By GUY FIPPS

The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents approved the establishment of the Irrigation Technology Center at their meeting on May 23 in Laredo. In addition to giving ITC approval to seek funding to construct a new facility in San Antonio for testing, education and research, the Regents approved expanding of ITC's mission to include coordination of the A&M System's Irrigation Research and Education programs statewide.

The ITC will be a center under the Texas Water Resources Institute and, administratively, will report to both Texas Cooperative Extension and the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station.

Over the next few months, several advisory councils and design review teams will be formed to assist with fund raising for the new San Antonio facility and to assess the current status and needs of A&M's irrigation research and extension programs. We anticipate that one or more special legislative initiatives to seek funding for the ITC, perhaps as early as the next Texas Legislative session which begins in January 2003.

On June 7 a stakeholder meeting on the ITC was held in San Antonio involving local and state agency personnel, industry and university representatives, and the city of San Antonio officials to begin planning ITC implementation.