MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 3, 2011

TO: Graduate Students and Faculty working in Water Resources

FROM: Neal Wilkins, Director
      Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI)

SUBJECT: Applications for Water Resources Assistantship

The Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI) is now accepting applications from eligible Ph.D. students for the 2012-2013 Water Resources Assistantship. This assistantship, made possible by support provided through the U.S. Geological Survey, the Mills Endowment and the National Institutes for Water Resources, is aimed at supporting water resources related research addressing key water issues in Texas.

The Water Resources Assistantship is designed to support exceptional full-time Ph.D. students at Texas A&M University, who have completed a master’s and are conducting high-priority water-related research in the following priority focus areas: water security, reuse and conservation, technology and policy innovation, and integrated water resources management. The annual assistantship provides a $25,000 stipend, benefits, tuition support up to $5,550 and discretionary funds of up to $2,500 for research-related expenses (i.e. supplies, publication costs, and travel). The assistantship recipient will begin January 1, 2012 at a maximum of 50% effort. Although the assistantship is for one-year of support, Ph.D. students may reapply each year for additional funding provided they meet the year two criteria indicated in the attachment.

Attached is information on selection criteria, application contents and format. All students applying for or receiving a Water Resources Assistantship should be aware that an award may include certain tax implications. All interested students should check with Student Financial Aid to determine the impact of this assistantship on their loans, if any, or for tax related questions.

All materials are to be submitted electronically. Completed applications should be emailed to Danielle Kalisek at dmkalisek@tamu.edu by 5:00 p.m. on November 30, 2011.

Attachment
WATER RESOURCES ASSISTANTSHIP

The Water Resources Assistantship, administered by the Texas Water Resources Institute, provides financial support for the research training of exceptional graduate students conducting water resources research in Texas. This assistantship is made possible by support provided through the U.S. Geological Survey, the Mills Endowment and the National Institutes for Water Resources. The topic of the research conducted by the student should be relevant to priority water resource issues in Texas, and the research must be conducted in the State of Texas. The assistantship recipient will begin January 1, 2012. Tenure is for one year with the option to reapply for continued funding when the following year’s assistantship application period begins. Criteria for students applying for second-year funding will include demonstration of outstanding performance in year 1 and research progress toward a Ph.D. The second-year goals will include high-impact summer learning opportunities with agencies and/or industry as well as preparation of peer-reviewed journal articles. The stipend is comparable with those of other competitive graduate fellowships, and a discretionary expense fund is provided for the Graduate Research Assistant selected. Graduate Research Assistants are selected by a committee appointed by the Director of the Texas Water Resources Institute. All requirements must be met by the applicant in order for his/her application to be considered.

Successful applicants will be expected to office at TWRI, engage in Institute programs and integrate Institute priority water research focus areas with their research.

Any questions regarding the following guidelines should be directed to Danielle Kalisek, Texas Water Resources Institute, at dmkalisek@tamu.edu (e-mail) or 979.845.2781 (phone).

Application Guidelines, Selection Criteria and Other Requirements:

1) The applicant must be a full-time Ph.D. graduate student enrolled at Texas A&M University with a completed master’s degree.

2) **Highest priority will be given to research on:**
   a. Water security for Texas and the role of integrated water resources management focusing on water use efficiency, conservation, emerging technologies, policy innovation and water reuse; examining the interplay of water and energy resources and needs in the state; studying the economic, environmental and social impacts of water use in energy production and exploration, including the impacts of this use on regional and state water planning; determining the current and likely future water needs of power generation and energy production, and evaluating options to develop new or alternative supplies; and evaluating current issues involving water use for oil and gas production and related water quality issues;
   b. Evaluating the status of desalination projects in Texas including an evaluation of the regulation of brackish groundwater and whether opportunities exist to facilitate better utilization of this groundwater resource to meet future needs; and
   c. Incentives for water conservation and efficiency in irrigation and municipal water use.

3) Applicants may not be employed above 50% effort and receive this assistantship. If employed and receiving a health insurance stipend from employed position, applicants will not be eligible for insurance stipend from the assistantship.

4) Assistantship available January 2, 2012 through December 21, 2012 based upon funding availability.

5) Successful applicant will be officed at TWRI located at 1500 Research Parkway in College Station.
A maximum of $36,670 may be requested annually, and as much as $5,550 annually can be used to offset tuition and fees that are not otherwise waived by the university.

Funds of up to $2,500 may also be used for travel, equipment, lab materials, supplies, analytical devices or services, or other items that improve the quality of the student's research program.

This assistantship requires a commitment of at least 1:1 match (i.e., $36,670) of non-federal funds (including in-kind) by the faculty advisor and/or committee. A letter of commitment signed by an official authorized to commit matching funds must be provided with the application. The 1:1 match can include the following: salaries, wages, and fringe benefits of faculty advisors and committee members funded by non-federal dollars; in-kind services and direct funding provided by non-federal sources; equipment or lab use; supplies furnished by student's department; and negotiated indirect costs. Indirect costs used for match cannot be applied to tuition and equipment costs.

A 1:1 match is required; however, additional match can potentially increase the competitiveness of the application.

Students will be required to submit a final report. The final report may include the student’s dissertation or a summary. In collaboration with research and Extension personnel, students must develop at least one Extension publication, a popular article and deliver an oral presentation at a national/international meeting.

**Application Contents (all items due to Danielle Kalisek, dmkalisek@tamu.edu, by 5:00 PM on November 30, 2011)**

A. A current copy of the Degree Program approved by the Office of Graduate Studies with amendments as necessary. The applicant must be a full-time student and must be enrolled in at least 9 hours during the regular semester and at least 6 hours during the summer session.

B. A short 3-5 page essay and/or concept paper describing the research problem, the significance of the research objectives and the benefits of the proposed research to society and/or the State of Texas. Include title; Congressional district(s) where project will occur; abstract (200 words or less); statement of critical need; nature, scope and objectives; and results expected from this project.

C. Matching Funds Letter. Documentation of matching in the form of a signed letter of support from the student’s department showing matching funds are present and have been approved must be legibly scanned in and sent to TWRI (example letter provided) by November 30, 2011 via email (dmkalisek@tamu.edu).

D. Copy of transcript.

**Electronic submissions only. Please do not send hard copies.**

If you have any questions, please contact Danielle Kalisek, Texas Water Resources Institute, at dmkalisek@tamu.edu (e-mail); 979.845.2781 (phone); 979.845.8554 (fax).
Matching Funds Letter

Email (dmkalisek@tamu.edu) to TWRI by November 30, 2011 the signed letter of support from your university showing matching funds are present and have been approved.

DATE

Dr. Neal Wilkins
Texas Water Resources Institute
2118 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-2118

Dear Dr. Wilkins,

This letter of commitment applies to the proposal, “Management of Produced Water in Oil & Gas Operations: Produced Water Reuse in Field Demonstrations of Natural Habitat Restoration” to be submitted to the U.S. Geological Survey.

The Texas A&M University Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Science supports the efforts of this project. This letter serves to commit one month of time ($8,148) plus fringe benefits ($1,887) for the next year for Dr. Jane Doe’s participation. In addition, the proposal includes $5,413 of waived indirect costs on non-federal funds.

Sincerely,

Jack Smith
Department Head