

Trinity and San Jacinto Rivers and Galveston Bay
Basin and Bay Expert Science Team

2nd Meeting – Agenda
February 11, 2009
The Woodlands, TX
Lone Star College
4800 Research Forest Dr.

Minutes

BBEST Members Present:

William Espey (Chair), Jim Lester (Vice-Chair), Richard Browning, David Buzan, Woody Frossard, George Guillen, Robert McFarlane, Mike Reedy, Antonietta Quigg, Sammy Ray, Tony Smith, Joe Trungale, Mike Turco, Mary Kelly (SAC Liaison)

Copies of all the presentations made during this meeting will be available on the BBEST's website which can be found at the following location:

http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water_supply/water_rights/eflows/trinsanjacgalbaystake.html

Organizational Discussion

Chairman Espey called the meeting to order and stated that the objective of the BBEST, as stated in SB3, was to develop environmental flow recommendations for submission to the Trinity and San Jacinto and Galveston Bay Stakeholder Committee and the state-wide Science Advisory Committee. He indicated that in these initial meetings the group's efforts would be focused on "fact-finding" and information dissemination in order to meet that objective. He also noted that the BBEST budget had been tentatively approved by TWDB and had been sent to the Environmental Flows Advisory Group for final approval.

Mary Kelly, SAC liaison, gave an update of SAC activities to date, discussing the guidance documents that group was preparing in order to provide to the BBEST groups to assist them in their development of environmental flow regimes.

Antonietta Quigg

Dr. Quigg gave a presentation on freshwater inflows to Galveston Bay and primary productivity as an indicator of ecosystem function.

George Guillen

Dr. Guillen gave a presentation discussing the historical perspective to instream flow methodologies.

Dan Opdyke, TPWD, gave an overview of the Hydrology based Environmental Flow Regime method, or HEFR. The associated guidance document was recently approved by the SAC for use by the BBESTs and a training on the use of HEFR will be held in Austin.

Richard Browning

Dr. Browning gave an overview of historical flows in the Trinity River basin, discussing confidence and uncertainty, and Region H Water Planning Group targets.

Discussion of available information and knowledge gaps

Dr. Lester began a group discussion of data needs and the fundamental question: is the hydrological data the fundamental data to be used in developing environmental flow recommendations. The SAC has developed guidance suggesting this is the primary data set to be used. Members discussed potential data (water quality, biology, etc) sets that might be applied as an overlay to the hydrologic data set for the basins. Members agreed that establishing the geographic scope to which environmental flows recommendations are applied is critical due to the fact that hydrologic data is the most readily available and complete data set the group can use. The group discussed the use of WAM data and agreed that it is not a suitable substitute for actual gaged flow data. Mike Turco, USGS will give a presentation outlining available USGS hydrologic data at the next meeting.

Approval of meeting minutes

The BBEST unanimously approved the minutes from the January 15, 2009 meeting.

Review and Develop agenda for next meeting

Members agreed to hold the next BBEST meeting in Austin, location TBD.

Potential agenda items suggested were:

- LCRA/SAWS Water Project
- National Wildlife Federation's Bays in Peril
- USGS data presentation
- Update on Sabine/Neches BBEST activities
- HEFR workshop overview

Public Input

Norman Johns, National Wildlife Federation, commended the group on their efforts and a fruitful meeting.

Meeting Adjourned