TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

Monthly Program News and Activities

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http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us

March 2010

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

- February 28th was the deadline for W-2 and 1099 to reach IRS if filing manually.
- The Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Speaker requested all agencies and institutions of higher education to implement a five percent biennial reduction to their 2010-11 General Revenue and General Revenue-Dedicated appropriations by August. To comply with this request, the TSSWCB has proposed a non-specific across the board reduction to all direct appropriations. The five percent biennial reduction amount for the TSSWCB will total $1,127,167 per year.

Please see the Budget and Accounting Section for more information.

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STATE BOARD WORK SESSIONS AND MEETINGS

The State Board has scheduled a Board Work Session for 1:30 p.m. on **Wednesday, May 12, 2010** at the Double Tree Hotel in Austin. A formal State Board Meeting is scheduled for 8:00 a.m. on **Thursday, May 13, 2010** at the Capitol in Austin.

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 Karen Preece at (254) 773-2250, ext. 245.

Board Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the March 18, 2010, State Board Meeting will be considered for approval at the meeting scheduled for May 13, 2010. To view any past Board Meeting minutes visit the agency's website at http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/boardmeetings/minutes

BUDGET AND ACCOUNTING

- The maximum state mileage reimbursement rate for travel will decrease to 50 cents per mile on Jan. 1, 2010. Therefore the maximum district director mileage reimbursement rate for travel will also decrease to 50 cents per mile starting Jan. 1, 2010.

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- The Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Speaker requested all agencies and institutions of higher education to implement a five percent biennial reduction to their 2010-11 General Revenue and General Revenue-Dedicated appropriations by August. To comply with this request, the TSSWCB has proposed a non-specific across the board reduction to all direct appropriations. The five percent biennial reduction amount for the TSSWCB will total $1,127,167 per year.

HUMAN RESOURCES

TSSWCB is currently hiring for the following:

- Engineering Technician IV – Hale Center
- Information Specialist I- Temple
- Natural Resource Specialist III- Temple

For more information on TSSWCB employment please visit the link below:
http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/en/employment

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.

Sunset Advisory Commission Review Update

Staff from the Sunset Advisory Commission has completed their assessment of TSSWCB and released their report. It is available on their website and on our website at **http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/sunset2009** for review. The Sunset Commission will have a hearing on the report April 6, 2010 in Austin.

70th Annual State Meeting of Texas Soil and Water Conservation District Directors

The 70th Annual State Meeting is scheduled for October 25-27, 2010 in Lubbock.

Proposed Amendments of Adopted New Rule (31 TAC §529, Subchapter A) – Flood Control O&M Grant Program

The State Board proposed amendments to the new rule 31 TAC §529, Subchapter A that make some typographical corrections, clarification of intent, and expanding the definition of O&M to stipulate that maintenance of roads within the easement may be considered as in-kind contribution of match.

The proposed rule amendment was published in the January 1, 2010 issue of the *Texas Register* for review and comment. The amendments were adopted by the State Board at their March 18, 2010 meeting.

Proposed New Rule (31 TAC §529, Subchapter B) – Flood Control Structural Repair Grant Program

The State Board proposed new §529, Subchapter B, relating to Flood Control Structural Repair on flood control dams.

The proposed new rule was published in the January 1, 2010 issue of the *Texas Register* for review and comment. The new rule was adopted by the State Board at their March 18, 2010 meeting.

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

Program Development Workshop- The Summer Program Development Workshop is scheduled for June 29-30 for district directors, employees and newly appointed NRCS district conservationists. A second flyer announcing additional details will be sent via e-mail to all SWCDS during the first week in April.

Manual of Fiscal Operations- Work is in progress on revising and updating the current Manual of Fiscal Operations. A target date for the completion and publishing of the document is yet to be determined.

Colorado SWCD to Hold 2nd Annual Wildlife Workshop- The Colorado Soil and Water Conservation District #333, Colorado County Farm Bureau (CCFB), and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department – Colorado County are co-hosting the 2nd Annual Wildlife Workshop on Saturday, May 1, 2010 at St. Roch's Parish Hall, 1600 Frelsburg Road in Mentz, Texas.

The morning session titled "White-Tailed Deer 101" includes: ***Deer Anatomy – Overview & Behavior*** – Bobby Eichler, Technical Guidance Biologist - Texas Parks & Wildlife Department/District 7, ***Deer Anatomy*** – ***Organs in Detail*** – Jon Hayes, Wildlife Biologist -Texas Parks & Wildlife Department/Lavaca & Jackson Counties, ***Fetus Aging***- Ryan Schoeneberg, Wildlife Biologist- Texas Parks & Wildlife Department/Colorado & Austin Counties, ***Browse/Stomach Contents*** – Stephanie Damron, Wildlife Biologist - Texas Parks & Wildlife Department/Washington & Waller Counties and ***Teeth/Jaw Aging*** – David Lobpries, Wildlife Biologist - Texas Parks & Wildlife Department/Fort Bend & Wharton Counties.

The afternoon session includes **Pond Management** – Peter Woods, Extension Fisheries Program Specialist - Texas AgriLife Extension Service – 1 IPM CEU, **Predators** – TJ Muir, Wildlife Damage Management Biologist - Texas AgriLife Extension Service – 1 IPM CEU and **Life Cycle of Feral Hogs** – Jon Hayes, Wildlife Biologist - Texas Parks and Wildlife/Lavaca & Jackson Counties – ½ General CEU.

Registration fee is $20 per person and includes a catered meal of roast beef. The deadline to register is April 23, 2010. Please mail registration fee to Colorado SWCD, 316 Spring Street – Room 108, Columbus, Texas 78934. (Make checks payable to Colorado SWCD.)

For more information, please call Colorado SWCD secretary Beverly Tuck at 979.732.9565 Monday – Thursday or any time - cell 979.732.7277 or email coloradoswcd333@att.net or contact CCFB office secretaries Gloria Ilse/Erin Young at 979.732.2383.

Regional Wildlife Contests Scheduled- Regional wildlife contests have been scheduled in Regions I, II, III and V on April 12. Locations for the contests are as follows:

Region 1: Caprock Canyons State Park located near Quitaque
Region II: Angelo State University MIR Center, San Angelo
Region III: Robbie and Bessie Welder4 Wildlife Foundation and Refuge located near Sinton

Region V: Rocosa Ridge Ranch located near Meridian

The State Wildlife Contest is scheduled for May 11, at the Stephen F. Austin State University Experimental Forest located near Nacogdoches.

Stewardship Week to be Celebrated April 25-May 2- Texas soil and water conservation districts will be joining with the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) to celebrate an annual historical national 55-year observance April 25-May 2. The theme for this year's observance is "Conservation Habits=Healthy Habitats".

TSSWCB Conservation Video Library

About The Catalog

There are over 200 conservation-related videos available; the 2009 catalog can be downloaded from the TSSWCB website at http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/files/docs/infoed/2009VideoLibraryCatalogue.pdf . The 2009 Catalog includes 30 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 SWCD or by contacting the Public Information/Education department of the TSSWCB.

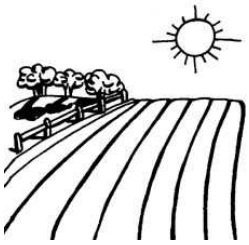
How Shipping Works

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 Whitley at mwhitley@tsswcb.state.tx.us to check it out.

WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN PROGRAM



Program Overview

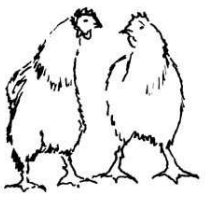
The passage of Texas Senate Bill 503 (1993) directed the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board to implement water quality management plans (WQMPs) in Texas. A WQMP is a site-specific plan developed through and approved by SWCDs for agricultural or silvicultural lands. The agency has been implementing WQMPs since the mid 1990s and has completed over 14,000 plans in the State of Texas. http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/wqmp.

A total of 753 WQMPs were certified by the State Board in FY2009. This is 21.5% greater than the yearly goal.

District cost-share fund allocations for FY2010 have been approved by the State Board. The period for obligating FY2010 cost-share funds goes from September 1, 2009 to April 30, 2010.

Lapsed cost-share funds have been reduced by 69% in the last five years. Approximately 8.3% of total cost-share funds are being lapsed statewide at the present time. The lapsed fund report for FY-07 was completed in September, 2009.

POULTRY WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLANS



Overview

In 2001, the 77th Texas Legislature amended the Texas Water Code to require all persons who own or operate a poultry facility to implement and maintain a Water Quality Management Plan that is certified by the State Soil and Water Conservation Board. In 2009, the 81st Texas

Legislature amended the Texas Water Code to require TSSWCB to assess whether the siting and construction of all new poultry farms or existing farms that expand by more than 50% within ½ mile of permanently inhabited residences, businesses, or places of worship is likely to cause a persistent nuisance odor. An odor control plan may be required for those farms. The new law also requires all poultry producers and most receivers of poultry litter to keep records of poultry litter usage. For more information on Poultry WQMPs, please visit

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

Program Activities

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

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

TEXAS NONPOINT SOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Program Overview

The federal Clean Water Act (CWA) requires States to develop a program to protect the quality of water resources from the adverse effects of nonpoint source (NPS) water pollution. The *Texas NPS Management Program* is the State's official roadmap for addressing NPS pollution. The program publication is updated every five years. The most recent revision was submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by the Governor in December 2005. The *Texas NPS Management Program* is jointly administered by the TSSWCB and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

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

Implementation of the *Texas NPS Management Program* involves partnerships among many organizations. With the extent and variety of NPS issues across Texas, cooperation across political boundaries is essential. Many local, regional, state, and federal agencies play an integral part in managing NPS pollution, especially at the watershed level. They provide information about local concerns and infrastructure and build support for the kind of pollution controls that are necessary to prevent and reduce NPS pollution. SWCDs are vital partners in working with landowners to implement best management practices (BMPs) that prevent and abate agricultural and silvicultural NPS water pollution. By establishing coordinated frameworks to share information and resources, the State can more effectively focus its water quality protection efforts.

More information on the *Texas NPS Management Program* is available at http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/managementprogram.

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

Watershed Approach

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

Watershed Approach is based on the following principles:

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

For groundwater management, the geographic focus is on aquifers rather than watersheds. Otherwise, the approach is the same. Wherever interactions between surface and ground water are identified, management activities will support the quality of both resources.

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

Texas Nonpoint Source Management Program – 2010 Revision Status

TSSWCB SRM staff and TCEQ staff are in the process of updating the *Texas NPS Management Program* document. Staffs from both agencies are currently reviewing the revised, draft chapters of the 2010 program publication. A completed draft is expected by the middle of April 2010. After which, staff intend to circulate the draft document to affected entities for preliminary review and comments. The revised program publication must be submitted to EPA by December 2010 to ensure continued CWA §319(h) funding.

On March 8, 2010, TSSWCB SRM staff [TJ Helton, Donna Long] met with TCEQ staff to discuss progress on revising the *Texas NPS Management Program* document.

FY2009 Nonpoint Source Annual Report Status

The *2009 Annual Report on Managing NPS Water Pollution in Texas* is currently being printed for distribution. In order to continue receiving CWA §319(h) funds, the State must annually report on success in achieving the goals and objectives of the *Texas NPS Management Program*. The report highlights the State's efforts during FY2009 to collect data, assess water quality, implement projects that reduce or prevent NPS pollution, and educate and involve the public to improve and maintain the quality of water resources. This report must be submitted to EPA to ensure continued funding.

Nonpoint Source Grant Program

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

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

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

FY2010 Request for Proposals
SRM staff identified priority areas and activities for this funding cycle based on the *Texas NPS Management Program* and the *2008 Texas Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List*. Twenty-two proposals requesting nearly $8.5 million in federal funding were received through the public Request-for-Proposals. Proposals are currently being reviewed by SRM staff based on the published ranking criteria and selected for funding. Projects receiving federal funding must be submitted to EPA in early summer 2010 for review and approval.

Clean Water Act §319(h) Grant Funding

Background
Congress enacted §319(h) of the CWA in 1987, establishing a national program to control NPS water pollution. Through §319(h), federal funds are provided through the EPA to States for the development and implementation of each State's NPS Management Program. The §319(h) funding in Texas is divided equally between the TCEQ and the TSSWCB. Over the past several years, the State's allocation has been approximately $9 million.

FY2003 – FY2009 CWA §319(h) Grant Status
There are currently 58 ongoing §319(h) grant-funded projects addressing a wide array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues. Unliquidated federal funds for these 58 ongoing projects total approximately $16 million and are primarily being used to address NPS pollution from animal feeding operations, prevent atrazine runoff, provide technical assistance, implement BMPs, support various NPS outreach/education programs, develop and implement WPPs, and implement the NPS portion of TMDL I-Plans. Summaries of the TSSWCB's activities within specific watersheds funded through these grants are available in the *Water Quality Planning and Implementation* section of this report.

State General Revenue Grant Funding

Background
The 80th Texas Legislature appropriated $3.1 million dollars in general revenue funds, for the FY2008-FY2009 biennium, to the TSSWCB for the purpose of planning, implementing, and managing programs and practices for preventing and abating agricultural and silvicultural NPS water pollution in impaired watersheds. The 81st Texas Legislature renewed this appropriation for the FY2010-FY2011 biennium. TSSWCB is committed to funding projects encompassing monitoring, assessment, modeling, planning, education and implementation that address the goals and objectives stated in the *Texas NPS Management Program*. On September 17, 2009, the Board approved a revised *TSSWCB Policy on TMDLs and Watershed Planning, Assessment, and Implementation Activities* which provides guidance to SRM staff on directing these state appropriations for the NPS Grant Program. The Policy is available at http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/managementprogram#StateGR.

FY2008 Grant Status
On July 19, 2007, the Board approved an operating budget for FY2008 that allocated $1,200,494 in state appropriations to the NPS Grant Program. There are currently two ongoing projects associated with the Little Brazos River Tributaries Bacteria Assessment Project. Five projects have been completed.

FY2009 Grant Status
On July 17, 2008, the Board approved an operating budget for FY2009 that allocated $1,296,426 in state appropriations to the NPS Grant Program. There are currently twelve ongoing projects that support implementation of agricultural NPS components of TMDL I-Plans, technical assistance for the development of WQMPs on agricultural lands, demonstration of innovative BMPs on animal feeding operations, and the collection and analysis of water quality data for watersheds with impaired waterbodies. One project has been completed.

FY2010 Grant Status
On July 16, 2009, the Board approved an operating budget for FY2010 that allocated $1,200,494 in state appropriations to the NPS Grant Program. SRM staff are in the process of finalizing workplans

and budgets with collaborating entities for various projects.

Total Maximum Daily Load Program

Background
The CWA requires Texas to identify lakes, rivers, streams and estuaries failing to meet or not expected to meet water quality standards and not supporting their designated uses (swimming, drinking, aquatic life, etc.). This list of impaired waterbodies is known as the *Texas 303(d) List* and must be submitted to the EPA for review and approval every two years.

The State must then establish a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for certain waterbodies identified on the *Texas 303(d) List*. A TMDL defines the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can assimilate on a daily basis and still meet water quality standards. The pollution reduction goal set by the TMDL is necessary to restore attainment of the designated use of the impaired waterbody. The maximum amount of a pollutant is determined by conducting a detailed water quality assessment that provides the information for a TMDL to allocate pollutant loads between point sources and nonpoint sources. It also takes into account a margin of safety, which reflects uncertainty and future growth.

Based on the environmental target of the TMDL, an Implementation Plan (I-Plan) is then developed that prescribes the measures necessary to mitigate anthropogenic (human-caused) sources of that pollutant in that waterbody. The I-Plan specifies limits for point source dischargers and recommends BMPs for nonpoint sources. It also lays out a schedule for implementation. Together, the TMDL and the I-Plan serve as the mechanism to reduce the pollutant, restore the full use of the waterbody and remove it from the *303(d) List*. EPA must approve the TMDL, but the I-Plan only requires State approval.

With authority as the lead agency in Texas for planning, implementing, and managing programs and practices for preventing and abating agricultural and silvicultural NPS water pollution, TSSWCB shares responsibility with the TCEQ for the development and implementation of TMDLs. TSSWCB is committed to funding and collaborating with TCEQ on TMDL projects encompassing monitoring, assessment, modeling, planning, education and implementation. More information on TMDLs is available at http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/tmdl.

The TSSWCB's efforts to restore water quality are channeled through TMDL and WPP development and implementation. Impaired waters may be addressed through either mechanism depending on the specific situation. Summaries of the TSSWCB's activities within specific watersheds are available in the *Water Quality Planning and Implementation* section of this report.

Watershed Protection Plan Program

Background
Watershed Protection Plans (WPPs) are locally-driven mechanisms for voluntarily addressing complex water quality problems that cross multiple jurisdictions. WPPs are coordinated frameworks for implementing prioritized 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.

WPPs serve as tools to better leverage the resources of local governments, state and federal agencies, and non-governmental organizations. WPPs integrate activities and prioritize implementation projects based upon technical merit and benefits to the community, promote a unified approach to seeking funding for implementation, and create a coordinated public communication and education program. Developed and implemented through diverse, well integrated partnerships, a WPP assures the long-term health of the watershed with solutions that are socially acceptable and economically viable which achieve environmental goals for water resources. Adaptive management is used to modify

the WPP based on an on-going science-based process involving monitoring and evaluating strategies and incorporating new knowledge into decision-making.

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

The TSSWCB's efforts to restore water quality are channeled through WPP and TMDL development and implementation. Impaired waters may be addressed through either mechanism depending on the specific situation. Summaries of the TSSWCB's activities within specific watersheds are available in the *Water Quality Planning and Implementation* section of this report.

Coastal NPS Pollution Control Program

Background
The Texas Coastal Management Program (CMP) was created to coordinate state, local, and federal programs for the management of Texas coastal resources. The program brings in federal Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) funds to Texas to implement projects and program activities for a wide variety of purposes. The Texas General Land Office (GLO) is responsible for coordinating activities associated with the CMP. The Coastal Coordination Council (CCC), established by the Texas Legislature, administers the CMP; the TSSWCB is a statutorily-authorized member of the CCC.

The CCC is charged with adopting uniform goals and policies to guide decision-making by all entities regulating or managing natural resource use within the Texas coastal area. The CCC reviews significant actions taken or authorized by state agencies that may adversely affect coastal natural resources to determine consistency with CMP goals and policies. In addition, the CCC oversees the CMP Grants Program and the Small Business and Individual Permitting Assistance Program.

The federal Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments (CZARA) §6217, requires each State with an approved CMP to develop a federally approvable program to control coastal NPS pollution. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the EPA jointly administer §6217 at the federal level. In Texas, the TSSWCB and the TCEQ hold primary responsibility for the development and implementation of the *Texas Coastal NPS Pollution Control Program*.

More information on the CMP is available at http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal.html.

Coastal Coordination Council (CCC)
CCC meeting information is available at http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal/ccc.html.

Sunset Review of CCC
The CCC is currently undergoing Sunset Review. The Sunset Advisory Commission has recently released the Staff Report on the CCC. The following are excerpts from the Report:

> "Since its creation, the Council's role has transitioned from developing and implementing the CMP to administering it. Sunset staff concluded the State has more to gain by continuing the Council and improving its coordination function than by abolishing it and transferring its functions to one of the agencies.

The Council has missed a key opportunity for the State. The Council has not used its unique multi-agency structure to develop a more comprehensive approach to identifying and addressing the State's coastal issues. As a result, the agencies continue to perform their individual coastal responsibilities, such as planning and grant making, in silos, without the ability to connect these efforts to achieve greater impact.

Integrating multiple agencies' efforts through a unified state coastal plan would provide for a regular assessment of the overall state of the coast that would be used to set state coastal goals and priorities, create strategies to advance them, and report performance towards meeting them.

Also, because the Council has not used its ability to fully coordinate agencies' individual coastal responsibilities, the State's approach to planning for and solving coastal issues remains fragmented. Creating a comprehensive Texas Coastal Plan would ensure the State uses a more integrated approach to identify and address its coastal issues.

Key Recommendations [include] Require the Coastal Coordination Council to create a comprehensive, five-year Texas Coastal Plan, and provide annual updates to the Legislature on progress toward meeting goals established in the Plan. The Council would use these goals to target its grant funding and evaluate the success of grant funds spent toward meeting the Plan's goals."

The Sunset Advisory Commission has tentatively scheduled an April 6, 2010 meeting to hear public testimony on the CCC and the Staff Report. Based on public input and the Staff Report, the Commission will adopt recommendations for the 82nd Legislature to consider when it convenes in January 2011. The Sunset Advisory Commission has tentatively scheduled a May 25-26, 2010 meeting to deliberate and decide on its recommendations for the CCC.

More information, including the Sunset Advisory Commission Staff Report on the CCC and a schedule of public meetings, is available at http://www.sunset.state.tx.us/.

Coastal Management Program Grant Cycle 16
Application information for Grant Cycle 16 will be distributed in April 2010 and grant workshops will be scheduled for May 2010 in South Padre Island, Corpus Christi, Port Lavaca, Galveston, and Port Arthur.

Section 309 Assessment and Strategies Review
Section 309 of the CZMA allocates funds to encourage states with federally approved CMPs to develop projects that will effect program enhancements in one or more of the following nine enhancement areas: wetlands, public access, coastal hazards, cumulative and secondary impacts, energy and government facility siting, marine debris, ocean resources, special area management plans, and aquaculture. As a condition of receiving grant funds under §309, Texas must submit a §309 Assessment and Strategies Report to NOAA every five years. The Report presents an analysis for each enhancement area, identifies needs, and outlines how the CMP plans to use §309 funds to address those needs over the next five years.

In 2006, the CCC drafted its third §309 Assessment and Strategies Report covering the time period of 2006-2010. In its 2006 Report, the Council identified four of the nine enhancement areas as being of high priority to the state. These included wetlands, public access, coastal hazards, and cumulative and secondary impacts. Energy and

government facility siting and aquaculture were ranked as medium priorities and ocean resources, marine debris, and special area management plans were ranked as low priorities.

In November 2009, the CCC initiated its program review and assessment for the 2011-2015 report. The report and assessment is being developed by the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies.

Texas Groundwater Protection Committee

Background
Established by the Texas Legislature in 1989, the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) bridges the gap between State groundwater programs, improves coordination between member agencies and works to protect groundwater as a vital resource; the TSSWCB is a statutorily-authorized member of the TGPC.

The Texas Water Code sets non-degradation of the State's groundwater resources as the goal for all State programs and asserts that groundwater be kept reasonably free of contaminants that interfere with its present and potential uses. The TGPC implements the State's groundwater protection policy which:

- requires that pollution discharges, waste disposal and other regulated activities not harm public health or impair current or potential groundwater use,
- recognizes the variability between aquifers,
- acknowledges the importance of water quality,
- balances the protection of the environment and the long-term economic health of the state, and
- recognizes the use of the best professional judgment of the responsible state agencies to implement the policy.

The Texas Groundwater Protection Committee:

- Reports on its activities and recommends new protection programs to the Legislature.
- Publishes numerous reports.
- Advises the TCEQ on the development of agricultural chemical plans for groundwater.
- Develops, implements and updates a comprehensive *Texas Groundwater Protection Strategy* and an annual *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report*.

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

TGPC Activities
On March 10, 2010, TSSWCB SRM staff [Donna Long] attended a TGPC Legislative Report Subcommittee meeting in Austin. The Subcommittee met to review the process and timeline for completion of the draft legislative recommendations and other sections of *Activities and Recommendations of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee: Report to the 82nd Legislature*. The report describes the TGPC's activities for the two preceding years and provides recommendations to improve groundwater protection for Legislative consideration. There was discussion and some editing of draft legislative recommendations with a charge to subcommittee members to review respective agency programs for appropriate submission into the report and return to the next meeting with additional edits.

On March 24, 2010, TSSWCB staff [Meredith Whitley] attended a TGPC Public Outreach and Education Subcommittee meeting in Austin. Items discussed included status reports on active outreach initiatives, request for reprinting the *Plugging Abandoned Water Wells* publication, exploring the use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter, using Google Analytics to track website statistics, possibly using Survey Monkey (low-cost) to get feedback, and an update on recent events where the TGPC booth was displayed.

National Groundwater Awareness Week
March 7-13, 2010 was National Groundwater Awareness Week. In Texas, groundwater from 9 major aquifers and 21 minor aquifers provides 59%

of all freshwater used, supplies 79% of the water used by agriculture and is a source of drinking water for over 6.95 million Texans. According to the *2007 Texas Water Plan* developed by the Texas Water Development Board, groundwater supplied 59% of the water used in the State in 2003. Farmers use about 79% of this groundwater to irrigate crops. Approximately 36% of the water used for municipal needs was groundwater.

Water Quality Coordination Activities

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

Coordination with EPA
On February 23, 2010, TSSWCB SRM staff [Aaron Wendt, Pamela Casebolt, TJ Helton] participated in a conference call with staff from EPA and TCEQ regarding the process of utilizing WPPs in lieu of TMDLs. Using a WPP in lieu of a TMDL is known as the "4b option" because it would change the waterbody from Category 5 to Category 4b on the *303(d) List*. This means the water quality standard is not met, but a TMDL is not required because other pollution control requirements are reasonably expected to result in the attainment of the standard in the near future. TSSWCB believes that in some watersheds, a WPP may be a more viable approach to restoring water quality than the establishment of a TMDL and that the most effective method for meeting water quality standards may be through management measures developed and implemented without TMDLs. TSSWCB believes that a WPP satisfies this. TCEQ and TSSWCB are exploring this 4b approach for Plum Creek; this would be the first use of a WPP in Texas for the rationale to shift an impaired waterbody to Category 4b. During the conference call, TSSWCB staff sought clarity from EPA on several issues raised in the *USEPA Region 6 Process for Review of WPPs in lieu of TMDLs*. This document discusses the national process of utilizing WPPs in lieu of TMDLs, and discusses how this 4b option relates to the 9 essential elements of WPPs.

On March 24-25, 2010, TSSWCB SRM staff [TJ Helton, Aaron Wendt, Pamela Casebolt, Loren Henley, Mitch Conine, Donna Long, Brian Koch, David Reeves] met with EPA and TCEQ staff for the annual end of year review 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 two day meeting including watershed restoration, data availability, and quality assurance. Both agencies discussed on-going efforts to develop and implement WPPs and TMDLs, and the status of educational projects. The group discussed coordination of water quality restoration activities with USDA-NRCS and the Texas Water Development Board, progress in revising the *Texas NPS Management Program* document, and the process for utilizing WPPs in lieu of TMDLs. The meeting also highlighted the program's accomplishments, goals, and plans for the coming year.

Coordination with Texas Forest Service
On March 4, 2010, TSSWCB SRM staff [Pamela Casebolt, Aaron Wendt] participated in a Texas Forest Service (TFS) coordination meeting in Temple. TFS has recently placed an employee in Temple to increase coordination with NRCS on implementing components of the federal Farm Bill. Additionally, this will allow a greater level of coordination between TSSWCB and TFS on forestland issues in central Texas. TFS is engaged in conservation planning with landowners in central Texas; TFS is working on issues including land fragmentation and the increase of "ranchettes", or small-acreage parcels owned by absentee landowners for infrequent recreational use. These non-traditional agricultural landowners present unique challenges for state and federal agencies. The group discussed TSSWCB's current scope of

work, funded with a CWA §319(h) grant, with TFS, which, in addition to traditional east Texas timber industry silvicultural NPS pollution abatement activities, includes central Texas land stewardship and technical assistance components. Additionally, it was noted that TFS is also undergoing Sunset Review this biennium.

House Committee on Agriculture and Livestock – Interim Charge on Managing Feral Hogs
On March 24, 2010, TSSWCB Executive Director [Rex Isom], SRM staff [John Foster, Pamela Casebolt], and other agency staff, participated in a House Committee on Agriculture and Livestock (81st Texas Legislature) hearing on interim Committee charges in Austin. Specifically, the Committee met to review efforts across the state to manage feral hog populations and mitigate damage to agricultural and livestock operations. TSSWCB staff testified on the agency's role in coordinating the work of the newly established Texas Invasive Species Coordinating Committee and highlighted the agency's efforts to abate feral hog populations in the Plum Creek watershed.

Feral hogs have been identified as significant contributors of pollutants to waterbodies. As feral hogs congregate around water sources to drink and wallow, this concentration of high numbers in small riparian areas poses a threat to water quality. Fecal matter deposited directly in streams by feral hogs contributes bacteria and nutrients, polluting the State's waterbodies. In addition, extensive rooting activities of groups of feral hogs can cause extreme erosion and soil loss. The destructive habits of feral hogs cause an estimated $52 million worth of agricultural crop and property damage each year in Texas alone. Stakeholders in watersheds across the state have recommended that efforts to control feral hogs be undertaken to reduce the population, limit the spread of these animals, and minimize their effects on water quality and the surrounding environment.

To support the implementation of the Plum Creek WPP, TSSWCB has provided CWA §319(h) grants to the Texas AgriLife Extension Service to 1) provide technical assistance to landowners in managing feral hogs on their properties, 2) host feral hog management workshops across the watershed, 3) develop and publish resource materials, brochures, and publications on the different control techniques landowners can utilize, and 4) develop and promote the use of an online reporting tool to track feral hog sightings and quantify damage caused by feral hogs in order to better target abatement activities. More information is available at http://plumcreek.tamu.edu/FeralHogs/.

An archived broadcast of the hearing is available at http://www.house.state.tx.us/fx/av/committee81/00324a01.ram.

Surface Water Quality Standards Revision
In the January 29, 2010 *Texas Register*, the TCEQ proposed for public comment revisions to 30 Texas Administrative Code Chapter 307, Texas Surface Water Quality Standards (Standards), and the *Procedures to Implement the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards, RG-194* (IPs).

These major revisions to the Standards include the establishment of numeric nutrient criteria for large reservoirs and modifications to contact recreation use and bacteria criteria. The IPs are an in-depth protocol that provides guidance and explanation of the general and technical procedures used by TCEQ in applying the Standards. This rulemaking provides for a periodic public review and revision of the State's Surface Water Quality Standards, as provided for in the Texas Water Code, §26.023, and as required by the federal CWA §303(c).

The public comment period closed March 17, 2010. TCEQ staff will respond to comments, make necessary changes to the proposed revisions to the Standards and IPs, and bring each before the Commissioners for adoption and approval.

TCEQ adoption of the proposed Standards changes and approval of the IPs is not expected until July 2010. If adopted, the final rule will then be published in the *Texas Register* and become effective in August 2010. EPA must then take

action to approve any changes to the Standards in accordance with the federal CWA.

On March 11, 2010, TSSWCB SRM staff [Aaron Wendt] attended a public hearing in Austin. TCEQ conducted the hearing to receive public testimony regarding the proposed revisions to the Standards and the IPs.

TSSWCB submitted written comments to TCEQ on the proposed revisions to the Standards and IPs. TSSWCB comments were focused on the impact of the Standards and the IPs to how the agency implements its water quality mandate and jointly administers the *Texas NPS Management Program*. TSSWCB comments primarily dealt with revisions to the Standards and IPs regarding 1) modifications to recreation use and associated bacteria criteria, and 2) establishment of new numeric nutrient criteria for large reservoirs. The bulk of these proposed changes to the Standards will improve and streamline the State's overall Water Quality Management Program as well as the *Texas NPS Management Program* by curtailing unnecessary restorative activities for waterbodies inaccurately identified as being impaired. A copy of TSSWCB's comment letter is available upon request.

More information on the Standards, including copies of the proposed rule and guidance, is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water_quality/stakeholders/2010standards.html.

Texas Integrated Report for CWA §§305(b) and 303(d)

The *Texas Integrated Report* (IR) summarizes the status of the State's surface waters, including concerns for public health, fitness for use by aquatic species and other wildlife, and specific pollutants and their possible sources, as required by CWA §305(b). The IR also identifies waterbodies not attaining water quality standards (i.e., impaired), as required by CWA §303(d).

On February 5, 2010, TCEQ staff released the draft *2010 Texas Integrated Report*, which constitutes the State's CWA §305(b) Assessment and §303(d) List of Impaired Waters, for public comment. The IR was published in 2008 as the *Texas Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List*.

The comment period ended March 8, 2010. Comments were sought on data that may not be appropriate for the period of record, data that may have been overlooked, incidences where monitoring locations may not be spatially representative of ambient water quality conditions, sources and causes of water quality concerns and impairments, and hydrologic conditions of waterbodies.

TCEQ will develop a response to public comment received and revise the IR as appropriate. TCEQ intends to submit the final 2010 IR to EPA in June 2010.

TSSWCB submitted written comments to TCEQ on the draft 2010 IR. Comments were also included on the draft *2010 Guidance for Assessing and Reporting Surface Water Quality in Texas* (Assessment Guidance). TSSWCB comments were focused on the impact of the IR and Assessment Guidance to how the agency implements its water quality mandate and jointly administers the *Texas NPS Management Program*. A copy of TSSWCB's comment letter is available upon request.

More information on the *Texas Integrated Report*, including the 305(b) Assessment and 303(d) List, is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/compliance/monitoring/water/quality/data/wqm/305_303.html.

Recreational Use Attainability Analyses

In light of the pending revisions to the Surface Water Quality Standards, TCEQ has developed procedures for conducting Recreational Use Attainability Analyses (RUAAs); previously there were no RUAA protocols in Texas. In order to change the presumed level of recreation use of a waterbody and the associated bacteria criterion, an RUAA would need to be completed and approved by TCEQ and subsequently EPA. The May 2009 TCEQ *Procedures for a Comprehensive RUAA and a Basic RUAA Survey* is available at

http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water_quality/stakeholders/swqsawg_handouts.html#proc.

The purpose of an RUAA is to ascertain the actual recreation occurring on a waterbody, establish or verify a presumed use, and, if necessary, assign a more appropriate use. During an RUAA information is collected on water recreation activities, stream flow type, and stream depth; additionally, interviews from users who are present during surveys and those familiar with the waterbody may be conducted and a review of historical information may be completed. If the results of the RUAA indicate that a different, more appropriate use is warranted, the resulting change in the associated bacteria criterion may result in the waterbody no longer being identified on the *303(d) List* as impaired, thus negating the need to adopt a TMDL.

TCEQ, and their contractors, are in the process of conducting RUAAs on over 110 waterbodies across the state. Prior to conducting the surveys, TCEQ contractors contacted local stakeholders seeking input on each project's monitoring plan. Specifically, contractors ask for input on potential sites near stream crossings to perform evaluations, and ask landowners to provide access to evaluate those stretches of the river that are not readily accessible to the public. TCEQ contractors were asked to coordinate communication with SWCDs through TSSWCB. Some of these RUAAs will be conducted in spring and summer 2010. After the RUAAs are conducted, TCEQ will evaluate the information and again consult with stakeholders regarding potential site-specific revisions to the surface water quality standards for each waterbody.

Because proposed changes to the surface water quality standards affecting recreation use and bacteria criteria must first be approved by TCEQ, and this is not expected until July 2010, and subsequently EPA, any changes to specific waterbodies as a result of these RUAAs will not likely be reflected until the *2014 303(d) List* is published.

On March 9, 2010, TSSWCB SRM staff [Aaron Wendt] attended a meeting in Navasota to discuss the RUAA being conducted on the Navasota River below Lake Limestone and numerous tributaries including Country Club Branch, Wickson Creek, Cedar Creek, Duck Creek, Gibbons Creek, Shepherd Creek, and Steele Creek. TCEQ and the University of Houston-Clear Lake sought input on proposed RUAA field survey sites.

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

More information is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/94-neneasttexruaa.html. These RUAAs affect livestock operations in scores of watersheds across the state.

Texas Clean Rivers Program

The Texas Clean Rivers Program (CRP) is a state fee–funded program for water quality monitoring, assessment, and public outreach administered by the TCEQ. CRP is a collaboration of 15 partner agencies who conduct water quality monitoring and assessments in the 23 river and coastal basins 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. Basin steering committee meetings are being scheduled and will be held throughout the state between March-May 2010. SWCDs should look for notices of these meetings as they are scheduled and make plans to attend.

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 March 25, 2010, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority CRP Basin Steering Committee meeting in Seguin. GBRA gave an overview of CRP activities in the basin the past year, and included information from the Upper Guadalupe River Authority (UGRA) and the Wimberley Valley Watershed Association on monitoring activities and water quality concerns. Information was provided on the status of water quality projects across the basin. UGRA reported on progress in implementing the Upper Guadalupe River bacteria TMDL, including monitoring data collected and projects that they applied for implementation funding. The River Systems Institute at Texas State University-San Marcos updated the group on the progress of developing the Cypress Creek WPP. Texas AgriLife Extension Service provided updates on the Plum Creek WPP implementation and progress in the development of the Geronimo Creek WPP. USGS provided information on a gain/loss study being conducted on Coleto Creek. TCEQ provided information on the 2010 Water Quality Assessments in the Guadalupe Basin, and status of the TMDLs in the basin (Upper Guadalupe River, Elm and Sandies Creeks, and Peach Creek). TCEQ also spoke about the proposed revisions to the water quality standards. More information is available at http://www.gbra.org/.

On March 23, 2010, the Red River Authority hosted a CRP Canadian River Basin Steering Committee meeting in Amarillo. More information is available at http://www.rra.dst.tx.us/.

On March 30, 2010, the Red River Authority hosted a CRP Red River Basin Steering Committee meeting in Wichita Falls. The status of developing the Buck Creek WPP was discussed along with bacterial source tracking results from the Buck Creek watershed. More information is available at http://www.rra.dst.tx.us/.

Southeast and South Central Texas Regional Watershed Coordination Steering Committee

On March 4, 2010, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] hosted the Southeast and South Central Texas Watershed Coordination Steering Committee (WCSC) meeting in Columbus.

This meeting featured an overview of the Bastrop County Watershed Initiative and the National Aquatic Habitat Assessment as a Watershed Planning Tool in Texas. There was also continued discussion from topics covered at the recent Watershed Coordinator Roundtable. The Bastrop County Watershed Initiative was presented by Environmental Stewardship, a non-profit group focused on water quality. The project was initiated as a proactive protective measure for the watersheds in Bastrop County, since there are no 303(d) listed impaired waterbodies in the County. The current focus is to secure funding to develop strategies to deal with development in the county before any of the streams become impaired. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department presented information on using the National Aquatic Habitat Assessment as a Watershed Planning Tool in Texas. Brian Koch led the discussion that continued dialogue from the recent Watershed Coordinator Roundtable. Discussion focused on utilizing the *USEPA Region 6 Review Guide for WPPs* and the *USEPA Region 6 Process for Review of WPPs in lieu of TMDLs*.

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 SRM staff on watershed planning activities in 47 counties across southeast and south central Texas. More

information, including meeting materials, is available at http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/cwp.

Galveston Bay Estuary Program
Galveston Bay is an estuary of national importance and, through the federal CWA §320, is included in the National Estuary Program administered by the EPA. The Galveston Bay Council is the stakeholder advisory group that coordinates the implementation of the *Galveston Bay Plan*, which is a Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan developed under the auspices of the National Estuary Program. The TSSWCB is a named member of the Galveston Bay Council.

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

San Antonio Bay Estuary Program
On March 10, 2010, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a steering committee meeting for the San Antonio Bay Partnership in Victoria. This was the first meeting for the group since they were nominated at the January 12 Future of San Antonio Bay Stakeholder meeting. The focus of this group is to develop strategies to set the direction for an estuary program focused on San Antonio Bay. The goal is to have a locally driven effort, with strong state involvement. The group was given an overview of activities that are ongoing in the watershed. GBRA, SARA, TPWD, TWDB, and USGS are collecting various types of data, ranging from water quality and quantity to fisheries data. CBBEP is providing the initial funding to facilitate this process and additional funding to continue is being sought; currently SARA has proposed to provide an additional $25,000 in funding for 8 months of work. There has been a proposal sent to EPA for a wetlands inventory of the San Antonio Bay system; a list of other potential projects is being developed in case funding becomes available. There were questions about non-technical needs of the group such as a mission statement and governance of the steering committee; John Kisalus who represents public interests was selected as the Chairman, and Gary Burns, Victoria County Commissioner, was selected as Vice Chair. Members of the steering committee identified some key stakeholders missing from the committee, including GBRA, Texas Sea Grant, and more county commissioners; it was recommended to add 3 more people to the committee from these groups. The Victoria SWCD #346 is represented on this committee.

Chambers County Greenprint Implementation
On February 25, 2010, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a capacity building workshop for the implementation of the *Chambers County Greenprint for Growth and Conservation* in Anahuac. A *Greenprint for Growth*® is a strategy to manage growth, while ensuring quality of life, recreation, clean air and water, and economic health. Greenprinting involves defining a local conservation vision, securing funding to implement the greenprint, and managing conservation lands. The purpose of this meeting was to give an overview of the Chambers County Greenprint which was published in June 2009, identify goals of the entities participating, and to help identify sources of funding for implementation. The group discussed aspects of a county-wide unifying theme that could become the basis for a marketing campaign. The group discussed the possibility of collaborating with the Texas A&M University Nature Tourism Program.

More information is available at http://www.tpl.org/tier3_cd.cfm?content_item_id=23053&folder_id=264. Implementation of this Greenprint affects agricultural operations in Chambers County.

Upcoming Public Meetings
- April 6, 2010 – Sunset Advisory Commission Hearing on the Coastal Coordination Council (Austin)
- April 6, 2010 – *Bacteria Best Management Practices Workshop* (Sinton)
- April 6, 2010 – Trinity River Authority Clean Rivers Program Basin Steering committee (Dallas)

- April 7, 2010 – Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (Austin)
- April 7, 2010 – TGPC Agricultural Chemicals Subcommittee (Austin)
- April 7, 2010 – TGPC Groundwater Research Subcommittee (Austin)
- April 7, 2010 – Northeast Texas Municipal Water District Clean Rivers Program Basin Steering Committee (Hughes Springs)
- April 7, 2010 – *Monitoring and Assessment Under the CWA* (EPA webcast)
- April 8-9, 2010 – Trans-Pecos Prescribed Fire Symposium (Alpine)
- April 12, 2010 – Geronimo and Alligator Creeks WPP Wastewater Infrastructure Work Group (Seguin)
- April 12, 2010 – Lampasas River WPP Habitat and Wildlife Work Group (Lampasas)
- April 12, 2010 – Sabine River Authority Clean Rivers Program Basin Steering Committee (Orange)
- April 13, 2010 – Geronimo and Alligator Creeks WPP Urban Work Group (Seguin)
- April 13, 2010 – Geronimo and Alligator Creeks WPP Agricultural Work Group (Seguin)
- April 13, 2010 – Sabine River Authority Clean Rivers Program Basin Steering Committee (Longview)
- April 14, 2010 – Sabine River Authority Clean Rivers Program Basin Steering Committee (Greenville)
- April 19, 2010 – Lampasas River WPP Wastewater Infrastructure Work Group (Lampasas)
- April 19, 2010 – Lampasas River WPP Agricultural Issues Work Group (Lampasas)
- April 20, 2010 – Lampasas River WPP Outreach and Education Work Group (Lampasas)
- April 20, 2010 – Greater Houston Area Bacteria Implementation Group (Houston)
- April 21, 2010 – Lampasas River WPP Urban/Suburban Issues Work Group (Killeen)
- April 22, 2010 – Arroyo Colorado Watershed Partnership Steering Committee (Weslaco)
- April 28, 2010 – Galveston Bay Council (Pasadena)
- April 28, 2010 – Angelina & Neches River Authority Clean Rivers Program Basin Steering Committee (TBA)
- April 29, 2010 – Texas Watershed Steward workshop focused on South Llano River (Junction)
- April 29, 2010 – Bastrop Bayou WPP Stakeholder Meeting (TBA)
- May 3, 2010 – Riparian Landowner Workshop, Nueces River Authority (Junction)
- May 4, 2010 – Riparian Landowner Workshop, Nueces River Authority (Cotulla)
- May 5, 2010 – Riparian Landowner Workshop, Nueces River Authority (Vance)
- May 6, 2010 – Plum Creek Watershed Partnership Steering Committee (Lockhart)
- May 6, 2010 – Riparian Landowner Workshop, Nueces River Authority (Brackettville)
- May 7, 2010 – Riparian Landowner Workshop, Nueces River Authority (Tarpley)
- May 10-14, 2010 – Watershed Planning Short Course (Bandera)
- May 10, 2010 – Geronimo and Alligator Creeks WPP Wastewater Infrastructure Work Group (Seguin)
- May 11, 2010 – Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Watershed Partnership (TBA)
- May 12, 2010 – Texas Watershed Steward workshop focused on Cedar Creek Reservoir (Seven Points)
- May 14, 2010 – *Composting Animal Mortalities* (NLPELC webcast)
- May 19, 2010 – TGPC Legislative Report Subcommittee (Austin)
- May 20, 2010 – Luling Foundation 83rd Annual Field Day (Luling)
- May 20, 2010 – San Bernard River WPP Stakeholder Meeting (Wharton)

- May 26, 2010 – *Coastal Resilience Symposium* (Rice University, Houston)

WATER QUALITY PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

The TSSWCB applies the Watershed Approach to managing NPS pollution by channeling its efforts to restore and protect water quality through the development and implementation of WPPs and TMDLs. A list of watersheds including links to on-going restoration projects within those watersheds is available at http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/watersheds; more detailed information on all watersheds described below is available at this website.

Adams and Cow Bayous
Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen, pH
Mechanism: TMDL, I-Plan
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/37-orangecounty.html. These TMDLs have limited affect on livestock and forestry operations in the Adams and Cow Bayous watershed in Orange, Jasper and Newton Counties.

Aquilla Reservoir
Impairment: Atrazine
Mechanism: TMDL, I-Plan
Lead: TSSWCB

More information is available at http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/watersheds#aquillareservoir. This TMDL and I-Plan affect farming operations in the Aquilla Reservoir watershed in Hill and Johnson Counties.

Arroyo Colorado
Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen
Concerns: Nutrients, Sediment
Mechanism: WPP, TMDL, I-Plan
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at http://www.arroyocolorado.org/. This WPP affects farming operations in the Arroyo Colorado watershed in Cameron, Hidalgo and Willacy Counties.

Atascosa River
Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen
Mechanism: UAA
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/31-atascosa.html. This project affects livestock operations in the Atascosa River watershed in Atascosa, Bexar, Frio, Karnes, Live Oak, McMullen, Medina and Wilson Counties.

Attoyac Bayou
Impairment: Bacteria
Concern: Nutrients
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB

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

Bastrop Bayou
Concern: Bacteria
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TCEQ

On March 25, 2010, the Houston-Galveston Area Council hosted a Bastrop Bayou stakeholder meeting in Lake Jackson. The group was updated on progress in developing the WPP document.

More information is available at http://www.bastropbayou.org/. This WPP has the potential to affect livestock and farming operations in the Bastrop Bayou watershed in Brazoria County.

Big Cypress Creek
Concern: Bacteria
Mechanism: Assessment
Lead: TSSWCB

More information is available at http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/watersheds#bigcypresscreek. This project will affect poultry and livestock operations in the Big Cypress Creek watershed (including tributaries Hart and Tankersley Creeks) in Titus, Camp, Upshur and Morris Counties.

Brady Creek
Impairment: Dissolved Oxygen
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at http://www.ucratx.org/NPSBrady.html. This project has the potential to affect agricultural operations in the Brady Creek watershed in McCulloch, Concho, San Saba and Menard Counties.

Buck Creek
Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB

More information is available at http://twri.tamu.edu/buckcreek/. This WPP will affect livestock and farming operations in the Buck Creek watershed in Donley, Collingsworth, and Childress Counties.

Buffalo and Whiteoak Bayous
Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: TMDL, I-Plan
Lead: TCEQ

The Bacteria Implementation Group (BIG) is focused on implementing bacteria TMDLs in the greater Houston area, including Buffalo and Whiteoak Bayous. 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. Current activities of the BIG are detailed in the *Lake Houston* section of this report.

More information is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/22-buffalobayou.html. This TMDL will have limited affect on livestock operations in the Buffalo and Whiteoak Bayous watershed in Harris, Fort Bend and Waller Counties.

Caddo Lake
Impairment: Dissolved Oxygen, pH
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at http://www.netmwd.com/Caddo%20Lake%20Protection%20Plan/Caddo_index.html. This WPP has the potential to affect poultry, forestry and other agricultural operations in the Caddo Lake watershed in Upshur, Camp, Titus, Morris, Cass, Harrison, Marion, Wood, Gregg, Franklin, and Hopkins Counties.

Carters and Burton Creeks
Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: TMDL
Lead: TCEQ

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

Cedar Creek Reservoir
Impairment: pH
Concerns: Nutrients
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: Third party

More information is available at http://nctx-water.tamu.edu/. This WPP will affect agricultural operations in the Cedar Creek watershed in Henderson, Kaufman, Rockwall and Van Zandt Counties.

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

The Bacteria Implementation Group (BIG) is focused on implementing bacteria TMDLs in the greater Houston area, including Clear Creek. 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. Current activities of the BIG are detailed in the *Lake Houston* section of this report.

More information is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/68-clearcreekbacteria.html. This TMDL has limited affect on livestock operations in the Clear Creek watershed in Galveston, Harris, Brazoria and Fort Bend Counties.

Concho River
Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen, Macrobenthic Community
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB

More information is available at http://www.ucratx.org/CRiverRest_UCRA.html. This WPP affects farming and livestock operations in the Concho River watershed in Coke, Concho, Crockett, Glasscock, Howard, Irion, Menard, Midland, Reagan, Runnels, Schleicher, Sterling, Tom Green, and Upton Counties.

Copano Bay and Mission and Aransas Rivers
Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: TMDL, I-Plan
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/42-copano.html. This TMDL will affect livestock operations in the Copano Bay and Mission and Aransas Rivers watershed in Bee, Goliad, Refugio, Karnes, Aransas and San Patricio Counties.

Cypress Creek
Concerns: Dissolved Oxygen, Bacteria
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at http://www.cypresscreekproject.org/. This WPP has the potential to affect livestock and farming operations in the Cypress Creek watershed in Hays County.

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

On March 25, 2010, the TCEQ hosted a Dickinson Bayou stakeholder meeting in Dickinson. The purpose of the meeting was to inform the public of ongoing activities of the TCEQ, the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, and the University of Houston-Clear Lake to restore and protect water quality in Dickinson Bayou. Discussion focused on the status of Dickinson Bayou WPP implementation efforts and progress in developing the TMDLs, and bacteria I-Plan.

This WPP is proceeding in tandem with the on-going TMDLs for bacteria and dissolved oxygen. More information on the TMDL is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/17-dickinson.html. More information on the WPP is available at http://www.dickinsonbayou.org/. Both the WPP and the TMDLs have the potential to affect farming and ranching operations in the Dickinson Bayou watershed in Galveston and Brazoria Counties.

Eagle Mountain Reservoir
Impairment: Bacteria
Concerns: Nutrients
Mechanism: WPP, UAA
Lead: Third party

On March 17, 2010, the Tarrant Regional Water District and Texas AgriLife Research hosted an Eagle Mountain Reservoir Watershed stakeholder meeting in Azle. The meeting included a report on computer modeling of pollutant levels and sources, as well as, a presentation of the economic management practice evaluation tool that will be utilized in development of the WPP.

More information on the WPP is available at http://nctx-water.tamu.edu/. This WPP has the potential to affect agricultural operations in the Eagle Mountain Reservoir watershed in Clay, Jack, Montague, Parker, Tarrant and Wise Counties.

Elm and Sandies Creeks
Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen
Mechanism: TMDL, I-Plan
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/31-elmsandies.html. This TMDL will affect livestock operations in the Elm and Sandies Creeks watershed in Gonzales, DeWitt, Karnes, Wilson and Guadalupe Counties.

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

More information is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/74-uppercoastoyster.html. This TMDL has limited affect on livestock operations around the Galveston Bay complex in Chambers, Harris, Galveston and Brazoria Counties.

Geronimo Creek
Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB

On March 9, 2010, TSSWCB SRM staff [Loren Henley, Brian Koch] and TSSWCB Field Staff [Kendria Ray] attended the Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Agricultural Work Group meeting held at the Geronimo Volunteer Fire Department in Seguin. Also, on March 9, 2010, TSSWCB SRM staff [Loren Henley, Brian Koch] attended the Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Urban Work Group meeting held at Continental Industries in Seguin. Presentations were given to both work groups on the watershed data, land use types, NPS pollutant sources in the watershed, and estimating populations in the watershed. The Spatially Explicit Load Estimation Calculation Tool (SELECT) was explained to the groups, and how the numbers that each group decides on effects the outputs for which the tool provides. Discussion at the Urban Work Group focused on the number of pets in the watershed and stormwater issues. Discussion at the Agricultural Work Group focused on the number of cattle, goats, and horses in the watershed.

More information is available at http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/watersheds#geronimocreek. This WPP has the potential to affect ranching and farming operations in the Geronimo Creek watershed in Guadalupe and Comal Counties.

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

More information is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/69-gillelandcreekbacteria.html. This TMDL has limited affect on livestock operations in the Gilleland Creek watershed in Travis County.

Lake Granbury
Concern: Bacteria
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at http://www.brazos.org/gbWPP.asp or http://lakegranbury.tamu.edu/. This WPP has the potential to affect agricultural operations around Lake Granbury in Hood and Parker Counties.

Lake Granger
Impairment: Bacteria
Concern: Sediment
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB

More information is available at http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/watersheds#lakegranger. This WPP will affect farming and livestock operations in the Lake Granger watershed in Williamson and Burnet Counties.

Hickory Creek
Concern: Nutrients, Sediment
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at http://www.cityofdenton.com/pages/mygovenvironmentalwater319grant.cfm. This WPP has the potential to affect farming and livestock operations in the Hickory Creek watershed in Denton County.

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

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

On March 16, 2010, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a monthly meeting for the BIG in Houston. Updates on the I-Plan were given, including the lists of sections that were sent to the workgroups for review of the implementation activities to be included. Also, HGAC staff updated the group on which segments in the area were proposed by TCEQ to be de-listed on the *2010 303(d) List* because they now meet water quality standards.

On March 29, 2010, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch, TJ Helton, Aaron Wendt] met with TCEQ staff in Austin to discuss progress on the development of the *Fifteen TMDLs for Indicator Bacteria in the Lake Houston Watershed*. Discussion focused on issues relating to the identification of agricultural nonpoint sources of bacteria loading and how those loads are allocated in the TMDLs.

More information on the greater Houston area Bacteria Implementation Group (BIG) is available at http://www.h-gac.com/community/water/tmdl/BIG/default.aspx. More information on the Lake Houston TMDLs is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/82-lakehouston.html. These TMDLs have the potential to affect livestock operations in the Lake Houston watershed in Grimes, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, San Jacinto, Walker and Waller Counties.

Lake O' the Pines
Impairment: Dissolved Oxygen
Mechanism: TMDL, I-Plan
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/19-lakeopines.html. This TMDL and I- Plan affect poultry, dairy and forestry operations in the Lake O' the Pines watershed in Upshur, Camp, Titus, Morris, Cass, Harrison and Marion Counties.

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

On March 11, 2010, TSSWCB SRM staff [Pamela Casebolt, Aaron Wendt] attended the Lampasas River Watershed Partnership Steering Committee meeting in Lampasas. Discussion centered on the draft *2010 Integrated Report*, water quality

standards, and water quality data analysis in the Lampasas River watershed. After the Technical Advisory Group meeting in February 2010, the TCEQ reevaluated the water quality data for the bacteria impaired segment of the Lampasas River. Although the impaired assessment unit has been carried forward, the data that originally caused it to be listed no longer meets new methodology uses to assess a waterbody against the water quality standards; therefore TCEQ is considering delisting the Lampasas River from the final *2010 Integrated Report*. In order to make knowledgeable decisions and to be prepared to set water quality goals, the Steering Committee learned about water quality standards. Watershed data was also presented side-by-side to the standard so stakeholders could see where the waterbodies were exceeding or meeting the standards. The Partnership also received an in-depth presentation on water quality data analysis for the Lampasas River. The stakeholders were provided information about how surface-ground water interactions in the Lampasas River, stream hydrology and flow regimes, and LDCs that included watershed data. In anticipation of the Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee meeting for the Brazos River Basin, the Partnership selected four stream locations to recommend for additional water quality sampling within the watershed. Five workgroup meetings have been scheduled for April to discuss land use/land cover maps, identify potential pollutant sources and loading estimates, and receive an introduction to the SELECT model.

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

Leon River
Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen
Mechanism: WPP, TMDL, I-Plan, UAA
Lead: TCEQ (TMDL, UAA), TSSWCB (WPP)

More information on the postponed bacteria TMDL is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/34-leonbacteria.html. More information on the WPP is available at http://www.brazos.org/LeonRiverWPP.asp. Both the WPP and the TMDL will affect livestock operations in the Leon River watershed in Comanche, Coryell, Mills, Erath and Hamilton Counties.

Little Brazos River Tributaries
Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: Assessment
Lead: TSSWCB

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

Lower San Antonio River
Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: TMDL, I-Plan
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/34-lowersanantoniobac.html. This TMDL affects livestock operations in the Lower San Antonio River watershed in Karnes, Goliad, Refugio, DeWitt, Wilson, Victoria, and Guadalupe Counties.

North Bosque River
Impairment: Nutrients, Bacteria
Mechanism: TMDL, I-Plan
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/06-bosque.html. This TMDL affects dairy operations in the North Bosque River watershed in Bosque, Erath, Somervell, Hamilton, Coryell and McLennan Counties.

Onion Creek
Impairment: None
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: Third party

More information is available at http://www.waterqualityplan.org/. This WPP affects agricultural operations in the Onion Creek watershed in Hays and Travis Counties.

Oso Bay and Oso Creek
Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: TMDL, I-Plan
Lead: TCEQ

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

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

More information is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/34-peachcreek_group.html. This TMDL will affect livestock operations in the Peach Creek watershed in Gonzales, Bastrop, Fayette and Caldwell Counties.

Pecos River
Impairment: Dissolved Oxygen
Concern: Salinity
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB

On March 23, 2010, TSSWCB field staff [Ben Wilde] and TSSWCB SRM staff [Mitch Conine, Aaron Wendt] attended a Pecos River implementation coordination meeting in San Angelo. Through implementation funding provided by the TSSWCB with a CWA §319(h) grant, the Crockett SWCD #235 and the Upper Pecos SWCD #213 have each recently hired a technician to support chemical saltcedar treatment along the riparian corridor and to encourage landowners to voluntarily implement recommended BMPs on their land. Technical and financial assistance will be provided to landowners to develop and implement WQMPs to reduce nutrient and sediment loading to the river. The group discussed the roles and responsibilities of each project partner and the activities that are going to be implemented.

More information is available at http://pecosbasin.tamu.edu/. This WPP affects agricultural operations in the Pecos River watershed in Andrews, Brewster, Crane, Crockett, Culberson, Ector, Jeff Davis, Loving, Pecos, Presidio, Reagan, Reeves, Terrell, Upton, Val Verde, Ward and Winkler Counties.

Plum Creek
Impairment: Bacteria
Concerns: Nutrients
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB

On February 23, 2010, TSSWCB SRM Staff [Brian Koch] attended a Feral Hog Management Workshop in Luling. Nearly 300 people attended this workshop which was held to implement portions of the Plum Creek WPP. The Plum Creek WPP identifies feral hogs as a significant contributor of pollutants to the creek. Landowners recommended in the Plan that efforts to control feral hogs be undertaken to reduce the population, limit the spread of these animals, and minimize their effects on water quality and the surrounding environment. This workshop was put on by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service with a CWA §319(h) nonpoint source grant from EPA and the TSSWCB. Presenters at the workshop were from state and federal agencies including AgriLife Extension, USDA Wildlife Services, Texas Department of Agriculture, Texas Animal Health Commission, and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Topics covered feral hog life history and biology, rules and regulations, current research, and control methods for this invasive exotic species including hunting and trapping.

AgriLife Extension recently released five new publications about feral hog control methods to help landowners corral this growing menace. These publications were funded by the TSSWCB and the EPA. The publications discuss recognizing feral hog sign and several different management tools including corral traps, box traps, and snares and are available online or at either the Caldwell or Hays County Extension offices. These publications specifically target the Plum Creek watershed, but are applicable wherever feral hogs are a problem. The publications are available online at http://plumcreek.tamu.edu/feralhogs.

More information is available at http://plumcreek.tamu.edu/. This WPP affects livestock and farming operations in the Plum Creek watershed in Caldwell and Hays Counties.

Red River above Lake Texoma
Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: Assessment
Lead: Third party

The River Systems Institute at Texas State University-San Marcos recently released drafts of the Red River Strategic Plan and Data Analysis Report. A Transboundary Work Group of local, regional, state, and federal agencies was assembled to assist in designing, implementing, and evaluating a comprehensive, long-term, integrated watershed planning and implementation process that will support sustainable water resource management in the Red River Basin. The first stage of this process focused on bacteria impairments in the Red River Basin above Lake Texoma. The draft strategic plan was developed in response to input from the Transboundary Work Group and proposes a paired watershed approach to managing bacteria in Lake Texoma. This strategy is intended to serve as a model that can be applied to other parts of the Red River Basin as well as other transboundary watersheds. The approach is limited to transboundary waters that exhibit known, high levels of contact recreation.

More information is available at http://www.rivers.txstate.edu/projects/rivers/Red-River-.html. This project affects livestock operations in portions of the Red River Basin in numerous counties.

Rio Grande below Falcon Reservoir
Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TCEQ

This project has the potential to affect livestock operations in Starr, Jim Hogg and Hidalgo Counties.**San Bernard River**
Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: WPP, UAA
Lead: TCEQ

On March 18, 2010, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a San Bernard River WPP stakeholder meeting in West Columbia. This was the second meeting for stakeholders in the watershed to review data and to provide input on monitoring sites along the river and tributaries. Also, the types of modeling that will be used to identify pollution sources were discussed, including LDCs, Tidal Prism, and SELECT. There was an overview of the BMPs that are available for the different land uses in the watershed. HGAC wants to monitor the effectiveness of BMPs in the watershed, specifically, those BMPs on cropland, pastureland and for septic systems. It was suggested to monitor the quality of stormwater at the two National Wildlife Refuges in the watershed in order to get a comparison of runoff from undisturbed rangeland.

More information is available at http://www.h-gac.com/go/sanbernard and http://www.sanbernardriver.com/. This WPP has the potential to affect farming and livestock operations in the San Bernard River watershed in Austin, Brazoria, Colorado, Fort Bend and Wharton Counties.

Lake Somerville
Impairment: pH, Dissolved Oxygen
Mechanism: Assessment
Lead: TCEQ

This project has the potential to affect farming and livestock operations in the Lake Somerville watershed in Bastrop, Burleson, Lee, Milam, Washington, and Williamson Counties.

South Llano River
Impairment: None
Mechanism: Assessment and Planning
Lead: Third party

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

E.V. Spence Reservoir
Impairment: Salinity
Mechanism: TMDL, I-Plan
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/04-spence.html. This TMDL and I-Plan affect agricultural operations in the E.V. Spence Reservoir watershed in Borden, Coke, Howard, Mitchell, Nolan, Scurry, and Sterling Counties.

Upper Cibolo Creek
Impairment: Bacteria
Concern: Dissolved Oxygen, Nutrients
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TCEQ

On March 16, 2010, the City of Boerne hosted an Upper Cibolo Creek WPP stakeholder meeting in Boerne. The group reviewed the permitted wastewater treatment facilities within the watershed and examined the current water quality monitoring locations and historical data. Proposed sample locations and monitoring to be conducted was discussed along with proposed work group topics.

On March 25, 2010, about 60 people attended a Texas Watershed Steward workshop in Boerne. Sponsored by TSSWCB , through a CWA §319(h) grant, and facilitated by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, the training discussed 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 was held in support of on-going watershed planning efforts being facilitated by the City of Boerne and TCEQ in the Upper Cibolo Creek watershed. More information on the Texas Watershed Steward Program is available at http://tws.tamu.edu/.

More information is available at http://www.ci.boerne.tx.us/. This WPP has the potential to affect livestock operations in the Upper Cibolo Creek watershed in Kendall County.

Upper Guadalupe River
Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: TMDL, I-Plan
Lead: TCEQ

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

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

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

Upper Trinity River
Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: TMDL, I-Plan, UAA
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/66-trinitybacteria.html. These TMDLs will have limited affect on livestock operations in the Upper Trinity River watershed in Dallas, Denton,

Ellis, Henderson, Kaufman, Navarro and Tarrant Counties.

Water Supply Enhancement Program Status Report

Background:

Administered by the TSSWCB, the goal of the program is to enhance the state's quantity of water resources through selective control of brush species. The 81st Legislature continued funding for the Water Supply Enhancement Program by providing $4,503,641.00 in General Revenue Funds in FY10. These funds were directed to be used for continuation of brush control projects designated by the State Soil and Water Conservation Board. Since the beginning of the Water supply Enhancement program in 1999 there has been 766,529 acres of brush treated in various watersheds throughout the State.

Program Activities

TSSWCB provided the following SWCDs with Water Supply Enhancement Program Updates, Water Supply Enhancement Program Certification, and /or Contracts:

Area 1 District
Donley County SWCD
Area 2 Districts
Middle Concho SWCD
Eldorado-Divide SWCD
Tom Green SWCD
Pedernales SWCD
Gillespie County SWCD
Kerr County SWCD
Kendall SWCD
Area 3 Districts
McMullen County SWCD
LaSalle County SWCD
Caldwell-Travis SWCD
Comal-Guadalupe SWCD
Webb County SWCD
Frio SWCD
Area 5 Districts
Archer County SWCD
Lower Clear Fork of the Brazos SWCD
Pecan Bayou SWCD
Bosque SWCD
Little Wichita SWCD

Current Water Supply Enhancement Projects throughout the State and Project Managers:

- Canadian River Project- Rod Goodwin Canadian River Municipal Water Authority
- GreenBelt Reservoir- Bob Gruner
- Twin Buttes- Tuffy Wood
- O.C. Fisher reservoir Project- Tuffy Wood
- Lake Ivie (Main Concho)- Johnny Oswald
- Pedernales Project- Melissa Grote
- Guadalupe River Project- Melissa Grote
- Edwards Aquifer Project (Bandera County)- Melissa Grote
- Fort Phantom Hill- Cody York
- Nueces River Project- Adrian Perez
- Frio River Watershed – Adrian Perez
- Lower Guadalupe River – Kendria Ray
- Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer- Kendria Ray
- Palo Pinto- Cody York
- Bosque Project- Cody York
- Little Wichita River (Archer and Clay Counties)- Cody York
- Lake Brownwood Project- Cody York

Evaluating Watersheds are based on the following criteria as per Chapter 203.053:

In ranking areas under the plan, the board shall consider:

(1) the location of various brush infestations;
(2) the type and severity of brush infestations;
(3) the various management methods that may be used to control brush;
(4) the amount of water produced by a project and the severity of water shortage in the project area; and any other criteria that the board considers relevant to assure that the brush control program can be most

effectively, efficiently, and economically implemented

Evaluating Limits on Cost Share Participation as per Chapter 203.154

(a) Not more than 70 percent of the total cost of a single brush control project may be made available as the state's share in cost sharing.
(b) A person is not eligible to participate in the state brush control program or to receive money from the state brush control program if the person is simultaneously receiving any cost-share money for brush control on the same acreage from a federal government program.
(c) The board may grant an exception to Subsection (b) if the board finds that joint participation of the state brush control program and any federal brush control program will:
  (1) enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of a project;
  (2) lessen the state's financial commitment to the project; and
  (3) not exceed 80 percent of the total cost of the project.
(d) A political subdivision is eligible for cost sharing under the brush control program, provided that the state's share may not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of a single project.
(e) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Section, 100 percent of the total cost of a single project on public lands may be made available as the state's share in cost sharing.

Staff Activities

- Evaluate pending application sub basin criteria from all projects
- Assisted landowners in Twin Buttes, Pedernales, Pecan Bayou, Lake Arrowhead, Lake Kickapoo, Bosque River with Brush Certifications
- Assisted landowners in Twin Buttes, Pedernales, Pecan Bayou, Lake Arrowhead, Lake Kickapoo, Bosque River with Brush Contracts
- Assisted Gonzales County SWCD with Water Enhancement Project on the Carrizo Wilcox Aquifer
- Assist Texas Sunset Advisory Commission on Water Enhancement Program
- Assisted UCRA with the Twin Buttes lake basin project
- Exit conference with Texas Sunset Advisory Commission
- Prepare formal responses to the Texas Sunset Advisory Commission

For more information on the Water Supply Enhancement Program contact the Water Supply Enhancement office at (325) 481-0335.

FLOOD CONTROL DAM PROGRAMS

Background

Nearly 2,000 floodwater retarding structures, or dams, have been built over the last 60 years within the State of Texas. The primary purpose of the structures is to protect lives and property by reducing the velocity of floodwaters, and thereby releasing flows at a safer rate. These are earthen dams that exist on private property, and were designed and constructed by the United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS). They were built with the understanding that the private property owner would provide the land, the federal government would provide the technical design expertise and the funding to construct them, and then units of local government would be responsible for maintaining them into the future.

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

sponsors in all watershed projects. Other local sponsors include counties, cities, and Water Control and Improvement Districts (WCIDs).

Due to the passage of time and difficulty in raising adequate funds locally, many sponsors approached the Texas Legislature with their concerns over amount of needed O&M and repairs. In recognition that these dams will continue to serve as a critical protection for our state's infrastructure, private property, and lives, the Legislature appropriated $15 million dollars to the TSSWCB for grants to local SWCDs during the 2010-2011 biennium for O&M and structural repairs.

Structural Repair Grant Program Rules
Rules for the Structural Repair Grant Program were published in the January 1, 2010 edition of the *Texas Register* for a 30 day comment period. The TSSWCB staff's recommendation for final adoption included the following modifications to the rules based on received comments:

(1) The definition of "O&M Agreement" was added [§529.51(9)] because it became necessary to make reference to the term in §529.55(b) relating to documents being required when submitting an application for grant funding; this required changing the numbering of all subsequent definitions.

(2) A comment was received suggesting that the definition of "structural repair" be less specific and simply make it the act of restoring a dam to meet current TCEQ safety criteria. As proposed, the definition stated a design deficiency was needed in order for the act to be defined as a repair act eligible for grant funding. The comment suggested repair needs may exist that did not result from a design deficiency. TSSWCB staff concurs with this suggestion and have modified the definition.

(3) A comment was received suggesting that Rule §529.55(c), relating to the entities and individuals that must sign an application for grant funding, may require more signatures than are necessary. The comment suggested these additional signatures may result in significant delays for applicants in preparing their applications. TSSWCB concurs with this suggestion and have modified Rule §529.55(c) to require only those sponsors that have responsibility for the particular dam on which the repairs are proposed to sign an application. As proposed, the rule required all sponsors on the overall watershed agreement to sign the application. This also required a modification to Rule §529.55(b) that specifies which supporting documents must be submitted with an application; O&M agreements would be required under this new rule.

(4) In Proposed Rule §529.59, Subcontracting Requirements, a typographical error was included. The word "contraction" was inadvertently proposed in place of "construction." This has been corrected in the TSSWCB staff's recommendation for final adoption.

(5) A comment was received suggesting that Proposed Rule §529.62, Structural Repair Grants Used as Match for Federal Watershed Rehabilitation Projects, should be modified to allow the TSSWCB to provide grants to sponsors for the express purpose of providing the required non-federal matching funds needed for federally funded rehabilitation projects. As proposed, the rules would have only allowed reimbursement of certain repairs performed in conjunction with the rehabilitation, which could have been used as non-federal matching funds. A comment was also received suggesting the federal projects undertaken through the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service's Emergency Watershed Program (EWP) should be included with federal rehabilitation projects in this rule. TSSWCB staff concurs with this suggestion and have modified the recommendation for final adoption to allow for non-repair specific grants to be used from this program to provide required non-federal matching funds for rehabilitation and EWP projects.

The State Board adopted the proposed version of the rules with the above specified modifications. The TSSWCB will be submitting the adopted rules to the Secretary of State the first week of April, and expect the rules to become effective prior to the May 1, 2010. At that time, the TSSWCB will

publish a "request for applications" for repair grant funding in the Texas Register. We anticipate applications being due by the end of May, but final dates will be determined based on available publication dates at the Texas Register. All SWCDs will be directly notified of the "request for applications."

O&M Grant Program Rules

The State Board adopted rules for the O&M Grant Program on September 17, 2009. In order to make references between the adopted O&M program rules and the newly proposed structural repair program rules clear and more understandable, agency staff recommended the State Board propose minor changes to the O&M program rules. Included in these proposed changes are a few typographical corrections, amendments to language to improve clarity of existing intent, and one substantive change relating to the addition of one definition. Staff recommended the definition of operation and maintenance (O&M) be expanded to include minor maintenance of roads within an easement used in gaining access to a flood control dam for the purpose of performing O&M. The expanded definition stipulates that such maintenance of roads would not be reimbursed by the State Board, but may be considered as an in-kind contribution of match. The State Board approved these proposed amendments to be published in the Texas Register for a 30-day public comment period. The rules were published in the January 1, 2010 edition of the *Texas Register*, and the comment period continued through the end of the month. No comments were received on the proposed rule amendments which were adopted as proposed by the State Board on March 18, 2010.

For more information on these new programs, please visit the TSSWCB's website at: http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/en/floodcontrol

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 Meredith Whitley (254) 773-2250 or mwhitley@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 216 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.

Soil Water TSSWCB

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