

**Nueces River Authority
Clean Rivers Program
2011 Upper Basin Stakeholder Forum Summary
February 16, 2011
Texas AgriLife Extension Center
10:00-2:00**

The Nueces River Authority (NRA) held a Clean Rivers Program (CRP) Steering Committee Meeting on February, 16th 2011. The Steering Committee Meeting was hosted as part of the NRA Upper Basin Stakeholder Forum. The Stakeholder Forum included discussions on the Clean Rivers Program, Lower Nueces River Watershed Protection Plan, Riparian Landowner's Network, and the Texas Stream Team. The meeting was well attended by a cross section of stakeholders including agricultural interests, university faculty, local government representatives, environmental groups, state agencies, and concerned citizens. Below is a summary of Wednesday's meeting.

Welcome and Introductions

CRP Overview

Discussion was held on the CRP program including NRA's area of responsibility, funding, deliverables and tasks, quarterly monitoring, available online resources, and the upcoming Coordinated Monitoring Meeting.

Integrated Report (Impairments and Concerns)

The Integrated Report was explained including designated uses, water quality criteria, the 303(b) list of concerns, and the 303(d) list of impairments. The 2010 integrated Report was discussed and all impairments in the upper basin were listed.

- Discussions continued regarding the parameters used in the assessment.
- Comments were made about Feral Hogs becoming a concern throughout the state of Texas.

Ongoing Projects in the Upper Nueces River Basin

The current watershed projects in the upper basin were discussed including the Atascosa TMDL RUAA, the Sabinal TMDL Implementation Plan, and the Leona Assessment was introduced by Nikki Jackson from the Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Research (TIAER).

- Discussion continued regarding the Sabinal River and when improvements will be seen after the WWTF comes online.
- Comments were made regarding the need for additional sampling on the Upper Sabinal above station 12944.
- Susie from Utopia said she could help with accessibility for sampling above station 12944 on the Upper Sabinal. Her property is located near the 2nd river crossing going south on 187.
- A comment was made about springs in the upper basin and the need to document historical flows.

Draft Basin Highlights Report

The 2011 Draft Basin Highlights Report was distributed. Input and review from the steering committee was sought.

Texas Stream Team

Josh Oyer from Texas Stream Team introduced the committee to the volunteer sampling program. Questions about the sampling kits and time commitments were discussed.

- *Keep Utopia Beautiful* is interested in having the Texas Stream Team train high school volunteers to monitor in the Upper Sabinal.
- Susan Lynch is going to look into reactivating *Friends of the Frio* in the Texas Stream Team program.

Lower Nueces River Watershed Protection Plan (WPP)

Rocky Freund from NRA discussed the Lower Nueces WPP. Discussion continued regarding chlorophyll and turbidity parameters.

Public Outreach and Education

Sky Lewey from NRA discussed the ongoing outreach and education in the upper basin including programs such as the watershed model, groundwater model, rainfall runoff model, wetlands on wheels, riparian function, and the rain barn.

Riparian Landowners Network

Sky Lewey from the NRA discussed the riparian landowner's network and the *Arundo donax* issue in the upper basin.

- The need for additional monitoring, particularly field parameters, to investigate water quality in and around the Arundo patches in the upper basin was discussed. Stations recommended for monitoring included CR 414 (above the Arundo patch), CR 410 (in the middle of the Arundo patch), and at the Laguna gauge (down stream of the Arundo) on the Nueces River.
- It was also suggested that 24 hr DO, Conductivity, pH, and temperature should be collected at station 13005 and 16704.