



TEXAS STATE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

Program News and Activities

JUNE 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 **Wednesday July 17, 2013** and a formal State Board Meeting on **Thursday, July 18, 2013 in Temple**. 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

- Financial Statement/Audit Notifications for Fiscal Year 2013 are now available.
- July 1st was the deadline for submitting 1st, 2nd, and 3rd quarter District Director Mileage Per Diem claims.

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.

- Natural Resources Specialist III – Nacogdoches
- Natural Resources Specialist III – San Angelo
- Administrative Assistant II – San Angelo

For additional information or to download an application, visit

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

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.

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

SOIL STEWARDSHIP PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST

Twenty finalists in the Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest will vie for top honors in the program at the 85th annual Texas FFA State Convention to be held July 8-12 in Dallas.

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 ten months of FY2013, 243,791 acres have been certified through the WQMP Program. There have also been 216 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>.

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

FY2013 CWA §319(h) Grant Application

TSSWCB received 21 proposals requesting a total of \$8,621,145 in federal funds during last fall's public request for proposals. Through the spring, TSSWCB and EPA worked on negotiating scopes of work and budgets for selected proposals.

TSSWCB's FY2013 CWA §319(h) allocation from EPA is \$3,522,000. TSSWCB selected 8 proposals to be included in the FY2013 CWA §319(h) grant application, which was submitted to EPA on June 18, 2013.

FY2008 – FY2012 CWA §319(h) Grant Status

There are currently 43 on-going §319(h) grant-funded projects addressing a wide array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues. Unliquidated federal funds for these 43 on-going projects total approximately \$11.6 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 Watershed Protection Plans (WPP); and implement the NPS portion of Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Plans (I-Plan).

FY2011 – FY2013 State Grant Status

There are currently 16 on-going projects addressing an array of agricultural and silvicultural NPS issues. Unliquidated state funds for these 16 on-going projects total approximately \$2.4 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.

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

Twenty-one grants were approved for Cycle 18 for a total of 1.75 million dollars. The grant list can be found here: <http://www.glo.texas.gov/what-we-do/caring-for-the-coast/documents/grants-funding/cmp/cmp-cycle-18-website-project-information.pdf>.

Grant Cycle 19 is open through June 2013. 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>.

Annual Report

The 2012 annual report of the coastal program can be viewed here:

<http://www.glo.texas.gov/what-we-do/caring-for-the-coast/publications/2012-cmp-annual-report.pdf>

Water Quality Coordination Activities

Coordination with EPA

On May 20, 2013, TSSWCB SRM staff [Pamela Casebolt, Mitch Conine, Ashley Alexander, Jana Lloyd, TJ Helton, Wesley Gibson] hosted EPA staff in Temple for the annual end-of-year review (FY12) of the *Texas NPS Management Program* and the CWA §319(h) NPS Grant Program. This meeting included discussions on new grant policies and expectations and the status of TSSWCB's CWA §319(h) NPS grant-funded projects.

Coordination with TCEQ

On June 10, 2013, TSSWCB SRM staff [Wesley Gibson, Pamela Casebolt, Jana Lloyd, TJ Helton, David Morris, Ashley Alexander, Mitch Conine] met with TCEQ staff in Austin to discuss and coordinate the many on-going activities between the two agencies. Many topics were discussed including the Watershed Action Planning process, water quality standard revisions, and priorities for statewide education programs. An update on the progress of resolving the conditional approval status of the *Texas Coastal NPS Pollution Control Program* was discussed as well. Other updates included the current status of both agencies' watershed protection plans (WPP), total maximum daily loads (TMDL), and recreational use attainability analysis (RUAA) projects, status of the FY2013 and FY2014 CWA §319(h) NPS grant Request-for-Proposals, and waterbody restoration success stories.

On June 6, 2013, TSSWCB SRM staff [Ashley Alexander, Mitch Conine] participated in the Texas Surface Water Quality Monitoring Guidance Advisory Workgroup meeting in Austin. This workgroup advises the TCEQ on revisions to the Guidance for Assessing and Reporting Surface Water Quality in Texas. The Guidance is

then used to evaluate data and information for development of the Texas Integrated Report of Surface Water Quality for Clean Water Act Sections 305(b) and 303(d). Topics discussed at the meeting included an update on water quality standards; results from the 2012 water quality assessment; and an overview of the process and goals for the upcoming 2014 assessment. There were also some revisions to assessment procedures discussed including: drought considerations, total dissolved solids (TDS) analysis, oyster water's, spatially comprehensive, fecal coliform and single sample, and orthophosphorus assessments.

More information on this Guidance Advisory Workgroup is available at <http://www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/assessment/swqmgawg.html>.

Coastal Bend, Bays and Estuaries Program

The 75 miles of estuarine environment along the Texas Coastal Bend, including Aransas Bay, Corpus Christi Bay, Baffin Bay and the Upper Laguna Madre, are of national importance and, through the federal CWA §320, are included in the National Estuary Program administered by the EPA. The Bays Council is the stakeholder advisory group that coordinates the implementation of the *Coastal Bend Bays 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 Water and Sediment Quality Implementation Team.

On June 12, 2013 SRM staff [Brian Koch] attended a Baffin Bay Workgroup meeting in Corpus Christi. This meeting was held to update the group on several ongoing projects and potential new projects in Baffin Bay. Also, discussion took place on all of these including the potential for additional water quality monitoring and a WPP.

More information is available at <http://www.cb bep.org/>. The implementation of the *Coastal Bend Bays Plan* affects agricultural operations in watersheds that drain to these estuaries in Refugio, Bee, McMullen, Live Oak,

Jim Wells, Duval, Brooks, Kenedy, Kleberg, Nueces, San Patricio, and Aransas Counties.

Water Quality Planning and Implementation

STATE DISTRICT I

E.V. Spence Reservoir*

Impairment: Salinity
Mechanism: TMDL, I-Plan
Lead: TCEQ

On May 22, 2013, TSSWCB SRM staff [Jana Lloyd] attended an Implementation Evaluation meeting for a TMDL for Stream Segment 1426, Colorado River below E.V Spence Reservoir in Ballinger. Discussion centered on updating and revising the I-Plan and how to re-engage the watershed coordination committee.

More information is available at <http://www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/tmdl/04-spence.html>. This TMDL and I-Plan affect agricultural operations in the E.V. Spence Reservoir watershed in Borden, Coke, Howard, Mitchell, Nolan, Scurry, and Sterling Counties.

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; State \$861,714*

On June 4, 2013, TSSWCB SRM staff [Ashley Alexander] attended the Leona River Public Meeting in Uvalde. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the RUAA 30-day public comment period and provide results from the load duration curve (LDC) and spatially explicit load enrichment calculation tool (SELECT) modeling efforts. Input from the stakeholders was solicited on the modeling results.

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

Pecos River

Impairment: Dissolved Oxygen
Concern: Salinity
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB
Project: "Implementing Components of the Watershed Protection Plan for the Pecos River in Texas", Texas Water Resources Institute, Crockett SWCD #235, Upper Pecos SWCD #213; Federal \$1,499,859/ External \$526,956
Project: "Implementing the Pecos River Watershed Protection Plan through Continuous Water Quality Monitoring and Dissolved Oxygen Modeling", Texas Water Resources Institute; Federal \$224,826/ External \$152,050
Project: "Implementing the Pecos River Watershed Protection Plan through a Heliborne Electromagnetic (EM) Survey", Texas Water Resources Institute/ Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources; Federal \$378,320/External \$210,681

On June 4-5, 2011, TSSWCB SRM staff [Mitch Conine] and field staff [Ben Wilde] attended public meetings in Imperial, Iraan, Ozona, and Pecos. Project personnel presented the draft WPP update. The update is out for public comment until July 22, 2013. The draft dissolved oxygen modeling results were another topic that was discussed. The WPP update and draft model results can be found on the project website. A brief update on the status of WQMP's was provided by the Upper Pecos SWCD technician. The final topic discussed was the upcoming heliborne electromagnetic survey (HEM). This survey will help identify areas where saline groundwater intrusion to the river is occurring. The project website can be found at <http://pecosbasin.tamu.edu/>.

More information is available at <http://pecosbasin.tamu.edu/>. This WPP affects agricultural operations in the Pecos River watershed in Andrews, Brewster, Crane, Crockett, Culberson, Ector, Jeff Davis, Loving, Pecos, Presidio, Reagan, Reeves, Terrell, Upton, Val Verde, Ward and Winkler Counties.

River Authority; Federal \$292,421/
External \$191,435

On June 10, 2013, TSSWCB SRM [Jana Lloyd] attended the Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Watershed Partnership meeting. The meeting focused on a Navarro High School Student Research project on Geronimo Creek, drought forecast and an overview of the First annual cleanup event.

South and North Llano Rivers

Impairment: None
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB
Project: "Development of the Upper Llano River Watershed Protection Plan", Texas Water Resources Institute; Federal \$666,167/ External \$447,239

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.

A Texas Well Owner Network training took place in Junction on June 1, 2013. Over 40 people attended the training that was sponsored by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Texas Water Resource Institute and TSSWCB. The training focused on water quality issues in the Upper Llano River Watershed, as well as help 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 your water supply. More information on the Texas Well Owner Network Program is available at <http://twon.tamu.edu/>.

Lower Nueces River

Impairment: None
Concern: Chlorophyll-a, Nutrients, Sediment
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: Third Party
Projects: "Development of the Lower Nueces River Watershed Protection Plan", Nueces River Authority; Federal \$309,727/External \$248,968

More information is available at <http://southllano.org/>. This project has the potential to affect farming and livestock operations in the South Llano River watershed in Edwards, Kerr, Kimble, Menard, Real and Sutton Counties.

On June 11, 2013, TSSWCB SRM staff [Jana Lloyd and Pamela Casebolt] attended the Nueces River Watershed Partnership Stakeholder meeting in Corpus Christi. Discussion centered on project timeline and potential draft ground rules for the steering committee. Other presentations included large debris survey status update, OSSF survey status update and overview of the river and tire cleanup and the CR 73 cleanup.

STATE DISTRICT III

Geronimo Creek

Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB
Project: "Water Quality Monitoring in the Geronimo Creek Watershed and Facilitation of the Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Watershed Partnership", Guadalupe-Blanco

More information, including the draft *Source Water Protection Plan*, is available at <http://www.nuecesriverpartnership.org/>. This WPP has the potential to affect livestock and farming operations in the Lower Nueces River watershed below Lake Corpus Christi in Jim Wells, Nueces, and San Patricio Counties.

Lower San Antonio River

Impairment: Bacteria
Mechanism: TMDL
Lead: TCEQ
Project: "San Antonio River Watershed Implementation Conservation

Initiative”, TSSWCB and NRCS;
External \$214,010/ State \$71,336

Caldwell-Travis SWCD #304;
Federal \$49,360

A Feral Hog Management Workshop took place in Floresville on May 31, 2013. Over 140 individuals attended this workshop that was put on by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service with a CWA §319(h) NPS grant from EPA and the TSSWCB. 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. Topics covered feral hog basic biology in the Lower San Antonio River, laws and regulations, current research, and control methods for this invasive exotic species including hunting and trapping. Additional information on feral hog management is available at http://www.extension.org/feral_hogs.

More information is available at <http://www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/tmdl/34-lowersanantoniobac.html>. This TMDL affects livestock operations in the Lower San Antonio River watershed in Karnes, Goliad, Refugio, DeWitt, Wilson, Victoria, and Guadalupe 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”,

On June 6, 2013, TSSWCB SRM staff [Jana Lloyd] Field Representative [Tony Franklin] and Regional office staff [Lawrence Brown] attended a Caldwell-Travis SWCD #304 meeting to discuss the FY 13 proposal for a District technician for the Plum Creek Watershed. Other items discussed was the water quality management plan update and survey.

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

Double Bayou

Impairment: Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen
Mechanism: WPP
Lead: TSSWCB
Project: “Development of a Watershed Protection Plan for Double Bayou”, Houston Advanced Research Center; Federal \$1,023,614/ External \$388,149

On May 21, 2013, TSSWCB SRM staff [Ashley Alexander, Mitch Conine] attended and presented at the Double Bayou Watershed Stakeholder Kick-off meeting in Hankamer. Over 40 local stakeholders attended the first public meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the concept of a watershed, water quality basics, and the watershed planning process. An overview of the current WPP project, its context and partners were also explained to attendees.

On June 12, 2013, TSSWCB SRM staff [TJ Helton] attended the Trinity Bay SWCD #434 meeting in Winnie. Discussion was held on the Double Bayou WPP project currently underway. SWCD directors and local landowners were able to provide feedback on the WPP process and the watershed in general.

More information is available at <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/watersheds#doublebayou>. This WPP has the potential to affect agricultural operations in the Double Bayou watershed in Chambers and Liberty Counties.

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

On June 13, 2013, TSSWCB SRM staff [Pamela Casebolt] attended the Lampasas River Watershed Partnership Steering Committee meeting in Lampasas. Discussion centered on changes made to the WPP following public comment, active grant proposals and future funding opportunities, the new feral hog program in the watershed, as well as upcoming educational/outreach events.

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.

STATEWIDE PROJECTS (NOT WATERSHED-SPECIFIC)

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

A Texas Watershed Steward workshop took place in Fredericksburg on May 22, 2013. Over 40 people attended the workshop that was sponsored by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and TSSWCB, in coordination with the Hill Country Alliance and the Lower Colorado River Authority. The training, focused on the Pedernales River Watershed, discussed 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 workshop included an overview of water quality and watershed management in Texas. More information on the

Texas Watershed Steward Program is available at <http://tw.s.tamu.edu/>.

Project: "Statewide Delivery of Riparian and Stream Ecosystem Education Program", Texas Water Resources Institute/Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources; Federal \$317,486/External \$207,973

On May 28-30, 2013, TSSWCB SRM staff [Wesley Gibson] attended the Southwest Stream Restoration Conference in San Antonio. This conference featured presentations on the Clean Water Act, riparian management, urban and rural stream management and its impact on water quality, rangeland management, riparian habitat, pasture and hay management, and wildlife habitat management. This three day conference was a chance to exchange ideas and techniques on all aspects of managing water quality. The Southwest Stream Restoration Conference was sponsored by The Resource Institute Inc.

Upcoming Public Meetings

- July 10, 2013 – Buffalo Creek RUAA meeting (Iowa Park)
- July 11, 2013 – Paradise Creek RUAA meeting (Vernon)
- July 18, 2013 – Double Bayou WPP Stakeholder Meeting (Double Bayou)
- July 22, 2013 – Sweetwater Creek RUAA Meeting (Wheeler)
- July 23, 2013 – Dixon Creek RUAA Meeting (Borger)
- July 30, 2013 – Watershed Coordinator Roundtable (Dallas)
- August 1, 2013 – Upper Llano River Coordination Committee Meeting (Junction)
- August 21, 2013 – Texas Watershed Steward Workshop, Leon River (Hamilton)

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. All FY2011 funds have been utilized.

Structural Repair Grant Program Update

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 all six flood control dams.

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. 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>

Monthly Program News and Activities is published by the TSSWCB for use by Texas SWCD Directors. If you have any questions regarding its contents, or have information you would like to see in a future issue, please call (254) 773-2250.



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

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.

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