

Texas Environmental Flows Science Advisory Committee  
Wednesday, December 8, 2010  
8:30 – 12:30 p.m.  
Capitol Extension, Room E2.026  
Austin, Texas 78701

## MINUTES

### **Call to order and Approval of meeting minutes from November 10, 2010**

Chairman Huston called the meeting to order. The minutes from the November 10, 2010 meeting were approved by consensus.

### **Liaison Reports**

(Trinity, San Jacinto, Sabine, Colorado/Lavaca, Guadalupe/San Antonio, Nueces)  
The SAC liaisons to the BBESTs gave brief updates on the activities of each group.

Trinity/San Jacinto BBEST: SAC member Fred Manhart noted that the workplan is being developed in two sections: instream and estuary. He noted concerns over continued funding and the role of the BBEST after the workplan is completed. BBEST member Dave Buzan stated that the draft workplan would be delivered to the BBASC by December 15, 2010 in time for the January 5, 2011 meeting. He added that the review cycle would be every 5 years to coincide with the Regional Water Planning process.

Sabine BBEST: Mr. Gregg Easley, TCEQ, noted that the BBASC met on November 30, 2010 to develop a modified environmental flow recommendation. Once the final document is approved it will be submitted to TCEQ as part of the proposed rule comments so it can be considered by TCEQ staff in the final rule. Once submitted, the revised proposal will be circulated. The workplan will be submitted by December 20, 2010.

Colorado/Lavaca BBEST: SAC member Ed Oborny reported on the BBEST meeting held November 16, 2010 and, in particular, progress of the instream analysis report. He stated that the next meeting would be December 21, 2010. He attended the Bay and Estuary subcommittee meeting held November 30, 2010 and was comfortable with their progress. BBEST chair Dave Buzan stated that BBEST is working closely with the BBASC and a discussion of WAM considerations would be part of the BBEST report. The SAC members expressed the need for caution regarding this type of analysis by the BBEST. However, results of the discussion noted that while environmental needs must be determined first, stakeholders and TCEQ need to be able to incorporate recommended regimes in the WAM using clearly defined implementation measures.

Guadalupe/San Antonio BBEST: SAC member Dr. George Ward gave an update on the group's November 18, 2010 meeting. He stated that the outline for the final report was completed and writing assignments designated. He discussed the progress made by the Instream Flow subcommittee and the cross sections provided by TWDB that will be used by Dr. Hardy in the database to integrate various hydraulic parameters. SAC members stressed the pending time constraints and the upcoming December 20, 2010 meeting.

Dr. Ward reported that the Estuary subcommittee is now utilizing GIS as it continues the TxBlend analyses. Members are reviewing salinity/flow preferences and conditions of rangia and blue crabs for future adjustments to the model.

Nueces BBEST: SAC member Dr. Paul Montagna stated the BBEST is meeting on December 10, 2010. He added that the BBASC was having difficulty getting a quorum due to lack of attendance. He noted that BBEST subcommittee meetings are occurring. Dr. Dan Opdyke, TPWD, noted that the hydrology subcommittee's attempt to determine appropriate flow components was challenging due to issues related to sites with extended periods of zero flow and flashy events.

Chairman Huston stated that he and other SB3 committee members participated in a program at the Capitol on December 6, 2010 to brief legislative members on water issues.

### **Budget Update and FY2011 SAC Budget**

Ruben Solis, TWDB, gave an update on the SAC budget and expenditures. Chairman Huston stated that TWDB had protected the SB3 program funding to date, and with State agencies having to reduce their present budgets by 2.5%, he asked the committee to consider a voluntary reduction in the SAC budget so that the BBEST budgets could remain intact. Chairman Huston will work with Ruben Solis on potential budget revisions

### **Discussion Paper – WAM/Flow Regime Translation Subcommittee**

Vice Chair Dr. Robert Brandes stated that comments received to date were incorporated as revisions to the document. He noted that the document outlines several methods that attempt to deal with attainment frequencies, still considered an important issue in light of the draft e-flow rules. Chairman Huston asked that SAC members provide comments by December 13, 2010 so that a draft document can be released by December 15, 2010.

### **Review Suggested Framework for Future BBEST Reviews**

SAC member Dr. Paul Montagna led the discussion addressing further modifications to the framework for SAC review of BBEST work products document. He compared existing review documents with actual reviews performed and found discrepancies. He suggested that members decide the purpose of the review, whether the review should be technical, and to what degree. Chairman Huston stated that SAC has received criticism that past reviews were procedural. Members discussed potential revisions. A modified document with the suggested changes will be distributed by Dr. Montagna with a request for comments by December 13, 2010.

### **Discussion - Market Approaches to meeting Standards**

SAC member Mary Kelly presented a background for this discussion including a terminology overview and questions that need to be addressed. Members discussed what framework could be used and at what level should it be used. Members agreed that it should be addressed at the stakeholder level and that approaches could be incorporated into the workplan. Members noted that the BBEST could assist the BBASC

in this effort. Mr. Oborny commented that it is not obvious where the environmental flow standards are not likely to be met and that there needed to be an analytical method for determination of this type of condition. Mary Kelly agreed to develop an outline for a white paper which defines how to determine whether or not a standard would be unlikely to be met and market approached to address those conditions. Chairman Huston suggested that members and others send comments and concerns to Ms. Kelly.

### **Discussion Open Issues – Hydrologic Methods Guidance -3<sup>rd</sup> Edition**

Chairman Huston raised the issue of whether it is necessary to include additional sections in the guidance related to specific project evaluations. Dr. Ward noted that this information might be beneficial in the process of moving from flow recommendations to rule standards and that a separate document might be a better solution. Dr. Paul Jensen suggested revisiting the issues at a later date. There was discussion of future enhancements to HEFR and the SAC determined not to proceed with those at this time.

### **Other Discussion Items**

There are no other discussion items at this time.

### **Public Comments**

There was no public comment at this time.

### **Next Meeting – Schedule (Jan 12 – TWDB) and Agenda**

The next SAC meeting is scheduled for January 12, 2011 and will be held at the Texas Water Development Board.

Discussion items include:

- Liaison Reports
- Status on rule comments from TCEQ

### **Adjourn**