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TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD
WATER SUPPLY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM OFFICE
Protecting and Enhancing Natural Resources for Tomorrow

TO: All Chairmen, Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts

FROM: Johnny Oswald, Water Supply Enhancement Program Administrator, TSSWCB

DATE: March 27, 2017

RE: FY2018-2019 Water Supply Enhancement Program Request for Project Proposals

The TSSWCB is requesting proposals for water supply enhancement projects seeking funding in FY2018-2019 to conduct brush control under the Water Supply Enhancement Program (WSEP). Proposed projects should focus on watersheds with a demonstrated water conservation need and where brush control has been shown, using a computer model, to be a feasible strategy to enhance surface and/or ground water supplies. Thursday, **June 1, 2017**, is the deadline for submitting all FY2018-2019 WSEP project proposals.

A competitive proposal review process will be used so that the most appropriate and effective projects are selected for funding. In January 2017, the State Board adopted a revised *State Water Supply Enhancement Plan*, which describes the program purpose and goals, the competitive grant process and proposal ranking criteria, how the agency will allocate funding, and priority watersheds across the state for water supply enhancement and brush control.

Two major changes were approved by the State Board for the previous RFP which are also being applied to this FY2018-2019 RFP. Both of these changes were intended to strengthen the WSEP by increasing the acreage of brush treated in a particular subbasin, which should increase the hydrologic response due to vegetation changes induced through the WSEP. First, each SWCD involved in the WSEP is limited to two (2) subbasins as active projects and/or newly submitted proposals. This will focus the brush control being conducted in any particular SWCD. Essentially, this means that, depending on the number of active projects from the FY2016 and/or FY2017 RFPs, a SWCD may only submit a maximum of two new proposals through this FY2018-2019 RFP. Second, in order to balance the two subbasin limitation, extended time is needed to complete an approved, prioritized project. Therefore, an active project will remain on the approved, prioritized project list, eligible for cost-share allocation, until the SWCD certifies that brush control is complete in that subbasin, or no more than 10 years after being approved.

Additionally, two major changes were approved by the State Board for this FY2018-2019 RFP. First, this single RFP is for both FY2018 and FY2019. Project applicants should submit project budgets that include cost-share funds needed for a 2-year project period. Project cost-share allocations for each of the two FYs will be based on this single RFP. Second, only Feasibility Studies accepted by the State Board as of March 23, 2017 will be considered as eligible Project Watersheds for this RFP.

Also, note that this RFP is being released prior to the conclusion of the 85th Texas Legislature and final approval of the State's budget for the 2018-2019 biennium. Any project allocations approved by the State Board based on this RFP will ultimately depend on the outcome of the budget approval process for the 2018-2019 biennium.

Enclosed is a copy of the application for proposed water supply enhancement projects. Additionally, two documents are enclosed to provide you assistance in completing the application. The first document is a set of instructions for the application that provides explanations of questions on the form and resources for answering those questions. The second document is a set of guidelines that details project eligibility requirements, identifies watersheds with published feasibility studies, and provides additional information critical for successful applications. All three of the enclosed documents are also available on the agency website.

As you may recall, the TSSWCB went through the Sunset review process in 2010-2011. This culminated in the 82nd Legislature passing HB1808 which delineated major changes to TSSWCB programs, including establishing the WSEP. This FY2018-2019 request for proposals for water supply enhancement projects continues to implement provisions of HB1808.

Proposals may be submitted either electronically (preferred) or as hard copies. Submit proposals electronically to Johnny Oswald at joswald@tsswcb.texas.gov. Hard copy submissions should be mailed to the TSSWCB WSEP Office located at 622 South Oakes Street, Suite H-2, San Angelo, TX 76903. Regardless of delivery method, proposals must be received by 5:00 p.m. CDT, Monday, July 18, 2016, to be considered for funding.

Additional information on the TSSWCB WSEP and this FY2018-2019 request for proposals is available on our website at <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/brushcontrol#rfp>. Please contact the WSEP office if you have any questions regarding FY2018-2019 water supply enhancement project proposals.

Enclosures (12 pages)