

TSSWCB PROGRAM GOALS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

Nonpoint Source Management Program

Goal – 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. NPS pollution is all water pollution that does not originate from regulated point sources. Types of regulated point sources include wastewater treatment facilities, municipal stormwater systems, and concentrated animal feeding operations. NPS pollution occurs when rainfall flows off the land, roads, buildings, and other features of the landscape. This diffuse runoff carries pollutants into drainage ditches, lakes, rivers, wetlands, bays, and aquifers. Common NPS pollutants include:

- Fertilizers, herbicides, and insecticides from agricultural lands and residential areas;
- Oil, grease, and toxic chemicals from spills, roads, urban areas, and energy production;
- Sediment from construction sites, crop and forest lands, and eroding stream banks; and
- Bacteria and nutrients from livestock, pet wastes, and leaking septic systems.

Evaluation Criteria—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 to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by the Governor in December 2017. The Texas NPS Management Program is jointly administered by the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

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

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

The NPS Grant Program is administered by the TSSWCB for the purpose of providing funding as grants to cooperating entities for activities that address the goals and objectives stated in the

Texas NPS Management Program. The Texas Legislature and the U.S. Congress (through the EPA) provide funding to the TSSWCB to administer the agricultural and silvicultural components of the Texas NPS Management Program through the TSSWCB NPS Grant Program.

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

Compliance Monitoring –The agency follows all applicable state and federal rules and regulations to implement the Texas NPS Management Program. The EPA reviews and approves the Texas NPS Management Program. Individual projects provide quarterly progress reports and agency staff conduct site visits to review the progress and current status of the project. Projects deliverables and timelines are used to monitor the progress of the project.

Analysis – Upon completion of each fiscal year the agency will evaluate the progress of the individual projects in priority watersheds. The analysis of project data is combined throughout the duration of the project and reported in the project final report. For applicable projects, load reductions estimates are generated based on the management measures being implemented to address the pollutant/s of concern in impaired or threatened watersheds. The overall goal of this program is to protect and improve water quality. The ultimate success is to restore an impaired waterbody. These successes are reported through a NPS Success Story.

Publishing – The status in achieving the goals and objectives of the Texas NPS Management Program are reported annually in the Annual Report on Managing NPS Water Pollution in Texas, which is submitted to EPA in accordance with the CWA. NPS Success stories are published on EPA's website.