



# 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 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

- July 1 is the deadline for submitting SWCD Director Mileage & Per Diem Grant claims for the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarters of 2008.
- The maximum mileage reimbursement rate for July and August will increase to \$0.585 per mile.

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## STATE BOARD WORK SESSIONS AND MEETINGS

### Scheduled Work Sessions and Meetings

The State Board has tentatively scheduled a Board Work Session for 2:30 p.m. at the Drury Inn in Amarillo, Texas, on Wednesday, July 16, 2008. A formal State Board Meeting is tentatively scheduled for 8:00 a.m. at the Drury Inn in Amarillo, Texas, on Thursday, July 17, 2008. 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 May 15, 2008, State Board Meeting will be considered for approval at the meeting tentatively scheduled for July 17, 2008. 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

July 1 is the deadline for submitting SWCD Director Mileage & Per Diem Grant claims for the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarters of 2008.

The maximum mileage reimbursement rate for July and August will increase to \$0.585 per mile.

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## HUMAN RESOURCES

TSSWCB is currently recruiting for the following positions; Engineer III in Hale Center and a Natural Resource Specialist IV in Harlingen. For more information about current TSSWCB job openings go to 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.

### Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District Directors

The State Meeting for this year is scheduled for September 29-30 and October 1, 2008 in Galveston. The meeting will be in the Galveston Island Convention Center.

Rooms have been blocked at the Galveston Island Hilton and the Holiday Inn Resort on the Beach. The Hilton may be contacted at 409-744-5000 and the Holiday Inn may be contacted at 409-740-3581.

Please mark this date and make plans to attend. Everyone's support is needed and welcomed. View the link below for any upcoming information.

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

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## PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

### SWCD Director and Employee Program

**Development Conference**— A program development conference for district directors and interested district employees is scheduled for July 29-30, 2008 at the LaQuinta Inn in Belton, TX.

**SWCD Director Training Resource Project**— A District Director and Employee Training Resources link is being created for posting on the TSSWCB website to permit SWCDs to access district related training resource materials. The training resources link will enable field staff to conduct director training on a localized level, and also provide SWCDs easier access to materials of a specific interest. The link to the training resources is anticipated to be ready for access by the end of July

**Priority Education Funding Program**— **Sixty-Three SWCDs have asked for and received approval for funding priority education programs under the Priority Education Funding program since the previous board meeting. Districts, during this fiscal year have until August 1 to make application for funding. The program is offered to districts through the Association of Texas SWCDs public information/education program**

## **TSSWCB and SWCDs**

The Pedernales Soil and Water Conservation District hosted a conservation education workshop for teachers at the Franklin Family Ranch in Blanco, Texas on June 24-26. Topics included soils, the water cycle, plants in the Texas Hill Country, prescribed burning, wildlife biology, and more.

Teachers attending the workshop had the opportunity to enjoy and stay at the ranch which included meals and workshop materials. Teachers of all grade levels benefited from information presented at the workshop.

## **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**

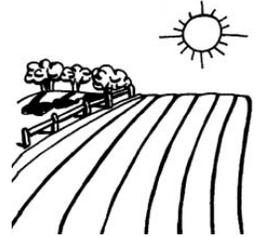
Select a video from the [TSSWCB Conservation Video Catalog](#), then contact Meredith McArthur at [mmcarthur@tsswcb.state.tx.us](mailto:mmcarthur@tsswcb.state.tx.us) to check it out.

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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.



### **Program News**

Districts are making every effort to ensure that FY-06 funds are used prior to August 15, 2008 which is when they will revert to the state treasury.

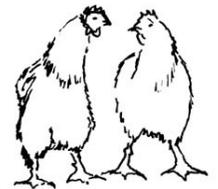
<http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/wqmp>.

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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

The TSSWCB Poultry Office recently sent out a letter and checklist to poultry producers to remind them TSSWCB will soon be conducting inspections of poultry CAFO facilities to ensure they are meeting all the necessary requirements. In addition, existing WQMPs are being reviewed and updated and plans are being developed for newly constructed farms.

Complaints against poultry farms have been significantly higher this fiscal year than past years. Due to increasing number of farms and increasing overall population and increased awareness and availability of the complaint processes to the public, this trend will probably continue. TSSWCB is actively working with producers, the industry, and other agencies to minimize negative effects to neighbors from poultry farms.

Staffs from TSSWCB, Texas AgriLife Extension, and Sanderson Farms, Inc. plan to hold meetings for growers in Limestone, Leon, and Robertson Counties in August to address reduction of odor complaints in the area.

A poultry CAFO producer meeting was held June 17, 2008 for turkey growers in the Waco area. The meeting was the same as the six that were held earlier this year for chicken growers.

All TSSWCB staff working with poultry issues are scheduled to meet in Temple on July 2, 2008 to discuss overall coordination and implementation of the Poultry Program.

John Foster and Mark Cochran met with the Texas Poultry Federation Board in Beaumont on May 15, 2008 and Mark Cochran met with the Texas Broiler Council in Nacogdoches on June 19, 2008. Issues of concern were discussed at both meetings such as implementation of WQMPs, mortality management, following CAFO rules, avoiding odor, and the need for the companies' assistance to ensure producers address these issues properly.

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

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## CLEAN WATER ACT, §319(h) GRANTS

### Background

Congress enacted §319(h) of the Clean Water Act (CWA) in 1987, establishing a national program to control nonpoint sources (NPS) of water pollution. Through §319(h), federal funds are provided through the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to states for the development and implementation of each state's nonpoint source management program. The §319(h) funding in Texas is divided evenly between the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB). The following report provides an overview of TSSWCB's §319(h) program status and major ongoing activities.

### FY2002 – FY2007 CWA §319(h) Grant Status

There are currently 63 ongoing §319(h) grant-funded projects addressing a wide array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues. Federal funds totaling \$16 million are primarily being used to address NPS pollution from animal feed operations, prevent atrazine runoff, provide technical assistance, implement best management practices, support various NPS outreach/education programs, develop and implement Watershed Protection Plans (WPPs), and implement the nonpoint source portion of TMDL Implementation Plans.

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

The TSSWCB's FY2008 §319(h) program allocation is \$4,578,700. The TSSWCB received a total of 18 proposals requesting a total of \$7,549,471 in federal funds. Of the 18 proposals, 6 were selected for funding. TSSWCB staff are finalizing the FY2008 §319(h) grant application for submittal to EPA.

### Texas Nonpoint Source Management Program

The Texas NPS Management Program is the State's official roadmap for addressing nonpoint source pollution, presenting its goals, priorities, programs, and milestones for the program. The program publication,

which is prepared jointly by the TSSWCB and the TCEQ, is required by Section 319 of the federal CWA and is updated every five years. The NPS Annual Report, which is also required by Section 319, provides an annual update of progress toward meeting the goals and milestones set forth in the NPS Management Program. TSSWCB staff and TCEQ staff are in the initial stages of updating the program publication. Staff from both agencies met on June 17 to begin discussing roles and responsibilities for the report, as well as a timeline for completion.

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## Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and Watershed Planning

### Total Maximum Daily Load Program Overview

The federal Clean Water Act (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 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (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 *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. 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. 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*. Responsibility to develop and implement TMDLs is shared between the TSSWCB and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). More information on the TSSWCB TMDL Program is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/tmdl>.

### Watershed Protection Plan Program Overview

A Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) is a coordinated framework for voluntarily 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. Developed and implemented through diverse, well integrated partnerships, a WPP assures the long-term health of a watershed with strategies for protecting unimpaired waters and restoring impaired waters. WPPs have a variety of ingredients and can take many forms. TSSWCB-sponsored WPPs are consistent with guidelines promulgated by EPA that describe nine elements fundamental to a potentially successful plan. More information on the TSSWCB WPP Program is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/wpp>.

### MOA Coordination with TCEQ

On September 27, 2006, at a joint TSSWCB/TCEQ meeting, a new *Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on TMDLs, I-Plans, and WPPs* was approved by the Board and Commission. 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>.

### Bacteria TMDL Task Force

On June 29, 2007, at a joint TSSWCB/TCEQ meeting in Austin, the Board and Commission approved the recommendations from the joint Bacteria TMDL Task Force. 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. TSSWCB staff continue to work with TCEQ staff to implement these directives. Specifically, staff have now completed a full draft of the revised TMDL Program Guidance document and are working with TCEQ staff to resolve outstanding issues and move this project to conclusion and publish the document. TSSWCB 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. More information is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/tmdl#taskforce>.

#### State Appropriations for TMDL Program Grants

On May 24, 2007, the Board approved a *TSSWCB Policy on TMDLs* which provides guidance to staff on directing state appropriations for the TMDL Program. On July 19, 2007, the Board approved an operating budget for FY2008 that allocated \$1,200,494 in state appropriations to TMDL Program grants. These monies have been fully obligated and directed to projects that support 1) increased analytical infrastructure at public Bacterial Source Tracking laboratories (49%), 2) implementation of agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source components of TMDL I-Plans (16%), and 3) development of TMDLs through the collection and analysis of water quality and land use data (35%).

#### 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 June 11, Brian Koch attended the Houston-Galveston Area Council CRP Steering Committee meeting in

Houston. At this meeting, the *2008 Basin Highlights Report* was approved, along with the 2008 Coordinated Monitoring Schedule. Also, an update on bacteria studies in Harris County was given; the County is looking at different areas along Halls and Whiteoak Bayous, one area with permitted discharges and one with none. The County is also looking at industrial wastewater and runoff from different land uses including lawns, wooded sites, and golf courses. A summary and report on the Cotton/West Fork Double Bayous study should be finalized soon and public meetings for the Bastrop Bayou WPP will be held concerning the use of the SELECT model. More information is available at <http://www.h-gac.com/community/water/rivers/default.aspx>.

#### Texas Watershed Planning Short Course

On June 2-6, Pamela Casebolt, Loren Henley, Mitch Conine, Brian Koch and Aaron Wendt participated in the inaugural Texas Watershed Planning Short Course in Bandera. The Texas Water Resources Institute, with CWA §319(h) funding from the TCEQ, developed this course. The planning team included TSSWCB staff. 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. Additional offerings of the Short Course will be scheduled in upcoming months. More information is available at <http://watershedplanning.tamu.edu/>.

#### Wharton Regional Watershed Coordination Steering Committee

On June 12, Brian Koch hosted the 13<sup>th</sup> Regional Watershed Coordination Steering Committee (WCSC) meeting in Columbus. Updates on activities of the watershed coordinator was given, and included attendance at several CRP and Coordinated Monitoring meetings, a Plum Creek Steering Committee meeting, NEMO Training, and the Texas Watershed Planning Short Course.

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) provided an update on their activities in the Plum Creek watershed. The "Taking Charge of Water Quality" project, funded by a CWA §106 Grant from TCEQ, focuses on outreach and education to cities, counties, and schools on water quality with information on how to lessen impacts from each group. Also, funds were provided to cleanup illegal dumping sites along the creek, and to organize community cleanups along the creek. GBRA identified 16 sites along the creek, and was able to leverage resources and accomplish 6 cleanups removing over 7 tons of trash from the creek including 62 tires and 3 car batteries. After the cleanups, signs were posted by the County showing who assisted with the site cleanups. More information is available at <http://www.gbra.org/Spotlight/PlumCreek.aspx>.

The Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC) provided an update on EnviroCast® for the Houston Area – Utilizing Television Media for Nonpoint Source Education. This project, funded with a CWA §319(h) grant from the TSSWCB, is tagged "Going Green" by KPRC Channel 2, the NBC affiliate in Houston. The focus of this project is to place water and air quality and quality of life stories alongside the weather during the newscast and also features an informative website. More information is available at <http://kprc.envirocast.net>.

The WCSC is composed of about two dozen water quality monitoring and improvement partners, including other state and federal agencies, river authorities, national estuary programs, and councils of governments. The WCSC is tasked with providing guidance to TSSWCB on watershed planning activities in 47 counties across southeast and south central Texas. More information is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/cwp>.

### Atascosa River

On June 24, Adrian Perez, Lee Munz and Aaron Wendt attended an Atascosa River TMDL public meeting in Pleasanton. TCEQ discussed proposed monitoring and modeling activities for the project, as well as, provided an update on the progress of the triennial water quality standards revision and implications for this project. An update was provided by the Atascosa County SWCD on technical and financial assistance being provided to cattlemen in the watershed. Technical assistance is funded through a CWA §319(h) grant from the TSSWCB to assist livestock operators in developing WQMPs. Financial assistance is available through the

USDA NRCS EQIP State Resource Concern for Water Quality in South Central Texas. Progress on expending funds obligated over the last three years was discussed. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/31-atascosa.html>. This TMDL will impact livestock operations in the Atascosa River watershed in Atascosa, Bexar, Frio, Karnes, Live Oak, McMullen, Medina and Wilson Counties.

### Bastrop Bayou

On May 30, nearly 40 citizens attended a Texas Watershed Steward workshop in Lake Jackson to learn about local water quality issues, sources of water pollution, and ways to get involved in local watershed management efforts. The workshop was sponsored by TSSWCB, the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, and the Houston-Galveston Area Council in support of ongoing watershed management efforts in the Bastrop Bayou watershed. The Texas Watershed Steward Program was developed by AgriLife Extension through CWA §319(h) NPS grants from the TSSWCB. Workshop participants learned about watershed systems, water quality regulation and monitoring, methods to improve water quality, and community-driven watershed protection and management. The workshop also provided the basic knowledge and tools needed to form a watershed action group, participate in and organize local watershed activities, and become more involved in protecting and enhancing community water resources. More information about the Texas Watershed Steward Program is available at <http://tw.s.tamu.edu>.

On June 26, Brian Koch attended a meeting for the Bastrop Bayou WPP in Lake Jackson. This was the second of two public meetings to update stakeholders on the SELECT model that will be used to help identify bacteria sources on the watershed. The other meeting was held June 24 in Angleton. An overview of the model and how it will work was provided, and discussion on sources and other potential concerns in the watershed followed. More information is available at [http://www.h-gac.com/community/water/watershed\\_protection/default.aspx](http://www.h-gac.com/community/water/watershed_protection/default.aspx). This WPP has the potential to affect livestock and farming operations in the Bastrop Bayou watershed in Brazoria County.

### Brady Creek

On May 29, Ben Wilde, Joe Freeman and Loren Henley attended a Brady Creek WPP advisory committee

meeting in Melvin. Discussion was centered on the monitoring sites and the Quality Assurance Project Plan for the project. The Upper Colorado River Authority (UCRA) opened the floor for committee members to express their concerns about the selected sites and the different best management practices that could be implemented in the watershed. UCRA asked advisory committee members what would be the best way to get access on private property in the watershed to collect water samples. UCRA also asked the advisory committee about how to best notify citizens about the project, and better educate those in the watershed. Loren Henley discussed the Texas Watershed Steward Program workshop that was held in Brady Creek in April. More information is available at <http://www.ucratx.org/NPSBrady.html>. This WPP has the potential to impact agricultural operations in the Brady Creek watershed in McCulloch, Concho, San Saba and Menard Counties.

#### Buck Creek

On June 24, Jack Foote and Mitch Conine attended a Buck Creek stakeholder meeting and field trip in Wellington. Results from the 3-year sampling project, "Bacteria Monitoring for the Buck Creek Watershed" funded with a CWA §319(h) grant from the TSSWCB, were presented to the stakeholders and copies of the final report were distributed. Sampling confirmed that Buck Creek exhibits elevated bacteria concentrations at numerous sites throughout the watershed. An update was given on the Bacterial Source Tracking (BST) portion of the current project. A presentation on solar powered water wells was given as well. The stakeholders spent the afternoon at the Skipper Ranch-Hounds Crossing for the field tour. Other discussions during the tour covered topics including nitrates, wildlife and ranching, brush control, animal behavior and wildlife assistance. More information is available at <http://twri.tamu.edu/buckcreek/>. This WPP has the potential to impact livestock and farming operations in the Buck Creek watershed in Donley, Collingsworth, and Childress Counties.

#### Buffalo and Whiteoak Bayous

On May 21, TCEQ approved publishing and soliciting public comment on *Eighteen TMDLs for Bacteria in Buffalo and Whiteoak Bayous and Tributaries (Segments 1013, 1013A, 1013C, 1014, 1014A, 1014B, 1014E, 1014H, 1014K, 1014L, 1014M, 1014N, 1014O, 1017, 1017A, 1017B, 1017D, and 1017E)*. The public

comment period is June 6 through July 5. A public comment meeting to receive comments on the proposed TMDL was held June 9 in Houston. Comments not submitted at the public meeting must be provided in writing and must be received by the TCEQ no later than July 5. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/2-2-buffalobayou.html>. This TMDL will have limited to no affect on livestock operations in the Buffalo and Whiteoak Bayous watershed in Harris, Fort Bend and Waller Counties.

#### Caddo Lake

On June 24, Max Berry attended a Caddo Lake WPP stakeholder meeting in Jefferson. Updates were provided on activities of the three workgroups (Water Quality, Physical Concerns, and Hydrology). Additionally, a presentation on a mercury study was given. 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 impact 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

On June 19, Lee Munz attended a Cedar Creek Watershed Partnership Steering Committee meeting in Kaufman. Plummer Associates presented information on the wastewater treatment plant study showing where current facilities are, current treatment levels and where the facilities may need to improve. Texas AgriLife Research reviewed the status of the work with the economic cost data to determine the cost effectiveness of each best management practice to be implemented in the watershed. This will be complete by the next meeting. The draft WPP was reviewed and stakeholders were asked to review the plan and provide comments at the next meeting. 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

On May 21, TCEQ approved publishing and soliciting public comment on *Nine TMDLs for Bacteria in Clear Creek and Tributaries (Segments 1101, 1101B, 1101D,*

1102, 1102A, 1102B, 1102C, 1102D, and 1102E). The public comment period is June 6 through July 5. A public comment meeting to receive comments on the proposed TMDL was held June 11 in League City. Comments not submitted at the public meeting must be provided in writing and must be received by the TCEQ no later than July 5. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/6-8-clearcreekbacteria.html>. This TMDL will have limited to no affect on livestock operations in the Clear Creek watershed in Galveston, Harris, Brazoria and Fort Bend Counties.

### Concho River

On May 28, Ben Wilde, Joe Freeman, Tuffy Wood, Loren Henley, TJ Helton and Aaron Wendt attended a Concho River WPP meeting in San Angelo with the Upper Colorado River Authority (UCRA) and affected soil and water conservation districts. The meeting objective was open discussion concerning comments from the SWCDs and NRCS on the draft WPP.

On June 26, Ben Wilde, Joe Freeman, Tuffy Wood and Loren Henley attended the Concho River WPP Steering Committee meeting in San Angelo. Discussion focused on Steering Committee comments on the draft WPP. This meeting was the last stakeholder meeting focused on the development of the WPP; although a public meeting will be held July 1 to receive comments from the general public on the WPP.

More information is available at [http://www.ucratx.org/CRiverRest\\_UCRA.html](http://www.ucratx.org/CRiverRest_UCRA.html). This WPP has the potential to 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.

### Dickinson Bayou

On May 21, TCEQ approved publishing and soliciting public comment on *Two TMDLs for Dissolved Oxygen in Dickinson Bayou (Segments 1103 and 1104)*. The public comment period is June 6 through July 5. A public comment meeting to receive comments on the proposed TMDL was held June 12 in Dickinson. Comments not submitted at the public meeting must be provided in writing and must be received by the TCEQ no later than July 5. This TMDL is proceeding in tandem with the on-going Dickinson Bayou WPP. 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 TMDL have the potential to affect farming and ranching operations in the Dickinson Bayou watershed in Galveston and Brazoria Counties.

### Elm and Sandies Creeks

On June 23, Kendria Ray, Shari Johnson, Lee Munz and Aaron Wendt attended an Elm and Sandies Creeks TMDL public meeting in Pilgrim. TCEQ discussed proposed monitoring and modeling activities for the project, as well as, provided an update on the progress of the triennial water quality standards revision and implications for this project. An update was provided by the DeWitt County SWCD on technical and financial assistance being provided to cattlemen in the watershed. Technical assistance is funded through a CWA §319(h) grant from the TSSWCB to assist livestock operators in developing WQMPs. Financial assistance is available through the USDA NRCS EQIP State Resource Concern for Water Quality in South Central Texas. Progress on expending funds obligated over the last three years was discussed. 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

On May 7, TCEQ approved publishing and soliciting public comment on *Six TMDLs for Bacteria in Waters of the Upper Gulf Coast (Segments 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2432, and 2439)*. These TMDLs focus on protecting oyster harvesting waters in the Galveston Bay system, including East Bay, West Bay, Chocolate Bay and Trinity Bay. The public comment period was May 23 through June 21. Two public meetings to receive comments on the proposed TMDL were held June 9 in Clear Lake and June 11 in Hankamer. Comments not submitted at the public meetings must have been received by the TCEQ no later than June 21. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/74-uppercoastoyster.html>. This TMDL will have limited to no affect on livestock operations around the Galveston Bay complex in Chambers, Harris, Galveston and Brazoria Counties.

## Lake Granger

On June 10, Meredith McArthur and Lee Munz attended a Texas Watershed Steward workshop in Georgetown. About 35 citizens participated in the workshop to learn about local water quality issues, sources of water pollution, and ways to get involved in local watershed management efforts. The workshop was sponsored by TSSWCB, the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, and the Brazos River Authority in support of ongoing watershed management efforts in the Lake Granger watershed. The Texas Watershed Steward Program was developed by AgriLife Extension through CWA §319(h) NPS grants from the TSSWCB. Workshop participants learned about watershed systems, water quality regulation and monitoring, methods to improve water quality, and community-driven watershed protection and management. The workshop also provided the basic knowledge and tools needed to form a watershed action group, participate in and organize local watershed activities, and become more involved in protecting and enhancing community water resources. More information about the Texas Watershed Steward Program is available at <http://tw.s.tamu.edu>. More information on the Lake Granger WPP 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.

## Lake Houston

On June 2-5, and 12, Joel Clark, Lawrence Brown, and Brian Koch attended a series of public meetings regarding the Lake Houston bacteria TMDL. Meetings were held in Kingwood, Cleveland, Humble, Woodlands and Conroe. This was the second round of meetings for the project. An update on findings concerning the bacteria impairment was provided to stakeholders. The meetings also included an "open house" so attendees could get information on the entities involved with the project. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/82-lakehouston.html>. These TMDLs have the potential to impact livestock operations in the Lake Houston watershed in Grimes, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, San Jacinto, Walker and Waller Counties.

## Lake O' the Pines

At their July 9 meeting, the TCEQ will consider approving *An Implementation Plan for One TMDL for Dissolved Oxygen in Lake O' the Pines (Segment 0403)*. The public comment period was April 18 through May 17. A public meeting to receive comments on the Implementation Plan was held April 29 in Hughes Springs. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/19-lakeopines.html>. This TMDL and Implementation Plan affect poultry, dairy and forestry operations in the Lake O' the Pines watershed in Upshur, Camp, Titus, Morris, Cass, Harrison and Marion Counties.

## Lower San Antonio River

On May 7, TCEQ approved publishing and soliciting public comment on *One TMDL for Bacteria in the Lower San Antonio River (Segment 1901)*. The public comment period was May 23 through June 21. A public meeting to receive comments on the proposed TMDL was held May 28 in Goliad. Comments not submitted at the public meeting must have been received by the TCEQ no later than June 21. 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.

## Oso Bay and Oso Creek

On June 6, EPA approved *One TMDL for Bacteria in Oso Bay (Segment 2485)*.

On June 26, Andy Garza, Mitch Conine and Aaron Wendt attended an Oso Bay/Creek TMDL public meeting in Corpus Christi. TCEQ gave an update on the status of the Oso Bay TMDL, including modifications EPA required before approving the TMDL. Texas AgriLife Research gave a presentation on the results from a TSSWCB-funded project that collected stormwater runoff from cropland areas to better understand nutrient, sediment and pesticide loadings. Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi discussed the sampling plan for another TSSWCB-funded project designed to better characterize bacteria loading, sources and fate and transport in the upper portion of the watershed. Data will be collected on water quality from in-stream sites during runoff and dry events, soil bacteria levels from fields and bacteria from in-stream sediments. Discussion on the sampling regime covered sample

locations, frequency of sampling, and Bacterial Source Tracking. Finally, a study that is being conducted to measure the influence of groundwater on the creek was discussed.

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

#### Upcoming Public Meetings

- July 1 – Concho River WPP Public Meeting (San Angelo)
- July 8 – Houston Area Bacteria Implementation Group Meeting (Houston)
- July 9 – TCEQ Agenda Meeting regarding Lake O' the Pines (Austin)
- July 15-17 – EPA MS4 Workshop (Dallas)
- July 16 – Galveston Bay Council (Pasadena)
- July 17 – Sulphur River Basin Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee (Texarkana)
- July 18 – *Air Quality Regulations for AFOs* (NLPELC Webcast)
- July 22 – TCEQ Water Quality Advisory Work Group (Austin)
- July 23 – Texas Watershed Steward Workshop on Hickory Creek (Denton)
- July 24 – Arroyo Colorado Watershed Agricultural Issues Work Group (Weslaco)
- July 24 – Arroyo Colorado Watershed Steering Committee (Weslaco)
- July 24 – Cedar Creek Reservoir Watershed Steering Committee (Kaufman)
- July 28 – Lavaca-Navidad River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee (Ganado)
- July 29 – Gilleland Creek TMDL Public Meeting (Pflugerville)
- July 30 – *Development and Evaluation of Environmental Flow Prescriptions for Big Cypress Bayou* (USGS Webcast)
- August 6 – Texas Watershed Steward Workshop on Plum Creek (Lockhart)
- August 7 – Lake Granbury WPP Stakeholder Meeting (Granbury)

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## COASTAL NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION CONTROL



### **Program Overview**

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) is a

member of Texas' Coastal Coordination Council, which administers the Texas Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program. The TSSWCB manages the agricultural and silvicultural portions of this program. The Texas Coastal Management Program was approved by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) on January 10, 1997. The Texas Coastal Management Program is administered by the Texas Coastal Coordination Council and staff of the Texas General Land Office. Section 6217 of the Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments requires each state with an approved Coastal Management Program to develop a federally approvable program to control coastal nonpoint source (NPS) pollution. The program must be submitted within 30 months of Coastal Management Program approval. As a result, the Texas Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program was submitted in December 1998 by the Coastal Coordination Council. The Coastal Management Program recognizes the TSSWCB and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) as holding primary responsibility over the development and implementation of the NPS program. More information is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/coastalnps>.

## **Program Activities**

The CCC met on June 26, 2008 in Port Arthur. Meeting information can be found at <http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal/ccc.html>

## **CIAP Program**

The State of Texas will receive \$48,591,202.09 for fiscal year 2007 and for fiscal year 2008. Of that amount, \$31,584,281.36 will be allocated to the state and \$17,006,920.73 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 MMS. This plan will include the recommended projects that have been submitted for funding.

In January 2008, the draft Texas Coastal Impact Assistance (CIAP) Plan was submitted for review to Minerals Management Service (MMS). After receiving comments, GLO staff made minor revisions to the draft and submitted a final plan to MMS upon approval by the Coastal Land Advisory Board and the Office of the Governor. MMS reviewed the plan and indicated it is not administratively complete. Grant applications for individual projects will be submitted to MMS after the state plan has been approved. It is anticipated that state projects will be approved for funding by early 2009.

A meeting of the Coastal Land Advisory Board was held on May 13, 2008. At that time, the Board provided guidance to CIAP staff as to the 2008 State CIAP Program. Public meetings were held in San Benito, Corpus Christi, and Houston to present the program to the general public. Grant applications for the 2008 state funding will be accepted through July 31, 2008. Initial applications must be made online at:

<http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal/ciap/fy2008.html>

The plan can be found at:

<http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal/ciap/fy2007.html>

Additional information on the CIAP program can be found at:

<http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal/ciap/index.html>

## **CMP Grant Program**

As in the previous grant cycles, the Coastal Coordination Council (CCC) expects to award approximately \$1.8 million for planning, acquisition, construction, education, and research projects in Grant Cycle 14.

The deadline for pre-proposals is June 25, 2008 by 5:00 p.m. (Submission of the pre-proposal is optional and is only necessary if written comments are desired.) The full application is due October 15, 2008 by 5:00 p.m.

Information on this grant program is available online:

<http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal/grants/cycle14.html>

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## **WATER ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM STATUS REPORT**

### **BACKGROUND:**

The 80<sup>th</sup> Legislature continued funding for the Water Enhancement Program by providing \$1,848,927.00 in General Revenue Funds in FY08. These funds were directed to be used for continuation of water enhancement control projects designated by the Soil and Water Conservation Board.

- The TSSWCB staff and other professionals have reviewed current water enhancement projects throughout the State identifying the highest water yielding areas of each project with the assistance of Ken Rainwater PhD., P.E., BCEE Director, Water Resource Texas Tech University.

- Staff has been providing information on water yield to Dr. Rainwater for primarily the Twin Buttes, Pedernales, Oak Creek Lake, Champion Lake, Lake Ballinger, and Canadian River Watersheds.

Provided the following SWCDs with Water Enhancement Program Updates or Water Enhancement Program Assistance

**Area 1 Districts**

Dawson County SWCD  
Upper Colorado SWCD

**Area 2 Districts**

North Concho River SWCD  
Nolan County SWCD  
Middle Concho SWCD  
Eldorado-Divide SWCD  
Tom Green County SWCD  
Pedernales SWCD  
Mitchell County SWCD  
Gillispie County SWCD  
Runnels SWCD  
Pecos County SWCD  
Middle Clear Fork SWCD  
Midland SWCD  
Trans Pecos SWCD  
Sandhills SWCD  
Howard County SWCD

**Area 3**

McMullen County SWCD  
LaSalle County SWCD  
Caldwell/ Travis SWCD  
Webb County SWCD  
Waters Davis SWCD

**Area 5**

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

- Evaluate pending application sub basin criteria from all projects
- Legislative update for Senator Duncan, Rep. Drew Darby, and Rep. Nathan Macias, and Senator Watson

- Assist TCEQ with Brush rider concerning water yield in State Brush Projects
- Evaluated sub-basins in the Twin Buttes and Pedernales watersheds that meet criteria for water supply enhancement cost share assistance and assess land owner participation
- Assist Comal/ Guadalupe District in reviewing potential areas for Water Enhancement Project
- Assist Dr. Rainwater with maps of treated areas in the water supply enhancement projects throughout the State
- Planning Lake Kickapoo Water Enhancement Project
- Assist Sen. Wentworth office in developing Guadalupe Watershed project
- Assisted Corp of Engineers with planning of water enhancement plan for O.C. Fisher and other Corp lakes
- Assist TSSWCB Headquarters with Concho River Watershed Protection Plan
- Assist Pecan Bayou SWCD with Water Enhancement Project

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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 the fact sheets from the Texas Watershed Web at:

<http://www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/watersheds/index.htm>.

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

The TCEQ is in the process of updating Texas' dam safety rules. The goal is to have them posted in the Texas Register for public comment on July 28, 2008 for thirty days of public comment. A public meeting on the proposed rules will be held in August, 2008. The revised rules should be effective January, 2009.

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## TEXAS GROUNDWATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE

Section 26.403 of the Texas Water Code established the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC), and mandated that the Executive Director (or a designee) of the TSSWCB be a permanent member. The TGPC bridges the gap between state groundwater programs, improves coordination between member agencies and works to protect groundwater as a vital resource.

The Texas Groundwater Protection Committee:

- Improves coordination between State and Federal agencies to protect groundwater.
- Reports on its activities and recommends new protection programs to the Legislature.
- Publishes numerous reports.
- Advises the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality on the development of agricultural chemical plans for groundwater.

- Develops, implements and updates a comprehensive *State Groundwater Protection Strategy* and an annual *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report*.

Meeting information is available on the TGPC website at:

<http://www.tgpc.state.tx.us/meetings/Meetings.htm>

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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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