitute 16% and low dissolved oxygen impairments account for 15%. The remainder of impairments are for a variety of pollutants. The TCEQ approved the *2008 Texas 202(d) List* on March 19, 2008. On July 9, 2008, EPA approved the *2008 Texas 303(d) List*.

More information on the *2008 Texas Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List* is available at

<http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/compliance/monitoring/water/quality/data/08twqi/twqi08.html>.

## 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).

On February 12, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [TJ Helton, Aaron Wendt] met with TCEQ staff to discuss priority waterbodies and resource allocation for conducting Recreational Use Attainability Analyses (UAAs). Utilizing new protocols recently developed by TCEQ, a Recreational UAA will need to be conducted on a waterbody before a new category of recreational use or different bacteria water quality standard may be applied.

## Feral Hog Abatement Advisory Committee

On February 18, 2009, TSSWCB staff [Mel Davis] attended the Feral Hog Abatement Advisory Committee meeting in Austin. This committee was established by Wildlife Services (a unit of Texas AgriLife Extension Service) to help identify and prioritize overall and regional feral hog control strategies. The committee is helping to direct the allocation of resources from a Texas Department of Agriculture grant. More information is available at <http://ws.tamu.edu/>.

## 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>.

On February 12, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended the Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC) CRP Steering Committee meeting in Houston. A brief summary of the sources and causes of pollution in area waterbodies was given and the group was asked to look over the list and make comments on waterbodies they are familiar with. A preview of the upcoming budget was provided, which included equipment, personnel and special studies, including WPP development. Overviews of potential studies was given, including a comparison of pre- and post-Hurricane Ike effects on waterways, BMP effectiveness by Harris County

Flood Control District, and WPP development for the San Bernard River and West Fork Double Bayou. A brief update on the greater Houston area Bacteria Implementation Group (BIG) was given. More information is available at <http://www.h-gac.com/community/water/rivers/default.aspx>.

## 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.

On February 19, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended the Galveston Bay Council Water and Sediment Quality Subcommittee meeting in Houston. Updates on three WPPs were provided. Texas Sea Grant reported on Dickinson Bayou, which nearly has a final draft of the plan. Implementation is set to begin when the planning process is complete, and will include stormwater wetlands as a major component to achieve load reductions. Other strategies include a pet waste campaign and land preservation through acquisition. HGAC reported on Bastrop Bayou, and noted the stakeholder approval of the SELECT model used to determine loading from identified sources in the watershed. Work is being done on the tidal prism model to understand the tidal influence on *E. coli* loads in the bayou. One strategy for implementation is looking at converting septic systems to centralized wastewater treatment. In Armand Bayou, there is work being done on converting a flood retention pond, located on the University of Houston-Clear Lake campus, into a stormwater wetland for water quality treatment. Next, project planning for FY2010 was discussed. A list of proposed projects included WPP development for Highland, Double, and Cedar Bayous and bacterial source tracking in Brazoria, Chambers, and

Galveston Counties. There is approximately \$300,000 available for projects for FY2010.

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 Galveston Bay in Brazoria, Chambers, Galveston, Harris and Liberty Counties.

## Texas Watershed Planning Short Course

On February 20, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Aaron Wendt] participated in a meeting of the planning team for the Texas Watershed Planning Short Course in College Station.

Proper training of watershed coordinators and water resource professionals is needed to ensure that WPPs are adequately planned, coordinated and implemented and the results properly assessed and reported. To provide the needed training and promote sustainable proactive approaches to managing water quality throughout the state, this Short Course provides participants with guidance on stakeholder coordination, education, and outreach; meeting the EPA's nine key elements of a WPP; data collection and analysis; and the tools available for plan development. The Texas Water Resources Institute, with CWA §319(h) funding from the TCEQ, developed this course.

The second offering of this Short Course was in January 2009 in Bandera. At this meeting, the planning team reviewed evaluations received from participants and instructors and discussed modifications to the agenda for the next course, which is scheduled for August 2009.

More information is available at <http://watershedplanning.tamu.edu/>.

## Upcoming Public Meetings

- March 3, 2009 – Nueces River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee (Uvalde)

- March 3, 2009 Watershed Steward Workshop focused on Little Brazos River Tributaries (Franklin)
- March 5, 2009 – Coastal Coordination Council (Austin)
- March 5, 2009 – Nueces River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee (Corpus Christi)
- March 11, 2009 – Northeast Texas Municipal Water District Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee (Hughes Springs)
- March 12, 2009 – Regional Watershed Coordination Steering Committee (Columbus)
- March 17, 2009 – Bacteria Implementation Group Steering Committee (Houston)
- March 18, 2009 – Copano Bay Field Day (Sinton)
- March 24, 2009 – Houston-Galveston Area Council Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee (Houston)
- March 24, 2009 – Red River Authority Clean Rivers Program Canadian River Basin Steering Committee (Amarillo)
- March 25, 2009 – Brazos River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee (Waco)
- March 26, 2009 – Caddo Lake WPP Water Quality Work Group (TBD)
- March 26, 2009 – Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee (Seguin)
- March 26, 2009 – South Llano River Stakeholder Meeting (Junction)
- March 26, 2009 – Barton and Onion Creeks Watershed Stakeholder Meeting (Austin)
- March 31, 2009 – Red River Authority Clean Rivers Program Red River Basin Steering Committee (Wichita Falls)
- April 1, 2009 – Lower Colorado River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee (Austin)
- April 22, 2009 – Galveston Bay Council (Houston)

- April 23, 2009 – Little Brazos River Tributaries Stakeholder Meeting (Franklin)
- April 27, 2009 – Arroyo Colorado WPP Steering Committee (Weslaco)
- April 30, 2009 – Trinity River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee (Dallas)
- April 30, 2009 – Buck Creek WPP Stakeholder Meeting (Wellington)

## 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

More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/31-atacosea.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

On February 24, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a Bastrop Bayou WPP public meeting in Angleton. A second meeting, with the same agenda, was held February 26, 2009 in Lake Jackson. The SELECT model results were approved by stakeholders. An overview of continuing work on the tidal prism model for the tidal portion of the bayou was presented. HGAC received additional funding from TCEQ to complete the planning process. Texas Stream Team (formerly Texas Watch) will be training volunteer water quality monitors in the watershed in order to generate more interest in the WPP. Also, Trash Bash, an annual event in the Houston area, will take place on March 28, 2009, and one of the cleanup sites is in the Bastrop Bayou watershed at Demi-John Island. Draft text for the WPP is available for comment on the project website. HGAC intends to complete the first draft soon.

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

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

On February 19, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Mitch Conine, Aaron Wendt] and Regional Office staff [Max Berry] attended the Caddo Lake WPP stakeholder meeting in Jefferson. An update was given to the stakeholders on the possible changes to the water quality standards for waterbodies in the basin. Espey Consultants gave a presentation on the modeling approach that is going to be taken. They are going to conduct a combination of SWAT, QUAL-2E, and WASP modeling in the watershed. Cypress Valley Navigation District gave a report on the current chemical control efforts on-going for invasive aquatic plants. Finally, a short presentation was given on the December 2008 hydrology work group meeting. The purpose of this work group is to assure adequate instream flows to sustain the ecological, recreational and economic values of Caddo Lake and its tributaries.

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

On February 5, 2009 TSSWCB SRM staff [Lee Munz] attended a Cedar Creek Reservoir WPP stakeholder meeting in Kaufman. Stakeholder feedback on the draft WPP was received. Several stakeholders had comments and additional questions about the plan. The group was updated on modeling results within the watershed to determine the best areas for BMP implementation. Finally, stakeholders were informed of possible funding sources for implementation and the group then set milestones for the WPP. A final draft of the plan is scheduled for summer 2009 and the final WPP in September 2009.

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, Macroenthic Community  
Mechanism: WPP  
Lead: TSSWCB

More information is available at <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

On February 4, 2009, EPA approved *Six TMDLs for Bacteria in Waters of the Upper Gulf Coast*. These TMDLs use a concentration-based approach for determining the necessary load reductions to protect oyster harvesting in Upper Galveston Bay, Trinity Bay, East Bay, West Bay, Chocolate Bay, and Lower Galveston Bay.

More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/74-uppercoastoyster.html>.

<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

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

On February 26, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Donna Long] attended a Gilleland Creek TMDL Technical Stakeholder meeting in Austin. The purpose of the meeting was to obtain input on the Key Elements for management measures agreed upon by the technical work groups and which were presented to the stakeholders at the July 2008 stakeholder meeting. Management measures for each subcommittee are:

- Stormwater Management – determine the effectiveness of retrofitting existing flood control facilities (stormwater detention basins) to perform as water quality facilities to reduce bacteria concentrations
- Wastewater Treatment Facilities – monitor and report effluent *E. coli* concentrations and identify and repair failing wastewater collection systems
- Education and Outreach – coordinate with partners to develop a general campaign to raise public awareness of NPS contributions of bacteria pollution, specifically pet waste
- Natural Resource Management – restore and preserve riparian zones to protect water quality

- On-Site Sewage Facilities – identify, prioritize, inspect and bring into compliance malfunctioning on-site sewage facilities in the watershed

This was the last meeting of the Gilleland Creek Technical Subcommittee and Workgroups.

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/mygoenvronmentalwater319grant.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

On February 17, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended the Bacteria Implementation Group (BIG) Steering Committee meeting in Houston. The BIG is focused on implementing bacteria TMDLs in the greater Houston area, including Lake Houston, Buffalo and Whiteoak Bayous, Clear Creek and others. At this meeting, discussion was held on the content and structure of TMDL I-Plans. Also, a handout describing EPA's nine elements for WPPs was discussed. The initial draft for the I-Plan is planned to be released in March 2009 for the public to provide comment on. Reports from three of the work groups followed along with discussion of the timeline.

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

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/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

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

## Lower San Antonio River

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

On February 10, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] participated in a tour of the San Antonio

River Basin hosted by the San Antonio River Authority (SARA). The tour started in San Antonio where several projects were highlighted, including flood control, streambank restoration, and park and paddling trail development. Also, the historic missions were visited demonstrating how the river contributed to the rich history of San Antonio. An aqueduct system, which is the oldest water right in Texas, was used for the missions for drinking and irrigation, and is still in use today for irrigation. The tour continued downstream through rural areas dominated by acres of grazing land with small cities scattered throughout. Several stops were made to explain different features along the river, including geology and land use. One interesting location was Conquista Crossing, which is located a few miles north of Falls City. This location was an historic crossing due to the limestone and lignite outcroppings that made the river shallow enough to cross. The tour continued on to Goliad, to the State Park and mission and to the existing paddling trail. SARA hopes to build several parks on recently purchased land along the river for more paddling trails. The tour ended at Berclair, where SARA has built a drinking water facility.

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

On February 27, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Lee Munz] attended the groundbreaking for the new Tarleton State University Southwest Regional Dairy Center in Stephenville. The highly anticipated center is expected to be a premier learning and research dairy serving Texas and surrounding states. A crowd of approximately 300 gathered in support of the dairy, which will serve as “the” dairy of

research and learning for The Texas A&M University System. Dr. Don Cawthon, dean of the Tarleton College of Agriculture and Human Sciences, started the ceremony with a brief synopsis of how the idea for the dairy started, who was instrumental in bringing it to life and what the ultimate goal for the dairy will be when it is finally completed. Others who addressed the crowd included: Tarleton President Dominic Dottavio; Representative Sid Miller; Congressman John Carter; Dr. Larry Boleman, Associate Vice Chancellor of Texas AgriLife Research; Nancy Hunter, City of Stephenville Mayor; Tab Thompson, Erath County Judge; and John Cowan, executive director of the Texas Association of Dairymen.

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 February 17, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [TJ Helton, Mitch Conine, Aaron Wendt], along with staff from TWRI, met EPA staff to discuss the federal consistency review of the Pecos River WPP. Nearly \$1,500,000 of TSSWCB's FY2008 CWA §319(h) allocation was set aside for implementing components of the Pecos River WPP. Award of these funds from EPA is contingent upon EPA completing their review and finding that the plan satisfies the nine elements fundamental to a WPP. At this meeting, discussion focused on EPA's preliminary review.

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 February 19, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Pamela Casebolt] attended the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership Steering Committee meeting in Lockhart. Discussion focused on WPP implementation, outreach and education, water quality monitoring, and other activities in the watershed. Current activities include installation of pet waste stations, hiring of an SWCD technician to provide technical assistance to farmers and ranchers, upcoming feral hog and athletic field (SAFE) workshops, community clean-ups, continued water quality monitoring, and completion of an on-line septic system education module. As the Partnership looks to its future sustainability, the

San Marcos River Foundation spoke on their experiences as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

On February 24, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Mitch Conine, Loren Henley] attended a feral hog management workshop in Luling. The workshop focused on the many elements of feral hog management and explained trapping mechanisms and guidelines in hunting feral hogs. There were many presenters from various agencies, including Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas Animal Health Commission, Wildlife Services (a unit of AgriLife Extension), and Texas Department of Agriculture. Participants were welcomed by the local Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Game Warden; she explained the appropriate means of contacting the local game warden when hunting feral hogs. A history of feral hogs was presented, ranging from the origin of feral hogs to how they have managed to adapt. More information on feral hog management is available at <http://feralhog.tamu.edu/>.

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

More information is available at <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 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/tmdl/25-oystercreek.html>. This TMDL will have limited affect on farming and livestock operations in the Upper Oyster Creek watershed in Fort Bend County.

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

The 80<sup>th</sup> Legislature continued funding for the Water Supply Enhancement Program by providing \$1,848,927.00 in General Revenue Funds in FY08.

These funds were directed to be used for continuation of brush control projects designated by the Soil and Water Conservation Board.

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

#### **Area 2 Districts**

North Concho River SWCD  
Nolan County SWCD  
Middle Concho SWCD  
Eldorado-Divide SWCD  
Tom Green County SWCD  
Pedernales SWCD  
Gillespie County SWCD

#### **Area 3**

McMullen County SWCD  
LaSalle County SWCD  
Caldwell/ Travis SWCD  
Comal/Guadalupe SWCD  
Webb County SWCD

#### **Area 4**

Harris Co. SWCD

#### **Area 5**

Archer County SWCD  
Lower Clear Fork/Brazos SWCD  
Pecan Bayou SWCD  
Bosque SWCD  
Clay County SWCD

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

- Canadian River Project- Rod Goodwin  
Canadian River Munciple Water Authority
- Twin Buttes- Tuffy Wood TSSWCB
- 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
- Nuecus River Project- Tuffy Wood
- Bosque Project- Cody York

- Sam Houston Area Council Boy Scout of America (Bandera)- Cody York
- Sam Houston Area Council Boy Scout of America (Wimberly)- 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 Guadalupe Blanco River Authority with potential areas for Water Enhancement Project
- 10 Landowners assisted with Water Supply Enhancement Certifications
- 5 Landowners assisted with Water Supply Enhancement Contracts
- Met with NRCS after the January Board Meeting to give an update on all the TSSWCB projects throughout the State
- Attended District Director workshop in Belton
- Attended the Senate Finance Hearing in Austin
- Attended the House Appropriation Committee Hearing in Austin
- Met with NRCS in Junction to discuss a Water Enhancement Project in the Edwards around Bandera
- Conducted a workgroup session in Bandera to discuss the areas the TSSWCB would considered for a Water Enhancement Project, also discussed average cost, type of treatment.

- Assisted Pedernales SWCD with networking Water Enhancement Project computers
- Working with TWRI on the Water Enhancement Program to develop a Priority system using GIS
- Met with the Clay County SWCD to discuss expanding the Lake Arrowhead Water Enhancement Project into Clay County
- Assisted the Frio SWCD and the McMullen SWCD with new cooperative agreements for the Water Enhancement Program District employees

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## FLOOD CONTROL DAMS

Floodwater retarding dams built by local watershed sponsors under the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) watershed program successfully protected many Texas communities from catastrophic damage during the spring and summer storms of 2007. Floodwaters from 24 storm events caused damages in 14 counties, with some counties being affected multiple times. Floodwater retarding dams in 19 watershed projects located within these counties reduced flood damages by \$25 million for these storm events.

Statewide, 148 watershed projects provide average annual benefits exceeding \$119 million. This very important infrastructure provides benefits by reducing flood damages to homes, businesses, roads, bridges, and agricultural lands, as well as protects many people's lives.

The NRCS has prepared Watershed fact sheets have for all U.S. Congressional Districts in Texas that have watershed projects. A state-wide fact sheet has also been prepared. You may access

<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.

### **Dam Safety Rules Revision**

The TCEQ has updated Texas' dam safety rules.. The new rules may be viewed at:

[http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/assets/public/legal/rules/rule lib/adoptions/08005299 ado clean.pdf](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/assets/public/legal/rules/rule%20lib/adoptions/08005299%20ado%20clean.pdf)

The adopted rule repeals and replaces the existing rule. The adopted rule relates to dam; design; construction plans and specifications; construction; operation and maintenance; inspections; removal; emergency management; and site security. The adopted rule updates existing criteria to make them more consistent with current engineering practices. The adopted rule adds requirements for emergency action plans, gate operating plans, security plans, and better defines dam owner responsibilities. The adopted rule requires new dams to meet certain design standards and requires additional nonstructural requirements of existing dams.

The adopted rule removes small and intermediate-size, low-hazard dams from the periodic inspection schedule, and establishes an inspection frequency of five years for high and significant-hazard dams and large, low-hazard dams. The adopted rule allows inspections by the owner or the owner's representative in lieu of agency inspections.

The adopted rule changes the definition of "dam", thus reducing the number of small, low-hazard dams subject to regulation. The adopted rule updates all relevant cross-references and citations.

The revised rules became effective January 1, 2009.

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*Monthly Program News and Activities* is produced by the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) for use by Texas soil and water conservation district directors. If you have any questions regarding its contents, or have information you would like to see in a future issue, please contact Loren Henley (254) 773-2250 or [lhenley@tsswcb.state.tx.us](mailto:lhenley@tsswcb.state.tx.us).

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 217 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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