

Minutes of the January 8, 2004 Meeting of the
Coastal Bend Regional Water Planning Group for the
Senate Bill 1 Regional Water Planning Program for Region “N”

The meeting of the Coastal Bend Regional Water Planning Group (RWPG) was held in the auditorium at the TAMU Research and Extension Center, 10345 Agnes Street, Corpus Christi, Texas 78406.

Agenda Item I - Call to Order: Ms Carola Serrato, Co-Chair of the Coastal Bend RWPG, called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

Agenda Item II - Roll Call: A visual attendance was noted. Voting members of the Coastal Bend RWPG in attendance included Mr. Newell Atkinson, Mr. Scotty Bledsoe, Mr. Ray Burdette, Ms. Teresa Carrillo, Mr. Greg Carter, Mr. Billy Dick, Dr. Patrick Hubert, Mr. Robert Kunkel, Ms. Josephine Miller, Mr. Bernard Paulson, Mr. Tom Reding, Mr. Mark Scott, and Ms. Serrato. Ms. Kimberly Stockseth had an excused absence. A quorum was determined to be present.

Non-voting members in attendance included Mr. Ralph Boeker, Mr. Vincente Guerra, and Mr. Con Mims. Ms. Rocky Freund attended for the Nueces River Authority (NRA). Guests included Mr. Jorge Arroyo, TWDB, Mr. Mike Cain, Equistar Chemicals LP, Mr. Max Castaneda, City of Corpus Christi, Mr. Ken Choffel, HDR Engineering, Inc., Ms. Pat Clements, USFWS, Mr. James Dodson, Mr. Stanley Fees, City of Kingsville, Mr. Johnny French, Mr. Randy Fugate, TPWD, Mr. Eduardo Garaña, City of Corpus Christi, Mr. Andy Garza, TSSWCB, Ms. Rebecca Krumnow, SPMWD, Mr. Mark Lowry, Turner, Collie, and Braden, Inc., Ms. Maggie Moorhouse, Moorhouse Associates, Mr. Kelly Ruble, TCEQ, Ms. Kristi Shaw, HDR Engineering, Inc., Mr. Bob Warren, Mr. Stan Williams, Turner, Collie, and Braden, Inc., and Mr. Yujuin Yang, TWDB.

Agenda Item III - Approval of Minutes: Ms. Serrato asked for approval of the minutes of the September 11, 2003 meeting of the Coastal Bend RWPG for the Senate Bill 1 Regional Water Planning Program for Region N. There was a motion by Mr. Kunkel to approve the minutes as presented. It was seconded by Mr. Scott. There was no discussion and the minutes were approved by a unanimous voice vote.

Agenda Item IV – Amendments to the State Water Plan: Ms. Serrato explained that after discussing this item with Mr. Boeker, the point that needed to be made is that this item demonstrates how changes to the State Water Plan should be addressed. Two amendments have been made to the State Plan. Once changes on the local level are identified, they need to be sent on to TWDB so that amendments can be made to the State Plan.

Agenda Items V and VI – Process of Identifying Potentially Feasible Water Management Strategies: Mr. Choffel introduced Ms. Kristi Shaw who will be working with him on the next Regional Water Plan. Before addressing the Process of Identifying Potentially Feasible Water Management Strategies, Mr. Choffel discussed the schedule for developing the Coastal Bend Regional Water Plan. TWDB requires that each of the 16 region water planning groups prepare two items through the public process. The first one is the Initially Prepared Water Plan which is due to TWDB by June 1, 2005. The second one is the Final Plan which is due January 5, 2006. A more detailed schedule shows that the RWPG will meet every other month over the next year and a half. There may be a lull in the meetings after the Initially Prepared Water Plan is produced.

Minutes of the January 8, 2004 Meeting of the
Coastal Bend Regional Water Planning Group for the
Senate Bill 1 Regional Water Planning Program for Region "N"

The Description of the Region and the Population and Demand Projections sections are in draft form. They will be updated and presented to the planning group at the next meeting. HDR will begin working on the Current Water Supplies and Water Management Strategies very soon.

The Water Management Strategies are basically water supply options that will be evaluated in the course of the plan. There are two types of water management strategies: those that have already been evaluated, but need to be updated with respect to cost and legislative rule changes; and new management strategies that need to be evaluated. At the next meeting, there needs to be a discussion about possible new strategies, and whether or not the group wants to apply for supplemental funding from TWDB. HDR will have a complete list of all strategies ready for discussion at the next meeting.

Most sections of the plan are scheduled to be completed by March 1, 2005 with exception of the Unique Segments and Policy. This is scheduled to be completed by June 1, 2005 in order to incorporate any new policies or laws resulting from the Texas State Legislature.

A public hearing will be required before the Initially Prepared Plan is submitted to TWDB. This will most likely take place in May 2005. TWDB has up to four months to review the plan, and then HDR plans on two months to review the TWDB comments with the group and make the required revisions.

There were no comments or questions about the schedule.

Mr. Choffel then addressed the Process of Identifying Potentially Feasible Water Management Strategies. He explained that TWDB requires that the process by which the group is going to select water management strategies be put in writing. He reviewed the eight steps that HDR has determined need to be done in order to meet this requirement.

This first four steps have already been done: the initial scoping where different options were considered (Steps 1-3), and since August 2002, they have been considering proposals for new water management strategies, including the City of Corpus Christi's desalination options.

Step 5 will consist of comparing water demand projections to available supplies. Step 6, as mentioned earlier, will be preparation of a draft list of all the water management strategies for review at the March meeting, Step 7. Any new strategies will require a request supplemental funding from TWDB in order to be able to study those strategies. Applications for the supplemental funds are due to TWDB by April 1, 2004.

Ms. Serrato asked three times for any public comment concerning the process. There were none.

There was a motion by Mr. Bledsoe to approve the process as presented by Mr. Choffel. It was seconded by Mr. Kunkel. There was no further discussion and the motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Agenda Item VII – Stream Flow Assessment: Mr. Boeker gave an overview of what TWPD is proposing to do with the Stream Flow Assessment. The intent is that the next State Water Plan will include a comparison of naturalized flow, flow under current conditions, and flow as a result

Minutes of the January 8, 2004 Meeting of the
Coastal Bend Regional Water Planning Group for the
Senate Bill 1 Regional Water Planning Program for Region "N"

of the implementation of water management strategies. Before TWDB proceeds, they need some feedback from the regions. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) will be conducting a similar study with respect to habitat, and that they would also be making a presentation to the group. He emphasized that this study was not the full-blown stream flow assessment that will be conducted under SB2. That process will take about 10 years. TWDB is requesting input from the groups so that they can have information back to the regions by June. The actual effects of the plans would be developed after TWDB receives the initially prepared plans.

Mr. Boeker then introduced Mr. Yujuin Yang. He gave a presentation discussing the methodology that TWDB intends to use in their assessment. (A copy of Mr. Yang's presentation is available at the Coastal Bend Division Office of NRA.)

TWDB will be using the TCEQ's WAM. Using control points, Phase I will assess flow status under naturalized and current conditions. Phase II will assess flow status under future conditions, incorporating surface water management strategies. These results will be provided to the RWPGs. Phase I is scheduled to be completed by June 1, 2004.

There are eight different runs in the WAM. TCEQ uses Run 3, the most conservative run. TWDB will also use Run 3 for the naturalized conditions, but will use Run 3 and Run 8, the most realistic run, for current conditions. Run 3 will be used for future conditions.

TWDB is requesting three things from the RWPGs: to determine the specific location of the control points, to recommend statistics to describe flow status, and to help to identify the strategies that may effect stream flow.

Mr. Boeker asked the group to have recommendations for the control points and any other comments by the next meeting.

Mr. Choffel suggested the four control points could be selected at this meeting. Mr. Bledsoe asked for clarification about the number of control points when a river crosses multiple regions. Mr. Yang said that four to five control points could be selected in each region.

Ms. Serrato summarized the three types of information that TWDB is requesting from the group, noting that the control points that the group selected were guaranteed to be used in the assessment. Mr. Yang said this standard study is being conducted for all regions, but that specialized runs may be done depending on resources.

Mr. Atkinson asked about which rivers would be involved in this study. Mr. Yang replied that it was major rivers, primarily the Nueces River. The Frio and Atascosa Rivers were also mentioned. Mr. Choffel emphasized that the control points needed to be where meaningful changes would take place. For example, there are no strategies that would affect the Aransas River.

Mr. Choffel recommended the following sites: The Nueces River upstream of Choke Canyon (reflects any changes that the region upstream of Region N are doing), the Frio River at Three Rivers (takes all water from Choke Canyon, Atascosa River, and the main stem of the Nueces

Minutes of the January 8, 2004 Meeting of the
Coastal Bend Regional Water Planning Group for the
Senate Bill 1 Regional Water Planning Program for Region “N”

River), the Nueces River below Lake Corpus Christi at Mathis (reflects changes for water supply releases), and at a point that shows all the fresh water inflow into the bays and estuaries. Mr. Carter asked if there would be the gauge at the saltwater barrier dam in Calallen. Mr. Choffel replied that it would not only need to reflect inflow from the Nueces River, but all of the uncontrolled areas that flow into the Nueces Estuary. Mr. Bledsoe asked about having a control point upstream of Choke Canyon on the Nueces River. Mr. Choffel agreed that the gauge on the Nueces River at Tilden could be used. Since selecting the sites was not listed as an Action Item for this meeting, Ms. Serrato asked Mr. Choffel to have recommendations available at the next meeting. Mr. Carter asked for clarification of the measurement of fresh water inflow into the bays and how the uncontrolled areas are measured. Mr. Choffel replied that he needs to find out if the WAM included uncontrolled flow or stopped at the Calallen dam. Mr. French noted that there has to be a control point downstream of the Rincon diversion. Ms. Freund noted that stream flow below the Calallen dam is tidally influenced so that at times, flow appears to be going upstream. Mr. French mentioned Mustang Creek.

Mr. Scott asked if the purpose of the project was to make future water decisions with the understanding of the impact on the environment, or to make future water decisions based on improving the environment, and how the data are going to be used. Mr. Boeker said that it would be useful information to the RWPGs to know the effects of the various strategies. Mr. Scott wanted to know if these results would be used to try and find additional inflows into the bays and estuaries. Mr. Yang replied that TPWD’s study would be focusing more on the environment.

(Mr. Atkinson asked that maps be available at the meetings. Ms. Serrato asked Mr. Choffel to work on getting some visual aids.)

Mr. Carter asked if this assessment was a part of SB2. Mr. Boeker replied that it is not the full assessment that will be done under SB2, but a shortcut to see what the effects could be. Mr. Carter also asked if the Texana and Garwood water should be taken into consideration. Mr. Choffel feels that any control points Region N would pick for those would also be picked by the other regions. Ms. Serrato asked if Region N’s diversion of these waters be considered one of the other regions’ strategies. Mr. Choffel replied that yes, the other regions would have to honor existing water rights. Mr. Carter proposed listing contingency points on the Colorado and Lavaca-Navidad Rivers if needed.

Mr. Warren mentioned the amount of water that has flowed into the bay over the last two years.

Mr. Bledsoe asked for clarification on which strategies would be included in the assessment. All strategies will be run.

Mr. French asked what years would be looked at historically to run the naturalized conditions. Mr. Choffel replied that the data for the Nueces River basin included 1934 – 1996. He also said that TWDB could not fund updating the WAM, however the NuBay model will be updated through 2002 provided funding is supplied by another partner project. Mr. Carter asked if HDR created the original WAM on the Nueces. Mr. Choffel replied that they did.

Mr. Lowery said that he would be sure that Regions P and K are aware of Region N’s concerns and control points for Lake Texana and Garwood.

Minutes of the January 8, 2004 Meeting of the
Coastal Bend Regional Water Planning Group for the
Senate Bill 1 Regional Water Planning Program for Region “N”

Agenda Item VIII – Additional Supplemental Funding for Preparation of 2006 Regional

Water Plans: Ms. Serrato reminded the group of the April 1, 2004 deadline to request supplemental funding related to changing conditions. Mr. Boeker said that TWDB will be looking at changing conditions and if there is any urgency to look at items that haven’t been looked at before. Examples of changing conditions are demand increases, supply changes, and technology changes.

Mr. Choffel asked if a letter would suffice or will a full application would be required.
Mr. Boeker said that he would find out.

Agenda Item IX and X – Water Conservation Implementation Task Force: Review and Best Management Practices: Mr. Carter reported that there are 32 members on the task force covering three different categories: municipal, agricultural, and industrial. He is a member of the industrial subgroup. SB 1094 created the task force, outlining six different tasks. The major effort of the group so far has been discussing best management practices (BMP). Each subgroup has initiated a BMP list.

Task 3 deals with public awareness programs to improve conversation. However, there are no financial ramifications as there are with littering (Don’t Mess With Texas) or not wearing a seatbelt (Click It or Ticket). The task will recommend a public awareness program to the legislature. Other tasks involve incentive, water conservation, and standardizing the methodology for reporting per capita water use.

Mr. Carter report that the only contentious issue has been regarding water reuse – direct or indirect. He cited Austin’s permit request to TCEQ to reuse wastewater. There have been objections from the Lower Colorado River Authority and the City of Corpus Christi because it would reduce flow downstream.

There are similar characteristics to the three BMP lists. Each one addresses water audits with respect to leak detection and repair, and water waste. The task force is soliciting feed back for the RWPGs, especially any BMPs that have been excluded.

Ms. Serrato asked about getting more information on the conservation pricing listed as one of the municipal BMPs. Mr. Carter replied that they are looking at the rate structure. Mr. Boeker said that he would check into how the information from the task force is going to be distributed to the RWPGs.

Mr. Carter said that the industrial group will be using New Mexico’s State Water Engineer’s guide for commercial and industrial water use as a guideline. He mentioned Carol Baker who is also on the task force. She is very active in conservation issues.

Ms. Carrillo asked if the guidelines are strictly guidelines or if the RWPG would be responsible for implementing the recommendations. Mr. Carter replied that for now, they are just guidelines. Mr. Boeker added that they could affect the regional water plans. Ms. Serrato explained that the RWPG does not have implementation authority.

Minutes of the January 8, 2004 Meeting of the
Coastal Bend Regional Water Planning Group for the
Senate Bill 1 Regional Water Planning Program for Region “N”

Ms. Miller asked if there are any areas for conservation that have not been thought of yet. She emphasized her point by saying that the City of Sinton recently discovered a water main under a building that they hadn't known about. Mr. Carter said that it may be possible that the task force would develop an audit checklist.

Ms. Serrato suggested forming a subcommittee to develop a response for the group to submit to the task force. Ms. Carrillo, Mr. Carter, Mr. Dick, and Ms. Serrato volunteered to be on the subcommittee. (Mr. Kunkel added his name to the list after the meeting.)

Mr. French suggested that TCEQ implement its authority to require conditions for discharge for environmental flows in their wastewater permits.

Agenda Item XI – Governor’s Desalination Initiative – Public Kickoff Meeting Briefing:

Mr. Garaña and Mr. Lowry gave the presentation that would be given at a public kickoff meeting later in the day. (A copy of the presentation and the kickoff meeting agenda are available at the Coastal Bend Division Office of NRA.)

Mr. Garaña discussed why Corpus Christi wants to have and is a good location for a desalination plant and the City’s regional water system. He explained the reasoning behind selecting the Barney Davis Plant as the site location.

Mr. Lowry discussed all the consultants involved in the study and each of the nine tasks associated with the study: 1-Identification of Sites, 2-Byproduct Handling, 3-Blending Water Sources, 4-Project Partnerships, 5-Potential Customers, 6-Power Sources, 7-Project Funding & Development, 8-Life Cycle Cost Model, and 9-Draft and Final Report.

Mr. Paulson asked about the motivation behind spending money on a desalination plant since Corpus Christi has a 50 year water supply. Mr. Lowry replied it is because Corpus Christi is in a good location and has been a forward thinking city with respect to water supply, their water distribution system, and that state-wide, there is a shortage. He also stressed that the City was not willing to raise rates in order to make this project happen. Mr. Paulson said that he has read that the state overall has a 100 year supply, and that there may be cheaper options. Mr. Lowry replied that, according to the governor’s initiative, that needs to be shown.

Ms. Miller suggested that Task 8 need to have a comparison of other water supply options, and other desalination grants. Mr. Lowry replied that all information will be used.

Ms. Carrillo asked how much the plant would yield. Mr. Lowry replied that Phase I is designed for 25 MGD, which would have minimal impacts on the environment. The more water that is produced, the greater the impact will be.

Ms. Miller said that she heard Mr. Ron Massey say on the radio that water from the desalination could possibly replace the Garwood water. Mr. Garaña assured her that the rates would not go up and that the Garwood rights will be maintained. Mr. Scott said that if the City will not make money on this project, they won't do it. He said that they have to look at it, but they will shelve it if it doesn't work.

Minutes of the January 8, 2004 Meeting of the
Coastal Bend Regional Water Planning Group for the
Senate Bill 1 Regional Water Planning Program for Region "N"

Mr. Paulson asked how this plant differs from the Tampa Bay and Santa Barbara plants. Mr. Lowry said that the Santa Barbara plant has a \$250/AF subsidy. The plant was built in the 1970's with old technology and they have never been able to afford to run the plant. Tampa Bay has had problems with contractors going bankrupt during construction which has increased costs.

Mr. Bledsoe asked about the timing of the reports. Mr. Lowry replied that the draft is due July 31, 2004 and the final is due September 30, 2004.

Mr. Scott wanted to clarify some earlier comments about Garwood. If the City can produce more than it needs and sell the excess to San Antonio for a profit, the actual water being sold may not come directly from the plant but from Garwood, which is physically closer.

Mr. French asked about the compatibility of the desal water with the rest of the system, including the pipes. Mr. Lowry replied that this issue is being looked at. Mr. Garaña said that there would be a post-treatment process before adding the water to the system.

Agenda Item XII – South Texas Water Authority's Application to TWDB for a Regional Water Facilities Planning Study: Ms. Serrato said that TWDB required notification of this application to the RWPG, but that it does not impact nor is impacted by the RWPG studies.

Agenda Item XIII: Authorizing the Nueces River Authority to Disseminate Requests for Local Funding for Calendar 2004 Local Administration Activities: Ms. Serrato explained that the 2004 Local Administrative Budget is the same as the 2003 budget. Ms. Miller made a motion to authorize NRA to request funding from the political subdivisions. Mr. Bledsoe seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Agenda Item XIV: Reports: Nueces River Basin Feasibility Study: Mr. Mims handed out a summary of the project. The local sponsors are still in negotiation with US Corps of Engineers. He expects their comments back by the end of the month. If there are no changes, then the contract could be signed next month. Any comments, and the seriousness of those comments, could delay the project further.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Assistance to RWPGs: Mr. Choffel reviewed the meeting with TPWD. They desire to be more involved in this next round of planning and will be working with TWDB.

Ms. Serrato said that she received a letter from the Texas Water Conservation Association after the packets had been distributed. They are proposing an approach to environmental flow protection. The letter will be included in the next meeting packet.

Administrative Issues: Ms. Serrato mentioned that according to the group's bylaws, the group should be meeting every other month. She asked if the bylaws needed to be changed. Mr. Paulson suggested that the bylaws be amended to read at least quarterly. The group will vote on it at the next meeting.

Election of Officers for 2004: Ms. Serrato said that since letters informing the group that election of officers needed to take place at this meeting did not go out at least 30 days prior to the

Minutes of the January 8, 2004 Meeting of the
Coastal Bend Regional Water Planning Group for the
Senate Bill 1 Regional Water Planning Program for Region “N”

meeting, that elections would take place at the next meeting. There will need to be an Executive Committee meeting prior to the next meeting to compile a slate of officers to recommend to the group.

All Chairs Conference Call October 9, 2003: Ms. Serrato said that most of the items discussed during the call had been covered at this meeting. There was considerable discussion about the information on TWDB website and how fresh that information is. The chairs agree that the information needed to be quality checked before it was posted.

Mr. Boeker praised the work that the Water Conservation Implementation Task Force has accomplished so far in such a short amount of time.

Agenda Item XV – General Public Comment: Ms. Serrato asked for any general public comment, but there was none.

Agenda Item XVI – Set Next Meeting Date: The next meeting date was set for 1:30 pm on March 11, 2004 at the same location, providing the facilities are available.

Ms. Freund asked that the voting members fax back the cover sheet to the meeting notice so that she would know in advance of the meeting whether or not a quorum would be present.

Agenda Item XVII – Adjourn: Dr. Hubert made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Bledsoe seconded the motion. All were in favor. Ms. Serrato adjourned the meeting at 3:50 pm.

Minutes prepared by: Ms. Rocky Freund and Ms. Carola Serrato

Minutes Submitted by: _____

Patrick Hubert, DVM
Secretary, Coastal Bend RWPG

Date