

TEXAS CLEAN RIVERS PROGRAM FOR THE RIO GRANDE BASIN

LOWER RIO GRANDE COORDINATED MONITORING MEETING

April 9, 2014

10:30 a.m.

Harlingen, Texas

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Participants

Lisa Ramirez, USIBWC Clean Rivers
Christine Kolbe, TCEQ Surface Water Quality
Roger Miranda, TCEQ Austin TMDL
Michael McCall, Brownsville PUB
Jim Tolan, TPWD Corpus Christi
Franklin Lazo, USIBWC Mercedes
John Lopez, TPWD Brownsville

Leslie Grijalva, USIBWC Clean Rivers
Sarah Eagle, TCEQ Clean Rivers
Guadalupe Garcia III, UT Brownsville
Chris Caudle, TCEQ Harlingen
Larry Peña, USIBWC Mercedes
Joe Bazaldua, USIBWC Mercedes

Meeting Notes:

- Began meeting with introductions and welcome and went around room for everyone to introduce themselves.
- TCEQ reported 8 CWQM stations still operating. They are operated and maintained by the TCEQ Watermaster Office. These stations measure only temperature and specific conductance. These stations are not used for water quality purposes, only for quantity and conductivity of irrigation water. This is just management effort not assessment Chris Kolbe pointed out. When specific conductance goes above 1,000, a notification goes out to the irrigators to let them know water is not usable for irrigation purposes at that time.
- Chris Kolbe updated group on the process for CWQM.
- Integrated report update was given by Chris Kolbe. She summarized what the IR is and that the 2012 report received approval last spring. The 2014 report is in a holding pattern. No surprises to report.
- Sarah, TCEQ, gave an update on the Watershed Action Process. It is used to address water impairments. The Lower Rio Grande Water Quality Initiative is the pilot program for the area. The new WAP tool is a collective system to update on all projects. The database will be available online soon. This will eventually be up on the TCEQ website.
- James Tolan, TPWD, asked for notification when the tool is online.
- James Tolan, TPWD provided update on their relevant projects. TPWD Corpus Christi has partnered with the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Partnership for a project on the Arroyo Colorado to perform water quality sampling. Every 6 weeks starting this spring, summer and fall there will be sampling at multiple stations. They want to deploy sondes to catch the full tidal cycle, and will be taking water quality, biological, sediment and benthic samples. Using the Arroyo as the end stream for degraded water body to pristine to determine if really degraded. The Rio Grande Tidal Stretch was originally part of the project as well, but was deemed a safety issue and was taken out. April 1-2 1st sampling effort, the biological life was pretty good and

what was expected. This sampling effort will continue for 2 years. Press release will follow soon.

- TCEQ asked if James would notify when press release is given and if they can provide some flyers for TCEQ to have for informational purposes.
- Roger Miranda inquired if the work would go on the tidal portion and TPWD said no.
- TCEQ said National Rivers and Stream Assessment had also dropped the Tidal stations and stations in the Lower Rio Grande Valley due to security issues.
- TPWD added that the Rio Grande has the most unique fish community and it was a shame more work isn't done here.
- LRGWQI update by Roger. Introduction of project was given as well as background and objective. Currently this project will feed a 1-D model so that if/what scenarios can be played out. 16 sites are planned to be sampled in July. Mexico is facing some challenges so the entire timeline is a couple of weeks delayed but the July Sampling is not planned to be affected. There will be no flow taken unless at a gage. Bacteria analysis will be big challenge. Roger mentioned that BPUB and Laredo Health Department may assist with those samples. Data Management will be handled by USIBWC CRP. Roger asked for help in coordination from attendees. Gave Mercedes heads up they might be helping. Frank asked if low releases from Falcon would be an issue and group thought no.
- Leslie went over coordinated monitoring schedule. USFWS site picked up by TCEQ and they have gone 3 times this year so far.
- Mercedes had no issues with schedule.
- UTB has no site issues. For Boca Chica could have access issues but so far not an issue. They asked to push May sampling back to June to accommodate university's finals week. For the future if low water levels exist access issues will be an issue. Leslie asked them to let her know if that comes up.
- BPUB all is well.
- TCEQ no changes to their schedule.
- TCEQ did offer to help with UTB sites. So coordination of plan B for coverage is available. Leslie will investigate further.
- TCEQ mentioned Arroyo Los Olmos and asked if CRP is sampling. If flowing the Falcon personnel do pick it up. Leslie said Falcon reported last month not flowing.

Training Participants

Guadalupe Garcia III, UT Brownsville

Michael McCall, Brownsville PUB

Larry Peña, USIBWC Mercedes

Franklin Lazo, USIBWC Mercedes

Joe Bazaldua, USIBWC Mercedes

Meeting Notes:

- Leslie went over some tips and a list of concerns with items seen over last year.
- Leslie went over standard bottle configuration from lab and fielded questions.

AGENDA

10:30 Welcome and Introductions

- 10:40 Ongoing research and projects in the area addressing issues
- CWQM stations
- 11:00 TCEQ Watershed Action Planning Process
- Discussion of TCEQ's Integrated Report/303d list
 - Identification of water quality issues, data gaps, sources
- 11:20 Monitoring Schedule
- Discussion of statewide Coordinated Monitoring Schedule (CMS)
<http://cms.lcra.org/> - current and FY 2014 monitoring
 - Potential future projects and potential new sites
- 11:50 Other announcements and information
- 2013 Basin Summary Report for the Rio Grande Basin Handout
 - 2014 Basin Highlights
- 12:00 Final comments and adjourn

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- 12:30 USIBWC CRP Partner Refresher Training and Monitoring Guidance Updates
- Go over USIBWC YSI multiprobe Standard Operating Procedures for maintenance and calibration. Please bring your probes
 - Review of Chain of Custody forms field forms
 - Cooler Shipment and Proper Procedures and Tips
 - Sampling techniques and bottle configurations for coolers
 - Answer questions and review monitoring procedures, as requested
- 2:30 Adjourn refresher training portion
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