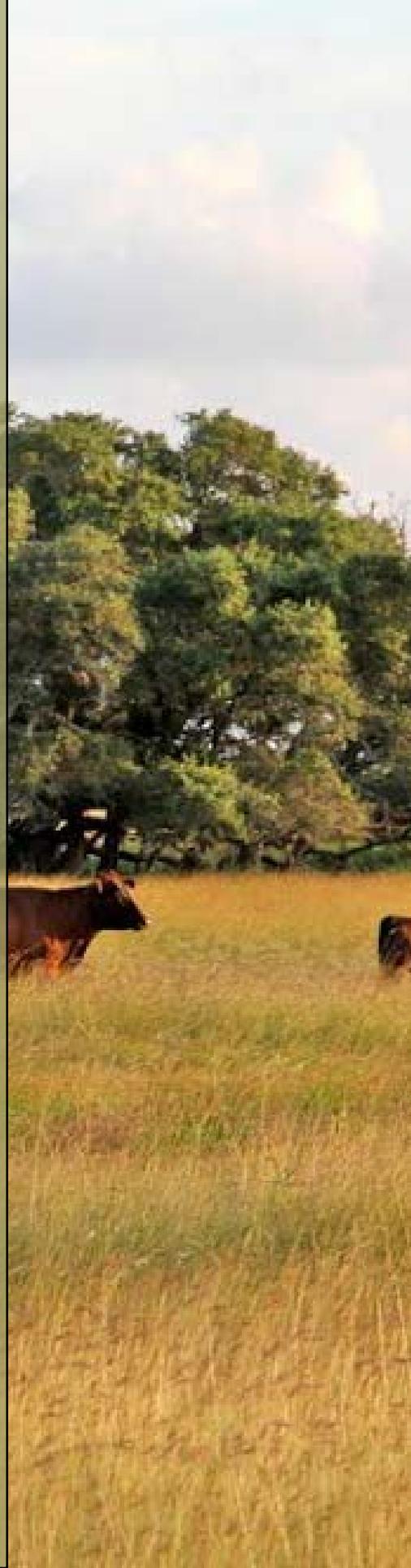# Tax Appraiser & Tax Assessor Training Summary Report

August 8, 2017

In August 2017, a tax appraiser and tax assessor training for land management for wildlife and livestock was held in Cooke County, Texas. Hosted by Texas A&M Natural Resources Institute (NRI), Cooke County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, and Noble Research Institute, the training included guest speakers from AgriLife Extension, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

A total of 34 participants from 13 counties attended the event (Figure 1). Counties included: Collin, Cooke, Denton, Fannin, Grayson, Gregg, Hopkins, Hunt, Kaufman, Palo Pinto, Tarrant, Upshur and Van Zandt. Total acreage in these 13 counties is 6,856,896 acres with 4,898,920 under Ag Valuation in 2012. Of the total acreage under Ag Valuation, 79,199 acres had wildlife management as the qualifying practice in 2012 (http://txlandtrends.org). Participants found the training event useful and unanimously agreed the information presented would help them in their job.

Curriculum

The agenda was focused on eight high priority teaching points as outlined in Table 1. Continuing education credits were offered for tax appraisers and tax assessors. Speakers included a AgriLife Extension county agent, NRI specialist, Noble Research Institute consultants, TPWD biologist and NRCS conservationists.

Evaluation

The changes in knowledge by participants for each of the teaching points outlined in Table 1 were evaluated using a "Retrospective Pre/Post" questionnaire. This evaluation method uses a single post-training questionnaire that asks participants to rate their level of understanding on a scale of 1 to 4 (1 = poor, 2 = average, 3 = good and 4 = excellent) for each individual teaching point before attending the program as compared to after receiving the training. A summary of the pre- and post-training ratings is presented in Figure 2.

In general, participants had the lowest initial level of knowledge of understanding watershed management (1.72 rating). Conversely, their highest initial level of knowledge pertained to the understanding of basic wildlife management planning (2.54 rating). Following the training, when averaged across all eight teaching points, participants' level of knowledge increased 55%, with a range of 26% to 83% depending on the individual teaching point (Table 2). The greatest increase in knowledge was for Q8, understanding of watershed management. Participants were also asked if the information presented during the event would help them with their job, and 100% answered yes.

Figure 1. Tax appraiser and tax assessor training event photos.

Table 1. Basic teaching points for tax appraiser and tax assessor training.

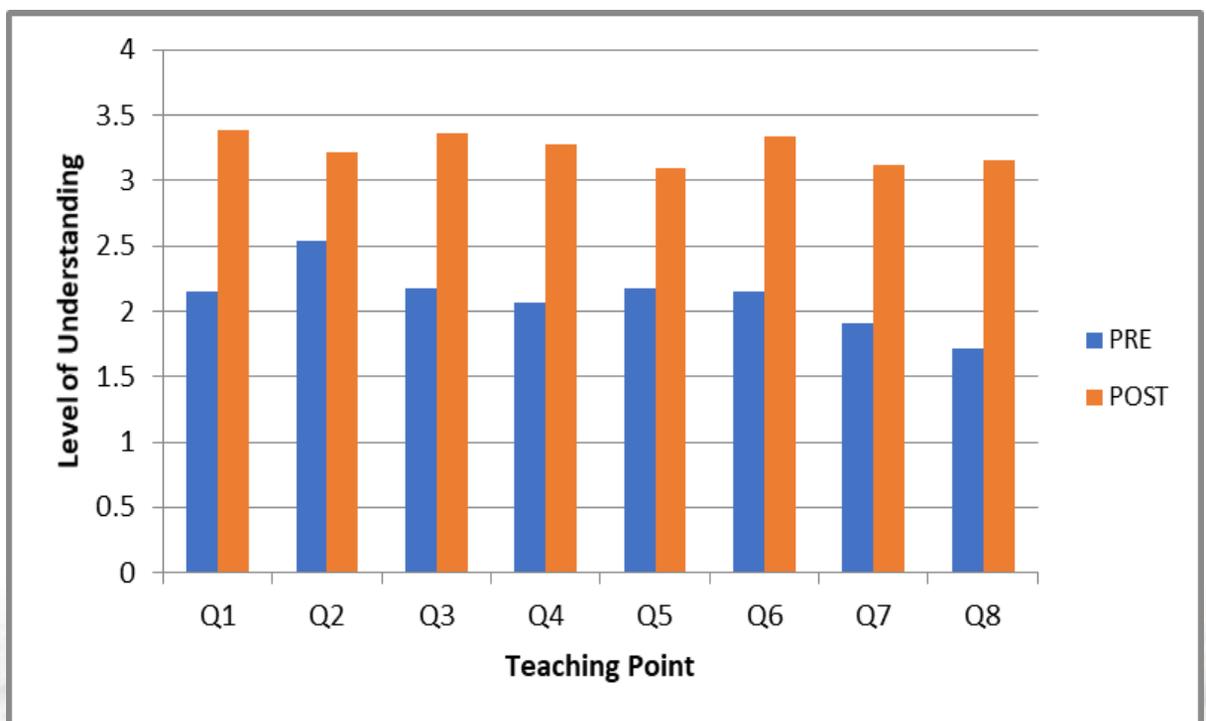| Teaching Point	Topic
Q1	Understanding economics of haying
Q2	Understanding of basic wildlife management planning
Q3	Understanding of native pasture management
Q4	Understanding introduced pasture management
Q5	Understanding how to determine stocking rate
Q6	Understanding of bee keeping
Q7	Understanding of Texas Land Trends
Q8	Understanding of watershed management

Figure 2. Average pre- and post-level of understanding for the teaching points results.

Table 2. Percent increase from pre- to post-level surveys of the average level of understanding for each teaching point.

Teaching Point	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	*Avg.*
Gain in Knowledge (%)	58	26	54	59	42	55	63	83	*55*