

# North Bosque River TMDL Public Meeting

Tuesday, September 1, 2020, 2:00pm to 4:00pm

## Meeting Summary

### **Welcome and Introductions – Lori Hamilton, TCEQ**

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Water Quality Planning Division Director and Office of Water Director introduced themselves and elected officials.

### **Presentation:**

#### **Overview of the TMDL and I-Plan – Louanne Jones, TCEQ**

The TCEQ Project Manager (PM) presented an overview and brief history of the TMDL and I-Plan measures for the North Bosque River.

#### **Current Status of the TMDL I-Plan Management Measures – Louanne Jones, TCEQ**

The TCEQ PM presented the current status of the I-Plan measures and the status of the I-Plan for each management measure. Additionally, the TCEQ PM covered some activities that were not included in the I-Plan. The overall status of the watershed shows water quality improvement, but not all goals have been met yet.

#### **Water Quality Status (Index Sites) – Jimmy Millican, TIAER**

The TCEQ PM introduced Jimmy Millican, the Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Science (TIAER) PM contracted with TCEQ for the North Bosque River implementation monitoring project. Mr. Millican opened his presentation with an update of the Geographic Information System (GIS) Inventory that is developed for the watershed each year. It was noted that the inventory indicated that there has been an overall drop in “active” fields (41%) and an increase in “historical” fields (771%) of permitted animal feeding operations (AFOs) and concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) in the watershed. This indicates that there is much less disposal activity on WAFs in the watershed since the TMDL was first established. Additionally, Mr. Millican presented an overall status on water quality at each index and a supplemental site on the North Bosque River. He stated that water quality has improved in the watershed.

#### **Next Steps – What options should be explored? – Discussion**

Louanne Jones led an open discussion with stakeholders exploring the next steps in the North Bosque River. She specifically asked for stakeholder input regarding the evaluation of existing and proposed monitoring sites, a review of the implementation strategies, and any other topics that had not been discussed prior.

#### ***Call for Questions***

Paul Cain, City of Waco, requested that the raw data for the graphs from Jimmy Millican’s presentation be made available to stakeholders. Jimmy Millican indicated he would provide the information.

Jenna Walker, Bosque River Coalition and Meadows Center, asked if any investigation has been done to explore why the most upstream (Above Stephenville) site remains so high, much higher than other monitored sites. Louanne Jones responded that this was one of the topics that TCEQ and TIAER would like to discuss with stakeholders. Jimmy Millican elaborated more that it is difficult to isolate where the pollutants are coming from as the Above Stephenville monitoring site (site 17226/BO020) receives combined flow from two forks of the river. One of the proposed monitoring changes would be to set up monitoring in the two forks of the river above site 17226/BO020 to isolate the pollutant location that is feeding into the Above Stephenville site.

Dickie Clary, County Commissioner for Hamilton County Precinct 4, asked if the improvement in water quality correlates to improvements to instream algae conditions downstream such as in Lake Waco?

Jimmy Millican responded that he is unsure if that is the case as Lake Waco is not being monitored as a part of this project.

Jay Bragg, Texas Farm Bureau, commented that although there are still pollutant concerns upstream, it appears that all downstream sites are meeting the standard, which is what was a stakeholder goal.

Jim Bradbury, Attorney for the Texas Association of Dairymen, asked if other potential sources of pollutant contribution have been looked at in the Above Stephenville site area. Jimmy Millican responded that the area is similar to other parts of the watershed in terms of land use (hay fields and CAFOs) and potential sources. There is a small wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) located on the north fork that has not been investigated much as a potential source.

Paul Cain, City of Waco, commented that in addition to normal flow phosphorous readings, Waco is very interested in the concentrations during storm events. Is there data that shows a correlation between U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) peak gauge flows by date and time versus the data and time of collected sampling data? Jimmy Millican responded that he will have to look into that information and see if it is available.

Jay Bragg, Texas Farm Bureau, asked if the project has an accounting and/or estimate of total annual phosphorous loading prior to the TMDL efforts to compare against existing loading data. Jimmy Millican responded that he would look into whether that data was available.

### ***Open Discussion about Monitoring Sites***

Jimmy Millican opened discussion with a proposed change in monitoring to include monitoring on the two forks of the North Bosque River above Stephenville to investigate potential sources of pollutants contributing to the Above Stephenville (site BO020) monitoring area. At this point, the proposal includes the cessation of stormwater monitoring funding that would be redistributed to funding the monitoring on the two forks due to budget constraints.

Jim Bradbury, Attorney for the Texas Association of Dairymen, commented that he is interested in looking into the monitoring of the two forks at the Above Stephenville monitoring site. The data has been constant with little variability, which raises more questions than answers. He also asked what kind of sampling would be completed, such as routine, periodic, etc.? Jimmy responded that this would be routine sampling pending flow, which can be intermittent in both forks. He also noted that it might have to be biased flow monitoring after rainfall events, depending on how often the two forks run dry. Extra monitoring is possible when flows are good.

Arden Kemmler commented that it would be beneficial to determine the difference between the two streams and begin to identify potential source(s).

Jenna Walker, Bosque River Coalition and Meadows Center, commented that stormwater sampling is still relevant to this project. Is there another sampling option to reduce instead? Jimmy Millican responded that there are other options to explore other than what is being proposed. In addition, this sampling would not happen this fiscal year (FY) but most likely in FY2022. Louanne Jones confirmed this as well.

Jennifer Bronson-Warren, Texas Parks and Wildlife, asked if we could move other stations in the watersheds to be relocated on the two forks. Jimmy Millican responded that it is hard to say, as the only non-index sites in the watershed that could be dropped would be the site on Greens Creek and Hico.

### ***Open Discussion about Implementation Strategies***

Louanne Jones opened the discussion by asking the stakeholders the following questions:

- What do you believe should be out next steps regarding implementation for the project?
- Should we begin thinking about revising the I-Plan, or keep as is?

Jim Bradbury, Attorney for the Texas Association of Dairymen, commented that this project has achieved significant progress through the years and that we should begin identifying a landing spot as a way to give stakeholders an idea of how we will begin wrapping up the project.

Paul Cain, City of Waco, commented that there has been improvement in the watershed, but would like to explore more about some storm flows that have been above the standard. In addition, he introduced the idea of some groups in the watershed helping to bolster that storm sampling effort if there are financial constraints.

Kenny Weldon, resident, commented that there are two things of note moving forward, 1) when beginning to evaluate pollutant source(s) in the Above Stephenville site, we cannot ignore wildlife as a source, which was excluded from the original TMDL, and 2) we should define what is the project strategy for closure for the TMDL so we can determine our path forward.

Jennifer Bronson-Warren, TPWD, confirmed that wildlife should be taken into consideration, but that wildlife are both desirable and hard to manage.

Earl Lott, TCEQ, suggested that the stakeholders form a smaller workgroup on this topic to determine a path forward. This idea was well received by many stakeholders in attendance and Louanne Jones committed to send out an email for to poll for those interested in participating.

Darren Turley, Dairy Farmers of America, commented that a next step would be to find an answer to the continuous high sampling data in Above Stephenville even though the CAFOs have reduced their phosphorous.

### **Next Meeting - Louanne Jones, TCEQ**

The TCEQ PM confirmed that there would be another year of monitoring for all index sites plus the site on Hico for FY21. The next meeting will be scheduled after TCEQ receives names of stakeholders interested in participating in the work group. Lori Hamilton closed the meeting and thanked all attendees for their time and participation.

### **Adjournment**

#### **Attendee List**

(in order of joining the meeting)

Louanne Jones, TCEQ

Jimmy Millican, TIAER

Lori Hamilton, TCEQ

Kerry Niemann, TCEQ

Amy Settemeyer, TCEQ

Chris Loft, TCEQ

Jim Bob Berry, City of Iredell

Nora Schell, City of Waco

Lisa Tyer, City of Waco

Dickie Clary, Commissioner, Hamilton County Precinct 4

Michael Martin, TCEQ

Earl Lott, TCEQ

Jay Bragg, Texas Farm Bureau

Willy De Jong, Resident

Maria Popescu, Baylor University

Anne McFarland, Resident and former TIAER project manager

John Foster, Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board

Jim Drake, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Nicole Reed, TCEQ  
TJ Helton, Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board  
Tiffany Malzahn, Brazos River Authority  
Michaela McCown, McLennan Community College  
Andrew Moerman, Bovine Supply Line, Inc.  
Sarah Whitley, TCEQ  
Jenna Walker, Bosque River Coalition and the Meadows Center  
Jaehak Jeong, Texas AgriLife Blackland Research Center  
Lauren Kalisek, Lloyd, Gosselink, Rochelle, & Townsend  
Kathleen Perdon, City of Waco  
Ron Duckworth, Volunteer at Waco Wetlands  
Darren Turley, Texas Association of Dairymen  
Jim Bradbury, Attorney for the Texas Association of Dairmen  
Alicia Seagraves, Sunset Advisory Commission of Texas  
Robert Romig  
Charlie Olson, Landowner  
Col. Kenny Weldon, Resident  
Jennifer Bronson-Warren, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department  
Katie Durain, Sunset Advisory Commission of Texas  
Paul Cain, City of Waco  
Haw Yen, Texas AgriLife Blackland Research Center  
Arden Kemler, LFG Biogas Development, LLC  
Michele Dunkerley, Landowner  
Marie Garland, City of Meridian  
Tiffany Gentry, City of Meridian  
Ashley Nystrom, City of Waco  
Stephen Powers, Baylor University  
Nick Williams, City of Stephenville