TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

Monthly Program News and Activities

4311 South 31st Street, Suite 125, Temple, Texas 76502
P.O. Box 658, Temple, Texas 76503 (254) 773-2250

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

March 2009

The TSSWCB produces this monthly update of the agency's activities as an informational service to local soil and water conservation district directors. I hope you find this information helpful, and if you have any questions please don't hesitate to call your local Field Representative or our State Headquarters.

REX ISOM, Executive Director

Budgeting and Accounting

- **The 5% administration payments on obligated water quality management plans will be made May 1st.**
- **May 15th is the deadline for claiming 2/3 of a district's Matching Fund allocation for 2009**

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STATE BOARD WORK SESSIONS AND MEETINGS

Scheduled Work Sessions and Meetings

The State Board has tentatively scheduled a Board Work Session for 1:00 p.m., in Temple, Texas at TSSWCB headquarters on **Wednesday, May 20, 2009**. A formal State Board Meeting is tentatively scheduled for 8:00 a.m. in Temple, Texas at the Texas AgriLife Research at Blackland Research and Extension Center on **Thursday, May 21, 2009.** For more information on State Board Work Sessions and Meetings, visit the agency's website at http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/boardmeetings.

Board Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the March 12, 2009, State Board Meeting will be considered for approval at the meeting tentatively scheduled for May 21, 2009. To view any past Board Meeting minutes visit the agency's website at http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/boardmeetings/minutes

For more information on past and pending State Board Work Sessions and Meetings, please visit the agency's website at http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/boardmeetings, or contact Vicki Davis at (254) 773-2250, ext. 253.

BUDGET AND ACCOUNTING

- The 5% administration payments on obligated water quality management plans will be made **May 1st**.
- **May 15th** is the deadline for claiming 2/3 of a district's Matching Fund allocation for 2009.

HUMAN RESOURCES

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

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

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Program Overview

Special Projects is a department within the TSSWCB that provides coordination for the Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation Directors, facilitates open government functions required by the Texas Administrative Procedures Act, and directs the completion of other mandatory agency responsibilities such as compiling the agency's Semi-Annual Report and rule making.

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

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

State Board Member Elections

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

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

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

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

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

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

Wildlife Alliance for Youth

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

February 25: TX Farm/Ranch Wildlife Expo
Ten teams comprised of 36 individuals competed in the event. Top scoring team in the event was the Anson FFA chapter. Daniel Tompkins was the high point scoring individual with a top score of 119.

March 4: Weimar Invitational Wildlife Contest Twenty-two teams comprised of 71 individuals competed in the event. Top scoring team in the event was the Ingram FFA chapter. Nathan Bird was the high point scoring individual with a top score of 113.

March 14: Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo 46 FFA teams and 13 4-H teams comprised of 139 individuals competed in the event. Top scoring FFA team in the event was the Weimar FFA chapter. Jonathan Treptow was the high point scoring individual with a top score of 114. Top scoring 4-H team was the Waller County 4-H team. Joseph Jones was the highpoint scoring individual in the 4-H division with a top score of 164.

March 24: Rolling Plains Wildlife Contest Thirty Three teams comprised of 100 individuals competed in the event. Top scoring team in the event was the Jacksboro FFA chapter. Laura Procter was the high point scoring individual with a top score of 140.

Top scoring individuals and teams in the noted local contests will be advancing to competition in five regional contests. Regional contests will be held on the following dates:

April 6	Region 1 (Matador Wildlife Management Area near Paducah)
April 14	Region II (Angelo State University MIR Center at San Angelo)
April 14	Region III (Texas A&M University Riverside Campus)
April 14	Region V (Arthur Littiken Ranch located near Windthorst)

The State Contest is scheduled to be held May 12, at the Welder Wildlife Refuge near Sinton.

SWCD Director & Employee Program Development Workshop

The workshop is scheduled for June 23-24 and will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn in Temple. Though the workshop is open to all directors and employees, a special letter of invitation encouraging their attendance will be sent to all directors elected in the last regular election as well as to all newly appointed directors who have assumed their duties of office since October 1, 2008. More information about the workshop will be sent to districts in April.

Soil and Water Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contests

The following FFA areas will be holding their soil and water soil stewardship public speaking events on the following dates:

Date	Area
May 4, 2009	9
May 7	3
May 9	5 & 6
May 14	10
May 15	2 & 1
May 20	7

The dates of Areas four and eight are not known. The first and second place contestants in these area contests will be eligible to compete at the state level which will be held in conjunction with the FFA annual convention in the summer. A $500 scholarship is awarded to the first place contestant in each of the respective areas. The winner in the state contest receives a $1,000 scholarship. The scholarships are granted through the Association of Texas SWCDs public information and education program.

TSSWCB Conservation Video Library

About The Catalog

There are over 200 conservation-related videos available; the 2008 catalog can be downloaded from the TSSWCB website at http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/files/contentimages/2008_Video_Library_Catalogue.pdf . The 2008 Catalog includes 18 new titles in DVD format. No rental fees are assessed to those wishing to borrow the videos from the library. However, the borrower

is responsible for paying the return postage. Borrowing privileges are for a length of two weeks and must be returned upon the date specified by the librarian. Videos can be ordered through your local soil and water conservation district or by contacting the Public Information/Education department of the TSSWCB.

How Shipping Works

The Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts' Public Information/Education Committee will pay the first transit postage costs to mail the video(s) to the requester. Postage for returning the video(s) will be the responsibility of the borrower. All videos must be insured upon return.

Ordering a Video

Select a video from the TSSWCB Conservation Video Catalog, then contact Meredith McArthur at mwhitley@tsswcb.state.tx.us to check it out.

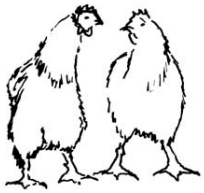
WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN PROGRAM

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 soil and water conservation districts for agricultural or silvicultural lands. The agency has been implementing WQMPs since the mid 1990s and has completed over 10,000 plans in the State of Texas.
http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/wqmp.

POULTRY WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

Overview



In 2001, the 77th Legislature amended the Texas Water Code to require all persons who own or operate a poultry facility to implement and maintain a Water Quality Management Plan that is certified by the State Soil and Water Conservation Board. For more information on Poultry WQMPs, please visit

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

Program Activities

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

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

TEXAS NONPOINT SOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Program Overview

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

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

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

For more information on the *Texas Nonpoint Source Management Program*, visit our website at http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/managementprogram.

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

Texas Nonpoint Source Management Program – 2010 Revision Status

TSSWCB staff and TCEQ staff are in the initial stages of updating the Texas Nonpoint Source Management Program. Staffs from both agencies are currently working on updating and revising the content of the program publication.

FY2008 Nonpoint Source Annual Report Status

TSSWCB SRM staff and TCEQ staff have completed development of the annual report and are awaiting a final document from Publications. The report will highlight the State's efforts during FY2008 to collect data, assess water quality, implement projects that reduce or prevent NPS pollution, and educate and involve the public to improve and maintain the quality of water resources for current and future generations of Texans.

CLEAN WATER ACT §319(h) NONPOINT SOURCE GRANT PROGRAM

Background

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

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

- Geographic focus based on hydrology rather than political boundaries;

- Water quality objectives based on scientific data;
- Coordinated priorities and integrated solutions; and,
- Diverse, well-integrated partnerships.

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

The TSSWCB and TCEQ apply the Watershed Approach to managing NPS pollution by supporting the development and implementation of watershed protection plans (WPPs). WPPs are locally-driven projects that serve as a mechanism for voluntarily addressing complex water quality problems that cross multiple jurisdictions. WPPs are coordinated frameworks for implementing prioritized and integrated water quality protection and restoration strategies driven by environmental objectives. Through the WPP process, TSSWCB encourages stakeholders to holistically address all of the sources and causes of impairments and threats to both surface and ground water resources within a watershed. More information on WPPs is available at http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/wpp.

The development of WPPs is supported by §319(h) funding to varying extents; however, a WPP that meets EPA's criteria is required to be completed in order to utilize §319(h) funding to implement portions of WPPs.

The TSSWCB's efforts to restore water quality are channeled through Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) and WPP development and implementation and are summarized in the *Water Quality Planning and Implementation* section of this report.

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

There are currently 61 ongoing §319(h) grant-funded projects addressing a wide array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues. Unliquidated federal funds for these 61 on-going projects total approximately $16 million are primarily being used to address NPS pollution from animal feeding operations, prevent atrazine runoff, provide technical assistance, implement BMPs, support various NPS outreach/education programs, develop and implement WPPs, and implement the NPS portion of TMDL Implementation Plans. Details on some of these projects are summarized in the *Water Quality Planning and Implementation* section of this report.

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

The FY2009 Request for Proposals was published in the *Texas Register* on October 3, 2008, posted on the TSSWCB website, and e-mailed to all SWCDs and cooperating entities on our contact list. The deadline for proposal submission was November 21, 2008. The TSSWCB received 22 proposals for FY2009 funds. TSSWCB SRM staff are currently reviewing and ranking the proposals.

STATE FUNDED NONPOINT SOURCE GRANT PROGRAM

Background

The 80th Texas Legislature appropriated $3.1 million dollars in general revenue funds, for the 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. TSSWCB is committed to funding projects encompassing monitoring, assessment, modeling, planning, education and implementation. On May 24, 2007, the Board approved a *TSSWCB Policy on TMDLs* which provides guidance to staff on directing state appropriations for the State

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

FY2008 Grant Status

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

FY2009 Grant Status

On July 17, 2008, the Board approved an operating budget for FY2009 that allocated $1,200,494 in state appropriations to NPS Program grants. TSSWCB SRM staff have obligated $560,957 through six projects that support implementation of agricultural NPS components of TMDL I-Plans, technical assistance for the development of WQMPs on agricultural lands, and the collection and analysis of water quality data for watersheds with impaired waterbodies. TSSWCB SRM staff are in the process of developing workplans, budgets and contracts with collaborating entities to obligate the remaining funds ($639,537).

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.

TEXAS COASTAL NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION CONTROL PROGRAM

Background

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

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

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

Texas submitted the *Texas Coastal NPS Pollution Control Program* (Coastal NPS Program) to EPA and NOAA in December 1998. In July 2003, NOAA and EPA issued conditional approval of the Coastal NPS Program. The agricultural and silvicultural portions of the program were approved without conditions. Texas had five years to meet the remaining conditions to gain full approval. States that fail to submit an adequate program (full approval) face penalties including loss of EPA and NOAA funds, including CWA §319(h) NPS grant monies.

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

Coastal Coordination Council (CCC)

The next CCC meeting has been tentatively scheduled for June, 2009 in Matagorda. Meeting information will be posted at http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal/ccc.html.

Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP)

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

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

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

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

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

Grant applications for FY2008 state CIAP funding have been reviewed by Coastal Land Advisory Board staff. Recommendations for funding will be submitted to the Coastal Land Advisory Board in the near future. All grant applicants will be notified at that time regarding projects recommended for funding.

Gulf of Mexico Alliance

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

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

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

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

A synopsis of the draft *Action Plan II* is available at http://www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org/pdfs/ap2_synopsis_022509.pdf

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

TEXAS GROUNDWATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE

Background

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

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

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

The Texas Groundwater Protection Committee:

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

Protection Strategy and an annual *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report*.

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

TGPC Activities

On March 10, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Donna Long] attended a TGPC Public Education and Outreach Subcommittee meeting in Austin.

The Subcommittee met to review, discuss and approve the following frequently asked questions, fact sheets and brochures:

- *What Did TCEQ's Monitoring Program in Urban Areas Find in the Groundwater?*
- *What is the State Water Plan?*
- *Plugging Abandoned Water Wells* (TAES L-5413)
- *Landowner's Guide to Plugging Abandoned Water Wells* (TCEQ RG-347)
- *Drinking Water Problems: Benzene*
- *Oil and Gas Waste Disposal Wells and Water Quality*

Texas Agrilife Extension Service, in conjunction with the TGPC, has scheduled several Water Well Screening outreach events within the next few months:

- April 6-9, 2009 – For Brooks, Duval, Jim Hogg, Jim Wells, and Starr Counties. Please contact Omar Montemayor at o-montemayor@tamu.edu or (956) 487-2306 for further information.
- April 20-22, 2009 – For Blanco County, in the cities of Blanco and Johnson City. Please contact Gretchen Sanders at glsanders@tamu.edu or (830) 868-7167 for further information.
- May 11-13, 2009 – For Real, Kimble, Kinney, and Edwards Counties. Please contact Joel Pigg at jpigg@tamu.edu or (830) 232-6673 for further information.
- May 20-21, 2009 – For Jack County, in the city of Jacksboro. Please contact Heath Lusty at rhlusty@tamu.edu or (940) 567-2132 for further information.

Posters were made for TGPC member agencies in order to promote National Groundwater Awareness Week, March 9-13, 2009. Posters were displayed in the Texas Capitol Annex, the Austin Nature and Science Center, the Barton Springs *Splash! Into the Edwards Aquifer* Exhibit, at several locations within the Stephen F. Austin State Office Building, and at the Texas Agrilife Research Center in Temple.

WATER QUALITY COORDINATION ACTIVITIES

MOA Coordination with TCEQ

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

Surface Water Quality Standards Triennial Review

Major revisions to the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards are being drafted by TCEQ, including the establishment of numeric nutrient criteria for reservoirs and modifications to contact recreation use and bacteria criteria.

TCEQ staff are working to incorporate comments received after the January 2009 Advisory Work Group meeting. The draft rule (Standards) will be proposed in the *Texas Register* for public comment. TCEQ adoption of any changes to the Standards is not expected until the end of 2009 or early 2010. EPA must also approve any changes.

More information on this Standards review process is available at

http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water_quality/stakeholders/swqsawg.html.

Texas Clean Rivers Program

The Texas Clean Rivers Program (CRP) is a state fee–funded program for water quality monitoring, assessment, and public outreach administered by the TCEQ. CRP is a collaboration of 15 partner agencies who conduct water quality monitoring and assessments in the 23 river and coastal basins in Texas. Each river or coastal basin is assigned to one of the designated CRP partner agencies. Each CRP partner agency has an established steering committee to set monitoring and assessment priorities within its basin. These committees bring together the diverse interests in each basin and are designed to allow local concerns to be addressed through regional solutions. The Texas Water Code requires the TCEQ and CRP partner agencies to coordinate monitoring and assessment activities with local SWCDs through the TSSWCB. The data generated by CRP partner agencies is used to identify significant long-term water quality trends and characterize water quality conditions. Each CRP partner agency develops and publishes an annual *Basin Highlights Report* and a five-year *Basin Summary Report*. The TCEQ also uses CRP-generated data in the biennial assessment conducted for the *Texas Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List*. More information is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/nav/eq/texcleanriver.html.

On March 5, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended the Nueces River Authority (NRA) CRP Steering Committee meeting in Corpus Christi. This was one of two meetings held for the basin; the other meeting was held in Uvalde on March 3, 2009. An overview of the CRP was given, including budgets, deliverables, and assessment and monitoring parameters. The FY2009 monitoring sites from all 3 basins monitored by NRA were discussed; the San Antonio-Nueces Coastal Basin includes the Copano Bay watershed; the Nueces River Basin covers the Nueces River and tributaries; and the Nueces-Rio Grande Coastal Basin includes the entire Laguna Madre and Arroyo Colorado. Regarding the Atascosa River TMDLs (dissolved oxygen and bacteria), UAAs will be performed for both aquatic life use and recreational use. For the Oso Bay/Creek TMDL (bacteria), TSSWCB projects are underway to identify bacteria using bacterial source tracking (BST) and a recreational UAA will be completed for the Blind Oso area. Monitoring continues for the Copano Bay TMDL (bacteria) with TSSWCB funding where four dry-weather events and three wet-weather events have been sampled so far; additionally, an independent BST report has been released for the Mission and Aransas Rivers tidal segments. Outreach events on-going across the basin include the basin watershed model, a groundwater model, rainfall runoff model, the aquatic education program, and the wetland-on-wheels. A draft of the 2009 *Basin Highlights Report* is available, with comments due by April 30, 2009. More information is available at http://www.nueces-ra.org/.

On March 11, 2009, the Northeast Texas Municipal Water District hosted a CRP Steering Committee meeting in Hughes Springs. More information is available at http://www.netmwd.com/.

On March 17, 2009, the Lower Colorado River Authority hosted a Coordinated Monitoring meeting in Austin. Discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities for FY2010 among various entities collecting data in order to avoid overlap and maximize resources in the Colorado River Basin and the Colorado-Lavaca Coastal Basin. More information is available at http://www.lcra.org/.

On March 24, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended the Houston-Galveston Area Council Coordinated Monitoring meeting in Houston. Discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities for FY2010 among various entities collecting data in order to avoid overlap and maximize resources in the San Jacinto River Basin, Brazos-Colorado Coastal Basin, San Jacinto-Brazos Coastal Basin, and Trinity-San Jacinto Coastal Basin. Most of the

sites were in the Houston area with the primary land use being urban; however, more monitoring will begin in the San Bernard River watershed, a largely rural area, to support the development of a WPP. More information is available at http://www.h-gac.com/community/water/rivers/default.aspx.

On March 24, 2009, 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 25, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Loren Henley, Pamela Casebolt] attended the Brazos River Authority CRP Steering Committee meeting in Waco. A brief summary of waterbodies not meeting state criteria and proposed monitoring schedule for FY2010 was discussed along with a preview of the proposed changes to the state water quality standards. A brief update was given on the status of the drought and on the WPPs that are currently being developed across the Brazos River basin. Also, there was a brief update on new bacteria testing requirements for permitted wastewater treatment facilities. More information is available at http://www.brazos.org/.

On March 26, 2009, TSSWCB Field staff [Kendria Ray], poultry program staff [Abigail Lindsey], and SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority CRP Steering Committee meeting in Seguin. An overview of the CRP and *Basin Highlights Report* was given. Presentations on water quality projects and issues followed. The Upper Guadalupe River TMDL I-Plan is focusing on reducing *E. coli* bacteria through proposed efforts such as bird exclusion on bridges, domestic waterfowl removal, rehabilitation of aging sewer infrastructure, and pet waste pickup. Also, a presentation on the current drought was given including historical drought data and comparisons with the current drought. WPP updates were given for Cypress Creek and Plum Creek. Cypress Creek is still in the planning phase and is focused on current and potential development in the watershed, as well as, issues such as failing septic systems. Plum Creek stakeholders are implementing their WPP through technical and financial assistance for BMPs on farm and ranch land and strategies for controlling NPS pollution in urban areas. In a report given by TCEQ, the proposed changes to the water quality standards were discussed, but it was noted that for the 2010 assessment, the current standards would be used as proposed changes would not yet be approved. More information is available at http://www.gbra.org/.

On March 26, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority Coordinated Monitoring meeting in Seguin. Discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities for FY2010 among various entities collecting data in order to avoid overlap and maximize resources in the Guadalupe River Basin and the Lavaca-Guadalupe Coastal Basin. More information is available at http://www.gbra.org/.

On March 26, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Mitch Conine] attended the NETMWD Coordinated Monitoring meeting in Jefferson. Discussion focused on coordinating surface water quality monitoring activities for FY2010 among various entities collecting data in order to avoid overlap and maximize resources in the Cypress Creek Basin. More information is available at http://www.netmwd.com/.

Galveston Bay Estuary Program

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

On March 4, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended the Galveston Bay Council Budget and Priorities Subcommittee meeting in Houston.

At this meeting projects were reviewed, discussed and weighed against priorities outlined in the strategic action plan. Projects ranged from WPP development to land acquisition for restoring and conserving habitat, and also implementation of BMPs for stormwater abatement. Also, discussion of the future State of the Bay Symposia occurred, with the suggestion of changing to February of even-numbered years. And finally, discussion occurred on the proposed "Ike Dike" which is a proposed extension of the existing seawall at Galveston, in addition to floodgate-type structures at major Gulf access points, to protect the island and inland areas from storm surges. The concern with the "Ike Dike" is that several factors are not being examined that would have a negative effect ecologically and that other areas will not be protected by the dike.

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

Texas Watershed Planning Short Course

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

The next offering of this course is August 17-21, 2009 in Bandera. Individuals interested in or responsible for watershed protection and restoration including employees and volunteers with federal, state, county, and local agencies; SWCDs; universities; consulting firms; non-governmental organizations; and watershed groups will benefit from this course. Early registration is open through July 17.

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

Southeast and South Central Texas Regional Watershed Coordination Steering Committee

On March 12, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] hosted the Regional Watershed Coordination Steering Committee meeting in Columbus. At this meeting the group was updated on progress in developing two WPPs in the region and discussed new procedures proposed by TCEQ for conducting Recreational UAAs.

The Westfield Estates WPP, located in Houston, is being funded by TCEQ with a CWA §319(h) grant to the Houston-Galveston Area Council. Westfield Estates is located on Halls Bayou; the homes were built in the 1950s and are all on septic systems. Many of the lots have been subdivided into multiple residences. Black water from failing septics has been observed in the ditches and there is also a large population of free roaming dogs and chickens. In three sampling events there was no detectible *E. coli* at WWTF outfalls. Some BST has been completed; the sources included: human 19%, dog 35%, chicken 11%, and 35% unknown. There are 700 homes that need inspection, septic system design upgrade; prioritization is targeted for 100-150 homes. Implementation will include septic system installation, repair, and maintenance agreements; BMPs for dogs and chickens; and general public education and outreach. Comments on a draft of the WPP are being addressed.

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority provided an overview of the Geronimo Creek WPP. GBRA has been monitoring Geronimo Creek since 1996, and in 2004 the creek was listed as impaired for exceeding the contact recreation criterion for *E. coli*

bacteria. Additionally, the creek has concerns for elevated nitrate-nitrogen. The creek is fed by springs from the shallow Leona Formation, and has no impacts from wastewater discharges except near the confluence with the Guadalupe River. The watershed includes Alligator Creek, portions of the cities of Seguin and New Braunfels, and the community of Geronimo. The land use is mostly cropland and pastureland with some urban areas around IH35 and IH10. In order to gather more data on the creek to support the development of the WPP, additional water quality monitoring is underway, including routine and targeted sites, wastewater treatment facility, and groundwater sites. Modeling will be conducted using SELECT (Spatially Explicit Load Enrichment Calculation Tool) and load duration curves.

TCEQ discussed proposed changes to the water quality standards regarding contact recreation use and bacteria criteria. The goal of proposed changes is to broaden recreation use categories to Primary Contact Recreation (PCR), Secondary Contact Recreation (SCR) 1 and 2, and Noncontact Recreation (NCR). The numerical criteria for *E. coli* bacteria would be revised from the current 126 cfu/100mL to 206 cfu/100mL. In order to change the use from PCR to SCR, a recreational UAA would need to be conducted. TCEQ has drafted procedures for conducting recreational UAAs. TCEQ discussed this process and the appropriateness of conducting a UAA. One example of a Recreational UAA was for Buffalo and Whiteoak Bayous conducted in summer 2008. Data collection included historical reviews, photos, hydrologic data, and recreational use observations. This UAA could result in revision of current standards, and would require a 45 day public comment period, as well as, EPA review and approval.

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

Upcoming Public Meetings

- March 31, 2009 – Red River Authority Clean Rivers Program Red River Basin Steering Committee (Wichita Falls)
- April 2, 2009 – Houston-Galveston Area Council Clean Waters Initiative Workshop on Land Use Strategies to Improve Water Quality (West Columbia)
- April 8, 2009 – TCEQ Agenda Meeting regarding Buffalo and Whiteoak Bayous Bacteria TMDLs (Austin)
- April 8, 2009 – Bacteria Implementation Group Agriculture and Animal Workgroup (Houston)
- April 9, 2009 – AgriLife Extension Feral Hog Management Seminar (Glen Rose)
- April 14, 2009 – Arroyo Colorado Education and Outreach Workgroup (Weslaco)
- April 15, 2009 – Lower Colorado River Authority Clean Rivers Program Lower Basin Steering Committee (Matagorda)
- April 15, 2009 – *Watershed Central: A New Gateway to Watershed Information* (EPA Webcast)
- April 17, 2009 – *Water 2.0: New Ideas for a Secure Water Future* Conference (Austin)
- April 17, 2009 – *What to Expect When You're Inspected* (NLPELC Webcast)
- April 18, 2009 – Rainwater Harvesting Consumer Education Event (16 Home Depot stores across Texas)
- April 18, 2009 – South Llano Watershed Alliance (Junction)
- April 20, 2009 – Sabine River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee (Orange)
- April 21, 2009 – Sabine River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee (Longview)

- April 21, 2009 – Bacteria Implementation Group Steering Committee (Houston)
- April 22, 2009 – Sabine River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee (Greenville)
- April 22, 2009 – Galveston Bay Council (Houston)
- April 23, 2009 – Little Brazos River Tributaries Stakeholder Meeting (Franklin)
- April 27, 2009 – Arroyo Colorado Watershed Steering Committee (Weslaco)
- April 28, 2009 – TCEQ Water Quality Advisory Work Group (Austin)
- April 28, 2009 – Angelina and Neches River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee (Nacogdoches)
- April 30, 2009 – Trinity River Authority Clean Rivers Program Steering Committee (Dallas)
- April 30, 2009 – Buck Creek Watershed Stakeholder Meeting (Wellington)
- May 5-7, 2009 – Four State Forestry BMP Conference (Longview)
- May 7, 2009 – Lower Colorado River Authority Clean Rivers Program Middle Basin Steering Committee (Austin)
- May 7, 2009 – Plum Creek Watershed Steering Committee (Lockhart)
- May 7, 2009 – Lampasas River Watershed Stakeholder Meeting (Killeen)
- May 8, 2009 – Workshop on Implementing Water Quality Strategies in Central Texas (San Antonio)
- May 8, 2009 – AgriLife Extension Southwest Dairy Day (Dublin)
- May 12, 2009 – Texas Watershed Steward Workshop focused on Lake Granbury (Granbury)
- May 12, 2009 – Lampasas River Watershed Stakeholder meeting (Lampasas)
- May 20-22, 2009 – National Water Quality Conference (San Antonio)

WATER QUALITY PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Adams and Cow Bayous

Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen, pH
Mechanism: TMDL, I-Plan
Lead: TCEQ

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

Arroyo Colorado

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

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

Atascosa River

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

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

Bastrop Bayou

Concern: Bacteria
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TCEQ

The Houston-Galveston Area Council hosted two public meetings to solicit stakeholder input on the

development of the Bastrop Bayou WPP. The meetings were held March 24, 2009 in Freeport and March 26, 2009 in Lake Jackson.

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

Brady Creek

Impairment: Dissolved Oxygen
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TCEQ

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

Buck Creek

Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB

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

Buffalo and Whiteoak Bayous

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

At their April 8, 2009 meeting, the TCEQ will consider adopting, as final, *Eighteen TMDLs for Bacteria in Buffalo and Whiteoak Bayous and Tributaries (Segments 1013, 1013A, 1013C, 1014, 1014A, 1014B, 1014E, 1014H, 1014K, 1014L, 1014M, 1014N, 1014O, 1017, 1017A, 1017B, 1017D, and 1017E)*. The public comment period was June 6, 2008 through July 5, 2008. A Response to Public Comments received has been developed by TCEQ staff.

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

Caddo Lake

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

On March 26, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Mitch Conine] attended the Caddo Lake WPP Water Quality Work Group meeting in Jefferson. An update was given to the stakeholders on the possible changes to the water quality standards for the basin. Espey Consultants gave a presentation on the modeling approach that is going to be taken. Stakeholder input was asked for on the following topics: Lake Gilmer, land practices, Caddo Lake sedimentation/dredging activities and water management. The SWAT model is being set up for the watershed. Local stakeholder information is important so the model is reflective of the watershed. The Caddo Lake Institute is going to conduct a demonstration project in May to examine the effectiveness of mechanical removal of giant salvinia.

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.

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

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 will affect farming and livestock operations in the Concho River watershed in Coke, Concho, Crockett, Glasscock, Howard, Irion, Menard, Midland, Reagan, Runnels, Schleicher, Sterling, Tom Green, and Upton Counties.

Copano Bay and Mission and Aransas Rivers

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

On March 18, 2009, TSSWCB Regional Office staff [Andy Garza] and SRM staff [Mitch Conine] attended a field day at the Welder Wildlife Foundation in Sinton. *Getting the Most from Rangeland Watersheds* was the topic. A presentation was given on grazing and water quality; stocking rates and vegetation management has an impact on water quality with heavier grazed rangeland having a higher potential for runoff. Texas AgriLife Research gave a presentation on how cattle will not graze certain areas with naturally occurring barriers, such as topography, vegetation and water. A new guide on horse management strategies is being developed to help horse owners understand their impacts on water quality in a watershed. Management strategies were discussed with landowners including small acreages, feeding, manure management, stocking rates and grazing behavior. Finally, a tour of a summer prescribed burned pasture was given. Many of the topics highlighted, including the grazing density study and the horse management guide, are being funded by TSSWCB with CWA §319(h) grants.

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

Cypress Creek

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

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

Dickinson Bayou

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

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

Eagle Mountain Reservoir

Impairment: Bacteria
Concerns: Nutrients
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: Third party

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

Elm and Sandies Creeks

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

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

Galveston Bay

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

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

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

Lake Granbury

Concern: Bacteria
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TCEQ

The Texas AgriLife Extension Service has planned six training events in April in Hood County to educate residents in about water quality threats related to NPS water pollution within the Lake Granbury watershed. Upcoming training events include:

- April 6 – Storm Water Management in the Home Landscape
- April 7 – Water Quality and Rainwater Harvesting Training
- April 14 – A county Extension agent will discuss watershed management, bacterial sources, and BMPs on a local television station
- April 15 – Health and Maintenance of your Aerobic Treatment System
- April 16 – Wastewater Practitioners Training
- April 17 – Small Acreage Landowners Symposium

More information on these scheduled educational events is available at http://twri.tamu.edu/news/2009/03/31/lake-

granbury-water-quality-program-advances-educational-efforts/.

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

Lake Granger

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

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

Hickory Creek

Concern: Nutrients, Sediment
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TCEQ

More information is available at http://www.cityofdenton.com/pages/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

On March 17, 2009, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended the Bacteria Implementation Group (BIG) Steering Committee meeting in Houston. The BIG is focused on implementing bacteria TMDLs in the greater Houston area, including Lake Houston, Buffalo and Whiteoak Bayous, Clear Creek and others. At this meeting a discussion on the public engagement for the I-Plan was held. The focus was on the language in the message, especially defining contaminants. There was a prioritization exercise centering on where to allocate implementation resources; the majority was on monitoring wastewater treatment facility effluent. Four of the workgroups provided reports from recent meetings on targeting implementation strategies to particular sources.

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

Lake O' the Pines

Impairment: Dissolved Oxygen
Mechanism: TMDL, I-Plan
Lead: TCEQ

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

Lampasas River

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

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

Leon River

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

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

Little Brazos River Tributaries

Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: Assessment
Lead: TSSWCB

On March 3, 2009, nearly 30 people participated in a Texas Watershed Steward workshop in Franklin; TSSWCB SRM staff [Loren Henley, Aaron Wendt] and TSSWCB Poultry Program staff [Mark Cochran, Teresa Reese] attended the workshop. Sponsored by TSSWCB and facilitated by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, the training discussed what it is to be a watershed steward, watershed impairments, managing urban and rural lands through the use of BMPs, and how to get involved in community-driven watershed protection and management. Attendees included SWCD directors, educators, landowners, environmental specialist from private and governmental entities and interested citizens. The training also involved interactive displays such as a rainfall simulator. The workshop was held in support of on-going watershed assessment and planning efforts in the Little Brazos River watershed. More information on the Texas Watershed Steward Program is available at http://tws.tamu.edu/.

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

Lower San Antonio River

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

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

North Bosque River

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

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

Oso Bay and Oso Creek

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

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

Peach Creek

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

More information is available at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/34-peachcreek_group.html. 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

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

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

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

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

This project has the potential to affect livestock operations in Starr, Jim Hogg and Hidalgo Counties.

San Bernard River
Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: Third party

On March 21, 2009, over 500 people attended the grand re-opening celebration of the mouth of the San Bernard River. The dedication ceremony, sponsored by the Friends of the River San Bernard, was the culmination of a multi-year effort to reopen the mouth. The river's mouth, which connects with the Gulf of Mexico, was closed due to silt deposits from the nearby Brazos River. This new passage will help prevent and control flooding, benefit navigation and the barge industry, and have positive impacts on fish and wildlife in the estuary. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers spent $2.75 million on a dredge project to remove 340,000 cubic yards of silt in order to reopen the river.

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

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

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

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

The South Llano Watershed Alliance held a meeting on March 26, 2009 in Junction. About 40 peopled gathered to hear presentations on brush management and land stewardship from the USDA-NRCS and the Environmental Defense Fund. NCRS discussed studies related to water yields resulting from removal of Ashe juniper (cedar) in the Seco Creek watershed near Hondo. NRCS distributed copies of *Effects of Brush Management on Water Resources*, recently published by the Texas Water Resources Institute. The remainder of the meeting focused on issues related the organizational establishment of the South Llano Watershed Alliance. The group adopted a mission statement for the group: *To preserve and enhance the South Llano River and adjoining watersheds by encouraging land and water stewardship through collaboration, education, and community participation*. The

Environmental Defense Fund will continue to foster the formation and development of the Alliance to help it become a fully functioning non-profit. This includes helping to develop a website, facilitate and participate in upcoming meetings and workshops, and helping to establish the Alliance as an incorporated 501(c)3 organization.

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

Upper Oyster Creek

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

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

Water Supply Enhancement Program Status Report

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

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

Area 2
North Concho River SWCD
Nolan County SWCD
Middle Concho SWCD
Eldorado-Divide SWCD
Tom Green County SWCD
Pedernales SWCD
Gillespie County SWCD
Area 3
McMullen County SWCD
LaSalle County SWCD
Caldwell/ Travis SWCD
Comal/Guadalupe SWCD
Webb County SWCD
Area 4
Harris Co. SWCD
Area 5
Archer County SWCD
Lower Clear Fork/Brazos SWCD
Pecan Bayou SWCD
Bosque SWCD
Clay County SWCD

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

- Canadian River Project- Rod Goodwin Canadian River Municipal Water Authority
- Twin Buttes- Tuffy Wood TSSWCB
- Little Wichita River (Archer and Clay Counties)- Cody York
- Pedernales Project- Melissa Grote
- Guadalupe River Project- Melissa Grote
- Edwards Aquifer Project (Bandera County)- Melissa Grote
- Lake Brownwood Project- Cody York
- Nuecus River Project- Tuffy Wood
- Bosque Project- Cody York
- Sam Houston Area Council Boy Scout of America (Bandera)- Cody York
- Sam Houston Area Council Boy Scout of America (Wimberly)- Cody York

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

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

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

Evaluating Limits on Cost Share Participation as per Chapter 203.154

(a) Not more than 70 percent of the total cost of a single brush control project may be made available as the state's share in cost sharing.
(b) A person is not eligible to participate in the state brush control program or to receive money from the state brush control program if the person is simultaneously receiving any cost-share money for brush control on the same acreage from a federal government program.
(c) The board may grant an exception to Subsection (b) if the board finds that joint participation of the state brush control program and any federal brush control program will:

(1) enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of a project;
(2) lessen the state's financial commitment to the project; and
(3) not exceed 80 percent of the total cost of the project.

(d) A political subdivision is eligible for cost sharing under the brush control program, provided that the state's share may not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of a single project.
(e) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Section, 100 percent of the total cost of a single project on public lands may be made available as the state's share in cost sharing.

Staff Activities

- Evaluate pending application sub basin criteria from all projects
- Assisted Guadalupe Blanco River Authority with potential areas for Water Enhancement Project
- 10 Landowners assisted with Water Supply Enhancement Certifications
- 5 Landowners assisted with Water Supply Enhancement Contracts
- Met with NRCS after the January Board Meeting to give an update on all the TSSWCB projects throughout the State
- Attended District Director workshop in Belton
- Attended the Senate Finance Hearing in Austin
- Attended the House Appropriation Committee Hearing in Austin
- Met with NRCS in Junction to discuss a Water Enhancement Project in the Edwards around Bandera
- Conducted a workgroup session in Bandera to discuss the areas the TSSWCB would considered for a Water Enhancement Project, also discussed average cost, type of treatment.

Assisted Pedernales SWCD with networking Water Enhancement Project computers

- Working with TWRI on the Water Supply Enhancement Program to develop a Priority system using GIS

- Met with the Clay County SWCD to discuss expanding the Lake Arrowhead Water Enhancement Project into Clay County

- Assisted the Frio SWCD and the McMullen SWCD with new cooperative agreements for the Water Supply Enhancement Program District employees

FLOOD CONTROL DAMS

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

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

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

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

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

Dam Safety Rules Revision

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

http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/assets/public/legal/rules/rule_lib/adoptions/08005299_ado_clean.pdf

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

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

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

The revised rules became effective January 1, 2009.

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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.

4311 S 31ST STREET, SUITE 125
TEMPLE, TEXAS 76502
(254) 773-2250
www.tsswcb.state.tx.us