

Texas Environmental Flows Science Advisory Committee
Wednesday, September 8, 2010, 8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Room 2210
Austin, Texas 78753

MINUTES

Call to order and Approval of meeting minutes from August 11, 2010

Chairman Huston called the meeting to order. The minutes from the August 11, 2010 meeting were approved by consensus.

Liaison Reports (San Antonio, Colorado, Nueces)

Liaisons

Guadalupe/San Antonio BBEST: SAC members Dr. George Ward and Jim Wiersema attended the most recent meeting of this BBEST. Dr. Ward discussed the pilot project this BBEST was undertaking which utilized a salinity zonation approach similar to what the Trinity/San Jacinto BBEST had used. He discussed the activities of the group's hydrology subcommittee and also noted that the instream subcommittee was using a desktop methodology that will generate a synthetic cross section of a river for which presence/absence of indicator species can be predicted.

Nueces BBEST: SAC member Dr. Paul Montagna attended the most recent meeting of this BBEST. He discussed the activities of the various BBEST subcommittees and noted that the hydrology subcommittee was reviewing initial datasets on sites selected by the BBEST for use in the hydrological analysis. He discussed the complexities of inflow criteria to Baffin Bay and the Upper Laguna Madre, both of which are hypersaline.

Colorado/Lavaca BBEST: SAC members Ed Oborny and Dr. Paul Jensen attended the most recent meeting of this BBEST. Mr. Oborny noted that the meeting was primarily dedicated to updates from the various subcommittees, but the group also discussed how the BBEST can be prepared to interact with the BBASC after the BBEST recommendations are submitted. Dr. Jensen noted that the freshwater inflow subcommittee is considering not developing an inflow requirement for East Matagorda Bay given its relatively small and independent watershed.

Budget Update

Ruben Solis, TWDB, gave a general update on the most recent expenditures and estimates to the SAC fiscal year 2010 budget. He noted that fiscal year 2010 was complete as of August 31, 2010 and that the full allotment of \$228,000 was not likely to be spent. He noted that those remaining dollars could be carried forward and allocated to other basin and bay groups. He noted that budgets have been allocated for each BBEST and BBASC for fiscal year 2011. Ruben and SAC Chairman Huston will begin to work on a draft 2011 budget for the SAC to be discussed at the October meeting.

Report on HEFR Workshop (8/25)

Dan Opdyke, TPWD, discussed the recently held HEFR workshop, noting that 11 attendees participated and that the workshop was very effective. There are no current plans to hold additional HEFR workshops.

Update - WAM/Flow Regime Translation subcommittee

SAC Vice-Chair Bob Brandes gave an update on the activities of this subcommittee. He noted that the document the group is developing had been distributed and those on the subcommittee were calculating and discussing the impacts of flow restrictions on certain example projects. He indicated that the group will circulate the draft document to the SAC members within two weeks for comments and completion.

Review potential modifications to Hydrologic Methods Guidance

Dan Opdyke gave an overview of the recommended changes to the Hydrologic Methods Guidance document. The SAC members and agency staff discussed the proposed changes and suggested clarifications and additional revisions to be included in the overall revisions being made to the document. The SAC agreed that the evolution of this document must be preserved in order to clearly identify the changes that have been made over time and the thought process behind those changes. As such, the two previous versions of the document will remain published on the Environmental Flows Resources website with specific notations identifying each revised version, and the new version will be identified as the 3rd Edition of the document.

Presentation on Cypress EFlows development

Joe Trungale discussed the process and steps used in the development of the environmental flow regime and analysis recommendations report for the Cypress Flows Project. He noted that this had been a voluntary consensus-based process through which those involved developed a regime and analysis in keeping with the intent of Senate Bill 3. He stated that the process used was in line with the guidance developed by the SAC. The SAC members discussed the various aspects of the project that were presented. Chairman Huston suggested that a SAC workgroup consisting of himself, Fred Manhart and Mary Kelly meet to discuss the project and report with TCEQ to determine a path forward. The group will develop recommendations to propose to the SAC at the October meeting.

Briefing on Stakeholder (BBASC) Facilitation

UT CPPDR*

Suzanne Schwartz, University of Texas Center for Public Policy Dispute Resolution (UT CPPDR), gave a briefing on the facilitation services performed for the Trinity/San Jacinto/Galveston Bay BBASC. She presented an analysis of what they saw that are the key ways to improve the process, in particular how the BBEST and the BBASC might interact. The SAC members suggested that the facilitation report prepared by UT CPPDR be made available to the remaining BBASC and BBEST groups.

Discussion - Market Approaches to meet EFlows objectives

This discussion was deferred to the October meeting.

Other Discussion Items

There were no other discussion items at this time.

Public comments

There were no public comments at this time.

Next Meeting – Schedule (TWDB) and Agenda

The next SAC meeting is scheduled for 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, October 6, 2010, to be held in room E2.026 of the Capitol Extension building, downtown Austin.

Discussion items include:

- HEFR document discussion and completion
- Report on Cypress work group request
- 2011 Budget discussion
- Market Approaches

Adjourn