



TEXAS STATE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

Program News and Activities

FEBRUARY 2013

The TSSWCB produces this monthly update of the agency's activities as an informational service to local Soil and Water Conservation District Directors. I hope you find this information helpful, and if you have any questions about specific programs or projects please don't hesitate to call your local field representative or our state headquarters.

REX ISOM

Executive Director

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UPCOMING STATE BOARD WORK SESSION AND MEETING

The State Board has scheduled a Work Session on **Monday, March 5, 2013** and a formal State Board Meeting on **Tuesday, March 6, 2013 at the Holiday Inn in Austin (Town Lake location)**. More information is available at <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/boardmeetings>, or by contacting Karen Preece at (254) 773-2250, ext. 245 or kpreece@tsswcb.texas.gov.

BUDGET AND ACCOUNTING

- On February 6, 2013, the Senate Committee on Finance held a public hearing and received testimony on the agency's 2014-15 budget request.
- On February 11, 2013, the House Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Articles VI, VII, & VIII, met in a public hearing and received testimony on the agency's 2014-15 budget request.

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

HUMAN RESOURCES

TSSWCB currently has 3 positions available at this time.

- Geographic Information Specialist II – Temple
- Natural Resource Specialist III – Dublin
- Natural Resource Specialist III - Gonzales

For additional information or to download an application, visit

<https://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/employment>.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The House Appropriations Committee met on February 26th to discuss budget recommendations from the Subcommittee on Article VI.

The Senate Finance Committee met on February 28th to discuss budget recommendations from the Subcommittee on Article VI.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

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

Annual State Meeting of SWCD Directors
Mark your calendars for October 28 – 30, 2013 and plan on attending the 73rd Annual State Meeting held in Fort Worth.

- Reservations at the Omni Hotel will open May 1st.

State Board Member Elections

State Board Member Elections will be conducted in State Districts I; III and V on Tuesday, May 7, 2013.

- State District I will be held at 6:00 p.m. at the College Heights Baptist Church in Plainview.
- State District III will be held at 5:00 p.m. at the Spring Creek Place Event Center in Victoria.
- State District V will be held at 6:00 p.m. in Room 219 of the Tarleton Student Center, Tarleton State University in Stephenville.

Districts in those state districts must certify their delegate and alternate delegate by April 1, 2013.

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

The February Program Development Workshop which was held on the 12-13, 2013 was well attended.

Eighteen directors attending the training as well as eleven employees. Seven NRCS District Conservationists also attended the training.

The next Program Development Workshop will be planned for sometime in July.

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<http://twitter.com/TSSWCB>

<http://www.facebook.com/tsswcb>

<http://www.linkedin.com/company/968674>



Conservation News

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

Conservation Video Library

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

Ordering a Video

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

WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN PROGRAM

With the passage of Senate Bill 503 in 1993, the Texas Legislature directed the TSSWCB to implement water quality management plans (WQMPs) to abate agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source pollution. A WQMP is a site-specific plan developed through and approved by SWCDs. The agency has been implementing WQMPs on private lands since late 1993.

All agriculture and silviculture producers in the state are eligible to have a water quality management plan developed. The TSSWCB identifies areas of the state where water quality is being negatively impacted by agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source pollution and allocates funding to those priority areas to serve as financial incentives to increase participation in the program. SWCDs with lakes, rivers or stream segments listed on the 303(d) list as impaired due to agriculture are eligible to be included as priority areas. All animal feeding operations are considered to be high priority and are eligible to receive financial incentives to install needed practices in their WQMP through their priority area or statewide assistance program.

During the first six months of FY2013, 85,910 acres have been certified through the WQMP Program. There have also been 85 applications

approved for financial incentives to assist producers with the implementation of agricultural nonpoint source pollution abatement practices. More information about the WQMP Program is available at <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/wqmp>.

POULTRY WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

Program Overview

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

In 2009, the 81st Texas Legislature amended the Texas Water Code to require TSSWCB to assess whether the siting and construction of all new poultry farms or existing farms that expand by more than 50% within ½ mile of permanently inhabited residences, businesses or places of worship is likely to cause a persistent nuisance odor. An odor control plan may be required for those farms. The law also requires all poultry producers and most receivers of poultry litter to keep records of poultry litter usage.

Program Activities

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

Currently there are 1203 poultry WQMPs with about 139 million birds in 48 counties. So far in FY 2013, two new poultry WQMPs have been certified, 57 existing plans recertified, and 29 decertified. Sanderson Farms has announced they will build a new \$124 million poultry complex in Texas located in or near Palestine. An estimated 75 new poultry farms will be built to support the new facility. This will be the third such complex, with the other two located in Bryan and Waco.

For more information on Poultry WQMPs, please visit <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/poultry> or contact the Poultry Program Office at (936) 462-7020.

TEXAS NONPOINT SOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

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

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

More information on the *Texas NPS Management Program* is available at <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/managementprogram>.

Nonpoint Source Grant Program

FY2008 – FY2012 CWA §319(h) Grant Status

There are currently 44 on-going §319(h) grant-funded projects addressing a wide array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues. Unliquidated federal funds for these 44 on-going projects total approximately \$12.7 million and are primarily being used to implement BMPs to abate NPS pollution from animal feeding operations, grazing livestock operations and row crop operations; provide technical assistance through SWCDs for the development of WQMPs; provide financial incentives for implementing certain BMPs prescribed in WQMPs; support various

targeted educational programs; develop and implement WPPs; and implement the NPS portion of Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Plans (I-Plan).

FY2011 – FY2013 State General Revenue Grant Status

There are currently 10 on-going general revenue-funded projects addressing an array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues. Unliquidated state funds for these 10 on-going projects total approximately \$3 million and are primarily being used to implement agricultural NPS components of TMDL I-Plans; conduct Recreational Use Attainability Analyses (RUAA); support increased analytical infrastructure at public bacterial source tracking (BST) laboratories; demonstrate innovative BMPs on animal feeding operations and grazing lands; and collect and analyze water quality data for watersheds with impaired waterbodies. SRM staff is in the process of developing workplans and budgets with collaborating entities to obligate remaining FY2013 allocated funds.

FY2012 Annual Report

On January 30, 2013, the *2012 Annual Report on Managing Nonpoint Source Water Pollution in Texas* was submitted to EPA; the report is jointly published by the TSSWCB and the TCEQ. In order to continue receiving CWA §319(h) funds, the State must annually report to EPA on success in achieving the goals and objectives of the *Texas NPS Management Program*. The report highlights the State's efforts during FY2012 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 in the State. The *2012 Annual Report* is available electronically at <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/reports#nps>.

Coastal NPS Pollution Control Program

The Texas Coastal Management Program (CMP) was created to coordinate state, local and federal programs for the management of Texas coastal resources. The CMP improves the management of the State's coastal resources to ensure long-term ecological and economic productivity of the coast. The CMP brings in federal Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) funds to Texas to

implement projects and program activities for a wide variety of purposes. The Texas General Land Office (GLO) and the Land Commissioner are responsible for coordinating activities associated with the CMP. The Coastal Coordination Advisory Committee (CCAC), established by the Texas Legislature, advises the Land Commissioner on matters related to implementation of the CMP; the TSSWCB is a statutorily-authorized member of the CCAC.

The GLO 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 GLO reviews significant actions taken or authorized by state agencies and subdivisions of state government that may adversely affect coastal natural resources to determine consistency with CMP goals and policies. In addition, the GLO oversees the CMP Grants Program and the Small Business and Individual Permitting Assistance Program.

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

More information on the CMP is available at <http://www.glo.texas.gov/what-we-do/caring-for-the-coast/grants-funding/cmp/index.html>.

Coastal Coordination Advisory Committee

The CCAC was created during sunset legislation (SB656) in the 82nd legislature. SB656, which was enacted in 2011, abolished the Coastal Coordination Council and transferred its functions to the Land Commissioner and the GLO. The legislation established the CCAC to advise the Land Commissioner on matters related to the CMP. The CCAC includes a representative of the TSSWCB designated by the Chairman of the State Board.

The general structure of the coastal program consists of workgroups from the agencies and governor appointees which focus on specific projects. The main function of the CCAC is to provide consistency review of federal projects and actions and to provide support to the workgroups.

More information is available for a limited time at <http://www.glo.texas.gov/GLO/boards-and-commissions/coastal-coordination-council/index.html>.

CMP Grant Program

Through the CMP, GLO awards approximately \$1.8 million of the federal §306/§306A coastal management grant funds received from NOAA to local governments and other entities along the coast for planning and implementation of projects that address environmental problems affecting the coastal area and that promote sustainable economic development.

§306 Grants

A final list of recommended projects to receive §306 grant funding was sent to the Land Commissioner for final approval in December 2012.

More information on the CMP grant program can be found at <http://www.glo.texas.gov/what-we-do/caring-for-the-coast/grants-funding/cmp/index.html>.

§309 Grant

The coastal program is dedicating §309 funds to the creation of a long-term plan utilizing coastal and marine spatial planning. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of coastal experts was formed to review and evaluate the project list and the issues of concern for the four coastal regions. TAC regional meetings were held throughout September in Corpus Christi, South Padre Island, Galveston, and Victoria to identify the critical areas and needs of the Texas coast. The information collected at the TAC meetings is being used to develop a "snapshot" report to inform the 83rd Texas Legislature of the coastal priorities for each of the four regions, and to serve as a baseline for the long-term planning process. This information will be presented to local officials in a series of meetings in early spring. This long-term plan will better enable an integrated,

adaptive management approach to plan for and balance competing natural and human uses along our coast.

Water Quality Coordination Activities

Coastal Bend, Bays and Estuaries Program

On January 16, 2013, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a Coastal Bend, Bays and Estuaries Program (CBBEP) - Water and Sediment Quality Implementation Team meeting in Corpus Christi. This meeting was held to discuss priority areas for funding which focus on addressing water quality issues in the CBBEP area. Priority areas discussed include Baffin Bay, Cole and Ropes Parks, Copano Bay, Nueces Delta and Nueces River. Proposals for funding projects in these priority areas will be developed and scored in following meetings, and finally submitted to the Bays Council for approval.

Galveston Bay Estuary Program

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

On January 23, 2013, TSSWCB SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a Galveston Bay Council meeting in Houston. This meeting featured a presentation on Freshwater Inflows and the Effects on Phytoplankton Communities in Galveston Bay. Due to the persistent drought conditions along the Texas coast, low freshwater flows continue to be seen causing blooms of harmful algae, such as red tide, which fare better in low inflows.

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

Texas Watershed Coordinator Roundtable

On January 22, 2013, TSSWCB SRM staff [TJ Helton, Wes Gibson, Jana Lloyd, Pam Casebolt, Ashley Alexander, Aaron Wendt] participated in the latest Texas Watershed Coordinator Roundtable workshop, entitled "Catalyzing Success", in Temple. Nearly 60 people attended representing many of the on-going watershed planning efforts across the state. Items discussed covered topics such as Defining Success and Social Media's Growing Role in Our Lives.

The primary purpose of the Texas Watershed Coordinator Roundtable is to provide a forum for continuing dialogue between watershed coordinators in order to facilitate interactive solutions to common issues being faced statewide affecting the development and implementation of WPPs. More information is available at <http://watershedplanning.tamu.edu/developing/roundtable>.

Water Quality Planning and Implementation

STATE DISTRICT II

Leona River

Impairment: Bacteria
Concern: Nutrients
Mechanism: Assessment
Lead: TSSWCB
Project: "Assessment of Water Quality and Watershed Planning for the Leona River", Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Research; GR \$861,714

On January 24, 2013, TSSWCB SRM staff [Ashley Alexander] attended a Leona River Assessment project meeting in Uvalde. The meeting covered two topics: RUAA summary of findings and Spatially Explicit Load Enrichment Calculation Tool (SELECT) modeling. Staff from the Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Research (TIAER) presented the results from the second survey portion of the RUAA as well as a summary of all the findings from the study to attendees. Second, an introduction to the SELECT model was presented which included detail about the various inputs to the model. Local

stakeholder and landowner input to both the RUAA process and SELECT modeling are crucial to the success of the Leona River Assessment project.

More information is available at <http://www.leonariver.org/>. This project affects livestock operations in the Frio, Uvalde, and Zavala Counties.

STATE DISTRICT III

Arroyo Colorado

Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen
Concerns: Nutrients, Sediment
Mechanism: WPP, UAA
Lead: TCEQ
Project: "Implementing Educational Components of the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Protection Plan Focused on Agricultural Nonpoint Source Pollution", Texas Water Resources Institute; Federal \$202,443/ External \$135,191
Project: "Implementing the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Protection Plan by Providing Technical and Financial Assistance to Reduce Agricultural Nonpoint Source Pollution", Southmost SWCD #319, Hidalgo SWCD #350; Federal \$532,516/ External \$200,000
Project: "Bacterial Source Tracking to Support Adaptive Management of the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Protection Plan", Texas Water Resources Institute/Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources; Federal \$465,555/ External \$178,333

On January 17, 2013, TSSWCB SRM staff [Ashley Alexander] met with Texas Water Resources Institute, University of Texas at Brownsville, University of Texas- Houston School of Public Health, El Paso Regional Campus, and Brownsville Public Utilities Board Analytical Laboratory staff to discuss the newly initiated FY12 project, "*Bacterial Source Tracking to Support Adaptive Management of the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Protection Plan*". The meeting covered all aspects of the project workplan including key tasks such as quality

assurance, the source survey, known source sample collection, surface water quality monitoring, and bacterial source tracking analysis.

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

Geronimo Creek

Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB
Project: "Development of a Watershed Protection Plan for Geronimo Creek", Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority; Federal \$472,398/ External 320,115
Project: "Water Quality Monitoring in the Geronimo Creek Watershed and Facilitation of the Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Watershed Partnership", Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority; Federal \$292,421/ External \$191,435

On January 31, 2013, SRM staff [Brian Koch, Jana Lloyd] attended Texas Well Owner Network training for the Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Watershed in Seguin. Over 48 people attended the training that was sponsored by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Texas Water Resource Institute and TSSWCB, in coordination with Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Watershed Partnership and the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority. The training focused on water quality issues in the Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Watershed, in addition to helping private well owners to understand and care for their wells. Topics covered included: aquifers in Texas, private water well basics, onsite wastewater treatment, water quality and quantity, and protecting personal water supply. More information on the Texas Well Owner Network Program is available at <http://twon.tamu.edu/>.

More information is available at <http://geronimocreek.org/>. This WPP affects ranching and farming operations in the Geronimo Creek watershed in Guadalupe and Comal Counties.

Plum Creek

Impairment: Bacteria
Concerns: Nutrients
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB
Project: "Coordinating Implementation of the Plum Creek Watershed Protection Plan", Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority; Federal \$216,000/ External \$144,000
Project: "Surface Water Quality Monitoring and Additional Data Collection Activities to Support the Implementation of the Plum Creek Watershed Protection Plan", Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority; Federal \$485,545/ External \$257,165
Project: "Implementation of Agricultural Best Management Practices in Support of the Plum Creek Watershed Protection Plan", Caldwell-Travis SWCD #304; Federal \$49,360

On February 5, 2013, SRM staff [Jana Lloyd, Wesley Gibson] attended the Plum Creek Feral Hog Management Workshop in Luling. Over 125 individuals attended this workshop that was put on by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. This workshop was held to implement portions of the Plum Creek WPP. The Plum Creek WPP identifies feral hogs as a significant contributor of pollutants to the creek. Landowners recommended in the WPP that efforts to control feral hogs be undertaken to reduce the population, limit the spread of these animals, and minimize their effects on water quality and the surrounding environment. Presenters at the workshop were from state and federal agencies including AgriLife Extension, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department Game Warden, Texas Animal Health Commission, USDA Wildlife Services and the Plum Creek Watershed Coordinator. Topics covered feral hog life history and biology, laws and regulations, current research, and control methods for this invasive exotic species including hunting and trapping. Additional information on feral hog management in the Plum Creek watershed is available at <http://plumcreek.tamu.edu/feralhogs>.

On February 7, 2013, TSSWCB SRM staff [Jana Lloyd] attended the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership Steering Committee Meeting in Lockhart. The meeting centered on feral hog education and the county Hog Out activities. Other updates included hillside terrace proposal submission, Plum Creek clean up and community collection events and implementation of agriculture BMPs.

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.

STATE DISTRICT IV

Cedar Bayou

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

On January 18, 2013, TSSWCB SRM staff [Ashley Alexander] attended and presented at the Crosby ISD- Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Education event in Crosby. Over 600 students, grades 3-9, and parents from the school district attended the inaugural event. TSSWCB SRM staff gave four presentations of the watershed model to over 75 students throughout the two hour educational event. Students interactively gained knowledge about their watershed, Cedar Bayou, types and sources of pollution, and solutions to this pollution.

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

Other State District IV Projects

Project: "Building Partnerships for Cooperative Conservation in the Trinity River Basin", Texas Water

Resources Institute; Federal
\$437,946/ External \$293,569*

On February 5 and 8, 2012, TSSWCB Regional Office Coordinator [Lee Munz] attended the Agriculture, Wildlife and Water Management Workshops, the second in a series of workshops for the Middle Trinity River Basin, in Athens and Huntsville, respectively. The goal of the series of workshops is to bring landowners and other stakeholders together to discuss solutions to challenges faced in the Middle Trinity region of the Basin. These workshops are designed to raise awareness of water quality issues, discuss land management techniques that could improve the water resources of the Trinity River Basin and make decisions to protect natural resources for future generations. Presentations at the workshop included the following topics: Land Use Trends and Impacts on Water Resources, Managing Land with the TRIMS Mapping Tool, Benefits of a Water Quality Management Plan, and Permit Regulations for Pesticide Applicators. Presenters on these various topics included Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Institute of Renewable Natural Resources, and TSSWCB staff. The third series of workshops are to be held in late February, March and early April, all leading up to a Summit workshop.

More information is available at
<http://trinitywaters.org/>.

STATE DISTRICT V

Lampasas River

Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB
Project: "Coordinating Implementation of the Lampasas River Watershed Protection Plan", Texas AgriLife Research; Federal \$205,305/External \$162,913

The draft Lampasas River WPP was released by Texas A&M AgriLife Research for public comment which spanned from January 4 – February 1, 2013. Two public meetings were held on January 15, 2013 in Lampasas and January 17, 2013 in Killeen to discuss the draft WPP and provide an opportunity for the public to give verbal comments on the document. Comments will be incorporated

into the WPP, as appropriate. The WPP can be downloaded from the Lampasas River Watershed Partnership's website at
<http://www.lampasasriver.org/>.

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

Leon River

Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen
Mechanism: WPP, TMDL, UAA
Lead: TCEQ (TMDL, UAA), TSSWCB (WPP)
Project: "Implementation of the Leon River WPP through Technical and Financial Assistance to Repair or Replace On-Site Sewage Facilities in Hamilton County", Hamilton County, Texas AgriLife Extension Service; Federal \$365,976/ External \$66,536
Project: "Coordinating Implementation of the Leon River Watershed Protection Plan", Central Texas Council of Governments; Federal \$205,305/External \$162,913
Project: "Water Quality Improvement Project for the Leon River", Leon Bosque Resource Conservation and Development Council; GR \$10,000

On February 6, 2013, TSSWCB SRM staff [Pamela Casebolt] attended the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service- Comanche County's Dairymen's Committee in Comanche. TSSWCB SRM staff introduced a new FY12 project, "*Coordinating Implementation of the Leon River Watershed Protection Plan*", as well as provided an update on watershed activities.

More information on the postponed bacteria TMDL is available at
<http://www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/tmdl/34-leonbacteria.html>. More information on the WPP is available at
<http://www.brazos.org/LeonRiverWPP.asp>. More information on the RUAA is available at
<http://www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/standards/>

[ruaas/ruaasbrazos](#). The WPP, the TMDL, and the RUAA affect livestock operations in the Leon River watershed in Comanche, Coryell, Mills, Erath and Hamilton Counties.

STATEWIDE PROJECTS (NOT WATERSHED-SPECIFIC)

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

A Texas Watershed Steward Program workshop took place in Navasota on January 24, 2013. Over 34 people attended the workshop that was sponsored by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and TSSWCB, in coordination with Texas Small Farmers and Ranchers Community and the Brazos River Authority. The training focused on water quality issues relating to the Brazos River Basin, including current efforts to help improve and protect water in the area. Topics covered included: what it means to be a watershed steward, watershed impairments, managing urban and rural lands through the use of BMPs, and how to get involved in community-driven watershed protection and management. The training also involved interactive displays such as a rainfall simulator. More information on the Texas Watershed Steward Program is available at <http://tws.tamu.edu/>.

Project: "Delivery of Lone Star Healthy Streams Feral Hog Component and Providing Technical Assistance on Feral Hog Management in Priority Watersheds", Texas AgriLife Extension Service; Federal \$491,227/External \$312,768

On January 18, 2013, TSSWCB SRM staff [TJ Helton, Wes Gibson] participated in a kickoff meeting for a new FY12 project, "*Statewide Delivery of the Beef Cattle, Dairy Cattle, Poultry and Horse components of the Lone Star Healthy Streams Program*", in College Station. The meeting covered all aspects of the workplan and overall goal of the program, as well as the agendas for workshops in the future. More information is available at <http://lshs.tamu.edu/>.

Project: "Texas Silvicultural Best Management Practices Education and Implementation Project", Texas Forest Service; Federal \$328,134/External \$295,660

On January 16, 2013, TSSWCB SRM staff [TJ Helton, Wes Gibson, Mitch Conine] participated in a kickoff meeting for a new FY12 project, "*Texas Silvicultural Best Management Practices Education and Implementation Project*", in Temple. The meeting covered all aspects of the workplan and overall goal of the program, as well as the agendas for educational workshops in the future. More information is available at <http://tfs.tamu.edu>.

Upcoming Public Meetings

- March 5, 2013 – Lower Nueces Watershed Protection Plan Stakeholder Meeting (Corpus Christi)
- March 6, 2013 – Lake Granbury Watershed Protection Plan Stakeholder Meeting (Granbury)
- March 6, 2013 – TGPC Public Outreach and Education Subcommittee Meeting (Austin)
- March 7, 2013 – BIG Workgroup Meeting (Houston)
- March 7, 2013 – Regional Watershed Coordination Steering Committee Meeting (Columbus)
- March 7, 2013 – Attoyac Bayou Stakeholder Meeting (Nacogdoches)
- March 20, 2013 – Coastal Bends, Bays and Estuaries Program Meeting (Corpus Christi)
- March 27, 2013 – Agriculture, Wildlife and Water Management Workshop (Huntsville)
- March 28, 2013 – Texas Watershed Steward Program (Lampasas)
- March 28, 2013 – Texas Well Owner Network training (Wellington)

WATER SUPPLY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

The 81st Legislature continued funding for the Water Supply Enhancement Program by providing \$2,135,413 in General Revenue Funds in FY2012. Staff has begun implementing HB 1808 and the Sunset Commission's recommendations.

Staff Activities

- Continued to consult with Dr. Ken Rainwater and his staff to evaluate the Water Supply Enhancement Program project proposals that were re-submitted for analysis.
- The primary and secondary sub-basins will be evaluated to determine the highest yielding areas in those sub-basins.
- WSEP staff met to discuss and review updated policies and procedures to the program.
- WSEP staff attended the Senate Finance meeting.
- WSEP staff attended the House Ag meeting.

FLOOD CONTROL DAM PROGRAMS

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

Local sponsors of the dams were required before a federal project was begun. Local sponsors signed a watershed agreement which outlined the

duties and responsibilities of the federal and local sponsors. In general, local sponsors are required to obtain and enforce easements, conduct operation and maintenance (O&M) inspections, maintain the structures, and implement land treatment measures in the watershed. SWCDs are one of the local sponsors in all watershed projects. Other local sponsors include counties, cities, and Water Control and Improvement Districts (WCIDs).

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

In response to this appropriation, TSSWCB assembled a representative stakeholder group and began the process of developing programs to deliver the funds to the sponsors of flood control dams during the Summer of 2009. It was determined that the most efficient and effective way to proceed was to develop two separate grant programs, one to address O&M, and the other to address structural repairs, due to their difference in complexity.

O&M Grant Program Update

In FY2010, \$2,472,008 was allocated to 84 SWCDs and co-sponsors to conduct O&M activities on flood control dams. All FY2010 funds have been utilized.

In FY2011, \$2,472,008 was allocated to 84 SWCDs and co-sponsors to conduct O&M activities on flood control dams. Currently, there is a balance of \$64,190 to be utilized by June 28, 2013.

Structural Repair Grant Program Update

In FY2010, \$4,055,471 in program funds were obligated to conduct structural repairs on 18 flood control dams. The TSSWCB and local SWCDs partnered and leveraged resources through the USDA-NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection

(EWP) Program for disaster recovery and provided funding for structural repair activities on five of these dams. To date, all needed repairs have been completed on all 18 flood control dams.

In FY2011, \$2,823,166 in program funds was obligated to conduct structural repairs on six flood control dams. The TSSWCB and local SWCDs continued to partner and leveraged resources through the USDA-NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program for disaster recovery and provided funding for structural repair activities on one of these dams. To date, all needed repairs have been completed on five of the six flood control dams the remaining dam is under construction.

In FY12, \$1,364,836 in program funds was obligated to conduct structural repairs on two flood control dams. To date, all needed repairs have been completed on one of the two flood control dams and the remaining dam is under construction.

On October 26, 2012, districts and sponsors were notified that the TSSWCB is seeking applications for structural repair projects on flood control dams in accordance with Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 529, Subchapter B. Applications for FY2013 grant funds were due no later than 8:00 am on November 30, 2012. The TSSWCB received ten applications on 21 dams for structural repair projects. Applications that were submitted for FY2010 and FY2011 repair projects that did not receive funding will also be considered for FY2013. TSSWCB staff is finalizing decisions on applications submitted for FY2013 grant funding and will be contacting potential grantees in the near future.

For more information on these programs, please visit the TSSWCB's website at:

<http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/en/floodcontrol>

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Established in 1939, the TSSWCB administers Texas' soil and water conservation law and delivers coordinated natural resource conservation programs to agricultural producers through the State's 216 individual SWCDs. The agency is governed by a seven-member State Board composed of two Governor appointees and five individuals elected from across Texas by 1,080 Directors of local SWCDs. The TSSWCB is the lead state agency for planning, implementing, and managing programs for preventing and abating agricultural and silvicultural (forestry) nonpoint sources of water pollution; administers a water supply enhancement program through the targeted control of brush species in areas in need of water conservation; provides operation, maintenance, and structural repair grant funds to local government sponsors of the State's network of 2,000 flood control dams; and facilitates the Texas Invasive Species Coordinating Committee.