

# CHAPTER 9

## RESOURCES TO IMPLEMENT THE WATERSHED PROTECTION PLAN

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter identifies the potential sources of technical and financial assistance available to maximize the implementation and management measures within the Kickapoo Creek in Henderson County. Grant funding will likely be a substantial source of implementation funding given the availability of resources identified thus far. In addition to funding management measures, it is recommended that funds be identified and developed to hire a local Watershed Coordinator to guide WPP implementation and facilitate long-term success of the plan.

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Designing, planning, and implementing some of the management recommendations in the plan will require technical expertise. In these cases, appropriate support will be sought to provide needed technical guidance. Funds required to secure needed expertise will be included in requests for specific projects and may come from a variety of sources. Table 9.1 provides a summary of the potential sources of technical assistance for each management measure.

#### Livestock Management

Designing and implementing practices to improve livestock management will require significant technical assistance from TSSWCB, local SWCDs, and local NRCS personnel. Producers requesting planning assistance in the watershed will work with these entities to define operation-specific management goals and objectives and develop a management plan that prescribes effective practices that will achieve stated goals while also improving water quality.

#### Feral Hog Management

Watershed stakeholders will benefit from technical assistance regarding feral hog control approaches, options, best practices, and regulations. AgriLife Extension and TPWD provide educational resources through local programs and public events.

Table 9.1 Summary of potential sources of technical assistance

Technical Assistance	
Management Measure (MM)	Potential Sources
MM1: Promote and implement WQMPs or CPs	TSSWCB; local SWCDs; NRCS; AgriLife Extension
MM2: Promote technical and direct operational assistance to landowners for feral hog control	AgriLife Extension; TPWD; NRCS; TSSWCB
MM3: Identify and repair or replace failing on-site sewage systems	Designed technicians from counties; AgriLife Extension
MM4: Manage SSOs and Unauthorized Discharges	City public works department; engineering firms; AgriLife Extension
MM5: Reduce Illicit Dumping	AgriLife Extension; county law enforcement; TPWD game wardens
MM6: Increase proper pet waste management	City public works department; AgriLife Extension

### OSSF Management

Technical support is needed to address failing OSSFs throughout Henderson and Van Zandt Counties. Technical assistance will be sought from respective county-designated representatives and permitting offices in prospective OSSF program design, funding acquisition, identification of potential participants and publicizing of program availability as funds become available. Technical assistance for education and outreach will be provided through AgriLife Extension.

### Manage SSOs and Unauthorized Discharges

City of public works staff will be relied upon to provide technical expertise on local systems, identify problem areas, and work with firms as needed to smoke test or provide other infrastructure assessments. The repair and/or replacement of pipes will require engineering design and assistance from contractors and outside firms. TCEQ also provides technical assistance for municipalities to address SSO issues through the SSO Initiative.

### Illicit Dumping

Efforts to reduce illicit dumping will focus on education and outreach. AgriLife Extension will provide technical assistance with education and outreach efforts. County law enforcement and TPWD game wardens are the primary sources of enforcement and monitoring activities associated with illicit dumping.

### Pet Waste Management

Limited technical assistance is available to directly address pet waste. City public works, neighborhoods, and parks departments will be relied upon to identify appropriate sites. Technical assistance for educational materials will be provided through AgriLife Extension.

## TECHNICAL RESOURCE DESCRIPTIONS

### AgriLife Extension

AgriLife Extension is a statewide outreach education agency with offices in every county of the state. AgriLife Extension provides a statewide network of professional educators, volunteers, and local county extension agents. AgriLife Extension will be coordinated with to develop and deliver education programs, workshops, and materials needed.

### Engineering Firms

Private firms provide consulting, engineering, and design services. The technical expertise provided by firms may be required for urban BMP design. Funding for services will be identified and written into project budgets as required.

### Counties or Cities Designated Representative

OSSF construction or replacement in Henderson and Van Zandt Counties requires a permit on file with local counties or the city's authorized agents. Permits must be applied for through a TCEQ-licensed professional installer. The county or city's designated representative is responsible for approving or denying permits. Site evaluations must be done by a TCEQ licensed Site & Soil Evaluator, licensed maintenance provider, or licensed professional installer.

### Municipal Public Works Departments

The respective public works departments of Brownsboro, Edom, and Murchison are responsible for the management of city streets, utility, and open space infrastructure. Implementation of stormwater BMPs and dog waste stations will require coordination and assistance from public works departments from each city.

### Natural Resource Conservation Service

The USDA NRCS provides conservation planning and technical assistance to private landowners. For decades, private landowners have voluntarily worked with NRCS specialists to prevent erosion, improve water quality, and promote sustainable agriculture. Assistance is available to help landowners (1) maintain and improve private lands, (2) implement improved land management technologies, (3) protect water quality and quantity, and (4) enhance recreational opportunities. Local NRCS service centers for Henderson and Van Zandt Counties are located in Athens, Texas.

### Soil and Water Conservation Districts

An SWCD, like a county or school district, is a subdivision of the state government. SWCDs are administered by a board of five directors who are elected by their fellow landowners. There are 216 individual SWCDs organized in Texas. It is through this conservation partnership that local SWCDs are able to furnish technical assistance to farmers and ranchers for the preparation of a water quality management plans to meet each land unit's specific capabilities and needs. The local SWCDs include the Trinity-Neches SWCD and the Kaufman-Van Zandt SWCD.

### Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

The TCEQ Sanitary Sewer Overflow Initiative is a voluntary program for permitted facilities and municipalities. Through the initiative, an SSO Plan is developed outlining the causes of SSOs, mitigative and corrective actions, as well as a timeline for implementation. Assistance for SSO planning and participation in the SSO Initiative is available through the TCEQ Regional Office (Region 5, Tyler) and the TCEQ Small Business and Environmental Assistance Division.

### Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

The TPWD's Private Land Services is a program to provide landowners with practical information on ways to manage wildlife resources that are consistent with other land use goals, to ensure plant and animal diversity, to provide aesthetic and economic benefits, and to conserve soil, water, and other

related natural resources. To participate, landowners may request assistance by contacting the TPWD district serving their county.

#### Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board

The TSSWCB WQMP Program provides technical assistance and financial assistance for developing and implementing water quality management plans. A visit with the local SWCD office is the first step for operators to begin the plan development process.

### FINANCIAL RESOURCE DESCRIPTIONS

Successful implementation of the Kickapoo Creek in Henderson County WPP, as written, will require substantial fiscal resources. Diverse funding will be sought to meet these needs. Resources will be leveraged where possible to extend the impacts of acquired and contributed implementation funds.

Grant funds will be relied upon to initiate implementation efforts. Existing state and federal programs will also be expanded or leveraged with acquired funding to further implementation impacts. Grant funds are not a sustainable source of financial assistance but are necessary to assist in WPP implementation. Other sources of funding will be utilized and creative funding approaches will be sought where appropriate. Sources of funding that are applicable to this WPP and will be sought as appropriate are described in this chapter.

#### Federal Sources

##### *Clean Water Act §319(h) Nonpoint Source Grant Program*

The EPA provides grant funding to the State of Texas to implement projects that reduce NPS pollution through the §319(h) Nonpoint Source Grant Program. These grants are administered by TCEQ and TSSWCB in the State of Texas. WPPs that satisfy the nine key elements of successful watershed-based plans are eligible for funding through this program. To be eligible for funding, implementation measures must be included in the accepted WPP and meet other program rules. Some commonly funded items include:

- Development and delivery of educational programs
- Water quality monitoring
- OSSF repairs and replacements, land BMPs, water body clean-up events and others

Further information can be found at: <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/nonpoint-source/grants/grant-pgm.html>

##### *Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)*

The CSP is a voluntary conservation program administered by USDA NRCS that encourages producers to address resource concerns in a comprehensive manner by undertaking additional conservation activities. The program is available for private agricultural lands including cropland, grassland, prairie land, improved pasture, and rangeland. CSP encourages landowners and stewards to improve conservation activities on their land by installing and adopting additional conservation practices. Practices may include but are not limited to, prescribed grazing, nutrient management planning, precision nutrient application, manure application, and integrated pest management. Financial assistance is available to implement the practices.

Program information can be found at: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/csp-conservation-stewardship-program>

### *Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)*

Conservation Reserve Program is a voluntary program for agricultural landowners administered by the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA). Individuals may receive annual rental payments to establish long-term, resource-conserving covers on environmentally sensitive land. The goal of the program is to reduce runoff and sedimentation to protect and improve lakes, rivers, ponds, and streams. Financial assistance covering up to 50% of the costs to establish approved conservation practices, enrollment payments, and performance payments are available through the program.

Information on the CRP program is available at: <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/conservation-reserve-program/index>

### *Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)*

Operated by USDA NRCS, the EQIP is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers through contracts up to a maximum term of 10 years. These contracts provide financial assistance to help plan and implement conservation practices that address natural resource concerns in addition to opportunities to improve soil, water, plant, animal, air, and other related resources on agricultural land and non-industrial private forestland. Individuals engaged in livestock or agricultural production on eligible land are permitted to participate in EQIP. Practices selected address natural resource concerns and are subject to the NRCS technical standards adapted for local conditions. They also must be approved by the local SWCD. Local work groups are formed to provide recommendations to the USDA NRCS that advise the agency on allocations of EQIP county-based funds and identify local resource concerns. Watershed stakeholders are strongly encouraged to participate in their local work group to promote the objectives of this WPP with the resource concerns and conservation priorities of EQIP.

Information regarding EQIP can be found at: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/eqip-environmental-quality-incentives>

### *Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)*

The RCPP is a comprehensive, and flexible program that uses partnerships to stretch and multiply conservation investments and reach conservation goals on a regional or watershed scale. Through the RCPP and NRCS, state, local, and regional partners coordinate resources to help producers install and maintain conservation activities in selected project areas. Partners leverage RCPP funding in project areas and report on the benefits achieved.

Information regarding the RCPP can be found at: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/rcpp-regional-conservation-partnership-program>

### *Rural Development Water & Environmental Programs*

USDA Rural Development provides grants and low interest loans to rural communities for potable water and wastewater system construction, repair, or rehabilitation. Funding options include:

- Rural Repair and Rehabilitation Loans and Grants: provides assistance to make repairs to low-income homeowners' housing to improve or remove health and safety hazards.
- Technical Assistance and Training Grants for Rural Waste Systems: provides grants to non-profit organizations that offer technical assistance and training for water delivery and waste disposal

- Water and Waste Disposal Direct Loans and Grants: assists in developing water and waste disposal systems in rural communities with populations of less than 10,000 individuals.

#### *Urban Water Small Grants Program*

The objective of the Urban Waters Small Grants Program, administered by the EPA, is to fund projects that will foster a comprehensive understanding of local urban water issues, identify and address these issues at the local level and educate and empower the community. In particular, the Urban Waters Small Grants Program seeks to help restore and protect urban water quality and revitalize adjacent neighborhoods by engaging communities in activities that increase their connection to, understanding of, and stewardship of local urban waterways.

More information about the Urban Waters Small Grants Program can be found at:

<https://www.epa.gov/urbanwaterspartners/urban-waters-small-grants>

#### State Sources

##### *Clean Rivers Program (CRP)*

The TCEQ administers the Texas CRP, a state fee-funded program that provides surface water quality monitoring, assessment, and public outreach. Allocations are made to 15 partner agencies (primarily river authorities) throughout the state to assist in routine monitoring efforts, special studies, and outreach efforts. ANRA is the CRP partner for the Kickapoo Creek in Henderson County watershed. The program supports water quality monitoring, and annual water quality assessments, and engages stakeholders in addressing water quality concerns in the Angelina & Neches River Basin.

More information about the Clean Rivers Program is available at: <https://www.anra.org/conservation-recreation/water-quality-activities/clean-rivers-program/>

##### *Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)*

The CWSRF, authorized through the Clean Water Act and administered by the TWDB, provides low-interest loans to local governments and service providers for infrastructure projects that include stormwater BMPs, WWTFs and collection systems. The loans can spread project costs over a repayment period of up to 20 years. Repayments are cycled back into the fund and used to pay for additional projects. Through 2016, the program committed over \$9.8 billion for projects across Texas.

More information on CWSRF is available at: <http://www.twdb.texas.gov/financial/programs/CWSRF/>

##### *Landowner Incentive Program (LIP)*

TPWD administers the LIP to work with private landowners to implement conservation practices that benefit healthy aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems and create, restore, protect, or enhance habitat assistance but does require landowner to contribute through labor, materials, or other means.

Further information about this program is available at:

<https://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/land/private/lip/>

##### *Supplemental Environmental Projects (SEP)*

The SEP program, administered by TCEQ, directs fines, fees, and penalties for environmental violations toward environmentally beneficial uses. Through this program, a respondent in an enforcement matter can choose to invest penalty dollars in improving the environment, rather than paying into the Texas General Revenue Fund. Program dollars may be directed to OSSF repair, trash dump clean up, and

wildlife habitat restoration or improvement, among other things. Program dollars may be directed to entities for single, one-time projects require special approval from TCEQ or directed entities (such as Resource Conservation and Development Councils) with pre-approved “umbrella” projects.

Further information about SEP is available at:

<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/compliance/enforcement/sep/sep-main>

#### *Texas Farm and Ranch Lands Conservation Program*

The Texas Farm and Ranch Lands Conservation Program was established and is administered by TPWD to conserve high-value working lands to protect water, fish, wildlife, and agricultural production that are at risk of future development. The program’s goal is to educate citizens on land resource stewardship and establish conservation easements to reduce land fragmentation and loss of agricultural production.

Program information is available at TPWD at: <https://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/land/private/farm-and-ranch/>

#### *Water Quality Management Plan Program (WQMP)*

WQMPs are voluntary, property-specific management plans developed and implemented to improve land and water quality. Technical assistance to develop plans that meet producer and state goals is provided by the TSSWCB and local SWCDs. Once the plan is developed, the TSSWCB may financially assist implementing a portion of prescribed BMPs.

#### *Other Sources*

Private foundations, non-profit organizations, land trusts, and individuals can potentially assist with the implementation funding of some aspects of the WPP. Funding eligibility requirements for each program should be reviewed before applying to ensure applicability. Some groups that may be able to provide funding include but are not limited to:

- Cynthia and George Mitchell Foundation: Provides grants for water and land conservation programs to support sustainable protection and conservation of Texas’ land and water resources.
- Dixon Water Foundation: Provides grants to non-profit organizations to assist in improving/maintaining watershed health through sustainable land management.
- Meadows Foundation: Provides grants to non-profit organizations, agencies, and universities engaged in protecting water quality and promoting land conservation practices to maintain water quality and water availability on private lands.
- Partnerships with local industry in the watershed could also provide in-kind donations or additional funding for implementation projects.
- Texas Agricultural Land Trust: Funding provided by the trust assists in establishing conservation easements for enrolled lands.