

Trinity and San Jacinto Rivers and Galveston Bay  
Basin and Bay Expert Science Team

7th Meeting – Agenda  
July 2, 2009  
Austin, TX

**Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Headquarters  
Commissioner’s Hearing Room  
4200 Smith School Road  
Austin, TX 78744**

**MINUTES**

**Call meeting to order, Business Review, Budget Update**

Chairman Espey called the meeting to order. He distributed a handout documenting the current status of the BBEST budget and asked that members submit reimbursement forms as soon as possible so a more accurate picture of the remaining budget is available. Chairman Espey indicated that the BBEST needed to begin planning the budget for the FY 2010-2011 biennium. He noted the SAC beginning these discussions with TWDB and the BBEST needed to begin preparations on a draft budget.

Cory Horan, TCEQ, made a clarification on the schedule for developing an environmental flow regime for the BBEST. He noted that the correct deadline for BBEST recommendations was actually December 1, 2009, and not November 1, 2009 as previously noted.

**Available SAC guidance**

Bob Brandes, SAC liaison, gave an update of the activities of the SAC to date. He noted that “working drafts” of the B&E and Sediment Transport documents were now available. They are formally titled “Methodologies for Establishing a Freshwater Inflow Regime for Texas Estuaries” and “Fluvial Sediment Transport as an Overlay to Instream Flow Recommendations for the Environmental Flows Allocation Process.” He indicated that the Biological and Water Quality overlays were in the process of being developed and the SAC would be working to finalize these as soon as possible. He also indicated that the SAC Hydrologic (HEFR) subgroup was going to meet again soon to further refine HEFR based on user input to date.

**Stakeholder/BBASC Presentation Summary (July 1, 2009)**

Chairman Espey reviewed the presentation given to the Trinity, San Jacinto, and Galveston Bay Stakeholder Committee. Vice Chair Jim Lester and Richard Browning were also in attendance and participated in this discussion. They gave an overview of where the BBEST was to date, discussing the budget briefly and the statement of qualifications the BBEST was currently considering, including the instream and freshwater inflow work to be performed.

### **SOW for Overlay SAC/BBEST Status (discussion included RFQ Development for Instream Flow work)**

Chairman Espey then began a discussion of the statement of qualifications (SOQ) for the ecological overlay work to be performed with SAC funding. He noted that SAC Chairman Huston and SAC member Fred Manhart had worked to finalize the SOQs and they have been submitted to the TWDB to initiate the contracting process. Carla Guthrie, TWDB, noted that the work would be performed by the Trinity River Authority and the San Jacinto River Authority for their respective basins. The group discussed the work to be done and how the scopes of work were developed.

Tony Smith and Joe Trungale presented and gave an overview of the draft scope of work for the hydrology (HEFR) work to be done, explaining the individual sections of the draft and how the discussions and decisions by the subcommittee crafted the current draft. They indicated the ultimate goal is to develop preliminary flow matrices on which environmental flow recommendations can be set for differing flow regimes. Members discussed and provided suggestions for refining the draft scope of work. The subcommittee will continue to refine the scope and run it by the BBEST members before submittal to TWDB.

Dan Opdyke, TPWD, discussed the hydrological work that the Sabine/Neches BBEST is undergoing, and suggested that the preliminary results from that group may be of use for this BBEST subgroup.

### **Instream Flow and B&E Scopes of Work**

Vice Chair Lester outlined the work on the salinity zonation approach to defining freshwater inflow recommendations. He gave an overview of the combined approach proposed by Smith and Trungale. He began a discussion of the tasks outlined in the draft scope of work. Members discussed individual tasks and methods within those tasks and provided input and suggestions for refining the scope of work. In this discussion the group agreed to remove task 4 from the scope of work and that the work described in this task would be performed by the B&E subcommittee. Thusly, the budget was revised to remove the \$12,000 allocated for Task 4 and shift it to allow the committee members to do this work. Salinity workshops were proposed and agency staff agreed to participate as well. All suggestions for additional members to participate are to be sent to vice chair Lester.

### **BBEST Flow Recommendation – Deliverable Outline**

Chairman Espey began a discussion of what the final deliverable, an environmental flow regime recommendation, might look like. He suggested that a work group be formed to begin exploring options of the form the recommendations might take. He noted the need for documentation that would help explain how the BBEST came up with its recommendations which would also serve to better justify those recommendations. Tony Smith reviewed the specific mandate from the statute regarding the BBEST deliverable, where those recommendations will be sent, and what actions other groups (BBASC, SAC, and TCEQ) will take regarding the recommendations. Chairman Espey proposed that he and Vice Chair Lester will initiate this process by preparing an outline which the BBEST can review.

Tony Smith requested that the TCEQ provide a list of minimum requirements that would be needed to implement the environmental flow recommendations in the rule making process. Joe Trungale relayed a discussion from the previous SAC hydrology subcommittee concerning this issue. Todd Chenoweth, TCEQ, requested guidance from the subcommittee on how to make the transition from environmental flow recommendations to environmental flow restrictions (similar to the Lyons method). Staff and BBEST members who participated in the meeting discussed methods on how this might be achieved and if it was necessary. The BBEST agreed that, due to statutory requirements and time restrictions imposed on the group, that this decision was not part of their charge.

### **Review and Future Initiatives**

The following agenda items were suggested for the next meeting, set for August 13, 2009 at 10:00:

- Finalize/Review B&E Scope of work
- Finalize/Review Instream Scope of work
- Discuss the “final deliverable” outline
- Jim Tolan, TPWD, presentation
- Woody Woodrow follow up discussion on Tolan presentation
- Adaptive Management discussion

### **Public Input**

Chris Loft, TCEQ, clarified that the TCEQ does have a full year to implement environmental flow standards through the rule making process.

Tony Smith reviewed the statutory provisions related to the adaptive management component and the work plan required to be developed in order to achieve adaptive management.

### **Adjourn**