



Brazos River Authority



Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

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North Bosque Newsletter

PRESENTED BY THE AUTHORITY IN COOPERATION WITH THE TSSWCB

Organization Highlight: Texas Farm Bureau

The Texas Farm Bureau, founded in 1933, has grown to be one of the largest groups of farmers, ranchers, and rural families in the world. As a representative of the rural community, the Farm Bureau sees that policies affecting its members are developed at the grassroots level before being adopted at the county, state, or national level. Throughout its history, the Farm Bureau has successfully defended rural interests in the State of Texas on a

wide range of issues from farm-to-market transportation to tax relief for farmers.

Efforts in the North Bosque Watershed

Representatives of the Farm Bureau act in an advisory capacity on technical committees for projects and policy development that affect agriculture in the North Bosque Watershed. The organization also works to facilitate involvement of dairy producers in demon-

strations of new and emerging technologies for improved agricultural waste handling. The Farm Bureau keeps producers informed on new regulations that may affect their operation.

As examples of their efforts in the watershed, the Farm Bureau is in partnership with various agencies to provide funding and support for special demonstration projects. These

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EPA Section 319(h) Grants—A Valuable Resource for Managing Nonpoint Source Pollution

In 1987, Congress amended the Clean Water Act to provide funding for the control of nonpoint source (NPS) pollution under Section 319(h). The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for distributing these funds among the states. In the State of Texas, Section 319(h) funds are divided equally between the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB). The TSSWCB is the lead agency for agricultural and silvicultural NPS pollution management. TCEQ manages urban and all other sources of NPS pollution. The grant program requires a 40 percent matching share. The majority of

319(h) funds are passed down by TCEQ and TSSWCB to eligible subgrantees.

According to the 2002 Annual Report for 319 grants administered in the State of Texas, the TSSWCB reported that 32 percent of its grant funds went to NPS pollution abatement associ-

ated with dairies. The EPA, along with the TCEQ and the TSSWCB, want to ensure that Section 319(h) funds are directed toward effective, high-quality NPS projects that will achieve the best possible results in reducing or abating NPS pollution.

Both TSSWCB and TCEQ websites contain information regarding application procedures for 319(h) funding in the State of Texas.

Section 319(h) Funds in the North Bosque Watershed

There are currently many projects underway in the North Bosque River Watershed that are funded through the EPA's Section 319(h) grant program.

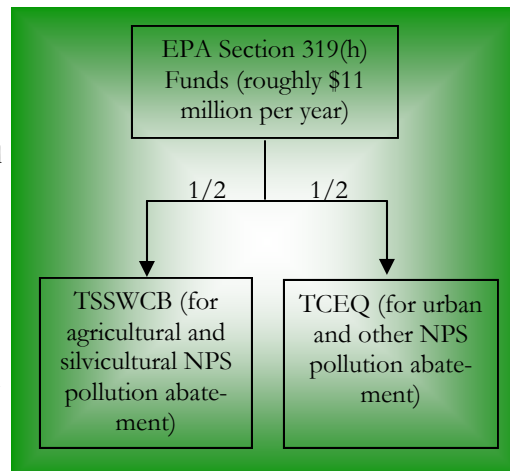


Diagram showing distribution of Section 319(h) funds to agencies in the State of Texas

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Organization Highlight: Texas Farm Bureau (continued)

Throughout its history, the Farm Bureau has successfully defended rural interests in the State of Texas...

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special projects include: the Bacterial Source Tracking Project which will identify relative sources of bacteria in two Central Texas reservoirs and allow for a more effective targeting of measures to reduce bacterial contamination; the Dairy Waste Management—Phosphorus Reduction Demonstration Project, which will demonstrate the use of anaerobic digestion and biological phosphorus removal technology to reduce phospho-

rus in the dairy waste stream while generating electricity and compost; and the Lake Waco Wetlands project which is designed to filter pollutants and improve wildlife habitat. The Farm Bureau has recently hosted the American Farm Bureau's Watershed Heroes Core4 Conference and National Eco-Team Competition held in Waco. This conference featured field demonstrations and classroom presentations by university personnel, farmers, and vendor representatives

from at least 15 different states and Mexico.

The Texas Farm Bureau's work on behalf of the rural community ensures that the interests of an important sector of the state's economy are considered when policies are formulated. The Farm Bureau's efforts help maintain the vitality of agriculture in the region as the industry moves towards improved stewardship of natural resources through the development of more sustainable practices and methods.

EPA Section 319(h) Grants (continued)

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A listing of the projects is as follows:

- *Dairy Waste Management - Phosphorus Reduction Demonstration Project*

This project uses anaerobic digestion and biological phosphorus (P) removal to reduce P in a dairy's waste stream by 80 percent.

- *Bacterial Source Tracking - Lake Waco and Lake Belton*

The study will allow for identification of bacteria in the study area and the relative percentage of each of the contributing sources.

- *Dairy Manure Export Support (DMES)*

Project provides support for the transport of raw dairy manure to authorized composting facilities.

- *Composted Manure Incentive Project (CMIP)*

Funding is used to provide a \$5 rebate to state agencies, cities, universities, etc. for every cubic yard of composted dairy manure purchased from a TCEQ authorized compost vendor. Project also focuses on establishing a sustainable market for compost to ensure future bene-

ficial usage of agricultural waste.

- *Compost Effectiveness Monitoring in the North Bosque and Leon River Watersheds*

This study evaluates the effects of the DMES and CMIP programs by monitoring water quality downstream of dairies participating in the composting program versus downstream of those not participating.

- *Improving Water Quality by Developing, Implementing, and Field Testing Innovative Methods*

Program provides for the testing of new dairy waste handling technologies designed to minimize water pollution associated with dairy operations.

- *North Bosque Watershed Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) Program*

Project provides financial assistance to dairies towards the development of a CNMP. A CNMP is used to manage resources with conservation practices and farm management activities that meet agricultural production goals while addressing water quality concerns.

- *Water Quality Data Coordination*

Establishes a central water quality database for the many agen-

cies involved in monitoring the North Bosque and Leon River Watersheds.

- *Establishment of a Watershed Coordinator for the North Bosque River Watershed*

Project goal is to increase communication among stakeholders by providing a single point of contact for information about environmental enhancement activities taking place in the North Bosque Watershed. Communication is through meetings, website, and newsletters.

- *Refinement and Application of the North Bosque River TMDL Modeling System*

This project is to refine the total maximum daily load (TMDL) modeling with new data and knowledge and to re-analyze the TMDL allocation.

The EPA, along with its 319 grant administrative agencies (TCEQ and TSSWCB), have devoted significant time and resources towards the improvement of water quality in the North Bosque River Watershed. These agencies are committed to finding solutions that mitigate the impacts of nonpoint source loading of pollutants from the watershed.

North Bosque Stakeholder Meeting Planned for August

As part of the watershed coordination effort for the North Bosque River Watershed, a stakeholder meeting is being planned for August 26, 2004. The meeting is tentatively scheduled for 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM at the Hico Community Center in Hico, TX.

The purpose of the meeting will be to familiarize stakeholders with the watershed coordination website and to take comments regarding the current content. The meeting will also serve to introduce stakeholders to a watershed

strategy being developed as a component of the overall coordination effort. The watershed strategy will benefit from a high level of stakeholder participation, therefore, anyone interested in contributing to the process should plan to attend.

Stakeholders should expect to receive an email invitation once the time and date have been finalized. The invitation will include directions to the community center as well as a list of topics that will be included for discussion in the meeting agenda.

The main goal of the watershed coordination is an increase in communication among stakeholders. This meeting will provide a forum for the discussion of ideas, concerns, and suggestions. Through attendance and participation, stakeholders can demonstrate a willingness to work together to improve environmental protection and awareness while maintaining a positive economic setting for industries, municipalities, agriculture, and commercial and residential development.

Brazos River Authority

4600 Cobbs Dr.
PO Box 7555
Waco, TX 76714-7555
Phone: 254-761-3100
Fax: 254-761-3204



Brazos River
Authority

This newsletter is produced for the benefit of the North Bosque River Watershed Stakeholders. Its purpose is to inform the readers and to highlight positive activities taking place within the watershed. If you're involved in a project in the watershed or hosting an event related to pollution prevention or water quality enhancement and you'd like to see it in a future issue of this newsletter, please contact Gary Henry (ghenry@brazos.org) or Kyle Headley (kheadley@brazos.org) by email or by phone at 254-761-3167.

**ISSUE 5 OF THE NORTH
BOSQUE NEWSLETTER
WILL HIGHLIGHT THE
TEXAS WATER
DEVELOPMENT BOARD
AND THEIR EFFORTS IN
THE WATERSHED**

THESE NEWSLETTERS, ALONG WITH OTHER ASPECTS OF THE PROJECT, ARE NOW LOCATED ON THE AUTHORITY'S WEBSITE (WWW.BRAZOS.ORG) UNDER THE TAB LABELED "NORTH BOSQUE WATERSHED COORDINATION"

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