

**March 16, 2010 Sabine and Neches Rivers and Sabine Lake
Bay Basin and Bay Stakeholder Committee (BBASC) Meeting Minutes**
Nacogdoches Recreation Center
Nacogdoches, Texas / 10:00 am

Members Present: Jerry Clark (Chair), Robert Stroder (Vice-Chair), David Alford, Christopher Bean, Keith Bonds, Greg Carter, Ken Dickson, Bruce Drury, Walter Glenn, Kelley Holcomb, Kathleen Jackson, Jerry Nichols, Fr. Sinclair Oubre, Jody Puckett, David Roemer, Monty Shank, Dick Sherron, Bob Staton

Call to Order

Chairman Jerry Clark called the meeting to order.

Approval of January 19, 2010 Meeting Minutes

Members reviewed and unanimously approved the minutes from the January 19, 2010 meeting.

Introductions

All committee members and other attendees introduced themselves.

Public Comment

None.

Science Advisory Committee (SAC) Comments

Dr. Bob Brandes, vice-chairman of the SAC, gave an overview of the SAC's comments on the Basin and Bay Expert Science Team's (BBEST) final recommendation report stating that the comments were mostly positive with only a few concerns. The SAC agreed with the BBEST's approach of evaluating historical flows given the lack of specific data concerning flow-ecology relationships. The BBASC must now balance the BBEST flow regimes with other needs, which necessitates a look at the effect of the recommendations on other uses including water supply projects. For this, the BBASC may need to lean upon the BBEST for guidance and assistance. There was discussion on other options for getting assistance with the evaluation of the recommendations and the time constraints involved with the June 1st BBASC report deadline. Another possibility would be for the BBASC to request additional time from the Environmental Flows Advisory Group.

Sabine-Neches BBASC Comments

Jack Tatum, chairman of the BBEST, presented a handout containing a compilation of BBEST report comments submitted by the BBASC (four members). Those members reiterated their comments. Jack mentioned that BBEST members David Parkhill and Sam Vaughn were doing some preliminary analysis of the effects of the BBEST flow recommendations on potential new water supply projects or permit amendments for existing projects (e.g. Toledo Bend Reservoir). In response to a concern about low subsistence flow recommendations, Jack stated that there are required minimum flow

releases for all of the major reservoirs in the basin. In a discussion of the current state of the environment, there was mention of documented tidal marsh decline and other species-specific declines.

Sabine-Neches BBEST Comments

Covering what hadn't been mentioned in the previous discussion, Jack brought up the Sabine estuary and gave an update on the Army Corps of Engineers' proposed deepening of the ship channel. The pre-project studies have been completed, and a report will be coming out in the near future that outlines the potential impacts to estuarine habitats and how those impacts might be mitigated. Regarding the potential impacts of environmental flow recommendations on things such as lake levels, recreation, and fisheries, Jack stated that we are in the process of assessing these potential impacts. Other things for the BBASC to consider in light of potential changes to lake levels and river flows are possible impacts to drought plans and their triggers, water intakes, as well as liability issues.

Evaluation of other factors including present and future needs for other uses related to water supply

Jerry Clark reiterated the BBASC charge to come up with recommendations that balance the needs of people and the environment. Acknowledging the constraints of little time and imperfect information, Chairman Clark asked the Committee for suggestions on how to move forward. Some members commented that more time and money be requested to adequately meet the group's charge. Others felt that the BBASC should move forward with the current timeline. Texas Parks & Wildlife Department and Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) staff offered their support to assist with needed evaluations. One member suggested asking the state agencies to compile available strategies for implementing recommendations and to perform the first two steps (Water Availability Model (WAM) analyses) in the SAC's implementation discussion paper (February 2010).

Draft Report Outline Discussion

A draft report outline was provided to BBASC members. Chairman Clark will commit Jack Tatum and other Sabine River Authority staff to put together a draft report, involving state agency assistance where possible. Dr. Brandes suggested that the BBASC authorize Jack to work with the state agencies to perform the WAM analyses. Jack mentioned that they have already been in communication with TWDB and will expand on that. A motion was approved to move forward with the draft report and analyses as discussed.

Next Meeting: agenda and schedule

The next meeting was set for Tuesday, May 4th at 10:00 am at the Nacogdoches Recreation Center.