DRAFT (4/24/2011)

Timeline of Steps for Environmental Flows Assessment by the Brazos BBEST

In their initial meeting, the Brazos BBEST members agreed it is desirable to perform the bulk of our work during the period April 1–August 31, 2011. The Brazos BBEST has until March 31, 2012 to complete its task of producing a final recommendations report. However, state funding in support of the BBEST's work is only available for FY2011.   The Brazos BBEST members have set for themselves an ambitious timetable that will require working efficiently. This appears feasible given the advantage of having the work of previous BBESTs for guidance and comparison.

April 18, 2011 – 1st BBEST Meeting: introductions, description of task, discussion of budget issues, adoption of consensus rules, election of chairs, identification of environmental flows (EF) study components, preliminary discussion if geographic scope, candidate gages to define study reaches, assignment of subcommittees (Hydrology, Ecology), planning for future meetings

Apr. 19-May 22 – Individual assignments

1) Obtain information on gages and periods of record – *Hydrology subcommittee*
2) Draft budget for TWDB approval – *Tom Gooch*
3) Draft timeline of steps for our EF assessment – *Kirk Winemiller*
4) Review SAC guidance documents and previous BBEST reports – *ALL*

May 23-2 4 – 2nd BBEST Meeting:

1) Approval of budget – *Tom Gooch*
2) Discussion of draft timeline – *Kirk Winemiller*
3) Discussion of geographic scope – *Tom Gooch*
4) Review/approval of gage selection; periods of record – *Hydrology subcommittee/BBEST*
5) Review/discussion of flow separation procedures – *Dan Opdyke, TPWD*
6) Ecology components – discussion for consensus of "sound ecological environment", evaluation of strategies for obtaining EF recommendations, focal taxa, etc – *Ecology subcommittee/BBEST*

May 25-June 15 – Individual assignments

1) *Hydrology subcommittee* – Hydrological analysis of 16 gages (MBFIT/HEFR for flow separation)
2) *Hydrology subcommittee* – Begin review of methods to evaluate geomorphology and sediment transport in response to flow in the basin

3) *Ecology Subcommittee* – Review of scientific literature for evaluation methods for four ecological components (water quality, aquatic fauna [fishes, mussels?], riparian plants, estuary); selection of focal species; begin to assemble information from reports, publications, databases

Mid-June – 3rd BBEST Meeting:

1) Examine progress on all fronts
2) Begin to work towards a consensus on EF flow recommendations

Late June - early Aug. – Individual assignments

1) *Hydrology subcommittee* – summarize final hydrological analysis (flow separations for each gage, yielding various flow components (magnitude, duration, frequency, recurrence)
2) *Hydrology subcommittee* – complete geomorphological/sediment analysis, summarize
3) *Ecology Subcommittee* – complete analysis of water quality (DO x flow; primary productivity x flow, etc), analysis of aquatic focal species, analysis of riparian trees, and analysis of estuarine focal species
4) *Ecology Subcommittee* – draft initial proposal of EF recommendations base on 1, 2 and 3 above

Aug. 4-5 – 4th BBEST Meeting:

1) BBEST members evaluate EF recommendations; discussion of additional analyses or steps for adoption of consensus EF recommendations for each gage/stream segment

Aug. 31, 2011 – 5th BBEST Meeting:

1) Discuss any new evidence or refinements of EF recommendations; achieve consensus EF recommendations
2) outline BBEST recommendations report
3) begin assembling charts and figures for segments of the recommendations report and begin drafting text for segments (some segments will be mostly drafted by this point)

Sept. 1, 2011 – Mar. 1, 2012 – Continue BBEST discussions and refine recommendations document; assist Brazos BBASC with evaluations of flow recommendations and implementation issues' draft adaptive management (future research needs) recommendations for Brazos BBASC; prepare, sign and submit final BBEST recommendations report