*TTI's Environment and Planning Program operates the 19-acre, full-scale, indoor/outdoor facility at Texas A&M University's Riverside Campus located in Bryan, Texas.*

# A Quarter Century of Product-Testing Excellence

**SINCE 1989,** the Texas A&M Transportation Institute's (TTI's) Sediment and Erosion Control Laboratory (SEC Lab) has generated an Approved Products List (APL) for the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT's) use of erosion-control products. Some 25 years later, the SEC Lab continues to be the nation's premier facility for performance evaluation of roadside environment management.

TTI's Environment and Planning Program operates the 19-acre, full-scale, indoor/outdoor facility at Texas A&M University's Riverside Campus located in Bryan, Texas. Demand for the facility has steadily grown, leading to a 2013 expansion to meet the transportation industry's research needs. The SEC Lab is highly versatile and houses state-of-the-art equipment, including indoor rainfall simulators, a climate-controlled greenhouse, a storm water quality structure, an index testing laboratory and multiple-channel test flumes.

The SEC Lab's research and product performance evaluation programs focus on maintaining environmental quality and meeting regulatory compliance. A commitment to quality drives its reputation of excellence. TxDOT's sediment and erosion-control product evaluation program seeks to establish and maintain an APL consisting of the best products that meet TxDOT's performance requirements.

**"With increased environmental regulations, TxDOT has to ensure that the best products are being used on roadway projects to minimize environmental concerns and to reduce the risk of product failure."**

*Jett McFalls, TTI SEC Lab manager*

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*The SEC Lab is the only facility in the nation doing work on this scale.*

projects to minimize environmental concerns and to reduce the risk of product failure," says TTI Assistant Research Scientist Jett McFalls, the SEC Lab's manager. "We're excited about and prepared for the increased use of the different facilities. The SEC Lab is gaining increased recognition not only by Texas industry leaders, but big groups outside the state as well."

The SEC Lab is the only facility in the nation doing work on this scale, and McFalls and his staff will continue to provide the transportation industry with a timely, uniform and fair method of product performance evaluation. ■

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## TTI to Evaluate Sediment Retention Devices for AASHTO

TTI's SEC Lab has been selected to conduct performance evaluations of sediment retention devices (SRDs) for an American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials pilot program. Due to TxDOT's recent inclusion of performance evaluation requirements for SRDs in its *2014 Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Highways, Streets, and Bridges*, the SEC Lab now includes SRD performance evaluations as part of its APL. Many state departments of transportation have performance evaluation programs in place for erosion-control products or have adopted the standards of the National Transportation Product Evaluation Program (NTPEP) or other testing programs. However, performance evaluation of SRDs is an emerging field, and Texas is ahead of the curve.

"TTI's SEC Lab has state-of-the-art equipment, facilities and the qualified personnel required for performing all the test methods and procedures for the NTPEP pilot program," says Jett McFalls, TTI's research supervisor on the project. "We are only one of two laboratories selected for this program. We plan to begin evaluations in late June 2015."