



TEXAS STATE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

Program News and Activities

JUNE 2015

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 about specific programs or projects please don't hesitate to call your local field representative or our state headquarters.

REX ISOM
Executive Director

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UPCOMING STATE BOARD WORK SESSION AND MEETING

The State Board has tentatively scheduled a Work Session on **Wednesday, July 15, 2015** and a formal State Board Meeting on **Thursday, July 16, 2015 in Temple**. More information is available at <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/boardmeetings>, or by contacting Karen Preece at (254) 773-2250, ext. 245 or kpreece@tsswcb.texas.gov.

FISCAL OPERATIONS

July 1st is the deadline for submitting 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Quarter Director Mileage and per diem claims.

August 31st is the deadline for submitting FY2015 Regular and Supplemental Matching Fund claims.

August 31st is the deadline for submitting a FY2015 online Performance Report for Technical Assistance.

August 31st is the deadline for completing online purchase verification for any information technology assistance received during FY2015.

September 1st is the deadline for submitting a FY2015 Financial Statement / Audit Notification Form.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

2015 Annual Meeting of District Directors

Mark your calendars for October 26-28, 2015 and plan on attending the 75th Annual State Meeting held in Corpus Christi.

Reservations for the 75th Annual State Meeting at the Omni Bayfront Tower please call 1-800-The OMNI.

ROOM UPDATE: Currently there are no rooms available for Tuesday night, the only way these rooms will become available is if folks cancel their reservation. Rooms are still available for Sunday and Monday night.

Soil and Water Conservation Stewardship Public Speaking Contest

First and second place contestants in the 10 FFA area soil and water conservation stewardship public speaking contests will be competing for top honors at the state contest in July.

The state event will be held in conjunction with the 87th Texas FFA State Convention. The convention will be held in Corpus Christi, Texas July 13-17, 2015.

The theme of this year's contest is *"From the Era of the Dust Bowl to the Present—Commemorating 75 years of Soil and Water Conservation"*.

WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN PROGRAM

With the enactment of Senate Bill 503 in 1993, the Texas Legislature designated the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) the lead agency in the state for the abatement, management, and prevention of nonpoint source pollution from agricultural or silvicultural sources. Additionally, the Legislature authorized the agency to administer a certified water quality management plan (WQMP) program, complete with a cost-share program to incentivize participation and offset the cost of implementing soil and water land improvement measures, for lands within the state. While the TSSWCB makes the program available on a statewide basis, the State Board approves priorities based on activity and geography to target the cost-share incentive funding to the areas of the state that exhibit the most need for nonpoint source pollution abatement.

The purpose of cost-share funding is to provide an incentive to landowners or operators to install soil and water conservation land improvement measures consistent with the purpose of controlling erosion, conserving water, and/or

protecting water quality. Rule requires this be done in accordance with a water quality management plan certified by the State Board.

At the beginning of each month the regional offices conduct a ranking exercise to rank all Requests for Cost-Share Incentive Funding. Regional office staff are working with those producers who ranked out, to develop a certified WQMP. Once the WQMP is certified an application for Cost-Share Incentive funding is completed. This application obligates funding to that producer to be used to implement Best Management Practices.

More information on the *Water Quality Management Plan Program* is available at <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/en/wqmp>

TEXAS NONPOINT SOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The federal Clean Water Act (CWA) requires states to develop a program to protect the quality of water resources from the adverse effects of nonpoint source (NPS) water pollution. The *Texas NPS Management Program* is the State's comprehensive strategy for addressing NPS pollution. The program publication is updated every five years. The most recent revision was submitted by the Governor in June 2012 and thusly approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The *Texas NPS Management Program* is jointly administered by the TSSWCB and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

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

More information on the *Texas NPS Management Program* is available at

<http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/managementprogram>.

Nonpoint Source Grant Program

FY2010 – FY2014 CWA §319(h) Grant Status

There are currently 32 on-going §319(h) grant-funded projects addressing a wide array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues. Unliquidated federal funds for these 32 on-going projects total approximately \$8.9 million and are primarily being used to implement BMPs to abate NPS pollution from animal feeding operations, grazing livestock operations and row crop operations; provide technical assistance through SWCDs for the development of WQMPs; provide financial incentives for implementing certain BMPs prescribed in WQMPs; support various targeted educational programs; develop and implement Watershed Protection Plans (WPP); and implement the NPS portion of Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Plans (I-Plan).

FY2016 Request for Proposals

On June 5, 2015, the FY2016 Request for Proposals (RFP) for the NPS Grant Program closed. The TSSWCB received 42 proposals from various entities across the state. TSSWCB SRM staff is now in the process of reviewing and ranking the proposals.

FY2013 – FY2015 State Grant Status

There are currently 25 on-going projects addressing an array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues. Unliquidated state funds for these 25 on-going projects total approximately \$2 million and are primarily being used to implement agricultural NPS components of TMDL I-Plans; conduct Recreational Use Attainability Analyses (RUAA); support increased analytical infrastructure at public bacterial source tracking (BST) laboratories; demonstrate innovative BMPs on animal feeding operations and grazing lands; and collect and analyze water quality data for watersheds with impaired waterbodies.

Water Quality Planning and Implementation

Coordination with TCEQ

On May 29, 2015, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch, Ashley Wendt, Liza Marshall, Jana Lloyd, Wesley Gibson, TJ Helton] met with TCEQ staff in Austin to discuss and coordinate the many on-going activities between the two agencies. Many topics were discussed including water quality standard revisions, success stories, and the CWA §319(h) FY16 request for proposals and grant applications. An update on the progress of resolving the conditional approval status of the Texas Coastal NPS Pollution Control Program was discussed as well.

Texas Groundwater Protection Committee

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 TGPC develops, implements, and updates a comprehensive *Texas Groundwater Protection Strategy* and an annual *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report*.

Federal \$666,167/ External
\$447,239

On June 9, 2015, TSSWCB SRM staff [Ashley Wendt] attended the TGPC Public Outreach and Education Subcommittee meeting in Austin. TCEQ staff gave a draft presentation to the group which will be presented in final form at the next Industry Council on the Environment meeting in July. Meeting attendees also discussed revisions to be made to the TGPC tri-fold brochure which is set to be updated later in the calendar year.

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

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 (GBC) 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 June 4, 2015, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a Galveston Bay Council Water and Sediment Quality Subcommittee meeting in Houston. An update on the Cedar Bayou WPP was given, and the group discussed the FY17 process for project proposals. Also, updates on activities in the Galveston Bay area were given.

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

STATE DISTRICT II

South and North Llano Rivers

Impairment: None
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB
Project: "Development of the Upper Llano River Watershed Protection Plan", Texas Water Resources Institute;

On June 4, 2015, TSSWCB SRM staff [Jana Lloyd, TJ Helton], field staff [Kendria Ray], Water Supply Enhancement Program staff [Aaron Wendt] and Area 2 State Board Member [Marty Graham] attended the Upper Llano River Watershed Protection Plan Coordination Committee meeting in Junction. The meeting focused on reviewing and discussing the watershed model preliminary results with stakeholders. Later, stakeholders discussed WPP content and reviewed introductory chapters.

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

STATE DISTRICT III

Arroyo Colorado

Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen
Concerns: Nutrients, Sediment
Mechanism: WPP, UAA
Lead: TCEQ
Project: "Implementing Best Management Practices to Reduce Agricultural Nonpoint Source Pollution in Support of the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Protection Plan", TSSWCB-Harlingen Regional Office; Federal \$183,741
Project: "Bacterial Source Tracking to Support Adaptive Management of the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Protection Plan", Texas Water Resources Institute/Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources; Federal \$465,555/ External \$178,333
Project: "Education Programs Focused on Stakeholder Needs to Address Agricultural NPS in the Arroyo Colorado Watershed", Texas Water Resources Institute; State \$83,027

On May 19 -23, 2015, TSSWCB SRM staff [Ashley Wendt, Brian Koch] attended and

presented at the 17th Annual Water Quality Management and Planning Conference in South Padre Island. Various topics were covered at the conference from nonpoint source pollution to stormwater by a host of different entities including US EPA, TCEQ, Texas Water Development Board and multiple universities. As agriculture was a new focus of the conference, the keynote speaker was Sid Miller, Texas Agriculture Commissioner. Coordination with the host of the conference, the Lower Rio Grande Valley Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Storm Water Task Force, is key for success of the Arroyo Colorado WPP.

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.

Lower Nueces River

Impairment: Total Dissolved Solids
Concern: Chlorophyll-a, Nutrients, Sediment
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB
Projects: "Development of the Lower Nueces River Watershed Protection Plan", Nueces River Authority; Federal \$309,727/External \$248,968

On June 9, 2015, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended an Agriculture Workgroup meeting for the Lower Nueces WPP in Robstown. Discussion focused on how to account for potential loading from livestock since there is no bacteria impairment, and the TDS impairment is likely caused by groundwater influence during low flows. Strategies discussed included status reviews on existing WQMPs, encouraging WQMP development and updating any WQMPs where needed.

More information, including the draft *Source Water Protection Plan*, is available at <http://www.nuecesriverpartnership.org/>. This WPP has the potential to affect livestock and farming operations in the Lower Nueces River watershed below Lake Corpus Christi in Jim Wells, Nueces, and San Patricio Counties.

Mill Creek

Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB
Project: "Data Collection and Development of Essential Components for the Mill Creek Watershed Protection Plan" Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service; State \$299,955
Project: "Phase 2: Development of a Watershed Protection Plan for Mill Creek" Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service; State \$208,542

On May 18, 2015, TSSWCB SRM staff [Jana Lloyd, Liza Marshall, Brian Koch] attended the Mill Creek Watershed Partnership meeting in Bleiberville. The meeting focused on the Steering Committee reviewing and finalizing the last draft sections of the WPP.

On June 1, 2015, TSSWCB SRM staff [Jana Lloyd, Brian Koch] attended the Mill Creek Watershed Partnership meeting in Bleiberville. At this meeting, the Steering Committee voted on a cover page for the WPP and marked the beginning of the 30-day comment period for the Mill Creek WPP. The watershed coordinator also gave an overview of three different implementation proposals that would be submitted for the TSSWCB CWA §319(h) NPS Grant solicitation for FY16.

More information is available at <http://millcreek.tamu.edu/>. This WPP affects livestock and farming operations in the Mill Creek watershed in Austin and Washington Counties.

Oso Bay and Oso Creek

Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: TMDL
Lead: TCEQ

On May 29, 2015, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a TMDL/I-plan meeting for Oso Creek in Corpus Christi. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the water quality conditions in the creek with stakeholders and the next steps in the TMDL process. Meetings for the TMDL and I-plan will continue over the next year.

More information is available at <http://www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/tmdl/67->

osobaybacteria.html. This TMDL has the potential to affect livestock and farming operations in the Oso Bay/Creek watershed in Nueces County.

STATE DISTRICT IV

Cedar Bayou

Impairment: Bacteria
Concerns: Macroinvertebrate Community, Dissolved Oxygen, Nutrients
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB
Project: "Development of a Watershed Protection Plan for Cedar Bayou", Houston-Galveston Area Council; Federal \$804,000/ External \$353,876

On May 28, 2015, a Texas Well Owner Network Training was held in Liberty. Over 20 people attended the training that was sponsored by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Texas Water Resource Institute and TSSWCB. The training was focused on helping private well owners care for their wells and water quality issues in the Cedar Bayou watershed. Topics covered included: aquifers in Texas, private water well basics, onsite wastewater treatment, water quality and quantity and protecting your water supply. Water quality analysis was also performed on water well samples brought in by training attendees. More information on the Texas Well Owner Network Program is available at <http://twon.tamu.edu/>.

More information is available at <http://www.cedarbayouwatershed.com>. This WPP affects farming and livestock operations in the Cedar Bayou watershed in Harris, Liberty, and Chambers Counties.

STATE DISTRICT IV

Double Bayou

Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB
Project: "Development of a Watershed Protection Plan for Double Bayou", Houston Advanced Research Center; Federal \$1,023,614/ External \$388,149

On May 28, 2015, a Texas Well Owner Network Training was held in Double Bayou. Over 30 people attended the training that was sponsored by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Texas Water Resource Institute and TSSWCB. The training was focused on helping private well owners care for their wells and water quality issues in the Double Bayou watershed. Topics covered included: aquifers in Texas, private water well basics, water quality and quantity and protecting your water supply. Water quality analysis was also performed on water well samples brought in by training attendees. More information on the Texas Well Owner Network Program is available at <http://twon.tamu.edu/>.

More information is available at <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/watersheds#doublebayou>. This WPP has the potential to affect agricultural operations in the Double Bayou watershed in Chambers and Liberty Counties.

STATEWIDE PROJECTS (NOT WATERSHED SPECIFIC)

Project: "Statewide Delivery of Riparian and Stream Ecosystem Education Program", Texas Water Resources Institute/Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources; Federal \$317,486/External \$207,973

On May 19, 2015, a Riparian and Stream Ecosystem Workshop was held for the Cypress Creek watershed. Over 20 people attended the workshop that was sponsored by the TWRI, TSSWCB and the Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources. The training focused on water quality issues including the key role riparian areas play in helping improve and protect water quality in the area. Topics covered included: the definition of a watershed and riparian area, riparian vegetation ratings, how to photo monitor, and local resources for landowners. The training also involved a field tour which provided a chance to see a recovering riparian area and evaluate the vegetation within it.

On May 21, 2015, a Riparian and Stream Ecosystem Workshop was held for the Hickory Creek watershed. Over 30 people attended the

workshop that was sponsored by the TWRI, TSSWCB and the Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources. The training focused on water quality issues including the key role riparian areas play in helping improve and protect water quality in the area. Topics covered included: the definition of a watershed and riparian area, riparian vegetation ratings, how to photo monitor, and local resources for landowners. The training also involved a field tour which provided a chance to see a recovering riparian area and evaluate the vegetation within it.

On June 2, 2015, a Riparian and Stream Ecosystem Workshop was held for the Richland-Chambers Reservoir watershed. Sixteen people attended the workshop that was sponsored by the TWRI, TSSWCB and the Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources. The training focused on water quality issues including the key role riparian areas play in helping improve and protect water quality in the area. Topics covered included: the definition of a watershed and riparian area, riparian vegetation ratings, how to photo monitor, and local resources for landowners. The training also involved a field tour which provided a chance to see a recovering riparian area and evaluate the vegetation within it.

On June 3-4, 2015, an Introduction to Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) Workshop was held in Waxahachie. Over 20 people attended the workshop that was sponsored by the TWRI, TSSWCB and the Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources. As a training and education tool, PFC is useful to help the layman understand the interrelationship of hydrology, fluvial geomorphology and riparian vegetation. The bases of PFC are the physical processes that produce the functionality of a riparian area. When these physical processes are working properly, then the stream and riparian area are able to provide for many of the important values desired by society, such as water quality, sustained flows, fish and aquatic habitat, wildlife habitat, livestock forage, and recreational value. The second day of training involved a field tour which provided a chance to see a recovering riparian area and evaluate the vegetation within it.

On June 17-18, 2015, an Introduction to Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) Workshop was held in Belton. Over 30 people attended the workshop

that was sponsored by the TWRI, TSSWCB and the Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources. As a training and education tool, PFC is useful to help the layman understand the interrelationship of hydrology, fluvial geomorphology and riparian vegetation. The bases of PFC are the physical processes that produce the functionality of a riparian area. When these physical processes are working properly, then the stream and riparian area are able to provide for many of the important values desired by society, such as water quality, sustained flows, fish and aquatic habitat, wildlife habitat, livestock forage, and recreational value. The second day of training involved a field tour which provided a chance to see a recovering riparian area and evaluate the vegetation within it.

For more information on the Riparian and Stream ecosystem educational program, please visit <http://texasriparian.org/>.

Upcoming Public Meetings

- June 30, 2015 – Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Watershed Partnership Meeting (Seguin)
- June 30, 2015 – Oso Creek I-plan Meeting (Corpus Christi)
- July 7, 2015 – San Miguel RUAA Public Meeting (Pearsall)
- July 7, 2015 – Lower Nueces River Watershed Partnership Meeting (Corpus Christi)
- July 8, 2015 – Intro to Modeling Workshop (Austin)
- July 8, 2015 – Galveston Bay Council Subcommittee Meeting (Houston)
- July 21, 2015 – Double Bayou Watershed Partnership Meeting (Double Bayou)

WATER SUPPLY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

In order to help meet the State's critical water conservation needs and ensure availability of water supplies, the TSSWCB administers the WSEP to increase available surface and ground

water supplies through the targeted control of brush species that are detrimental to water conservation (e.g., juniper, mesquite, saltcedar). The 83rd Texas Legislature continued funding for the WSEP by providing \$2,135,413 in general revenue funds for FY2015.

WSEP staff activities (from May 23, 2015 to June 26, 2015):

- WSEP staff assisted SWCD Directors with WSEP issues at board meetings for the Kendall SWCD #216, Kerr County SWCD #217, Pedernales SWCD #218, Gillespie County SWCD #220, Bandera SWCD #229, and Upper Nueces-Frio SWCD #238.
- WSEP staff assisted Conservation Planners in the Upper Guadalupe River, Pedernales River, Frio River, Upper Nueces River, and Edwards Aquifer projects and worked with landowners in several project watersheds to develop cost-share contracts.
- WSEP staff worked with project applicants to assess unobligated funds from the FY2015 project cost-share allocations in order to consider reallocation of FY2015 grant funding to maximize expenditure of WSEP funds during this fiscal year.
- On May 1, 2015, the 16 Regional Water Planning Groups (RWPGs) submitted their 2016 Initially Prepared Regional Water Plans (IPPs) to the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) for review. Throughout June and July, all 16 RWPGs will host hearings to receive oral public comment on the IPPs. After the hearings, there is a 60-day public comment period and a 90-day public agency comment period to submit written comments. After which, the RWPGs will consider and address all comments received and submit their final adopted 2016 Regional Water Plans to the TWDB no later than December 1, 2015. WSEP staff is reviewing the IPPs to ascertain how each RWPG addressed brush control for water supply enhancement. The IPPs are

available at

<http://www.twdb.texas.gov/waterplanning/wp/plans/2016/IPP.asp>.

- On March 13, 2015, Senator Carlos Uresti introduced legislation (SB 1734) in the Texas State Senate that would require the TSSWCB to develop and implement a program to eradicate carrizo cane (*Arundo donax*) along the Rio Grande. This bill would implement the Governor's legislative priority for border security. Carrizo cane is an invasive, non-native species that impedes and conceals the detection of criminal actors and restricts law enforcement officers' access to riverbanks. While this bill supports border security, carrizo cane is also a noxious brush species that consumes water to a degree that is detrimental to water conservation. As such, carrizo cane is a species of interest to the WSEP and is eligible for inclusion in the program.
 - On June 9, 2015, TSSWCB staff participated in a field tour in Weslaco. Hosted by the USDA Agricultural Research Service, the tour highlighted carrizo cane biological control methods.
 - On June 10, 2015, SB 1734 was signed by the Governor. The statute is effective immediately.
- On June 20, 2015, the Governor signed HB 1, the general appropriations bill for the 2016-2017 biennium. The 84th Texas Legislature continued funding for the WSEP by providing \$2,638,413 in general revenue funds for each fiscal year of the new biennium. This is an increase of \$1M across the biennium for the WSEP. This increase partially funds the exceptional item included in the agency's Legislative Appropriations Request for the new biennium, which sought additional funding to partially meet unmet demand for cost-share to landowners and to conduct new feasibility studies.
- On June 4, 2015, WSEP staff attended the Upper Llano River Watershed Protection Plan Coordination Committee meeting in

Junction. The Coordination Committee met to review progress by Texas Tech University in developing the computer model of the watershed. The focus of discussion during the meeting was on aspects of the model related to brush control and water supply enhancement. Once completed, the model will be used to produce a brush control feasibility study for the North and South Llano Rivers.

- On June 23, 2015, TSSWCB issued a request for proposals for water supply enhancement projects seeking funding in FY2016 to conduct brush control under the WSEP. Proposed projects should focus on watersheds with a demonstrated water conservation need and where brush control has been shown, using a computer model, to be a feasible strategy to enhance surface and/or ground water supplies. Proposals must be received by 5:00 p.m. CDT, Monday, August 3, 2015, to be considered for funding. A competitive proposal review process will be used so that the most appropriate and effective projects are selected for funding. Project proposals will be evaluated giving priority to projects that balance the most critical water conservation need of municipal water user groups with the highest potential water yield from brush control. The proposal submission packet includes the application for proposed water supply enhancement projects, a set of instructions that provides explanations of questions on the form and resources for answering those questions, and a set of guidelines that details project eligibility requirements and provides additional information critical for successful applications. A complete copy of the proposal submission packet is available at <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/brushcontrol#rfp>.
- On June 24, 2015, WSEP staff participated in a field tour and media day of the Hoppe Ranch near Johnson City. The event highlighted land stewardship efforts by private landowners in Blanco County. Along with staff from the USDA

NRCS, the Lower Colorado River Authority, and the Pedernales SWCD #218, the group discussed the effects of brush control on water supply enhancement and water quality.

More information on the WSEP is available at <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/brushcontrol>.

FLOOD CONTROL DAM PROGRAMS

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) is appropriated general revenue by the Texas Legislature to provide grants to the sponsors of flood control dams for operation, maintenance, repair, and rehabilitation. The TSSWCB administers an Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Grant Program and a Structural Repair Grant Program, both of which are administered according to rules adopted by the State Board in 31TAC529. The rules for these programs specify which flood control dams are eligible for funding, the entities that are eligible to apply and receive funding, and the conditions under which a grant must be administered, matched, and reported.

For FY2013, \$2,050,997 was allocated to 69 dam sponsors to conduct O&M activities on flood control dams through August 26, 2015. To date there is a balance of \$89,664 that still needs to be spent before the August 2015 deadline.

For FY2015, \$1,000,000 was allocated to 69 dam sponsors to conduct O&M activities on flood control dams through June 30, 2017. To date there is a balance of \$696,157 that still needs to be spent before the June 2017 deadline.

The TSSWCB has contracted with the Dalworth SWCD to conduct a major repair on Mountain Creek, Site 10, in Ellis County using \$5,600,000 of FY2014 funds.

The TSSWCB has also contracted with the McCulloch SWCD to conduct repairs on Deep Creek, Site 8, in McCulloch County using \$362,000 of FY2015 funds.

TSSWCB has signed ten Project Agreements with NRCS for \$13 million in federal rehabilitation

funding for planning, design, and construction on 15 dams. TSSWCB has contracted for engineering services on these dams.

The TSSWCB has contracted with M&E Consultants to develop a rehabilitation plan for Lower Running Water Draw Site 4 in Hale County.

The TSSWCB has contracted with the City of McKinney and the San Antonio River Authority to provide state funds to assist sponsors with the local share of rehabilitation costs on 5 dams.

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

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



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Established in 1939, the TSSWCB administers Texas' soil and water conservation law and delivers coordinated natural resource conservation programs to agricultural producers through the State's 216 individual SWCDs. The agency is governed by a seven-member State Board composed of two Governor appointees and five individuals elected from across Texas by 1,080 Directors of local SWCDs. The TSSWCB is the lead state agency for planning, implementing, and managing programs for preventing and abating agricultural and silvicultural (forestry)

nonpoint sources of water pollution; administers a water supply enhancement program through the targeted control of brush species in areas in need of water conservation; provides operation, maintenance, and structural repair grant funds to local government sponsors of the State's network of 2,000 flood control dams; and facilitates the Texas Invasive Species Coordinating Committee.

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