

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

Friday, January 28, 2011 at 2:00 p.m.
Choke Canyon State Park

MINUTES

Members Present: Sam Vaughn, Chair; Rocky Freund, Vice Chair; Ryan Smith; Tom Arsuffi; Greg Stunz; Ben Hodges; Dave Buzan; 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 and December 10, 2010
Meetings**

Approval of the minutes for both the October 22, 2010 and December 10, 2010 meetings was deferred until the next meeting, March 25, 2011. Copies of the draft minutes will be distributed to the members prior to the March 2011 meeting.

Approval of Draft Meeting Rules

Approval of the draft meeting rules was deferred. Revisions to the rules will be made and copies of the revised rules will be distributed for approval at the next meeting.

Science Advisory Committee (SAC) Report

There was no SAC update at this time. Dr. Dan Opdyke, TPWD, noted that the SAC was working to develop a new guidance document on attainment frequencies. It was noted that the Brazos and Rio Grande BBASC and BBEST, which will run concurrently with the Nueces, have been formed and will begin their work soon.

BBASC Report

Chairman Vaughn provided a copy of the power point presentation that he presented to the basin and bay stakeholder committee (BBASC) on the BBEST activities. He discussed the charges of the BBEST, hydrologic challenges of the Nueces Basin, bays and estuaries, and what the stakeholders will ultimately see when the BBEST process is complete.

BBEST Budget Status

Nolan Raphelt, TWDB, gave an update of the BBEST budget. He requested that BBEST members should submit invoices within 30 days.

Discussion of Field Reconnaissance

Members discussed the morning field reconnaissance of selected gage locations. They discussed conditions found at various sites, and how these conditions should be considered. Members agreed unanimously to have Chairman Vaughn contact the stakeholder who offered access to his ranch on the Nueces River, and make the necessary arrangements for a tour in conjunction with a meeting in Cotulla sometime in the summer. Members agreed to a tour of the delta/estuary in conjunction with the March 25, 2011 meeting, as well as and a tour of the hill country recharge areas in conjunction with the May meeting to be held in the area. Jace Tunnel, CBBEP, and Doyle Mosier, TWDB, volunteered to explore the necessary arrangements.

Discussion of BBEST Recommendations Report & Timeline (Vaughn)

Chairman Vaughn asked members to familiarize themselves with the reports soon to be completed by the Guadalupe/San Antonio, and the Colorado/Lavaca BBESTs. The members should be prepared to discuss the draft report outline and timetable at the March meeting. He added that with the progress to date, it would be difficult to meet the self-imposed October 1, 2012 deadline for the final report. The required delivery date is March 1, 2012.

Discussion of Instream Work Elements and Issues

Instream subcommittee chair Dave Buzan gave an overview of the instream subcommittee meeting January 17, 2011. He reported that Nolan Raphelt/TWDB agreed to perform the geomorphological analysis for the BBEST. Doyle Mosier, TPWD, said he was working with existing cross section data to develop habitat flow relationships. Chairman Vaughn requested TPWD and TWDB begin work to support the biological overlay and prepare a list of species and habitat guilds for three separate communities: hill country, below the recharge area, and below the reservoirs. TPWD will prepare a list of sites needing additional data to be included with field work being coordinated by Nolan Raphelt/TWDB. The field work schedule will be distributed if members wish to attend.

Mr. Buzan discussed the draft water quality parameters previously provided to members for input. Members agreed to ask Nolan Raphelt/TWDB to address effective discharge. Members agreed to request a presentation by Darwin Ockerman, USGS, on sediment transport modeling for the May, 2011 meeting. The literature review was postponed until after the TWDB work has been completed. Lynne Hamlin, TPWD, will provide available Texas ecosystem classification maps for riparian and floodplain vegetation for use in interpreting riparian zones. The subcommittee discussed revisions to the draft process timeline for the instream flow analysis.

Discussion of Hydrology Work Elements and Issues

Chairman Vaugh stated that the subcommittee had not met since the last BBEST meeting. However, members had a good idea of how to approach the sites with flow at least most of the time. Work is progressing on filling in data gaps and a fairly complete set of draft HEFR matrices that cover the three periods of record identified by the members (full, early and late) should be ready for those sites by the next meeting. The group is working with hydrographic separation based on IHA to identify rises and pulses more accurately. The group will decide how to approach sites with zero flow at the next work group meeting. Dr. Dan Opdyke, TPWD, will be prepared to make a presentation on sites that are complete and some sites with frequent zero flow at the March 25, 2011 meeting. The next subcommittee meeting will be held March 9, 2011 at 3:00 p.m.

Discussion of Estuary Work Elements and Issues

The Estuary subcommittee did not have a formal meeting since the last BBEST meeting. Subcommittee chair Dr. Greg Stunz said that members continue to work on the scope of work, defining a sound ecological environment and determining whether current conditions are indicative of a sound ecological environment. Member Dr. Ken Dunton has begun a review of existing literature. It was noted that the subcommittee intends to rely on the final reports of the Guadalupe/San Antonio and Colorado/Lavaca BBESTs and their findings related to San Antonio and Matagorda Bays for guidance in selecting study areas and focal species. Chairman Vaugh asked Dr. Stunz to discuss the issues considered for determining a sound ecological environment at the next meeting, and to include quantitative measures for specific species. Dr. Stunz noted that their process will probably include a combination of approaches including a look at the lower food chain as well as the indicator approach. The estuary subcommittee will schedule a meeting when all members are available.

Cory Horan, TCEQ, will add cell phone numbers to the member contact list and will distribute prior to the May meeting.

It was clarified that members are allowed to bill 5 hours for meetings.

Future Meetings

The next BBEST meeting will be held on March 25, 2011 in conjunction with a delta/estuary field tour. The following meeting will be held on May 27, 2011 in conjunction with a Hill Country Recharge area field tour in the area near Garner State Park. The estuary subcommittee will schedule a meeting when all members are available.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Adjourn