



# Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board

## Quarterly Program Update: Winter 2021

### Feral Hog Control Resources Available to Texas Landowners

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) is working with the United States Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Texas Wildlife Damage Management Association (TWDMA), Texas A&M Natural Resources Institute (NRI), and Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) across the state to help address the issues that feral swine pose to agriculture, ecosystems, and the health of humans and animals.



Feral swine cause a high level of economic, biologic, and natural resource damage. The species are also a threat to Texas waterways and ecosystems as their numbers rapidly increase. Texas is a private-land state, with 83 percent of its land mass in family-owned farms, ranches, and forests. Consequently, providing learning opportunities to landowners about effective management strategies remains crucial to the success of abating damages associated with feral swine.

TSSWCB is working in partnership with local SWCDs, USDA-NRCS, APHIS, Texas A&M NRI, and the TWDMA to administer the Feral Swine Control Pilot Program (FSCPP). The FSCPP consists of a “smart trap” loan program, educational and outreach activities, and direct control activities by APHIS.

The program is currently available in five project areas including the following counties: Hartley, Oldham, Potter, Eastland, Comanche, Erath, Hardeman, Wilbarger, Wichita, Clay, Dallam, Milam, Williamson, Nueces, San Patricio and Bee counties.

Landowners in participating counties may be eligible to utilize a feral swine smart trap on their property through the SWCD trap loan program or receive direct control through APHIS.

Anyone interested in participating should contact their local SWCD. Contact information can be found at <https://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/feral-swine-texas>

Funding for the TSSWCB Texas Feral Swine Eradication and Control Pilot Program activities are provided through a federal USDA-NRCS grant.

# Program Updates

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## • BUDGET & ACCOUNTING

- The TSSWCB has RESTORED SWCD Information Technology Assistance and SWCD Audit reimbursements for Fiscal Year 2022.
- An updated version of the SWCD Manual of Fiscal Operations is available at the SWCD resources section on the TSSWCB website.

### *Important Dates and Deadlines*

- The deadline for submitting annual financial statements prepared by the SWCD was October 30th. The deadline for submitting annual financial statements, reviews, or audits prepared by a CPA was December 30th.
- Important Dates and Deadlines for Calendar Year 2022 will be made available in February.

*Please note the SWCDs resource section on the TSSWCB website contains documents, forms and important updates to SWCDs in conducting their daily business operations. Please continue to check the resources section.*

## • FLOOD CONTROL PROGRAM

The State Board approved \$2,000,000 for dam operation and maintenance (O&M) grants for fiscal year 2022. All of this funding has been obligated. Work on funded proposals must be completed within 90 days of Purchase Order date. For FY 2022, \$6,000,000 is available for structural repair. It is anticipated that all of these funds will be used to cover high bids on some previously funded projects but will not be enough to cover high bids on all previously funded projects. Staff have contracted with sponsors for construction of 50 dam repairs and 15 high hazard dam upgrades. Thirty-eight dam repairs have been completed. Federal construction funds and state ESF matching funds have been obligated on 6 federal rehabilitation projects. Federal rehabilitation planning continues on 9 high hazard dams. Currently, \$110 million is needed to repair about 163 flood control program dams in Texas, and \$2.0 Billion is needed to upgrade and rehabilitate about 500 high hazard dams where downstream urban development has resulted in public safety issues.

## • WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN PROGRAM

With the enactment of Senate Bill 503 (73rd Regular Session - Sims / Counts) in 1993, the Texas Legislature designated the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) the lead agency in the state for the abatement, management, and prevention of nonpoint source pollution from agricultural or silvicultural sources. Additionally, the Legislature authorized the agency to administer a certified water quality management plan (WQMP) program, complete with a cost-share program to incentivize participation and offset the cost of implementing soil and water land improvement measures, for lands within the state. For FY2022 as of January 20, 58 WQMPs have been certified on 29,792 total acres.

## • CARRIZO CANE ERADICATION PROGRAM

A total of 3,970.0 acres of Carrizo Cane was treated along the Rio Grande River at cost of \$813,780, utilizing GR funds during the fourth quarter. The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) was awarded \$1,465,000 from the Office of the Governor (OOG) to pay invoices for the treatment of Carrizo Cane along the Rio Grande River in support of the Texas Carrizo Cane Eradication Program. This grant was made from the appropriation made by HB(2), 87th Legislative Session, to the Trusteed Programs within the Office of the Governor, Strategy A.1.1., Disaster Funds for Border Security. A total of 3,769.4 acres of Carrizo Cane was treated at a cost of \$1,464,982.85, utilizing these Disaster Funds for Border Security. This grant has been fulfilled. The OOG also awarded an additional grant of \$462,500 to the TSSWCB to provide for the immediate action of contracted applicators for herbicide treatment of 250.0 acres of Carrizo Cane along the Rio Grande River in support of the Texas Carrizo Cane Eradication Program. These acres will be treated and certified in January 2022 and reported during the next quarter.

## • COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH

- 2022 SWCD Director & Employee Workshop

We have rescheduled the 2022 SWCD Director & Employee Workshop for April 26-27 at the Mayborn Convention Center in Temple. Registration is open as of January 20th and will close March 30th. For more information on registration and hotels, please visit: <https://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/programs/public-information-and-education/soil-and-water-conservation-district-leadership>