The Lower Basin Steering Committee Meeting was held on March 4th, 2019 in conjunction with the Coastal Bend Bays Foundation’s monthly Coastal Issues Forum at the Del Mar Center for Economic Development, Conference Room 106. Thirteen people were in attendance.

5:40pm - The Steering Committee Meeting began with a discussion about the Nueces River Authority’s (NRA’s) custom made watershed model that was on-hand during the event. A few of the attendees gathered around the model to listen to Sam Sugarek, Director of Water Quality Programs, discuss how the model is used at education/outreach events. Topics of discussion included: names of major waterbodies in the region, timing of floods flows from the Upper Basin to the Lower Basin, current lake levels, the importance of riparian vegetative buffers, and aquifers in the region.

6:00pm – The presentation began with a brief history of the Texas Clean Rivers Program. Mr. Sugarek discussed NRA’s involvement with the CRP Monitoring Program and how it partners with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality’s regional Surface Water Quality Monitoring Program to provide data to the state’s database. Also discussed were the site locations, parameters tested for, laboratories used, and the frequency of monitoring. The presentation included a discussion of how the state uses the data to assess water quality concerns and impairments, and how segments get listed in the Integrated Report. The presentation also described the Total Maximum Daily Load Program, Watershed Protection Plans, and Standards Revisions process to address impaired waterbodies.

6:30pm – The next topic of discussion included water quality impairments in Basin 24 (Bays and Estuaries), Basin 20 (San Antonio-Nueces Coastal Basin), Basin 21 (Nueces River Basin), Basin 22 (Nueces-Rio Grande Coastal Basin) and the southern portion of Basin 24 (Bays and Estuaries. All listed concerns and impairments in the region were summarized.

7:10pm – Mr. Sugarek also discussed NRA’s Education/Outreach Program and showed some of the tools that are used including the watershed model, groundwater model, and the rain catchment model.

7:20pm – Meeting adjourned.