

Texas Environmental Flows Science Advisory Committee

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

9:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

Bldg. F, Room 2210

Austin, Texas

Meeting Minutes

Call Meeting to Order

Bob Brandes

Approval of Meeting Minutes

The Science Advisory Committee (SAC) approved the meeting minutes from the February 4, 2009 SAC meeting.

Liaison Reports on BBEST Meetings

Mary Kelly and George Ward

Mary Kelly, SAC member, summarized the events of the Trinity and San Jacinto Rivers and Galveston Bay BBEST meeting held on February 11, 2009. The next Trinity and San Jacinto Rivers and Galveston Bay BBEST meeting will be on March 11, 2009 at the Lower Colorado River Authority's Redbud Center in Austin, TX. George Ward, SAC member, recalled the events of the Sabine and Neches Rivers and Sabine Lake Bay BBEST meeting held on February 20, 2009. The next Sabine and Neches Rivers and Sabine Lake Bay BBEST meeting will be on March 31, 2009 at the Lower Neches Valley Authority Offices in Beaumont, TX.

Budget Update

Barney Austin, TWDB

Barney Austin, Texas Water Development Board (TWDB), updated the SAC on funding that remains for the 2008-2009 fiscal year, to be used by August 31, 2009.

Consider Statement of Work - Literature Review

Todd Chenoweth, TCEQ

Todd Chenoweth, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), provided a draft statement of work for future basin literature reviews and described literature review work that TCEQ requested from contractors for the Trinity/San Jacinto and Sabine/Neches basins. The SAC discussed literature review work needed for 1) the Colorado and Lavaca Rivers and Matagorda and Lavaca Bay; and 2) the Guadalupe, San Antonio, and Aransas Rivers and Copano, Aransas, and San Antonio Bay Basins. SAC members commented that 1) bays and estuaries should be included in future literature review requests; 2) data management protocol should be adopted, not created; and 3) literature review work is most needed for the Lavaca and Guadalupe systems and the San Antonio Bay. If funding is available, the SAC requests literature review work for the Upper Colorado River.

Report on HEFR Workshop

Dan Opdyke, TPWD

Dan Opdyke, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), summarized the events of a HEFR workshop held on February 24, 2009 at Espey Consultants, Inc. in Austin, TX. Mr. Opdyke provided a handout "Hydrology-Based Environmental Flow Regime (HEFR) Potential Enhancements and Modifications", describing potential changes to be made to

HEFR. The SAC discussed which modifications are necessary and how to proceed with the changes.

ACTION ITEM: Bob Brandes, SAC member, and Dan Opdyke, TPWD, will meet to organize a subgroup to address changes to be made to HEFR within the next month (particularly items #1, #2, #3, and #6 from the handout).

Progress Report on B&E Memo

Bob Brandes

Bob Brandes, SAC member, guided the SAC through the latest draft of the Bay and Estuaries deliverable. The SAC commented on revisions that could be made to the document and members were assigned sections to revise. SAC members suggested that the committee attend a presentation "LCRA/SAWS Water Project - Instream Flow Study Matagorda Bay Health Evaluation" scheduled for 10:30 AM at the March 11, 2009 Trinity and San Jacinto Rivers and Galveston Bay BBEST meeting.

ACTION ITEM: SAC members will submit comments and revisions to Bob Brandes by March 20, 2009. Dr. Brandes will then combine the revisions and submit a revised document to the SAC within a few days.

Progress Reports (Overlays to Hydrology Analyses)

Sediment Loading

Frank Heitmuller

Frank Heitmuller, SAC member, summarized revisions made to the current sediment loading overlay deliverable.

ACTION ITEM: Mr. Heitmuller will submit a revised document to the SAC within the next week.

Water Quality

Paul Jensen

Paul Jensen, SAC member, provided two handouts "Nutrient and Water Quality Overlay on Hydrology-based Instream Flow Recommendations" and "Water Quality and Nutrients Overlay". The SAC recommended that the "Water Quality and Nutrients Overlay" document be added to the B&E memo.

Biology

Jim Wiersema

Jim Wiersema, SAC member, commented on progress being made with the biology overlay document. Mr. Wiersema stated that he would like to meet with other biologists before proceeding with the document.

Consider Geographic Extent Draft for release to BBEST

Full Committee

Todd Chenoweth, TCEQ, provided the latest draft of the geographic scope deliverable "Geographic Scope of Instream Flow Recommendations" and a handout "TCEQ Current Practices to Determine Streamflow and Restrictions on Ungaged Streams". The SAC commented on changes to be made to the deliverable.

ACTION ITEM: The SAC and state agencies will provide comments to TCEQ by March 9, 2009. If revisions are minor, TCEQ will revise the document and return it to the SAC by March 10, 2009. The SAC would then deliver the document to the BBESTs. Bob Huston, SAC Chair, will compose a transmittal document to accompany the deliverable.

Presentation on BRA HEFR Application**Phil Price, BRA**

Phil Price, Brazos River Authority (BRA), gave a presentation concerning how the HEFR method is being used in the Brazos River Basin. Mr. Price fielded questions from the SAC and public.

Presentation on Sabine Lake Freshwater Inflow Studies**Jack Tatum, SRA**

Jack Tatum, Sabine River Authority (SRA), provided a handout "Sabine-Neches Estuary and Lower Tidal Sabine River: A System in Transition" and gave information to the SAC about the Sabine-Neches Estuary (Sabine Lake) and man-made alterations to the estuary.

Presentation on Region H Environmental Flows Analyses**Mike Reedy**

Mike Reedy gave a presentation on the Region H Environmental Flow Study results. Mr. Reedy answered questions from the SAC and responded to comments from the public.

Presentation on Recent Caddo Lake (Cypress Basin) Flow Standards Lowery/Trungale

Rick Lowery gave a presentation "Results of the December 2008 Workshop on Environmental Flows in the Cypress River Basin", immediately followed by Joe Trungale's PowerPoint presentation "Overlays to Hydrology-Based Environmental Flow Regimes". Mr. Lowery and Mr. Trungale addressed questions and comments from the SAC.

Public Comments

Norman Johns, National Wildlife Federation, voiced his concerns over using HEFR for B&E inflows. The SAC requested that Dr. Johns submit his concerns to the committee.

Glenda Callaway and Bill Espey expressed their gratitude to the SAC for the committee's dedication.

Next Meeting (Schedule and Agenda)

The next SAC meeting is scheduled for 8:30 - 1:00 PM, April 7, 2009 at TPWD.

Tentative agenda items:

- Discuss revisions to the B&E memo.
- Discuss progress made by the HEFR modifications group.
- Literature review process update
- Sediment modeling discussion

Meeting Adjourned