TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

75TH ANNIVERSARY 1939-2014

Protecting and Enhancing Natural Resources for Tomorrow

Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board

Agency Strategic Plan Fiscal Years 2015-2019

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Temple, Texas 76502

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www.tsswcb.texas.gov

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AGENCY STRATEGIC PLAN

FOR THE FISCAL YEARS 2015-2019

BY

TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

MEMBERS	DATES OF TERM	HOMETOWN
Marty H. Graham, Chairman	May 6, 2014 – May 3, 2016	Rocksprings
Scott Buckles, Vice-Chairman	May 7, 2013 – May 5, 2015	Stratford
Barry Mahler, Member	May 7, 2013 – May 5, 2015	Iowa Park
José Dodier, Jr., Member	May 7, 2013 – May 5, 2015	Zapata
Jerry D. Nichols, Member	May 6, 2014 – May 3, 2016	Nacogdoches
Larry D. Jacobs, Member	February 1, 2012 – February 1, 2014	Montgomery
Joe L. Ward, Member	February 1, 2013 – February 1, 2015	Telephone

JUNE 23, 2014

SIGNED: _____

Charles "Rex" Isom, Executive Director

APPROVED: _____

Marty H. Graham, Chairman

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List of Acronyms

AFO	Animal Feeding Operation
ATSWCD	Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts
BMP	Best Management Practice
CCAC	Coastal Coordination Advisory Committee
CCC	Coastal Coordination Council
CMP	Coastal Management Program
Corps	United States Army Corps of Engineers
CRP	Clean Rivers Program
CWA	Clean Water Act
CZARA	Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments
CZMA	Coastal Zone Management Act
DQO	Data Quality Objective
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
FOTG	Field Office Technical Guide
GR	General Revenue
HB	House Bill
HUB	Historically Underutilized Business
I-PLAN	Implementation Plan
IT	Information Technology
LAR	Legislative Appropriations Request
LBB	Legislative Budget Board
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NPS	Nonpoint Source
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
PL	Public Law
QA	Quality Assurance
QAPP	Quality Assurance Project Plan
QMP	Quality Management Plan
RFP	Request for Proposals
SB	Senate Bill
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SRM	Statewide Resource Management
SWCD	Soil and Water Conservation District
TCEQ	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
TDA	Texas Department of Agriculture
TFS	Texas A&M Forest Service
TGPC	Texas Groundwater Protection Committee
TISCC	Texas Invasive Species Coordinating Committee
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load
TPDES	Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
TPWD	Texas Parks and Wildlife Association
TSSWCB	Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board
TWDB	Texas Water Development Board
TXDOT	Texas Department of Transportation
USDA-NRCS	United States Department of Agriculture-Natural Resource Conservation Service
WPP	Watershed Protection Plan
WQMP	Water Quality Management Plan

THE MISSION OF TEXAS STATE GOVERNMENT

Texas state government must be limited, efficient, and completely accountable. It should foster opportunity and economic prosperity, focus on critical priorities, and support the creation of strong family environments for our children. The stewards of the public trust must be men and women who administer state government in a fair, just, and responsible manner. To honor the public trust, state officials must seek new and innovative ways to meet state government priorities in a fiscally responsible manner.

Aim high . . .we are not here to achieve inconsequential things!

THE PHILOSOPHY OF TEXAS STATE GOVERNMENT

The task before all state public servants is to govern in a manner worthy of this great state. We are a great enterprise, and as an enterprise, we will promote the following core principles:

- First and foremost, Texas matters most. This is the overarching, guiding principle by which we will make decisions. Our state, and its future, is more important than party, politics, or individual recognition.
- Government should be limited in size and mission, but it must be highly effective in performing the tasks it undertakes.
- Decisions affecting individual Texans, in most instances, are best made by those individuals, their families, and the local government closest to their communities.
- Competition is the greatest incentive for achievement and excellence. It inspires ingenuity and requires individuals to set their sights high. Just as competition inspires excellence, a sense of personal responsibility drives individual citizens to do more for their future and the future of those they love.
- Public administration must be open and honest, pursuing the high road rather than the expedient course. We must be accountable to taxpayers for our actions.
- State government has a responsibility to safeguard taxpayer dollars by eliminating waste and abuse and providing efficient and honest government.
- Finally, state government should be humble, recognizing that all its power and authority is granted to it by the people of Texas, and those who make decisions wielding the power of the state should exercise their authority cautiously and fairly.

PRIORITY GOAL

To conserve and protect our state's natural resources (air, water, land, wildlife, and mineral resources) by:

- Providing leadership and policy guidance for state, federal, and local initiatives;
- Maintaining Texas' status as a leader in agriculture; and
- Encouraging responsible, sustainable economic development.

BENCHMARKS

- Percentage of nitrogen oxide and criteria pollutants reduced in the air
- Acre-feet of desalinated brackish and ocean water produced for Texas
- Percentage of water conservation through decreased water usage, increased water reuse and brush control
- Percentage of Texas waters that meet or exceed safe water quality standards
- Percentage of polluted site clean-ups to protect the environment and public health
- Percentage of regulatory permits processed while ensuring appropriate public input
- Percentage of environmental violations tracked and reported
- Percentage of land that is preserved and accessible through continuation of public and private natural and wildlife areas
- Percentage of renewable energy usage and production of domestic fuel sources
- Percentage of implemented new technologies that provide efficient, effective, and value-added solutions for a balanced Texas ecosystem
- Percentage increase of exported food and fiber from Texas
- Percentage increase of Texas food and fiber in Texas markets, including diversified and nontraditional agriculture products
- Number of animal disease outbreaks
- Number of food safety incidents from farm to fork
- Number of family farms
- Number of farms using cutting edge conservation techniques
- Number of farms producing non-food grade feedstocks for biofuel production
- Average time required in responding to natural disasters such as wildfires and hurricanes
- Average time required for producers to recover and begin production after natural or man-made disasters
- Number of jobs created or retained in rural communities through state investment
- Percentage contribution of agricultural sector to the gross state product
- Total acreage farmed for diversified, nontraditional agriculture products

TSSWCB MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

Agency 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.

Agency Philosophy

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board 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 soil and water conservation districts, 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.

EXTERNAL/ INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Overview of Agency Scope and Functions

Statutory Basis and Historical Perspective

National Background

In the early history of the United States, the conservation of soil and water resources was not often a consideration of those involved in agriculture. Land was cleared and put into farm production. When the land ceased producing at a profitable level, the farmers merely moved on to new land farther west and started the process over again. There was no need to be concerned with soil conservation, as there was a seemingly unlimited supply of virgin land waiting to be tilled. This process continued through the 1800s and into the early 1900s. With the outbreak of World War I, farmers in the Great Plains states were encouraged to break up native grassland to grow wheat and other foodstuffs to feed the nation and the world. As a result of these and other unwise management practices, and the fact that the farmlands were experiencing long periods of drought, the 1930s produced some of the worst dust storms the nation had ever seen.

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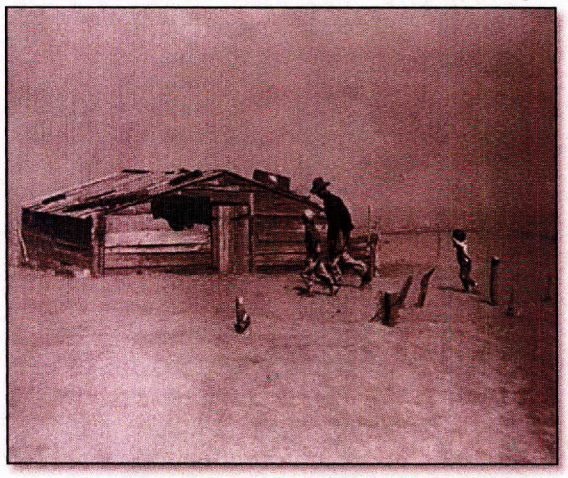


Arthur Rothstein, Fleeing a Dust Storm (1936)

Clouds of dust rolled across the plains states sending dust storms through the south and into the nation's capitol. At the same time, the nation was in the midst of a great economic depression. The federal government, seeking ways to put people back to work and encourage conservation, created the Civilian Conservation Corps and Soil Erosion Service. Through these mechanisms, demonstration projects were initiated to train technicians and to educate the public in ways to conserve soil resources. These programs were successful in putting people back to work, but lacked the local ties to establish lasting conservation programs.

One of the early leaders in the national effort to control soil erosion was Hugh Hammond Bennett from North Carolina. After graduation

from the University of North Carolina in 1903, Hugh Bennett took a job with the Bureau of Soils in the United States Department of Agriculture. Because of his experience, scientific knowledge and leadership ability, he was put in charge of the Soil Erosion Service when it was created in 1933. In 1935, Public Law (P.L.) 46 was passed creating the Soil Conservation Service within the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Hugh Bennett became the first Chief of the agency. He soon became internationally known for his accomplishments in conservation work.

With the help of Congressman Buchannan from Columbus, Texas, Hugh Bennett was able to persuade President Franklin Roosevelt that the soil resources of this nation were being wasted. He convinced the President that a Model Soil Conservation Act should be developed and sent to the governors of each state for passage by their state legislatures. The purpose of this Model Act would be to develop programs at the state and local level to control soil erosion.

In 1936, such a Model Act was sent to the governors with the endorsement of President Roosevelt. The Model Act, developed in Washington, was patterned after the Texas Wind Erosion Act, the Grass Conservation Acts in the Northern High Plains and certain water conservation district law.

The Effort Begins in Texas

In 1937, legislation was introduced in the Texas Legislature based on this Model Act. It is reported that as many as 25 different versions of this soil conservation law were considered before a final version was passed. There was much heated discussion of the proposed legislation. When the final version was adopted, the bill contained many undesirable features. The law would have set up Soil Conservation Districts automatically on a county basis and made County Commissioners Courts the governing body. A portion of the county tax was to be used to finance the program and county agricultural agents were to be the administrative officers.

A number of agricultural leaders from across the state had, by this time, become concerned about the newly passed legislation. It was their opinion that, if the responsibility for installing and maintaining conservation measures lay in the hands of the landowners, the control of such a program should also be in their hands. As a result of these and other concerns, a group of landowners led by V.C. Marshall of Heidenheimer, Texas, convinced the Governor to veto the 1937 legislation.

Hard feelings among agricultural leaders resulted from the attempt to pass this soil conservation law. Under the leadership of Mr. Marshall, a concerted effort was made during the interim between legislative sessions to heal the old wounds and to put together a version of a law that would be generally accepted by the farmers and ranchers of Texas. Mr. Marshall organized a committee of leaders from across the state to promote the passage of a new Soil Conservation Law. He traveled many miles at his own expense seeking the views of agricultural leaders and promoting the idea of the Soil Conservation District Program.

The key points Mr. Marshall felt should be included in the new law were that (1) farmers and ranchers should determine whether or not a Soil Conservation District was needed and hold a local option election prior to the establishment of the district; (2) the program should be controlled by landowners; and (3) the Soil Conservation Districts should have no taxing authority or the power of eminent domain.

In 1939, the Texas Legislature passed House Bill (H.B.) 20, which incorporated those features and was the first Soil Conservation Law for the state. The law created the State Soil Conservation Board and allowed for the creation of the Soil Conservation Districts. Mr. Marshall was elected as the first Chairman of the Soil Conservation Board and later resigned to become the first Executive Director of the agency.

The First Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts

On April 30, 1940, the Secretary of the State issued Certificates of Organization for the first 16 Soil Conservation Districts, paving the way for the program we now operate. Today, Texas has 216 local soil and water conservation districts that encompass 100% of the state.

As previously mentioned, the Model Act endorsed by President Roosevelt was in part patterned after the Texas Wind Erosion Act. Texas was already making attempts to address soil conservation as a result of the "Dust Bowl" days of the 1930s. The 44th Legislature in 1935 passed legislation authorizing the establishment of Wind Erosion Conservation Districts. This law provided for the creation of districts to "conserve the soil by prevention of unnecessary erosion caused by winds, and the reclamation of lands that have been depreciated or denuded of soil by reasons of winds." Although a number of Wind Erosion Conservation Districts were created, the passage of the Soil Conservation District Law in 1939 resulted in those districts becoming dormant.

New Responsibilities

In 1975, Governor Dolph Briscoe, by Executive Order, designated the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board as lead agency to assume the planning and management responsibility for control of agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source pollution as required by the Federal Water Pollution Control Act.

In 1981, the 67th Legislature passed H.B. 1436, which for the first time codified the agricultural laws of Texas. Title 7, Chapter 201 of this code contains the portion pertaining to soil and water conservation.

In 1985, the 69th Legislature passed Senate Bill (S.B.) 1083 creating a Brush Control Program in Texas and granting new powers and responsibilities, without funding, to the TSSWCB and SWCDs under Chapter 203 of the Agriculture Code. In 1999, the TSSWCB received its first appropriation for the FY2000-2001 biennium to control water-depleting brush and trees, such as juniper and mesquite. The program received $9.16 million to establish a pilot project in the North Concho River watershed and has received varying amounts of funding for similar projects in five subsequent bienniums.

In 1993, the 73rd Legislature passed S.B. 503, which named the TSSWCB the lead agency to address water quality issues relating to runoff from diffused or nonpoint sources resulting from agricultural and forestry operations. This legislation created a voluntary water quality management plan (WQMP) certification program for landowners. Also, it expanded the TSSWCB's environmental mission and resulted in the agency administering the agricultural and silvicultural components of the state's federally mandated Texas Nonpoint Source Management Program through the Clean Water Act, Section 319(h) grant program.

In 1997, the 75th Legislature passed S.B. 1910, which required all poultry farms to have a Texas

Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)-approved method of dead bird disposal. The law took effect in March 1998. However, the rules were not adopted and did not take effect until fall 1999. It was during this time that requests for poultry WQMPs significantly increased due to pursuit of cost-share for mandated mortality management.

In 2001, the 77th Legislature passed S.B. 1339, which requires all poultry facilities in Texas to operate in accordance with a WQMP certified by the TSSWCB. The review and certification process assures the plan includes appropriate practices, management measures, and schedules of implementation.

In 2003, the 78th Legislature passed Senate Bill 1828, which changed the make-up of the TSSWCB governing board by adding two Governor Appointees to join the five elected board members to create a seven member board. The legislation also required the agency to prepare and deliver a semiannual report relating to the status of the budget areas of responsibility assigned to the board, including outreach programs, grants made and received, federal funding applied for and received, and oversight of SWCD activities.

Senate Bill 1828 also required the TSSWCB to consult with SWCDs in the adoption and administration of the Brush Control Program under Chapter 203 of the Agriculture Code and to consult with the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) in regard to the effects of brush control on water quantity and the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) in regard to the effects of brush control on agriculture. Brush control cost-share was reduced from a maximum of 80% to 70% (not to exceed a total of 80% when combined with a federal program) and made political subdivisions eligible for cost-sharing not to exceed 50% of the total cost. Public lands were made eligible for 100% total cost-share.

For the 2008-2009 biennium, the TSSWCB was provided $1,200,494 in new funds and an additional two FTEs to complement the agency's existing federally- funded Nonpoint Source Grant Program.

During the 81st regular session, the Legislature appropriated $15,000,000 and three FTEs for operation, maintenance, and repair of flood control structures, an additional $677,200 for Conservation Implementation Assistance (Technical Assistance) grants for targeted assistance toward SWCDs engaged in total maximum daily loads and watershed protection plans, and a 5% across the board cost of living increase for all SWCDs. Also, $4,745,218 and one FTE was appropriated for new and existing brush control projects, and one federally-funded FTE was appropriated to perform database development and maintenance, geospatial data management, and geographic information systems. An additional $219,109 was also appropriated for SWCD director mileage reimbursement.

House Bill 4586 from the 81st Legislature, provided $54,664 in supplemental appropriations for district director mileage reimbursements in 2009.

House Bill 865 from the 81st Legislature, established the Texas Invasive Species Coordinating Committee. The committee is composed of the TDA; Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD); Texas AgriLife Extension Service; Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS); TWDB and the TSSWCB. The committee is administratively attached to the TSSWCB and the agency was provided one FTE to coordinate the activities of the committee.

Senate Bill 2534 from the 81st Legislature, established the Task Force on Economic Growth and Endangered Species. The task force is composed of: the Comptroller, the Commissioner of Agriculture, the Executive Director of the TPWD, the Executive Director of the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT), and the Executive Director of the TSSWCB (or their designees).

In 2011, the 82nd Legislature passed H.B. 1808 which extended the TSSWCB's sunset date through September 1, 2023. The agency's sunset legislation required additional goal setting and reporting for grant programs and effectively eliminated the Texas Brush Control Program. The sunset legislation established a new program for the agency, the Water Supply Enhancement Program (WSEP), with the exclusive purpose of increasing available surface and ground water through the selective control of brush species that are detrimental to water conservation. Numerous programmatic requirements, such as requiring feasibility studies and considering the potential water yield prior to initiating a project, were added through House Bill 1808. The agency received an appropriation for the FY2012-2013 biennium of $4.27 million to implement the new WSEP; the program received the same amount of funding in the subsequent biennium. Other events during the 82nd Legislative Session included the reduction of the agency's flood control budget from the previous biennium's total of $15 million to a significantly lower $4 million, and a slight reduction in agency FTEs.

The leaders who framed the Texas Soil and Water Conservation Law in 1939 recognized that landowners and operators of private land constitute the basic resource for the conservation of our renewable natural resources. Without the support and willing participation of private landowners and operators in the development and implementation of soil and water conservation programs, there is little hope of success. Local SWCDs led by farmers and ranchers who know the land and the local conditions and problems have the means to develop conservation plans that address each acre of land specific to its needs to solve or reduce the severity of its problems.

Affected Populations

The services and programs provided by the TSSWCB target rural Texas farmers and ranchers, but the results of these services benefit all Texans. For example, many of the flood control structures maintained by soil and water conservation districts serve to protect heavily populated areas from flood damage, and also prevent sediment from building up in suburban drinking water supplies. Another example is the use of best management practices, implemented through TSSWCB-certified water quality management plans, to prevent pesticides, nutrients, and other contaminants from impairing Texas waters.

Main Functions

Agency Responsibilities

The TSSWCB is the state agency that administers Texas' soil and water conservation law and coordinates voluntary natural resource conservation and nonpoint source (NPS) water pollution abatement programs throughout the state. Headquartered in Temple, Texas, the TSSWCB is charged with offering technical assistance to the state's 216 SWCDs. The TSSWCB continues to promote the stewardship of soil and water resources during the production of food and fiber, while remaining the sentinel Texas agency that protects the rights to such actions against the ever increasing efforts to regulate common everyday aspects of farming and ranching. A seven member State Board

governs the TSSWCB, which is composed of two members appointed by the Governor and five members elected from across Texas by more than 1,000 local SWCD directors through state district conventions; SWCD directors are elected to their positions by agricultural producers and rural landowners within the geographic boundaries of each SWCD. The TSSWCB

- is the lead state agency for the planning, management, and abatement of agricultural and silvicultural (forestry-related) NPS water pollution;
- administers the Water Supply Enhancement Program to increase available surface and ground water through the targeted control of water-depleting brush;
- administers grant programs to SWCDs for conducting operation, maintenance, and repair activities on flood control dams to ensure the network of dams is protecting lives and property;
- and facilitates the Texas Invasive Species Coordinating Committee.

The TSSWCB maintains regional program offices in strategic locations in the state to help carry out the agency's responsibilities.

The 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. Local SWCDs are actively involved throughout the state in soil and water conservation activities such as operation and maintenance of flood control structures, developing voluntary conservation plans for landowners, sponsoring pesticide workshops, producer field days, land and range judging contests and scholarships, and securing money for the construction of outdoor classrooms.

SWCD Assistance

The TSSWCB provides assistance to SWCDs in financial and program matters, as well as the administration of grants. Also, the TSSWCB provides SWCDs with information and guidance on planning and implementing projects and regulatory issues related to NPS pollution. The TSSWCB employs field representatives that regularly meet with SWCDs and provide assistance in areas such as the Texas Open Meetings Act, the Texas Open Records Act, audits and financial reporting, wage and hour laws, and in coordinating programs carried out in neighboring SWCDs. In addition, the TSSWCB assists SWCDs in obtaining funding for a wide variety of special conservation initiatives. The TSSWCB administers a state-funded technical assistance program and provides additional assistance to SWCDs through program offices located in Centerville, Gonzales, Hale Center, Harlingen, Mount Pleasant, Nacogdoches, San Angelo, Dublin, and Wharton.

Flood Control Dam Operation, Maintenance, and Repair Grants to SWCDs

The 81st Legislature appropriated funding to the TSSWCB to administer grant programs to SWCDs for conducting operation, maintenance, and repair activities on the State's approximately 2,000 flood control dams. Local SWCDs, county governments, municipalities, water control and improvement districts, and other special districts are all party to sponsorship agreements across the state whereby they have agreed to perform needed maintenance and repairs on federally designed and constructed flood control dams on private property. The TSSWCB has developed two separate grant programs for delivering these funds to local dam

sponsors. The Flood Control Operation and Maintenance Grant Program focuses on routine up-keep activities, while the Flood Control Structural Repair Grant Program focuses on major repair activities related to dam function. Both programs became effective during fiscal year 2010.

Nonpoint Source Water Pollution Prevention and Abatement

The Texas Legislature and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provide funding to the TSSWCB to administer the agricultural and silvicultural components to the Texas NPS Management Program. The federal funding originates from the Clean Water Act, Section 319(h) grant program, which is split evenly between the TSSWCB and the TCEQ. The TCEQ uses its half of the funding to focus on urban and industrial NPS pollution, while the TSSWCB focuses on rural agricultural and silvicultural NPS pollution. The TSSWCB also receives general revenue from the Legislature to complement and enhance the federally funded activities. The state funding provides a portion of the 40% non-federal match requirement associated with the Clean Water Act, Section 319(h) grant.

Local SWCDs and the TSSWCB employ the Certified Water Quality Management Plan Program as the primary implementation component of the Texas NPS Management Program. This voluntary conservation planning program is based on the United States Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG), which is recognized by state and federal water quality agencies as an effective alternative to water quality permitting on smaller animal feeding operations. It is the decision of the TSSWCB that the implementation of a WQMP based on the NRCS FOTG, including all practices required to minimally meet the resource quality criteria for water quality at the resource management system level, represents the best available technology for ensuring that Texas surface water quality standards are not compromised due to degradation. Through a longstanding conservation partnership between the NRCS, SWCDs, and the TSSWCB, NRCS Field Office personnel certify that each WQMP meets the FOTG definition of a Resource Management System. The TSSWCB also administers a financial incentive program (Senate Bill 503, 1993-73rd Legislature) for program participants to encourage the implementation of WQMPs.

The 77th Legislature introduced a regulatory element into the WQMP Program as it relates to poultry operations. Senate Bill 1339 instituted mandatory participation in the program for all poultry operations in the state. While the legislation stated that all poultry facilities must participate in the program, it was later determined that the intent of the requirement was focused on those facilities not already required to obtain permit coverage from the TCEQ. Certain poultry facilities use liquid waste handling systems that are regulated by the TCEQ under the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES), which requires permitting through delegated federal authority from the EPA. As a result, only dry-litter poultry facilities, or those that do not use liquid waste handling systems, were required to participate in the program. Aside from poultry operations, the WQMP Program remains a voluntary program administered for agricultural or silvicultural lands.

The TSSWCB also works with other state and federal agencies on NPS issues as they relate to water quality standards, total maximum daily loads, watershed protection plans, and the Coastal Management Program. Because the

TSSWCB is the lead Texas agency for agricultural and silvicultural NPS pollution abatement, all other state agencies must coordinate their NPS abatement efforts with the TSSWCB, and the TSSWCB is charged with representing the state before the EPA in such matters.

Water Supply Enhancement Program

Scarcity and competition for water have made sound water planning and management increasingly important in Texas. The availability of water supplies is essential for not only the Texans of today but also for those of tomorrow. Noxious brush, detrimental to water conservation, has invaded millions of acres of rangeland and riparian areas in Texas, reducing or eliminating stream flow and aquifer recharge.

In order to help meet the State's critical water conservation needs and ensure availability of water supplies, the TSSWCB administers the WSEP, through a Program Office in San Angelo and a satellite office in Johnson City. The agency works closely with SWCDs and various state and federal entities to efficiently implement the WSEP.

The purpose of the WSEP is to increase available surface and ground water through the selective control of brush species that are detrimental to water conservation (e.g., juniper, mesquite, saltcedar).

The Program involves the designation of priority watersheds within the state where selective control of brush species will lead to an increase in available surface and/or ground water. Cost-share assistance is made available through the Program to eligible landowners as an incentive to implement brush control activities on eligible acres in priority watersheds.

Statutory Responsibilities to Committees, Councils, and Task Forces

The TSSWCB is a statutorily mandated member of:

- the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee,
- the Coastal Coordination Advisory Committee
- the Interagency Task Force on Economic Growth and Endangered Species
- the Texas Drought Preparedness Council,
- the Prescribed Burning Board,
- the Water Conservation Advisory Council, and
- the Texas Invasive Species Coordinating Committee which is administratively attached to the TSSWCB.

The TSSWCB works to ensure SWCDs and local landowners are adequately represented in matters that could have a significant impact on future conservation and utilization of natural resources.

Program and Function Detail

Conservation Implementation Assistance (Technical Assistance) Grant Program

The Conservation Implementation Assistance Grant Program, commonly referred to as the Technical Assistance Program, was first authorized through an appropriation for the 1984-1985 biennium by the 68th Legislature. The objective of this program is to provide funding to local SWCDs for the purpose of employing soil conservation technicians to provide technical natural resource conservation planning assistance to owners and operators of agricultural or other lands. This work includes gathering supplementary planning data and

information on the physical features of farms and/or ranches, performing survey and layout work, explaining and/or demonstrating methods of applying conservation practices such as contour cultivation, terracing, tree planting, woodland improvement, seasonal or other irrigation practices, range practices, fertilizing, seeding and land preparation operations. The technicians are also responsible for follow-up on the application and maintenance of planned conservation practices.

Over the years, soil erosion and its effects on productivity have been overshadowed by improved crop varieties, fertilizers, better control of pests and diseases and improved seeding and land preparation. Technology increases yields despite losses in topsoil, but does not address the permanent effects to our land. Farmers and ranchers are now dependant on increasingly expensive technology advancements to maintain the improved yields. As rising oil prices continue to impact the costs of agriculture production in the state, installing and maintaining proper conservation practices becomes increasingly important to ensure that the state's farm and ranch land remains productive.

It is the goal of the TSSWCB to ensure that conservation implementation assistance is available to each landowner in the state, and that through this program each acre of land in Texas is utilized within its capabilities and treated according to its needs. As the state population continues to increase, maintaining the productivity of our farm and ranch land becomes more and more vital in meeting the food and fiber needs of the state.

Conservation Assistance Matching Funds Grant Program

In 1969, the Legislature authorized the State Board to provide funds on a dollar-for-dollar matching basis to local SWCDs. These funds are used for daily operating expenses. SWCDs must raise sufficient additional local funds to match the state allocation prior to the receipt of state funds. The TSSWCB has adopted guidelines for the proper use of these funds and the sources that local districts may use to raise matching funds. SWCDs were created without taxing authority which makes it challenging to fund a local soil and water conservation program. The Conservation Assistance Matching Funds Grant Program was the first attempt by the Legislature to appropriate funds on a continuing basis for SWCDs.

Field Representative Function

As the state agency responsible for providing assistance to local SWCDs, the TSSWCB employs field representatives to serve as liaisons to communicate with and coordinate agency assistance programs with local SWCDs. This agency function is vital due to the complexity of coordinating state programs through 216 individual political subdivisions, and the importance that state and federal appropriations are administered in accordance with applicable law and guidelines. Field representatives also serve as legislative liaisons with city, county, state and federal officials and staff to inform them about SWCDs and conservation programs and activities.

Field representatives attend SWCD board meetings on a regular basis and oversee SWCD directors in local program planning, development and implementation and in promoting conservation programs. They confer with SWCD directors on programs and needs of

the SWCD; and provide technical advice in preparation of SWCD programs, workplans, and annual calendars of activities. Field representatives coordinate with and advise SWCDs with the implementation of all agency programs, in addition to all federal conservation programs administered by the United States Department of Agriculture-Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). Field representatives are responsible for being knowledgeable of current rule changes affecting agriculture and conservation and interpret and advise local SWCDs of such changes. They oversee and direct agency SWCD operation activities within their specified geographic area.

Field representatives also analyze and coordinate financial affairs of SWCDs, and provide guidance on proper expenditure of SWCD funds such as bookkeeping and procedures, audit procedures, and purchase and sale of property and equipment. They advise SWCDs on grant procurement and administration and train SWCD employees in proper accounting and reporting procedures. Field representatives provide oversight and monitoring of SWCD reporting activities and train SWCD employees on annual financial statements, IRS forms, Texas Workforce Commission forms, the Open Meetings Act, the Open Records Act and accounting procedures.

Field representatives supervise training and development opportunities for SWCD directors and as well as their employees. They explain TSSWCB policies, programs, state laws, rules and regulations pertaining to operations of SWCDs, and provide information to SWCDs as requested. They explain Conservation Implementation Assistance grants and reporting procedures, Conservation Assistance Matching Funds grants, elections procedures, civil rights issues, state funds, trust funds, and director travel.

Additionally, field representatives refine and advance efficient relations with farmers, ranchers, state and federal representatives, local officials, professional groups and others engaged in promoting conservation programs. They direct and promote public information and education activities in the field, and serve on committees representing SWCDs and the TSSWCB. They also represent SWCDs and the TSSWCB at public meetings.

Other activities include coordinating with and supporting SWCD directors in organizing and conducting youth activities in the field of soil and water conservation such as educational workshops and tours for students. Field representatives oversee planning woodland, soil evaluation, plant identification, range evaluation and wildlife contests and assist with finding locations, workers, and judges. They also serve on organizing committees and help with conducting contests or workshops.

Field representatives supervise and provide leadership and guidance for the development and expansion of soil and water conservation programs within their geographic area such as TSSWCB regional offices, SWCD area associations and conservation workshops. They also set up SWCD area association meetings and banquets, State Board member elections, training workshops, tours, clinics, and area conservation awards programs.

Field representatives coordinate their field activities with TSSWCB administration by attending monthly staff meetings with staff in other agency departments, and advise administration on rule changes, SWCD comments, state board policy, program implementation, and other issues that require knowledge gained from personal contact with districts.

Soil and Water Conservation District Director Mileage and Per Diem Reimbursement Program

As local district directors are volunteers and are not compensated for their time serving on district boards, the Soil and Water Conservation District Director Mileage and Per Diem Program is a program that reimburses them for their travel expenses incurred while performing their duties as specified in Chapter 201, Agriculture Code.

Agriculture Code, Sec. 201.013 states that for the purpose of electing a member to the state board, each state district shall conduct a convention attended by delegates elected from each SWCD in the state district. Section 201.013 (e) specifies that each delegate to a state district convention, or an alternate attending in the place of a delegate, is entitled to a per diem of $30 a day for not more than two days and the state mileage reimbursement rate specified in the General Appropriations Act for travel each way between the county seat of the delegate's residence and the convention site. The state board is required to pay the per diem and travel allowance.

Agriculture Code, Sec. 201.077 specifies that a SWCD director may receive compensation in an amount not to exceed $30 for each day the director attends meetings of the board of directors, plus the state mileage reimbursement rate specified in the General Appropriations Act for travel each way between the residence of the director and a designated meeting place within the boundaries of the SWCD. Section 201.077 (b) further specifies that a director is entitled to be paid quarterly, but may not receive the compensation and mileage allowance for more than five days in any three-month period except as provided for attending an annual meeting or a state district convention. Further, Section 201.077(c) states that two directors are entitled to receive $30 a day for not more than two days, and one director is entitled to receive the state mileage reimbursement rate specified in the General Appropriations Act for travel, while attending the annual statewide meeting of directors.

Soil and Water Conservation Public Education and Information Program

The objective of the Public Information/Education Program is to provide leadership and coordination of information/education programs relating to the TSSWCB and SWCD programs, services, operations and resources. Traditionally, the TSSWCB has prepared and disseminated public information relative to the agency and SWCD functions, programs, events and accomplishments for the public and to farmers and ranchers. TSSWCB staff coordinates seminars, conferences, workshops, displays at trade shows and training for SWCD directors and SWCD employees, conservation professionals, youth groups and other entities. Staff provides guidance to SWCDs with their own individual information/education programs as well as regional and state information/education programs initiated by SWCDs. Staff prepares and disseminates press releases, news stories and printed promotional products. The TSSWCB monitors the use of the publications and use of information. Staff represents the agency as needed with various information/education groups and entities. The TSSWCB has a cooperative agreement with the Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts (ATSWCDs) to provide assistance and help with the organization's information and education efforts.

More recently, the TSSWCB has initiated efforts through social media platforms including

Facebook® and Twitter ®. Through these services, the TSSWCB has expanded its outreach to newer generations while improving its ability to communicate with traditional clientele. Also, for a number of years the agency has prepared a monthly activities update that is distributed to all SWCDs, agency partners, registered clientele, and legislative staff. This monthly update has proven to be a very valuable communication tool.

Flood Control Dam Operation and Maintenance Grant Program

The Flood Control Dam Operation and Maintenance Grant Program is one of two programs the TSSWCB developed in response to an appropriation for the 2010 – 2011 biennium. The Texas Legislature appropriates dollars to the TSSWCB for the operation, maintenance, repair and rehabilitation of approximately 2,000 federally designed and constructed flood control dams in Texas. In order to deliver these dollars, the TSSWCB developed one grant program to address operation and maintenance (O&M) needs, and another to address structural repair needs. The separation of the two activities was done to increase efficiency and flexibility due to the difference in complexity of both the nature of O&M and repair activities, as well as differences in the complexity in the administrative needs. O&M activities are relatively routine and uncomplicated in nature, where structural repair activities are more complicated in that they involve extensive engineering design specifications and more elaborate concurrence requirements from regulatory agencies such as the TCEQ Dam Safety Program. Local soil and water conservation districts, in partnership with other dam sponsors, represent all flood control dams; therefore, the TSSWCB has developed the program to provide "pass-through" grants to SWCDs.

Flood Control Dam Structural Repair Grant Program

The Flood Control Dam Structural Repair Grant Program is the other program the TSSWCB developed in response to the 2010 – 2011 biennium appropriation for operation, maintenance, repair and rehabilitation of approximately 2,000 federally designed and constructed flood control dams in Texas. This program focuses on the most serious structural problems associated with dams that are considered to be in danger of failure under certain precipitation events, and attempts to capture as many federal dollars as possible when available; the USDA-NRCS occasionally receives funds from Congress for programs that offer grants to repair and rehabilitate certain dams; however, each requires 25% to 35% non-federal matching funds, depending on the program. Since the inception of the state program, the TSSWCB has initiated repair work on 19 flood control dams in the most serious condition, while capturing almost $600,000 in federal assistance as well. Based on a 2012 survey, work performed by TSSWCB and USDA-NRCS since then, it is estimated that there are $18 million in remaining O&M needs and $74 million in repair needs on 194 dams.

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 water pollution [CWA, Sec. 319(a)(1)]. If a state fails to develop and acquire approval of a statewide Nonpoint Source Program by the EPA, the EPA is required by federal law to develop a state program in which the state has little or no control over the program's policy or financing [CWA, Sec. 319(d)(3)]. Because the Legislature has

designated the TSSWCB as the lead state agency for activity relating to abating agricultural and silvicultural NPS pollution, the agency is involved in active participation and program management of numerous water quality functions [Sec. 201.026, Agriculture Code]. The Texas NPS Management Program is an omnibus program title and document that encompasses and directs many other function-specific subprograms. The Texas NPS Management Program serves as the State's official roadmap for addressing NPS pollution. The program publication is revised every five years and requires approval by the State Board of the TSSWCB and the Commissioners of the TCEQ. Once each agency has approved the Texas NPS Management Program, the program document is provided to the Governor who then submits the document on behalf of the State to the EPA for approval. The most recent revision was submitted to the Governor in June 2012, and approved by EPA in August 2012.

The Texas NPS Management Program is jointly administered by the TSSWCB and TCEQ. As a result of agricultural and silvicultural NPS pollution being excluded from regulation by permit in the CWA by Congress, the TSSWCB administers the portion of the overall program and subprograms that pertain to agriculture and silviculture, while the TCEQ administers the remaining urban activities in accordance with a memorandum of understanding (MOU) [30 TAC 7.102] and a separate memorandum of agreement (MOA). The MOU sets forth the coordination of jurisdictional authority, program responsibility, and procedural mechanisms for point and nonpoint source pollution programs, while the MOA is a more specific document that addresses total maximum daily loads (TMDLs), TMDL implementation plans (I-Plans), and watershed protection plans (WPPs).

The Texas NPS 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 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. 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.

Programs and functions of the agency that fit within the overall Texas NPS Management Program include:

- NPS Grant Program
- Watershed Protection Plan Program
- Total Maximum Daily Load Program
- Environmental Data Quality Management Function
- Water Quality Management Plan Program
- Poultry WQMP Program
- Water Quality Complaint Resolution Function
- Coastal NPS Pollution Control Program
- Coastal Coordination Advisory Committee Function
- Texas Groundwater Protection Committee Function

There are a handful of other functions which are carried out by TSSWCB staff under the auspices of the TSSWCB's agricultural and silvicultural NPS authority:

The Texas Clean Rivers Program (CRP) is a state fee–funded program for water quality monitoring, assessment, and public outreach administered by the TCEQ. CRP is a collaboration of 15 partner agencies who conduct water quality monitoring and assessments in the 23 river and coastal basins in Texas. Each river or coastal basin is assigned to one of the designated CRP partner agencies. Each CRP partner agency has an established steering committee to set monitoring and assessment priorities within its basin. These committees bring together the diverse interests in each basin and are designed to allow local concerns to be addressed through regional solutions. The Texas Water Code requires the TCEQ and CRP partner agencies to coordinate monitoring and assessment activities with local SWCDs through the TSSWCB. The data generated by CRP partner agencies is used to identify significant long-term water quality trends and characterize water quality conditions. Each CRP partner agency develops and publishes an annual Basin Highlights Report and a five-year Basin Summary Report. The TCEQ also uses CRP-generated data in the biennial assessment conducted for the Texas Integrated Report of Surface Water Quality. Data collected through CRP drives priority setting for the Texas NPS Management Program.

CWA Sections 305(b) and 303(d) require the State to develop and submit the Texas Integrated Report of Surface Water Quality to EPA. The Texas Integrated Report of Surface Water Quality summarizes the status of the State's surface waters, including concerns for public health, fitness for use by aquatic species and other wildlife, and specific pollutants and their possible sources. The 303(d) List identifies waterbodies not attaining water quality standards (i.e., impaired). The TCEQ is the lead agency in the state for overall water quality management and is responsible for the development of the Inventory and List and for their submittal to EPA. The TCEQ has assembled an advisory group to make recommendations on revisions to the Guidance for Assessing and Reporting Surface Water Quality in Texas. The Guidance is used to evaluate data and information for development of the Texas Integrated Report of Surface Water Quality. TSSWCB serves on this advisory group. Further, to finalize the Texas Integrated Report, the TCEQ uses a defined process for receiving public comment. The TSSWCB provides comment to TCEQ on the draft Texas Integrated Report to ensure that probable causes and sources of identified water quality impairments and concerns accurately characterize the potential for contribution from agricultural and silvicultural NPS pollution. The Texas Surface Water Quality Standards establish explicit goals for the quality of

streams, lakes, and bays throughout the state. The Standards are developed to maintain the quality of surface waters in Texas so that it supports public health and enjoyment and protects aquatic life, consistent with the sustainable economic development of the state. Water quality standards identify appropriate uses for the state's surface waters, including aquatic life, contact recreation, and source of public water supply (or drinking water). The Texas Surface Water Quality Standards are codified in Title 30, Chapter 307 of the Texas Administrative Code and are written by the TCEQ under the authority of the CWA and the Texas Water Code. The process of reviewing and revising the standards, generally triennially, is a joint process with the TCEQ, EPA, the general public, other governmental agencies, industries, municipalities, environmental groups, and others. The public and affected state agencies participate in the development and implementation of the Standards through the TCEQ's Surface Water Quality Standards Advisory Work Group. The TSSWCB serves on this Advisory Work Group in order to ensure that the water quality standards are appropriate, credible, and realistic for specific waterbodies. Established Standards drive priority setting for the Texas NPS Management Program.

Coastal Coordination Advisory Committee Function

The Texas Coastal Management Program (CMP) was created to coordinate state, local, and federal programs for the management of Texas' coastal resources. The federally approved program brings approximately $2.2 million in federal Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) funds to Texas annually, most of which goes to state and local entities to implement projects and program activities. The program was originally developed and, until September 1, 2011, managed by the Coastal Coordination Council (CCC).

The CCC underwent the Sunset Review process in 2010. Sunset legislation (SB656) was passed by the 82nd legislature and signed into law by the Governor abolishing the CCC and transferring its functions to the Land Commissioner and the General Land Office. It also established a Coastal Coordination Advisory Committee (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 act took effect on September 1, 2011.

The general structure of the coastal program will be work groups from the agencies and governor appointees to focus on specific projects modeled on the grants workgroup. The main function of the CCAC will be to provide consistency review of federal projects and actions and to provide support to the work groups.

Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program

The federal Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments (CZARA), Section 6217, requires each State with an approved CMP to develop a federally approvable program to control coastal NPS pollution. The CCC appointed a Coastal NPS Pollution Control Program workgroup to develop this document. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the EPA jointly administer the program at the federal level. In Texas, the TSSWCB and the TCEQ hold primary responsibility for the program's development and implementation. Section 6217 calls for implementation of management measures (Section 6217(g)) that will control significant nonpoint sources of pollution to coastal waters. Six source categories are addressed by these measures: agriculture, forestry, urban and developing areas, marinas,

wetland/riparian areas and hydromodification. States can use voluntary approaches combined with existing state authorities to achieve implementation of management measures; however, if the voluntary mechanisms are not effective, states must have backup enforcement authorities in place to ensure that management measures are implemented.

Texas submitted the Texas Coastal NPS Pollution Control Program to EPA and NOAA in December 1998. In July 2003, NOAA and EPA issued conditional approval of the Texas Coastal NPS Pollution Control Program. The agricultural and silvicultural portions of the program were approved without conditions. Texas has five years to meet the remaining conditions to gain full approval of the program. The NPS Work Group developed a list of potential options to address the remaining conditions and submitted it to NOAA and EPA in July, 2008 for approval. In May, 2009 EPA and NOAA requested further information from Texas before lifting the conditions on its approval. They then lifted the hydromodification condition. TCEQ is working closely with GLO and TXDOT to address the remaining conditions based on guidance from EPA. TCEQ has developed a revised On-site Disposal System (OSDS) measure, which GLO submitted to NOAA and EPA in January 2012.

The TSSWCB is responsible for implementing the agricultural and silvicultural management measures of the program. Mechanisms the TSSWCB uses to abate agricultural and silvicultural NPS pollution in the coastal zone include: the agency's Water Quality Management Plan Program, the CWA Section 319(h) NPS Grant Program, the Total Maximum Daily Load Program and the Watershed Protection Plan Program. Fifteen SWCDs are located in the Coastal Management Zone and work with landowners to implement WQMPs.

For over eleven years, more than $300,000 in state appropriations has been spent annually in the coastal zone to provide financial assistance through SWCDs to implement about 2,250 WQMPs on agricultural land.

In addition, many of the WPPs and TMDLs that the TSSWCB is engaged in are in the coastal zone. WPPs being developed or implemented in the Coastal Zone include the Arroyo Colorado, Bastrop Bayou, Armand Bayou, Dickinson Bayou, Cedar Bayou, Double Bayou, San Bernard River, Highland Bayou and Lower Nueces River. TMDLs being developed or implemented in the Coastal Zone include Adams and Cow Bayous, Clear Creek, Copano Bay and Aransas and Mission Rivers, Dickinson Bayou, and Oso Bay and Creek.

Implementation of the silvicultural management measures in the coastal zone is through a CWA Section 319(h) grant to the Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS).

Nonpoint Source Grant Program (State and Federal Funds)

The Nonpoint Source 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. Agricultural and silvicultural NPS pollution abatement activities that can be funded through the NPS Grant Program include the following: implementation of nine-element WPPs and the NPS portion of TMDL I-Plans, surface water quality monitoring, demonstration of innovative BMPs, technical and financial incentives assistance for the development and implementation of WQMPs, public outreach/education, development of nine-element WPPs, and monitoring activities to

determine the effectiveness of specific pollution prevention methods.

The SRM staff, in cooperation with the TCEQ, EPA and other agencies, identify priority areas and activities for the years funding cycle based on the Texas NPS Management Program and the most recently approved Texas Integrated Report of Surface Water Quality. These priorities are identified in a request for proposal (RFP) that is published in the Texas Register and sent to all interested entities. The TSSWCB only releases a portion of the NPS Grant Program funds through the Request For Proposal (RFP) process. Entities submit proposals to TSSWCB for funding consideration through the RFP. The proposals are reviewed, ranked and scored by Statewide Resource Management (SRM) staff based on the published ranking criteria and selection of proposals for funding is determined. The funding not released through the RFP is directly awarded to entities to ensure the highest priority activities receive funding. Projects receiving federal funding must be submitted to EPA for review and approval.

The scopes of work are initiated through contracts for one to three years depending on the funding source. SRM staff provides technical assistance and oversight of all project activities. Overall project progress is continuously monitored by SRM staff through project meetings, conference calls, site visits, stakeholder meetings and field days. Request for reimbursement of project activities are reviewed by SRM staff and forwarded to the Budget and Accounting department for payment processing.

Congress enacted Section 319 of the Clean Water Act in 1987, establishing a national program to control NPS of water pollution. Under section 319(h), State, Territories, and Indian Tribes receive grant money which support a wide variety of activities including technical assistance, financial assistance, education, training, technology transfer, demonstration projects, and monitoring to assess the success of specific NPS implementation projects. Since 1990, Congress has annually appropriated grant funds to States under Section 319(h) to help them to implement those management programs. EPA's allocation to Texas is split evenly between the TSSWCB and the TCEQ. The TCEQ uses it's half of the funding to focus on urban and industrial NPS pollution, while the TSSWCB focuses on rural agricultural and silvicultural NPS pollution.

During the development of the TSSWCB's FY08-FY09 Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR), the agency included an exceptional item to request State General Revenue (GR) to complement the federal money received from EPA to implement the NPS Management Program. These dollars would demonstrate the state's commitment to implementing the NPS Management Program and would allow TSSWCB to leverage additional resources beyond the Section 319(h) funds. The 80th Texas Legislature approved this request and appropriated general revenue funds to the TSSWCB for the purpose of planning, implementing, and managing programs and practices for preventing and abating agricultural and silvicultural NPS water pollution in impaired watersheds. This state funding has proven to be invaluable in drawing down even more Section 319(h) funds from time to time when EPA alerts states that cost-savings have allowed for enhanced allocations. Additionally, these funds allow the State to finance agricultural water quality research when needed, which is something that is not allowable with Section 319(h) funding.

Watershed Protection Plan Program

Watershed Protection Plans are locally-driven efforts that serve as mechanisms for voluntarily addressing complex water quality problems that cross multiple jurisdictions. WPPs are coordinated frameworks for implementing prioritized and integrated water quality protection and restoration strategies driven by environmental objectives. Through the watershed planning process, The TSSWCB encourages stakeholders to holistically address all of the sources and causes of impairments and threats to both surface and ground water resources within a watershed.

WPPs serve as tools to better leverage the resources of local governments, state and federal agencies, and non-governmental organizations. WPPs integrate activities and prioritize implementation projects based upon technical merit and benefits to the community, promote a unified approach to seeking funding for implementation, and create a coordinated public communication and education program. Developed and implemented through diverse, well integrated partnerships with decision-making founded at the local level, a WPP assures the long-term health of the watershed with strategies for protecting unimpaired waters and restoring impaired waters. Adaptive management is used to modify the WPP based on an on-going science-based process involving monitoring and evaluating strategies and incorporating new knowledge into decision-making.

Design for the WPP Program stems from the EPA Guidelines for the CWA Section 319(h) grants, specifically Nonpoint Source Program and Grants Guidelines for States and Territories [68 Federal Register 205 (23 October 2003), pp. 60653-60674]:

"EPA has been working with the States to realign our programs to strengthen our support for watershed-based environmental protection, whereby local stakeholders join forces to develop and implement watershed-based plans that make good sense for the particular conditions found within their communities. The watershed approach is a coordinating framework for management that focuses public and private sector efforts to address the highest priority water-related problems within geographic areas, considering both surface and ground water flow. The watershed approach is commonly characterized by four principles: (a) Diverse, well integrated partnerships; (b) a specific geographic focus; (c) action driven by environmental objectives and by strong science and data; and (d) coordinated priority setting and integrated solutions.

These guidelines are intended to help advance the watershed approach as a means for resolving and preventing nonpoint source pollution problems and threats. In the initial stages of the national nonpoint source program, some States and EPA Regions focused their nonpoint source programs narrowly on demonstrations of particular technologies, supported by Federal Section 319 grants. In upgrading their nonpoint source programs during the last few years, many States have incorporated watershed-based approaches as a significant and sometimes central organizing theme of their programs. As a result, State nonpoint source programs have improved their capacity to solve nonpoint source pollution problems at the watershed scale. At the same time, EPA and the States have sharpened our focus upon waterbodies listed by States as impaired under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act. This is particularly critical, as nonpoint source pollution is reported by States and others to be responsible for the majority of remaining water pollution in the United States. The two key steps needed to solve nonpoint

source problems within a watershed context are the development of a watershed-based plan that addresses a waterbody's water quality needs and the actual implementation of the plan.

These guidelines discuss the use of detailed watershed-based plans to help solve water quality problems at the watershed level. The watershed-based plan must address a large enough geographic area so that its implementation will address all of the sources and causes of impairments and threats to the waterbody in question. While there is no rigorous definition or delineation for this concept, the general intent is to avoid...narrowly defined areas that do not provide an opportunity for addressing a watershed's stressors in a rational and economic manner. At the same time, the scale should not be so large as to minimize the probability of successful implementation."

The EPA Guidelines describe nine elements fundamental to a potentially successful WPP:

a) Identification of the causes that will need to be controlled to achieve the load reductions described in (b)
b) Estimate of the load reductions expected for the management measures described in (c)
c) Description of management measures that will need to be implemented to achieve the load reductions described in (b)
d) Estimate of technical and financial assistance needed to implement this plan
e) Information/education component that will be used to enhance public understanding of this plan
f) Schedule for implementing management measures described in (c)
g) Description of interim, measurable milestones for determining whether management measures described in (c) are being implemented
h) Set of criteria that can be used to determine whether load reductions described in (b) are being achieved
i) Water quality monitoring component to evaluate effectiveness of implementation measured against the established criteria described in (h)

TSSWCB provides technical and financial assistance to local stakeholder groups to develop and implement WPPs consistent with EPA's nine elements. Entities are provided financial assistance (grants) necessary to facilitate the WPP development process in specific watersheds with significant agricultural or silvicultural NPS pollution. Additionally, TSSWCB staff provide technical assistance in developing WPPs which are funded and facilitated by other entities, such as the TCEQ or a third party.

On September 27, 2006, at a joint meeting, the TSSWCB and the TCEQ approved a revised MOA on Total Maximum Daily Loads, Implementation Plans, and Watershed Protection Plans. This framework for collaboration between the two agencies clarifies and strengthens the programmatic mechanisms employed to develop and implement WPPs.

The development and implementation of WPPs currently sponsored by TSSWCB have significant agricultural or silvicultural NPS pollution components and are all funded through the NPS Grant Program.

- Attoyac Bayou
- Buck Creek
- Cedar Bayou
- Concho River
- Double Bayou
- Geronimo Creek

- Lake Granger
- Lampasas River
- Leon River
- Lower Nueces River
- Pecos River
- Plum Creek
- Upper Llano River

While WPPs sponsored by TCEQ have significant water quality issues related to urban NPS pollution or wastewater treatment, most, to varying degrees, have agricultural or silvicultural NPS pollution components.

- Armand Bayou
- Arroyo Colorado
- Bastrop Bayou
- Brady Creek
- Caddo Lake
- Upper Cibolo Creek
- Cypress Creek
- Dickinson Bayou
- Lake Granbury
- Hickory Creek
- San Bernard River
- Highland Bayou
- Upper San Antonio River

There are several other watershed planning efforts across the state which are funded and sponsored by entities and agencies other than the TSSWCB or the TCEQ. These third-party WPPs may or may not adequately satisfy EPA's nine elements; although, those that do, are eligible to receive CWA Section319(h) funding from the TSSWCB to support implementation of agricultural or silvicultural NPS pollution components of the WPP.

- Onion Creek and Barton Springs
- Cedar Creek Reservoir
- Eagle Mountain Reservoir
- Upper San Marcos River
- Paso del Norte portion of Rio Grande

Once an entity has developed a WPP, it is submitted to the State (either TSSWCB or TCEQ) and then to EPA for review. This consistency review process is designed to assess if the WPP satisfies the intent of the nine elements or if it is somehow deficient and does not provide adequate information. This consistency review process should not be construed as an "approval" or "adoption" process; rather, it is to ensure that adequate technical justification exists in the plan to substantiate the expenditure of state and/or federal funds to implement the WPP in order to restore water quality.

The CWA requires the State to establish a Total Maximum Daily Load for certain waterbodies identified on the 303(d) List of Impaired Waters. A TMDL defines the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can assimilate on a daily basis and still meet water quality standards; TMDLs are "adopted" by TCEQ and "approved" by EPA – a key difference from WPPs. The TSSWCB asserts, and EPA concurs, that in some watersheds, the development and implementation of a WPP may be a more viable approach to achieving restoration of water quality than through the establishment of a TMDL. EPA has outlined a process by which the State may submit a WPP in lieu of a TMDL. That document discusses the national guidance and regulatory mechanisms governing the process of utilizing WPPs in lieu of TMDLs, as well as, discusses how this "4b option" relates to the nine elements of WPPs. Essentially, this "4b option" recognizes that certain alternative pollution control measures, such as a WPP, may obviate the need for a TMDL and that the most effective method for achieving water quality standards for some waterbodies may be through management measures developed and implemented without TMDLs. The significance

and complexity of whether a WPP may serve in lieu of a TMDL necessitates close coordination between watershed stakeholders, the State and EPA. Since early 2010, TSSWCB has worked with TCEQ, EPA and the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership to explore utilizing this "4b option" with the Plum Creek WPP. With the submission of the 2010 Integrated Report (which includes the 303(d) List) by TCEQ to EPA, the State submitted a Rationale for Reclassifying Plum Creek from Category 5 to Category 4b based on the Plum Creek WPP. EPA approved the 2010 Texas 303(d) List, including the use of this "4b option" for Plum Creek, on November 18, 2011, noting that the category 4b demonstration adequately demonstrates how other pollution control requirements (i.e., other than a TMDL) will lead to the attainment of water quality standards in Plum Creek in a reasonable period of time. TSSWCB understands this to be the first national use of a voluntary WPP to delist a waterbody from the 303(d) List.

In order to abate agricultural and silvicultural NPS pollution, WPPs will implement components of other TSSWCB Programs, such as the Water Quality Management Plan Program or the Water Supply Enhancement Program. Additionally, the TSSWCB NPS Grant Program serves as a funding source to implement the agricultural and silvicultural NPS components of WPPs.

Texas Total Maximum Daily Load Program

The federal CWA requires Texas to identify lakes, rivers, streams and estuaries failing to meet or not expected to meet water quality standards and not supporting their designated uses (contact recreation, drinking, aquatic life, etc.). This list of impaired waterbodies is known as the Texas 303(d) List and must be submitted to the EPA for review and approval every two years. The 2012 303(d) List was approved by EPA on May 9, 2013. The List also identifies the pollutants or conditions responsible for impairment. The 2012 List identifies 568 impairments (waterbody-pollutant combinations).

The State must establish a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for certain waterbodies identified on the 303(d) List. A TMDL defines the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can assimilate on a daily basis and still meet water quality standards, essentially a budget for allowable pollution. The pollution reduction goal set by the TMDL is necessary to restore attainment of the designated use of the impaired waterbody. The maximum amount of pollutant is determined by conducting a detailed water quality assessment that provides the information for a TMDL to allocate pollutant loads between point sources, nonpoint sources, and natural sources. It also takes into account a margin of safety, which reflects uncertainty; the load allocation must also allow for future growth. TMDLs must be legally and scientifically defensible; therefore, TMDLs describe that data, analyses, and assumptions used in calculating the allocations and identify the causes and sources of the pollutant and estimates the load reductions necessary to restore water quality. If the State fails to meet its obligations and develop a TMDL for an impaired waterbody within 13 years of when it was placed on the 303(d) List, the CWA requires EPA to establish TMDLs for the State.

Based on the environmental target of the TMDL, an Implementation Plan is then developed that prescribes the measures necessary to mitigate anthropogenic (human-caused) sources of that pollutant in that waterbody. The I-Plan specifies limits for point source dischargers and recommends best management practices for nonpoint sources. Where nonpoint sources of

pollution are identified, the State will work through the Texas NPS Management Program to encourage local implementation of voluntary actions to reduce the amount of pollutants entering waterbodies. It also lays out a schedule for implementation. Together, the TMDL and the I-Plan serve as the mechanism to reduce the pollutant, restore the full use of the waterbody and remove it from the 303(d) List. EPA must approve the TMDL, but the I-Plan only requires State approval.

The State's TMDL Program works to improve water quality in impaired waterbodies in Texas. The program is a major component in the State's strategy for managing the quality of water in Texas streams, lakes, bays, and other surface waters. The TCEQ and the TSSWCB are the state agencies having primary responsibility for developing and implementing TMDLs.

On September 27, 2006, the TSSWCB and the TCEQ renewed this partnership and approved a revised Memorandum of Agreement on Total Maximum Daily Loads, Implementation Plans, and Watershed Protection Plans. This framework for collaboration between the two agencies clarifies and strengthens the programmatic mechanisms employed to develop and implement TMDLs and I-Plans.

The TCEQ is the State's lead agency for urban nonpoint source pollution abatement and for point source discharge permitting through the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES). The TSSWCB is the lead State agency for planning, implementing, and managing programs and practices for preventing and abating agricultural and silvicultural NPS water pollution. The TCEQ, which has overall authority for managing the quality of surface waters, must adopt all TMDLs and is the agency responsible for their submission to the EPA. In accordance with the MOA, the State Board will consider taking action on (i.e., approving) TMDLs and I-Plans with significant agricultural or silvicultural NPS components.

The federal mandate for the TMDL Program is contained in the CWA Section 303(d).

"Each state shall identify those waters within its boundaries for which the effluent limitations required... are not stringent enough to implement any water quality standard applicable to such waters. The State shall establish a priority ranking for such waters, taking into account the severity of the pollution and the uses to be made of such waters.

Each State shall establish for the waters identified..., and in accordance with the priority ranking, the total maximum daily load, for those pollutants which the Administrator identifies... as suitable for such calculation. Such load shall be established at a level necessary to implement the applicable water quality standards with seasonal variations and a margin of safety which takes into account any lack of knowledge concerning the relationship between effluent limitations and water quality."

The Texas TMDL Program was created and authorized to fulfill the requirements of CWA Section 303(d). The CWA requires that where point source controls alone (i.e., technology-based effluent limitations through the TPDES as administered by TCEQ) are not sufficient to attain water quality standards, a TMDL must be established to resolve the remaining water quality problems, including agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint sources.

The federal regulations governing TMDL programs, issued in 1992, are described in 40 CFR 130.7. Texas TMDL guidelines are consistent with federal regulations and further define requirements that are specific to the state.

In accordance with EPA guidance, specifically Guidelines for Reviewing TMDLs Under Existing Regulations Issued in 1992 (May 2002), an approvable TMDL includes the following required components:

- identification of waterbody, pollutant of concern, pollutant sources, and priority ranking
- applicable water quality standards and numeric targets
- loading capacity – linkage between pollutant sources and water quality
- load allocations for nonpoint sources and natural background
- waste load allocations for permitted point sources
- margin of safety
- seasonal variation
- reasonable assurances of implementation
- full and meaningful public participation

Further, under federal regulations in 40 CFR 130.6, TMDLs must be included in the State's water quality management plan (not to be confused with the TSSWCB's Water Quality Management Plan Program). The water quality management plan is a waste treatment management plan developed and updated in accordance with CWA Sections 205(j), 208 and 303. Elements contained in the water quality management plan include effluent limitations of wastewater facilities, TMDLs, NPS management controls, identification of designated management agencies, and groundwater and source water protection planning. Consequently, the TCEQ will ensure that the state's continuing planning process requirements and other procedural requirements for adopting TMDLs and updating the water quality management plan are followed throughout review of a TMDL. The TCEQ updates the water quality management plan quarterly.

TSSWCB is engaged in implementation activities that support approved I-Plans addressing agricultural or silvicultural NPS load reductions described in adopted TMDLs; collaborating with stakeholders on the development of I-Plans for adopted TMDLs that contain agricultural or silvicultural NPS load reductions; and, actively engaged in the development of TMDLs for waterbodies impaired due to known or suspected agricultural or silvicultural NPS pollution. TSSWCB is committed to funding and collaborating on TMDL projects encompassing monitoring, assessment, modeling, planning, education, and implementation. TSSWCB-funded activities include mitigating bacteria, atrazine, dissolved oxygen, phosphorus and salinity impairments through TMDLs and I-Plans as listed below.

- Aquilla Reservoir – Atrazine
- North Bosque River – Nutrients
- Colorado River below E.V. Spence Reservoir – Salinity
- Galveston Bay (oyster waters) – Bacteria
- Gilleland Creek – Bacteria
- Houston, Lake – Bacteria
- Lake O' the Pines – Dissolved Oxygen
- Lower San Antonio River – Bacteria
- E.V. Spence Reservoir – Salinity
- Adams and Cow Bayous – Dissolved Oxygen, pH, Bacteria
- Clear Creek – Bacteria
- Copano Bay and Aransas and Mission Rivers – Bacteria
- Dickinson Bayou – Bacteria and Dissolved Oxygen
- Oso Bay and Creek – Bacteria
- Upper Oyster Creek – Dissolved Oxygen and Bacteria

- Carters and Barton Creeks – Bacteria
- Upper Guadalupe River – Bacteria

In order to abate agricultural and silvicultural NPS pollution, TMDLs and I-Plans will implement components of other TSSWCB Programs, such as the WQMP Program or the Water Supply Enhancement Program. Additionally, the TSSWCB NPS Grant Program frequently serves as a funding source to implement the agricultural and silvicultural NPS components of I-Plans.

Texas Groundwater Protection Committee Function

The Legislature created the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) in 1989 to bridge gaps and improve coordination among existing state water and waste regulatory programs. State law [Texas Water Code (TWC), 26.401—26.407] established the TGPC and outlined its powers, duties, and responsibilities. The Legislature also established a policy of nondegradation of the State's groundwater resources as the goal for all state programs. The State's groundwater protection policy recognizes:

- the variability of the State's aquifers in their potential for beneficial use and susceptibility to contamination;
- the value of protecting and maintaining present and potentially usable groundwater supplies;
- the need for keeping present and potential groundwater supplies reasonably free of contaminants for the protection of the environment and public health and welfare; and
- the importance of existing and potential uses of groundwater supplies to the economic health of the State.

The TGPC implements this policy by identifying opportunities to improve existing groundwater quality programs and promote coordination among agencies. The TGPC identifies areas where new or existing programs can be enhanced to provide additional protection.

The major responsibilities of the TGPC are:

- Improve coordination among member agencies and organizations engaged in groundwater protection activities;
- Develop, implement, and update a comprehensive groundwater protection strategy for the State;
- Study, and recommend to the Legislature, groundwater protection programs for each area in which groundwater is not protected by current regulation;
- File, with the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Speaker of the House of Representatives, a biennial report of the TGPC's activities and any recommendations for legislation for groundwater protection;
- Publish an annual groundwater monitoring and contamination report describing the current monitoring programs of each member agency and the status of groundwater contamination cases documented or under enforcement during the calendar year; and
- Advise the TCEQ on the development of plans for the protection and enhancement of groundwater quality pursuant to federal statute, regulation, or policy, including management plans for the prevention of water pollution by agriculture chemicals and agents.

Water Quality Management Plan Program

The Water Quality Management Plan Program is administered by the TSSWCB through local SWCDs for the purpose of providing a voluntary, incentive-based, natural resource conservation planning service to agricultural producers and other rural landowners who choose to implement best management practices that prevent, abate, and/or manage NPS pollution. The WQMP Program includes technical assistance for the development of WQMPs on the lands of participants as well as financial incentives in the form of cost-sharing payments to participants to assist with the installation of the WQMPs. The WQMP Program is the state's primary BMP implementation program for agricultural and silvicultural lands as specified in the Texas Nonpoint Source Management Program (Texas NPS Program).

The overall WQMP Program is supervised and administered by the agency's Regional Office Coordinator located in the agency's headquarters in Temple. Cost-sharing administration is coordinated by the joint efforts of the Regional Office Coordinator, six other regional office managers, and the Fiscal Officer in the agency's headquarters. Policy and programmatic assistance is provided by the Statewide Programs Officer and other members of the SRM staff in the agency's headquarters. Regional offices used to administer the WQMP Program are located in Harlingen, Wharton, Mount Pleasant, Hale Center, San Angelo and Dublin. A program office for administering the WQMP program to poultry producers is located in Nacogdoches, where the Poultry WQMP Program is headquartered. Two other "single-person" offices are maintained in Gonzales and Centerville for poultry WQMPs. The Poultry WQMP Program includes additional requirements specified by statute, including a regulatory requirement to obtain a WQMP that exceed the normal program elements; more information on the Poultry WQMP Program is available in that program's individual description (starting on page 30).

Starting in Fiscal Year 2014 major changes were made regarding the delivery of the cost-share incentive funding as a result of the agencies sunset legislation. Historically, SWCDs have received a direct allocation; currently funds are allocated to cost-share incentive priorities. These priorities are geographically defined by either watersheds or aquifer recharge zones. The following is a summary of the changes to the program. The WQMP Program involves a participant voluntarily requesting conservation planning assistance from the local SWCD within which the identified lands are located. Once a request for planning assistance and request for cost-share incentive funding is received from a participant, the SWCD approves the request and submits both to the appropriate TSSWCB Regional Office. The regional office evaluates based on approved criteria resulting in a ranking score. At the end of each month all requests are ranked and compared, and then cost-share funds are allocated to the highest ranking requests. The SWCD then arranges for technical conservation planning assistance. This technical assistance may be provided by an employee of the SWCD made possible through Conservation Implementation Assistance Grants from the TSSWCB (see the individual program description for more information on these grants). The technical assistance may also be provided by an employee of the TSSWCB located within the appropriate TSSWCB Regional Office, or by an employee of the NRCS through a MOU amongst the NRCS, the TSSWCB and all Texas SWCDs.

Once a WQMP has been developed through consultation between the landowner and the

technical assistance provider, the SWCD makes a determination whether the WQMP covers the participant's entire operating unit as required by TSSWCB rule. Concurrently, the NRCS provides certification that the WQMP meets the technical standards and specifications within their Field Office Technical Guide for a resource management system. The TSSWCB has adopted the FOTG as the technical basis for a WQMP; it is the policy of the TSSWCB that the FOTG, when implemented to the resource management system level, represents the best available technology for abating NPS pollution on agricultural and silvicultural lands. When agreement is reached by the participant, the NRCS, and the SWCD that the WQMP meets all program requirements, a certification page is signed by all three parties. The WQMP is then forwarded to the appropriate TSSWCB Regional Office for certification, where an additional technical and programmatic review is conducted. Once certified by the TSSWCB, by law the WQMP is considered to meet all of the technical requirements for the agricultural or silvicultural operation to maintain compliance with Texas Surface Water Quality Standards as established and adopted by the TCEQ.

When a WQMP has been certified by the TSSWCB, a cost-share application is completed by the participant and then submitted to the appropriate SWCD. Once a BMP that is listed on the cost-sharing application has been installed, the local SWCD, the NRCS, or staff from a TSSWCB Regional Office inspects the work to confirm the installation of the practice was performed in accordance with specifications within the FOTG. A performance certification document is completed and signed by the entity performing the verification, which then results in the cost-share payment being made by the TSSWCB to the participant.

Once a WQMP is in the process of being implemented, the participant is subject to periodic status reviews by the TSSWCB. A status review involves a site visit by an employee from the appropriate TSSWCB Regional Office or a representative of the SWCD. If a participant is found to have fallen behind schedule or has un-installed a required practice, then the participant is requested to correct the situation by complying with the existing WQMP or by working with the TSSWCB to amend the WQMP to allow for unforeseen circumstances or complications. If cost-sharing assistance was provided for the installation of a BMP which has not been maintained in accordance with the expected lifespan for the BMP specified in the FOTG, then the participant may be asked to reimburse the TSSWCB for the cost of the BMP. If ultimate resolution is not reached to the extent that the TSSWCB rules for the WQMP Program are being met, then the WQMP may be decertified and the participant is no longer under the jurisdiction of the program and the status with respect to water quality authorization the program provides.

Agency personnel involved in the WQMP Program also coordinate a water quality complaint resolution process specified in statute. This process requires extensive coordination among the parties involved, the local SWCD, and the TCEQ. Specific information on this process is available in the program description for the Water Quality Complaint Resolution Function.

Poultry Water Quality Management Plan Program

The Poultry Water Quality Management Plan Program is a specialized subprogram of the TSSWCB's overall WQMP Program (see the WQMP Program description). During the 75th

Regular Session (1999), the Legislature enacted Senate Bill 1910 in response to numerous water and odor related complaints pertaining to inappropriate disposal of poultry carcasses. Addressing animal mortality is a part of any animal feeding operation (AFO); however, some poultry producers were utilizing mortality management practices that were not environmentally advisable or considerate of neighboring property owners. This legislation mandated that only certain specific methods were to be used when addressing dead poultry; these specific methods included incineration, composting, and freezing and/or refrigerating dead birds until they could be transported to a rendering facility. Each of those practices required new equipment that many operations did not have on site. Because the TSSWCB's WQMP Program provides for the cost-sharing of this equipment, many poultry facilities chose to voluntarily participate in the program.

During the 77th Regular Session, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 1339 which went a step further and required participation in the program by all poultry facilities. Between 1994, when the WQMP Program began, and September 1, 2001 when Senate Bill 1339 became effective, with significant assistance from NRCS in the earlier years, about 50% of all poultry farms in Texas had received a WQMP. This was mostly due to incentives offered by the cost-share provisions of the program and mortality management requirements of Senate Bill 1910 from the 75th Regular Session in 1997. However, between September 1, 2001 and January 1, 2008 the remaining 50% of the total poultry farms and any newly constructed ones still needed a WQMP and existing WQMPs need ongoing periodic revisions, resulting in an increased workload for TSSWCB staff to develop and certify those WQMPs due to reduced assistance from NRCS because of their increased federally mandated programmatic workload. The passage of Senate Bill 1339 resulted in the TSSWCB formally establishing the Poultry WQMP Program to address the additional workload and technical requirements that existed for poultry operations.

The major functions of the Poultry WQMP Program are essentially the same as the overall WQMP Program, which are included in that program's individual description. Additional functions of the Poultry WQMP Program include enhanced status reviews of WQMP implementation and adherence, which are conducted in a manner consistent with permit inspections performed by the TCEQ. The TSSWCB and TCEQ coordinate very closely on site inspections for poultry operations to ensure compliance with state and federal environmental rules.

Nonpoint Source Water Quality Complaint Resolution Function

Section 201.026(a), Agriculture Code, and Section 26.1311, Water Code, establish the TSSWCB and its authorized agents as responsible for the abatement and prevention of pollution resulting from agricultural or silvicultural NPS pollution. Section 201.026(j), Agriculture Code, requires that complaints concerning a violation of a water quality management plan (see program description for the WQMP Program) or a violation of a law or rule relating to agricultural or silvicultural NPS pollution under the jurisdiction of the TSSWCB be referred to the TSSWCB. The TSSWCB, in cooperation with the local SWCD, is required to investigate the complaint, and upon completion of the investigation, the TSSWCB, in consultation with the SWCD, is required to determine that further action is not warranted or must develop and implement a corrective action plan to address the complaint. If the subject of the complaint is not already a participant in the

WQMP Program, then the development of a WQMP is generally the corrective action. If the subject of the complaint already participates in the WQMP Program, then modifications to the existing WQMP may be warranted, or the management activities of the participant are adjusted to compensate for the cause of the complaint. If the person about whom the complaint has been made fails or refuses to take corrective action, the TSSWCB is required to refer the complaint to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality for enforcement actions at their discretion. Section 201.027, Agriculture Code, requires the TSSWCB to maintain detailed records about each TSSWCB referral of an agricultural or silvicultural operation to the TCEQ for enforcement. These records must include information regarding the final disposition of the referral by the TCEQ, including any enforcement action taken against the agricultural or silvicultural operation.

Environmental Data Quality Management Function

Quality Assurance (QA) activities are conducted within the TSSWCB to ensure that all environmental data generated and processed are scientifically valid; of known precision and accuracy and acceptable completeness, representativeness and comparability; and legally defensible regarding methodology. This is achieved by ensuring that adequate QA tools are used throughout the entire data collection and assessment process (from initial planning through data usage).

The tools used in the quality system include the TSSWCB Quality Management Plan (QMP), management systems reviews, readiness reviews, the Data Quality Objective (DQO) process, Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs), surveillance, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), technical systems audits, reviews, and data quality assessments. The QA Officer and appropriate management and technical staff participate in and are responsible for the creation and implementation of each of these tools. Individual QAPPs include a schedule for required reviews, assessments, and audits.

Quality system components are applied to specific projects using a graded approach. This is a process of basing the level of application of quality system controls applied to environmental data programs according to the intended use of the results and the degree of confidence needed in the quality of the results.

Specifically, it is the responsibility of the QA Officer working with SRM Project Managers and cooperating entities to ensure that the following objectives are achieved:

- All environmental data generated are of known and acceptable quality. The data quality information developed with all environmental data is documented and available.
- The intended uses of the data are defined before the data collection effort begins, so that appropriate QA measures can be applied to ensure a level of data quality commensurate with the project data objectives. The determination of this level of data quality takes into account the prospective data needs of secondary users. The assigned level of data quality, specific QA activities and data acceptance criteria are explicitly described in each individual QAPP.
- Audits are conducted within the TSSWCB to ensure data validation. General audit procedures are stated in QAPPs generated by the TSSWCB and cooperating entities.

- QA activities are designed in the most cost-effective manner possible without compromising DQOs.
- Each entity that generates environmental data is to develop a QAPP, and will be responsible for ensuring that adequate resources (both monetary and staff) are provided to support the QA effort, and that the QAPP is implemented. QAPPs are to comprehensively describe detailed Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) procedures that must be implemented for a particular project to ensure the quality of the data generated satisfy DQOs, and to specify mechanisms by which timely corrective action can be taken in the event that DQOs are not met.
- Until environmental data operations are completed, QAPPs are revised, at least annually, throughout the life of the project. More frequent revisions may be necessary if substantive changes are needed to incorporate modifications in project goals or DQOs or to incorporate corrective action. If non-substantive amendments are needed, they may be approved in writing without a revision to the QAPP; however, approved non-substantive amendments must be incorporated into the next annual revision of the QAPP. The last approved version of a QAPP remains in effect (i.e., does not expire) until a revised version has been approved by TSSWCB and EPA as appropriate.
- All applicable projects will adhere to the requirements and specifications stated in the TSSWCB QMP and the associated QAPP.

Water Supply Enhancement Program

Scarcity and competition for water have made sound water planning and management increasingly important. With Texas' population expected to grow by 82% in the next 50 years, the availability of water supplies is essential for not only the Texans of today, but also for those of tomorrow (TWDB, 2012).

Noxious brush, detrimental to water conservation, has invaded millions of acres of rangeland and riparian areas in Texas, reducing or eliminating stream flow and aquifer recharge through interception of rainfall and increased evapotranspiration. Brush control has the potential to enhance water yield, improve soil conservation, protect water quality, manage invasive species, and reduce hazardous fuels to mitigate wildfire.

In 1985, the 69th Legislature passed Senate Bill 1083, creating the Brush Control Program and granting new powers and responsibilities, without funding, to the TSSWCB and SWCDs under Chapter 203 of the Agriculture Code. The TSSWCB was designated as the agency responsible for administering the program and was given authority to delegate responsibility for certain portions of the program to local SWCDs. Although the program was authorized and created in 1985, the Program was unfunded for 7 bienniums (FY1986-1999).

In 1999, the 76th Legislature appropriated funds to begin implementing the Brush Control Program. The Legislature appropriated varying amounts of funding to TSSWCB for 6 bienniums (FY2000-2011) to carry-out the program. Due to the legislative intent of appropriations and specific direction from lawmakers, since 2003 the program focused almost exclusively on specific areas of the state

which were likely to produce the most increases in available surface and ground water.

In 2001, the 77th Legislature, for the FY2002 – 2003 biennium, directed proceeds of Texas Agricultural Water Conservation Bonds be transferred from the TWDB as a grant of $15 million to the TSSWCB to be used for brush control cost-share projects.

In 2003, the 78th Legislature passed Senate Bill 1828, which required the TSSWCB to consult with local SWCDs in the administration of the Brush Control Program. TSSWCB was required to consult with the TWDB in regard to the effects of brush control on water quantity and with the TDA in regard to the effects of brush control on agriculture. Brush control cost-share was reduced to a maximum of 70% (not to exceed a total of 80% when combined with a federal program) and political subdivisions were made eligible for cost-sharing not to exceed 50% of the total cost. Public lands were made eligible for 100% total cost-share.

In 2007, the 80th Legislature directed the TCEQ to submit a report to the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) and the Governor by the end of FY2008 providing certain information on brush control activities being conducted by the TSSWCB. The report was to include an evaluation of the current monitoring programs at the treated sites; identification of proper monitoring approaches where upgrades are needed; and estimation of water enhancement in areas of the state that are characterized by saltcedar, juniper, and mesquite.

In 2011, the 82nd Legislature passed House Bill 1808 which effectively eliminated the Brush Control Program. This legislation resulted from the Sunset Advisory Commission's conclusion that the then current framework of the Brush Control Program was ineffective for meeting the State's critical water conservation needs. The sunset legislation established a "new" program for the agency, the WSEP. The exclusive purpose of the WSEP is to increase available surface and ground water through the selective control of brush species that are detrimental to water conservation (e.g., juniper, mesquite, saltcedar). This legislation made significant modifications to the Program, such as requiring a feasibility study with a computer model predicting water yield to be completed prior to considering approval or funding of a project. Additionally, a requirement for project creation to be initiated through a competitive application process was implemented, as well as, a requirement for the agency to make the balance between expected water yield and relative water conservation need the primary factor in choosing which projects to ultimately approve and initiate. The agency has received appropriations for 2 bienniums (FY2012-2015) to implement the new WSEP.

In order to help meet the State's critical water conservation needs and ensure availability of water supplies, the TSSWCB administers the WSEP through a Program Office in San Angelo and a satellite office in Johnson City. The agency works closely with SWCDs and various local, regional, state, and federal entities to efficiently and effectively implement the WSEP.

In accordance with Texas Agriculture Code §203.051, the TSSWCB must prepare and adopt the *State Water Supply Enhancement Plan* (*State Plan*). The *State Plan* serves as the State's comprehensive strategy for managing brush in all areas of the state where brush is contributing to a substantial water conservation problem. The *State Plan* also serves as the programmatic guidance for the TSSWCB's WSEP. The *State Plan* must document the goals, processes, and results the State Board has established for the WSEP.

The TSSWCB collaborates with SWCDs, and other local, regional, state, and federal agencies to identify watersheds across the state where it is feasible to conduct brush control in order to enhance water supplies. The agency has established detailed guidance on factors that must be considered in a feasibility study. Once a feasibility study is completed, if it demonstrates increases in projected post-treatment water yield as compared to the pre-treatment conditions, the TSSWCB may consider designating the studied area as a priority WSEP Project Watershed, making the watershed eligible for allocation of WSEP cost-share funds.

The TSSWCB uses a competitive grant process to rank and select feasible projects and allocate WSEP cost-share funds. Project proposals must relate to a water conservation need, based on information in the *State Water Plan* as adopted by the TWDB. A feasibility study must have been completed for the watershed in each proposal. Proposals are prioritized for each funding cycle, giving priority to projects that balance the most critical water conservation need of municipal water user groups with the highest projected water yield from brush control. Applications are ranked using a calculated Ranking Index that gives a measure of the projected water yield increased per capita user for each proposal. TSSWCB utilizes the Ranking Index and other statutorily-required considerations to prioritize proposals and allocate funding.

In project watersheds where WSEP cost-share funds have been allocated, the TSSWCB performs a geospatial analysis to delineate the acreage eligible for cost-share of brush control activities. This geospatial analysis maximizes the positive impacts of brush control on water supply enhancement and the effective and efficient use of allocated funds by prioritizing the acreage that has the highest potential to yield water within the project watershed. Characteristics that are assessed in the geospatial analysis include soils, slope, brush type and density, proximity to waterbodies and other hydrologically sensitive areas, and proximity to the watershed outlet. The geospatial analysis results in four brush control priority zones for each watershed: high, medium, low, and not eligible.

In project watersheds where WSEP cost-share funds have been allocated, the TSSWCB works through SWCDs to deliver technical assistance to landowners in order to implement brush control activities for water supply enhancement. A 10-year resource management plan is developed for each property enrolled in the WSEP, in accordance with technical standards and specifications within the USDA-NRCS FOTG. These plans are designed to implement brush control, sound range management practices, and other soil and water conservation land improvement measures; these plans meet landowner goals and address wildlife considerations. These plans describe the extent and method of brush management to be implemented, follow-up treatment requirements, and brush density to be maintained after treatment.

Cost-share assistance is made available through the WSEP to eligible landowners as an incentive to implement brush control activities on eligible acres in project watersheds. The TSSWCB and the local SWCD enter into cost-share agreements with individual landowners. Cost-share agreements must be based on an approved resource management plan developed for the property. Upon completion of brush control as described on the cost-share agreement, the local SWCD or TSSWCB inspects the work to verify the practice was performed and implemented in accordance with specifications set forth in the

FOTG. Canopy cover of target brush species must be reduced to less than 5% to be certified. A performance certification is completed which then results in the cost-share payment being made by the TSSWCB to the participant.

All WSEP resource management plans that received cost-share assistance are subject to periodic status reviews conducted by the TSSWCB. Status reviews are conducted within three to five years after initial treatment of brush to determine if the canopy is above 5%. A second status review is performed eight to nine years after initial treatment. If the producer is found out of compliance, they will not be eligible for another WSEP contract for a period of ten years.

A statutorily-required Annual Report is published by the TSSWCB to document WSEP results, assess the program, and report overall projected water yield enhanced. The number of acres of brush treated per project watershed using WSEP cost-share is reported. The enhanced water yield from the brush treated using cost-share is also reported. The number of status reviews conducted and number of contracts found to be out of compliance are also reported.

The TGPC, in the *2013 Report to the 83rd Legislature*, makes a specific recommendation related to education and outreach: "Provide tools, educational programs, and assistance for landowners, citizens, local governments, and others to facilitate efforts such as the [TSSWCB's] WSEP to increase groundwater yield..." As such, the TGPC Public Outreach and Education Subcommittee has included the WSEP as one of its four focus areas for outreach efforts over the next several years.

Texas Invasive Species Coordinating Committee Function

Because invasive species are likely to cause economic harm, environmental harm, or harm to human health, the Texas Invasive Species Coordinating Committee (Committee) was created through House Bill 865 during the 81st Regular Legislative Session. The purpose of the Committee is to serve as a catalyst for cooperation between state agencies in the area of invasive species control and facilitate governmental efforts to prevent and manage invasive species and to mitigate the effects such species have on the economy, the environment, and people's health. House Bill 865 specified that the Committee was administratively attached the TSSWCB.

The member agencies of the Committee include (1) the Texas Department of Agriculture, (2) the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, (3) the TSSWCB, (4) the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, (5) the Texas A&M Forest Service, (6) the Texas Water Development Board, and (7) any other state agency that requests and receives membership by unanimous agreement of the existing members.

The Committee's duties include serving as a catalyst for cooperation between state agencies in the area of invasive species control, facilitating governmental efforts including the efforts of local governments and special districts and preventing and managing invasive species. The Committee is also charged with making recommendations to state agencies regarding research, technology transfer, and management actions, and then facilitating an exchange of that information so that each member agency is informed of Committee plans, recommendations, and proposals for research, education, and implementation activities. These

activities are intended to prevent, detect, assess, monitor, contain, and control or eradicate invasive species to reduce environmental and economic threats and threats to human health from invasive species. The Committee provides a forum for developing coordinated interagency strategies and policies for invasive species control and provides technical information and input to regional and national invasive species control coordination efforts including the National Invasive Species Management Plan.

The Committee is responsible for facilitating the review of committee technical decisions and work product by specialists and interested persons, and report as needed to the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house of representatives on committee plans, work product and accomplishments.

Each member agency of the Committee is responsible for coordinating their agency's invasive species control activities with the Committee and relevant coordinating bodies, including the National Invasive Species Council. Committee members also share with the Committee their agency's technical expertise related to invasive species, advise the Committee of known invasive species threats to natural and agricultural resources, and cooperate, to the extent allowed by law, in initiatives to obtain appropriations and grants for invasive species control.

Water Conservation Advisory Council Function

House Bill 4 passed by the 80th Texas Legislature created a Water Conservation Advisory Council to serve as an expert resource to state government and the public on water conservation matters critical to the state. The TSSWCB was named as one of the twenty-three entities which the council comprises.

Texas Drought Preparedness Council Function

House Bill 2660 passed by the 76th Texas Legislature in 1999 created the Drought Preparedness Council chaired by the coordinator of the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM). The TSSWCB was named as one of the agencies which the Council comprises, therefore the TSSWCB dedicates personnel to participating and assisting the Council with the responsibilities assigned to it by legislation. The Council has developed a comprehensive state drought preparedness plan for mitigating the effects of drought in the state. The Council's responsibilities include reporting drought and water supply conditions, advising the Governor of significant drought conditions, advising regional water planning groups of drought-related issues, ensuring effective coordination among state, local, and federal agencies in drought response planning, and reporting to the Legislature each odd-numbered year regarding significant drought conditions in the state.

Prescribed Burning Board Function

The Prescribed Burning Board was established within the TDA by House Bill 2599 (76th Regular Session) to establish standards for prescribed burning, develop a comprehensive training curriculum for prescribed burn managers, establish standards for certification, recertification, and training for prescribed burn managers, establish minimum education and professional requirements for instructors for the approved curriculum, and establish minimum insurance requirements for certified prescribed burn managers.

House Bill 2599 required that an employee of the TSSWCB be a member of the Board, as well as employees of the TFS, TPWD, TCEQ, Texas

A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Texas A&M AgriLife Research, Texas Tech University Range and Wildlife Department and TDA. Five other persons, who are (1) owners of agricultural land, as that term is defined by Section 153.081, (2) self-employed or employed by a person other than a governmental entity, and (3) appointed by the commissioner of agriculture, are included as well.

The Executive Director of the TSSWCB has designated one employee of the agency to serve as a member of the Prescribed Burning Board. This employee provides information to the Prescribed Burning Board on TSSWCB programs as they relate to the agency's programs and functions, and disseminates the Prescribed Burning Boards information to the TSSWCB and local SWCDs as needed.

Task Force on Economic Growth and Endangered Species Function

Senate Bill 2534, 81st Regular Session, created the Task Force on Economic Growth and Endangered Species to provide state agencies with a mechanism to provide policy and technical assistance regarding compliance with endangered species laws and regulations to local and regional governmental entities and their communities engaged in economic development activities so that compliance with endangered species laws and regulations is as effective and cost efficient as possible. This legislation named the executive director of the TSSWCB as a member of the Task Force, along with the Comptroller of Public Accounts, the Commissioner the TDA, the Executive Director of the TPWD, and the Executive Director of the TXDOT. The Comptroller is the presiding officer of the task force.

The Task Force is charged with assessing the economic impact on the state of federal, state, or local regulations relating to endangered species, and assisting landowners and other persons in this state to identify, evaluate, and implement cost-efficient strategies for mitigation of impacts to and recovery of endangered species that will promote economic growth and development in the state. The Task Force is also charged with facilitating state and local governmental efforts to effectively implement endangered species regulations in a cost-efficient manner. The Task Force is authorized, if requested by a local government or state official, to review state and local governmental efforts to address endangered species issues and provide recommendations to make those efforts more cost effective. The Task Force is required to consider all available options as part of its recommendations where the options considered include fee simple acquisition of land, conservation easements, use of land owned by local governments or this state, recovery crediting and all relevant federal programs.

As a member of the Task Force, the TSSWCB will facilitate the exchange of information between local SWCD directors, landowners participating in SWCD programs, and the Task Force. If soil and water resources are a relevant factor in matters addressed by the Task Force, the TSSWCB will coordinate applicable programs as needed.

What is the Public's Perception of the TSSWCB?

Until recently, the TSSWCB was not a high-profile agency. Increasing public concerns over regional water quality and an intense statewide focus on agricultural water conservation have placed the agency in the forefront. For five decades, soil and water conservation districts worked diligently at the local level to conserve

activities are intended to prevent, detect, assess, monitor, contain, and control or eradicate invasive species to reduce environmental and economic threats and threats to human health from invasive species. The Committee provides a forum for developing coordinated interagency strategies and policies for invasive species control and provides technical information and input to regional and national invasive species control coordination efforts including the National Invasive Species Management Plan.

The Committee is responsible for facilitating the review of committee technical decisions and work product by specialists and interested persons, and report as needed to the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house of representatives on committee plans, work product and accomplishments.

Each member agency of the Committee is responsible for coordinating their agency's invasive species control activities with the Committee and relevant coordinating bodies, including the National Invasive Species Council. Committee members also share with the Committee their agency's technical expertise related to invasive species, advise the Committee of known invasive species threats to natural and agricultural resources, and cooperate, to the extent allowed by law, in initiatives to obtain appropriations and grants for invasive species control.

Water Conservation Advisory Council Function

House Bill 4 passed by the 80th Texas Legislature created a Water Conservation Advisory Council to serve as an expert resource to state government and the public on water conservation matters critical to the state. The TSSWCB was named as one of the twenty-three entities which the council comprises.

Texas Drought Preparedness Council Function

House Bill 2660 passed by the 76th Texas Legislature in 1999 created the Drought Preparedness Council chaired by the coordinator of the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM). The TSSWCB was named as one of the agencies which the Council comprises, therefore the TSSWCB dedicates personnel to participating and assisting the Council with the responsibilities assigned to it by legislation. The Council has developed a comprehensive state drought preparedness plan for mitigating the effects of drought in the state. The Council's responsibilities include reporting drought and water supply conditions, advising the Governor of significant drought conditions, advising regional water planning groups of drought-related issues, ensuring effective coordination among state, local, and federal agencies in drought response planning, and reporting to the Legislature each odd-numbered year regarding significant drought conditions in the state.

Prescribed Burning Board Function

The Prescribed Burning Board was established within the TDA by House Bill 2599 (76th Regular Session) to establish standards for prescribed burning, develop a comprehensive training curriculum for prescribed burn managers, establish standards for certification, recertification, and training for prescribed burn managers, establish minimum education and professional requirements for instructors for the approved curriculum, and establish minimum insurance requirements for certified prescribed burn managers.

House Bill 2599 required that an employee of the TSSWCB be a member of the Board, as well as employees of the TFS, TPWD, TCEQ, Texas

natural resources and protect the environment. The TSSWCB mainly served in a coordination and oversight role for soil and water conservation districts. The 1990s saw the agency receive several sources of funding that enabled the TSSWCB to more actively and effectively deliver conservation assistance. For example, the agency began receiving half of the State's annual Clean Water Act, Section 319(h) grant in 1994 and was appropriated funding to conduct brush control activities in 1999. In 1994, cost-share funding through the Water Quality Management Plan Program became available. The TSSWCB's responsibilities increased during this time as well. With the mandate to establish the Water Quality Management Plan Program and the agency's designation as the lead agency for the abatement of agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source pollution, came the need to take on additional water quality responsibilities such as Total Maximum Daily Loads and the Nonpoint Source Coastal Management Program.

The public's overall perception of the agency is generally split between rural Texans and urban Texans. Rural Texans generally have a positive and well-informed perception. This is to be expected, because they are the obvious intended target of our services and programs and are the population from which the 1,085 elected soil and water conservation district directors originate. Urban Texans generally do not have a good understanding of the agency or the need for the services the agency provides, although they are without doubt the largest beneficiaries of the results. The TSSWCB recognizes the need to carry out a more vigorous awareness campaign in the increasingly urbanized areas of the State in order to prevent future natural resource concerns from being overlooked until serious problems arise.

Most recently, the Legislature's decision to appropriate funding to the TSSWCB specifically for the operation, maintenance, repair, and rehabilitation of flood control structures has elevated the notoriety of the TSSWCB among urban constituents. Many of the state's approximately 2,000 flood control structures are in close proximity to highly urbanizing areas, making their continued functionality a significant concern.

Organizational Aspects

The State Board

When originally created in 1939, the TSSWCB was set up to be governed by five board members elected in regional conventions by delegates from each of five regions of the State's 216 local soil and water conservation districts. In 2003, the Texas Legislature enacted Senate Bill 1828 during the 78th regular session, which created two Governor Appointed positions on the State Board. Elections for the five original positions continue to occur annually at regional conventions of the local soil and water conservation districts, with members serving two-year staggered terms.

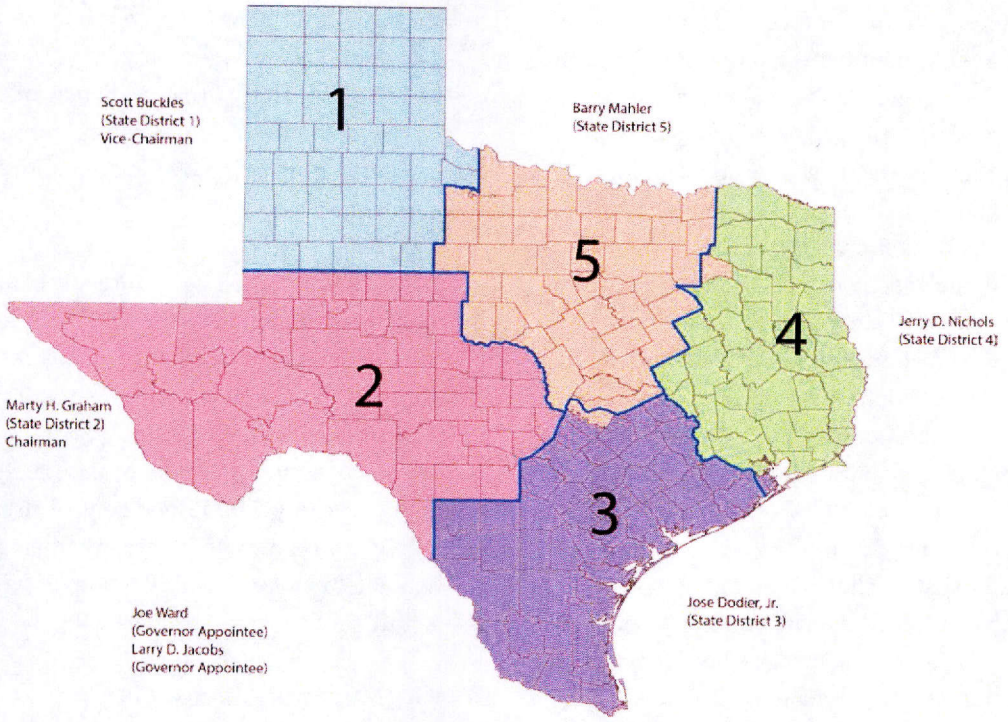


Figure 1. State Board Regions

Elected State Board members must be 18 years of age or older; hold title to farmland or ranchland; and be actively engaged in farming or ranching. The Governor appointees must be actively engaged in the business of farming, animal husbandry, or other business related to agriculture and wholly or partly own or lease land used in connection with that business; and may not be a member of the board of directors of a conservation district.

The State Board elects its own Chair and generally meets every other month, unless specific programs or issues require more immediate action. The following list (and associated Figure 1) shows the current Board members and the TSSWCB area they represent.

- Area I – Scott Buckles
- Area II – Marty H. Graham
- Area III– José Dodier, Jr.
- Area IV – Jerry D. Nichols
- Area V – Barry Mahler
- Appointed – Joe L. Ward
- Appointed – Larry D. Jacobs

The TSSWCB Staff

Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board's workforce plan describes each major program of the agency and its associated workforce planning. The workforce plan can be found in Appendix E of this document.

TSSWCB staff are divided into 8 organizational units. While each unit has a distinct purpose, they all function collaboratively to fulfill agency mission and statutory responsibilities.

Executive Management is composed of an Executive Director, an Administrative Coordinator, along with an Administrative Assistant. This unit directs the administrative affairs of the TSSWCB including the execution

of rules, guidelines, decisions, and directives of the State Board to ensure the efficient and effective operation of the agency.

Budget and Accounting responsibilities include the development and oversight of TSSWCB's overall budget, revenue and expenditures, strategic planning, performance measures, cost recovery efforts, and the proper expenditure state appropriations and federal grants in order to ensure compliance with the agency's fiduciary responsibility..Responsibilities also include managing TSSWCB's general ledger and ensuring the proper processing of cash, communicating and implementing state and federal cash management practices, monitoring and processing expenditures in accordance with state and federal statutes and regulations, and information technology. This unit also performs contract management; and manages the Conservation Implementation Assistance Grant Program, the Conservation Assistance Matching Funds Grant Program, and the SWCD Director Mileage and Per Diem Reimbursement Program.

With respect to information technology (IT), the Budget and Accounting unit installs and maintains network services including: local area networks; wide area network; internet services; local application support; infrastructure security; implements and maintains web-based technology; and trains staff on the use of applications and services. IT also configures, secures and maintains both wired and wireless local area network environments and troubleshoots computing hardware and software problems for local and remote staff in all agency departments. The program audits and tracks the use of hardware and software deployments; serves as the agency Information Resource Manager and Security Officer, working with the Department of Information Resources to ensure agency compliance with state IT law; develops, maintains, and enforces policies regarding security, the acceptable use of IT infrastructure, and disaster recovery and works with agency purchaser on the procurement of IT software and hardware.

The Budget and Accounting unit executes all purchasing efforts for the agency in accordance with state and federal requirements, the HUB program and vendor recruitment requirements.

The **Statewide Resource Management (SRM)** team constitutes the bulk of the agency's technical program support and policy personnel assigned to the state headquarters. The SRM team administers the agency's statewide agricultural and silvicultural NPS water pollution abatement mandate, with the exception of the direct day-to-day administration of the agency's WQMP Program and its associated financial cost-share functions. The statewide agricultural and silvicultural NPS management mandate is codified at Agriculture Code Section 201.026 (Senate Bill 503, 73rd Regular Session of the Texas Legislature), and serves as a policy umbrella for numerous water quality programs essential to carrying out the broader mandate. Additionally, the SRM team administers and coordinates most natural resource conservation and environmental management functions that fall under the agency's responsibilities.

The SRM team's responsibilities include overall management of the agricultural and silvicultural aspects of the Texas Nonpoint Source Management Program. In carrying out this program, the SRM team administers the Federal Clean Water Act, Section 319(h) NPS Grant Program, an Environmental Data Quality Management Program, a Watershed Protection Plan Program, a Total Maximum Daily Load Program, and the Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program.
The SRM team also manages most of the agencies grant contracts (internally and

externally funded), and provides administrative and technical support on water conservation and irrigation management. Members of the SRM Team represent the agency on the Water Conservation Implementation Task Force, Water Conservation Advisory Council, Texas Groundwater Protection Committee, the Coastal Coordination Advisory Committee, and the Texas Drought Preparedness Council.

The SRM team manages the policy and fiscal aspects of the Poultry Water Quality Management Plan Program, as well as the Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan Program for the dairies in the North Bosque and Leon River Watersheds. Additionally, the SRM team coordinates certain aspects of the cost-share function for the Water Quality Management Plan Program in areas that did not receive a cost-share allocation by the State Board at the beginning of the current fiscal year. The SRM team also provides technical and programmatic support to local soil and water conservation districts on flood control structure issues.

Other duties of the SRM team include providing support to other agency staff on information technology issues, and managing the content of the agency's website. This group also provides technical support on natural resource matters to the agency's field staff and regional office personnel in the areas of geographic information systems, engineering, water quality, agronomy, soil science, and environmental compliance coordination with state and federal agencies.

Beginning in Fiscal year 2010, the SRM team received additional FTEs to support the newly created Flood Control Grant Programs. These FTEs consist of a programs coordinator in the agency's headquarters, and two field representatives that coordinate with dam sponsors receiving grant funds.

Certain members of the SRM team also coordinate agency activities with agricultural industry groups, and perform certain intergovernmental relations activities with other state agencies, the Governor's Office of Budget, Planning and Policy and the Texas Legislature.

The **Conservation Outreach** unit plans and coordinates the Annual State Meeting of SWCD Directors; coordinates agency rulemaking functions; coordinates the development of various agency reports; coordinates requests for public information; coordinates the complaint process; maintains an open and relevant relationship between SWCDs, agricultural interest groups, and the general public; serves as the primary agency liaison with the Association of Texas SWCDs, the National Association of State Conservation Agencies, and the National Association of Conservation Districts; represents the agency on the Texas Invasive Species Coordinating Committee, the Prescribed Burning Board, the Interagency Task Force on Economic Growth and Endangered Species, and subcommittees of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee; administers agency responsibilities for facilitating and managing the Texas Invasive Species Coordinating Committee; manages the Texas Conservation Awards Program including the public speaking, poster, and essay contests; provides administrative services and programmatic support for the Wildlife Alliance for Youth; administers a conservation education video library loan service; produces the agency's Monthly Program News and Activities report; distributes agency press releases and Conservation News updates; produces content for the agency's social media platforms; supports conservation education for teachers through continuing education workshops; provides conservation education demonstration models on nonpoint source water pollution for

schools; plans and coordinates SWCD Program Development Workshops; and represents the agency at numerous trade shows and conferences across the state.

Human Resources responsibilities include: overseeing all personnel matters including benefits administration, state classification plan, payroll, leave accounting, employment and recruitment, managerial, developmental and safety training. Human Resources also ensures that TSSWCB personnel practices are in compliance with state and federal laws and regulations. Human Resources serves as a strategic partner with Executive Management and also consults and advises managerial staff regarding human resource matters.

The **Water Supply Enhancement** unit, through a Program Office in San Angelo and a satellite office in Johnson City, carries out duties and responsibilities associated with administering the WSEP; manages a financial incentive cost-share program supporting the removal of water-depleting brush; coordinates the work of SWCDs that implement specific water supply enhancement projects; collaborates with various state and federal entities to conduct brush control feasibility studies to identify priority watersheds; and develops resource management plans for landowners addressing brush control and other natural resource issues.

Soil and Water Conservation District Program Support provides assistance to SWCDs and their employees through TSSWCB field representatives that meet regularly with the SWCDs to provide guidance, training and consultation. The field staff also coordinates the activities of districts and provides a direct link between the TSSWCB and districts. Field Representatives explain TSSWCB policies, programs, rules, and regulations to SWCDs; assist SWCDs in developing and implementing their local conservation programs; provide guidance on proper expenditure of funds, bookkeeping procedures, and audits; train SWCD employees in proper accounting and fiscal reporting procedures; provide guidance to SWCDs on employment issues, open meetings, and open records; and assist SWCDs in organizing and conducting conservation education activities.

The **Water Quality Management Plan** Program, through six Regional Offices and a Poultry Program Office, assists agricultural and silvicultural producers in meeting the state's water quality goals and standards through a voluntary, incentive-based program. There are special requirements regarding Poultry WQMPs. Staff carry out duties and responsibilities associated with administering the WQMP Program; provide technical assistance to SWCDs and cooperators in developing and implementing WQMPs on agricultural or silvicultural operations; certify WQMPs; conduct engineering work associated with implementing WQMPs; manage day-to-day operation of the agency's Poultry WQMP Program; address the issue of nuisance odors created by poultry farms and land application of poultry litter; investigate water quality complaints involving agricultural and/or silvicultural NPS pollution; and manage a financial incentive program supporting WQMP implementation.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts

The TSSWCB performs many of its activities in coordination with the state's 216 local SWCDs. These local districts are political subdivisions of the state, established through local option elections of agricultural landowners. Districts generally reflect county boundaries, but may also follow river basin or watershed boundaries, depending on the desires of the local landowners.

Figure 2 shows the current 216 local districts that cover the entire state. The map also shows the grouping of the districts into the five State Board Districts that respectively elect a State Board member.

Landowners within these local districts elect the five district directors that comprise the district's governing body or board of directors. This board of directors administers the programs and activities of the district. Representatives of the districts within each region then elect the members of the State Board through a series of convention-style elections.

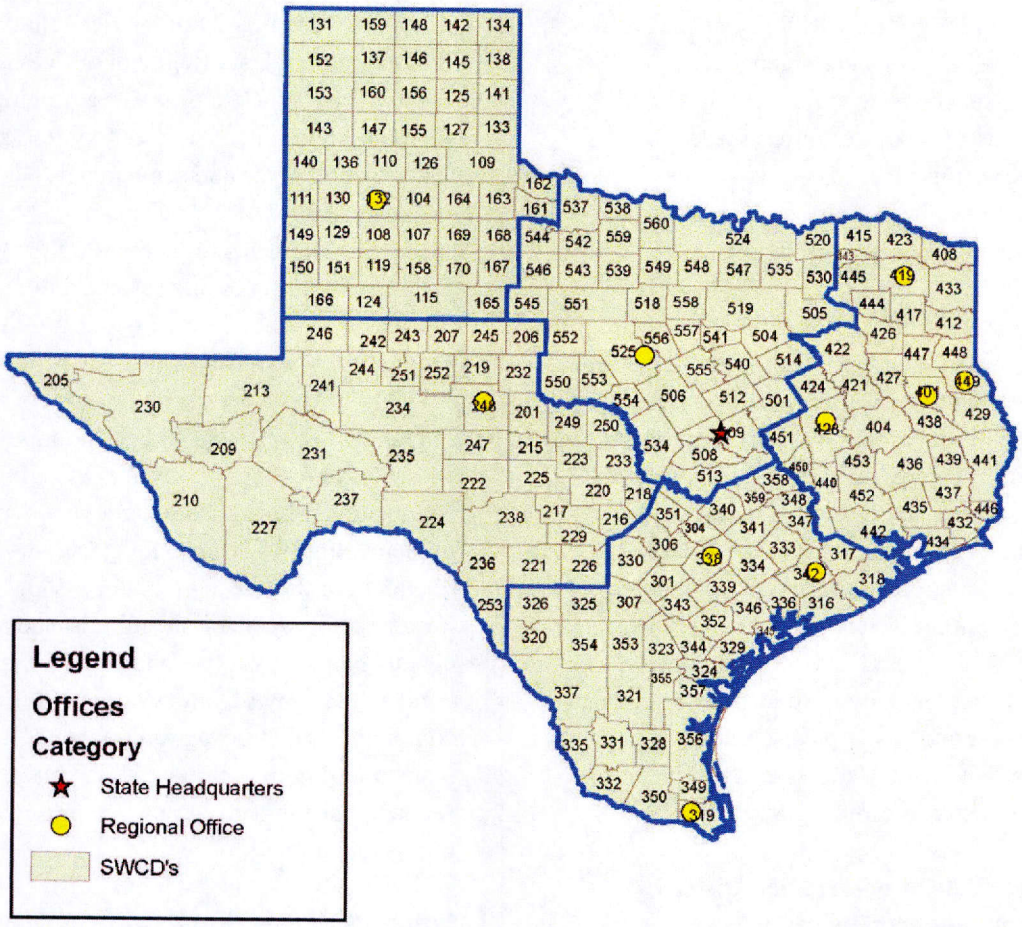


Figure 2. Locations of SWCDs, TSSWCB Regional Offices and State Board Districts

Districts do not have taxing authority and rely on locally generated funds from various activities and programs, federal assistance, county assistance, and state assistance from the TSSWCB. The NRCS provides most of the federal assistance available to districts and through cooperative agreements provide technical assistance to farmers and ranchers requesting assistance from the district.

Fiscal Aspects

The 2014-2015 biennial appropriations for the TSSWCB total $52.5 million. The methods for financing these appropriations include General Revenue and Federal Funds (Figure 3). Items of appropriation include Soil and Water Conservation District Assistance Programs, Nonpoint Source Pollution Abatement Programs, the Water Supply Enhancement Program, and Indirect Administration (Figure 4).

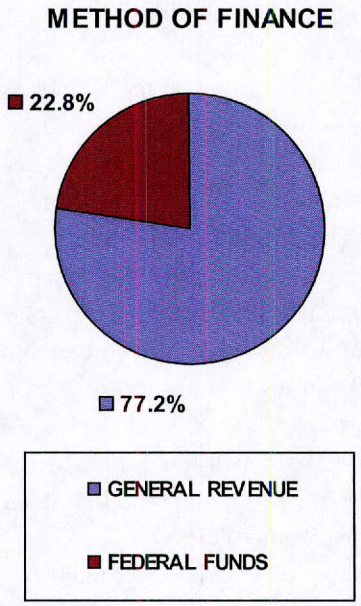


Figure 3. Method of Finance

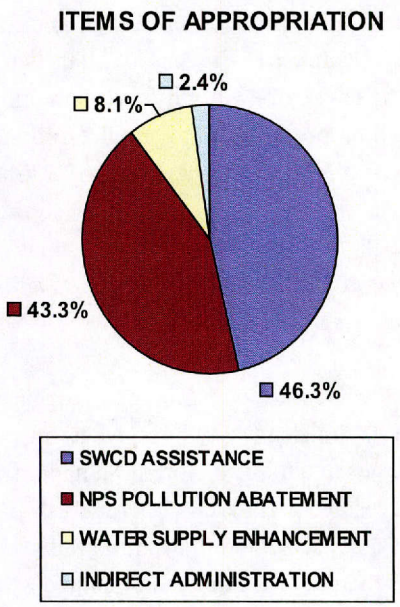


Figure 4. Items of Appropriation

The 2014-15 GAA, 83rd Legislature increased agency appropriations by $12.4 million from the 2012-13 GAA, 82nd Legislature:

- Article VI-55 Rider 7, Flood Control Dam Operation, Maintenance, and Structural Repair: Operation and maintenance, structural repair, and rehabilitation grants for flood control dams increased by $10.8 million in the 2014-15 GAA.
- Article VI-54 Rider 3, Allocation of Grant Funds: Technical assistance grants to soil and water conservation districts increased by $1.4 million in the 2014-15 GAA.
- Article VI-54 Rider 2, Matching Requirements: Matching fund grants to soil and water conservation districts increased by $259,200 in the 2014-15 GAA.
- The agency full-time employee (FTE) cap did not change and remains 72.1 FTEs.

Service Population Demographics

During this time period, the State has seen changes in land ownership. For many years, the number of people involved in agricultural production has been on the decline, and the average size of agricultural enterprises has grown. The percentage of the population involved in the production of food and fiber has steadily decreased. This has, to a large degree, been the result of economic forces making it more and more difficult to acquire and maintain economically viable agricultural operations. These same economic forces have required producers to scrutinize investments made in resource protection and conservation activities more closely.

Changes in land ownership impact conservation programs in three ways. First, each individual landowner may have different management objectives and techniques. As ownership changes, conservation plans and practices often change to adapt to changes in management. Second, changes in ownership often result in increased absentee ownership, where the landowner does not live on or have a direct hand in operation of the land unit. In such cases, those administering conservation programs must not only deal with landowners who may live a long distance away, but must become involved in and sensitive to landowner/tenant relationships. The third impact that changes in land ownership can have on conservation programs is to decrease the number of people qualified to serve as district directors. As absentee landownership increases, the number of producers who do not own land increases. Several areas in the state now have significant numbers of agricultural producers who do not own land.

Present trends indicate that society's expectations will continue to increase in the areas of natural resource conservation and agricultural pollution abatement. At a time when the influence of Texas' rural interests in the political process is decreasing, the public's awareness of environmental issues, particularly issues involving agricultural activities, is intensifying.

While Texas is a large state with a vast wealth of natural resources, the capability of its land resources is limited. As the state's population continues to grow, pressure on these resources for production of food and fiber will continue to increase. This expanding pressure will necessitate more active resource conservation and pollution prevention efforts.

Successful voluntary resource conservation programs will become more and more complex in the future. Securing voluntary cooperation from private property owners will require increased efforts. Media influence on issues impacting TSSWCB programs and increased government involvement in resource management coupled with inherent fear of regulation by impacted citizenry complicates conservation programs. Voluntary programs will continue to be the most efficient and effective means of conserving and protecting the state's natural resources.

Economic Variables

The promotion of soil and water resource conservation is significantly impacted by technological developments. As advanced farm machinery design becomes the norm in the industry, some changes in conservation practices or programs may be necessary to maintain conservation's acceptable image with agricultural producers. This points out the importance of maintaining close coordination with research entities to assure that the level and direction of research is appropriate from both the economic and the resource conservation view.

Looking at economic factors which affect Texas soil and water conservation programs, one must first begin with the human resources who in effect put conservation programs on the ground and who are most affected by state and national economic trends. The agricultural producers, i.e., the farmers, ranchers and timber producers, are traditionally conservationists, but that does not necessarily mean they are carrying out the soil and water conservation practices they espouse. To explain, one must understand that agricultural producers, like all of society, face a constant level of inflation in the cost of goods they purchase, but without the advantage of an offsetting rise in the price of goods they sell.

To put the argument into perspective, agriculture provides the foundation for an impressive array of Texas businesses, all of which make their own contributions to the state's economy. Manufacturers, food processors, the packaging industry, transportation, wholesalers and retailers all rely on the raw materials produced on Texas farms and ranches. All graduated costs from the time a raw product leaves the land until a specific product reaches the consumer is paid for by the consumer. This market system creates and generates jobs and dollars.

In contrast, agriculture in the State as well as the Nation is composed of individual entrepreneurs who pay market prices for supplies, machinery and services. In addition, they gamble on the weather and government policy and take what is offered on the open market for their products. This system does not permit adding the cost of implementing soil and water conservation to the prices of food, fiber and fuel; however, the products of the land are used by all consumers. It is therefore only reasonable that the public bear a part of the investment to protect the soil and water resource base.

In our continuing efforts to adequately feed and clothe the world, dependency on soil resources will continue to cause a need for soil and water conservation. An effective program to meet that need requires a financial commitment in relative proportion to the production levels being attempted. In reality, the priorities of all government functions are limited by economic factors on the international, national and state levels.

International policies aim to protect self-interest and artificially limit market opportunities thereby limiting agricultural income and government revenues that could proportionally be allocated for soil and water conservation programs. National policies aimed at stabilizing and providing an affordable market create the same limitations. However, stable and affordable agricultural markets help consumers to have spendable income for other purchases that contribute to the overall economy and the generation of government revenues.

Texas is fortunate in many ways. The geography of the state provides a great diversity in its climate and land resource base. The agricultural land resource base provides the opportunity for many agricultural products to be generated. This diversity of products opens the door to many markets and reduces dependence on the variables of a few select markets. By the same token, the various climes of the state affords the opportunity to produce a variety of products. The size of Texas helps to further reduce the impact of adverse climatic events or conditions which tend to be local or regional in their effect. This contributes to the chances that most areas of Texas will be able to market an agricultural product. It also provides an opportunity to give special attention to those areas significantly impacted by a climatic event or condition so that those affected land resource areas may be

adequately treated for continued agricultural production.

Impact of Federal Statutes/Regulations

Federal statutes and regulations have major impacts on agriculture in general and very specific and important impacts on soil and water resource conservation programs. These statutes and regulations not only determine many of the resources available for use in conservation programs, but in many cases place requirements on the agricultural industry to which conservation programs must be able to adapt.

Historically, most of the resources available for use by conservation programs have come from the federal government. Technical assistance to agricultural producers has been provided through districts primarily by the NRCS. The agency's delivery of technical assistance has been dramatically reduced over the last 30 years due to reduction in budget and staffing levels, resulting in the need for developing alternative ways to provide technical assistance.

The 1985 Federal Farm Bill changed relationships between conservation programs and other farm commodity programs. Since then, under certain conditions, conservation requirements have been placed on producers as a prerequisite for eligibility in farm commodity programs. Although subsequent Farm Bills have seen significant increases in program funding, these conservation requirements remain.

Federal statutes other than the Farm Bill also impact soil and water conservation programs in Texas. In the forefront of these is the Clean Water Act, which requires the development and implementation of nonpoint source pollution management programs, of which agriculture and silviculture are the responsibility of the TSSWCB. So far, requirements under the Clean Water Act have been satisfied with voluntary programs. However, future revisions of the Act are expected to include more stringent requirements. Requirements in the CWA for development of a TMDL for waterbodies not meeting state water quality standards have been highlighted by lawsuits in other states. Texas has an aggressive TMDL development and implementation program in which the TSSWCB is responsible for agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source components. The reauthorization of the Coastal Zone Management Act placed into law nonpoint source management requirements based on enforceable mechanisms at the state level. Regardless of what type of nonpoint source management programs are instituted, it is clear that the TSSWCB's workload in this area will multiply in the future.

Other federal statutes and regulations which impact conservation programs are those dealing with wetlands and endangered species. Not only do they generate a need for assistance to agricultural landowners, but also in many cases, conservation program planning must take them into account to avoid conflicts.

While federal statutes and regulations impact conservation programs in many ways, they are also a source of funding. Currently, the TSSWCB receives federal funds through the Clean Water Act. The greatest impediment to securing federal funds is the requirement in most programs that they be matched by varying percentages of non-federal funds. Limited state appropriations have and will continue to limit efforts to obtain federal funding.

Increased public awareness of environmental issues and pressure for government involvement in environmental protection will undoubtedly result in increased state and federal legislation.

Programs implementing environmental laws and those dealing with natural resource management will be expected to do more to assure that the environment is protected. The conservation and protection of soil, water and related resources will be central to these efforts. Agricultural activities, which have been more or less exempted from environmental laws and regulations, are sure to be a major focus of upcoming legislation. It is anticipated that the TSSWCB, because of its institutional make-up, will be experiencing continuously increasing responsibilities and workload.

Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Plan

HUB Mission

To encourage and effectively promote the utilization of Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs) by our agency and to report this to the Comptroller's Office.

HUB Goal

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board participates in the Texas HUB Program for minority and women-owned businesses. Our goal is to provide maximum opportunity to HUBs to participate in our agency's procurement in the awarding of contracts and subcontracts.

HUB Objectives

- Report expenditures and payment information regarding HUB utilization during each fiscal year.
- To include historically underutilized businesses in at least 25 percent of the total value of contracts and subcontracts awarded annually by the agency in purchasing and public works contracting.
- Agency HUB Coordinator attends HUB forums and HUB Vendor Fairs.

HUB Strategy

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board encourages the use of HUBs for any and all purchasing needs of our agency. We also encourage any and all contractors to use HUBs as partners and subcontractors.

HUB External/Internal Assessment

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board has in good faith used HUBs in the past and will continue to use HUBs when purchasing commodities or services or when entering into contracts. The agency's budget is rather small, and there is a limited number of HUBs in our area which offer commodities or services we require. Our agency has contacted HUBs in nearby areas, but has met with little success. We plan to persist in this effort and will continue to monitor the HUB listing published and maintained by the Comptroller's Office while continually seeking to solicit participation from HUB's in and around our local and statewide area.

HUB Planning Elements

Goal

We participate in the Texas HUB Program for minority and women-owned businesses. Our goal is to provide maximum opportunity to HUBs to participate in our agency's procurement in the awarding of contracts and subcontracts.

A.1 Objective

To include historically underutilized businesses in at least 25 percent of the total value of contracts and subcontracts awarded annually by

the agency in purchasing and public works contracting by fiscal year 2018.

Outcome Measure

Percentage of Total Dollar Value of Purchasing and Public Works Contracts and Subcontracts Awarded to HUBs.

A.1.1 Strategy

Develop and implement a plan for increasing the use of historically underutilized businesses through purchasing and public works contracts and subcontracts.

Output Measures

1. Number of HUB Contractors and Subcontractors Contacted for Bid Proposals
2. Number of HUB Contracts and Subcontracts Awarded
3. Dollar Value of HUB Contracts and Subcontracts Awarded

Self Evaluation and Opportunities for Improvement

Because the TSSWCB is a bridge between locally elected officials and State Government, we recognize how vital effective communication is when administering statewide programs and services. The TSSWCB's goal is to consistently look for opportunities to improve existing communication between the agency, the Legislature, soil and water conservation districts, other state and federal agencies, as well as the general public. The TSSWCB especially intends to concentrate our future communication efforts on the urban sector of Texas in order to increase their understanding of the important work soil and water conservation districts perform across the state. The more urbanized areas of Texas are the largest beneficiaries of the soil conservation and water quality improvement efforts that take place on rural lands.

The TSSWCB also recognizes the importance of utilizing federal funding to augment state funding when possible. In the past we have relied on the Clean Water Act, Section 319(h) grant the agency receives from the EPA as a sole source of external funding. However, recently the TSSWCB has begun competing for additional EPA grants such as the funding available under the Clean Water Act, Section 104(b)(3). Beginning in 2006, the TSSWCB entered into annual contracts with the NRCS to serve as a Technical Service Provider by assisting with the implementation of Farm Bill programs.

Because of the ever increasing need to report on the environmental impacts of the conservation work we facilitate, the TSSWCB recognizes the need to develop a comprehensive database that can not only track the amount of funding used to implement management practices, but also a measure of the improvement in water quality resulting from those management practices.

The TSSWCB sees these challenges as opportunities to better improve the service the agency provides to all Texans. Through effective communication and cooperation with landowners, soil and water conservation districts, state and federal agencies, the Texas Legislature, and the general public, the TSSWCB looks forward to addressing the State's most pressing natural resource concerns.

Sunset Advisory Commission Review and Legislative Actions

The Texas Sunset Advisory Commission performed its review of the TSSWCB during 2010 and submitted its findings to the 82nd

Legislature. The result was the passage of House Bill 1808.

The State Board was continued for 12 years, but a special purpose review of the agency was required and will be carried out this summer or early fall by the Sunset Commission.

Current Obstacles

An obstacle the TSSWCB must perpetually manage is the difficulty in administering cost-sharing programs for conservation practices that are both bound by the constraints of weather and seasonal variations as well as the constraints of a biennial budget cycle. Many conservation practices can only be successfully implemented when precipitation is favorable for the establishment of vegetation, or when the weather conditions are suitable for the use of chemical herbicides. Often, funding that is contractually obligated for a specific purpose is delayed due to unfavorable conditions, increasing the possibility that the funding will be lapsed back into the state treasury before the work can be accomplished. Having the ability to expand the period of time within which contracted obligations could be liquidated would likely decrease the amount of funding removed from those programs due to lapses, and increase the amount of conservation installed on Texas lands.

Other obstacles the TSSWCB must routinely adapt its programs around pertain to changes in the federal regulations relating to the Clean Water Act. Slight changes to laws at the federal level often cause an enormous amount of work at the state level. For example, when the EPA reclassified certain dry-litter poultry operations as "point sources" under the federal permitting program, extensive changes needed to be made to the rules and program guidance of both the TSSWCB and the TCEQ. Another example is the ever-evolving requirements for using Clean Water Act, Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Grant funds. In past years, greater flexibility was placed in the hands of the state, whereas currently the EPA is more directly dictating to the state where federal funding can be spent and on which types of projects. These changes, which are frustrating at the least, can cause great difficulty for state agencies in their attempts to carry out water quality improvements that require a number of years to achieve.

To a large extent the state of the economy, persistent drought, and changing federal priorities will always remain impediments that TSSWCB will have to manage. However, the ability to carry contractually obligated funds into future biennia would alleviate aspects of the challenges that they present.

Potential Future Obstacles

Proposed Congressional legislation, as well as at least two pending court cases, may have significant impacts on the TSSWCB and its programs in the near future.

On April 2, 2009, U.S. Senator Russell Feingold and 24 other Senate sponsors introduced S.787, better known as the Clean Water Restoration Act. This pending legislation would amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (commonly known as the Clean Water Act) to replace the term "navigable waters" with the term "waters of the United States." Although this legislation ultimately was not passed by Congress, in subsequent years its major provisions were included in potential regulation changes by federal agencies.

Many believe a change such as this would result in an unprecedented expansion of the CWA because the CWA already regulates truly navigable waters and streams with both permanent and seasonal flows. The enactment of provisions would lead to a much more broad interpretation of the CWA. Proponents have

asserted that such an approach would "restore" the original intent of the CWA and "clarify" CWA jurisdiction. However, others believe it would grant the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) jurisdiction over all "intrastate waters" – essentially all wet areas within a state, including groundwater, ditches, pipes, streets, municipal storm drains, gutters, desert features and farmland. It is believed this would also grant EPA and the Corps authority over all "activities affecting these waters" (private or public), regardless of whether the activity is occurring in water or whether the activity actually adds a pollutant to the water. Many consider this a change from the original intent of Congress in enacting the CWA by replacing its link to the commerce clause with the full "legislative power of Congress under the Constitution." The impact of this legislation could result in the need for expansive modifications of state law, state-federal agreements, and reclassifications of state agency jurisdictions and programs. As the lead agency in Texas for the management, abatement, and prevention of agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source pollution, the TSSWCB would likely need expanded jurisdiction and additional authority to carry out its conservation programs in a manner consistent with federal law if this law is enacted.

Future Opportunities

An area that the TSSWCB feels is already evolving into a measurably improved function relates to water quality improvement through watershed-wide planning prior to implementing conservation practices. While the TSSWCB, and other agencies, have always attempted to apply program resources in a coordinated manner, recent advances in the understanding of watershed dynamics, potential pollutant sources, fate and transport of pollutants, ultimate impacts of those pollutants, and strategies in monitoring for successes have led to the establishment of a Watershed Protection Plan Program. This program is based on the administrative, technical, and cultural requirements identified by the EPA as critical to achieving success in water quality restoration activities. Taking this approach, through extensive stakeholder participation, is laying the foundation for true water quality success stories in numerous watersheds across the state.

The TSSWCB is also anticipating an increase in the state's ability to control invasive species through the work of the new Invasive Species Coordinating Committee (Senate Bill 691/81st Regular Session). As the Committee begins its work, the TSSWCB and other agencies feel that improvements in the state's efforts to mitigate the effects of invasive species will occur due to a greater emphasis being placed on them, the potential for increased federal funding, and increased coordination between state agencies.

A final area that the TSSWCB believes is rapidly improving is the ability of the agency to identify, verify, and address the vast number of Texas waters that are considered impaired due to excessive bacteria and other pathogens. For several years, the water quality assessment functions of the TCEQ have followed established standards and practices which have resulted in a tremendous number of designated impairments, resulting in the need for extensive, and expensive, water quality functions required under the CWA. Difficulty in characterizing the nature of bacteria, as well as a seemingly disproportionate number of actual illnesses compared to the number of documented impairments, have led to an increased focus on the issue. Recent efforts by the TCEQ to evaluate the appropriateness of designated uses and their associated numeric water quality standards will likely increase the ability of all water quality agencies to place limited technical and financial resources in the most important

situations. Improved assessment techniques, faster and less expensive modeling applications, as well as an extensive statewide initiative to increase understanding of bacteria fate and transport, all funded by the TSSWCB, should enable the agency to better target its natural resource conservation programs in the very near future.

AGENCY GOALS, OBJECTIVES, OUTCOME MEASURES, STRATEGIES AND OUTPUT, EFFICIENCY AND EXPLANATORY MEASURES

Goal A—SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE

To protect and enhance Texas natural resources (water, land and wildlife) by providing education, outreach, and information to agricultural and silvicultural operations, district directors, and the general public on water quality improvement measures, water yield enhancement, and soil and water conservation and ensuring that a quality conservation program is available and being applied in all soil and water conservation districts in Texas.

OBJECTIVE 1 – Support Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Provide a level of financial assistance, technical guidance, and administrative support to all districts allowing them to identify 100% of their soil and water resource needs; develop and manage conservation plans and programs to meet district needs.

Outcome Measure: Percent of District Financial Needs Met by Soil and Water Conservation Board Grants

Strategy: Program Management, Financial and Conservation Implementation Assistance

Provide program expertise, technical guidance and conservation implementation assistance, and financial assistance on a statewide basis in managing and directing conservation programs

Output Measure: Number of Grant Related Claims Processed

Efficiency Measure: Average Number of Days to Process Grant Related Claims

Explanatory Measure: Percent of Districts Receiving Technical Assistance Funds

Strategy: Rural and Urban Conservation Outreach

Design and implement outreach programs which effectively communicate and promote proper stewardship of the state's natural resources

Output Measure: Number of Contacts with Districts to Provide Conservation Education and Program Implementation Assistance

Output Measure: Number of District Meetings Attended

OBJECTIVE 2 – Flood Control Dams

Provide grants for operation, maintenance, structural repair, and/or rehabilitation of eight (8) flood control dams through fiscal year 2020.

Outcome Measure: Percent of Flood Control Dams Identified as in Need of Repair

Strategy: Flood Control Dam Operation, Maintenance, Repair, and Rehabilitation

Output Measure: Number of flood control dam repair grants awarded

Output Measure: Number of flood control dam repairs completed

GOAL B – NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION ABATEMENT

To effectively administer a program for the abatement of nonpoint source pollution caused by agricultural and silvicultural uses of the state's soil and water resources

OBJECTIVE 1 – Reduce Nonpoint Source Pollution

Reduce the potential loadings from agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint sources by designing and implementing pollution prevention programs in each area with identified problems and concerns within four years of identification

Outcome Measure: Percent of Projects Addressing 303(d) List Impaired Water Bodies

Outcome Measure: Percent of Identified Problem Areas with Certified Plans

Strategy: Statewide Management Plan Implement and update as necessary a statewide management plan for the control of agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source water pollution

Output Measure: Number of Proposals for Federal Grant Funding Evaluated

Strategy: Pollution Abatement Plans

Develop and implement pollution abatement plans for agricultural/silvicultural operations in identified problem areas

Output Measure: Number of Pollution Abatement Plans Certified

Output Measure: Number of Water Quality Treatment Grants Made

Efficiency Measure: Average Number of Days to Certify Pollution Abatement Plans

GOAL C – WATER SUPPLY ENHANCEMENT

To protect and enhance water supplies in Texas by ensuring that a quality conservation program is available and that funds are being used effectively to increase water conservation and enhance water yields through brush control in targeted areas

OBJECTIVE 1 – Conserve and enhance water supplies for the state of Texas; manage and direct water conservation and water yield programs in targeted areas

Outcome Measure: Percent of Eligible Acres in WSEP Areas Treated and Cleared of Brush

Outcome Measure: Predicted Number of Gallons of Water Yielded from Brush Control

Strategy: Water Conservation and Enhancement

Provide program expertise, technical guidance and conservation implementation assistance, and financial assistance for brush control and other

means to conserve water and enhance water yields in targeted areas

Output Measure: Number of Acres of Brush Treated

Efficiency Measure: Average Cost per Acre of Mechanical Brush Clearing

Efficiency Measure: Average Cost per Acre of Chemical Brush Clearing

GOAL D – INDIRECT ADMINISTRATION

OBJECTIVE 1 – Indirect Administration

Strategy: Indirect Administration

Technology Resource Planning

Part 1: Technology Assessment Summary

The TSSWCB is engaged in an ongoing series of initiatives that focus on user support, high-availability of network services and leveraging open source software. These initiatives are in line with and directly correlate to one or more of the statewide goals enumerated in the State Strategic Plan for Information Resources. These initiatives include:

- *Expanding the use of Geographic Information System technologies* – to address two primary needs: 1) supporting agency staff in performing conservation planning work with capable, reliable, and cost-effective solutions; and 2) providing the public and partnering organizations with high quality data.
- *Increasing the IT assistance provided to Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs)* – through activities centered around the following goals: 1) increasing the use of technology to help SWCDs go paperless, save money and ensure uniform standards; 2) providing SWCDs with the resources to operate independently.
- *Furthering workplace mobility* – through the use of wireless technologies, mobile computing devices and server support. Emphasis is on enabling employees to efficiently perform job functions across a variety of work environments and locations.
- *Continuing to leverage open source software* - the agency has for many years made exclusive use of open source software to power its own network operations. The flexibility, cost-effectiveness and reliability of its deployed open source applications have allowed the agency to provide a wide spectrum of network services without jeopardizing the support needs of its desktop user base. Additionally, limited open source applications have been used as desktop clients where the net results have also been a reduction in support needs and an increase in overall user capability.

Alignment with Statewide Technology Priorities

TSSWCB initiatives seek to align with the Statewide Priorities identified in the 2014-2018 State Strategic Plan for Information Resources Management.

- **Statewide Technology Priority – Security and Privacy**

  Security at the agency begins maintaining updated software on deployed systems. Its fleet of PCs is maintained by a open source inventory and software update server which is used to regularly push updates to systems in any location on the Internet. Server operating systems are aggressively patched when vulnerabilities are disclosed.

  Additionally, TSSWCB requires unique user name and password credentials for users accessing agency IT resources. This includes desktop PCs, network file shares, and access to internally-

developed web applications. Passwords must meet certain minimum requirements and are checked against publicly available password cracking utilities.

Strong encryption is used to protect offsite backups of production systems that have been identified as containing potentially sensitive data.

The agency is evaluating the use of encryption on a larger basis to protect mobile devices that have been identified as potentially working with sensitive data. Issues of increased support and affects on system reliability are potential barriers that are being considered in this process.

- **Statewide Technology Priority – Cloud**

  Over the last few years, the agency has developed several web-based applications to handle various information-collecting duties involving the state's 216 soil and water conservation districts. This has proven an effective means of receiving accurate information while saving time and money for both the agency and the districts. The use of web-based applications for this role will continue and expand in scope when feasible.

- **Statewide Technology Priority – Legacy Modernization**

  In the past, the agency developed its web applications by hand. When possible, simple forms are now being developed through the content management system that drives the agency's website. The use of the content management system will increase for agency web applications when it can result in greater efficiency.

  More complex web applications are now built using open source application development frameworks to speed application deployment and in many cases enhance the maintenance and usability of the resulting applications.

  In the area of geographic information systems, the agency is using open source technologies in seeking to develop a solution to greatly enhance the way in which water quality management plans are developed. This project aims to replace a legacy system of acquired technology with the goal of significantly improving the workflow of agency employees and the openness and hence usability of the data generated.

- **Statewide Technology Priority – Virtualization**

  Virtualization is used by the TSSWCB on network servers and on desktop PCs to reduce hardware expenses, increase the utilization of hardware, ease system management and in some cases enhance system security through application isolation.

  Server virtualization has been in use for many years and runs on an open source platform that has proven to be flexible and resilient.

  Select desktop PCs and laptops use virtualization included with Windows 7 to run legacy GIS software which is needed in a few instances. This use will be curtailed by the replacement of the legacy software when the agency rolls out a successor GIS application.

Other desktop virtualization is used by the Help Desk to troubleshoot various system configurations and to test server configurations and upgrades. The Help Desk utilizes an open source virtualization solution.

- **Statewide Technology Priority – Business Continuity**

  The TSSWCB regularly reviews, updates and tests its Business Continuity Plan for alignment with critical IT operations. This process helps ensure minimal disruption to agency services in the event of natural disasters or other situation resulting in damage to network or facility infrastructure.

  Regular and frequent backups are made of agency servers and PCs to guard against hardware failures, software problems and data corruption or loss.

  All backup systems use open source software for the transmission, storage and encryption of data.

- **Statewide Technology Priority – IT Workforce**

  Agency IT staff is given considerable latitude to work directly with staff and management to research, develop, and deploy solutions that further the TSSWCB's ability to carry out its mission. This ability to directly shepard the technology landscape used by the agency has proven a strong motivator and resulted in high employee job satisfaction.

- **Statewide Technology Priority – Data Management**

  The deployment of Help Desk systems to help track agency IT inventory, proprietary software licenses and Help Desk tickets has further streamlined the generating and accessing of data needed to support agency staff.

- **Statewide Technology Priority – Mobility**

  The agency's open source groupware solution has transformed the way calendaring, task and contact management occurs among and between employees. This is expected to have a larger effect in the future as integration with smartphones and tablets expands. Additionally, the TSSWCB uses virutal private network technology to provide secure remote access to file storage for many employees.

- **Statewide Technology Priority – Network**

  The TSSWCB has provided for a steady increase of information sharing with Texas' soil and water conservation districts via the Web. Conservation districts depend heavily upon information available on the public portions of the agency website and the agency expects an increase in information sharing to occur across private and secured portions of the website and through the use of email, online forms, document posting and possibly other means such as hosted forums.

  The use of appropriate, late-generation open source technologies factors heavily into this area. The content management system that runs the website provides a powerful platform for

collaboration and information sharing. This may be further utilized in the future with technologies such as wikis, forums and blogs.

The agency has for many years made exclusive use of open source software to power its own network operations. The flexibility, cost-effectiveness and reliability of the open source applications deployed have allowed the agency to provide a wide spectrum of network services.

Limited open source applications have been used on desktop clients where the net results have been a reduction in support needs and an increase in overall user security and capability

Part 2: Technology Initiative Alignment

The table below depicts the format and mapping of the TSSWCB's current and planned technology initiatives to the agency's business objectives.

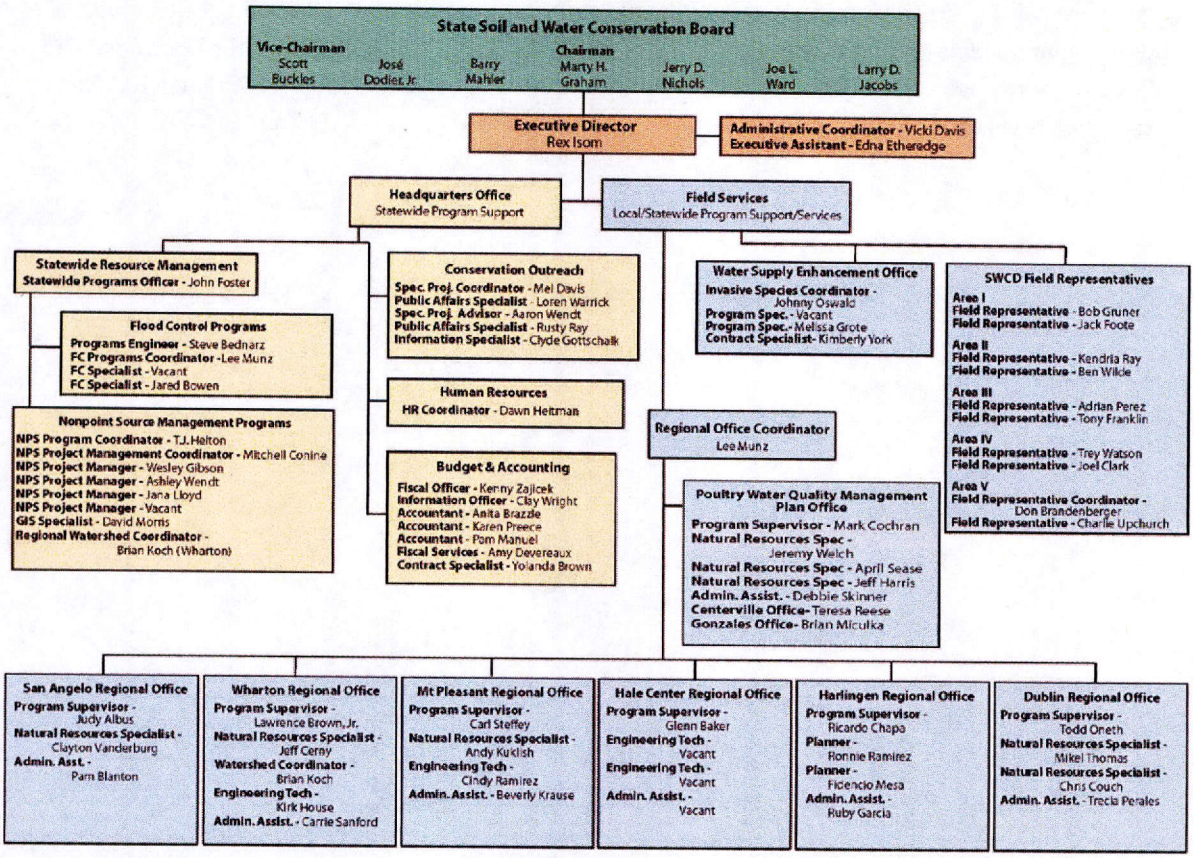
TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE	RELATED AGENCY OBJECTIVE/(S)	RELATED SSP STRATEGY/(IES)	CURRENT OR PLANNED	ANTICIPATED BENEFIT(S)	INNOVATION, BEST PRACTICE, BENCHMARKING
1. User Support	All Objectives	1.2 1.3 2.1 3.2 4.1 4.2 4.3	Current	The agency will provide a level of information resource technology support that is both reasonable in cost and readily available to agency users as they carry out the agency's mission.	User satisfaction with IT support. Availability of agency IT services.
2. Stewardship of Information	All Objectives	2.1 2.2 4.3	Current	The TSSWCB will provide a high level of security for information created, received and/or maintained on agency IT resources.	Prevention of data theft or corruption.
3. Enhancement of IT Capabilities within the Agency	All Objectives	1.3 3.2 4.2	Current	The TSSWCB will provide cost-effective Information Technology tools and resources to agency personnel with the goal of further enhancing the ability of the agency to carry out its mission.	Increased ability of users to perform their duties. Increased security. Increased IT support capabilities.
4. Information Management Practices	All Objectives	2.1 4.3	Current	The TSSWCB will continue regular internal audits of its IT policies and procedures. The agency will follow pertinent recommendations with the goal of improving and/or creating policies and procedures as needed to help protect and strengthen the agency's information technology infrastructure for the future.	Compliance with Texas Administrative Code and DIR policies.
5. Leverage Open Source Software	All Objectives	1.1 3.2 4.2	Current	The TSSWCB will deploy appropriate open source software solutions wherever applicable for all information technology projects and needs.	Lowered licensing and support costs, enhanced user experience and increased productivity.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Description of Agency's Planning Process

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) continually reviews and solicits input on agency priorities and goals. During April 2012, the agency formally solicited for suggested updates and/or recommendations on proposed changes for the 2013-2017 Strategic Plan. All suggestions and comments were documented and referred to appropriate staff for consideration within their specific agency functions and responsibilities.

APPENDIX B: Current Organizational Chart



APPENDIX C: Five-year Projections for Outcomes

FIVE -YEAR PROJECTIONS FOR OUTCOMES

Outcome	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Percent of SWCD Financial Needs Met by TSSWCB Grants	70%	68.3%	66.1%	63.8%	61.6%
Percent of Eligible Acres in WSEP Areas Treated and Cleared of Brush	50%	90%	50%	90%	50%
Predicted Number of Gallons of Water Yielded from Brush Control	838 million gallons	1.49 billion gallons	797 million gallons	1.48 billion gallons	758 million gallons
Percent of Problem Areas with Certified WQMPs	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%
Percent of Projects Addressing 303(d) List Impaired Waterbodies	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%

APPENDIX D: PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND DEFINITIONS

Goal:	**Soil and Water Conservation Assistance**	
Objective:	**Provide Program Expertise, Financial and Technical Guidance to all Soil and Water Conservation Districts**	
Outcome Measure:	**Percent of District Financial Needs Met by Conservation Board Grants**	
	Definition: The total amount of grant payments and other direct payments to districts to meet financial needs as requested by districts in their biennial budget request divided by the total projected financial needs of districts as requested in their district biennial budget request with the quotient being expressed as a percent.	
	Data Limitations: Measure is considered to offer reliable information on financial program support to districts but is restricted by total allocated funds available for allocation to districts.	
	Data Source: The data is collected via program guidelines for report and payment procedures and biennial budget requests submitted by districts. The field staff is kept apprised of program reporting adherence by districts and grant payments processed by districts.	
	Methodology: Dollar amount of grant payments and other direct payments to districts to meet financial needs as requested by districts in their biennial budget request are divided by total projected financial needs of districts as requested in their district biennial budget request. Expressed as a percentage.	
	Purpose: This measure addresses the number of direct payments to the districts in the form of grant funds as allocated with state revenues. Addresses the resource needs of the districts.	
	Calculation Method Noncumulative	**New Measure** No
	Key Measure Yes	**Target Attainment** Higher than target
Strategy:	**Program Expertise, Financial and Conservation Implementation Assistance**	
Output Measure:	**Number of Contacts with Districts to provide Conservation Education and Program Implementation Assistance**	
	Definition: The total number of district directors and employees contacted by State Board staff through personal contacts, seminars, workshops, and other conservation program related functions.	
	Data Limitations: Limited only by reporting accuracy. Contacts are obtained via personal interaction and phone conversations.	
	Data Source: Information tabulated from staff reports.	
	Methodology: Tabulated from actual numbers documented by staff.	
	Purpose: Tracks the number of contacts and assistance districts are receiving from TSSWCB staff.	
	Calculation Method Cumulative	**New Measure** No
	Key Measure Yes	**Target Attainment** Higher than target
Output Measure:	**Number of Grants-related Claims Processed**	
	Definition: The total number of claims for grant funds from Soil and Water Conservation Districts processed for payment by TSSWCB staff.	

	Data Limitations: Limited by requests received from Soil and Water Conservation Districts.	
	Data Source: Information from data collected from Soil and Water Conservation Districts.	
	Methodology: Collected and tabulated by TSSWCB staff as requests re-evaluated.	
	Purpose: Tracks the requests of grant funds.	
	Calculation Method Cumulative	**New Measure** No
	Key Measure No	**Target Attainment** Higher than target
Efficiency Measure:	**Average Number of Days to Process a Grants-Related Claim**	
	Definition: Using a representative sample of all claims processed, and dividing the total days spent in processing those claims by the number of claims in the sample, calculate the average time in processing expressed as calendar days.	
	Data Limitations: Limited only by the number claims received from Soil and Water Conservation Districts.	
	Data Source: Submitted to agency via Soil and Water Conservation Districts.	
	Methodology: The total number of days spent in processing those claims is divided by the number of claims in the representative sample, expressed as calendar days.	
	Purpose: Evaluates the agency's performance relating to processing of grant payments.	
	Calculation Method Cumulative	**New Measure** No
	Key Measure No	**Target Attainment** Lower than target
Explanatory Measure:	**Percent of Districts Receiving Technical Assistance Funds**	
	Definition: The number districts participating in the Technical Assistance Program divided by the total number of Soil and Water Conservation Districts with the resulting quotient expressed as a percent.	
	Data Limitations: Limited by the number of requests received from SWCDs.	
	Data Source: Information collected from Soil and Water Conservation Districts.	
	Methodology: Number of districts participating in Technical Assistance program divided by total number of districts with the resulting quotient expressed as a percentage.	
	Purpose: Addresses the needs of the Soil and Water Conservation Districts.	
	Calculation Method Cumulative	**New Measure** No
	Key Measure No	**Target Attainment** Higher than target
Strategy:	**Rural and Urban Conservation Outreach**	
Output Measure:	**Number of District Meetings Attended**	
	Definition: The total number of district board meetings, district functions that are posted and a quorum is present, district elections, and other meetings attended for the purpose of acquiring and disseminating information to soil and water conservation districts.	
	Data Limitations: Limited only by accuracy of reporting of district meetings, district functions that are posted and a quorum is present, district elections, and other meetings attended for the purpose of acquiring and disseminating	

	information to soil and water conservation districts.	
	Data Source: Events are tabulated and categorized for reporting by TSSWCB.	
	Methodology: Total number of events are recorded and tabulated.	
	Purpose: Identifies the conservation outreach and district assistance efforts of the TSSWCB staff.	
	Calculation Method Cumulative	**New Measure** No
	Key Measure No	**Target Attainment** Higher than target
Objective:	**Flood Control Dams**	
Outcome Measure:	**Percent of Flood Control Dams Identified as in Need of Repair**	
	Definition: The percentage of flood control dams that have a known repair need.	
	Data Limitations: The agency neither has the authority nor the resources to require or carry out surveys of all flood control dams, nor routinely receive the results of site inspections or dam safety inspections. Repair needs are only verified or confirmed by the agency when an application for repair grant funds is submitted for consideration. Some information from a 2008 statewide survey conducted by the USDA-NRCS has provided a base line, however, each passing year makes it less relevant.	
	Data Source: The agency receives data regarding repair needs on applications for grant funding.	
	Methodology: The number of flood control dams known to have a repair need divided by the total number of flood control dams in the state with the resultant quotient being expressed as a percentage.	
	Purpose: Provides an outcome of the amount of repair needs in the state that can be addressed through TSSWCB's Flood Control Dam Structural Repair Grant Program. This program was created in response to an appropriation of funds intended to be passed through to local dam sponsors for the purpose of providing no more than 95% of the cost of a structural repair to a flood control dam. When possible, these funds are also used to provide between 25% and 35% of the match required for federally funded dam repairs and rehabilitation projects.	
	Calculation Method Cumulative	**New Measure** Yes
	Key Measure No	**Target Attainment** Higher than target
Strategy:	**Flood Control Dam Operation, Maintenance, Repair, and Rehabilitation**	
Output Measure:	**Number of flood control dam repair grants awarded**	
	Definition: The number of flood control repair grant applications received by the agency that result in a grant award to a dam sponsor for the protection and safety of human health and critical infrastructure.	
	Data Limitations: Limited by the amount of funds received by the TSSWCB per grant year, and the number of applications received for repair grant funds. Given the number and severity of significant repair needs known to the agency, the agency has determined that for every $2 million in appropriated funding the agency will be able to award one contract per fiscal year. For every $2 million in funds one flood control dam repair contract will be awarded.	
	Data Source: The amount of funding available and the number of applications received will be known numbers to the agency on a yearly basis.	

	Methodology: The number of flood control dam repair contracts awarded is totaled.	
	Purpose: Provides an output on the performance of the TSSWCB's Flood Control Dam Structural Repair Grant Program. This program was created in response to an appropriation of funds intended to be passed through to local dam sponsors for the purpose of providing no more than 95% of the cost of a structural repair to a flood control dam. When possible, these funds are also used to provide between 25% and 35% of the match required for federally funded dam repairs and rehabilitation projects.	
	Calculation Method Cumulative	**New Measure** Yes
	Key Measure No	**Target Attainment** Higher than target
Output Measure:	**Number of flood control dam repairs completed**	
	Definition: The number of flood control dams repaired in a fiscal year with the assistance of a grant through the TSSWCB's Flood Control Dam Structural Repair Grant Program for the protection and safety of human health and critical infrastructure.	
	Data Limitations: Limited by the amount of funds appropriated to the TSSWCB and the number of applications received by the TSSWCB during the current and previous two fiscal years. Given the number and severity of significant repair needs known to the agency, the agency has determined that for every $2 million in appropriated funding the agency will be able to complete one structural repair project per fiscal year.	
	Data Source: The amount of funding available and the number of applications received will be known numbers to the agency on a yearly basis.	
	Methodology: The number of flood control dams repaired is totaled.	
	Purpose: Provides an output on the performance of the TSSWCB's Flood Control Dam Structural Repair Grant Program. This program was created in response to an appropriation of funds intended to be passed through to local dam sponsors for the purpose of providing no more than 95% of the cost of a structural repair to a flood control dam. When possible, these funds are also used to provide between 25% and 35% of the match required for federally funded dam repairs and rehabilitation projects.	
	Calculation Method Cumulative	**New Measure** Yes
	Key Measure Yes	**Target Attainment** Higher than target
Goal:	**Administer a Program for Abatement of Agricultural Nonpoint Source Pollution**	
Objective:	**Reduce Agricultural/Silvicultural NPS Pollution with Prevention Programs**	
Outcome Measure:	**Percent of Projects Addressing 303(d) List Impaired Waterbodies**	
	Definition: The percent of approved and active projects addressing 303(d) listed impaired or impacted waterbodies with federal grant funds.	
	Data Limitations: Limited by the amount of funds received by the TSSWCB per grant year and grantor guidance.	
	Data Source: Collected from proposals accepted and funded under contract.	
	Methodology: The number of federally funded, approved, and active projects addressing 303(d) listed impaired or impacted waterbodies is divided by the total number of federally funded, approved, and active projects with the resultant	

	quotient being expressed as a percentage.	
	Purpose: Tabulates the percent of TSSWCB projects funded with federal grant dollars addressing impaired or impacted waterbodies as listed on the 303(d) list. Projects are focused on nonpoint source abatement for the control of agricultural and silvicultural source water pollution. CWA Section 319(h) grant funds can be utilized in the 305(b) listed water bodies of the State and Assessment Projects. The TSSWCB has directed that the majority of funds be directed at impaired or impacted water bodies already showing problems.	
	Calculation Method Cumulative	**New Measure** No
	Key Measure No	**Target Attainment** Higher than target
Outcome Measure:	**Percent Problem Areas with Certified Plans**	
	Definition: The number of agricultural/silvicultural operations identified as having a potential to cause nonpoint source pollution with certified water quality management plans divided by the total number of agricultural/silvicultural operations identified as having a potential to cause nonpoint source pollution in problem areas designated by the TSSWCB with the Quotient expressed as a percent.	
	Data Limitations: Data limited only by ability to identify operations having a potential to cause nonpoint source pollution.	
	Data Source: Tabulated from data collected from Regional Offices, CWA Grant program and internal database containing certified water quality management plans.	
	Methodology: Operations identified as having a potential to cause nonpoint source pollution with certified plans divided by total operations identified as having a potential to cause nonpoint source pollutions in problem areas designated by the TSSWCB.	
	Purpose: Tabulates the agricultural/silvicultural operations with water quality management plans versus operations without water quality management plans in problem areas designated by the TSSWCB.	
	Calculation Method Noncumulative	**New Measure** No
	Key Measure Yes	**Target Attainment** Higher than target
Strategy:	**Implement a Statewide Management Plan for Controlling Nonpoint Source Pollution**	
Output Measure:	**Number of proposals for Federal Grant Funding Evaluated**	
	Definition: The number of proposals for federal grant funding evaluated by TSSWCB staff	
	Data Limitations: Limited by number of proposals received.	
	Data Source: Generated through proposals received, internal and external recommendations, and assessment of potential sites.	
	Methodology: Collected and tabulated by Board staff as requests are evaluated.	
	Purpose: Identifies direction of agency's funding initiatives.	
	Calculation Method Cumulative	**New Measure** No
	Key Measure Yes	**Target Attainment** Higher than target
Strategy:	**Pollution Abatement Plans for Problem Agricultural Areas**	

Output Measure:	**Number of Pollution Abatement Plans Certified**	
	Definition: The number of plans developed and certified to satisfy compliance requirements of the state's water quality standards.	
	Data Limitations: Limited by requests and the availability of planning assistance at the district level.	
	Data Source: Submitted to agency via Soil and Water Conservation Districts and TSSWCB Regional Offices for certification signature. Maintained in database.	
	Methodology: Tabulated from submitted plans for certification during quarter.	
	Purpose: Demonstrates need of water quality management plans and major area of work and funding for agency.	
	Calculation Method Cumulative	**New Measure** No
	Key Measure Yes	**Target Attainment** Higher than target
Output Measure:	**Number of Water Quality Treatment Grants Made**	
	Definition: The number of grants made to cooperators to defray part of the cost of installing water quality management plans.	
	Data Limitations: Limited only by requests.	
	Data Source: Generated internally by payments processed.	
	Methodology: Tabulated from applications for cost share and payment process.	
	Purpose: Shows the amount of need in the field for cost share assistance.	
	Calculation Method Cumulative	**New Measure** No
	Key Measure No	**Target Attainment** Higher than target
Efficiency Measure:	**Average Number of Days to Certify Pollution Abatement Plans.**	
	Definition: The total time required to certify pollution abatement plans divided by the number of plans developed with the quotient expressed in terms of calendar days with time tracked from the date plan is received by TSSWCB through date of plan certification.	
	Data Limitations: Limited only by timeframe in process and plans developed for the quarter.	
	Data Source: Generated by Regional Offices and headquarter staff involved in application process	
	Methodology: The total time required to certify pollution abatement plans divided by the number of plans developed with the quotient expressed in terms of calendar days with the time tracked from the date plan is received by TSSWCB through date of plan certification.	
	Purpose: Evaluates efficiency and turnaround time upon receipt of application.	
	Calculation Method Noncumulative	**New Measure** No
	Key Measure No	**Target Attainment** Lower than target
Goal:	**Protect and Enhance Water Supplies**	
Objective:	**Conserve and Enhance Water Supplies for the State of Texas**	
Outcome Measure:	**Percent of Eligible Acres in WSEP Areas Treated and Cleared of Brush**	
	Definition: The percent of eligible acreage in WSEP areas treated and cleared of brush as determined by feasibility studies for the watersheds. Measure evaluates amount of eligible acres treated and cleared as compared to eligible acres.	

	Data Limitations: Measure limited in scope only by on ground activities to clear and treat brush, funding constraints, unfavorable weather conditions and economic downturn in agricultural activities.	
	Data Source: Collected from information contained in the feasibility studies for the projects and project objectives in conjunction with landowner input. Actual acreage treated and cleared information is collected from Performance Certifications submitted by landowners for cost-share reimbursement.	
	Methodology: The number of acres treated and cleared divided by the number of eligible acres in WSEP areas as determined by feasibility studies.	
	Purpose: This measure addresses the level of activities ongoing in evaluating the end objective of the project. Of the actual acres of brush that have been treated and cleared this measure indicates where does the program activities stand in comparison to what is eligible and treated.	
	Calculation Method Cumulative	**New Measure** No
	Key Measure No	**Target Attainment** Higher than target
Outcome Measure:	**Predicted Number of Gallons of Water Yielded from Brush Control**	
	Definition: The total predicted amount of water yielded in all WSEP Program project watersheds combined as a result of reduced evapotranspiration by brush and reduced evaporation due to interception of rainfall by brush.	
	Data Limitations: Limited in scope by the availability of funding for water quantity monitoring and modeling, availability of water quantity monitoring and modeling data, capacity to verify initial treatment, capacity to verify long-term maintenance of brush re-growth, appropriation amounts for cost-share incentives, unfavorable weather and seasonal limitations, and economic downturns affecting agricultural activities.	
	Data Source: Agency verification data relating to acres of brush treated, predicted gallons of water yield (gallons/acre/year) for each WSEP project watershed as determined by feasibility studies and/or research activities, and estimates included on watershed project applications submitted to the agency prior to project initiation.	
	Methodology: Tabulated by actual treated acres verified by agency staff and multiplied by the predicted water yield (gallons/acre/year) as determined by feasibility studies and/or research activities, and estimates included on watershed project applications submitted to the agency prior to project initiation.	
	Purpose: To measure the total predicted amount of water yielded in all WSEP project watersheds combined as a result of reduced evapotranspiration by brush and reduced evaporation due to interception of rainfall by brush.	
	Calculation Method Cumulative	**New Measure** No
	Key Measure No	**Target Attainment** Higher than target
Strategy:	**Provide Technical Guidance and Financial Assistance for Brush Control to Enhance Water Yields**	
Output Measure:	**Number of Acres of Brush Treated**	
	Definition: The total number of acres treated (where brush control work has been performed and the State has issued reimbursement) under the WSEP to increase water yield for State of Texas.	
	Data Limitations: Limited by the number of claims processed via Performance	

	Certifications.	
	Data Source: Collected from the "Actual Acres" column on the Performance Certification submitted under landowner contracts and approved by SWCDs for reimbursement payment.	
	Methodology: Tabulated from actual numbers verified and checked by TSSWCB staff from a Performance Certification form.	
	Purpose: Tabulates the number of acres of brush control work that has been performed and the State has issued reimbursement.	
	Calculation Method Cumulative	**New Measure** No
	Key Measure Yes	**Target Attainment** Higher than target
Efficiency Measure:	**Average Cost Per Acre of Mechanical Brush Clearing**	
	Definition: The average cost per acre for mechanical brush clearing to yield additional water for the State.	
	Data Limitations: Limited by the number of landowners utilizing mechanical brush clearing methods.	
	Data Source: Collected from the Brush Control Performance Certification form as submitted for payment by the landowner and the Soil and Water Conservation District.	
	Methodology: Actual dollars per acre of brush cleared mechanically verified and checked by TSSWCB staff from the Brush Control Performance Certification form divided by the number of acres of brush cleared mechanically.	
	Purpose: Tabulates the cost per acre where brush control is mechanically applied.	
	Calculation Method Cumulative	**New Measure** No
	Key Measure No	**Target Attainment** Lower than target
Efficiency Measure:	**Average Cost Per Acre of Mechanical Brush Clearing**	
	Definition: The average cost per acre for mechanical brush clearing to yield additional water for the State.	
	Data Limitations: Limited by the number of landowners utilizing mechanical brush clearing methods.	
	Data Source: Collected from the WSEP Performance Certification form as submitted for payment by the landowner and the SWCD.	
	Methodology: Actual dollars per acre of brush cleared mechanically verified and checked by TSSWCB staff from the WSEP Performance Certification form divided by the number of acres of brush cleared mechanically.	
	Purpose: Tabulates the cost per acre where brush control is mechanically applied.	
	Calculation Method Cumulative	**New Measure** No
	Key Measure No	**Target Attainment** Lower than target
Efficiency Measure:	**Average Cost Per Acre of Chemical Brush Clearing**	
	Definition: The average cost per acre for chemical treatment of brush clearing to yield additional water for the State.	
	Data Limitations: Limited by the number of landowners utilizing chemical brush clearing methods.	

	Data Source: Collected from the WSEP Performance Certification form as submitted for payment by the landowner and the Soil and Water Conservation District.	
	Methodology: Actual dollars per acre of brush cleared chemically verified and checked by TSSWCB staff from the WSEP Performance Certification form divided by the number of acres of brush cleared chemically.	
	Purpose: Tabulates the cost per acre where brush control is chemically applied.	
	Calculation Method Cumulative	**New Measure** No
	Key Measure No	**Target Attainment** Lower than target

APPENDIX E: Workforce Plan

Agency Overview

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) was created by the Texas Legislature in 1939. The TSSWCB is charged with overall responsibility for administering and coordinating the state's soil and water conservation program with the state's soil and water conservation districts. Title 7, Chapters 201 and 203 of the Agriculture Code of Texas contains the provisions of law pertaining to soil and water conservation. The TSSWCB is named as the agency responsible for implementing constitutional provisions and state laws relating to conservation and protection of soil resources. Within this framework of law, Section 201.026 gives the TSSWCB responsibility for planning, implementing and managing programs and practices for abating agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source pollution. It is through this, that water quality management planning is incorporated into conservation planning methodologies. Chapter 203 creates the Water Supply Enhancement Program, designates the TSSWCB as the implementing agency, establishes a cost-share program for water supply enhancement and provides for delegation of certain powers and duties to SWCDs.

Passage of the Texas Soil Conservation Law makes it possible for local landowners to organize and manage their own districts. Each local district develops a Long-Range Program and Plan of Work and an Annual Plan of Operations that guide the district in solving its conservation problems. These district programs and plans of work are updated regularly to recognize and evaluate changes in agriculture, economy and natural resources. Farmers and ranchers desiring to use a conservation program on their land receive assistance from their local district. Currently, there are 216 local soil and water conservation districts that cover the entire state.

Since their creation conservation districts have effectively administered conservation programs based on the voluntary application of conservation practices. The voluntary approach, incorporating the basic philosophy prevalent throughout the farming and ranching industry, has proven successful. That philosophy recognizes private land as property of the owner and management a responsibility of ownership. Most Texas landowners have great respect for natural resources including water quality. With appropriate education, these landowners readily recognize the desirability of implementing suitable management practices. These management practices are what constitute conservation plans and water quality management plans.

The current network of 216 districts into which Texas is organized is the logical vehicle to provide the necessary local leadership and the appropriate information as to what practices are best for individual farming or ranching operations. The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board is responsible for coordinating the programs of districts through advice and consultation.

The agency structure consists of seven State Board members (five Board members are elected by soil and water conservation districts, two Board members are Governor appointed) and staff. The staff is organized into Executive Management, and seven program areas: Budget and Accounting (including Information Technology and Purchasing), Statewide Resource Management (including Flood Control),

Human Resources, Conservation Outreach, Water Supply Enhancement (administered out of San Angelo), Soil and Water Conservation District Program Support (administered by Field Representatives), and Water Quality Management Plan Program (administered by Regional Offices). See Organization Chart (Appendix B of agency strategic plan).

The TSSWCB is currently staffed by 66 (64.3- FTEs) employees and has a current operating budget of approximately $52.5 million for the biennium. Twenty-four (22.3 FTEs) employees are centrally located in Temple, Texas in close proximity to the state headquarters of the NRCS, a federal agency that is a partner in the statewide conservation program. The other 42 employees are located throughout the state. Seven regional water quality offices have a total staff of 32 employees. In addition, there are four contract employees who work in regional offices. Ten field staff employees serve their assigned districts from a designated headquarters location. One Director administers the Water Supply Enhancement Program in a San Angelo field office. One program office specializes in poultry water quality management plans with two additional satellite offices in Centerville and Gonzales. Two field positions (with one currently vacant) coordinate Flood Control activities.

Overview of Operations

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board's workforce plan describes each major program of the agency and its associated workforce planning.

Executive Management

Composed of an Executive Director, an Administrative Coordinator, along with an Administrative Assistant. Directs the administrative affairs of the TSSWCB including the execution of rules, guidelines, decisions, and directives of the State Board to ensure the efficient and effective operation of the agency.

Budget and Accounting

Responsibilities include: development and oversight of TSSWCB's overall budget, revenue and expenditures, strategic planning, performance measures, cost recovery efforts, and proper expenditure of state appropriations and federal grants in order to ensure compliance with the agency's fiduciary responsibility.. Responsibilities also include: managing TSSWCB's general ledger and ensuring the proper processing of cash, communicating and implementing state and federal cash management practices, monitoring and processing expenditures in accordance with state and federal statutes and regulations, and information technology. Budget and Accounting also performs contract management; and manages the Conservation Implementation Assistance Grant Program, the Conservation Assistance Matching Funds Grant Program, and the SWCD Director Mileage and Per Diem Reimbursement Program.

With respect to information technology (IT), the Budget and Accounting program installs and maintains network services including: local area networks; wide area network; internet services; local application support; infrastructure security; implements and maintains web-based technology; and trains staff on the use of applications and services. IT also configures, secures and maintains both wired and wireless local area network environments and troubleshoots computing hardware and software problems for local and remote staff in all agency departments. The program audits and tracks the use of hardware and software

deployments; serves as the agency Information Resource Manager and Security Officer, working with the Department of Information Resources to ensure agency compliance with state IT law; develops, maintains, and enforces policies regarding security, the acceptable use of IT infrastructure, and disaster recovery and works with agency purchaser on the procurement of IT software and hardware.

The budget and accounting program executes all purchasing efforts for the agency in accordance with state and federal requirements, the HUB program and vendor recruitment requirements.

Statewide Resource Management (SRM)

Constitutes the bulk of the agency's technical program support and policy personnel assigned to the state headquarters. The SRM team administers the agency's statewide agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source (NPS) water pollution abatement mandate, with the exception of the direct day-to-day administration of the agency's Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) Program and its associated financial cost-share functions. The statewide agricultural and silvicultural NPS management mandate is codified at Agriculture Code Section 201.026 (Senate Bill 503, 73rd Regular Session of the Texas Legislature), and serves as a policy umbrella for numerous water quality programs essential to carrying out the broader mandate. Additionally, the SRM team administers and coordinates most natural resource conservation and environmental management functions that fall under the agency's responsibilities.

The SRM team's responsibilities include overall management of the agricultural and silvicultural aspects of the Texas Nonpoint Source Management Program. In carrying out this program, the SRM team administers the Federal Clean Water Act, Section 319(h) NPS Grant Program, an Environmental Data Quality Management Program, a Watershed Protection Plan Program, a Total Maximum Daily Load Program, and the Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program.

The SRM team also manages most of the agencies grant contracts (internally and externally funded), and provides administrative and technical support on water conservation and irrigation management issues. Members of the SRM team represent the agency on the Water Conservation Implementation Task Force, Water Conservation Advisory Council, the Coastal Coordination Advisory Committee and the Texas Drought Preparedness Council.

The SRM team manages both agency grant programs designed to provide grants for the operation, maintenance, and repair of flood control structures.

The SRM team manages the policy and fiscal aspects of the Poultry Water Quality Management Plan Program, as well as the Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan Program for the dairies in the North Bosque and Leon River Watersheds. Additionally, the SRM team coordinates certain aspects of the cost-share function for the WQMP Program in areas that did not receive a cost-share allocation by the State Board at the beginning of the current fiscal year. The SRM team also represents the agency's Executive Director on the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee, and provides technical and programmatic support to local soil and water conservation districts on flood control structure issues.

Other duties of the SRM team include providing support to other agency staff on information technology issues, and managing the content of the agency's website. This group also provides technical support on

natural resource matters to the agency's field staff and regional office personnel in the areas of geographic information systems, engineering, water quality, agronomy, soil science, and environmental compliance coordination with state and federal agencies.

Certain members of the SRM team also coordinate agency activities with agricultural industry groups, and perform certain intergovernmental relations activities with other state agencies, the Governor's Office of Budget, Planning and Policy, and the Texas Legislature.

The 81st Legislature appropriated funding to the TSSWCB to administer grant programs to SWCDs for conducting operation, maintenance, and repair activities on the State's approximately 2,000 flood control dams. Local SWCDs, county governments, municipalities, water control and improvement districts, and other special districts are all party to sponsorship agreements across the state whereby they have agreed to perform needed maintenance and repairs on federally designed and constructed flood control dams on private property. The TSSWCB has developed two separate grant programs for delivering these funds to local dam sponsors. The Flood Control Operation and Maintenance Grant Program focuses on routine up-keep activities, while the Flood Control Structural Repair Grant Program focuses on major repair activities related to dam function. Both programs became effective during Fiscal Year 2010.

Human Resources

Responsibilities include: overseeing all personnel matters including benefits administration, state classification plan, payroll, leave accounting, employment and recruitment, managerial, developmental and safety training. Human Resources also ensure that TSSWCB personnel practices are in compliance with state and federal laws and regulations. Human Resources serve as a strategic partner with Executive Management and also consult and advise managerial staff regarding human resource matters.

Conservation Outreach

Responsibilities include: planning and coordinating the Annual State Meeting for SWCD Directors; coordinates agency rulemaking functions; coordinates the development of various agency reports; coordinates requests for public information; coordinates the complaint process; and maintains an open and relevant relationship between SWCDs, agricultural interest groups, and the general public; serves as the primary agency liaison with the Association of Texas SWCDs, the National Association of State Conservation Agencies, and the National Association of Conservation Districts; represents the agency on the Texas Invasive Species Coordinating Committee, the Prescribed Burning Board, the Interagency Task Force on Economic Growth and Endangered Species, and subcommittees of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee; administers agency responsibilities for facilitating and managing the Texas Invasive Species Coordinating Committee; manages the Texas Conservation Awards Program including the public speaking, poster, and essay contests; provides administrative services and programmatic support for the Wildlife Alliance for Youth; administers a conservation education video library loan service; produces the agency's Monthly Program News and Activities report; distributes agency press releases and Conservation News updates; produces content for the agency's social media platforms; supports conservation education for teachers through continuing education workshops; provides conservation education demonstration models on nonpoint source water pollution for schools; plans and

coordinates SWCD Program Development Workshops; and represents the agency at numerous trade shows and conferences across the state.

Water Supply Enhancement

Carries out duties and responsibilities associated with administering the WSEP; manages a financial incentive cost-share program supporting the removal of water-depleting brush; coordinates the work of SWCDs that implement specific water supply enhancement projects; collaborates with various state and federal entities to conduct brush control feasibility studies to identify priority watersheds; and develops resource management plans for landowners addressing brush control and other natural resource issues.

Soil and Water Conservation District Program Support

Provides assistance to SWCDs and their employees through TSSWCB field representatives that meet regularly with the SWCDs to provide guidance, training and consultation. The field staff also coordinates the activities of districts and provides a direct link between the TSSWCB and districts. Field Representatives explain TSSWCB policies, programs, rules, and regulations to SWCDs; assist SWCDs in developing and implementing their local conservation programs; provide guidance on proper expenditure of funds, bookkeeping procedures, and audits; train SWCD employees in proper accounting and fiscal reporting procedures; provide guidance to SWCDs on employment issues, open meetings, and open records; and assist SWCDs in organizing and conducting conservation education activities.

Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) Program

Assists agricultural and silvicultural producers in meeting the state's water quality goals and standards through a voluntary, incentive-based program. There are special requirements regarding Poultry WQMPs. Staff carry out duties and responsibilities associated with administering the WQMP Program; provide technical assistance to SWCDs and cooperators in developing and implementing WQMPs on agricultural or silvicultural operations; certify WQMPs; conduct engineering work associated with implementing WQMPs; manage day-to-day operation of the agency's Poultry WQMP Program; address the issue of nuisance odors created by poultry farms and land application of poultry litter; investigate water quality complaints involving agricultural and/or silvicultural NPS pollution; and manage a financial incentive program supporting WQMP implementation.

Workforce Profile

Critical Workforce Skills

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 TSSWCB could not provide basic services. These skills are listed below:

- Developing and promoting voluntary approaches
- Conservation Planning
- Database development and maintenance
- Providing a liaison with districts
- Providing technical assistance
- Project/Contract management
- Developing Water Quality Management Plans
- Coordinating activities of districts
- Strategic Planning
- Customer service
- Interpreting legal statutes
- Educating clientele
- Providing liaison with other local, state, and federal agencies and interest groups
- Integrated watershed protection planning
- Geo-spatial data manipulation and management
- Water quality pollutant load reduction characterization
- Invasive species management
- Environmental data quality management
- Interpretation of hydrologic data
- Grant management
- Engineering expertise
- Agronomic expertise
- Expertise in soil science
- Web application development and delivery

Workforce Demographics

Information from the State Auditor's Office (SAO) Human Resources Analysis System shows the average headcount was 70.25 (total headcount, 77, includes 7 State Board members). Of that total, 45 employees were male and 25 were female. The overall percentages are shown in Figure 1. Over 55% of TSSWCB's employees are over the age of 40 as shown in Figure 2 below. Approximately 44% of employees have less than 10 years of service. These employees have the potential for continued service with the agency. About 56% of employees have over 10 years of service and have the ability to serve as mentors to the other staff. The following charts profile TSSWCB's workforce for fiscal year 2013.

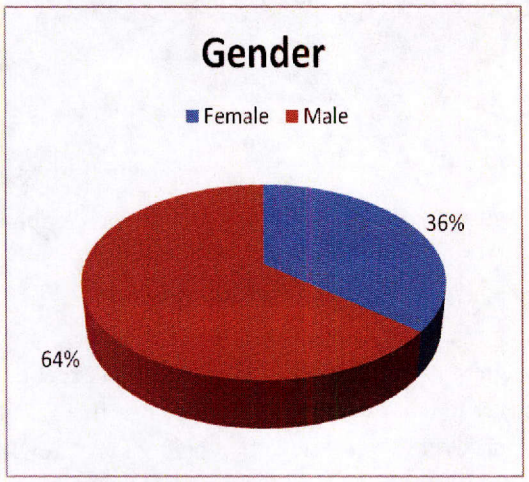


Figure 1. Percentages of male and female population employed at the TSSWCB.

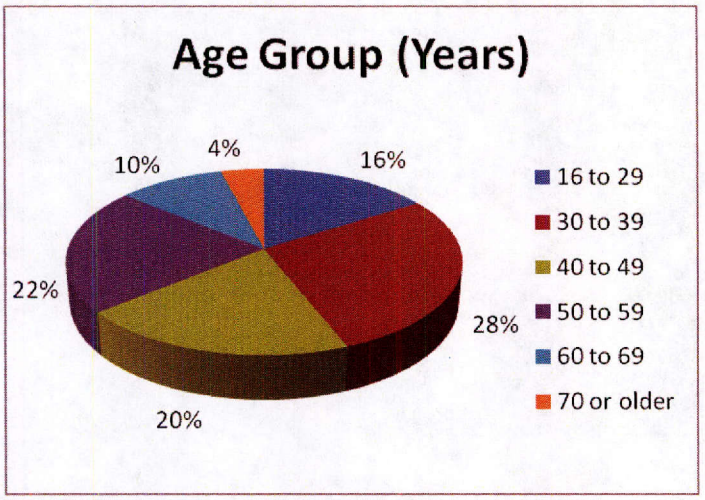


Figure 2. Employees' age employed at the TSSWCB.

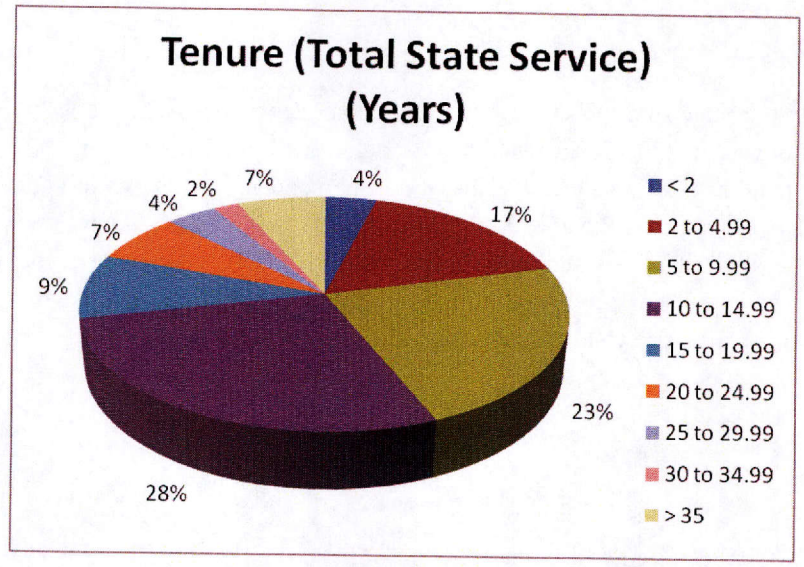


Figure 3. Total years of service for each employee.

Employee Turnover

Turnover is an important issue in any agency, and TSSWCB is no exception. The following graph 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 below the statewide average for turnover.

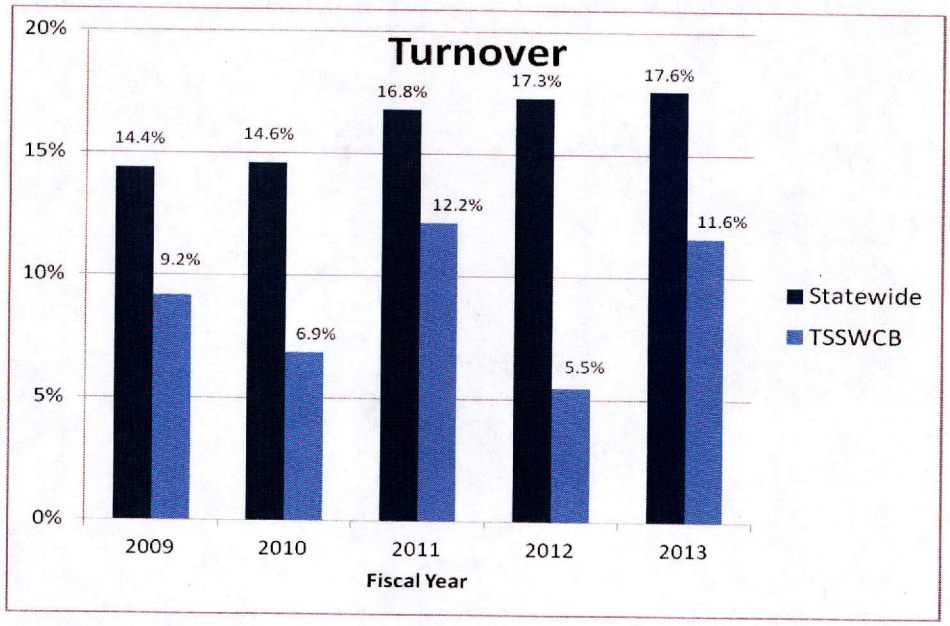


Figure 4. Employee Turnover Rate at TSSWCB as compared to Statewide

Attrition

TSSWCB has not experienced forced attrition in the last 7 fiscal years.

Retirement Eligibility

Since 36% of TSSWCB's employees are 50 years of age or older, retirement accounts for a considerable part of employees leaving the agency. Because 20% of the agency's employees are between the ages of 40 and 49, in the next few years, retirement will become increasingly significant. Currently the agency could experience a potential loss of at least 12 employees, 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.

Future Workforce Profile

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 develop a 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.

Projected future workforce knowledge needed includes the following:

- Conservation planning
- Working with locally elected soil and water conservation district directors
- Negotiation and facilitation
- Strategic planning
- Project/Contract management
- Performance management
- Stakeholder group facilitation

TSSWCB recognizes the need to maintain and improve current skill levels and anticipates projected future workforce skills needed includes the following:

- Knowledge of legislative processes
- Knowledge of applicable state and federal laws
- Technology advances in agricultural best management practices
- Accounting services
- Technical planning
- Computer technology
- Decision making
- Communication
- Engineering services
- Customer service
- Public service
- Contract management

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, 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.

Changes We Anticipate in Our Workforce

- Expansion of water supply enhancement and brush control activities
- Addressing flood control infrastructures
- Addressing mandated deadlines/requirements for Poultry operations
- Emerging technology

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
- Increased number of Grant Managers, Project Managers, Contract Managers, and Natural Resource Specialists

Anticipated Increase/Decrease in Number of Employees Needed to Do the Work

- Expect current staff to remain relatively static
- Increased demands to be addressed by reallocation of workload within the agency

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 must take on greater importance. The increased alliance on information technology requires lifetime learning for all employees.

Strategy Development

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 and/or telecommute opportunities; 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.