

**Lower Rio Grande, Rio Grande Estuary and  
Lower Laguna Madre  
Basin and Bay Expert Science Team,  
Thursday, 1 December, 2011  
Meeting at UTPA**

**Minutes**

**Members present:** Hudson DeYoe, Carlos Marin, Bob Edwards, BBASC chair Tony Reisinger; Participating via teleconference: Dave Buzan, Warren Pulich, and Jude Benavides

**Call to Order**

Chairman Hudson DeYoe called the meeting to order.

**SAC update**

SAC liaison Bob Brandes provided a brief update on recent SAC activities and reminded the BBEST members to be cognizant of their March 1, 2012 deadline.

**Budget update**

Chairman DeYoe distributed a budget summary and requested that members confirm documented expenditures and make updates as needed.

**2012 contract updates**

Members reported that the isotope and report preparation contracts are in place. Member Jude Benavides stated that the TWRI contract is in motion but not yet executed.

**Report on Rio Grande Basin Water Resources Workshop**

Member Warren Pulich gave an update on his presentation at the recently held Rio Grande Water Resources Workshop hosted by the US Army Corps of Engineers on October 19 and 20, 2011. He provided an overview of the process and steps the BBEST is taking to develop environmental flow recommendations. He noted that Kevin Urbanczyk, chair of the Upper Rio Grande BBEST, had provided a similar presentation at the workshop.

**Updates on qualitative descriptions**

**1. Resacas**

Member Dave Buzan provided an update on the drafting of qualitative descriptions for resacas. The members discussed historical conditions relating to resacas and the Rio Grande and the need for a review of historical data. Members discussed strategies for evaluating resacas as a sound ecological environment and noted that access from the Rio Grande and Laguna Madre need to be considered.

## **2. Bahia Grande and San Martin Lake**

Chairman DeYoe noted that the draft description for the Bahia Grande and San Martin Lake had not been modified from the version sent out prior to the meeting. He discussed a proposal he recently submitted to look at the suitability of using San Martin Lake as an incubator of red tide.

## **3. Above tidal Rio Grande**

Member Bob Edwards noted that his draft outline regarding fish communities would be distributed soon. Warren Pulich will add a section addressing riparian vegetation.

### **Discussion and possible adoption of criteria to define/establish a "sound environment" and the associated "period of record" for selected study areas.**

Members began a discussion on what criteria to consider in defining a sound ecological environment. Members discussed the need to consider period of record, historical conditions past to present, hydrology, and focal species. Members discussed the geographic scope of the four study areas: Arroyo Colorado, Resacas, Lower Laguna Madre, and Rio Grande Tidal. The members agreed that the sound ecological environment definition will be different for the four study areas.

After discussion the members agreed that the primary section authors would develop a draft definition for comment by the full BBEST.

Rio Grande Tidal – Bob Edwards

Lower Laguna Madre – Hudson DeYoe and Warren Pulich

Resacas – Dave Buzan

Arroyo Colorado – Dave Buzan

### **Arroyo nutrient-flow relationships**

Chairman DeYoe presented his findings on nutrient-flow relationships by looking at annual gaged flows during wet, dry, and normal years and determining nutrient loading rates to the Lower Laguna Madre. He suggested that Nitrogen from the Arroyo Colorado is what's driving seagrass communities.

### **TXBLEND salinity output for Rio Grande**

Carla Guthrie, TWDB, provided a short update on the status of the TxBLEND model for the Rio Grande Tidal. She noted that the model was completed but has not been calibrated or validated at this point.

### **Next meeting date**

The BBEST will next meet on January 16, 2012 via conference call.

### **Adjourn**