

**Soil and Water Conservation Board
Summary of Budget Recommendations - Senate**

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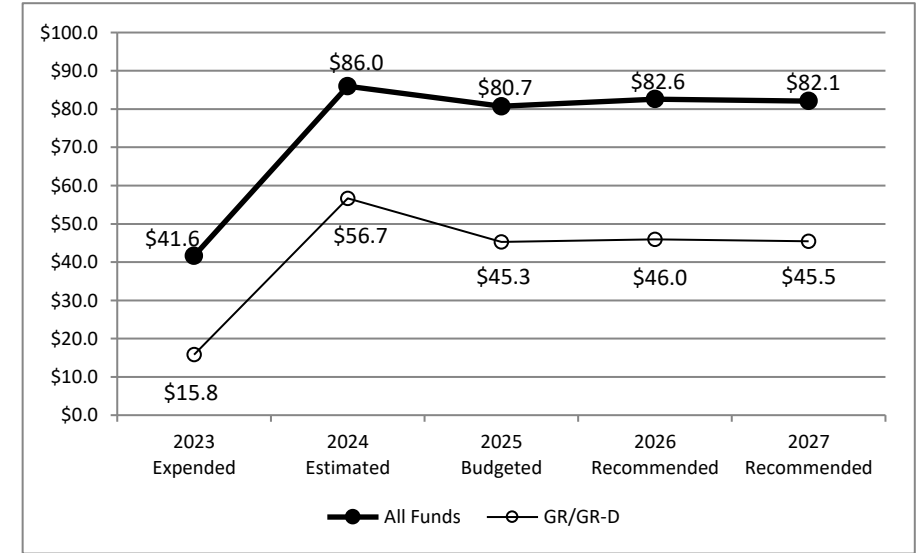
Rex Isom, Executive Director

Justin Dioso, LBB Analyst

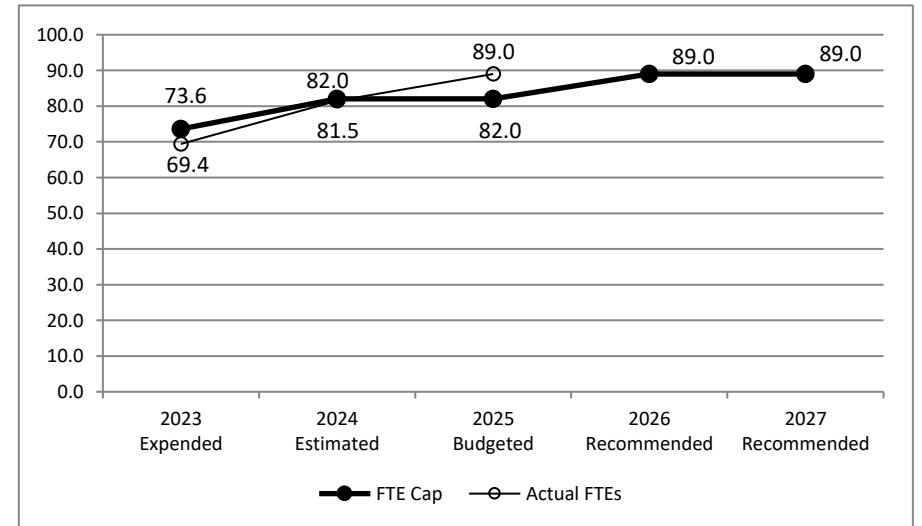
Method of Financing	2024-25 Base	2026-27 Recommended	Biennial Change (\$)	Biennial Change (%)
General Revenue Funds	\$101,929,604	\$91,409,050	(\$10,520,554)	(10.3%)
GR Dedicated Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.0%
<i>Total GR-Related Funds</i>	<i>\$101,929,604</i>	<i>\$91,409,050</i>	<i>(\$10,520,554)</i>	<i>(10.3%)</i>
Federal Funds	\$64,741,456	\$73,288,624	\$8,547,168	13.2%
Other	\$11,000	\$11,000	\$0	0.0%
All Funds	\$166,682,060	\$164,708,674	(\$1,973,386)	(1.2%)

	FY 2025 Budgeted	FY 2027 Recommended	Biennial Change	Percent Change
FTEs	89.0	89.0	0.0	0.0%

Historical Funding Levels (Millions)



Historical Full-Time-Equivalent Employees (FTEs)



The bill pattern for this agency (2026-27 Recommended) represents an estimated 99.9% of the agency's estimated total available funds for the 2026-27 biennium.

Soil and Water Conservation Board
Summary of Funding Changes and Recommendations - Senate

Funding Changes and Recommendations for the 2026-27 Biennium compared to the 2024-25 Base Spending Level (in millions)	General Revenue	GR-Dedicated	Federal Funds	Other Funds	All Funds	Strategy in Appendix A
SIGNIFICANT Funding Changes and Recommendations (each issue is explained in Section 3 and additional details are provided in Appendix A):						
A) Net decrease in All Funds primarily for the removal of one-time costs for Flood Control Dam Construction and Flood Control Dam Maintenance, including: 1) Decrease of \$11.6 million in General Revenue Funds for unexpended balances carried forward from fiscal year 2023 into the 2024-25 biennium. 2) Increase of \$0.4 million in General Revenue Funds for additional grants to local sponsors for flood control maintenance work and contracts for high hazard flood control dam engineering designs.	(\$11.2)	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	(\$11.2)	A.2.1, A.2.2.
B) Increase in Federal Funds for the On-the-Ground Conservation Program. The increase is provided through a federal subaward received from the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service for the implementation of Texas Climate-Smart Initiative.	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$10.2	\$0.0	\$10.2	A.1.1.
C) Increase in General Revenue Funds for a Carrizo Cane Mapping Study.	\$0.5	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.5	C.1.1.
OTHER Funding Changes and Recommendations (these issues are not addressed in Section 3 but details are provided in Appendix A):						
D) Increase in General Revenue Funds to biennialize the statewide salary adjustments included in the 2024-25 appropriations.	\$0.2	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.2	A.1.1, A.2.1, B.1.2, C.1.1, D.1.1.
E) A net decrease in various Federal Funds anticipated to be unavailable in the 2026-27 biennium primarily related to the Conservation Reserve Program, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, the Feral Swine Eradication and Control Pilot Program, and the Nonpoint Source Implementation Grants.	\$0.0	\$0.0	(\$1.7)	\$0.0	(\$1.7)	A.1.1.
TOTAL SIGNIFICANT & OTHER Funding Changes and Recommendations (in millions)	(\$10.5)	\$0.0	\$8.5	\$0.0	(\$2.0)	As Listed
<i>SIGNIFICANT & OTHER Funding Increases</i>	\$0.7	\$0.0	\$10.2	\$0.0	\$10.9	As Listed
<i>SIGNIFICANT & OTHER Funding Decreases</i>	(\$11.2)	\$0.0	(\$1.7)	\$0.0	(\$12.9)	As Listed

NOTE: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

**Soil and Water Conservation Board
Selected Fiscal and Policy Issues - Senate**

1. **Flood Control Dam Funding.** Recommendations include \$94.9 million in All Funds for all Flood Control Dam funding, which is a net decrease of \$11.4 million below 2024-25 spending levels. This decrease primarily includes: (1) a one-time reduction of \$11.6 million in General Revenue Funds carried forward from fiscal year 2023 into the 2024-25 biennium; (2) \$0.2 million in General Revenue Funds reallocated to other strategies for administrative purposes; and (3) an increase of \$0.4 million in General Revenue Funds for flood control dam maintenance work and contracts for high hazard flood control dam engineering designs.

Recommendations include \$29.8 million in All Funds for Strategy A.2.1, Flood Control Dam Maintenance, Operations, and Engineering, which includes an increase of \$1.0 million in General Revenue Funds above 2024-25 spending levels. Recommendations also include \$65.1 million in All Funds for Strategy A.2.2, Flood Control Dam Construction, which includes a decrease of \$12.4 million in General Revenue Funds below the 2024-25 spending levels. The agency reports that state funds are utilized as needed to provide a match for federally funded rehabilitation projects and that the state has historically been able to secure additional federal funds that are not used by other states.

Dams with a high hazard designation are defined as structures that are likely to result in loss of life during a catastrophic failure. The agency relies on the Commission on Environmental Quality's (TCEQ) Dam Safety Division to determine the number of high hazard flood control dams in the state. According to TCEQ, 661 flood control dams out of a total of 2,038 dams, which were built in the state through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) Watershed Programs, have been determined to be high hazard dams. Of these 661 high hazard dams, 131 currently meet the high hazard safety criteria classification and the remaining 517 need to be upgraded to meet that standard. Of the 131 dams meeting classification requirements, 12 have been upgraded by the SWCB since 2019 and 13 are currently undergoing repairs and are anticipated to be completed by the end of fiscal year 2025.

According to the agency, the timeline necessary to complete a high hazard flood control dam upgrade can range from 4 to 8 years depending on the project. The timeline necessary to complete federally funded high hazard dam upgrades requires an additional planning phase prior to design and construction which can take up to an additional three years. In addition, federally funded projects require federal approval which can take additional time to obtain.

Recommendations do not include:

- 1) \$150.0 million in General Revenue Funds to complete work on an estimated 25 additional high hazard flood control dam projects. (See also, Items Not Included in Recommendations #1.)
- 2) \$0.3 million in General Revenue Funds and 1.0 FTE for a Flood Control Dam Safety Engineer to provide state assistance to local sponsors of flood control dams on technical issues related to urban development of existing dams. (See also, Items Not Included in Recommendations #2.)

2. **Water Quality Management Program.** The agency provides funds administered through local soil and water conservation districts to develop water quality management plans (WQMPS). WQMPS are voluntary, incentive-based, natural resource conservation planning services provided to agricultural producers and other rural landowners. Recommendations include funding of \$10.7 million for the 2026-27 biennium, which continues 2024-25 funding levels with a slight increase to biennialize the statewide salary adjustments included in the 2024-25 appropriations.
3. **Soil and Water Conservation District Funding.** Recommendations include \$17.4 million in All Funds for Soil and Water Conservation District funding, which includes a net decrease of \$1.0 million below 2024-25 spending levels. This reduction includes an increase of \$0.1 million in General Revenue Funds to biennialize the statewide salary adjustments included in 2024-25 appropriations offset by a decrease of \$1.1 million in Federal Funds no longer anticipated to be available in 2026-27.

4. **On The Ground Conservation Program.** The On-the-Ground (OTG) Conservation Program established by Senate Bill 1118, Eighty-seventh Legislature, Regular Session 2021, authorizes the Soil and Water Conservation Board (SWCB) to form partnerships with other state and federal agencies, soil and water conservation districts, local governments, nonprofits, universities, non-governmental and private organizations for the purpose of leveraging funds from multiple sources to address a wide variety of conservation projects. Recommendations include \$22.7 million in All Funds which is an increase of \$9.7 million above 2024-25 spending levels that is primarily due to an anticipated increase in Federal Funds. It also includes a slight increase in General Revenue Funds to biennialize the statewide salary adjustments included in the 2024-25 appropriations.

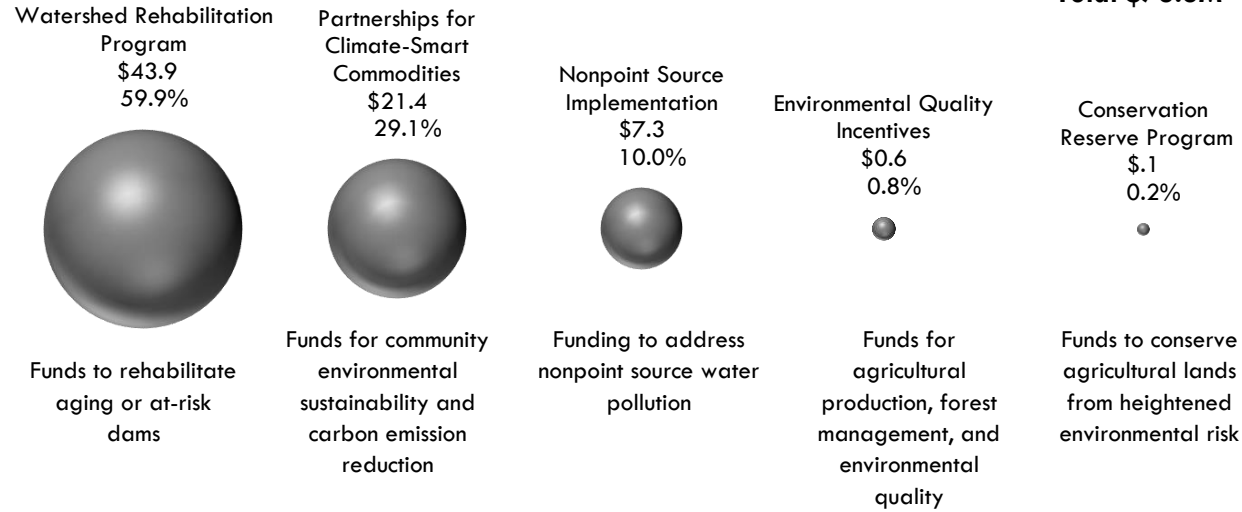
In June 2023, the SWCB received a federal sub-award from the Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service for \$41.9 million in Federal Funds to be used through May 2028 to develop a new Climate-Smart Agriculture and Forestry management plan to provide financial incentives to producers, including 7.0 FTEs in Strategy 1.1.1, Soil and Water Conservation Assistance, to administer the program. The 7.0 FTEs are continued in the 2026-27 biennium.

5. **Carrizo Cane Eradication.** Recommendations include \$7.7 million in General Revenue Funds for Carrizo Cane Eradication, which includes an increase of \$0.5 million in General Revenue Funds above 2024-25 spending levels for a Carrizo Cane Mapping Study. The Carrizo Cane Mapping Study will map the extent of growth of Carrizo Cane along the Rio Grande, determine the acreage of Carrizo Cane remaining, and determine the cost to eradicate the remaining Carrizo Cane. The agency accomplishes the Carrizo Cane eradication goal through contracts for herbicide treatments with the intent of improving law enforcement efforts along the international border.

Soil and Water Conservation Board

Summary of Federal Funds (2026-27) - Senate

Total \$73.3M

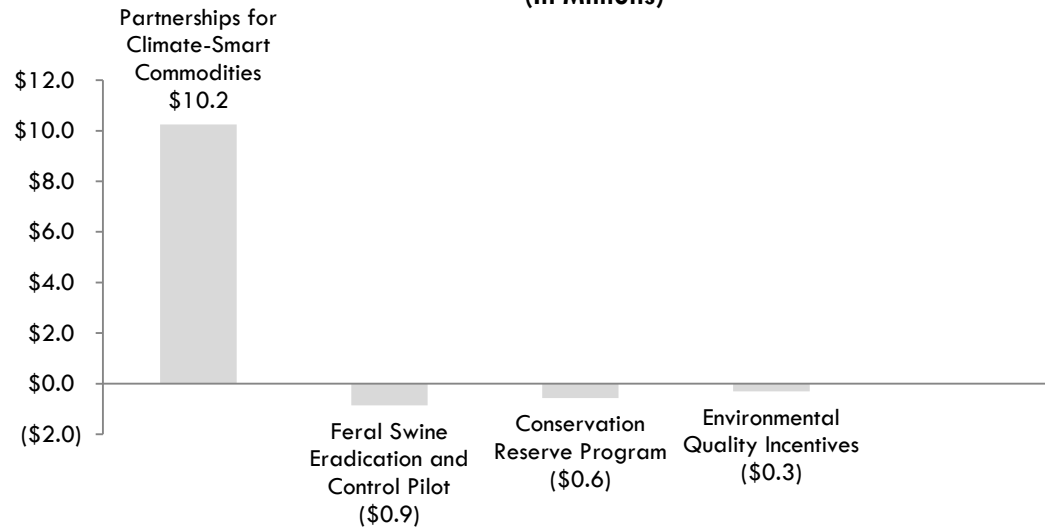


Selected Federal Fiscal and Policy Issues

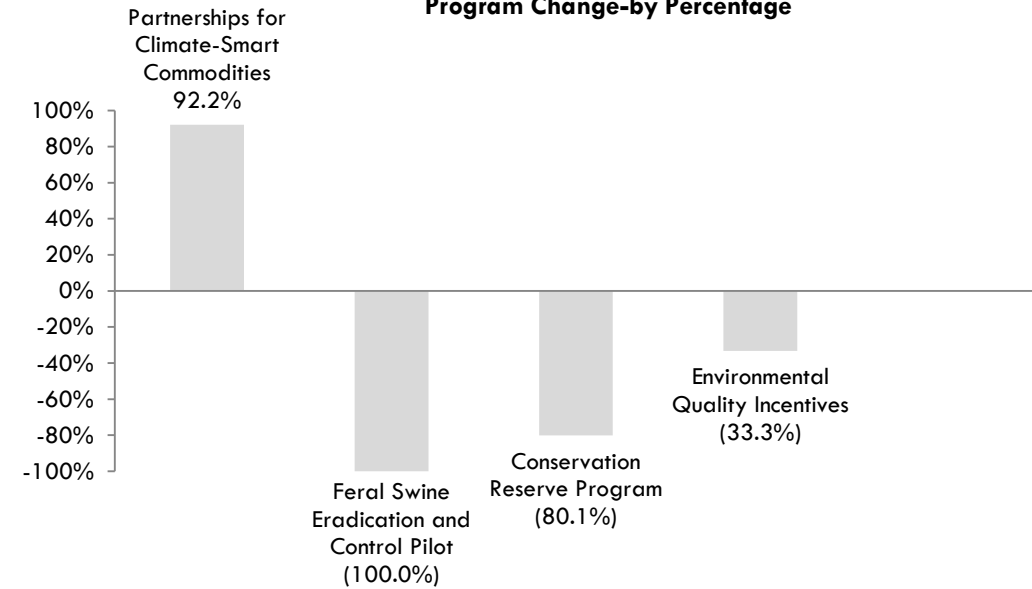
Federal funds would increase from \$64.7 million in 2024-25 to \$73.3 million in 2026-27. This is primarily due to an increase of \$10.2 million in the Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities program. This increase results from an additional subaward from the federal government.

Programs with Significant Federal Funding Changes from 2024-25

Program Change-by Amount (In Millions)



Program Change-by Percentage



**Soil and Water Conservation Board
Rider Highlights - Senate**

Modification of Existing Riders

The following riders include recommendations to remove obsolete language, make conforming changes such as updating fiscal years and amounts to reflect funding recommendations, and clarify deadlines:

Rider 5, Water Quality Management Plans,
Rider 6, Flood Control Dam Transfer Authority,
Rider 7, Ten-Year Dam Repair and Maintenance Plan Report,
Rider 8, Unexpended Balances.

2. **Soil and Water Conservation Districts.** Recommendations revise Rider 2, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, to provide the Soil and Water Conservation Board with the authority to expand soil and water conservation district (SWCD) grant amounts and corresponding grant match requirement limits from \$7,500 to \$15,000 to maximize available remaining funds among eligible SWDCs when other SWCDs are not able to provide the required non-state match to receive the full \$7,500 during each fiscal year.

The revised language:

1. continues the 2024-25 funding and policy which allocates \$7,500 in assistance grant funds for each of the 216 SWCDs at the beginning of each fiscal year contingent on SWCDs generating a required equivalent match;
2. authorizes the Soil and Water Conservation Board to reallocate an additional amount not to exceed \$7,500 to each SWCD that is able to generate the necessary additional equitable match after unused funds are determined to be available following the initial allocation; and
3. provides unexpended balance authority to the Soil and Water Conservation Board authorizing it to carry forward appropriation authority for any unused remaining balances that are not reallocated and matched in a second round by SWCDs in the first fiscal year of the biennium into the second fiscal year for the same purpose.

New Riders

9. **Carrizo Cane Mapping Study.** Recommendations add a new rider to: (1) require the Soil and Water Conservation Board (SWCB) to use \$492,000 in General Revenue Funds appropriated in Strategy C.1.1, Carrizo Cane Eradication, in fiscal year 2026 to be used for the purposes of mapping the extent of growth of Carrizo Cane along the Rio Grande, determining the acreage of Carrizo Cane remaining, and determining the cost to eradicate the remaining Carrizo Cane; and (2) provide unexpended balance authority to the SWCB authorizing it to carry forward any balances remaining from this appropriation at the end of the first fiscal year into the second fiscal year of the biennium. Any unexpended and unobligated balances remaining as of August 31, 2026, are appropriated for the same purpose in the fiscal year beginning September 1, 2026.
10. **Flood Control Dam Funding.** Recommendations add a new rider to direct the use and strategy allocation of the \$34.0 million in General Revenue Funds and the matching \$23.3 million of Federal Funds appropriated for the purpose of providing for flood control dam maintenance, operations, engineering, and construction projects in the 2026-27 biennium.

Deleted Riders

9. **Sunset Contingency.** Recommendations delete Rider 9, Sunset Contingency, to reflect the continuation of the agency for 12 years due to the enactment of Senate Bill 1424, Eighty-eighth Legislature Regular Session, 2023.

**Soil and Water Conservation Board
Items Not Included in Recommendations - Senate**

	2026-27 Biennial Total			Information Technology Involved?	Contracting Involved?	Estimated Continued Cost 2028-29
	GR & GR-D	All Funds	FTEs			

Agency Exceptional Items Not Included (in agency priority order)

1)	Flood Control Dam Construction: General Revenue Funds to repair or upgrade an estimated 25 additional high hazard flood control dams in need of repair that are not meeting safety criteria. (See also, Selected Fiscal and Policy Issue #1)	\$150,000,000	\$150,000,000	0.0	No	Yes	\$0
2)	Flood Control Dam Safety Engineer: General Revenue Funds and authority for a new Flood Control Dam Safety Engineer position (1.0 FTE) to provide state assistance to local sponsors of flood control dams on any technical issue related with urban development of existing flood control dams. This amount includes \$45,000 for a vehicle for the engineer. (See also, Selected Fiscal and Policy Issue #1)	\$250,000	\$250,000	1.0	No	No	\$0
3)	Carrizo Cane Mapping Study: Request to remove General Revenue Funds for a Carrizo Cane Mapping Study due to the completion of the study in December 2024 using existing resources. (See also, Selected Fiscal and Policy Issue #5)	(\$492,000)	(\$492,000)	0.0	No	No	\$0

TOTAL Items Not Included in Recommendations		\$149,758,000	\$149,758,000	1.0			\$0
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**Soil and Water Conservation Board
Appendices - Senate**

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**Soil and Water Conservation Board
Funding Changes and Recommendations by Strategy - Senate -- ALL FUNDS**

Strategy/Goal	2024-25 Base	2026-27 Recommended	Biennial Change	% Change	Comments
PROGRAM MANAGEMENT & ASSISTANCE A.1.1	\$31,385,143	\$40,107,550	\$8,722,407	27.8%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations include an All Funds increase that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) an increase of \$0.1 million in General Revenue for the consolidation of Field Control positions and to biennialize the statewide salary adjustments included in the 2024-25 appropriations. b) an increase of \$0.1 million in General Revenue Funds reallocated for Strategy C.1.1, Carrizo Cane Eradication, for the On-the-Ground Conservation Program. c) an increase of \$10.2 million in Federal Funds due to a federal sub-award received from Texas A&M AgriLife Extensive Service for implementation of Texas Climate-Smart Initiative. d) a decrease of \$1.7 million in Federal Funds anticipated to be unavailable related to the Conservation Reserve Program, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, and the Feral Swine Eradication and Control Pilot Program.
FLOOD CONTROL DAM MAINTENANCE A.2.1	\$28,762,043	\$29,797,786	\$1,035,743	3.6%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations include an increase of \$1.0 million in General Revenue Funds for additional grants towards Flood Control Dam Maintenance costs due to a re-allocation for Strategy A.2.2, Flood Control Dam Construction. (See also, Selected Fiscal and Policy Issue #1.)

**Soil and Water Conservation Board
Funding Changes and Recommendations by Strategy - Senate -- ALL FUNDS**

Strategy/Goal	2024-25 Base	2026-27 Recommended	Biennial Change	% Change	Comments
FLOOD CONTROL DAM CONSTRUCTION A.2.2	\$77,525,299	\$65,117,638	(\$12,407,661)	(16.0%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations include a net decrease in General Revenue Funds for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) a decrease of \$11.6 million for removal of one-time costs for unexpended balances carried forward from fiscal year 2023 into the 2024-25 biennium; b) a decrease of \$0.2 million reallocated to other strategies for administrative purposes; c) an increase of \$0.4 million for additional grants for flood control maintenance work and contracts for high hazard flood control dam engineering designs; and d) a decrease of \$1.0 million reallocated to Strategy A.2.1, Flood Control Dam Maintenance.
Total, Goal A, SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION ASSIST.	\$137,672,485	\$135,022,974	(\$2,649,511)	(1.9%)	
STATEWIDE MANAGEMENT PLAN B.1.1	\$9,220,155	\$9,249,200	\$29,045	0.3%	• Recommendations include an increase in Federal Funds to biennialize the statewide salary adjustments included in the 2024-25 appropriations.
WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLANS B.1.2	\$10,672,234	\$10,741,000	\$68,766	0.6%	• Recommendations include an increase in General Revenue Funds to biennialize the statewide salary adjustments included in the 2024-25 appropriations.
Total, Goal B, NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION ABATEMENT	\$19,892,389	\$19,990,200	\$97,811	0.5%	

**Soil and Water Conservation Board
Funding Changes and Recommendations by Strategy - Senate -- ALL FUNDS**

Strategy/Goal	2024-25 Base	2026-27 Recommended	Biennial Change	% Change	Comments
CARRIZO CANE ERADICATION C.1.1	\$7,265,758	\$7,702,000	\$436,242	6.0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations include a net increase in General Revenue Funds that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) an increase of \$0.5 million for a Carrizo Cane Mapping Study. b) a decrease of \$65,000 for a re-allocation of funds to Strategy A.1.1, Program Management and Assistance, for the On-the-Ground Conservation Program. c) an increase of \$9,242 to biennialize the statewide salary adjustments included in the 2024-25 appropriations.
Total, Goal C, WATER SUPPLY ENHANCEMENT	\$7,265,758	\$7,702,000	\$436,242	6.0%	
INDIRECT ADMINISTRATION D.1.1	\$1,851,428	\$1,993,500	\$142,072	7.7%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations include an increase of \$0.1 million in General Revenue to biennialize the statewide salary adjustments included in the 2024-25 appropriations and the conversion of part time Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE) position to a full-time FTE.
Total, Goal D, INDIRECT ADMINISTRATION	\$1,851,428	\$1,993,500	\$142,072	7.7%	
Grand Total, All Strategies	\$166,682,060	\$164,708,674	(\$1,973,386)	(1.2%)	

**Soil and Water Conservation Board
Summary of Federal Funds - Senate
(Dollar amounts in Millions)**

Program	Est 2024	Bud 2025	Rec 2026	Rec 2027	2024-25 Base	2026-27 Rec	2026-27 Rec % Total	Recommended Over/(Under) Base	% Change from Base
Watershed Rehabilitation Program	\$23.9	\$20.0	\$21.9	\$21.9	\$43.9	\$43.9	59.9%	(\$0.0)	(0.0%)
Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities	\$0.6	\$10.5	\$10.6	\$10.8	\$11.1	\$21.4	29.1%	\$10.2	92.2%
Nonpoint Source Implementation Grants	\$3.6	\$3.7	\$3.7	\$3.7	\$7.3	\$7.3	10.0%	\$0.0	0.4%
Environmental Quality Incentives Program	\$0.6	\$0.3	\$0.3	\$0.3	\$0.9	\$0.6	0.8%	(\$0.3)	(33.3%)
Conservation Reserve Program	\$0.4	\$0.4	\$0.1	\$0.0	\$0.7	\$0.1	0.2%	(\$0.6)	(80.1%)
Feral Swine Eradication and Control Pilot Program	\$0.3	\$0.6	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.9	\$0.0	0.0%	(\$0.9)	(100.0%)
TOTAL:	\$29.3	\$35.4	\$36.6	\$36.6	\$64.7	\$73.3	100.0%	\$8.5	13.2%

**Soil and Water Conservation Board
FTE Highlights - Senate**

Full-Time-Equivalent Positions	Expended 2023	Estimated 2024	Budgeted 2025	Recommended 2026	Recommended 2027
Cap	73.6	82.0	82.0	89.0	89.0
Actual/Budgeted	69.4	81.5	89.0	NA	NA

Schedule of Exempt Positions (Cap)					
Executive Director (Group 4)	\$150,283	\$155,273	\$160,262	\$160,262	\$160,262

Notes:

- a) The agency exceeded the fiscal year 2025 cap due to an anticipated increase in Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities Federal Funds provided through a subaward received from the Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service for the Texas Climate-Smart Initiative which included 100.0 percent funding for an additional 7.0 FTEs. This funding is anticipated to continue through the 2026-27 biennium.
- b) Fiscal years 2023 and 2024 reflect actual FTEs below the cap due to staff vacancies and turnovers.