



TEXAS STATE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

Program News and Activities

MARCH 2014

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 scheduled a Work Session on **Wednesday, May 14, 2014** and a formal State Board Meeting on **Thursday, May 15, 2014**. 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.

BUDGET AND ACCOUNTING

- Manual of Fiscal Operations for SWCDs has been updated and will be sent out to all districts in April.
- April 1st is the deadline for submitting Board Member Election Delegate and Alternate Form TSSWCB - 43 for Areas II and IV.
- April 1st is the deadline for submitting a SWCD Biennial Budget Request for the 2016-2017 Biennium.
- May 15th is the deadline for claiming two-thirds of your Matching Fund Allocation for FY 2014.

For more budget and accounting information, contact Kenny Zajicek at (254) 773-2250 ext. 236 or kzajicek@tsswcb.texas.gov

HUMAN RESOURCES

TSSWCB currently has 2 positions available at this time.

- Engineering Technician-Hale Center Regional Office
- Program Specialist (Flood Control)- Primarily Central, North Central and East Texas

For additional information or to download an application, visit <https://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/employment>.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

The TSSWCB Special Projects department provides coordination for the Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Directors, facilitates open government functions required by the Texas Administrative Procedures Act, and directs the completion of other mandatory agency responsibilities such as publishing the agency's Semi-Annual Report and coordinating rule-making functions.

Annual State Meeting of SWCD Directors
Mark your calendars for October 27-29, 2014 and plan on attending the 74th Annual State Meeting held in Galveston.

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

2014 Texas Envirothon

The 2014 Texas Envirothon will be hosted April 5th -7th by the University of Houston Clear Lake. Key topics of this year's competition include:

1. Understanding the three pillars of sustainable agriculture and the indicators of sustainable farming.
2. Understanding how ecosystems function and the services they provide.
3. Good soil health is the foundation of a healthy ecosystem.
4. How sustainable farming practices enhance and protect soil health, water quality and water quantity, biodiversity, manage insect pests, disease, and weeds, and
5. The importance of local and regional foods systems to sustainable agriculture.

2014 Youth Range Workshop

The 60th consecutive annual workshop will be held on June 22 - June 27, 2014. Purpose of the Workshop is to recognize outstanding youth, develop leadership skills, and provide advanced training to 4-H and FFA youth interested in practical range ecology, ranch and natural resource management. The workshop will be conducted at the Texas Tech University – Junction, located in Junction, Texas. A total of 40 youth will be accepted to the 2014 Workshop.

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

decisions on the range resource, and the landowner.

Hands-on activities provide curriculum reinforcement, visual examples and opportunities to learn skills in plant identification, plant collecting, plant species composition, total resource planning, stocking rate determinations, estimating forage standing crops, and estimating brush densities and ecological trend. Special sessions on water and range health provide the participants with skills for teaching youth and adults in their home communities. A media program is conducted which encourages youth participants to use and train others on what they have learned. Extending the knowledge learned or gained to others is one of the highest goals of this program.

Participants are exposed to actual land management practices and decisions through field trips to Menard and Mason County ranches and the Kerr Wildlife Management Area. The field trips bring out facts on decision-making, goals of land ownership and the responses of vegetation to practices conducted for livestock, wildlife and range restoration.

A brochure about the Youth Range Workshop is available on the web. The web site for the announcement, brochure and application can also be found at www.rangelands.org/texas/youtheducation.htm

Conservation News

Conservation News is a collection of readily available current news and information regarding natural resource issues. TSSWCB periodically distributes Conservation News via email to those interested. To subscribe, send an email to conservation-news-subscribe@tsswcb.texas.gov. Conservation News is also available at <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/news>.

Conservation Video Library

There are over 200 conservation-related videos available; the 2011 catalog can be downloaded at <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/infoed/videolibrary>. No rental fees are assessed to those wishing to borrow videos from the library.

Ordering a Video

Select a video from the Conservation Video Catalog, then contact Loren Warrick at lwarrick@tsswcb.texas.gov to check it out. The Association of Texas SWCDs will pay the first transit postage costs to mail the video(s) to the requester. Postage for returning the video(s) will be the responsibility of the borrower. All videos must be insured upon return.

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

FY2009 – FY2013 CWA §319(h) Grant Status

There are currently 34 on-going §319(h) grant-funded projects addressing a wide array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues.

Unliquidated federal funds for these 34 on-going projects total approximately \$10.7 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).

FY2012 – FY2014 State Grant Status

There are currently 15 on-going projects addressing an array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues. Unliquidated state funds for these 15 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 Coordination Activities

Coordination with EPA

On February 27, 2014, TSSWCB SRM staff [TJ Helton, Mitch Conine, Jana Lloyd, Ashley Wendt, Wesley Gibson, David Morris] met with EPA and TCEQ staff in Temple for the annual joint end-of-year review (FY2013) of the *Texas NPS Management Program* and the CWA §319(h) NPS Grant Program. Many priority issues affecting both state agencies were discussed in the meeting including new grant policies from EPA, financial aspects of the program, and measuring success in watershed restoration. Both agencies discussed on-going efforts in select watersheds to develop and implement WPPs and TMDLs, and the status of statewide educational projects. The group also discussed collaborating with other state and federal agencies on water quality restoration activities. Discussion highlighted the program's accomplishments, goals, and plans for the coming year.

Coordination with TCEQ

On January 7, 2014, TSSWCB SRM staff [Jana Lloyd, Wesley Gibson, TJ Helton, Mitch Conine, Brian Koch] met with TCEQ staff in Austin to discuss and coordinate the many on-going activities between the two agencies. Many topics were discussed including the Watershed Action Planning process, CWA 303(d) Vision for furthering watershed planning activities, water quality standard revisions, including EPA approval, and 2014 Assessment (Integrated Report) progress. An update on the progress of resolving the conditional approval status of the *Texas Coastal NPS Pollution Control Program* was discussed as well. Other updates included status of the FY2013 and FY2014 CWA §319(h) NPS grant Request-for-Proposals, CRP and the estuary programs (GBEP and CBBEP).

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 March 13, 2014, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a Water and Sediment Quality (WSQ) Subcommittee meeting in Houston. This meeting featured updates from different projects focused on improving water quality in Galveston Bay and its tributaries; these include planning and implementation projects. The Texas Coastal Watershed Program gave an update on their floating wetland project at Clear Creek ISD. Also, the WSQ plan for the Estuary Program was reviewed and updates from the program 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.

Coastal Bend, Bays and Estuaries Program

The 75 miles of estuarine environment along the Texas Coastal Bend, including Aransas Bay, Corpus Christi Bay, Baffin Bay and the Upper Laguna Madre, are of national importance and, through the federal CWA §320, are included in the National Estuary Program administered by the EPA. The Bays Council is the stakeholder advisory group that coordinates the implementation of the *Coastal Bend Bays 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 Water and Sediment Quality Implementation Team.

On January 15, 2014, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended the Water and Sediment Quality Implementation Team meeting for the Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program in Corpus Christi. This meeting was held to generate project ideas for the FY15 workplan. These project ideas are then turned into proposals for consideration of the team and then the top proposals are moved to the Bays Council for approval.

On February 19, 2014, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a Water and Sediment Quality Implementation Team meeting for the Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program in Corpus Christi. This meeting was held to present project proposals for funding by the estuary program. The projects must address issues with water and sediment quality, and can be used to enhance these resources. A total of eight projects were submitted for consideration, and the team provided comments to help improve the proposals. The projects will be presented once more, and then scored by the team by the end of March 2014.

More information is available at <http://www.cbbep.org/>. The implementation of the *Coastal Bend Bays Plan* affects agricultural operations in watersheds that drain to these estuaries in Refugio, Bee, McMullen, Live Oak, Jim Wells, Duval, Brooks, Kenedy, Kleberg, Nueces, San Patricio, and Aransas Counties.

Southeast and South Central Texas Regional Watershed Coordination Steering Committee

The Southeast and South Central Texas Regional Watershed Coordination Steering Committee (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 SRM staff on watershed planning activities in 47 counties across southeast and south central Texas.

On March 6, 2014, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] hosted a quarterly Southeast and South Central Texas Watershed Coordination Steering Committee Meeting in Columbus. This meeting featured an update on the Copano Bay (Mission and Aransas Rivers) TMDL and I-plan by TWRI, and an overview of their project to address bacteria impairments in streams in Basins 15, 16, and 17, which all flow into West Matagorda Bay or bays connected to it. Texas A&M Forest Service presented information on their project looking at Ecosystems Services by Forests in Texas, which summed up the natural functions, aesthetic and cultural features they provide. The next meeting will be held June 12, 2014.

More information, including meeting materials, is available at <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/cwp>.

Water Quality Planning and Implementation

STATE DISTRICT III

Arroyo Colorado

Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen

Concerns: Nutrients, Sediment

Mechanism: WPP, UAA

Lead: TCEQ

Project: "Implementing Educational Components of the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Protection Plan Focused on Agricultural Nonpoint Source Pollution", Texas Water Resources Institute; Federal \$202,443/ External \$135,191

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

On February 20, 2014, TSSWCB SRM staff [Ashley Wendt] attended several Arroyo Colorado Watershed Partnership meetings in Weslaco. First, the Agriculture Issues Workgroup met to discuss the update of the WPP as well as discuss current implementation, soil testing campaign and upcoming educational events. Later, the Habitat Workgroup met and also discussed the WPP update along with current projects’ implementation. Finally, the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Partnership Steering Committee Meeting was held. Roundtable discussion of the WPP update at this meeting provided beneficial feedback about the timeline going forward. Stakeholders reinforced the need to continue implementation activities while updating the 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.

STATE DISTRICT IV

Attoyac Bayou

Impairment: Bacteria
Concern: Nutrients
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB
Project: “Development of a Watershed Protection Plan for Attoyac Bayou”, Texas Water Resources Institute; Federal \$617,829/ External \$414,621

On February 20th, 2014, TSSWCB State Board Member [Jerry Nichols] Regional Office staff [Jeremy Welch] with staff from Texas Water

Resources Institute, Castilaw Environmental Services LLC, and Angelina & Neches River Authority attended a stakeholder meeting for the Attoyac Bayou WPP. The objective of the meeting was to discuss management measure recommendations developed by the watershed steering committee. Each management measure addresses what the local watershed steering committee members consider sources of bacteria entering the Attoyac Bayou that can be reasonably and cost-effectively managed. An overview of the first complete draft of the Attoyac Bayou Watershed Protection Plan was provided. The stakeholders were asked to provide TWRI with comments on the first draft of the watershed plan by March 21st.

More information is available at <http://attoyac.tamu.edu/>. This WPP affects livestock, farming, and silvicultural operations in the Attoyac Bayou watershed in Nacogdoches, Rusk, San Augustine, and Shelby Counties.

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 March 6, 2014, TSSWCB SRM staff [Ashley Wendt] attended a Cedar Bayou Watershed Partnership Meeting in Baytown. This meeting was held to update stakeholders on the progress of the WPP, and any activities related to the plan. Central focus of the meeting remained on the preliminary modeling results of the load duration curve (LDC) and spatially explicit load enrichment calculation tool (SELECT) models. Stakeholders were asked to provide input on the results, which will then allow further refinement of the models. Staff from the City of Baytown also presented on their Watershed Protection City Ordinance.

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.

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 February 18, 24, and 25, 2014, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended work group meetings to help develop the Double Bayou WPP in Anahuac. The workgroups that met were the Agriculture, Wildlife and Feral Hogs, Waste Water and Recreation sources. Best management practices for the potential sources that were identified by the stakeholders at previous meetings were discussed at each individual meeting. These will be summarized and asked for approval by all of the stakeholders in March at the next partnership meeting.

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.

Lake Houston

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

The Bacteria Implementation Group (BIG) is focused on implementing 72 bacteria TMDLs in the greater Houston area, including Lake Houston, Buffalo and Whiteoak Bayous, Clear Creek and others. The BIG is responsible for receiving input, establishing workgroups, facilitating communications, developing recommendations, and providing oversight in the development of the I-Plan designed to achieve the load reductions called for in these TMDLs.

On February 11, 2014, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a BIG Agriculture and Animals Workgroup meeting in Houston. This meeting was held to assess the implementation status of

management measures identified in the I-Plan and to seek improvement on existing management measures or add additional measures.

On March 5, 2014, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended an I-plan meeting for the East and West Forks of the San Jacinto River in Cleveland. This meeting was held to engage stakeholders in these watersheds and come up with solutions to implement management measures to lower bacteria levels. One option was to form a stakeholder group and develop an I-plan or to join the Bacteria Implementation Group, which is already addressing bacteria in neighboring watersheds.

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

Other State District IV Projects

Project: "Recreational Use Attainability Analysis for Ten Creeks in the Red River and Neches Basins", Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Research at Tarleton State University: State \$406,298*

On February 20, 2014, TSSWCB SRM staff [Wesley Gibson] participated in a public meeting in Tyler to discuss conducting an RUAA on the Neches River Above Lake Palestine, Prairie Creek, Mud Creek & West Mud Creek. Presentations at the meeting focused on the components of an RUAA and the timeline to complete the effort. Access to sites along the creek for field surveys was also discussed with the landowners. More information on this RUAA is available at <http://tiaer.tarleton.edu/ruaa/index.html>.

On February 24, 2014, TSSWCB SRM staff [Wesley Gibson, Mitch Conine] participated in a

public meeting in Chandler to discuss conducting an RUAA on Kickapoo Creek and the Neches River above Lake Palestine. Presentations at the meeting focused on the components of an RUAA and the timeline to complete the effort. Access to sites along the creek for field surveys was also discussed with the landowners. More information on this RUAA is available at <http://tiaer.tarleton.edu/ruaa/index.html>.

On February 25, 2014, TSSWCB SRM staff [Wesley Gibson, Mitch Conine] participated in a public meeting in Rusk to discuss conducting an RUAA on Mud Creek & West Mud Creek. Presentations at the meeting focused on the components of an RUAA and the timeline to complete the effort. Access to sites along the creek for field surveys was also discussed with the landowners. More information on this RUAA is available at <http://tiaer.tarleton.edu/ruaa/index.html>.

On March 6, 2014, TSSWCB SRM staff [Wesley Gibson, Mitch Conine] participated in a public meeting in Paris to discuss conducting an RUAA on Smith Creek. Presentations at the meeting focused on the components of an RUAA and the timeline to complete the effort. Access to sites along the creek for field surveys was also discussed with the landowners. More information on this RUAA is available at <http://tiaer.tarleton.edu/ruaa/index.html>.

On March 11, 2014, TSSWCB SRM staff [Mitch Conine] participated in a public meeting in DeKalb to discuss conducting an RUAA on Mud Creek. Presentations at the meeting focused on the components of an RUAA and the timeline to complete the effort. Access to sites along the creek for field surveys was also discussed with the landowners. More information on this RUAA is available at <http://tiaer.tarleton.edu/ruaa/index.html>.

STATE DISTRICT V

Lampasas River

Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB
Project: "Coordinating Implementation of the Lampasas River Watershed

Protection Plan", Texas A&M AgriLife Research; Federal \$205,305/External \$162,913
Project: "Surface Water Quality Monitoring to Support the Implementation of the Lampasas River Watershed Protection Plan", Texas A&M AgriLife Research; Federal \$206,169/External \$166,616

On February 20, 2014, TSSWCB SRM staff [Jana Lloyd] attended the Lampasas River Watershed Partnership meeting in Lampasas. The Watershed Coordinator gave a recap of the results from the Bacterial Source Tracking project as well as discussed adopting a partnership logo. An introduction to the water quality monitoring project being conducted by TIAER was given. Other topics discussed include Texas Stream Team volunteer monitoring, upcoming outreach and education programs.

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

Other State District V Projects

Project: "Recreational Use Attainability Analysis for Ten Creeks in the Red River and Neches Basins", Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Research at Tarleton State University: State \$406,298*

On March 4, 2014, TSSWCB SRM staff [Wesley Gibson] participated in a public meeting in Bonham to discuss conducting an RUAA on Bois D'Arc Creek. Presentations at the meeting focused on the components of an RUAA and the timeline to complete the effort. Access to sites along the creek for field surveys was also discussed with the landowners. More information on this RUAA is available at <http://tiaer.tarleton.edu/ruaa/index.html>.

On March 10, 2014, TSSWCB SRM staff [Wesley Gibson] participated in a public meeting in Sherman to discuss conducting an RUAA on Iron Ore & Choctaw Creeks. Presentations at the

meeting focused on the components of an RUAA and the timeline to complete the effort. Access to sites along the creek for field surveys was also discussed with the landowners. More information on this RUAA is available at <http://tiaer.tarleton.edu/ruaa/index.html>.

STATEWIDE PROJECTS (NOT WATERSHED SPECIFIC)

Project: "Continued Statewide Delivery of the Texas Watershed Steward Program", Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service; Federal \$417,398/ External \$72,033

A Texas Watershed Steward workshop took place on February 17, 2014 in Tyler. Over 35 people attended the workshop that was sponsored by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and TSSWCB, in coordination with TCEQ. The training, focused on the Neches and Sabine River Basins, discussed what it means to be a watershed steward, watershed impairments, managing urban and rural lands through the use of BMPs, and how to get involved in community driven watershed protection and management. The workshop included an overview of water quality and watershed management in Texas. More information on the Texas Watershed Steward Program is available at <http://tws.tamu.edu/>.

A Texas Watershed Steward workshop took place on February 18, 2014 in Nacogdoches. Over 55 people attended the workshop that was sponsored by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and TSSWCB, in coordination with Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. The training, focused on the Angelina River, discussed what it means to be a watershed steward, watershed impairments, managing urban and rural lands through the use of BMPs, and how to get involved in community driven watershed protection and management. The workshop included an overview of water quality and watershed management in Texas. More information on the Texas Watershed Steward Program is available at <http://tws.tamu.edu/>.

Upcoming Public Meetings

- April 2, 2014 – Lake O' Pines I-Plan Meeting (Hughes Spring)
- April 3, 2014 – Galveston Bay Council-Budget and Priorities Subcommittee Meeting (Houston)
- April 7, 2014 – Sabine River Authority CRP Coordinated Monitoring Meeting (Orange)
- April 8, 2014 – Lower Nueces River Watershed Partnership Meeting (Corpus Christi)
- April 8, 2014 – Upper Oyster Creek TMDL I-plan Meeting (Sugarland)
- April 10, 2014 – Feral Hog Workshop, Brazos River (Palo Pinto)
- April 10, 2014 – Sheldon Lake State Park Wetland Field Day (Houston)
- April 15, 2014 – Texas Watershed Steward Workshop, Middle Trinity River (Ennis)
- April 15, 2014 – Upper Colorado River Authority CRP Coordinated Monitoring and Steering Committee Meeting (San Angelo)
- April 15, 2014 – Lampasas River Watershed Partnership Meeting (Lampasas)
- April 16, 2014 – Upper San Antonio I-plan Meeting (San Antonio)
- April 17, 2014 – Nueces River Authority CRP Coordinated Monitoring Meeting (Corpus Christi)
- April 17, 2014 – Brazos River Authority CRP Steering Committee Meeting (Waco)
- April 17, 2014 – Houston-Galveston Area Council CRP Steering Committee Meeting (Houston)
- April 22, 2014 – Feral Hog Workshop, Blanco County (Johnson City)
- April 23, 2014 – Feral Hog Workshop, Geronimo Creek (Seguin)
- April 23, 2014 – Galveston Bay Council Meeting (Houston)
- April 24, 2014 – Arroyo Colorado Riparian Workshop (Weslaco)
- April 24, 2014 – San Antonio River Authority CRP Coordinated Monitoring Meeting (San Antonio)
- April 29, 2014 – Arroyo Colorado Financial Incentive Workshop (Weslaco)
- May 8, 2014 – Plum Creek Watershed Partnership Meeting (Lockhart)

WATER SUPPLY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

The 83rd Legislature continued funding for the Water Supply Enhancement Program by providing \$2,135,413 in General Revenue Funds in FY2014. Staff has begun implementing HB 1808 and the Sunset Commission's recommendations.

- WSEP staff attended several SWCD board meetings to discuss implementation of WSEP projects: Kendall 216, Kerr County 217, Pedernales 218, Gillespie County 220, Nueces-Frio Sabinal 221, Upper Nueces-Frio 238, Comal-Guadalupe 306, and Pecan Bayou 553. Ongoing geospatial analysis of FY2014 WSEP project proposals is used to determine the highest yielding areas.
- WSEP staff attended a variety of meetings to discuss water supply enhancement related issues. Staff attended the following Texas Water Development Board Regional Water Planning Group meetings: Region G, Region J, Region L, and Region N. Also, staff conducted a WSEP Science Advisory Committee meeting in Austin and attended a planning meeting called by Aquifer Group, LLC with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Texas Tech University, and Texas Forest Service in Junction.
- In addition, WSEP staff provided assistance to Bandera SWCD with documentation, shapes files, and GIS training. Staff also consulted with HDR Engineering, Inc. to develop an engineering contract to evaluate brush control in Gonzales County as a Water Management Strategy for the Region L Water Planning Group, and assisted the San Antonio River Authority with WSEP activities.
- Next, WSEP staff consulted with U.S. Geological Survey to review and discuss the effects of huisache control on water quantity in Victoria County. Staff also attended the Texas Invasive Plant and Pest Conference in Port Aransas, and presented information on the WSEP and the agency's salt cedar control efforts.
- WSEP staff published and distributed the WSEP 2013 Annual Report available at <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/reports#wsep>, and developed a draft WSEP Operations Manual that when finalized will provide detailed guidance to program participants on implementing the program.

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. Contracts were signed with all 69 entities, and funds are available for use by sponsors through June 30, 2015.

Staff is in the final stages of contracting the Dalworth Soil and Water Conservation District to conduct a major repair on Mountain Creek, Site 10, in Ellis County using FY2014 funds. On December 3, 2013, sponsors were notified that the TSSWCB is seeking applications for structural repair projects on flood control dams in accordance with Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 529, Subchapter B. The TSSWCB received six applications addressing 15 dams for structural repair projects. Applications that were submitted for FY 2010, FY 2011 and FY 2013 repair projects that did not receive funding will also be considered for FY 2014. Staff has ranked the applications and onsite evaluations of six dams have been conducted. Staff is currently working with NRCS, the contracted program engineer, to develop more accurate cost estimates for each application. As cost estimates are completed, staff will work with sponsors to determine which of the applications will develop into repair projects.

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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