

Arroyo Colorado Steering Committee/Partnership Meeting

Texas A&M Kingsville, Citrus Center
312 N. International Blvd, Weslaco, Texas 78596

July 24, 2007 4:30 am-7:00 pm

MEETING NOTES

ATTENDANCE:

Enrique Perez – TCE
Brad Cowan – TCE
Andy Garza – TSSWCB
John D. Wallace – USFWS/LANWR
Jude A. Benavides – UTB/TSC
Richard Ister – TDA
Rick Reyes – IBWC
Heather Harris – CH2M Hill
Tony Reisinger – TX Sea Grant Ext.
Elizabeth Heise – UTB
Abel P. Garza – TAMUK
Ruben Saldana – TCE
Jason Pinchback – TSU/RSI
Ernesto Reyes – USFWS Ecological Service
Rocky Freund – NRA
Brad Lamb – EPA
Fred Moore – EPA
Neil Haman – HWWS/POH
Kevin Wagner – TWRI
Cecilia Wagner – TWRI
Laura De La Garza – TWRI
Cory Horan – TCEQ
Kim Jones – TAMUK
Martha McClain – City of San Benito
Darla Jones – City of La Feria
Richard LeFever – City of Mercedes

5:00 Welcome and IntroductionsDr. Jude Benavides, Chairman

- Thanks to Harlingen Waterworks System for providing the snacks and refreshments
- Shifting from planning to action
- Special Guests from the EPA Region – Dallas Texas, Brad Lamb – Regional NPS Coordinator and Fred Moore – Extension Service Liaison
- Cory Horan – Project Manager Water Quality Planning also present
- Self introductions made

Steering Committee Member ChangeDr. Jude Benavides, Chairman

- Steve Bearden request that Bobby Aguilar replace him on the Steering Committee (to represent sugar cane growers), there were no objects. Bobby now a SC member

- Neil Haman no longer with TWDB but serves locally on two other boards
- New Direction for Partnership – Plan Implementation rather than planning – new focus on grant writing for funding strategies.

ACWPP Implementation Facilitation/Meeting Schedule Kevin Wagner, TWRI

- Lapse between contracts
- Position open for Program Assistant – Megan Meier assisting in mean time.

Quarterly SC meetings to be held on the 4th Thursday of month – Next meeting October 25

**Note agenda change. Next the 4 Cities Wetland Project was presented.

Presentation/Wetland Studies.....Laura De La Garza introduced City Representatives

- Going through permitting process
- Discussed education and ecotourism possibilities
- Cost of land issues and engineering fees; discussed whether a liner will be needed
- Requested more guidance from TCEQ

Four City Wetland Project..... Martha McClain, City of San Benito
 Darla Jones, City of La Feria
 Richard LeFever, City of Mercedes
 Laura De La Garza for the City of San Juan

Work Group Updates:

Agricultural Issues Andy Garza, TSSWCB
 Kevin Wagner, TWRI

- Development of water quality management plans for thousands of acres
- BMP education and evaluation
- SWAT model simulation
- NPS assessment project

Habitat Issues Dr. Kim Jones, TAMUK
 Tony Reisinger, Texas Sea Grant

- Overview of CMP grants
- Site suitability analysis....need LIDAR data
 - Possible sites include Port of Harlingen oxbow, San Benito wastewater plant, Llano Grande near TPWD property, La Feria sand pit, Goat Island Resaca, shrimp farms

Education and Outreach.....Laura De La Garza, TWRI

- Physical Model – Acknowledgement of Nueces RA and the Clean Rivers Program for providing \$12,000. Sky Lewey for being project coordinator, and Jude and Anthony Reisinger for providing the engineering. Should be completed by September 15th and housed at UTB.
- On going compost project. Acknowledge Christie Jo Lugo-Waldron and the City of Weslaco for project management. Will highlight project at one of the future meetings.
- CMP Grants and Don Hockaday taking lead on NSF grant
- Texas Watch’s work in the Valley – Jason Pinchback and Eric Mendelman

- September 22, 2007 event

Other Work Groups.....Laura De La Garza, TWRI

- Will be scheduling a WWI Work Group meeting for end of August
- Need a new WG leader – Roger on other projects – Asking for nominations
- Four Cities wetland project – read and distribute write-up from Arthur Talley
- Acknowledge TCEQ and EPA for work and funding
- Rocky Freund, Nueces RA said that in regards to instream monitoring of the Arroyo Colorado, she has been working with the TCEQ Region 15 to establish five additional sites. Jude said that UTB could help in the sampling.
- TMDL work continues?
- Jason Pinchback presented Texas Watch Activities

6:40 Discuss/Prioritize Future Funding Needs and Sources.....Cecilia Wagner, TWRI

- Regional Wetland development a priority need – CIAP maybe a source, need at least \$12M
- Review some of the grants available
- Work groups to focus on developing Scopes of Work – SC approval for drafting letters of support (LOS). Additional individual LOS may be asked of SC members
- Expressed need to maybe look for private funding sources

6:50 Direction of Partnership/Other BusinessDr. Jude Benavides, Chairman

- Long-term sustainability. Laura tasked with looking at local NOG umbrella, other possibilities like the Coastal Bend Bays and Estuary Program.
- IBWC meeting
- Cameron County resolution supporting ACWPP
- Ask SC of input.

7:00 AdjournDr. Jude Benavides, Chairman