

SCHEDULE F: AGENCY WORKFORCE PLAN

TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

WORKFORCE PLAN

FISCAL YEARS 2025 TO 2029



JUNE 2024

I. Agency Overview (Strategic Direction)

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) was created in 1939 by the Texas Legislature to organize the State into SWCDs and to serve as a centralized agency for communicating with the Texas Legislature as well as other state and federal entities. Each SWCD is an independent political subdivision of state government and is governed by five directors elected by rural landowners. Local SWCDs are actively involved throughout the State in soil and water conservation activities such as operation and maintenance of flood control structures; sponsoring pesticide workshops, producer field days, land and range judging contests, and scholarships; and securing money for the construction of outdoor classrooms.

Headquartered in Temple, a seven-member State Board governs the TSSWCB. The State Board is composed of two Governor appointees and five landowners elected from across Texas by the local SWCD Directors. The TSSWCB is the lead state agency for the planning, management, and abatement of agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source water pollution and administers the Water Supply Enhancement Program. The TSSWCB maintains regional offices in strategic locations in the State to help carry out the agency's responsibilities.

Mission

It is the mission of the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB), working in conjunction with local soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs), to encourage the wise and productive use of natural resources. It is our goal to ensure the availability of those resources for future generations so that all Texans' present and future needs can be met in a manner that promotes a clean, healthy environment and strong economic growth.

Philosophy

The TSSWCB will act in accordance with the highest standards of ethics, accountability, efficiency, and openness. We affirm that the conservation of our natural resources is both a public and a private benefit, and we approach our activities with a deep sense of purpose and responsibility. We believe the existing unique organizational structure of SWCDs, whereby owners and operators of the state's farm and grazing lands organize and govern themselves through a program of voluntary participation, is the most realistic and cost-effective means of achieving the State's goals for the conservation and wise use of its natural resources.

Strategic Goals and Objectives

- Soil and Water Conservation Assistance– Provide program expertise, financial assistance and technical guidance to all Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Administer a Program for Abatement of Agricultural Nonpoint Source Pollution–Reduce agricultural/Silvicultural nonpoint source pollution with prevention program

- Protect and Enhance Water Supplies–Conserve and enhance water supplies for the State of Texas
- Indirect Administration–Indirect Administration

Core Business Functions

The agency’s core business functions of each area are as follows:

Board

Executive Administration

SWCD Field Services

TSSWCB Programs

- *Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs*
- *Invasive Species*
- *Water Supply Enhancement and Carrizo Cane Eradication*
- *Flood Control*
- *Water Quality Management Plans and Poultry Water Quality Management*
- *Nonpoint Source Management*
- *Communications and Outreach*

Operations and Fiscal Services

- *Accounting*
- *Human Resources and Payroll*
- *Information Resources and Technology*

II. Current Workforce Profile (Supply Analysis)

In fiscal year 2023, the TSSWCB employed a total of 73 employees, which includes 11 new hires and 9 separated employees. As of March 2024, the TSSWCB is currently staffed with 73 (71.4 FTEs) employees and has a current operating budget of approximately \$130 million for the biennium.

Location of Employees

There are 27 employees located at Headquarters in Temple, Texas, while the other 46 employees are located throughout the state either in remote or regional offices.

Workforce Demographics

Gender

In fiscal year 2023, the TSSWCB workforce was 58% male and 42% female, as shown in figure 1. The TSSWCB's leadership is

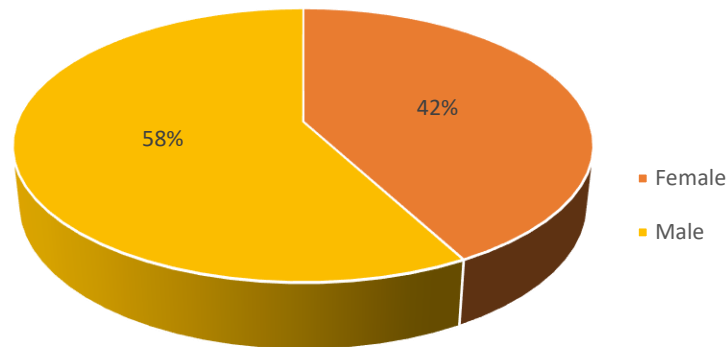


Figure 1. Percentages of male and female population employed at the TSSWCB.
Chart includes Full-Time & Part-Time Employees

Age

Figure 2 illustrates that 70% of TSSWCB's employees are age 40 or older.

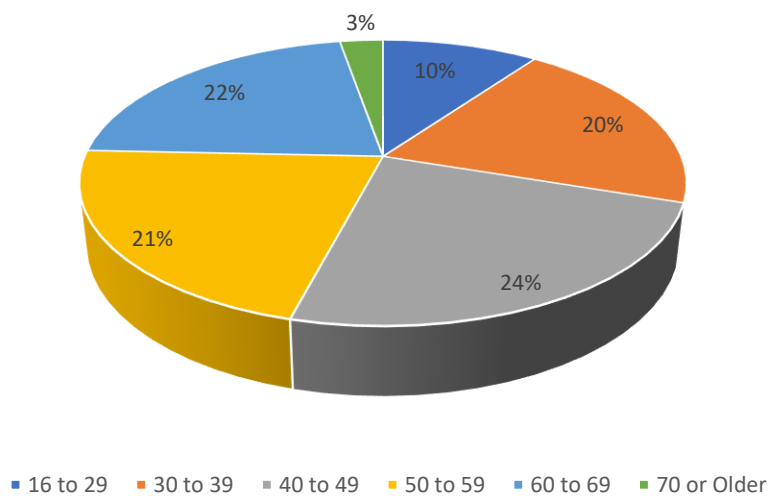


Figure 2. Employees breakdown in age group employed at the TSSWCB.
Chart includes Full-Time & Part-Time Employees

Ethnicity

Figure 3 shows the agency's ethnicity.

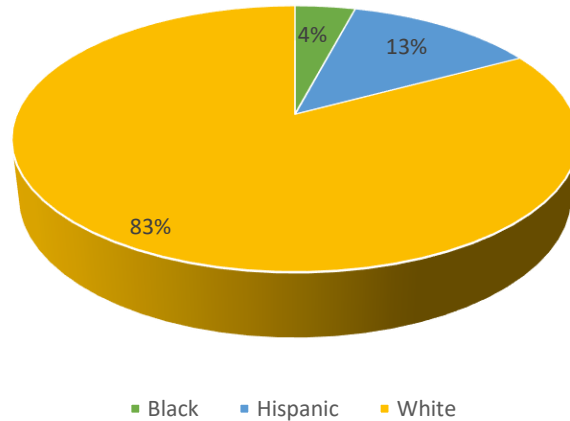


Figure 3. Employees breakdown in ethnicity employed at the TSSWCB.
Chart includes Full-Time & Part-Time Employees

Length of Service

In Figure 4, 33% of employees have less than 10 years of service. These employees have the potential for continued service with the agency. 67% of employees have 10+ years of service and have the ability to serve as mentors to the other staff.

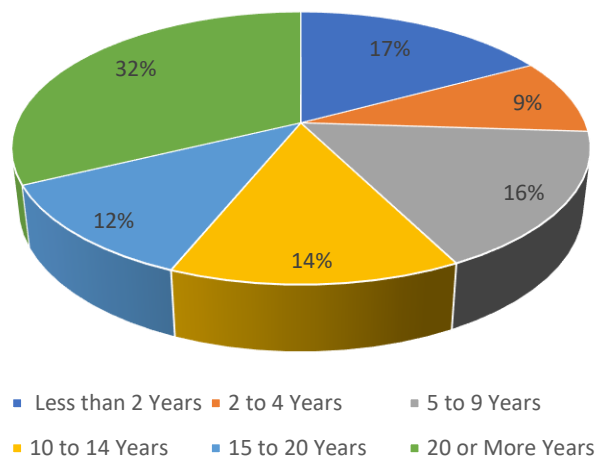


Figure 4. Total years of service for each employee.
Chart includes Full-Time & Part-Time Employees

Veterans

Veterans comprise 5.48% of the TSSWCB in the second quarter of fiscal year 24.

Retirement Eligibility

Since 46% of TSSWCB's employees are 50 years of age or older, retirement eligibility accounts for a considerable part of employees leaving the agency. Also, because 24% of the agency's employees are between the ages of 40 and 49, in the next few years, retirement will become even more impactful. The agency could experience a potential loss of approximately 46% of the agency's employees as they could retire in the next 3 years. 1 employee is currently a return-to-work retiree (part-time).

These employees have helped to further establish and improve the agency, and it is important to ensure that this knowledge and organizational experience is not lost. The agency will be working on developing employees along with succession planning, as well as overall staffing, cross training, and workload issues to address this potential change.

Employee Turnover

Turnover is an important issue in any agency, and TSSWCB is no exception. Figure 5 compares the TSSWCB turnover to that of the State over the last five fiscal years. For the last five fiscal years, TSSWCB's employee turnover rate has remained substantially less than the statewide average for turnover. In the next five years, the agency anticipates higher turnover rates due to retirements based on the agency's demographics. The agency could also experience increased turnover if employees are targeted from outside entities.



Figure 5. Employee Turnover Rate including interagency transfers at the TSSWCB compared to Statewide.

Workforce Skills Critical to the Mission and Goals of the Agency

Although the TSSWCB has qualified employees, there are several critical skills that are important to the agency's ability to operate. Without these skills the agency could not accomplish its basic services. These skills are listed below:

- High ethical and moral values
- Strong work ethic
- Professionalism
- Developing and promoting voluntary approaches
- Working with locally elected SWCD directors
- Coordinating activities of SWCDs
- Providing a liaison with SWCDs
- Knowledge of legislative processes
- Knowledge of applicable state and federal laws
- Interpreting legal statutes
- Strategic planning
- Providing liaison with other local, state, and federal agencies and interest groups
- Performance management
- Negotiation and facilitation
- Stakeholder group facilitation
- Invasive species management
- Endangered species management
- Carrizo Cane management
- Conservation Planning
- Developing Water Quality Management Plans
- Water quality management on commercial poultry operations
- Providing technical assistance
- Agronomic expertise
- Expertise in soil science
- Engineering expertise
- Integrated watershed protection planning
- Geo-spatial data manipulation
- Research and data analysis
- Interpretation of hydrologic data, research, and computer modeling studies
- Environmental data quality management
- Water quality pollutant load reduction characterization
- Grant management
- Project/Contract management
- Technology advances in agricultural best management practices
- Database development and maintenance
- Data and information management
- Web application development and delivery
- Strategic Human Resources
- Customer service
- Educating clientele

III. Future Workforce Profile (Demand Analysis)

The ultimate goal is to ensure continuity of task performance in each area and program at TSSWCB. Employees approaching retirement eligibility should work with management to ensure training and development of replacements to be consistent with the succession plan for their program area.

TSSWCB workforce changes are anticipated to be driven by goals, strategies, performance measures, technology, work, workloads, work processes, program related federal grants, and federal contract programs.

The knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform specific functions and tasks within the agency requires an educated staff that has extensive information technology, project management, managerial and professional training. Written and verbal proficiency is essential in all agency positions. Individual skill development will also need to be accommodated to recruit, train, retain, and motivate workers.

Future Workforce Skills Needed

Projected future workforce knowledge needed includes the following:

- Developing and promoting voluntary approaches
- Working with locally elected SWCD directors
- Coordinating activities of SWCDs
- Providing a liaison with SWCDs
- Knowledge of legislative processes
- Knowledge of applicable state and federal laws
- Interpreting legal statutes
- Strategic planning
- Providing liaison with other local, state, and federal agencies and interest groups
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- Technology advances in agricultural best management practices
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Strategy to Address Changing Workforce Needs

The strategic vision anticipates annual technological advances requiring knowledge and skill improvement. TSSWCB anticipates information will be processed faster and more accurately allowing for smooth transitions during staff changes. TSSWCB foresees more electronic document exchange, more accountability, and more reporting requirements.

TSSWCB also projects an increase in involvement addressing agriculture, silvicultural, and nonpoint source pollution concerns, water supply enhancement and brush control activities, flood control, invasive species management and control, endangered/threatened species management, and contracting to provide technical services for federal agriculture programs.

It is also recognized that additional future changes to strategies and goals are contingent on legislative activities, new initiatives defined by the TSSWCB, and changes in state and federal laws. Economic trends in the marketplace would dictate our ability to retain and recruit employees with competitive job skills.

Critical Functions

The TSSWCB's critical functions include:

- Providing conservation assistance to landowners with emphasis on water quality and water quantity
- Providing assistance to 2,000 Watershed Dams to ensure the protection of public safety and infrastructure
- Conducting carrizo cane control activities along the international border to enhance border security
- Manage federal funding
- Providing conservation assistance to eliminate agricultural runoff from polluting public waterways

To successfully complete these critical functions, TSSWCB recognizes the need to maintain and improve current expertise and skill levels in the following areas:

- Financial Reporting
- Budgeting
- Engineering services
- Communications
- Technical planning
- Information Technology
- Conservation Planning
- Computer Programing
- Cybersecurity Protocol
- Customer service
- Public service
- Contract management
- Technical writing
- Governmental Relations
- Human Resources
- Procurement
- Nutrient Management

IV. Gap Analysis

The projected retirement or loss of employees in technical and professional areas has the potential to create a shortage of expertise in various areas. Mentoring, coaching, cross training, and succession planning along with improved on-the-job training has taken on greater importance. The increased alliance on information technology requires lifetime learning for all employees.

Changes We Anticipate in Our Workforce

- Expansion of Rio Grande Carrizo cane control and border security activities
- Addressing flood control infrastructures
- Addressing mandated deadlines/requirements for Poultry operations
- Emerging technology
- Increased emphasis on endangered/threatened species

Expected Workforce Changes

- More direct relation with producers
- Increased use of technology to revise, increase efficiencies, streamline work processes enabling better communication between mobile staff members and an increasing mobile public
- Employees cross-trained in functional areas
- Attrition due to possible staff retirements

Anticipated Surplus or Shortage of Workers or Skills

- Expect current staff changes as a result of potential retirements
- Anticipated potential retirements will impact workforce and programs
- Agency knowledge and expertise anticipated as a shortage of skills as a result of potential retirements
- Increased demands to be addressed by reallocation of workload within the agency

V. Strategic Development

TSSWCB is utilizing succession planning by identifying key positions and focusing on encouraging individual advancement of employees who demonstrate talent through high performance, potential, willingness to take on additional tasks, and training and knowledge of various programs. The goal is to preserve and manage knowledge essential to the agency. The TSSWCB will monitor the needs of the agency and make adjustments to address competency and skill gaps that might occur due to staffing changes or new technological needs.

Our strategies to address gaps in our workforce agency-wide include: (dependent upon budget constraints) adequate salary; merit increases; monetary and non-monetary rewards for performance; flex time; telecommuting; career, leadership, and professional development; cross training, contract workers; and increased participation in agency programs. When possible, a mentoring process whereby replacement employees are hired prior to the current employee retiring, contingent upon FTE issues is utilized as needed. A continual review of the agency's Workforce Plan is conducted as business goals change.