

# Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program

United States Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

# EWP Objective

- Provide assistance to project sponsors in implementing emergency recovery measures to relieve imminent hazards to life and property created by a natural disaster that causes a sudden impairment of a watershed.
- PROTECTION

# EWP Scope

- EWP technical and financial assistance may be available when the following declarations are made:
  - Secretary of Agriculture Declaration of Drought only
  - Presidential Disaster Declaration
  - Governor's State of Emergency Declaration
  - Local Disaster Declaration by the NRCS State Conservationist

# EWP Scope

- Local Disaster Declaration by the NRCS State Conservationist based on:
  - Request for assistance from Governor
  - Request for EWP assistance from Sponsors

# EWP Request for Assistance

- Written request to the NRCS State Conservationist within 60 days of disaster
- Assistance needed, including:
  - Nature of problem, location and scope
  - Commitment of sponsor to provide:
    - Land rights
    - Permits
    - O&M
  - Statement indicating that funds have either been exhausted or are insufficient to provide adequate relief

# EWP Compliance with Federal Law

- National Environmental Policy Act
- Endangered Species Act
- Federal Water Pollution Control Act
- National Historic Preservation Act
- Etc.

# EWP Project Sponsor

- Any legal subdivision of a State government or a State agency including the following:
  - Cities
  - Counties or parishes
  - Towns
  - Municipal Authorities
  - Townships
  - Soil and Water Conservation Districts
  - And when chartered under state laws
    - Levee Districts
    - Irrigation Districts
    - Drainage Districts
- Native American tribe or tribal organization
- Not Individuals

# EWP Project Sponsor

- Has a legal interest in or responsibility for the values threatened by the emergency
- Is capable of obtaining land rights and required permits
- Is capable of carrying out any operation and maintenance that may be required

# EWP Funding

- Cost-share may not exceed 75%
- Cost-share for Limited Resource Areas can be up to 90%
- Must meet all three of the following conditions:
  - Housing values are less than 75 percent of the State housing value average.
  - Per capita income is 75 percent or less than the national per capita income.
  - Unemployment is at least twice the U.S. average over the past three years based upon the annual unemployment figures.

# EWP Funding

- Authorized through Supplemental Appropriations
  - EWP is not an annual appropriated program
  - EWP is event funded

# EWP Local Contributions

Sponsors may provide share of cost-share  
in the form of:

- Cash
- In-kind goods and/or services
- Any combination of cash or in-kind goods/services

# EWP Local Contributions (cont)

## ➤ In-kind Goods

- Materials
- Labor
- Equipment
- Debris disposal

# EWP Other Sponsor Requirements

- Secure all land rights
- Secure all permits
  - COE 404
  - SWPP
  - Etc.
- Does not qualify as in-kind

# EWP Priorities

1. Exigency situations 501.07(a) –
  - those situations that demand immediate action to avoid potential loss of life or property, including situations where a second natural disaster event may occur shortly thereafter that could compound the impairment, cause new damages or the potential loss of life, if action to remedy the situation is not taken immediately
  - Must be treated within 10-days of access
  - Phone calls to local EMCs
  - Quick assessments
  - Immediate contracting procedures
  - Sponsors must commit to cost-share, land rights, permits, etc. on the spot.
  - Document, document, document

# EWP Exigency



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# EWP Priorities

2. Sites where there is a serious, but not immediate threat to human life
  3. Sites where buildings, utilities, or other important components are threatened
  4. Other sites established by the NRCS Chief
- Modifiers to the above priorities:
- a. Endangered Species
  - b. Historic Resources
  - c. Prime farmland/Protected Wetlands
  - d. State listed threatened species
  - e. Water quality
  - f. Unique wildlife habitat

# EWP Funding Instruments

- Force Accounts
- Contracting Local Organization
- Federal Contract

# Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program

What is Eligible?

# EWP Eligible Measures

## 501.03 d

Assistance of measures that:

- Reduce threats to life or property from a watershed impairment, including sediment and debris removal in floodplains and uplands
- Provide protection from additional flooding or soil erosion by retarding runoff
- Remove debris that would affect runoff or erosion
- Restore the hydraulic capacity to the natural environment to the maximum extent practical
- Are economically, socially, and environmentally defensible and technically sound. (pg 1 DSR)

# EWP Eligible Measures

Measures must also:

- Provide immediate, adequate, and safe relief from the hazard
- Be limited to only those measures/ practices necessary to reduce applicable threats to a stable condition and which approximate the conditions that existed before the impairment of the watershed
- Be completed within 220 days of funding

# EWP Eligible Measures

## ➔ Debris Removal



# EWP Eligible Measures

## ➔ Streambank Stabilization



# EWP Eligible Measures

## ➔ Erosion



# EWP Eligible Measures

## ➔ Critical Area Treatment



# EWP Eligible Measures

## ➔ Watershed & RC&D Structures



# EWP Ineligible Actions

## 501.04 a

- Assistance on Federal lands
- Recovery assistance to a site more than twice in any 10-year period
- Perform operation and maintenance
- Solve problems that existed prior to the disaster

# EWP Ineligible Actions (cont)

- Work on levee projects where a stream has drainage area greater than 400 square miles
- Increase the pre-disaster capacity of a channel
- Repair coastal erosion
- Landscaping
- Remove sediment from reservoirs or basins
- Drill or modify wells, construct pipelines, install irrigation equipment or purchase portable equipment
- Repair conservation practices that are eligible under ECP

# EWP Ineligible Actions (cont)

- Repair, rebuild, or maintain public or private transportation facilities or utilities
- EWP cannot
  - Rebuild roads/bridges
  - Replace culverts
  - Replace road base
- Rule of Thumb – Cannot treat anything between the white lines of the road.

# EWP Eligible/Ineligible Actions

- Examples
- Scenarios
- Questions

# Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program

The Damage Survey Report  
DSR

# EWP Damage Survey Report

## 502.01

- The DSR is the primary document in the planning process to record all assessment, evaluation, and planning decisions for EWP recovery measures.
- A DSR must be completed for every site determined eligible for EWP assistance, and the report must include sufficient data and information to document eligibility in accordance with Part 501, Section 501.3.
- (2) DSR's may be completed by either method:
  - One eligible site per DSR.
  - Groups of similarly impaired sites within a limited geographic area per DSR.
- DSR's must be completed within 60 days of the availability of funding.
- DSR's for structural recovery measures will be maintained for a minimum of 10 years following the completion of EWP assistance to check for repetitive damage in accordance with GM 120, Part 408 and Part 501, Section 501.4.
- A project sponsor's representative shall be provided an opportunity to participate on the DSR team. Project sponsors will assist in developing priorities for EWP implementation within their specific jurisdiction. (See Part 500, Section 500.5.)

# DSR Team

## 502.00

- Expertise recommended for the team should include the following disciplines:
  - Personnel with EWP program experience (RC&D Coordinator, Leader)
  - Engineering (Assigned by Zone)
  - Resource conservation and planning (DC, SC, RMS, etc)
  - Economics (RC&D Coordinator)
  - Biology (Zone Biologist, DC, SC, RMS)
  - Cultural resources (DC, SC, RMS)
  - Contracting (CO, Assigned Engineer, COTR)
  - Other disciplines as required
- The ASTC FO will assign members to serve on the team

[www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/ewp](http://www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/ewp)

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