

Colorado and Lavaca Rivers and Matagorda and Lavaca Bays Basin and Bay Area Stakeholder Committee (BBASC)

Wednesday, January 26, 2011 at 9:30 a.m.
LCRA Dalchau Service Center
3505 Montopolis Drive, Austin, TX 78744

Meeting Minutes

BBASC Members Present: Chair Patrick Brzozowski, Vice-Chair Myron Hess, Bruce Arendale, Jim Dailey, Ronald Gertson, Carroll Hall, David Hill, Deedy Huffman, Joe King, Frank Lewis, Teresa Lutes, Jack Maloney (alternate for Dick Ottis), Bob Pickens, L.G. Raun, Caroline Runge, Andrew Sansom, Clarence Schomburg, Haskell Simon, Buddy Treybig, Suzanne Zarling

1) Call to order and introductions

Chairman Patrick Brzozowski called the meeting to order.

2) Discussion and agreement on agenda

To accommodate individual schedules, it was decided to move up the BBEST update agenda item after administrative business. Also, the stakeholder presentations could get moved up earlier if needed. No additional items were added to the agenda.

3) Public comments (limit 3 min.)

None.

4) Administrative business

a) Approval of December 1 meeting minutes

The December 1, 2010 meeting minutes were approved as presented.

b) Consideration of revision to meeting rules

Myron Hess

Myron Hess presented his suggested meeting rule change to the committee. The proposed change would define excessive absences as absences from three consecutive meetings or three within a calendar year. All members approved the change. Gregg Easley (TCEQ) will incorporate the change in the meeting rules and distribute the revised version of the rules to the BBASC.

5) WAM subcommittee update

Patrick Brzozowski

a) WAM analysis examples

Kirk Kennedy

This agenda item occurred after the Free-Range Livestock presentation. Kirk Kennedy of the BBEST started his slide presentation with an overview of what the BBEST will accomplish: recommendations for 21 stream sites (four of which will be based on existing instream studies) and 2 bays (one of which will be based on an existing study). He then displayed and discussed examples of his WAM analysis of flow regimes from four example instream sites: Colorado River near San Saba,

Colorado River near Columbus, Lavaca River near Edna, and Tres Palacios near Midfield. A map handout was also provided demonstrating the location of these four sites. He discussed topics such as how pulse flows were derived and how they could be implemented, and how seasons were determined. Kirk then described the different types of WAM models (e.g., Region K, cutoff model) and WAM runs (runs 3 and 8) and explained the meaning of the output provided in the analysis tables. He said that tables similar to these will be included in the final BBEST report, and he stressed that the BBEST will be available to assist with the BBASC's understanding of the analyses.

b) Discussion of information needs

No discussion occurred in order to move on to the facilitation presentations.

6) BBEST update

Dave Buzan

BBEST chairman Dave Buzan gave his update after the conclusion of the administrative business item. He said that the BBEST is nearing completion of its work. To give an example of their work product, Dave distributed a handout containing a draft description of a sound environment and a draft environmental flow regime for the Colorado River at San Saba. Though acknowledging that streams and estuaries in the Colorado and Lavaca Basins have changed over time, the BBEST has concluded that the water bodies they have analyzed have acceptably sound environments with regards to flow regimes, and that human modifications have not substantially degraded the characteristic biological communities. The flow regimes that the BBEST are developing are intended to support these existing systems. There was some discussion about East Matagorda Bay and the fact that it is evolving into a different, yet expected, system given the human-induced reductions in its inflows. Dave then went over the example flow regime provided on the handout, explaining its organization and content of the monthly non-pulse and pulse flow recommendations. He explained the no-flow periods component of the regime, which states that any artificial increase in the historical frequency or duration of no-flow periods (which are described in the flow regime table) at a given site could negatively impact stream health. The channel maintenance flow component language was also discussed, which says that an additional quantity of flow, above that which is proposed within the flow regime, is needed to maintain channel morphology at any given site. This quantity of additional flow, as acknowledged through a preliminary analysis of three sites, can only be determined through a more comprehensive analysis than is possible within the present BBEST process. Dave mentioned that this would need to be discussed by the BBASC from an implementation standpoint, with BBEST support, and could also be a focus of the adaptive management component of the process. He reminded the members that the BBEST has set aside \$44,000 to provide support to the BBASC as they come up with their recommendations. Ronald Gertson recommended that the Google e-mail group be used as a forum for any BBASC-BBEST interaction (e.g., Q&A regarding today's discussion) that occurs outside of the meetings.

7) Professional facilitation

a) Subcommittee update

Teresa Lutes

This agenda item occurred after the WAM presentation. Teresa Lutes reviewed the purpose and activities of the facilitation subcommittee and introduced the two facilitator teams that will be giving presentations to the BBASC.

b) Possible facilitator interviews/selection of facilitator(s)

Suzanne Schwartz and Margaret Menicucci with the UT Center for Public Policy and Dispute Resolution and the team of Susan Springer (Intrinsic Consulting) and Marty Rozelle (The Rozelle Group) each presented information to the BBASC regarding their qualifications and proposed approach to facilitating the process of the stakeholder committee's arrival at consensus environmental flow recommendations. A question and answer session followed each presentation. It was mentioned that the facilitation subcommittee would make a selection decision by February 2nd and bring that before the full BBASC for approval at the February 9th meeting. After the facilitator teams were dismissed, the BBASC discussed the path forward. Teresa asked the BBASC to submit any comments on the facilitator candidates to the facilitation subcommittee by Friday, January 28th. The subcommittee would then meet on Monday, January 31st to select one of the teams. The selection would be communicated to the BBASC, and the BBASC would have until Wednesday, February 2nd to voice any objections. If none, the subcommittee would contact the selected team and begin contract discussions, with the goal of bringing a proposed contract for approval to the February 9th BBASC meeting. The discussion then turned to funding for the facilitation services. The National Wildlife Federation has offered to be the contracting agent. There is currently about \$16,500 in firm funding commitments, and with the addition of "soft" commitments, the total would be about \$25,000. With both candidates' proposals coming in around \$40,000, the group discussed the possibilities of additional funding and ways a contract could be structured based on available funding. Teresa mentioned that the facilitation subcommittee recommends the formation of a facilitation steering committee comprised of the BBASC chair and vice-chair plus two additional BBASC members. This would be handled at the February 9th meeting. A report committee, headed up by Joe King, was also recommended to be formed at the next meeting. All BBASC members approved of the idea of forming the two additional committees.

8) Stakeholder presentations

a) Free-Range Livestock

Frank Lewis/Clarence Schomburg

This agenda item occurred after the BBEST update. Clarence Schomburg gave a PowerPoint presentation entitled "Free Range Livestock in Texas". In his presentation, he discussed statistics regarding the number of cattle in Texas and their water and acreage needs, as well as what proportion of the state is rangeland. Regarding the water needs of cattle, he also mentioned that cattle are sensitive to levels of salinity in the water they drink. He talked about the more common breeds of cattle, horse, sheep, and goats raised in the state. He described the stages of beef production and displayed photographs of the Texana (Schomburg) and Hawkins

(Lewis) Ranches giving examples of some of these stages and activities. Lastly, Clarence discussed a handout that he provided that demonstrates the variety of uses of beef by-products.

b) Chemical Manufacturing

David Hill

Following the facilitation item, David Hill gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding chemical manufacturing. He presented statistics regarding the number of chemical plants along the Gulf Coast and the number of employees as well as the proportion of plants represented in Calhoun, Victoria, and Jackson Counties. David then gave an overview of Formosa Plastics in Point Comfort including the succession of facilities on the plant site, the type of consumer products it manufactures, how water is used or recycled in its processes, and how wastewater is treated. He also talked about the 245-acre Formosa-Tejano wetland complex located in southern Jackson County that provides educational and environmental benefits to the area.

9) Discussion of SB 3 charge and tasks

This item was moved to the next BBASC meeting.

10) Public comments (limit 3 min.)

None.

11) Next meeting date and agenda

a) When (February 9)/Where

Myron is still working on the location for the February 9th meeting. He should have it determined within a day or two, and the details will then be sent out to the BBASC.

b) Proposed agenda items/instream tour

Not discussed.

c) Schedule for subsequent meetings

Not discussed.