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NEWS RELEASE

USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service  
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**NRCS Improves Impaired Watersheds in Texas**

*Agricultural Producers located in priority watersheds will be able to participate*

TEMPLE, Texas. May 1, 2013 — Salvador Salinas, state conservationist for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), has announced funding for an initiative to improve water quality in selected Texas watersheds.

NRCS will make \$704,000 in financial assistance available this year to help farmers, ranchers and forestland owners install conservation practices that manage nutrients, pathogens and sediments. Funding comes through the agency's National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI).

“The National Water Quality Initiative is a focused approach in watershed areas that are facing natural resource challenges. It will amplify the positive results of landscape conservation practices that NRCS and its partners already have underway,” Salinas says. “These funds will provide incentive payments to landowners located in the priority watersheds and further NRCS’ partnership efforts to improve water quality using voluntary actions on private lands.”

NRCS worked closely with partners to select the priority watersheds. State agencies, key partners and technical experts have chosen five sub-watersheds, where on-farm conservation investments have the best chance to improve water quality. The five sub-watersheds, which reach downstream into East Texas’ Lake O’ the Pines, are targeted for funding by NWQI. These sub-watersheds are located in Upshur, Camp, Titus and Morris Counties.

The Lake O’ the Pines is an important municipal, cultural, recreational, ecological and aesthetic asset. Working to preserve and maintain water quality will ensure prosperity, productivity and quality of life for surrounding communities and lands.

Producers in the selected counties may be eligible to receive assistance for installing conservation systems that may include practices such as nutrient management, cover crops, waste storage facility, pasture planting and tree planting.

The sign up time period to apply for NWQI funding at your local NRCS field office through the agency’s Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is May 15 through June 15, 2013, with additional signups if additional financial assistance funding becomes available.

NRCS accepts applications for financial assistance on a continuous basis throughout the year. For more information about NRCS' programs, initiatives and services in Texas visit [www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov).

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service helps America's farmers and ranchers conserve the Nation's soil, water, air and other natural resources. All programs are voluntary and offer science-based solutions that benefit both the landowner and the environment.

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