

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

Friday, December 10, 2010 at 10:00 a.m.  
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Austin, Texas

## **MINUTES**

### **Members Present:**

Sam Vaughn, Rocky Freund, Tom Arsuffi, David Buzan, Ken Dunton, Wayne Gardner, Ben Hodges, David Hoeninghaus, Lonnie Stewart, Greg Stunz, Lance Williams

### **Call to Order and Introductions**

Chairman Sam Vaughn called the meeting to order.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment at this time.

### **Approval of Minutes from October 22, 2010 Meeting**

Minutes from the October 22, 2010 meeting will be distributed and will be considered for approval at the next meeting.

### **Approval of Draft Meeting Rules**

Members discussed the draft meeting rules as prepared by Cory Horan, TCEQ. Revisions were made and approved as edited, by consensus. Mr. Horan will revise meeting rules to include the approved edits and copies of the final meeting rules will be distributed.

### **Science Advisory Committee (SAC) Report (Paul Montagna)**

SAC liason Paul Montagna discussed the SAC Work Plan document and Implementation document. SAC is revising the review procedures in response to comments, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> version of the review procedure document will be presented for approval at the January meeting. The 3<sup>rd</sup> version of the HEFR which includes updates made last winter will also be presented for approval.

### **BBASC Report**

BBASC member Rocky Freund stated that BBASC had not met since the previous update. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 19, 2011 in Uvalde.

### **BBEST Budget Status (TWDB)**

Caimee Schoenbaechler, TWDB, distributed a handout on the status of the budget. The present balance reflects everything submitted as of Wednesday, December 8, 2010. The SAC may be able to provide additional funds to the BBEST from their own budget.

### **Discussion of Field Reconnaissance (Freund, Vaughn)**

Chairman Sam Vaughn provided a presentation on streams in the Nueces basin to assist members in a better understanding and familiarity of the unique stream segments found in the basin. Chairman Vaughn and BBEST member Rocky Freund discussed logistics for a field trip to visit selected gage locations in the Three River area to occur concurrent with the next meeting. The field trip is tentatively scheduled for the morning of Friday, January 28, 2011, followed by an afternoon meeting.

### **Discussion of BBEST Recommendations Report and Timeline (Vaugh)**

Chairman Vaugh distributed a handout and presented an overview of the BBEST Recommendations Report that included revisions made at the last meeting. Members were reminded of the October, 2011 target date for delivery of the recommendations.

### **Discussion of Instream Work Elements and Issues**

Member Dave Buzan gave a summary of the instream subcommittee meetings and recommended seasons to be used in the flow regime matrix for both the Edwards and Non-Edwards plateau sites. The seasonal breakout recommendations were approved by consensus. Mr. Buzan discussed the different flow regime components and how to classify flows in each flow regime component. The subcommittee has proposed a flow regime matrix with overbank flows, high pulse flows, base flows, and subsistence flows.

Member Ryan Smith gave a presentation on the functions of the various flow components for each of the three proposed stream types (Coastal Rivers and Streams, Wildhorse Desert, and Hill Country). Handouts were distributed including a general guidance for the biological overlay and an initial attempt to apply this approach to the different rivers. Members were asked to submit any comments to Mr. Smith within 2 weeks (by December 24, 2010). Next Instream subcommittee conference call is scheduled for January 17, 2011.

Member David Hoeninghaus prepared a handout and led a discussion on Sound Ecological Environment. The instream subcommittee recommended that the BBEST adopt the SAC definition with modification to delete "are shown to be" in the environmental flow regime definition. The motion was seconded and approved by consensus.

### **Presentation on Draft TCEQ Environmental Flow Standards (Vaugh)**

Chairman Sam Vaugh presented examples of the draft TCEQ Environmental Flow Standards established for a location in the Trinity River Basin and a location in the Sabine River Basin to show members what the committee is working toward, and how the resulting standards in the two basins can be compared. The Trinity BBEST and Sabine Neches BBEST had different approaches to their recommendations while still meeting the requirements. Following the BBEST recommendations and stakeholder recommendations, TCEQ staff derived the draft rules for each basin. He mentioned that members need to consider what approach should be taken, select what are considered the appropriate number of components for the flow regime recommendations, and decide how the BBEST would like recommendations implemented. Chairman Vaugh requested Kathy Alexander (TCEQ) make a presentation in the next two months.

### **Discussion of Hydrology Work Elements and Issues (Vaugh, Opdyke)**

Chairman Vaugh presented a handout showing recent revisions to the Flow Regime Recommendations locations. Members agreed to remove the Los Olmos Creek from consideration. The Hydrology subcommittee recommended using thresholds of 25% and 75%, and use of IHA as the hydrographic separation method. Members agreed to move forward with the subcommittee recommendations. Dan Opdyke (TPWD) will run HEFR and hydrographic separation on approved locations. Analysis on gages with zero flow will be delayed pending further discussion. The subcommittee will provide a progress report at the January 28, 2010 meeting.

### **Discussion of Estuary Work Elements and Issues (Stunz)**

BBEST member Greg Stunz stated that the last meeting of the subcommittee was held December 7, 2010. The subcommittee will look into using the assemblage approach as opposed

to focal species. The subcommittee will also work on determining the baseline for a sound ecological environment. For the next meeting, the subcommittee plans to present an update on:

- Review of assemblage approach vs. focal species;
- Determination of baseline for defining Sound Ecological Environment for the bay system; and
- Framework of deliverables with the timeline specified.

### **Future Meetings**

The next meeting of the BBEST is scheduled for Friday January 28, 2011. Members will be notified with additional information regarding the field trip planned to coincide with the meeting.

### **Public Comment**

Stakeholders for the Rio Grande and Brazos River have been chosen. Nominations for BBESTs will probably be solicited in either January or February.

### **Adjourn**