



## **Call for a Watershed Coordination Steering Committee Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board**

The inherent complexities in addressing non-point source pollution throughout Texas, necessitate the utilization of the watershed approach in water quality management. The watershed approach must be the fulcrum of collaborative actions to restore and protect the health and productivity of Texas watersheds. Failure to fully incorporate the watershed approach into program implementation will result in failure to achieve the designated uses in many of our state's waters.

Therefore, tasked with serving as Texas' lead agency for the planning, management and abatement of agricultural and silvicultural non-point source pollution, the TSSWCB has initiated a watershed coordination effort in southeast and south central Texas. Funded by an EPA Clean Water Act § 319(h) grant, this pilot project establishes a Watershed Coordinator in the TSSWCB's Wharton Regional Office.

Key objectives of this regional watershed coordination effort include:

- Identification of all NPS pollution prevention and abatement projects currently underway and tracking the implementation progress of those projects
- Promotion and support of sustainable, locally-driven watershed coordination through development of EPA approved nine element Watershed Protection Plans (WPPs)
- Assistance in leveraging limited financial resources and locating new funding sources needed for successful WPP implementation
- Tracking federal and state rules and regulations affecting operations impacting water quality and education of stakeholders about those rules and regulations
- Identification of water quality trends
- Implementation and evaluation of new and emerging NPS pollution reduction technologies and BMPs by providing technology transfer opportunities
- Communication between stakeholders through regular meetings, newsletters and website development

The Watershed Coordinator will provide technical assistance to local groups in their efforts to draft and implement WPPs. WPPs serve as a mechanism for addressing complex problems that cross multiple jurisdictional boundaries. WPPs also serve as a tool to better leverage the resources of different federal and state agencies and public and private organizations. WPPs will be used to integrate activities and prioritize projects based upon technical merit and benefits to the community, promote a unified approach to seeking funding, and create a coordinated public communication and education program.

In order to successfully accomplish the project objectives listed above, a Steering Committee composed of representatives from water resource agencies will be established. This advisory board will provide guidance to the TSSWCB's Watershed Coordinator. In addition, this committee will steer the Watershed Coordinator to those watersheds most in need of program support and WPP development. This focused use of resources will lead to a more rapid advancement in measurable water quality improvements.

## Steering Committee Membership (28)

### Councils of Governments (4)

- Brazos Valley Council of Governments
- Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission
- Houston-Galveston Area Council
- South East Texas Regional Planning Commission

### River Authorities (10)

- Brazos River Authority
- Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority
- Lavaca-Navidad River Authority
- Lower Colorado River Authority (2)
- Lower Neches Valley Authority
- Nueces River Authority
- Sabine River Authority
- San Antonio River Authority
- Trinity River Authority

### State Agencies (7)

- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality Clean Rivers Program
- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality TMDL Program
- Texas Department of Agriculture
- Texas General Land Office
- Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Coastal Fisheries Division
- Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Inland Fisheries Division
- Texas Water Development Board

### Federal Agencies (2)

- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Zone 3 Corpus Christi
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Zone 4 Bryan

### National Estuary Programs (2)

- Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program
- Galveston Bay Estuary Program

### Land Grant University Entities (3)

- Texas Cooperative Extension
- Texas Forest Service
- Texas Water Resources Institute

## Service Area extends to Watersheds in the following 47 Counties:

- |            |             |              |              |
|------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| • Aransas  | • Colorado  | • Hays       | • Newton     |
| • Atascosa | • Comal     | • Jackson    | • Orange     |
| • Austin   | • DeWitt    | • Jasper     | • Refugio    |
| • Bastrop  | • Fayette   | • Jefferson  | • Robertson  |
| • Bee      | • Fort Bend | • Karnes     | • Travis     |
| • Bexar    | • Galveston | • Lavaca     | • Victoria   |
| • Brazoria | • Goliad    | • Lee        | • Walker     |
| • Brazos   | • Gonzales  | • Leon       | • Waller     |
| • Burleson | • Grimes    | • Liberty    | • Washington |
| • Caldwell | • Guadalupe | • Madison    | • Wharton    |
| • Calhoun  | • Hardin    | • Matagorda  | • Wilson     |
| • Chambers | • Harris    | • Montgomery |              |

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