



**National Watershed Coalition
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News Release

September 19, 2018 – One hundred and five people from eight states and Washington, DC attended a *Watershed Program Procedures and Policies Seminar and NRCS Listening Session for Watershed Project Sponsors and Their Partners* in Decatur, Texas on September 18, 2018. The purpose of the session was for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to provide information and updates on the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program and to listen to concerns and ideas from sponsors of watershed projects.

NRCS Deputy Chief for Programs Jimmy Bramblett, National NRCS Watershed Team Leader Kevin Farmer, NRCS National Watershed Rehabilitation Program Leader Jesse Wilson and NRCS Water Management Center Director Doris Washington attended and presented the latest information about the Watershed Program and answered questions during the listening session portion of the session.

The Watershed Program had received limited or no funding for several years prior to 2017. In 2017 Congress appropriated \$150 million for the program and another \$150 million in 2018. This influx in program funding has meant challenges to both NRCS and watershed project sponsors moving to get projects ready for construction. In many cases this means obtaining new easements, land rights and local funding for projects and for NRCS to engage in contracting for project work, hire additional employees or redirect personnel to watershed program activities.



Kevin Farmer, NRCS Watershed Leader provided an overview of the Watershed Program and a current status report of funding and approved projects.



Dan Sebert, NWC Executive Director moderated the Listening Session that NRCS National Leadership Members responded to questions and comments from participants.

“We appreciate NRCS working with the National Watershed Coalition (NWC) to participate in this session. We feel it not only provided valuable information to project sponsors and others involved in the program, but will help establish better communication and cooperation between NRCS and sponsors,” said Rex Isom, NWC Chair and Executive Director of the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board.

“Plans are underway to hold similar seminar and listening sessions in other parts of the U.S. Notice of location and dates of future sessions will be posted on the NWC web page:

www.watershedcoalition.org



Rex Isom, National Watershed Coalition Chair and Executive Director for the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board provided opening remarks at the session.