

Nueces River and Corpus Christi and Baffin Bays Basin and Bay Expert Science Team (BBEST)

Monday, June 21, 2010 at 10:00 a.m.
Chamber of Commerce, Corpus Christi, TX
[Driving Directions](#)

MINUTES

Members Present: Tom Arsuffi, Ken Dunton, Rocky Freund, Ben Hodges, David Hoeninghaus, Ryan Smith, Greg Stunz, Sam Vaughn

Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order and participants introduced themselves.

BBEST Charge and Timeline as Stated in SB3 (Cory Horan - TCEQ)

Cory Horan, TCEQ, discussed the duties of the Basin and Bay Expert Science Team as stated in Senate Bill 3, specifically noting that the BBEST was to develop environmental flow recommendations based on best available science. He also discussed the SB3 timeline for the development of an environmental flow analyses and a recommended environmental flow regime, and explained role of the BBEST and the Basin and Bay Area Stakeholder Committee (BBASC).

Introduction and areas of expertise (BBEST)

Members of the BBEST introduced themselves and discussed their background and areas of expertise.

SAC/BBEST and BBASC/BBEST Relationships

Paul Montagna, the SAC liaison to the BBEST, gave an overview of the makeup and charge of the Texas Environmental Flows Science Advisory Committee (SAC). He noted that the SAC had produced several guidance documents directed toward the BBESTs to assist them in their stated charge, as well as provide consistency among the various BBESTs across the state. He discussed the challenges the SAC has dealt with in developing this guidance, noting that much time and effort had been put into the process from all groups. He discussed the need to define "Sound Ecological Environment" early on in the process, as well as the recommendation to consider biological conditions of the basin/bay system up front. He also noted that the BBEST will need to allocate time dedicated to working with the BBASC after the BBEST has developed an environmental flow analyses and a recommended environmental flow regime.

Previous BBEST Experience

Member Sam Vaughn discussed the activities of the Sabine/Neches BBEST. He discussed the various flow components which were used in the development of their recommendations (Subsistence flows, Base flows, High Flow Pulses, and Overbank events) and the need to link these hydrological events to the biological considerations of the basin/bay system. He suggested that defining the geographic scope of the system early on in the process was key. He also discussed the formation of subcommittees to address different components of an environmental flow regime, and noted that this was very helpful to the BBEST in meeting their charge. He gave an overview of the Sabine/Neches BBEST recommendations, stating the group's consensus agreement was that the current state of the Sabine/Neches system constituted a Sound Ecological Environment and explained the various challenges the group dealt with.

BBEST Budget Overview

Ruben Solis, TWDB, gave an overview of the BBEST budget process and stated that the TWDB provides administrative support for budgeting the SB3 process. He noted that BBEST members are eligible for compensation for their time and attendance, as well as their travel and lodging expenses. He explained that there is \$228,000 allocated to each currently active BBEST, and

that each BBEST would need to develop a budget to outline their reimbursement needs. This budget will need to be approved by the Environmental Flows Advisory Group. Questions about the budget or reimbursements can be directed to Gayla Ray, TWDB, at gayla.ray@twdb.state.tx.us.

Administrative and Technical Documentation Support

Cory Horan discussed the administrative support that will be provided to the group. He noted that the TCEQ will coordinate with the members to schedule meeting dates and locations. The TCEQ will draft minutes for each meeting that reflect decisions made by the group and will maintain a website that will host meeting materials and presentations.

The three resource agencies, TWDB, TPWD, and TCEQ, will provide technical support to the group. It was noted that agency staff contributed greatly to the development of SAC guidance documents and that staff had been actively participating in previous BBEST activities.

Elect Chair and Vice-Chair (BBEST)

The selection of a chair and vice-chair was postponed because several members were not in attendance. Discussions related to this task will occur via e-mail between meetings with a formal selection to occur at the next meeting.

BBEST Meeting Rules

Cory Horan discussed the need for the group to establish meeting rules and process guidelines for the BBEST. In order to meet the objectives outlined in SB3 the group will need to establish rules for what constitutes a quorum, how to define consensus, and how the group will proceed if consensus is not reached. Meeting rules adopted by other groups established by SB3 were discussed as potential meeting rules for consideration by the group. Formal meeting rules were not adopted at this meeting. Cory Horan will put together a proposed set of rules based on those adopted by other SB3 groups for consideration and approval at the next BBEST meeting.

Future Meetings

The members discussed several potential locations in which future meetings can be held. The group agreed to hold meetings in several locations across the state to accommodate the needs of those traveling to the meetings. The group agreed that the next meeting will be held in the Austin area.

The group agreed that the standing dates for future meetings will be on the 4th Friday of every month, excepting those that conflict with holidays.

Next Meeting - Discussion Items

The following topics of discussion were proposed for future meetings:

- Discussion of the HEFR model
- Freshwater Inflow methodologies
- Discussion of Baffin Bay
- BBASC interaction
- Geographic Scope

Public Comment

No public comments were received at this time.

Adjourn