

TEXAS CLEAN RIVERS PROGRAM FOR THE RIO GRANDE BASIN

MIDDLE RIO GRANDE COORDINATED MONITORING MEETING

June 2, 2020
1:30 – 3:00 p.m.
Skype Teleconference

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Participants

Leslie Grijalva, USIBWC Clean Rivers
Terra Lindgren, TCEQ Surface Water Quality
Mario Gomez, USIBWC Falcon Dam/Laredo FO
Elsa Hull, TCEQ Laredo
Erika Saenz, TCEQ Laredo
Dr. Tom Vaughan
Victor Wong, TCEQ Border Affairs, Laredo

Kelly Rodibaugh, TCEQ Clean Rivers
Tricia Cortez, RGISC
Erika Saenz, TCEQ Laredo
Eli Mendoza, USIBWC Falcon Dam FO
Lauro Cantu, USIBWC Falcon Dam FO
Alejandra Carrera, State of Coahuila

Meeting Notes:

- Leslie Grijalva opened meeting and began with introductions from all participants.
- Leslie briefly explained the handouts and other materials available.
- Discussion went straight into 303d list to discuss impairments and concerns.
- Leslie went briefly over the Integrated Report.
 - Segment 2304: Impaired for bacteria. Concerns for ammonia, toxicity in water.
 - Segment 2304A: No impairments. Concerns for antimony in sediment, bacteria, nitrate, total phosphorus
 - Segment 2303: No impairments. Concerns for fish kills and toxicity in water.
- RGISC: They had a meeting with COMAPA director, who is new. Raw sewage outflows into river currently at 12 million gallons a day.
 - Main issue is still the area between Arroyo La Joya (across from Laredo Community College) to Arroyo El Coyote in Nuevo Laredo.
 - Steady collapses of the collector, which then flow into the creeks.
 - Victor: Spoke to Agustin Boone of CILA this past Friday, recent rains have caused issues with the sewer lines. Working with COMAPA and the Public Works Dept in Nuevo Laredo.
- Alejandra Carrera spoke briefly about the project she's working on in Coahuila. They are interested in starting a program like CRP in Coahuila. Listening in on the call to see how we manage our schedule and partners, and what kinds of issues we have.
 - Leslie asked if this was the same project that the students from UT Austin were working on.
 - Victor said yes, but at that time the project was not funded. They are working to get it funded this time around.

- Mussels: TX Hornshell has been listed as endangered. The Laredo population near La Bota Ranch is the largest community that exists. The USFWS is looking at possibly listing the Salina Mucket and Mexican Fawnsfoot as well.
 - Dr. Vaughan said he was not aware of anyone doing anything on mussels right now. He said it would be great to reintroduce the Texas Hornshell downstream of Laredo, but it would be pointless until the issues with the raw sewage were dealt with.
 - Is SWQM still planning on coming down to do a study? Leslie reached out to Lauren Pulliam in SWQM, currently no plans to do anything on the Rio Grande.
 - TCEQ suggested maybe to reach out to Marty Kelly of TPWD.
- Leslie reviewed the Coordinated Monitoring schedule:
 - TCEQ Laredo:
 - Worried about access to the river with the new proposed Laredo wall.
 - Leslie briefed everyone about the recent opportunity to provide input to DHS. Provided GPS coordinates for gaging stations and CRP stations. Requested access to these locations via gates of some sort.
 - TCEQ asked about their stations. Leslie stated that coordinates had been given only for IBWC and CRP stations. Will check to see if TCEQ was given the opportunity to provide information.
 - Not currently sampling. No current guidance on how to resume sampling.
 - Last monitoring was done March 10 (Apache Ranch).
 - Carry forward their schedule.
 - RGISC
 - Having issues with their pH sensor. Leslie is ordering sensors and will get one to them asap.
 - Should we be concerned about COVID-19 in wastewater or raw sewage?
 - There are currently studies that are ongoing looking at this, but at present there is no information.
 - Would like to resume sampling.
 - No additional changes.
 - City of Laredo Environmental:
 - Not present at the meeting.
 - Carrying their schedule forward with no changes.
 - Laredo Health Department:
 - No changes and no issues.
 - Not present at meeting but had emailed Leslie.
 - Laredo Health Department Lab:
 - Not present at the meeting.
 - USIBWC Falcon Dam Field Office:
 - Shipping issues. FedEx is no longer accepting their coolers. Will try to ship via UPS.
 - Rio Grande City site: Stairway down to the river was almost washed out. Arroyo was filled in they are now able to get to the river.
 - Discussed with them the possibility of them picking up the Arroyo los Olmos sites that Dr. Ho currently monitors. They said they probably could and requested a map and site location information before they decided.

- RGISC: Received a grant (\$100k for 2 years) from U.S. Bureau of Reclamation for watershed planning and restoration.
 - Eagle Pass/Piedras Negras to the southern tip of Webb County, both sides of the border.
 - Moving toward getting a “seasoned” water quality person to do various environmental activities.
 - Texas Water Trade- need to look this up
- TCEQ Laredo: Last year received complaints from local people in Del Rio regarding the bacteria levels in San Felipe Creek (Segment 2313).
 - Grad student was working on some research, Elsa will provide the information to Leslie.
- Laredo Special Study: Tricia asked if this was still in IBWC plans.
 - Leslie stated that yes, the IBWC still plans to do a second phase of the study, but the whole point was to repeat it after the discharges were taken care of and show an improvement in water quality; repeating the study right now would not show anything different.
 - Dr. Vaughan offered a different perspective- if repeating the study showed further degradation in water quality, this might warrant action if both IBWC Sections were on board. Dr. Vaughan thinks the water quality issue is currently worse than it was at the time we did the first study.
 - Leslie said she would bring this up with IBWC.
- Dr. Vaughan said he had been contacted by a fish biologist that wanted to do fish studies between Eagle Pass and Laredo. Might be in contact with some people at the meeting.
- Leslie spoke about the 2020 Basin Highlights Report, it will be out soon. Leslie will send a copy to everyone.
- Meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM.

Training Participants

Leslie Grijalva, USIBWC CRP

Tricia Cortez, RGISC

Eli Mendoza, USIBWC Falcon Dam FO

Lauro Cantu, USIBWC Falcon Dam FO

Training Notes:

- Went over the training materials with the partners.
- Leslie took notes on partners who needed supplies, etc.

AGENDA

- 1:30 Welcome and Introductions
- 1:40 Discussion of various water quality topics
- Discussion of TCEQ's Integrated Report/303d list
 - Identification of water quality issues, data gaps, and sources of pollution
- 2:00 Monitoring Schedule
- Discussion of statewide Coordinated Monitoring Schedule (CMS)
<http://cms.lcra.org/> - current and FY 2021 monitoring
 - Stations- any issues
 - Shipping issues
 - Safety/security issues
 - Potential new sites
- 2:20 Ongoing research and projects
- Laredo Bacteria issues: Updates
 - Infrastructure repairs in Nuevo Laredo: Updates
 - Any projects or research in the Middle Rio Grande Basin
- 2:45 Other announcements and information
- 2020 Basin Highlights Report for the Rio Grande Basin
- 3:00 Final comments and adjourn

USIBWC CRP Partner Training and Monitoring Guidance Updates- Required

- Discuss issues with partners.
- Answer questions and review monitoring procedures on USIBWC YSI multiprobe Standard Operating Procedures for maintenance and calibration for the YSI ProDSS
- Review of Field form, Chain of Custody forms, cooler shipment procedures
- Go over any supply needs

Adjourn partner meeting
