

Texas Watershed Planning Training Project

Watershed efforts continue to grow in Texas supported by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and a growing network of watershed coordinators and water professionals. This group of water professionals assembles biannually through Texas Watershed Coordinator Roundtables. Texas Watershed Coordinator Roundtables, organized by the Texas Water Resources Institute, provide a forum for establishing and maintaining dialogue between watershed coordinators and facilitate interactive solutions to common watershed issues faced throughout the state. Nearly 200 water professionals attended the two Texas Watershed Coordinator Roundtables held in Temple and Austin in 2011. Topics discussed included stakeholder involvement and facilitation; and bacteria dynamics, assessment methods, and best management practices.

To further support watershed efforts in the state, a variety of training opportunities have also been made available to watershed coordinators and other water professionals. In July 2011, a Stakeholder Facilitation Training was held in conjunction with the Texas Watershed Coordinator Roundtable in Austin. The Stakeholder Facilitation Training highlighted tools used to effectively identify, engage, and involve stakeholders throughout a watershed to restore and maintain healthy environmental conditions. More than 40 watershed coordinators and water resource professionals attended the Stakeholder Facilitation Training. Other training opportunities to be offered include the weeklong Texas Watershed Planning Short Course and an additional Stakeholder Facilitation Training. Courses being developed include an Introduction to Modeling training; training on the use of Load Duration Curves and the Spatially Explicit Load Enrichment Calculation Tool; and instruction on water quality monitoring.

These efforts are supported by a collaborative project between the Texas Water Resources Institute, Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas AgriLife Research, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Research, Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Through funding from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, it is the goal of this project to provide tools, training, and coordination opportunities for watershed planners and coordinators throughout Texas to ensure consistent, high quality plans are developed and implementation and water quality improvements are achieved and sustained.

For more information on Texas Watershed Coordinator Roundtables and upcoming training opportunities for watershed planners and water professionals, as well as guidance on watershed planning, see the Texas Watershed Planning website <<http://watershedplanning.tamu.edu/>>.