

# TCEQ Interoffice Memorandum

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**To:** Commissioners

**Thru:** Bridget Bohac, Chief Clerk

**From:** Amy Settemeyer, Manager, Watermaster Section  
Water Availability Division

**Date:** August 16, 2013

**Subject:** Agenda Executive Summary for Approval of Fiscal Year 2014 Proposed Assessment for Annual Costs for Watermaster Operations in the Rio Grande Water Division Set for September 4, 2013 Agenda  
Docket No. 2013-1085-BGT

Summary of Request:

The Rio Grande Watermaster Program seeks approval of its Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 proposed assessment for annual costs of operations based on its operating budget which consists of a \$50 base fee applicable to each assessment account. A penalty of 5.0% of any delinquent fee shall be imposed on a person who fails to pay the required fee when due and if the person fails to pay the fee within 30 days after the date the fee is due, an additional 5.0% penalty shall be imposed. Delinquent fees will accrue interest beginning on the 61<sup>st</sup> day after the due date. The yearly interest rate on all delinquent fees required under this title is the prime rate plus one percent, as published in the *Wall Street Journal* on the first day of each calendar year that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or a legal holiday. Penalties and/or interest fees may be waived by the Executive Director for good cause. The Executive Director estimates the proposed assessment of Eight Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Six Hundred Fifty-Five Dollars and Eighty-Six Cents (\$825,655.86) will generate revenue of Eight Hundred Nine Thousand One Hundred Forty-Two Dollars and Seventy-Five Cents (\$809,142.75) for FY 2014.

Authority: Tex. Water Code § 11.329  
30 Tex. Admin. Code §§ 12.1, 12.3, and 12.5

Staff Recommendation:

Approval of the Rio Grande Watermaster Program FY 2014 Assessment for Annual Cost of Operations.

Contact: Amy Settemeyer, (512) 239-2588  
Cindy Hooper, (210) 403-4080

**TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
AGENDA ITEM REQUEST**

**AGENDA REQUESTED:** September 4, 2013

**NAME & NUMBER OF PERSON TO CONTACT REGARDING CHANGES TO THIS REQUEST, IF NEEDED:**

Erasmio Yarrito, Jr., (956)430-6056  
Cindy Hooper, (210) 403-4080

**CONSIDERATION OF FISCAL YEAR 2014 ASSESSMENT OF ANNUAL COSTS FOR WATERMASTER OPERATIONS IN THE RIO GRANDE WATER DIVISION.**

Pursuant to Texas Water Code Section 11.329 and 30 Tex. Admin. Code Sections 12.1, 12.3, 12.5, and 303.71 of the Commission Rules, the Executive Director requests that the Commission consider Watermaster assessment of annual costs for the fiscal year beginning September 1, 2013, and ending August 31, 2014, for appropriators in the Rio Grande Water Division which extends from Fort Quitman, Texas to the mouth of the Rio Grande River, excluding the watersheds of the Pecos and Devils Rivers and including that portion of the Nueces-Rio Grande Costal Basin lying in Hidalgo, Cameron, Willacy, and Starr Counties and approve \$825,655.86 as the amount to be assessed for annual costs.

**CHIEF CLERK MUST SEND NOTICE OF THE APPLICATION/HEARING:** No

**TYPE OF MATTER:** Budget

**COUNTY:** The 16 counties within the Rio Grande Watermaster's Jurisdiction (Brewster, Cameron, Dimmit, Hidalgo, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis, Jim Hogg, Kinney, Maverick, Presidio, Starr, Terrell, Val Verde, Webb, Willacy, and Zapata)

**DOCKET NUMBER:** 2013-1085-BGT

# TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY



## **AN ORDER**

Assessing the Annual Cost of Operation for the Rio Grande Water Division and Associated Basins for the fiscal year beginning September 1, 2013, and ending August 31, 2014: Docket No. 2013-1085-BGT; Rio Grande Watermaster

On September 4, 2013, after proper notice and public hearing as provided in Texas Water Code § 11.329, came to be considered by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality ("Commission") the matter of cost for the Watermaster operations in the said Division for the fiscal year beginning September 1, 2013, and ending August 31, 2014. After reviewing the supporting documentation, the Commission finds as follows:

1. The area subject to the order and referred to as the "Rio Grande" herein extends from Fort Quitman, Texas to the mouth of the Rio Grande River, excluding the watersheds of the Pecos and Devils Rivers; and includes that portion of the Nueces-Rio Grande Coastal Basin lying in Hidalgo, Cameron, Willacy, and Starr Counties;
2. Pursuant to Texas Water Code § 11.329, the holders of water rights which are to be administered by the Watermaster may be assessed the compensation and necessary expenses of a Watermaster, assistant Watermasters, and other necessary employees;
3. 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §§ 303.71-303.73 set forth formulas and procedures for the assessment of costs of the Watermaster operations in the Rio Grande;
4. The procedures set out in the Texas Water Code § 11.329 and 30 TAC § 303.71 were followed for this assessment;
5. The compensation and necessary expenses of a Watermaster and other necessary employees for the fiscal year beginning September 1, 2013, and ending August 31, 2014, will require the amount to be assessed in the sum of Eight Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Six Hundred Fifty-Five Dollars and Eighty-Six Cents (\$825,655.86).
6. The charges, fees, formulas for assessment rates, and method for assessing and levying costs approved below constitute an equitable apportionment of costs, as required by Texas Water Code § 11.329;
7. All requirements of Texas Water Code § 11.329 and 30 TAC §§ 303.71-303.73 have been met.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED BY THE TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY:**

1. That the amount of Eight Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Six Hundred Fifty-Five Dollars and Eighty-Six Cents (\$825,655.86) is approved as the total amount to be assessed for annual costs of operations of the Rio Grande Watermaster during the fiscal year beginning September 1, 2013, and ending August 31, 2014, and that such amount is assessed against the water rights holders in the Rio Grande Water Division in the manner described in this order and pursuant to 30 TAC §§ 303.71-303.73;
2. That the following charges, rates, fees, formulas for assessment rates and method for assessing and levying cost are approved and shall be implemented by the Executive Director:
  - a. Except as provided for “no charge” water and excess flow permits below, a base charge for each assessment account of Fifty Dollars (\$50.00);
  - b. No base charge for “no charge” water diverted pursuant to Texas Water Code § 11.0871;
  - c. No base charge for excess flow water rights authorized under 30 TAC § 303.61;
  - d. Assessment rates for each assessment account to be calculated by the Executive Director in accordance with the procedures set forth in 30 TAC § 303.72;
  - e. Assessment of costs and levy of assessments for each account in accordance with procedures set forth in 30 TAC § 303.73;
  - f. A penalty of 5.0% of the fee due shall be imposed when the assessment is not paid on time. If the assessment is not paid within 30 days after the day on which the fee is due, an additional 5.0% penalty shall be imposed pursuant to 30 TAC Chapter 12;
  - g. Delinquent fees accrue interest beginning on the 61<sup>st</sup> day after their due date;
  - h. Penalties and/or interest under this section may be waived by the Executive Director for good cause; and
3. That the Executive Director shall specify dates by which payments assessed pursuant to this order shall be paid or postmarked.

Issued This Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Texas Commission on  
Environmental Quality

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For the Commission

## TCEQ Interoffice Memorandum

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**To:** Commissioners, TCEQ

**Thru:** L'Oreal Stepney, P.E., Deputy Director  
Office of Water

**From:** Kellye Rila, Director  
Water Availability Division

**Date:** August 16, 2013

**Subject:** Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 Proposed Assessment of Annual Costs of Operations for the Rio Grande Watermaster Program

The Rio Grande Watermaster fund is required by Texas Water Code (TWC) § 11.329 to pay compensation and expenses of the Watermaster and to pay expenditures for equipment, facilities, and capital expenditures necessary for Watermaster operations when recommended by the Watermaster Advisory Committee (WAC) and the Executive Director and approved by the Commission.

The attached document, "Rio Grande Watermaster Operations," was provided to Rio Grande WAC members on May 24, 2013, and during a public meeting on July 8, 2013, in Harlingen, Texas. The second column, "FY14 Operating Budget Needs" indicates the projected program needs within the FY 2014 appropriation. Also, attached to this memo is a copy of the public meeting notice for the July 2013 Rio Grande WAC meeting. An additional public meeting notice was mailed on August 2, 2013, to all affected water right holders regarding this budget item scheduled for the September 4, 2013, commission agenda. A copy of that notice and the mailing affidavit from the Chief Clerk's office are also attached. As required by the TWC, this notice provides thirty (30) days notice of the budget hearing.

WAC members have agreed with staff's recommendation for the proposed "FY13 Operating Budget Needs" in the amount of \$809,142.75. A copy of the WAC meeting agenda is attached for your information.

Staff recommends the "FY14 Operating Budget Needs" in the amount of \$809,142.75. Using this budget amount, the program calculates its assessment based on a 98% collection rate; therefore, the total assessment amount is \$825,655.86 with a municipal rate of \$0.3686. This staff proposal represents an increase of \$0.0241 from the previous year's municipal rate of \$0.3445. The calculated rate for FY 2014 is expected to generate revenue in excess of the Comptroller's Biennial Revenue Estimate (BRE) when combined with the revenue estimates for the Concho River Watermaster Program and the South Texas Watermaster Program. This combined excess revenue collection

## **TCEQ Interoffice Memorandum**

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will provide access to the contingency Watermaster appropriations as authorized in Rider 22 of the General Appropriations Act.

This memorandum requests Commission approval of the Rio Grande Watermaster Program operating budget and assessment for FY 2014. If I can be of further assistance or should you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact me at 239-4612, Amy Settemeyer, Watermaster Section Manager at 239-2588, or Erasmo Yarrito, Jr, Rio Grande Watermaster at (956) 430-6056.

# Rio Grande Watermaster Operations

## FY13 Approved Budget Compared to FY14 Budget Needs:

Budget Categories	FY13 Approved Budget	FY14 Operating Budget Needs	Difference from FY13 to FY14 Budget
Salaries	452,928.00	443,394.00	(9,534.00)
Longevity	11,850.00	13,440.00	1,590.00
Salary Enhancements (1)	11,549.66	11,306.55	(243.12)
Fringe (2)	71,757.00	86,597.00	14,840.00
SORM (3)	1,006.00	1,006.00	0.00
SWCAP (4)	2,622.00	4,834.00	2,212.00
LAR Capital (5)	0.00	28,000.00	28,000.00
Professional/Temp Services (6)	75,804.00	80,800.00	4,996.00
Travel In-State (7)	20,000.00	15,000.00	(5,000.00)
Travel Out-of-State	0.00	0.00	0.00
Training	1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00
Rent - Building (8)	48,857.00	48,856.20	(0.80)
Postage	8,275.00	8,355.00	80.00
Phone/Utilities	15,726.00	17,332.00	1,606.00
Supplies - Consumables	1,000.00	1,500.00	500.00
Other Operating Expenses (9)	1,624.00	3,022.00	1,398.00
Fuels/Lubricants	18,000.00	23,000.00	5,000.00
Rent - Machine & Other	6,200.00	6,200.00	0.00
Facilities, Furniture & Equip (10)	15,500.00	15,000.00	(500.00)
Capital Equipment - Non LAR (11)	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$764,198.66</b>	<b>\$809,142.75</b>	<b>\$44,944.08</b>

### FY14 Proposed Assessment Calculation:

FY14 Operating Budget Needs:	\$809,142.75
<b>Assessment Necessary Based on 98% Collection</b>	<b>\$825,655.86</b>

### Historical Assessment Comparison

	FY12	FY13	FY14
<b>Total Assessment:</b>	\$ 718,644.00	\$ 779,794.56	\$ 825,655.86
<b>Municipal Rate (per A-F):</b>	\$ 0.3128	\$ 0.3445	\$ 0.3686

**Notes:**

- (1) Salary Enhancements are calculated based on 3.4% of 75% of total Salaries; these are projections only; actual expenditures will vary based on salary actions approved by management
- (2) Fringe includes employee benefits such as health insurance, social security insurance, and retirement
- (3) State Office of Risk Management (SORM) is a fee that is charged annually to the TCEQ; amount is estimated during budget development; actual expenditure may vary
- (4) Statewide Cost Allocation Plan (SWCAP) is a fee that is charged annually to the TCEQ for central services; amount is estimated during budget development; actual expenditure may vary
- (5) Legislative Appropriation Request (LAR) Capital includes all items exceeding \$25,000 in total agency cost (ex: vehicles, computers, monitoring equipment); must have legislative approval
- (6) Professional/Temp Services includes but is not limited to software development costs, summer interns, temporary employees
- (7) Travel In-State is capped at an agency level; an increase in WM travel funding cannot be accommodated without a corresponding decrease in travel funding in another agency program
- (8) A proportionate share of the annual TCEQ Regional Office building rent is charged to the Watermaster Program
- (9) Other Operating Expenses includes items designated by Comptrollers Office that do not fall into any remaining budget category (ex: annual vehicle inspection fees, vehicle decals, etc)
- (10) Facilities, Furniture & Equipment (FFE) includes but is not limited to non-LAR equipment less than \$5,000 in cost, non-consumable supplies, vehicle maintenance and repairs, etc
- (11) Capital Equipment - Non LAR includes capital items with a cost between \$5,000 and \$24,999

Bryan W. Shaw, Ph.D., *Chairman*  
Carlos Rubinstein, *Commissioner*  
Toby Baker, *Commissioner*  
Zak Covar, *Executive Director*



## TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

*Protecting Texas by Reducing and Preventing Pollution*

### **NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED ASSESSMENT OF ANNUAL COSTS FOR THE RIO GRANDE WATERMASTER PROGRAM**

The Commissioners of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality will consider the Rio Grande Watermaster Operation's budget and proposed assessment for costs for September 1, 2013 through August 31, 2014 (TCEQ Fiscal Year 2014), during a public meeting at:

**9:30 A.M. in Building E, Room 2015  
Located at 12100 Park 35 Circle  
In Austin, Texas on  
September 4, 2013**

This item is Docket No. 2013-1085-BGT, Consideration of an Order assessing costs of Watermaster operations in the Rio Grande Water Division and associated basins which extends from Fort Quitman, Texas to the mouth of the Rio Grande River, excluding the watersheds of the Pecos and Devils Rivers; and includes that portion of the Nueces-Rio Grande Costal Basin lying in Hidalgo, Cameron, Willacy, and Starr Counties.

The compensation and necessary expenses of the Rio Grande Watermaster Operations for the fiscal year is Eight Hundred Nine Thousand One Hundred Forty-Two Dollars and Seventy-Five Cents (**\$809,142.75**). Of this amount, Five Hundred Fifty-Four Thousand Seven Hundred Thirty-Seven Dollars and Fifty-Five Cents (**\$554,737.55**) are needed for program staff base salaries and benefits (including longevity, salary enhancements, and fringe) and the remaining Two Hundred Fifty-Four Thousand Four Hundred Five Dollars and Twenty Cents (**\$254,405.20**) are needed for program operating costs. Based on a 98% collection rate, these necessary expenses require a total assessment of Eight Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Six Hundred Fifty-Five Dollars and Eighty-Six Cents (**\$825,655.86**) with a municipal rate of **\$0.3686**.

This notice is provided to all holders of water rights as required by the Texas Water Code Section 11.329. You may attend this meeting and provide comments to the Commission concerning this item. Persons with disabilities who have special communication or other accommodation needs who are planning to attend this meeting should contact the Office of Administrative Services Facilities Liaison at (512) 239-0080. Requests should be made as far in advance as possible.

The Rio Grande Watermaster Advisory Committee (WAC) was provided the proposed assessment and budget and a public meeting was held in Harlingen, Texas on July 8, 2013. The public was invited to attend this WAC meeting via notice dated June 14, 2013.

If you have any questions or would like a copy of the proposed budget, please contact the Rio Grande Watermaster's Office at (956) 430-6056 or (800) 609-1219, via fax at (956) 430-6052, or email at [Erasmio.Yarrito@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:Erasmio.Yarrito@tceq.texas.gov).

Bryan W. Shaw, Ph.D., *Chairman*  
Carlos Rubinstein, *Commissioner*  
Toby Baker, *Commissioner*  
Zak Covar, *Executive Director*



## TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

*Protecting Texas by Reducing and Preventing Pollution*

May 24, 2013

Re: Preliminary Budget for Fiscal Year 2014 for the Rio Grande Watermaster

Dear Rio Grande Watermaster Advisory Committee Members:

Enclosed for your review is a preliminary Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14) for the Rio Grande Watermaster Program (RGWM). This notice is required by the Texas Water Code to be submitted at least 60 days before the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (Commission, or TCEQ) meets to consider a proposed order establishing the final assessment amount (Texas Water Code, Section 11.557).

The Watermaster will present a detailed proposed budget to the Watermaster Advisory Committee (WAC) during a meeting at the TCEQ's Harlingen regional office on Monday, July 8, 2013 at 1:30 p.m. Staff will mail a notification of this meeting to all water right holders and will provide an opportunity for the public to provide comments at the meeting.

The following list includes the pending time frames for budget approval:

- **June:** Watermaster staff will mail notification of WAC meeting to water right holders along with the June monthly report.
- **July 8:** The WAC will meet to discuss the preliminary budget.
- **July 10-31:** TCEQ management will review the proposed budget
- **August 5:** TCEQ will mail notice of the Commission meeting to all water right holders.
- **September 4:** The Commission will meet to consider approval of the FY14 budget.
- **October:** TCEQ will mail FY14 invoices to water right holders.

The proposed assessment provides funding needed to support the Watermaster Program without additional TCEQ subsidy. Preliminary calculations indicate that the total amount to be assessed for FY14 would be \$825,655.86, which is an increase when compared to FY13. Most of this difference is from the cost of one new vehicle that is needed by the Rio Grande Watermaster program, which has attempted to minimize other planned expenditures in an effort to keep the assessment rate as low as possible.

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at (512) 239-4721 or Erasmo Yarrito, Jr., Rio Grande Watermaster, at (956) 430-6046.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy Settemeyer".

Amy Settemeyer  
Manager, Watermaster Section (MC-160)  
Water Availability Division

Enclosure

## PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE

### **RIO GRANDE WATERMASTER ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

DATE: Monday, July 8, 2013  
TIME: 1:30 P.M.  
LOCATION: Texas Commission on Environmental Quality,  
Harlingen Regional Office  
1804 West Jefferson Avenue; Harlingen, Texas 78550-5247

Section 11.3261(e) of the Texas Water Code requires the Watermaster Advisory Committee (WAC) to review and provide comments to the executive director of the TCEQ on the annual budget for watermaster operations. The Rio Grande WAC will hold a meeting at the TCEQ's Harlingen Regional Office on **July 8, 2013 at 1:30 p.m.** to discuss the proposed Rio Grande Watermaster budget for fiscal year 2014. **The public, including all water right holders in the watermaster area, are invited to attend and participate in this meeting as well as to provide comments.**

You will also receive another notice after the WAC meeting is held. Section 11.329(b) of the Water Code requires the executive director to provide notice to water right holders at least 30 days prior to the Commission holding a public hearing on the proposed fiscal year budget. This is a separate notice that will be mailed following the completion of the WAC meeting and at least 30 days before the date that the proposed budget being considered during a Commission agenda meeting.

Notice Date: June 14, 2013

**Erasmio Yarrito, Jr., Rio Grande Watermaster**

**For questions or for a copy of the Rio Grande Watermaster proposed budget for fiscal year 2014, please feel free to call the Rio Grande Watermaster at (956) 430-6056 or (800) 609-1219.**

### Special Notice – Participation on Committee

The Rio Grande WAC was established in January 1998 based on Section 11.3261 of the Texas Water Code. The WAC is required to:

- provide recommendations to the executive director of the TCEQ regarding water administration and distribution activities that would benefit water rights holders;
- review and provide comments to the executive director on the annual budget of the watermaster operations; and
- perform other duties requested by the executive director with regard to the watermaster operations, or perform other duties requested by water rights holders that the committee determines would benefit the administration of water rights.

The TCEQ values input from the Rio Grande WAC and is actively seeking interested participants to serve on the committee as vacancies become available. If you are interested in serving, or would like to nominate someone for appointment consideration, please contact the Rio Grande Watermaster's office at (956) 430-6056 or (800) 609-1219, via fax at (956) 430-6052, or e-mail at [Erasmio.Yarrito@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:Erasmio.Yarrito@tceq.texas.gov).

# **Rio Grande Watermaster Advisory Committee Meeting**

TCEQ Watermaster Office  
1804 W. Jefferson Avenue  
Harlingen, Texas

July 8, 2013 at 1:30 pm

## **Agenda**

Call to order / Determination of a quorum ..... Wayne Halbert

Introductions..... Erasmo Yarrito, Jr.

WAC membership nominations ..... Wayne Halbert

Minutes from previous meeting ..... Erasmo Yarrito, Jr.

Watermaster Program Updates:

- Water Deliveries by Mexico ..... Erasmo Yarrito, Jr.
- Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2014 ..... Erasmo Yarrito, Jr.  
Cindy Hooper
- Updates to TCEQ Enforcement Initiation Criteria ..... Amy Settemeyer
- Watermaster Reports..... Erasmo Yarrito, Jr.

Discussion of Legislative Session ..... Wayne Halbert

El Morillo Drain Update/Discussion ..... Sonny Hinojosa

Public Comments and Concerns

Future Meetings

Adjourn

Wayne Halbert, Chairman