

Name of the Project: **Water for Texans**

Is This a New Project or Request for Continuation? Continuation

Geographic Area of the Project: Statewide - currently located in 13 counties

Name of Principal Investigator(s): Larry D. White and Barron S. Rector

County(s) and/or University Department(s), TCE, or Unit: RLEM, TCE

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Project Need, Description and Expected Outcomes

The Water for Texans program was initiated four years ago to provide demonstrations and educational programs for clientele through county Extension agents at the county level. Due to the variety of soils and resource situations in Texas, local demonstrations were and continue to be developed with county Extension agents to demonstrate the impacts of current management and Best Management Practices on water quality and quantity from rangelands. **Currently 46 paired watersheds, located in 13 counties, are directly handled by the campus Water for Texans staff.** We have assisted CEAs in Kinney, Edwards, Wise and Webb counties, Dr. Charles Hart on the Rio Grande Project and Willy Conrad, City of Austin, to develop paired watersheds for their use in evaluating Best Management Practices as part of the Water for Texans program.

Demonstrations utilize paired catchments with tipping buckets or flumes to measure runoff and collect a sediment sample for each rainfall/runoff event. A tipping bucket raingage allows interpretation of results as percent of rainfall and gallons per acre and pounds of sediment per acre per event and cumulative. Due to the drought and equipment development, calibration took longer than expected. BMPs have been initiated on half the watersheds and the remainder will be installed this winter. CEAs and cooperators that collect rainfall, runoff and sediment data are using the information for clientele programs. Field days were conducted this past spring at two sites and are planned for four sites this fall with others planned for the spring, 2003. Informational kiosks have been installed at the Freeman Ranch and will be installed at the Brazos and McKinney Roughts watersheds for interpretation by visitors this fall.

Continuation of support for these demonstrations and program activities is critical to maintain, initiate BMPs and collect, interpret, and report results to CEAs, cooperators and clientele for their consideration in adoption of BMPs for improving rangeland watershed health. This information also helps to adapt research findings to specific situations that local landowners can identify with. We have already seen some cooperators change management on their adjoining lands. This data base should also help researchers expand and improve their modeling efforts for rangeland situations in Texas. All results will be available via the TRM web site currently under development.

The Water for Texans program has been supported by an Extension Assistant position funded by Senate Bill 1 (60%), although the position is vacant and TCE has not informed us if we will be allowed to refill the position after Sept. 1, 2002. Currently the two campus based Extension Range Specialist positions (40% and 25% on the Water for Texans program) plus a half time student worker are continuing this effort. **Support for the student worker salary is essential** for completion of this project over the next three

years. If the Extension Assistant position is approved it will require training before assuming some of the duties associated with this project. **The most critical need for this next year is man-power** to handle, prepare, analyze and assist with report preparation resulting from the large amount of data now coming in from these demonstrations, plus **travel** to each site for data collection and to conduct field days. We are limiting activity to the current sites and not expecting to further expand the project unless adequate funds are obtained from other sources. The Lower Colorado River Authority has expressed a desire to expand these demonstrations to other LCRA properties.

The number of Water for Texans presentations and county programs will increase dramatically this coming year as results are interpreted and communicated to collaborators. Examples of two reports provided at two field days for clientele (75 participants) conducted in Hays and Kerr counties this past spring are attached. Information from the Kerr watersheds was also presented to 40 participants at the Youth Range Workshop sponsored by the Texas Section Society for Range Management, the Texas Holistic Resource Management annual meeting (100 participants), and the Annual Meeting of Senior Staff of Texas Parks and Wildlife. Other programs have been conducted for clientele through out the year.

Water from rangeland is a major topic for many water planning districts and landowners. The information obtained from these demonstrations coupled with current research will provide citizens needed knowledge to make informed decisions for improving range watershed health and meeting landowner goals.

Specific Soil and Water Conservation Issues Addressed

The following issues are addressed by this portion of the Water for Texans program efforts:

- water management and conservation
- soil management
- resource management
- brush control for soil, water and wildlife management
- land management related to soil and water conservation
- youth educational programs about water conservation

The Water for Texans demonstrations and program activities addressed by this grant include the following counties:

Bastrop	Blanco	Brazos	Comal
Ellis	Hays	Jim Wells	Kaufman
Kendall	Kerr	Mason	Menard
Travis			

Collaboration

Person/Position	Agency/Organization	Function
Rachel Bauer , CEA, Hays and Bastrop (until new CEA is hired) Counties	Texas Cooperative Extension and Master Naturalist Volunteers	On-site maintenance, data collection, Master Naturalist coordinator, clientele programs

Staff at McKinney Roughts Nature Center, Bastrop County	Lower Colorado River Authority, Bastrop County	On-site maintenance, data collection, clientele tours
Jack Hunter, CEA, Brazos County	Texas Cooperative Extension	Clientele programs
Kathryn Vaughan, coordinator, Texas Cooperative Wildlife Collection, Brazos County	Dept. Wildlife and Fisheries Science, TAMU	On-site maintenance
Gary Stanford, CEA, Ellis County	Texas Cooperative Extension	Clientele programs
Durant Rodrique, small acreage landowner	Ellis County Cooperator	On-site maintenance, data collection
Billy Kniffen, CEA, Menard County	Texas Cooperative Extension	Develop a paired watershed demonstration 2002-2003
Brian Davis, CEA, Comal County	Texas Cooperative Extension	On-site maintenance, data collection, clientele programs
Position Open, CEA, Kendall County	Texas Cooperative Extension	On-site maintenance, data collection, clientele programs
Staff at Guadalupe State Park	Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept., Kendall County	On-site maintenance, data collection
Steven Zoeller, CEA, Blanco County	Texas Cooperative Extension	On-site maintenance, data collection, clientele programs
Lew K. Hunnicutt, Stewardship Education and Research	SELAH, Bamberger Ranch, Blanco County	On-site maintenance, data collection, clientele programs
Brent K. Drennan, CEA, Mason County	Texas Cooperative Extension	Clientele programs
Mark Mitchell, Wildlife Biologist	Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. Mason Mountain WMA, Mason County	On-site maintenance, data collection
Ralph Davis, CEA, Kaufman County	Texas Cooperative Extension	Clientele programs
W. R. Braziel, small acreage landowner	Kaufman County Cooperator	On-site maintenance, data collection
Roger Green, Star Brand Ranch	Kaufman County Cooperator	On-site maintenance, data collection
Garry Hawes, small acreage landowner	Kaufman County Cooperator	On-site maintenance, data collection
Eddie Holland, CEA, Kerr County	Texas Cooperative Extension	Clientele programs
Jay Carroll, Wildlife Technician	Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept., Kerr Wildlife Management Area, Kerr County	On-site maintenance, data collection, clientele programs
Willie Conrad, resource manager	City of Austin, Travis County	On-site maintenance, data collection, clientele programs
Rogelio Mercado, CEA, Jim Wells County	Texas Cooperative Extension	Clientele programs
David McKown, Exten. Assoc.	La Copita Demonstration Ranch, Jim Wells County, RLEM, Texas Cooperative Extension	On-site maintenance, data collection, clientele programs
J. P. Bach, Manager, Freeman Ranch, San Marcos	Southwest Texas State University, San Marcos	On-site watershed maintenance, data collection, educator

Submitted by _____

Date: _____

Approved for submission _____

Date: _____

Head, Department of Rangeland Ecology and Management