



TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

Monthly Program News and Activities

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May 2008

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

- Five Percent Administration payments for 2008 obligated Water Quality Management Plans were disbursed on May 1.
- May 15 was the deadline for submitting SWCD Matching Fund Grant claims for 2/3 of 2008 SWCD allocations.
- July 1 is the deadline for submitting SWCD Director Mileage & Per Diem Grant claims for the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Quarters of 2008.

STATE BOARD WORK SESSIONS AND MEETINGS

Scheduled Work Sessions and Meetings

The State Board has tentatively scheduled a Board Work Session for 2:30 p.m. at the Drury Inn in Amarillo, Texas, on Wednesday, July 16, 2008. A formal State Board Meeting is tentatively scheduled for 8:00 a.m. at the Drury Inn in Amarillo, Texas, on Thursday, July 17, 2008. For more information on State Board Work Sessions and Meetings, visit the agency's website at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/boardmeetings>.

Board Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the May 15, 2008, State Board Meeting will be considered for approval at the meeting tentatively scheduled for July 17, 2008. To view any past Board Meeting minutes visit the agency's website at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/boardmeetings/minutes>

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

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BUDGET AND ACCOUNTING

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HUMAN RESOURCES

TSSWCB is currently recruiting for the following positions; Engineering Technician IV in Hale Center and Natural Resource Specialist IV in Harlingen.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Program Overview

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

Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District Directors

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

Rooms have been blocked at the Galveston Island Hilton and the Holiday Inn Resort on the Beach. The Hilton may be contacted at 409-744-5000 and the Holiday Inn may be contacted at 409-740-3581. Please mark this date and make plans to attend. Everyone's support is needed and welcomed.

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest— The 2008 Soil Stewardship Public Speaking FFA area contests were held during May.

Both the first and second place area winners will compete for the first place state award at the annual FFA convention which will be held in Lubbock in July. All first place area winners receive a \$500.00 scholarship. The state winner will receive a \$1,000.00 scholarship.

For more information on Area Winners contact Clyde Gottschalk.

The theme for this year's contest is "Water is Life" which correlates with the annual NACD Soil Stewardship program.

SWCD District Director and Employee Program Development Workshop

A workshop for district directors and interested district employees is scheduled for July 29-30, 2008. The workshop will be held at the LaQuinta Inn in Belton

Water Quality Management Plan Program Guidance Manual

The Water Quality Management Plan Program Guidance Manual is in final draft form and is currently being reviewed.

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Priority Education Funding Program

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

Regional Wildlife Contests

The Wildlife Alliance for Youth state contest was held May 13 at the San Angelo State Park. Fifty-three FFA teams (100 students) and nine 4-H teams (30 students) participated in the event. Ranking 1st place in the FFA competition was Dalton Ervin from the Weimar FFA chapter. He scored a total of 135 points in the competition. The Weimar FFA Chapter also ranked first among the 53 teams competing. Reagan Noland of the Wall FFA chapter ranked 2nd place with a score of 134 points and Jacob Hamby of Canadian ranked in third place with a score of 131 points. The FFA team ranking second in the state competition was the Canadian chapter. Ranking third place in the event was the Ingram FFA chapter.

High point individual in the 4-H division was Keid Williams of the Idalou 4-H chapter. He scored a total of 125 points. Ranking second was Hunter Westbrook of the Red River County 4-H with a total score of 121 points. Cody Harman of the Red River 4-H placed third with an overall score of 99 points. 4-H chapters placing first, second and third place in the contest in respective order are the Red River County 4-H, Montague County 4-H and the Harris County 4-H.

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.

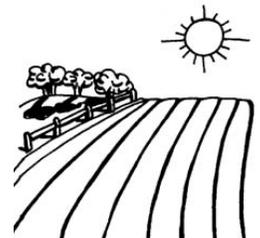
Ordering a Video

Select a video from the [TSSWCB Conservation Video Catalog](#), then contact Meredith McArthur at mmcarthur@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.



Program News

The period for obligating cost-share funds ended on April 30, 2008. Funds not obligated to a plan reverted to the State Board on May 1, 2008. At their May, 2008 meeting, the State Board

considered and approved requests for supplemental funds from districts within each region. The balance of funds was transferred to the Statewide Fund for further reallocations.

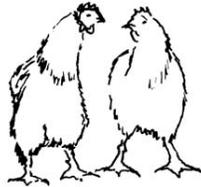
Districts are making every effort to ensure that FY-06 funds are used prior to August 15, 2008 which is when they will revert to the state treasury.

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

POULTRY WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

Overview

In 2001, the 77th Legislature amended the Texas Water Code to require all persons who own or operate a poultry facility to implement and maintain a



Water Quality Management Plan that is certified by the State Soil and Water Conservation Board. For more information on Poultry WQMPs, please visit <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/poultry>.

Program Activities

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

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

other agencies to minimize negative effects to neighbors from poultry farms.

Another poultry CAFO producer meeting is scheduled for June 2008 for turkey growers in the Waco area. The meeting will be the same as the six meetings held earlier this year for chicken growers.

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

Related Activities

The Soil & Water Conservation Society will hold their annual meeting in Nacogdoches at the Fredonia Hotel June 12, 2008 with discussions and tours involving forestry and the poultry industry.

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

CLEAN WATER ACT, §319(h) GRANTS

Background

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

FY2001 – FY2007 CWA §319(h) Grant Status

There are currently 82 ongoing §319(h) grant-funded projects addressing a wide array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues. Federal funds totaling \$16 million are primarily being used to address NPS

pollution from animal feeding operations, prevent atrazine runoff, provide technical assistance, implement best management practices, support various NPS outreach/education programs, develop and implement Watershed Protection Plans (WPPs), and implement the nonpoint source portion of TMDL Implementation Plans.

FY2008 CWA §319(h) NPS Grant Program Funding Allocation

The FY2008 CWA §319(h) funding allocation for EPA is \$200,857,000 nationally, up from \$199,278,000 in FY2007. The TSSWCB's FY2008 §319(h) program allocation is \$4,578,700. This is an increase of \$13,800 from the FY2007 allocation (excluding the additional allocation we received for past exemplary grant management).

FY2008 CWA §319(h) NPS Grant Program Request for Proposals

The FY2008 Request for Proposals was published in the Texas Register on December 7th, posted on the TSSWCB's website and e-mailed to all soil and water conservation and cooperating entities in our contact list. The deadline for proposals was February 1, 2008. The TSSWCB received 18 proposals requesting a total of \$7,549,471 in federal funds. Staff is currently working with applicants to revise project workplans that were selected for funding and also notifying the applicants that were denied funding.

FY2007 Nonpoint Source Annual Report

In order to receive §319(h) funds, the State of Texas must submit a report on the activities of the Texas NPS Program annually. This report, Managing Nonpoint Source Pollution in Texas, highlights the State's efforts during FY2007 to collect data, assess water quality, implement projects that reduce or prevent nonpoint source pollution, and educate and involve the public to improve and maintain the quality of water resources for current and future generations of Texans. The 2007 Annual Report was mailed to all soil and water conservation districts in April and can be accessed at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/managementprogram> under the heading Program Reports.

Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and Watershed Planning

TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS AND WATERSHED PLANNING

Total Maximum Daily Load Program Overview

The federal Clean Water Act (CWA) requires Texas to identify lakes, rivers, streams and estuaries failing to meet or not expected to meet water quality standards and not supporting their designated uses (swimming, drinking, aquatic life, etc.). This list of impaired waterbodies is known as the *Texas 303(d) List* and must be submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for review and approval every two years. The State must then establish a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for certain waterbodies identified on the *303(d) List*. A TMDL defines the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can assimilate on a daily basis and still meet water quality standards. Based on the environmental target of the TMDL, an Implementation Plan (I-Plan) is then developed that prescribes the measures necessary to mitigate anthropogenic (human-caused) sources of that pollutant in that waterbody. Together, the TMDL and the I-Plan serve as the mechanism to reduce the pollutant, restore the full use of the waterbody and remove it from the *303(d) List*. Responsibility to develop and implement TMDLs is shared between the TSSWCB and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). More information on the TSSWCB TMDL Program is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/tmdl>.

Watershed Protection Plan Program Overview

A Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) is a coordinated framework for voluntarily implementing prioritized and integrated water quality protection and restoration strategies driven by environmental objectives. Through the WPP process, TSSWCB encourages stakeholders to holistically address all of the sources and causes of impairments and threats to both surface and ground water resources within a watershed. Developed and implemented through diverse, well integrated partnerships, a WPP assures the long-term health of a watershed with strategies for protecting unimpaired waters and restoring impaired waters. WPPs have a variety of ingredients and can take many forms. TSSWCB-sponsored WPPs are consistent with

guidelines promulgated by EPA that describe nine elements fundamental to a potentially successful plan. More information on the TSSWCB WPP Program is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/wpp>.

MOA Coordination with TCEQ

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

Bacteria TMDL Task Force

On June 29, 2007, at a joint TSSWCB/TCEQ meeting in Austin, the Board and Commission approved the recommendations from the joint Bacteria TMDL Task Force. The Board directed TSSWCB staff to work with the staff of the TCEQ to 1) incorporate the principles of the recommendations into an updated joint-agency TMDL guidance document, 2) move diligently to expedite the development of bacteria TMDLs that were paused during the work of the Task Force, and 3) establish a multi-agency bacteria work group to continue examining the scientific research and development needs identified in the Task Force Report. TSSWCB staff continues to work with TCEQ staff to implement these directives. Specifically, staff has now completed a full draft of the revised TMDL guidance document and is working with TCEQ staff to resolve outstanding issues and move this project to conclusion and publish the document. More information is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/tmdl#taskforce>.

State Appropriations for TMDL Program Grants

On May 24, 2007, the Board approved a *TSSWCB Policy on TMDLs* which provides guidance to staff on directing state appropriations for the TMDL Program. On July 19, 2007, the Board approved an operating budget for FY2008 that allocated \$1,200,494 to TMDL Program grants. Staff have obligated \$886,728 through five contracts and are working with cooperating entities to finalize workplans and budgets to obligate the remaining \$313,766.

Surface Water Quality Standards Triennial Review

On May 5, John Foster, Donna Long, Mitch Conine and Aaron Wendt attended the fifth meeting of the TCEQ Surface Water Quality Standards Advisory Workgroup in Austin. Major revisions to the Standards are being drafted, including the establishment of numeric nutrient criteria for reservoirs and modifications to contact recreation use and bacteria criteria. Primary discussion at this meeting focused on 1) draft rule language related to recreational uses and bacteria criteria, and 2) implementation of whole effluent toxicity testing, which is a topic not germane to TSSWCB programs.

Proposed language will create more options in designated uses, changing from two categories of recreation use (contact and noncontact) to four categories (primary contact 1, primary contact 2, secondary, and noncontact). These different categories of use would apply different numeric bacteria criteria based on more appropriate risk levels. Proposed language would change the presumed use of contact recreation, which is now applied to all waterbodies without distinction, to a presumed use that is based on the characteristics of the stream (i.e., a major river with perennial flow, a small stream with perennial pools, or intermittent streams). Proposed language removes the use of the outdated fecal coliform indicator as an alternative indicator to *E. coli* or *Enterococcus*. Proposed language clarifies that standards attainment (listing as impaired on the 303(d) List) will be based only on the geometric mean (average), relegating the single sample maximum criteria to be used only for swimmer safety notification programs and wastewater permit compliance. The geometric mean is a more appropriate methodology for assessing the long-term health of a waterbody.

TCEQ accepted comments on the draft rule language through May 27; TSSWCB staff submitted comments focused on the proposed revisions to the bacteria standards. Comments will be incorporated and 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 mid-2009. 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.

EPA Region 6 Workshop to Address Monitoring Concepts for Better WPPs

On May 19-21, Donna Long and Aaron Wendt participated in the EPA Region 6 Workshop to Address Monitoring Concepts for Better WPPs in Dallas. The workshop was designed to facilitate a better understanding of what data is needed to effectively develop WPPs and to document implementation successes. Participants in the workshop included technical program managers and staff from various monitoring/assessment, TMDL, nonpoint source and standards programs from EPA and the five states in the Region. Each of the States presented information on WPPs they believed had achieved successes as well as those in which they had shortfalls. Several national monitoring experts were brought in to present watershed restoration achievements and challenges they had overcome. EPA is particularly interested in where to best focus nonpoint source efforts and monitoring in order to most effectively improve water quality. Overall goals of this workshop were to examine data shortfalls, share information on adaptations states are using to bridge these data gaps, identify successful approaches that might be adopted in order to support watershed-based planning and implementation, and finally, to frame issues for further discussion and follow up.

Association of State and Interstate Water Pollution Control Administrators

On May 13, Aaron Wendt participated in an ASIWPCA Monitoring Task Force conference call on Bacterial Source Tracking (BST). Scientists from EPA and various States discussed the state of the science and progress made in utilizing BST in bacteria TMDLs across the nation. Participants compared and contrasted various BST methodologies and discussed the costs of using BST.

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 April 30, Loren Henley, Lee Munz and Aaron Wendt attended the Trinity River Authority CRP Steering Committee meeting in Dallas. Discussion centered on various educational materials and informative tools that are in development, including videos demonstrating water quality monitoring techniques. Also, there was an update on the development status of the Trinity River Information Management System (TRIMS). TRIMS provides landowners and other stakeholder with an outreach and planning tool for supporting land conservation and habitat restoration decisions in the Trinity River Basin by providing web-based data access and baseline support for projects. Additionally, NRCS discussed the status of floodwater control structures throughout the Trinity River Basin. Nearly half of all floodwater control structures, authorized under programs administered by NRCS, are in the Trinity River Basin. More information is available at <http://www.trinityra.org/>.

Riparian Assessment Workshop

On May 6-7, Pamela Casebolt and Loren Henley participated in a riparian assessment workshop in Uvalde. The seminar was designed to teach methods for assessing the proper functioning condition of riparian areas. Participants learned about basic riparian dynamics with an emphasis on the interaction of hydrology-vegetation-erosion/deposition. The workshop included one day of classroom instruction followed by one day in the field applying the methodology to riparian areas along the Nueces River.

Buffalo and Whiteoak Bayous

On May 21, TCEQ approved publishing and soliciting public comment on *Eighteen TMDLs for Bacteria in Buffalo and Whiteoak Bayous and Tributaries (Segments*

1013, 1013A, 1013C, 1014, 1014A, 1014B, 1014E, 1014H, 1014K, 1014L, 1014M, 1014N, 1014O, 1017, 1017A, 1017B, 1017D, and 1017E). The public comment period is June 6 through July 5. A public comment meeting to receive comments on the proposed TMDL is scheduled for June 9 in Houston. Comments not submitted at the public meeting must be provided in writing and must be received by the TCEQ no later than July 5. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/2-buffalobayou.html>. This TMDL will have limited to no affect on livestock operations in the Buffalo and Whiteoak Bayous watershed in Harris, Fort Bend and Waller Counties.

Cedar Creek Reservoir

On April 30, Loren Henley, Lee Munz and Aaron Wendt attended a Cedar Creek Watershed Partnership Steering Committee meeting in Kaufman. Workgroups (Agricultural, Wastewater, and Education/Outreach) broke out and discussed the feasibility, costs, and effectiveness of different best management practices to be included in the WPP. A draft of the full WPP document is anticipated in early summer.

On May 7, Lee Munz met with the Kaufman-Van Zandt SWCD to discuss WQMPs and the implementation of those best management practices discussed at the April 30 stakeholder meeting. Targeted areas across the watershed were identified for priority implementation. Funding for WQMP development and best management practice implementation will be provided through a TSSWCB CWA §319(h) NPS grant to the SWCD.

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

Clear Creek

On May 21, TCEQ approved publishing and soliciting public comment on *Nine TMDLs for Bacteria in Clear Creek and Tributaries (Segments 1101, 1101B, 1101D, 1102, 1102A, 1102B, 1102C, 1102D, and 1102E)*. The public comment period is June 6 through July 5. A public comment meeting to receive comments on the proposed TMDL is scheduled for June 11 in League City. Comments not submitted at the public meeting must be provided in writing and must be received by the TCEQ no later than July 5. More information is

available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/6-8-clearcreekbacteria.html>. This TMDL will have limited to no affect on livestock operations in the Clear Creek watershed in Galveston, Harris, Brazoria and Fort Bend Counties.

Dickinson Bayou

On April 30, Brian Koch attended the Dickinson Bayou Watershed Partnership meeting in Dickinson. There was considerable discussion about the status of sunken barges in the bayou. Funding has been secured to remove four barges at this time and additional monies are being sought. The Education and Outreach Workgroup is working on “branding” the Dickinson Bayou Watershed Partnership. Currently there is a “logo” contest being conducting with 4th grade students at Hughes Elementary School. The Partnership will then take the winning logo “concept” to a graphic artist for detail work. The Flooding and Stormwater Workgroup is working on a Bottom Land Restoration project. The Recreation Workgroup is working to develop a project to identify and develop pocket parks throughout the watershed TCEQ discussed progress made with the bacteria TMDL for Dickinson Bayou. More than half of the water quality monitoring sites show bacterial levels that exceed the standard more than 80% of the time. The TMDL modeling should be completed by 2010. There is interest in collecting targeted samples from the wildlife park and the wastewater treatment facilities in the watershed. A rough draft of the WPP had been completed and the final WPP should be complete by late summer. This WPP is proceeding in tandem with the on-going Dickinson Bayou bacteria and dissolved oxygen TMDLs.

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

More information on the TMDL is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/1-7-dickinson.html>. More information on the WPP is available at <http://www.dickinsonbayou.org/>. Both the

WPP and the TMDL have the potential to affect farming and ranching operations in the Dickinson Bayou watershed in Galveston and Brazoria Counties.

Galveston Bay

On May 7, TCEQ approved publishing and soliciting public comment on *Six TMDLs for Bacteria in Waters of the Upper Gulf Coast (Segments 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2432, and 2439)*. These TMDLs focus on protecting oyster harvesting waters in the Galveston Bay system, including East Bay, West Bay, Chocolate Bay and Trinity Bay. The public comment period is May 23 through June 21. Two public meetings to receive comments on the proposed TMDL are scheduled for June 9 in Clear Lake and June 11 in Hankamer. Comments not submitted at the public meetings must be provided in writing and must be received by the TCEQ no later than June 21. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/7-4-uppercoastoyster.html>. This TMDL will have limited to no effect on livestock operations around the Galveston Bay complex in Chambers, Harris, Galveston and Brazoria Counties.

Gilleland Creek

On May 19, Pamela Casebolt attended the Gilleland Creek TMDL I-Plan Natural Resource Management Work Group meeting in Austin. Discussion centered on current funding programs available in the watershed, such as the Creekside Conservation Program (funded through a CWA §319(h) grant from TSSWCB) and the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), which provide technical and financial assistance to help implement best management practices to restore riparian areas. Progress was made in developing the natural resource component of the I-Plan.

On May 30, Pamela Casebolt attended the Gilleland Creek TMDL I-Plan Education and Outreach Work Group meeting in Austin. Discussion centered on progress in developing the education components of the I-Plan.

More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/6-9-gillelandcreekbacteria.html>. This TMDL will have limited affect on livestock operations in the Gilleland Creek watershed in Travis County.

Lake Granger

On May 13, Pamela Casebolt and Lee Munz attended the Lake Granger WPP agricultural producer Work Group meeting in Granger. Discussion centered on the history of Lake Granger; results from bathymetric surveys conducted in 1995, 2002, and 2007; and concerns and priorities within the watershed.

Texas AgriLife Extension Service will hold a Texas Watershed Steward (TWS) training on June 10 in Georgetown. The workshop will focus on the Lake Granger watershed. Participants can register online at <http://tws.tamu.edu>.

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.

Lake O' the Pines

On April 2, TCEQ approved publishing and soliciting public comment on *An Implementation Plan for One TMDL for Dissolved Oxygen in Lake O' the Pines (Segment 0403)*. The public comment period was April 18 through May 17. A public meeting to receive comments on the proposed TMDL was held April 29 in Hughes Springs. Comments not submitted at the public meeting must have been received by the TCEQ by May 17. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/1-9-lakeopines.html>. This TMDL and Implementation Plan affect poultry, dairy and forestry operations in the Lake O' the Pines watershed in Upshur, Camp, Titus, Morris, Cass, Harrison and Marion Counties.

Leon River

On March 19, TCEQ approved publishing and soliciting public comment on *One TMDL for Bacteria in the Leon River below Proctor Lake (Segment 1221)*. The public comment period was April 4 through May 5. A public meeting to receive comments on the proposed TMDL was held April 17 in Hamilton; Pamela Casebolt, Mitch Conine, Don Brandenberger and Charlie Upchurch attended this meeting. Comments not submitted at the public meeting must have been received by the TCEQ by May 5. This TMDL is proceeding in tandem with the TSSWCB-sponsored WPP for the Leon River. More information on the TMDL project is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/3>

[4-leonbacteria.html](#). Both this TMDL and the WPP will affect livestock operations in the Leon River watershed in Comanche, Coryell, Mills, Erath and Hamilton Counties.

Lower San Antonio River

On May 7, TCEQ approved publishing and soliciting public comment on *One TMDL for Bacteria in the Lower San Antonio River (Segment 1901)*. The public comment period is May 23 through June 21. A public meeting to receive comments on the proposed TMDL was held May 28 in Goliad. Comments not submitted at the public meeting must be provided in writing and must be received by the TCEQ no later than June 21. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/34-lowersanantoniobac.html>. This TMDL will affect livestock operations in the Lower San Antonio River watershed in Karnes, Goliad, Refugio, DeWitt, Wilson, Victoria, and Guadalupe Counties.

Matagorda Bay

On May 20, Brian Koch attended the *Freshwater for a Healthy Matagorda Bay Forum* in Bay City. This program was focused on freshwater inflows into the Matagorda Bay system, but not including East Matagorda Bay. The concern is how current and future growth will impact water resources that are necessary for bay health. Some of the items discussed included Senate Bills 2 and 3, the LCRA-SAWS project, and water rights. A Regional Work Group of local stakeholders will be formed to identify strategies to implement freshwater inflows.

Peach Creek

On April 2, TCEQ approved publishing and soliciting public comment on *One TMDL for Bacteria in Peach Creek (Segment 1803C)*. The public comment period was April 18 through May 17. A public comment meeting to receive comments on the proposed TMDL was held April 15 in Waelder. Comments not submitted at the public meeting must have been received by the TCEQ no later than May 17. 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.

Plum Creek

On May 8, Brian Koch, Pamela Casebolt and Aaron Wendt attended the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership Steering Committee meeting in Lockhart. Updates on funding proposals submitted by the Caldwell-Travis SWCD and AgriLife Extension to TSSWCB and the City of Kyle to TCEQ for CWA §319(h) NPS Grants were provided. There was significant discussion on feral hog management, including outcomes from recent workshops in the area. GBRA announced they received funding from the Texas Water Development Board to conduct a Regional Feasibility Study for Water and Wastewater Services. GBRA also provided an update on outreach and education activities being conducted through a TCEQ grant. Additionally, GBRA reported on the highly successful clean-up of several road/creek crossings along Plum Creek. Over 7 tons of appliances, tires, construction debris and household trash was removed from 6 sites. Finally, TPWD reported on an investigation into the cause of a February 2008 fish kill on Plum Creek. After extensive site investigation and water quality data analysis, the cause remains unknown. It was suggested that because the fish kill was first reported to officials over 4 days after it was observed, the timeframe was too great to gather data to understand the cause of this particular fish kill.

On May 13, Brian Koch attended the *Nonpoint Source Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO) Workshop on Managing Urban Growth* in Lockhart. This training was targeted to cities in the Plum Creek watershed, and managing urban growth to benefit quality of life and the environment. The training included presentations on land trusts, regional perspectives on growth and sustainability, and planning and implementation. More information on NEMO is available at <http://www.urban-nature.org/landuse/landuse.htm>.

More information is available at <http://pcwp.tamu.edu/>. This WPP will affect livestock and farming operations in the Plum Creek watershed in Caldwell and Hays Counties.

Upper Oyster Creek

On April 2, TCEQ approved publishing and soliciting public comment on *One TMDL for Dissolved Oxygen in Upper Oyster Creek (Segment 1245)*. The public comment period was April 18 through May 17. A public comment meeting to receive comments on the proposed TMDL was held April 22 in Sugar Land. Comments not

submitted at the public meeting must have been received by the TCEQ no later than May 17. More information is available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/water/tmdl/25-oystercreek.html>. This TMDL will have no to limited affect on farming and livestock operations in the Upper Oyster Creek watershed in Fort Bend County.

Upcoming Public Meetings

- May 28 – Concho River WPP Meeting with Affected SWCDs (San Angelo)
- May 28 – Lower San Antonio River TMDL Public Comment Meeting (Goliad)
- May 29 – Brady Creek WPP Stakeholder Meeting (Melvin)
- May 30 – Gilleland Creek TMDL I-Plan Outreach and Education Work Group (Austin)
- May 30 – Texas Watershed Steward Workshop on Bastrop Bayou (Lake Jackson)
- June 2-6 – Texas Watershed Planning Short Course (Bandera)
- June 2 – Lake Houston TMDL Stakeholder Meeting (Kingwood)
- June 3 – Lake Houston TMDL Stakeholder Meeting (Cleveland)
- June 4 - *Assessing the Effectiveness of Municipal Stormwater Programs* (EPA Webcast)
- June 4 – Lake Houston TMDL Stakeholder Meeting (Humble)
- June 5 – Lake Houston TMDL Stakeholder Meeting (Woodlands)
- June 9 – Buffalo and Whiteoak Bayous TMDL Public Comment Meeting (Houston)
- June 9 – Upper Coast Oyster Waters TMDL Public Comment Meeting (Clear Lake)
- June 10-11 – *From Grant Seeking to Grant Winning Workshop* (San Antonio)
- June 10 – Upper Trinity River TMDL Stakeholder Meeting (Irving)
- June 10 – Texas Watershed Steward Workshop on Lake Granger (Georgetown)
- June 11 – Upper Coast Oyster Waters TMDL Public Comment Meeting (Hankamer)
- June 11 – Clear Creek TMDL Public Comment Meeting (League City)
- June 12 – Lake Houston TMDL Stakeholder Meeting (Conroe)
- June 12 – Dickinson Bayou TMDL Public Comment Meeting (Dickinson)

- June 12 – Wharton Regional Watershed Coordination Steering Committee (Columbus)
- June 17-18 – *From Grant Seeking to Grant Winning Workshop* (Floresville)
- June 19 – Cedar Creek WPP Stakeholder Meeting (Kaufman)
- June 20 – *Nutrient Management for Small-Scale Farms* (NLPELC Webcast)
- June 23 – Elm and Sandies Creeks TMDL Stakeholder Meeting (Pilgrim)
- June 23-25 – *National Workshop to Advance State TMDL Programs* (Shepherdstown, WV)
- June 24 – Atascosa River TMDL Stakeholder Meeting (Pleasanton)
- June 24 – Caddo Lake WPP Stakeholder Meeting (TBD)
- June 24 – *Clean Water State Revolving Fund: Tapping its Untapped Potential Workshop* (Dallas)
- June 24 – Buck Creek WPP Field Day (Wellington)
- June 26 – Oso Creek TMDL Stakeholder Meeting (Corpus Christi)

COASTAL NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION CONTROL

Program Overview

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

Coastal Coordination Council, which administers the Texas Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program. The TSSWCB manages the agricultural and silvicultural portions of this program. The Texas Coastal Management Program was approved by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) on January 10, 1997. The Texas Coastal Management Program is administered by the Texas Coastal Coordination Council and staff of the Texas General Land Office. Section 6217 of the Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments requires each state with an approved Coastal Management Program to



develop a federally approvable program to control coastal nonpoint source (NPS) pollution. The program must be submitted within 30 months of Coastal Management Program approval. As a result, the Texas Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program was submitted in December 1998 by the Coastal Coordination Council. The Coastal Management Program recognizes the TSSWCB and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) as holding primary responsibility over the development and implementation of the NPS program. More information is available at <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/coastalnps>.

Program Activities

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

CIAP Program

The State of Texas will receive \$48,591,202.09 for fiscal year 2007 and for fiscal year 2008. Of that amount, \$31,584,281.36 will be allocated to the state and \$17,006,920.73 will be allocated directly to the 18 coastal counties.

Before any funds can be disbursed to the state or the counties, a state CIAP plan must be approved by MMS. This plan will include the recommended projects that have been submitted for funding.

In January 2008, the draft Texas Coastal Impact Assistance (CIAP) Plan was submitted for review to Minerals Management Service (MMS). The GLO staff is reviewing MMS' comments on the proposed projects and is preparing the final plan for submittal to the Office of the Governor. Upon acceptance, the final plan will be sent to MMS who has 110 days to review and approve the final plan. Grant applications for individual projects will be submitted to MMS after the state plan has been approved. It is anticipated that state projects will be approved for funding by early 2009.

A meeting of the Coastal Land Advisory Board was held on May 13, 2008. At that time, the Board

provided guidance to CIAP staff as to the 2008 State CIAP Program. Public meetings will be held in Harlingen, Corpus Christi, and Houston to present the program to the general public. Meeting details and grant applications will be posted on the GLO CIAP Website and sent to all 2007 project nominees and Council and Executive Committee members. The time frame for accepting project applications is tentatively set for June 1, 2008 through July 16, 2008.

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

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

GMP Grant Program

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

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

Five grant workshops were held on the coast in May to help potential applicants through the guidance document and application package.

Information on this grant program is available online:

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

WATER SUPPLY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM REPORT

BACKGROUND:

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 water supply enhancement projects designated by the Soil and Water Conservation Board.

Staff Activities

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

Area 1 Districts

Dawson County SWCD
Upper Colorado SWCD

Area 2 Districts

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

Area 3

McMullen County SWCD
Caldwell/ Travis SWCD
Comal/ Guadalupe SWCD

Area 5

Archer County SWCD
Lower Clear Fork/Brazos SWCD

- Landowners assisted with 9 Water Supply Enhancement Program Contracts
- Landowners assisted with 11 Water Supply Enhancement Program Certifications
- Evaluate pending application from all projects
- Assist TCEQ with Brush rider concerning water yield in State Brush Projects
- Evaluated sub-basins in the Twin Buttes and Pedernales watersheds that meet criteria for water enhancement cost share assistance and assess land owner participation
- Assist Comal/ Guadalupe District in reviewing potential areas for Water Enhancement Project
- Assist Dr. Rainwater and Dr. Fish with maps of treated areas in the water enhancement projects throughout the State
- Planning Lake Kickapoo water enhancement project
- Preparing for Red River Authority annual meeting
- Assist Sen. Wentworth office in developing Guadalupe Watershed project
- Assisted Corp of Engineers with planning of water enhancement plan for O.C. Fisher and other Corp lakes
- Assist Reed Stewart with Concho River Watershed Protection Plan

FLOOD CONTROL DAMS

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

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

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

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

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

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

Tuesday, May 13, Rex Isom and John Foster from TSSWCB and Steve Bednarz of USDA-NRCS testified before a hearing of the Texas Senate Committee On Natural Resources concerning dam

safety and other issues associated with the flood control program.

TEXAS GROUNDWATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE

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

The Texas Groundwater Protection Committee:

- Improves coordination between State and Federal agencies to protect groundwater.
- Reports on its activities and recommends new protection programs to the Legislature.
- Publishes numerous reports.
- Advises the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality on the development of agricultural chemical plans for groundwater.
- Develops, implements and updates a comprehensive *State Groundwater Protection Strategy* and an annual *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report*.

Meeting information is available on the TGPC website at:

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

Monthly Program News and Activities is produced by the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) for use by Texas soil and water conservation district directors. If you have any questions regarding its contents, or have information you would like to see in a future issue, please contact Loren Henley (254) 773-2250 or lhenley@tsswcb.state.tx.us.

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) is a state agency that administers Texas' soil and water conservation law and coordinates conservation and pollution abatement

programs throughout the State. Headquartered in Temple, Texas, the TSSWCB offers technical assistance to the state's 217 soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs). The TSSWCB is the lead state agency for the planning, management, and abatement of agricultural and silvicultural (forestry) nonpoint source pollution, and administers the Texas Brush Control Program. The TSSWCB maintains regional offices in strategic locations in the State to help carry out the agency's responsibilities.



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