# Arkansas's Nonpoint Source Pollution Program/Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts Annual Meeting: Tate Wentz (Water Quality Section Manager/Arkansas Natural Resources Division) Presentation



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Mr. Tate Wentz undertook a presentation at the Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts Annual Meeting titled:

*Arkansas's Nonpoint Source Pollution Program ("Presentation")*

Tate serves as the Water Quality Section Manager at the Arkansas Natural Resources Division ("ANRD") of the Arkansas Department of Agriculture.

The Presentation initially referenced key programs in the ANRD section which include:

- Nonpoint Source Program
- Arkansas Unpaved Roads Program
- Arkansas Nutrient Reduction Strategy
- Wetland and Riparian Zone Tax Credit Program

Note that the terms "nonpoint source" and "point source" have key jurisdictional significance under the Clean Water Act. A Clean Water Act National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System ("NPDES") permit must be acquired if five jurisdictional elements are present:

- A person
- adds a
- pollutant
- to navigable waters
- from a point source.

The term "point source" is defined under the Clean Water Act to include:

. . . any discernable, confined and discrete conveyance, including but not limited to, any pipe, ditch, channel, tunnel, conduit, well, discrete fissure, container, rolling stock, concentrated animal feeding operation, or vessel or other floating craft, from which pollutants are or may be discharged.

The Clean Water Act NPDES program is operated by the Arkansas Department of Energy & Environment – Division of Environmental Quality. It has been delegated such authority by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

Nonpoint source pollutants are normally associated with agricultural, silvicultural, and urban runoff. Some portions of such discharges tend to be generated by soil disturbance and sedimentation. Nonpoint source pollution generally results from land runoff, atmospheric deposition, drainage, or seepage of contaminants. A stormwater runoff or flow can mobilize various pollutants such as metals, oil and grease, and nutrients.

A nonpoint source would include any source of pollution that does not fall within the scope of the definition of "point source" in Section 502(14) of the Clean Water Act.

The ANRD has programs to address nonpoint source pollution in Arkansas.

Tate's Presentation states that the United States Department of Agriculture estimates the cost of soil erosion in the United States at $44.39 billion. This cost is stated to include:

- Lost productivity
- Sedimentation
- Eutrophication of water reservoirs

Lost farm income is estimated by the Presentation to be $100 million per year as a result of soil erosion in the United States.

The ANRD Water Quality Section is specifically responsible for the Nonpoint Source Pollution ("NPS") Management program. It is stated to be annually funded at $3 million and subaward NPS projects are referenced as:

- Watershed Management Plans
- NPS Best Management Practices implementation
- Bank Stabilization
- Education & Outreach
- Low impact development/green infrastructure
- Title 10 Cost Share Program with Conservation Districts

FY 24 Request for Project Pre-Proposals date are referenced as July 17-September 15.

The Presentation also identified and described:

- Title X Cost Share Program
- Producer/Landowner best management practice implementation
- 319 grants facilitated through county conservation districts
- Decreasing nonpoint source pollution
- Nutrient reduction strategy
- Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Taskforce
- $4,174,999 funding available for the program
- Wetland and Riparian Zone Tax Credit Program
- Since 1996 nearly 250 applications
- $5.7 million in tax credits
- Over 30 miles for restoration
- Common Natural Resource Conservation Service Practices

A copy of the slides from the Presentation can be downloaded here.