

# **Trinity and San Jacinto River Basins and Galveston Bay BBASC Meeting**

Wednesday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 1:00 p.m., San Jacinto River Authority Office  
1577 Damsite Road, Conroe, Texas

## **Minutes**

**Members Present:** John Bartos, Chair; Jace Houston, Vice-Chair; Adam Sinclair; Tom Michel; Scott Alford; Pudge Willcox; Denis Qualls; Jim Parks; Glenda Callaway;; Ken Kramer; Carl Masterson (alternate for Terry Anderson); Jun Chang; Lisa Lattu (alternate for Jun Chang); Zachary Holland; Kathy Turner Jones; Dan Buhman (alternate for Jim Oliver); Phyllis Frank (alternate for Lori Traweek); Kevin Ward; Gene Fisseler; Glenn Lord

**BBEST Members Present:** Bill Espey, Chair; Jim Lester, Vice-Chair; Mike Turco; Mike Reedy; Tony Smith; Woody Woodrow; Webster Mangham

### **Call to Order**

Chair John Bartos called the meeting to order and the members introduced themselves.

### **Public Comment**

No public comments were made at this time.

### **Approval of November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013 Meeting Minutes**

The minutes from the November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013 meeting were unanimously approved.

### **Vote on renewing terms of all BBASC members**

Carl Masterson motioned and was seconded by Kevin Ward to renew all BBASC membership terms for another 5 year period beginning March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014. BBASC members inquired as to the process of replacing members for nonattendance and were informed by Chair John Bartos that this would be addressed at the next meeting.

### **Vote on renewing terms of all BBEST members**

All BBASC members in attendance were in agreement to renew the terms of all BBEST members another 5 years beginning April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014.

### **Acceptance of Resignations**

Both Ted Long's and Gena Leather's resignation from the stakeholder group was unanimously accepted.

### **Report of Vacancies and Nominations Committee**

Kevin Ward provided a brief overview of each BBASC and BBEST candidate's qualifications.

- a) Gene Fisseler was nominated and unanimously approved to replace Ted Long on the BBASC to represent industrial water users - electricity generation.
- b) Glenn Lord was nominated and unanimously approved to replace Gena Leathers on the BBASC to represent industrial water users – chemical manufacturing.
- c) Fran Gelwick was nominated and unanimously appointed as a member to the BBEST.
- d) Webster Mangham was nominated and unanimously appointed as a member to the BBEST.

## **Status of Workplan approval by the Environmental Flows Advisory Group (EFAG)**

Chair Bartos inquired as to when the EFAG would meet to approve the Trinity's workplan. Leslie Patterson, TCEQ, informed the members that to date no meeting is scheduled for the group.

## **Workplan Project Updates**

- a) Antonietta Quigg, Texas A&M University, Galveston – Dr. Quigg representative, Rachel Windham, presented to members the status of the funded workplan project aimed at identifying bioindicator species responsive to freshwater inflows to Galveston Bay. She indicated that several species are currently being evaluated for seasonal and/or annual sensitivities to freshwater water inflows including *Vallisneria*, *Rangia*, and oyster drills. The study is set to be completed in summer 2015. BBEST member, Woody Frossard, inquired as to whether the BBEST might have the opportunity to review the draft findings of the study. Ruben Solis, TWDB, indicated that while there is no contractual obligation to provide the document for review, the Trinity BBASC/BBEST can request to review the draft report.
- b) Webster Mangham, Trinity River Authority – Mr. Mangham provided an update on the progress of LiDAR acquisition and the flow assessment study for the Middle Trinity River. He indicated that out of three total sites being evaluated, collection of field data at RM 444 is complete and sites RM 085 and RM295 should be completed in winter 2014 and spring 2015, respectively. He further stated that RAS modeling for RM444 is in progress. Members inquired as to when a draft report would be available and Mr. Mangham indicated that draft reports would be made as study sites are completed.
- c) Amy Bussink, United States Geologic Survey – Mrs. Bussink presented on the status of the project aimed at determining freshwater inflow volume from the Trinity River into Trinity Bay. She indicated that a index velocity meter was installed April 2014 and the velocity data is presently available through USGS's National Water Information System Web Interface. Members were further informed that hydrologic monitoring as well as index velocity rating development are ongoing; however, closure of the saltwater barrier since installation of the gage has delayed development of the index velocity rating. Members inquired as to when a final report would be available and Mrs. Bussink stated that a progress report would be provided within a one year but that no formal report would be drafted.

## **Discussion of Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) RFQ – Ruben Solis**

Ruben Solis, TWDB, discussed a project, funded through USACE assistance, aimed at evaluating SB3 environmental flow regulations on freshwater inflows and salinity within the Trinity-San Jacinto estuary. He stated that while the study proposed was more exploratory in nature, several BBASC and BBEST members had expressed concerns over the scope of the RFQ. He indicated that at present the Board is holding off pursuing the project and encouraged further discussions between members and the Board with regards to the project. BBASC members inquired as to the time period before the study would move forward, the type of USACE assisted funding, and whether the funding could be used to host a symposium to support discussions. Dr. Solis informed members that the funding was project specific and while the Board could participate in a symposium, they would be unable to reallocate project funding.

## **Update on the Middle Trinity Texas Instream Flow Program (TIFP) Studies**

John Botros, TPWD, provided an update to members concerning the status of ongoing Texas Instream Flow studies in the Middle Trinity River. He indicated that habitat, biological, and water quality components of the study have commenced and that the TWDB approved funding at their October 21<sup>st</sup> board meeting to support scientific review of the study design. He stated at

present, the study design is undergoing internal review at TPWD, TCEQ, and TWDB and that it should be finalized and available later next year. Members inquired as to the timeline for all remaining TIFP studies across Texas, and Mr. Botros indicated that the remaining basin instream flow studies are on schedule to be completed by 2016.

**Agency Updates – TCEQ, TPWD, TWDB**

- a) TCEQ – Leslie Patterson provided a handout to members concerning the status of SB2 TIFP studies in the Middle Trinity.
- b) TPWD – Lynn Hamlin informed members about three new programs TPWD is requesting funding for in the upcoming legislative session. The programs include an oyster shell recovery and replacement program, a new coastwide habitat monitoring program, and an aquatic invasive species program (species include lion fish, tiger prawn, giant salvinia, salt cedar, zebra mussels, etc.). Members inquired as to the amount of funding requested and Mrs. Hamlin indicated TPWD asked for a total \$18.9 million for the biennium.
- c) TWDB – Ruben Solis informed members that TWDB is requesting \$471,140 in legislative appropriations for the research and planning fund in support of instream flow studies as well as the coastal data sonde program and tide monitoring program.

**Announcements**

It was announced that extra HGAC reports are available if members wish to take home a copy.

**Public Comments**

No public comments were made at this time.

**Next Meeting**

The next TSJ BBASC meeting date/conference call is tentatively scheduled for February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Members suggested that next meeting agenda items include a legislative report, status of EFAG approval of the workplan, a report from the vacancies and nominations committee concerning inactive BBASC members, and any additional progress reports from the BBASC or funded workplan groups concerning basin related studies.

**Adjourn**