

Minutes of the May 11, 2000 Meeting of the  
Coastal Bend Regional Water Planning Group for the  
Senate Bill 1 Regional Water Planning Program for Region "N"

This meeting of the Coastal Bend Regional Water Planning Group (Coastal Bend RWPG) was held in the auditorium at the TAMU Research and Extension Center, 10345 Agnes Street, Corpus Christi, Texas 78406. Judge Josephine Miller called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

Voting members of the Coastal Bend RWPG in attendance included Mr. Ben Figueroa, Judge Josephine Miller, Mr. Robert Kunkel, Dr. David McNichols, Mr. Billy Dick, Mr. Bobby Nedbalek, Mr. Greg Carter, Dr. Patrick Hubert, Mr. Bernie DeLaune, Mr. Frank Brogan (substituting for Mr. Bernard Paulson), and Ms. Carola Serrato.

Non-Voting members of the Coastal Bend RWPG in attendance included Mr. Robert Flores, Mr. Vincent Guerra, Mr. Jim Tolan, Mr. Con Mims, and Mr. Robert Fulbright.

Also in attendance were Mr. Kelly Payne, Mr. Ken Choffel, Mr. Larry Land, and Mr. Brett Goodman of HDR Engineering. Mr. Glen Bridges of Naismith Engineering was in attendance as well. Mr. Jack Hunt and Mr. Robert Flores were in attendance representing the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB).

Judge Miller asked for a roll call. Mr. James Dodson stated that a visual roll call had been noted.

Minutes from the March 9, 2000 meeting of the Regional Water Planning Group for the Senate Bill 1 Regional Water Planning Program for Region "N" were reviewed. There were no requested additions or modifications to the minutes. Dr. David McNichols made a motion to approve the minutes and Mr. Frank Brogan seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by a unanimous voice vote.

Judge Miller introduced the next item on the Agenda, Item IV: Water Supply Options and Interregional Water Supply Development. Mr. Payne reported on the current status of the Coastal Bend RWPG projects. Mr. Payne noted that two-thirds of the water supply options will be covered in the current meeting and the remainder will be covered in the following Coastal Bend RWPG meeting. Mr. Payne next discussed a schedule that was presented at the coordination Meeting held between the South-Central Regional Water Planning Group (South-Central RWPG) and the Coastal Bend RWPG. He noted completion of the Scope of Work through Task 4 and the submittal of supply/demand options to the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB). He also noted that the evaluation of options for the alleviation of water supply shortfalls would be completed by the Coastal Bend RWPG meeting in June. Mr. Payne stated that a review of these plans would be available for review during the Coastal Bend RWPG meeting in July. He added that a full draft report would be available for public comment at the end of August (30 days before submittal to TWDB). Mr. Payne also stated that the frequency of Coastal Bend RWPG meetings would increase to a monthly basis through August.

Next, Mr. Payne began discussion on five water supply options under consideration. Mr. Payne first discussed weather modification (precipitation enhancement) as a water supply option. He explained that the use of silver iodide provides a condensation nuclei in certain "convective" cloud types which can increase rainfall amounts. Applications of this option have been used to increase infiltration into aquifers and to supplement irrigation during the growing season. Mr. Payne noted a 36% increase in rainfall due to cloud seeding in the Colorado River area. He stated that, like brush management, it is difficult to account for the firm yield (an increase in yield in a dry year) of this option. Dr. Hubert asked how much rain, in inches, could typically be gained

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using precipitation enhancement. Mr. Payne stated that the statistics from the South Cooperative Program reported increases in rainfall coverage (43% larger) and duration of rainfall (36% longer).

Mr. Payne next introduced Mr. Larry Land to discuss the Gulf Coast Aquifer Supply for the Coastal Bend Region. Mr. Land discussed the option of placing a well field in Refugio County. He explained that the northwest portion of Refugio County is being considered for a well field due to the water quality, salinity, depth and size of wells, and the close proximity to the Mary Rhodes Pipeline. Mr. Land indicated that of the 28 wells, some would be idle during the low demand period (October through May). Mr. Land indicated that the well field would be a T-shape, thus collecting water in a central location and then pumping it to the Mary Rhodes Pipeline. Mr. Land noted that a new groundwater district known as the Refugio Groundwater Conservation District is in the process of being formed. He also mentioned that there are some uncertainties in regard to rules and regulations of exporting water out of that district. Mr. Land indicated that the projected annual cost of water (\$224/acft) which includes a \$55/acft purchase price that is equal to Evergreen Water District's exportation fee. Referring to Gulf Coast Aquifer monitoring wells, Dr. Hubert commented on the need to provide more frequent monitorization. Mr. Land stated that the Refugio Groundwater Conservation District is expected to have a monitoring program. Mr. Dick questioned whether the South-Central RWPG is considering the Refugio County well field options. Mr. Land stated that water from Refugio County well fields is currently one of their options.

Mr. Land next began discussion on alternative options of using the Gulf Coast Aquifer for small municipal and rural water systems. Mr. Land stated that certain areas of Region "N" depend solely on groundwater and that consideration for those areas with regard to groundwater supplies, well capacities, and water quality must be taken into account. Judge Miller commented on the high relative salinity levels of San Patricio and Tilden groundwater supplies. Mr. Land indicated that the salinity levels did not exceed the secondary drinking water standards but was most likely at the high end of the acceptable range. Mr. Land indicated that George West and Orange Grove have water quality problems whereas San Diego has acceptable water quality but insufficient well capacities. Mr. Land explained that in areas where the water quality is not acceptable, a possible option may be to pass the water through a desalination plant. He also noted some difficulties associated with Freer water supplies; water levels have fallen substantially and caused interference among wells. He proposed keeping two wells online and extend a well-field southeast of Freer and another northeast of Freer and bring the water to a central location for desalination. Mr. Dodson questioned whether new Safe Drinking Water Standards for arsenic and radon would have an effect on compliance. Mr. Land confirmed that current concentrations of arsenic are close to the upper limit or exceed the standard.

Next, Mr. Ken Choffel explained the Inter-Regional Water Management Alternative Plan. He first discussed South-Central RWPG's five options of increasing water supply in their area. The Inter-Regional Plan is an attempt to minimize construction of new reservoirs by tying in to Coastal Bend water supplies. Mr. Choffel noted the exceptional conservation and water recycling (20% of wastewater) practices in Bexar County; although Mr. Choffel stated that the need for additional supplies still exists. He stated that the plan includes the construction of 4 or 5 recharge dams in the Upper Nueces River Basin and some basins to the east, and the construction of a pipeline connecting Choke Canyon Reservoir to San Antonio. Mr. Choffel explained that to replace the water taken from Choke Canyon, a pipeline to the saltwater barrier dam on the

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Guadeloupe River would be connected to Lake Corpus Christi or to the Mary Rhodes Pipeline. He stated that another option is to pump water from the San Antonio River into Choke Canyon, which will then be pumped back to San Antonio. The last component of the plan calls for building a pipeline from the Colorado River where Garwood water could be transported for use by the Coastal Bend. Mr. Choffel stated that the Guadeloupe/Blanco River Authority owns some of the water rights in the mouth of the Guadeloupe River and negotiations to sell some of that water hinge on the future water demand of that area. Mr. Choffel added that dissolved minerals, such as the chloride levels, were lower with the use of the Inter-Regional Plan. A question was asked concerning the estimated cost of such a project. Mr. Choffel responded by stating that although that information is still being figured it is expected to be about \$700-800 acre-foot. He added that the cost of treatment is determined from the characteristics of the water. Finally, Mr. Choffel stated that the five options being considered by the South-Central RWPG will be narrowed to three options by June and finally, one will be chosen.

Judge Miller next gave a brief report on the Executive Meeting with the South-Central RWPG regarding the Inter-Regional Water Management Alternative Plan Options. She also expressed her concern for the possible future need of Rio Grande Valley water and emphasized the need to coordinate with the Rio Grande Valley Regional Water Planning Group.

Next, Mr. Brett Goodman discussed a proposed pipeline between Choke Canyon Reservoir and Lake Corpus Christi. He stated that the pipeline would be used to enhance the system yield of Choke Canyon Reservoir (CCR)/ Lake Corpus Christi (LCC) by reducing channel losses and spills. The proposed two-way operation would exchange water between CCR and LCC as needed whereas the proposed one-way operation would transfer water only from CCR to LCC. The goal of the analysis of the two-way pipeline was to identify the Optimum Delivery Rate (250 cfs using a 90 inch pipeline) and the best way to operate the reservoirs.

Mr. Glenn Bridges next discussed the removal of sediment from Lake Corpus Christi (LCC). He noted that reservoir operation studies indicate that the loss of storage capacity impacts the yield on Choke Canyon Reservoir and Lake Corpus Christi by 350 acre-feet/year; a thirty-year sediment removal program would yield approximately 10,000 acre-feet/year. Mr. Bridges explained that a new sedimentation survey would have to be done to determine the volume, characteristics, and location of the material to be dredged. Mr. Bridges also noted that the dredged material could be used as fill material in the construction industry if a market could be found. He stated that this water supply option would cost \$981/acre-foot, thus placing it in the high cost category.

Judge Miller next introduced Agenda Item V: Consideration of Resolution Supporting the Joint Development of Additional Water Supplies with the South Central Texas RWPG and Approval of Activities to Encourage Support within the Coastal Bend Region. Judge Miller explained the Resolution to Support the Joint Development of Additional Water Supplies in South Central Texas Regional Water Planning Group, which would give the Coastal Bend RWPG the authority to continue discussion with the South-Central RWPG. Judge Miller also explained that the Approval of Activities to Encourage Support within the Coastal Bend Region would give the Executive Committee the authority to find support for the Inter-Regional Cooperation Regional Water Management Alternative Plan. Judge Miller asked for a motion to support Agenda Item V. Mr. Carter made a motion to support the resolutions and Dr. Hubert seconded that motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

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Next, Judge Miller introduced Agenda Item VI: Consideration on Recommendations on Designating either Unique Stream Segments or Reservoir Sites. Ms. Serrato stated that there are no plans at this time for designating unique stream segments or new reservoir sites. She expressed the need for the clarification of the impact of designating/altering unique stream segments. Ms. Serrato made a motion against designating either unique stream segments or reservoir sites. Mr. Kunkel seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Judge Miller asked Mr. Dodson to discuss the development of a policy recommendation for the Coastal Bend Regional Water Management Plan and the budget. Mr. Dodson discussed the need to create a group to review policy recommendations. Mr. Dodson also expressed the need to create a proposed budget to fund local and administrative expenses during the interim period of the Coastal Bend RWPG.

Next, Mr. Dodson discussed public participation. He stated that six meetings would be conducted throughout the Coastal Bend Region to inform the public of the Senate Bill 1 planning process. He invited members of the Coastal Bend RWPG to attend some of the meetings.

Judge Miller commented on the All-chairs conference call. She stated that a contingency fund has been established for possible dispute resolutions between Senate Bill 1 Regions. She added that there was much discussion and concern with water deals, water marketing and groundwater districts. Judge Miller also indicated that the TWDB is planning a six-year plan that will incorporate current plans and new census information.

Finally, Mr. Flores reminded the Coastal Bend RWPG of the Federal Coordination meetings to be held in Corpus Christi on June 29, 2000. He stated that public comment would not be incorporated into those meetings at this time.

Next meeting date was set for June 8, 2000 at 1:30 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 4:27 p.m.

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Minutes prepared by                      Mr. Sam Sugarek and Mr. James Dodson

Minutes Submitted by:

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Dr. Patrick Hubert, Secretary  
Coastal Bend RWPG

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Date