



Brazos River
Authority



Texas State Soil & Water
Conservation Board

Volume 1, Issue 6

September 2004

North Bosque Newsletter

PRESENTED BY THE AUTHORITY IN COOPERATION WITH THE TSSWCB

Tarleton State Proposes Construction of Demonstration Dairy

Tarleton President Dennis McCabe will ask the state legislature to fund a modern teaching, research, and demonstration dairy in Stephenville. The dairy center, designated as "The Texas A&M University System Dairy" would reside on existing lands owned by Tarleton State University. The proposed center has four main objectives, which include:

- provide educational and internship opportunities in dairy science, dairy management, fluid milk processing and dairy food manufacturing for undergraduate and graduate students state and region wide; and training opportunities for students studying veterinary medicine
- provide resources for basic and applied research in dairy science, environ-

mental science and best animal waste management practices; and field-testing of new equipment and technology

- provide continuing education opportunities for dairy industry representatives and others, and
- assist industry in developing and promoting an appropriate image to current and future generations of consumers.

The facility would feature freestall housing for 300-400 cows with state-of-the-art waste handling to insure no environmental impact. Onsite classrooms and labs will provide space for academic and industry courses and meetings. There are also plans for a creamery for the processing and retail sale of milk and processed dairy foods. The facility will provide

group and individual tours with space for visitor/animal interaction (bottle feeding calves, petting zoo, etc).

A Board of Directors composed of representatives of the dairy industry, non-profit organizations, the university, and other stakeholders will provide overall guidance and direction based upon educational, research and outreach needs of industry and society.

With a \$2.4 billion economic impact to the Texas economy, dairying is the second largest animal industry in the state. Erath County is the largest dairy producing county in the Southwest and is central to the three dairy producing regions in Texas. A facility in Stephenville would provide maximum access to education, research and demonstration programs and results.

EQIP Now Under NRCS Administrative Control

According to a recent article in Country World Newspaper, as of October 1, 2004, administrative control of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) will no longer be managed by the Farm Service Agency. The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) will be responsible for handling administrative duties such as applications and payments.

EQIP, which began as part of the 1996 Farm Bill and reauthorized with the 2002 Farm Bill, was created "to provide a voluntary con-

servation program for farmers and ranchers who face serious threats to soil, water, and related natural resources." The program provides cost-share assistance of up to 75 percent on approved conservation practices. Contract terms range from 5 to 10 years and may also provide incentive payments to ensure the program's success.

In Texas, a portion of the funds are distributed equally among the state's 254 counties with the remainder reserved for "priority areas", where important natural

resource concerns exist. The four counties that make up the North Bosque Watershed are included as part of a seven-county statewide resource concern area for dairy concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFO).

EQIP is available only to landowners engaged in livestock or agricultural production. Applications are ranked based on locally established resource concerns. EQIP facts may be found on the web at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/eqifact.html>.

North Bosque Stakeholder Meeting Held in Waco

A meeting of the North Bosque Stakeholder group was held Thursday, September 9 at the Brazos River Authority Central Office in Waco. The meeting was held to familiarize stakeholders with the watershed coordination project. Brazos River Authority project manager, Kyle Headley, explained the project objectives to the attendees and introduced the coordination website.

Stakeholders were also made aware of the North Bosque and Leon Watersheds Data Repository Website, which features water quality data collected by agencies over the past

several years in both watersheds. There were demonstrations of geographic information system-based sampling station searches and options for data retrieval.

A draft watershed plan was discussed and stakeholders were asked to review the document and submit comments and suggestions.

Representatives from many agencies/entities were in attendance, including: Environmental Protection Agency, US Army Corps of Engineers, Texas Cooperative Extension, Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board, Texas Commission on Environ-

mental Quality, Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Research, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, Texas Department of Agriculture, Texas Association of Dairymen, Texas Farm Bureau, Tarleton State University, Texas Water Development Board, Brazos River Authority, Cities of Clifton, Stephenville, and Waco, Texas Water Resources Institute, and Environmental Management Solutions.

It is expected that future stakeholder meetings will be held every six months, although smaller technical advisory groups may meet more regularly.

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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.

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

This newsletter is made possible through a US EPA Clean Water Act Section 319(h) grant administered by the TSSWCB.