

**Texas AgriLife Research  
Texas Water Resources Institute**

**Watershed Protection Plan Development for Buck Creek  
FY 06 CWA 319(h)  
TSSWCB Project No. 06-11**

Quarter no.   9   From 1/1/2009 Through 3/31/2009.

**I. Abstract**

Work conducted during this quarter of the project focused on the continuation of collecting water samples and preparing collected water and fecal samples for BST analysis. Water samples were collected at sites 3, 5, 6, 10A, 10C and 11 six times during the quarter. A large shipment of samples was shipped to El Paso for appropriate BST analyses. A stakeholder meeting has been planned for April 30th in Wellington and will focus on sampling progress, watershed protection plan progress, watershed modeling activities and a BST update. Significant progress in BST analyses were made this quarter and are illustrated in the table on the last page of this report.

**II. Overall Progress and Results by Task**

**TASK 1: Project Coordination and Administration**

Subtask 1.1: *Conduct quarterly TTVN meetings as appropriate with project participants to discuss project activities, project schedule, lines of responsibility, communication needs, and other requirements. (Sept. 06 - Aug. 10).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. TTVN meeting was held March 9<sup>th</sup> to discuss project progress and other activities.

**60% Complete**

Subtask 1.2: *TWRI will prepare electronic quarterly reports. All progress reports will also be provided to Texas AgriLife Research and Texas AgriLife Extension Service project cooperators and participants, Hall-Childress, Collingsworth, and Donley SWCD directors and will be placed on the project website. (Sept. 06 - Aug. 10).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. Submitted Year 3, Quarter 1 report to TSSWCB on 4.15.09.

**75% Complete**

Subtask 1.3: *Representatives from TWRI will attend meetings with the TSSWCB project manager and other meetings, as needed, to review project status, deliverables, etc. (Sept. 06 - Aug. 10).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. TWRI and TSSWCB continue to confer and discuss the project, its workplan and

deliverables. Meetings between all project participants have also been held to discuss these subjects.

**75% Complete**

Subtask 1.4: *TWRI will submit appropriate Reimbursement Forms. (Sept. 06 - Aug. 10).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. As of February 28, 2009, a total of \$190,596 or about 45% of total project funding has been expended.

**45% Complete**

Subtask 1.5: *TWRI will attend all stakeholder meetings as described in Task 6. (Sept. 06 - Aug. 10).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. A newsletter was sent out to the stakeholders during the quarter in lieu of a stakeholder meeting.
- b. The next stakeholder meeting has been scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on April 30<sup>th</sup> in Wellington at the Club Room of the Wellington Auditorium.

**50% Complete**

## **TASK 2: Quality Assurance Project Plan Development**

Subtask 2.1: *TWRI will develop a QAPP that will detail project goals and objectives relating to water quality monitoring activities; identify the data needed to fulfill those objectives; list field and laboratory methods; describe procedures and schedules to be followed; and specify a data management structure and the quality assurance protocols. (Sept. 06 – Feb. 07).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. The QAPP has been submitted to EPA for their review and was approved the last week of September.

**100% Complete**

Subtask 2.2: *Provide annual revisions to the QAPP and amendments, as necessary, to the TSSWCB and EPA. (Feb. 07 – Aug. 10).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. No activity to report at this time.

**50% Complete**

## **TASK 3: Sanitary Survey of Buck Creek Watershed**

Subtask 3.1: *Texas AgriLife Research will acquire available literature, data, and information germane to describing the contributions, both spatially and temporally, and sources of bacterial*

*loading in Buck Creek. The data analyses will include discussion of temporal (inter-annual, seasonal) and spatial trends in water quality, an evaluation of potential sources, and an identification of data gaps. This task will include an explanation of how BST methods provide useful data to assist in water quality management efforts where bacterial contamination is a concern. (Sept. 06 – Aug. 09).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. Work on this subtask is underway. The Research Assistant is continually in contact with landowners in the watershed and is constantly learning new information regarding potential bacteria sources in the watershed.

**75% Complete**

*Subtask 3.2: Texas AgriLife Research will perform an aerial assessment of watershed will be utilized along the main channel of Buck Creek to identify and characterize stream channel locations, vegetation dynamics, current land use, and potential bacteria sources to the creek. The area will be flown twice during the project to assist in determining possible contributions. This information will be supplemented with a review of current DOQQ photography. Information from this subtask will be crucial in the development of implementation strategies in the Watershed Protection Plan. (Sept. 06 – Aug. 09).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. This task has been completed.

**100% Complete**

*Subtask 3.3: Texas AgriLife Research will conduct an inventory of existing land use patterns in the Buck Creek watershed utilizing available imagery. (Sept. 06 – Aug. 07).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. This subtask is complete.

**100% Complete**

*Subtask 3.4: Texas AgriLife Research will conduct a survey of the watershed to identify the potential sources of fecal matter to Buck Creek. Wildlife and domestic animal sources of observed scat can be identified. Concentrated waterfowl areas and bird rookeries or bat colonies may be identified. The utilization of waterways by wildlife, as well as dogs, cats, and other domestic animals will also be assessed. Human influences are also typically identified, including malfunctioning septic systems and sewer overflows. (Sept. 06 – Aug. 07).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. Trapping approved by Texas A&M and Texas Parks and Wildlife continues to be a means of collecting a positively identified source of fecal material in the watershed.
- b. Motion activated wildlife cameras continue to be used at multiple locations to identify what species of wildlife or other animals pass by these locations on a somewhat frequent

basis and to assess their viability for trapping live animals.

- c. RRA and TCEQ will assist with obtaining samples from wastewater treatment plants.

**85% Complete**

#### **TASK 4: Micro-Watershed Monitoring and Sampling**

Subtask 4.1: *Texas AgriLife Research will perform routine sampling (grab sampling) at six locations (Sites 3, 5, 6, 10a, 10c, and 11) on Buck Creek. (Feb. 07 – Aug. 09).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. Samples were collected at all sites during each month this quarter.

**80% Complete**

Subtask 4.2: *Texas AgriLife Research will collect a minimum of 8 rain event/high flow grab samples from the Buck Creek sites over the course of the study. (Feb. 07 – Aug. 09).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. No rainfall events occurred during the quarter that produced surface runoff.
- b. Thus far, five rainfall events have been collected.

**63% Complete**

Subtask 4.3: *Texas AgriLife Research will perform quarterly sampling (grab sampling) at selected tributary sites within the Buck Creek watershed when flow is present. (Feb. 07 – Aug. 09).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. Site 5 is a tributary of Buck Creek and 6 samples have been collected during the quarter.

**85% Complete**

Subtask 4.4: *Texas AgriLife Research will compile and analyze the sampling data. Data will be for informational and assessment purposes due to the limited data previously collected. (Feb. 07 – Jan. 10).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. Newly collected data have been incorporated into the data base.
- b. Data analysis will begin upon completion of water quality sampling.

**30% Complete**

Subtask 4.5: *TWRI will transfer monitoring data from activities in Task 4 to TSSWCB for inclusion in the TCEQ surface water quality monitoring database. (Aug. 09 – Aug. 10)*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. No new information to report at this time.

## 0% Complete

### TASK 5: Bacterial Source Tracking

Subtask 5.1: *Stage 1 BST Assessment. Monthly targeted water grab sampling of creek segments at greatest risk for fecal pollution loading, as identified through the sanitary survey, will be performed for a period of six months (Texas AgriLife Research -Vernon). Approximately 50 E. coli isolates from 50 different water samples will be analyzed using ERIC-PCR and RiboPrinting and compared with known isolates from the previously developed Texas AgriLife Research-El Paso, Texas E. coli source library to determine the need for the development of a local Buck Creek source library for Stage 2 of the BST work (Texas AgriLife Research-El Paso). Bacteroidales PCR will be performed by Texas AgriLife Research-El Paso to determine if creek segments are being impacted by human or animal fecal pollution. Depending on the results of the Stage 1 BST work, the number of water and source isolates and the types (sewage or animal) of source samples listed below for Stage 2 may change. (Feb. 07 – Aug. 07).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. 50 *E. coli* water isolates analyzed by ERIC-PCR and RiboPrinting (ERIC-RP). Results indicate approximately 65% identification rate with existing library, indicating that a small Buck Creek local library should increase identification rates.
- b. 72 water samples have been analyzed for *Bacteroidales* fecal source indicators, indicating a mix of wildlife and human contamination sources.
- c. This subtask is now considered complete.

## 100% Complete

Subtask 5.2: *Samples of fecal matter and/or domestic sewage will be collected from the major potential sources of fecal matter in the watershed. These sources will include domestic animals, wildlife, and human sources. In all, 100 known source samples from the Buck Creek watershed will be collected and processed for E. coli isolation and archival by Texas AgriLife Research-Vernon. Bacterial cultures of E. coli isolates will be archived for future analyses and dissemination to other laboratories. E. coli isolates will be sent to the Texas AgriLife Research-El Paso laboratory for BST analyses and selection of isolates for inclusion in the source library. It is anticipated that over 300 E. coli colonies from source samples will be screened by ERIC-PCR. Approximately 100 of those isolates will be selected for ribotyping BST analysis and inclusion in the source identification library. All sample collection, processing procedures and documentation will be specified in the QAPP. (Aug. 07 – Jan. 10).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. 19 *E. coli* source isolates have been received by Texas AgriLife El Paso. ERIC-PCR has been completed for 18 isolates and RiboPrinting has been completed for 14 isolates.
- b. 75 new isolates are currently being prepared in Vernon and should be received during the next quarter.

## 40% Complete

Subtask 5.3: *Ambient water sampling, analysis and isolation of E. coli will be conducted by Texas AgriLife Research – Vernon. Ambient water samples will be collected from at least 4 sites*

*in the Buck Creek watershed on ten dates over a 1-year period. These dates would likely include at least five dry weather events and at least three post-rainfall events. Approximately five water samples would be collected on each date from each site; and ten samples from the vicinity of the Clean Rivers Program monitoring site. E. coli in water samples will be enumerated using USEPA Method 1603 by the Texas AgriLife Research-Vernon laboratory. Following enumeration, Texas AgriLife Research-Vernon will isolate E. coli from the samples and archive cultures. Bacterial cultures of E. coli isolates will be archived for future analyses and dissemination to other laboratories. E. coli isolates will be sent to the Texas AgriLife Research-El Paso laboratory for ERIC-PCR and RiboPrinting BST analyses and source identification. The Texas AgriLife Research-El Paso laboratory technician will coordinate sample shipment or collection (when necessary) with Texas AgriLife Research -Vernon. (Aug. 07 – Jan. 10).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. Ambient water quality samples were collected all three months this quarter.
- b. Isolates from these events will be sent to El Paso in the next shipment.

**75% Complete**

*Subtask 5.4: ERIC-PCR and RiboPrinting fingerprints of approximately 500 E. coli isolates from ambient water samples will be analyzed and compared to source library isolates using Applied Maths BioNumerics software by Texas AgriLife Research-El Paso. (Aug. 07 – Jan. 10).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. A total of 307 *E. coli* water isolates (including the 50 from Task 5.1) have been received by Texas AgriLife El Paso. ERIC-PCR has been completed for 300 isolates and RiboPrinting has been completed for 305 isolates, for a total of 298 isolates with completed ERIC-RP analyses.

**50% Complete**

*Subtask 5.5: Texas AgriLife Research-El Paso will compile and analyze the BST data. Water isolates will be identified to cattle, other livestock, avian and non-avian wildlife, domestic sewage, and pet sources. Results will help identify the sources needed to be addressed by the Watershed Protection Plan. (Aug. 07 – Jan. 10).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. Initial reports have been developed and discussed between project personnel during TTVN meetings.

**25% Complete**

**TASK 6: Stakeholder Coordination and Education**

*Subtask 6.1: The Vernon Research Assistant will receive training on watershed protection plan development and serve as the watershed coordinator for Buck Creek. (Sept. 06 – Aug. 10).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. The Research Assistant has completed the Watershed Protection Planning Workshop on June 2-6 in Bandera.

**100% Complete**

*Subtask 6.2: The Vernon Research Assistant/Watershed Coordinator, with assistance from TWRI and Texas AgriLife Extension Service, will assemble a stakeholder group to provide input and assist in the development of a Watershed Protection Plan. The stakeholder group will be made up of landowners, elected officials, agency representatives, industry groups, and others as appropriate. Potential agency representatives and industry groups include soil and water conservation districts, county commissioners and judges, Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board, Red River Authority, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas AgriLife Research, Texas Water Resources Institute, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Farm Services Agency, Texas Cattle Feeders Association, and Texas Farm Bureau. Participation by all that may be affected will be encouraged throughout the process. (Sept. 06 – Feb. 07).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. The stakeholder group has been assembled and continues to be added to as the project progresses.

**93% Complete**

*Subtask 6.3: The stakeholder group will meet quarterly, or as needed. These meetings will be held within the Buck Creek watershed to solicit input on the development of the watershed plan. In addition, the status of monitoring and assessment efforts will be presented in the context of how a watershed plan will promote recovery or proper functions of the Buck Creek watershed. (Sept. 06 – Aug. 10).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. A newsletter was sent out to the stakeholder group in lieu of a meeting this quarter.
- b. A meeting has been scheduled for April 30<sup>th</sup>

**60% Complete**

*Subtask 6.4: As appropriate, educational programs will also be provided in conjunction with the stakeholder meetings. Informational programs on topics such as principles of watershed hydrology, primary nonpoint source pollution types, and agricultural BMPs for protecting water quality (i.e. alternative watering, riparian management issues, livestock and wildlife management, grazing management, shade development, feeding strategies, cross fencing, and prescribed burning) will also be provided. (Sept. 06 – Aug. 10).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. No new activity to report at this time.

**60% Complete**

*Subtask 6.5: The Vernon Research Assistant/Watershed Coordinator will also meet semi-annually with each SWCD to discuss the status of the project and obtain any input the SWCDs have to offer regarding the project and watershed protection plan. (Sept. 06 – Aug. 10).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. The Research Assistant/Watershed Coordinator met informally with the SWCDs.

**70% Complete**

*Subtask 6.6: TWRI will develop (Months 1-3), host and maintain (Months 3-36) an internet website for the dissemination of information on educational, monitoring and demonstration activities taking place across the Buck Creek watershed. Website delivery of information will be the most time and cost effective way to disseminate information to interested people or groups. (Sept. 06 – Aug. 10).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. The website has been developed and will be updated at least quarterly with project updates. Any and all information related to the project will be available on the project website. <http://twri.tamu.edu/buckcreek/>

**97% Complete**

### **TASK 7: Watershed Protection Plan**

*Subtask 7.1: Texas AgriLife Research and TWRI will develop a Watershed Protection Plan for Buck Creek based on criteria set forth in the FY04 guidelines. Findings from Tasks 3-5 and stakeholder input obtained from Task 6 will be utilized to develop the plan. (Sept. 06 – Aug. 10).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. Work on the WPP continued this quarter. Much of the background information has been compiled and drafted.

**30% Complete**

*Subtask 7.2: TSSWCB, Texas AgriLife Extension, RRA, and local SWCDs will assist with composition, editing, and publication of the final watershed protection plan, as needed. (Sept. 06 – Aug. 10).*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. No activity to report at this time.

**0% Complete**

### **III. Related Issues/Current Problems and Favorable or Unusual Developments**

- A final submission of paper work will be submitted in the upcoming quarter for NELAC

certification.

- TXDOT was contacted regarding roadkill removal. TXDOT is responsible for removing roadkill from the right-of-way on state maintained roads. Stakeholders can report roadkill to the local TXDOT offices in Childress 940-937-7249, Clarendon 806-874-3721 or Wellington 806-447-2971.

TXDOT has apparently responded well to reports of roadkill and as a result, fewer roadkill are being found by the Vernon Research Assistant to collect fecal samples from. Please call Phyllis (cell: 940-414-0195) to report roadkill in the watershed prior to calling TXDOT. After she collects fecal samples, she can call TXDOT to have them removed.

#### IV. Projected Work for Next Quarter

The following will be accomplished during the coming quarter:

- Sampling and sample analysis will continue according to plan.

Sample Type	Total # Samples Needed	Total # Samples Collected to date	Total # Samples or Isolates Received at El Paso Lab	Total # Samples Analyzed to date		
Known Source (Fecal Samples)	100	55	NA <sup>a</sup>	NA		
Known Source Isolates ( <i>E. coli</i> isolates from fecal samples)	300	49 75 in process	19 <sup>b</sup>	# ERIC-PCR	# RiboPrint	Total Completed
				18	14	14
Ambient Water Isolates ( <i>E. coli</i> from water samples)	550	309 sent w/o LB 88 in process	307 <sup>c</sup>	# ERIC-PCR	# RiboPrint	Total Completed
				300	305	298
Ambient Water <i>Bacteroidales</i>	50	72 sent 34 in process	72 <sup>d</sup>	72 (Completed )		

Table contains samples collected thru March 16, 2009

<sup>a</sup>NA, not applicable Vernon lab will be doing most isolations

<sup>b</sup>A total of 20 samples were received and 1 of these samples was a blank

<sup>c</sup>A total of 323 samples were received and 14 of these samples were blanks

<sup>d</sup>A total of 80 samples were received and 8 of these samples were blanks