



Natural Resources and Wildlife (NRW) Committee

Policies for Review

September 2018

**Environmental Quality Incentives Program
(NRW-2)**

WHEREAS, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) has proven to be an effective tool for ranchers implementing sound conservation practices on rangeland; and

WHEREAS, EQIP has provided these practices through technical and financial assistance for rangeland conservation; and

WHEREAS, TSCRA has played a significant role in the implementation of EQIP at the state and local level; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that TSCRA supports EQIP as an effective tool for landowners seeking technical and financial assistance for environmental conservation purposes; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that TSCRA urges Congress to maintain and enhance support for EQIP in order that landowners be able to continue to rely on this program for technical and financial assistance for rangeland conservation; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that TSCRA continue to advocate the needs of rangeland conservation to the state technical advisory committee to ensure that such needs are met by the statewide and local priority process through EQIP; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that TSCRA supports a significant allocation of EQIP funds to livestock related applications (rangeland and CAFO); and, be it further

RESOLVED, that TSCRA supports the use of EQIP for all sizes, business structures, and income levels of operations in order that the program impacts the greatest acreage of rangeland possible.

new 10/12/06, revised 10/2/09, revised 6/18/10, renewed 9/26/14

RECOMMENDATION:

**Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board
(NRW-5)**

WHEREAS, the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board has coordinated Texas soil and water conservation programs in an exemplary fashion since 1939; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts are independent, locally-controlled bodies with directors elected by local landowners; and the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board is elected on an area basis by the directors of local Soil and Water Conservation Districts and also includes two members appointed by the Governor; and

WHEREAS, the leadership exercised by this state agency has resulted in a voluntary soil and water conservation program unequalled in accomplishments in the United States and the world, accounting for a large portion of our nation's total land committed to conservation programs; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that TSCRA supports the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board and Conservation Districts administration of the state's conservation programs and practices for abating agricultural and silvi-cultural nonpoint source pollution; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that TSCRA supports and recognizes the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board as the lead agency in Texas for these programs; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that TSCRA supports adequate funding for Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board and local Soil and Water Conservation Districts programs and technical assistance.

new 3/25/92, revised 10/2/09, revised 9/27/13, renewed 9/26/14

RECOMMENDATION:

**Dipping Vat Cleanup
(NRW-6)**

WHEREAS, in 1906 the United States Department of Agriculture imposed a quarantine on livestock from tick-infested areas of the country; and

WHEREAS, the quarantine led to a tick eradication program conducted as a federal-state-local government cooperative program involving criminal penalties for nonparticipation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that TSCRA encourages the state and federal governments not to hold current landowners responsible for mandates by prior government regulations such as the cost of cleaning up dipping vat sites; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that TSCRA encourages the state and federal government to provide funds to assist with the cost of cleaning up dipping vat sites when a proper responsible party cannot be located.

new 3/22/95, renewed 10/2/09, revised 6/18/10, renewed 9/26/14

RECOMMENDATION:

**Clean Water Act
(NRW-7)**

WHEREAS, the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972, commonly referred to as the Clean Water Act, was enacted by the United States Congress to help protect our water from pollution; and

WHEREAS, various federal agencies, such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), are charged with the promulgation of regulations concerning and administration of this law and in such capacity have exceeded the intent of the United States Congress; and

WHEREAS, the interpretation and administration of this statute has expanded the regulatory burdens imposed by them to such a degree that private property rights, free enterprise, and resource development are now being seriously threatened and could be an economic and legal burden for landowners; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that TSCRA urges the United States Congress to amend the Clean Water Act to better balance sound science, economic development, and the importance of private property rights; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that TSCRA oppose all efforts by federal agencies to expand, misuse, and/or misinterpret their authority under the Clean Water Act.

new 6/13/91, renewed 10/2/09, revised 6/18/10, revised 9/26/14

RECOMMENDATION:

**Invasive Species
(NRW-9)**

WHEREAS, invasive species have encroached on private lands becoming a nuisance; and

WHEREAS, invasive species have damaged range and pasture lands used for livestock and wildlife forage; and

WHEREAS, invasive species can reduce the amount of ground and surface water available to rural and urban areas; and

WHEREAS, the identification and management of invasive species should be determined on a local, state or regional basis by private landowners and technical experts closest to the situation with Federal assistance only on request; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that TSCRA supports best management practices on range and pasture lands that will reduce or eliminate invasive species; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that TSCRA supports voluntary local, state, and federal partnerships with private landowners to reduce or eliminate invasive species.

new 10/11/99, renewed 10/2/09, revised 6/18/10, renewed 9/26/14

RECOMMENDATION:

**Groundwater Rights in Pollution Cases
(NRW-11)**

WHEREAS, there is growing awareness of the negative impacts of pollution on the value of Texas' groundwater supplies; and

WHEREAS, courts and regulatory agencies have not always considered the diminution of value of groundwater and groundwater rights in pollution cases; and

WHEREAS, failure to consider the value of groundwater and groundwater rights has led to carelessness and negligence in the protection of Texas' groundwater by many entities; and

WHEREAS, evidence of groundwater pollution caused by leaking underground pipelines and wells is increasing; and

WHEREAS, aging pipelines and related facilities across the State of Texas greatly increase the likelihood of irreparable harm to the State's valuable groundwater supplies; and

WHEREAS, the most effective way to reduce the likelihood for pollution of the groundwater is to ensure potential polluters are aware they will be held liable for harm to groundwater by regulatory agencies and the courts; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that TSCRA supports and encourages the Texas Legislature, state regulatory agencies, and the courts to take appropriate and reasonable actions, based on sound science, to prevent groundwater pollution in the State of Texas as soon as possible and to recognize the value of groundwater and groundwater rights in pollution cases.

new 10/29/04, revised 10/2/09, revised 6/18/10, renewed 9/26/14

RECOMMENDATION:

**Inactive Well Plugging
(NRW-16)**

WHEREAS, the State of Texas has allowed the oil and gas industry to avoid plugging tens of thousands of inactive oil and gas wells, and many of these inactive unplugged wells reside on lands owned by members of TSCRA; and

WHEREAS, many inactive wells change operators and/or working interest owners and are allowed to ultimately be owned by successor operators and/or working interest owners who cannot or will not plug the wells, and such wells are then orphaned and left for the State of Texas to plug; and

WHEREAS, such inactive wells pose a threat to groundwater and create an unsafe and unsightly mess on the surface of the land; and

WHEREAS, legislative and regulatory efforts have been made to stop this reckless pattern of allowing thousands of wells to go unplugged for years without recourse to any of their owners or operators; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that TSCRA supports legislative efforts to require that all operators and/or working interest owners in the chain of title be held responsible for the timely plugging of inactive oil and gas wells in this State or that a bonding

requirement be put in place that would provide a permanent bond for each oil and gas well that would remain in effect for the life of each well; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that TSCRA supports efforts for more rigorous enforcement of bonding and plugging requirements for owners of inactive oil and gas wells; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that TSCRA supports full appropriation of state funds by the Texas Legislature for their intended use of plugging inactive oil and gas wells.

new 3/22/09, revised 10/2/09, revised 6/18/10, revised 9/26/14

RECOMMENDATION:

**Surface Water Quality
(NRW-18)**

WHEREAS, ranchers are good stewards of surface water and take pride in making sure it is abundant, safe, and high in quality; and

WHEREAS, TSCRA advocates responsible land use that helps to ensure good surface water quality and provides many educational programs for its members on best management practices; and

WHEREAS, ranchers are potentially subject to severe land use regulation under the federal Clean Water Act; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that TSCRA supports the establishment and implementation of surface water quality standards, laws, regulations, and rules that have landowner input, are based on sound science, place an emphasis on voluntary management practices, recognize geographical differences in uses and practices, protect water quality, and sustain economic development.

new 6/18/10, revised 9/26/14

RECOMMENDATION:

**Transfer of Pesticide Regulations from Texas Department of Agriculture
(NRW-22)**

WHEREAS, the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) has experience and knowledge of the needs and uses of pesticides in Texas, and

WHEREAS, the transfer of pesticide regulatory authority away from TDA would be detrimental to landowners, agriculture and the economy of Texas; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that TSCRA is opposed to a transfer of pesticide regulatory authority from the TDA.

new 7/13/91, revised 10/2/09, renewed 9/27/13, revised 9/29/17

RECOMMENDATION:

**Texas Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative
(NRW-24)**

WHEREAS, private grazing lands are one of Texas' largest natural resources, comprising approximately 70 percent of the privately owned land in the state; and

WHEREAS, grazing lands are part of the foundation of the ranching industry in Texas, providing forage for livestock, livelihoods for Texas ranchers and private landowners, habitat for diverse wildlife, open space enjoyment, and a primary source of clean water for all Texans; and

WHEREAS, the health, vitality and productivity of private grazing lands are under constant pressure from many sources including energy and transportation infrastructure, recreational uses, and the effects of extreme natural disasters; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (Texas GLCI) is an organization of ranchers, private landowners, biologists, range management specialists, producer groups and others whose sole purpose is to provide a forum for research, education and promotion of healthy private grazing lands; and

WHEREAS, Texas GLCI maintains a staff of highly trained grazing land management specialists available to provide technical assistance to ranchers and private landowners on a voluntary basis and to promote education related to grazing land health and management issues; and

WHEREAS, Texas GLCI regions throughout the state are guided by ranchers and private landowners who coordinate with Texas GLCI grazing land specialists, state and federal agencies, and producer groups to recommend activities that will benefit ranchers, private landowners, and local communities and help address local and state natural resource concerns; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED that TSCRA:

1. Appoint and maintain a rancher and/or private landowner member to sit on the Texas GLCI Executive Committee; and
2. Support the Texas GLCI as a source of technical grazing land assistance to ranchers and private landowners on a voluntary basis and as a means to promote education, research, and other collaborative efforts that encourage the sustainability of private grazing lands; and
3. Encourage private, state and federal funding to maintain GLCI technical expertise and educational and research activities for the benefit of Texas ranchers, private landowners, and all Texans.

new 6/11/14

RECOMMENDATION:

**Mexican Wolf Reintroduction
(NRW-27)**

WHEREAS, the Mexican wolf is listed on the federal endangered species list; and

WHEREAS, under the Mexican wolf recovery plan, certain guidelines have been established in connection with the identification of suitable release sites for reintroduction of the Mexican wolf; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has determined that no Texas sites satisfy the criteria for reintroduction; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that TSCRA strongly opposes the re-introduction of the Mexican wolf or any other wolf subspecies in Texas; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that TSCRA supports the determination of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department that no suitable release sites have been identified or exist in Texas.

new 3/28/90, renewed 10/2/09, revised 9/27/13, renewed 9/26/14

RECOMMENDATION:

**Predator Control Programs
(NRW-28)**

WHEREAS, livestock producers provide a valuable source of food and fiber to consumers; and

WHEREAS, despite the efforts of livestock producers to reduce damage caused by predators, livestock producers continue to suffer significant economic losses each year to livestock and private property as a result of predators; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that TSCRA supports the adequate funding and development of predator control programs that effectively utilize lethal and non-lethal control measures.

new 3/12/80, revised 1992, renewed 10/2/09, revised 9/27/13, renewed 9/26/14

RECOMMENDATION:

**License and Stamp Revenue
(NRW-30)**

WHEREAS, the Texas Legislature authorized the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) to issue and assess fees for hunting and fishing licenses in 1975; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Legislature also authorized the issuance and assessment of fees for certain stamps such as the migratory and upland game bird stamps and freshwater and saltwater fishing stamps; and

WHEREAS, funds generated by fees collected from licenses and stamps are required to be deposited into a dedicated state account called the Game, Fish, and Water Safety Account; and

WHEREAS, the funds in the Game, Fish, and Water Safety Account are used by the TPWD for research and management of state fish and wildlife resources and other important uses such as law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Legislature has in recent years chosen to not fully appropriate all the dedicated funds collected in the Game, Fish, and Water Safety Account in accordance with its previously stated statutory purpose; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that TSCRA encourages the Texas Legislature to appropriate all dedicated funds collected from TPWD license and stamp fees to the TPWD for their intended use and purpose.

new 9/26/12, renewed 9/26/14

RECOMMENDATION: