

**Guadalupe, San Antonio, Mission, and Aransas Rivers and  
Mission, Copano, Aransas, and San Antonio Bays  
Basin and Bay Area Stakeholder Committee (BBASC)**

Organizational Meeting

Tuesday, December 15, 2009 at 1:00 p.m.

GBRA – River Annex

Seguin, Texas

**MINUTES**

**Welcome and Introductions**

Bill West, General Manager for the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority, welcomed the group to the meeting and thanked and encouraged the committee members' participation in this important process.

Members of the committee introduced themselves to the group, identifying their background and interest group they represent.

**Discussion and agreement on agenda**

Cory Horan, TCEQ, explained that the purpose of these meetings, in keeping with the intent of the legislation, was to allow the decision making process to be put in the hands of the Basin and Bay Stakeholders. He noted that while the TCEQ drafted the initial agenda with input from various members and other agency staff, it was the group's decision to approve the agenda and address items of concern to the group. It was requested that some additional background on the evolution of the environmental flows process in Texas be provided. Mr. West and committee member Robert Puente commented on some of the steps and background work that led to the passage of Article 1, SB3.

**Overview of SB3 and role of the Basin and Bay Area Stakeholders**

Cory Horan, TCEQ, gave an overview of the environmental flows timeline and process for this particular basin and bay system, referring to a flowchart that outlined the steps mandated by the legislation. He noted that the schedule for implementation of the SB3 process did not match the dates to which the group was appointed, but that the Environmental Flows Advisory Group can revise the schedule upon request. He then explained the various duties of the committee as outlined by the statute. These include:

- Formation of a Basin and Bay Expert Science Team (BBEST)
- Review and comments on the BBEST environmental flow recommendations
- Development of environmental flow recommendations and strategies to meet the environmental flow standards for submission to the TCEQ and the Environmental Flows Advisory Group
- The Stakeholder Committee was not subject to Government Code but meeting should be open to the public
- The Committee must operate on a consensus basis to the maximum extent possible

**Report on funds available for Expert Science Team (BBEST) expenses**

Nolan Raphelt, TWDB, explained the funding available for the members of the BBEST to perform their work, noting that a total of \$228,000 was available to the BBEST for this Basin and Bay system. He distributed a handout which included scenarios of various BBEST expenditures based on the number and size of the BBEST selected.

## **Overview of the State Wide Science Advisory Committee (SAC) for Environmental Flows**

Bob Huston, Chair of the SAC, gave a brief history on the Science Advisory Committee for environmental flows. He noted that the current group was the 3<sup>rd</sup> Advisory Committee, which was established under SB3. He encouraged the committee to review documents developed by the previous Science Advisory Committees from 2004 and 2006. Both documents are available on the TCEQ's environmental flows resources website located here:

[http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water\\_supply/water\\_rights/eflows/resources.html](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water_supply/water_rights/eflows/resources.html)

Mr. Huston explained the roles of the BBASC and BBEST, noting that the BBEST was only to consider available science while the BBASC would incorporate other factors into their recommendations. He stated that the primary responsibility of the SAC was to provide guidance, coordination and consistency among the various basin and bay groups, but the decision making process would be left to the individual basin and bay groups. He also noted that the SAC had developed several guidance documents for use by the BBESTs and stakeholders in the development of their environmental flow analysis and regimes. Those guidance documents can be found on the SAC website located here:

[http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water\\_supply/water\\_rights/eflows/txenvironmentalflowssac.html](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water_supply/water_rights/eflows/txenvironmentalflowssac.html)

1. Mr. Huston also discussed the makeup of the BBEST. He noted the challenges the group will face regarding time to complete their charge and funding availability. He suggested the committee consider a smaller sized group which would allow for easier scheduling of meetings, less use of budget, etc. He then noted that the SAC was to provide an overview of the BBEST recommendation reports to the Advisory Group, who would then provide comments to TCEQ.

Cory Horan then gave an overview of the websites developed to support the environmental flows process. He noted that there were websites set up for each basin and bay group, as well as one for the Advisory Group, the SAC, and a website containing resources to support the development of environmental flows. He also noted that e-mail groups were available that allow subscribers to be notified of upcoming meetings and any changes made to one of the environmental flows websites.

## **Overview of environmental flows**

John Botros and Norman Boyd, both with TPWD, gave general presentations on the ecological function and importance of environmental flows, both instream flows and freshwater inflows respectively. Their presentations will be made available on the group's website located here:

[http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water\\_supply/water\\_rights/eflows/guadalupe-sanantonio-bbsc](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water_supply/water_rights/eflows/guadalupe-sanantonio-bbsc)

## **Elect Committee chair**

The Committee elected both a chair and vice-chair. Suzanne Scott was nominated, seconded, and unanimously approved as committee chair. Diane Wassenich was nominated, seconded, and unanimously approved as committee vice-chair. Both Suzanne and Diane accepted the positions.

## **Set ground rules/operating procedures**

The committee discussed various potential ground rules including the following:

- Organizational structure / group coordination
- The election of additional officers
- Quorum/Consensus
- The committee decision making process
- When will public input be taken at meetings

- How will the committee communicate with the members between meetings
- Do alternates need to be appointed

The group agreed to allow the committee chairs to draft an initial set of meeting rules, similar to rules set by other committees and various aspects of the group discussion, for discussion and consideration at the January meeting. The group will refine and finalize the meeting rules at that time.

### **Discuss nominations process for basin expert science team (BBEST)**

The committee discussed the process for nominating and selecting members for the BBEST. The committee agreed to form a work group to discuss relevant disciplines that should be represented on the BBEST, schedule for accepting nominations, and to develop a nomination form and process for accepting nominations. The work group will hold a conference call to discuss various aspects of the BBEST nomination and selection process prior to the January meeting. The results of the conference call discussions will be presented to the committee as a whole for discussion at the January meeting. The committee will then finalize the process, seek nominations, and make selections at the February meeting.

### **Committee Vacancies**

The committee discussed how to fill vacancies on the committee due to resignations of appointed members from the Commercial Fisheries and Recreational Water User categories. The group agreed to look at the candidates submitted for those two categories in the initial BBASC selection process. The TCEQ will forward the information on the various nominees who were not selected to serve on the BBASC the day following the meeting. Members agreed to review and comment on the number of available nominees for each category by December 22, 2009. If sufficient candidates are available the group agreed to fill the vacancies from that pool of nominees. The committee agreed that if there are not sufficient candidates to fill either category then the committee members can submit their own nominees to fill the vacancies. The candidates for both categories will be discussed at the January meeting.

### **Set next meeting**

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, January 11, 2009, to be held at the Invista facilities in Victoria, TX. The meeting will begin at 10:00 am and go through 3:00 pm. There will be a working lunch.

Items to be discussed include:

- Committee Vacancies
- Ground Rules
- BBEST Selection

### **Meeting Adjourned**