

THE TEXAS WATER SOURCE

UPDATING NACOGDOCHES, RUSK, SAN AUGUSTINE, & SHELBY CO. FOREST LANDOWNERS ON FORESTRY AND WATER ISSUES

25 Years of Protecting Water Resources

This year marks the silver anniversary of the Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS) Water Resources Program, and what a ride it has been.

Program efforts have overcome early resistance to fundamentally change how forest operations are conducted in East Texas. This program has become institutionalized throughout the forest sector. Listed below are some major milestones.

In 1989, the *Texas Forestry Best Management Practices Handbook* was developed and published. Since then, this handbook has been revised and republished as needed to ensure water resource protection.

Monitoring of forest operations began in 1991 to evaluate the level of BMP implementation, and ultimately the effectiveness of the educational program. The level of BMP implementation has increased 20% over the years since monitoring began.

In an effort to improve BMP implementation, TFS developed a BMP workshop in 1995. To date, more than 3,000 loggers have attended these workshops. Major forest

products companies now include this training in their mandatory requirements before loggers are able to deliver wood to their facilities.

In 1998, TFS began coordinating landowner workshops around the state. These workshops focus on sustainable forestry, covering topics such as BMPs, wildlife, reforestation, and forestry legislation.

In 2003, the Water Resources Program began an intensive, highly technological stream monitoring project designed to test the effectiveness of BMPs in protecting water quality. After four years of data collection, the results prove that Texas BMPs, when applied properly, are effective in protecting water quality.

Program efforts expanded in 2011 to address water issues throughout the state as a result of the Texas Statewide Forest Resource Strategy (June 2011). Major initiatives focusing on vegetation management, riparian management/restoration, stormwater management, wildfire rehabilitation, and land stewardship will further protect critical water resources.

For more information:

- <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/Water>
- <http://goo.gl/xacJ2b>
See document pages 44-46.

3000th Logger Trained

BMPs are designed to help landowners, foresters, loggers, and others protect water quality during forestry operations. The 3,000th logger to complete the BMP logger workshop (sponsored by the Texas Logging Council and Texas A&M Forest Service) is Ryan Arwine. Arwine lives in Tenaha with his wife and their three children. He joined

the Texas Logging Council to get involved in logging safety and environmental protection. "Years ago, before I became educated on reforestation practices, I was critical of logging," said Arwine. "Now, I want to help educate the public on the Sustainable Forestry Initiative and what an asset the logging industry is to the economy in Texas."

Inside this issue:

Soil and Water Conservation Districts	2
Association of Texas SWCDs	2
Attoyac Bayou Watershed Partnership	3
Water Quality Management Plans	3

Organization Spotlight

Soil and Water Conservation Districts

For more information:

- <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/swcds>
- <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/swcds/resources>
- <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/swcds/area4>
- <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/swcds/locatormap> - to find SWCDs across Texas

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) organizes the entire state into soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs); currently, there are 217. Each SWCD is an independent political subdivision of state government and is governed by five directors elected by fellow rural landowners. A district's board of directors is made up of agricultural landowners, one from each of five subdivisions.

Through a chartered, legally established SWCD, local farmers and ranchers are given the opportunity to decide for themselves how they are going to solve local soil and water conservation problems.

With water quality being a major issue of concern in Texas, the 73rd Legislature passed Senate Bill 503. This bill created the Water Quality Management Plan Program to provide agricultural and silvicultural (forestry) producers with an opportunity to comply with state water quality laws through traditional, voluntary, incentive-based programs. Landowners and operators may request the development of a site-specific water quality management plan through local SWCDs. Plans include appropriate land treatment practices, production practices and management, and technology measures to

achieve a level of pollution prevention or abatement consistent with state water quality standards.

The Rusk Soil and Water Conservation District is located at 1305 South Main, Suite 102, in Henderson. Meetings are conducted on the first Tuesday of the month at 8:30 a.m. at this location (the NRCS office). Contact them at ruskswcd@tx.nacdnet.org.

The Nacogdoches SWCD is at 4609 Northwest Stallings Dr. in Nacogdoches. They meet at noon on the first Thursday of the month at The Barbeque House, 704 North Stallings Dr., in Nacogdoches. They can be reached at nacogdochesswcd@tx.nacdnet.org.

The Shelby SWCD can be found at the NRCS-USDA office, 158 Cass Caid Dr., in Center. Their meetings are held at this same location at 9:00 a.m. on the first Monday of the month. Contact them at shelbyswcd@tx.nacdnet.org.

The Piney Woods SWCD serves San Augustine County and is located on 913 W. Columbia St. in San Augustine. They meet the second Tuesday of the month at 9:00 a.m. in the same location - the NRCS office. Contact them at pineywoodsswcd@tx.nacdnet.org. This district also serves Sabine County.

Association of Texas SWCDs

For more information:

- <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/swcds/atswcd>

The Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts (ATSWCD) is a chartered, tax exempt, non-profit organization of soil and water conservation districts in Texas. The purpose of the organization is to promote SWCDs through educational, scientific, charitable, and religious activities.

The ATSWCD attempts to make owners and operators of agricultural land aware of the need to conserve and protect the soil and water resources of

Texas and the consequences all citizens face if these valuable resources are allowed to deteriorate.

The ATSWCD is divided into 13 Area Associations and each Area Association is governed by their own by-laws. The 13 Area Associations are designed to develop leadership within each Area and to address regional conservation concerns. The Areas are also set up to strengthen lines of communication between all areas of the state.

Attoyac Bayou Watershed Partnership

The Attoyac Bayou runs through Rusk, Nacogdoches, San Augustine, and Shelby counties. With several rural communities in the area, the majority of the land in the watershed is used for cattle and poultry operations, forestry, or recreational and wildlife uses.

This bayou is one of many rural watersheds listed as an impaired water body by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) due to high levels of bacteria. High levels of bacteria may cause health concerns if “contact recreation” (swimming, diving, etc) occurs in this waterbody.

To better understand the Attoyac Bayou, a locally driven Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) is being developed through the Attoyac Bayou Watershed Partnership to facilitate the restoration of this waterbody.

Monitoring has been conducted to determine if bacteria is impairing the Attoyac, potential sources of the bacteria (humans, wildlife, livestock, etc.), and the amount of recreation that occurs in

this waterbody. This information will be the foundation for identifying common sense solutions to improve the Attoyac.

The Partnership is currently developing the WPP and has drafted several sections of the plan already. The following draft chapters are available for download and public comment:

- Ch. 1: Watershed Management
- Ch. 2: Watershed History
- Ch. 3: Watershed Characteristics
- Ch. 6: Watershed Source Survey

The focus right now is on identifying applicable recommended conservation practices to include in the plan, such as water quality management plans. A partnership meeting in Nacogdoches is scheduled for January 2014 to discuss the plan and recommended conservation practices.

For meeting dates, information on this process, or to view the draft sections of the plan, visit the link in the sidebar.

For more information:

- <http://attoyac.tamu.edu/>
- <http://attoyac.tamu.edu/reports/>

Did you know...

The TSSWCB is the lead Texas agency for planning, implementing, and managing programs and practices for abating agricultural and silvicultural (forestry) nonpoint source (NPS) pollution.

Water Quality Management Plans

The passage of Texas Senate Bill 503 in 1993 directed the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) to implement water quality management plans (WQMPs) in Texas. The agency has completed over 14,000 plans throughout the State since the mid-1990s.

These site-specific plans identify applicable agriculture and silviculture (forestry) conservation practices as outlined by the USDA NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service), and may include:

- conservation cropping sequence and residue management on cropland

- proper grazing on rangeland
- water facility considerations
- pesticide & nutrient management
- animal waste management
- waste utilization
- erosion control and others

In order to obtain a WQMP, visit your local soil and water conservation district (SWCD), which is typically located with the NRCS at the local USDA Service Center. Cost share assistance may be available to implement some of the conservation plans identified in your plan.

This information is from the TSSWCB website.

For more information:

- <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/en/wqmp>

Updating Nacogdoches, Rusk, San Augustine, & Shelby
Co. Forest Landowners on Forestry and Water Issues

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Timber Tax Workshop

- February 18, 2014 -

Pitser Garrison Convention Center
601 N. Second St., Lufkin, TX

7:45 a.m. - 4:45 p.m.

This workshop will provide basic information about timber taxation and the latest changes to tax laws and rules for 2013 tax return preparations. Topics will focus on federal timber income tax issues for private forest owners with a refresher on local timberland property tax incentives.

The workshop is designed for forest landowners, consulting foresters, accountants, attorneys, and others who work with forest landowners in matters pertaining to timber taxes.

Registration fee is \$70 per person. Workbook, lunch, and refreshments are included. Cost would be \$30 for each additional family member (no workbook). Continuing education credits are available for foresters, loggers, and CPAs.

For additional information or questions, contact Dawn Spencer, Texas A&M Forest Service, at (979) 458-6630 or dspencer@tfs.tamu.edu. See the agenda and register online at:

<http://texasforests.tamu.edu/taxworkshop>.



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