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## CHAPTER 7.0: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

### 7.1 OVERVIEW

The Lower Colorado Regional Water Planning Group (LCRWPG) made a commitment to conducting public outreach as a part of their duties as Planning Group members. The public involvement effort was led by Planning Group member Dede Armentrout and a five-member Public Involvement Committee that she chaired. Committee members were Richard Macaulay, Julia Marsden, Cole Rowland, and Haskell Simon.

Major aspects of this effort included:

- **Holding more than 35 open meetings of the Planning Group** for presentation of material, discussion, deliberation, voting on specific measures, and public comment between April 1998 and October 2000. Members of the public attended all of these meetings, which were posted on the Internet on the Travis County and LCRA bulletin boards. Every meeting included a scheduled time for public comment and questions. Nine of these meetings were held at the M.D. Anderson Cancer Research Center near Smithville, which is approximately the geographic center of Region K. An additional nine meetings were held at the Lower Colorado River Authority's (LCRA's) McKinney Roughs Environmental Education Center near Bastrop (also near the region's center). Four meetings were held at LCRA facilities in Austin or Bastrop. Three public meetings were also held in Austin, Burnet and Eagle Lake in 1998 near the beginning of the planning process to answer questions from the public regarding Senate Bill 1.
- **Holding 15 of the RWPG's regular monthly meetings at locations throughout the region** to enable a broader spectrum of the public to observe the work of the Planning Group first-hand and to comment or ask questions. These meetings were publicized through phone contact and news releases to the local weekly and daily papers and radio stations in the area that each meeting was to be held in, as well as through mailings of invitations and personal letters to and contacts with interested parties. These meetings and the publicity they generated have reached thousands of people, including the estimated 2,500 people who had personally attended meetings as of 30 November 2000.
  - This included holding meetings open to the public with their counterparts from **Regions L and G** to discuss potential programs that could be pursued in common and potential strategies that cross regional boundaries. In addition, individual Planning Group members served as liaisons to these regions and reported on related developments at the monthly meetings.
- Serving as **speakers at more than 100 civic and interest group meetings** representing the full spectrum of interests and public opinion. These presentations took place throughout the planning period and in all counties of the region.
- Conducting **four surveys** regarding water supply issues and needs throughout the region. The first of these was conducted as part of devising the project scope, while the second survey sought information regarding the boundaries and customers of water utilities. Furthermore, the Planning Group's Unique Stream Segments and Reservoir Sites Committee (USS/RSC) conducted a mail survey on the subject of their deliberations. In the fall of 1999, members of the public attending one of the Planning Group meetings were asked to prioritize the benefits they hoped to gain from a Regional Water Plan.

- Sending a **fund-raising** letter and raising more than \$30,000 in cash and in-kind contributions, in addition to those made by Planning Group members, to supplement the project's public involvement budget. Contributors are listed below and include cities, counties, water utilities, and other water user groups that consume more than 1,000 acre-feet of water annually. In addition, LCRWPG members LCRA, the City of Austin and Aqua Water contributed substantial in-kind contributions of labor, technical and administrative support, graphics, postage, printing, and other forms of assistance.
- Maintaining a **web page** with documentation and notices of meetings and discussions, with links from the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) home page and the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) website.
- Providing **fact sheets** at the beginning and near the end of the planning process to any interested parties. These fact sheets were used as handouts for presentations, at the Planning Group's regular monthly meetings, and as an accompaniment to news releases and in other settings.
- Forming a special **Irrigation Water Supply Working Group** with representatives of farm and recreational interests, among others, to review the potential strategies for meeting identified shortages that were most feasible in their particular setting. Two informal "focus group" meetings were held for interests affected by these identified irrigation shortages. The group also met via conference call and at the Turner, Collie, and Braden, Inc. offices to discuss strategy options.
- Holding **four public meetings, including one required public hearing**, to gain public input on the *Initially Prepared Draft Plan* in addition to that gained through other means. A total of about 400 people attended these meetings, which included a presentation and video describing the Regional Plan as initially drafted.
- Two appearances on the KLRU-TV public affairs program *Austin at Issue*, which airs Fridays at noon and 9:00 p.m. and Sundays at 5:00 p.m. About 90 percent of the Region K population lives within the KLRU viewing area.
  - On August 11, 2000, the RWPG Chair gave a 10-minute interview centered on the availability of the *Initially Prepared Draft Plan* and the upcoming public meetings
  - On September 29, 2000, a 3-minute video (provided by LCRA and the LCRWPG) outlining the proposed plan was aired and the RWPG public interest representative was interviewed with a member of the National Wildlife Federation who opposes the plan regarding pros and cons of what is being proposed and what steps are to follow.

Once the concept of a proposed strategy was endorsed by the Planning Group, a number of additional activities were sponsored and led by the Lower Colorado River Authority, which is the administrative agency for the region, including:

- Holding six public meetings throughout the region, all of which were publicized through news releases and advertisements, and which prompted many media interviews.
- Issuing news releases regarding the proposal to more than 30 media outlets within the region, providing an OpEd column from the LCRA General Manager, and conducting other media relations that resulted in an editorial in the *Austin American-Statesman* and coverage of meetings and the proposal's features in both the print and electronic media.

- Preparing a video on the features of the primary strategies proposed to be used at public meetings.

These activities of the Regional Water Planning Group members are discussed in more detail below.

## **7.2 PLANNING GROUP MEETINGS THROUGHOUT THE REGION**

The first meeting - designated as the Initial Coordinating Body Meeting - of those appointed to serve as representatives on the Regional Water Planning Group was held on 19 March 1998 and was attended by about 14 members of the public. The Planning Group met a total of 12 times during 1998. As with all Planning Group meetings, these meetings were posted on the Internet and included a period for public comment and questions. In many cases, members of the public in attendance also asked questions and participated in discussions during informational parts of the meetings throughout the planning period. At these early meetings, ground rules and bylaws were established, technical project scoping was conducted, and a consultant team was selected to assist the Planning Group.

Ten monthly meetings were held in 1999, many of which focused on establishing the geophysical and hydrologic characteristics of the region, the projected population growth and distribution, the patterns of water consumption, and future water supply needs. These meetings often included special presentations about the concerns and contribution to the region of a particular interest group, potential strategies for conserving or supplying additional water, or other related topics that helped to establish a common vocabulary and a foundation of understanding shared by all Planning Group members.

Meetings were held twice monthly in 2000 as the Lower Colorado Regional Water Planning Group began deliberating on the policies, strategies, and other types of recommendations that were under consideration. Three meetings were held with the South Central Texas (Region L) Regional Water Planning Group in a largely successful effort to build consensus regarding strategies that crossed regional boundaries.

While all Planning Group meetings were open to the public, beginning in April 1999, the Planning Group began holding many of its regular meetings in locations throughout the region in order to make their deliberations accessible to a wider variety of constituents. Table 7.1 provides an overview of these "local" meetings, most of which were heavily publicized.

All meetings not held in locations shown in Table 7.1 were held at McKinney Roughs near Bastrop, the M.D. Anderson Science Park near Smithville, or LCRA facilities in Austin or Bastrop. These "central" meetings were typically attended by about 25 people in addition to the RWPG members, alternates, and consultants.

Gaining publicity to increase attendance at the "local" meetings was a major focus of activity due to the rural nature of much of the region. For most of the meetings shown in Table 7.1, phone contact was made with six to fifteen media outlets in the area surrounding the meeting location. This contact was followed by a news release and fact sheet, and often by a follow-up call from a RWPG member residing in the area. In several cases, Planning Group members appeared on radio talk shows before the meetings. Local print coverage was obtained for all of these meetings. Several of these meetings attracted more than 100 attendees. The most heavily attended were those dealing with strategies that would cross regional boundaries.

Each of these "local" meetings was sponsored by a Planning Group member, who acted as host and arranged for the meeting location and logistics, as well as serving lunch to all attendees. In some cases this provided an opportunity for involving a broad range of community groups as sponsors. The Cities of Bay City, Wharton, Burnet, and others provided meeting facilities free of charge, for example. More than a dozen local sponsors participated in funding and providing in-kind contributions for the 14 June 2000 meeting in Wharton alone. The meeting held at Bamberger Ranch was co-hosted by LCRWPG member Dede Armentrout and Dr. Curtis Chubb of the Hill Country Aquifers Coalition.

Some of these meetings included special tours and events to acquaint Planning Group members with the issues and needs involved. Tours were provided of the:

- South Texas Electric Project;
- Bamberger Ranch environmental demonstration projects;
- Rice irrigation and farming practices;
- Pierce Ranch irrigation methods and organic farming; potential off-channel reservoir and well development sites;
- Ecotourism, and bird watching areas; and,
- Seco Creek Brush Control Project.

Special presentations to the RWPG were made by the Save Barton Creek Association, the State Clean Rivers Program, officials from the City of Austin's Rainwater Harvesting Program, and ALCOA, among others; and each member of the Planning Group had the opportunity to make a presentation regarding the concerns and importance of the interest group he or she represents.

Table 7.1: LCRWPG Publicized "Local" Meetings Throughout the Region

Date	Meeting Location	# Attending	Attendee Comments
4/14/99	City of Goldthwaite, Mills Co.	~ 100 * (84)	Concern about supplies during drought; support for capturing more runoff and storing more river flow;
6/16/99	City of La Grange, Fayette Co.	24	Concern about potential local reservoirs (e.g.. Cummins Creek); support for Groundwater District creation;
8/11/99	Bay City, Matagorda Co.	36	Concern about maintaining freshwater inflows to estuaries, water quality concerns, and property rights; concerns with regard to designation of USS/RS**;
9/22/99	City of Burnet, Burnet Co.	139	Need for water storage in Highland Lakes; property rights concerns regarding USS/RS** designation; support for greater emphasis on impacts to recreation and the need to maintain lake levels in the Highland Lakes; support for including flood control considerations;
9/27/00	City of Burnet, Burnet Co.	305	Concerns expressed regarding uncertainties of plan with regard to "temporary" use of water, total amount, willingness of San Antonio to pay, the expanding role of LCRA. Both support and opposition voiced. Praise for proactive effort. Also concern that the Regional Plan is subject to legislative fiat, or control, regardless of Region K's recommendations.
11/10/99	City of Columbus, Colorado Co.	~ 200 * (160)	Strong opposition expressed by many opposing potential Shaw's Bend and Cummins Creek area reservoirs;
1/12/00	City of Llano, Llano Co.	75	Support for brush control, rainwater harvesting, conservation incentives; proposal to consider dredging reservoirs as a supply strategy;
2/23/00	City of San Marcos, Hays Co.	~ 400 * (290)	Joint meeting with Region L. Fayette & Colorado Co. Judges opposed interbasin transfers (IBT) to Region L, supported conservation, and emphasis on economic impacts in Region K. <i>City of Lago Vista and Highland Lakes Group</i> opposed IBTs due to concern about economic impacts. <i>Wilson Co. Water Action Project</i> opposed Cibolo reservoir, presented petition with 2,800 signatures. <i>Take Back Texas</i> expressed concerns regarding property rights implications of water planning. <i>Neighbors for Neighbors</i> opposed ALCOA project due to concerns about air quality, aquifer drawdown, impact on nearby wells, lack of local control, and endangered species. <i>BCEN</i> opposed ALCOA due to aquifer drawdown concerns; several individuals also spoke in opposition to ALCOA. <i>Grassroots Citizens Group</i> opposed Shaw's Bend area reservoir, IBTs, and impacts on property rights. <i>Burnet Water Council</i> opposed IBTs, supported conservation and growth controls;

Date	Meeting Location	# Attending	Attendee Comments
3/20/00	City of Belton, Bell Co.	81	Joint meeting with Region G. ALCOA presentation. Concerns expressed about ALCOA project; opposition to large-scale groundwater exports;
4/12/00	Bamberger Ranch, Blanco Co.	52	Groundwater district for Blanco County advocated;
5/10/00	City of Lakeway, Travis Co.	19	Opposition to water pipeline to Dripping Springs;
6/14/00	City of Wharton, Wharton Co.	~ 100 *	Support for reservoirs upstream of Wharton County; strong support for agricultural interests; concern about encroaching development from Houston area; interest in cooperation with flood control efforts;
7/18/00	City of San Marcos, Hays Co.	~ 50 *	Joint meeting with Region L to discuss proposal endorsed by LCRWPG. Opposition to ALCOA project expressed. Proposal for recharge/recirculation as supply strategy for Region L;
8/9/00	McKinney Roughs Complex, Bastrop Co.	~ 15	no public comment received
<b>10/2/00</b>	--	--	Draft Plan was submitted to TWDB. See tables on subsequent pages for reporting on additional meetings.

\* In cases where the number of attendees appeared to be significantly larger than the number of people who signed in, an estimate of total attendance is given, with the actual number of people who signed in indicated in parentheses. All other numbers shown reflect the number of people not directly associated with the Planning Group who signed the sign-in sheets.

\*\* USS/RS stands for Ecologically Unique Stream Segments and Reservoir Sites.

### 7.3 PRESENTATIONS TO CIVIC AND SPECIAL-INTEREST GROUPS

Using their own materials and a standardized set of presentation materials, Planning Group members gave presentations to more than 100 civic and special-interest groups. Table 7.2 provides a summary of this outreach effort with a listing of the LCRWPG presentations to civic and special interest groups.

These presentations were made to groups composed of individuals from all types of general and special interests that were identified by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) in the establishment of the Regional Water Planning Groups.

Table 7.2: LCRWPG Presentations to Civic and Special Interest Groups (3 pages)

<b>LCRWPG PUBLIC OUTREACH RECORD: PRESENTATIONS BY GROUP MEMBERS TO COMMUNITY GROUPS</b>					
<b>Presenter *</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Community Group</b>	<b>Type of Group**</b>
M	10/5/98	Georgetown	Williamson	Senior University	1
M	11/15/98	Austin	Travis	Presbyterian Social Issues Class	1
M	11/22/98	Austin	Travis	Presbyterian Social Issues Class	1
M	11/29/98	Austin	Travis	Presbyterian Social Issues Class	1
A	1/6/99	Bastrop	Bastrop	Chamber of Commerce	10,6
A	1/7/99	Giddings	Lee	Kiwanis Club	1
A	1/7/99	Bastrop	Bastrop	City Council	7
A	1/14/99			Manville WSC Board of Directors	11
A	1/26/99	Smithville	Bastrop	Lions' Club	1
A	1/26/99	Elgin	Bastrop	City Council	7
A	2/4/99	Elgin	Bastrop	Chamber of Commerce	10,6
A	2/11/99	Smithville	Bastrop	Chamber of Commerce	10,6
A	2/12/99	Austin	Travis	Central TX Assn of Water Districts	11
A	2/25/99	Giddings	Lee	Rotary Club	1
P	3/4/99	San Saba	San Saba	San Saba Co Soil & Water Conservation Dist	2
M	3/8/99	Austin	Travis	League of Women Voters--Day	1
Q	3/9/99	Austin	Travis	UT Water Environmental Assn	12
M	3/10/99	Austin	Travis	League of Women Voters--Night	1
P	4/12/99	San Saba	San Saba	San Saba Co Commissioners Court	3
P	4/14/99	San Saba	San Saba	San Saba Co Soil & Water Conserv. Dist.	2
H	5/11/99	San Antonio	Bexar	Reg L Wtr Planning Group	12
T	6/1/99	Fredericksburg	Gillespie	Hill Country Municipalities' Secretaries	7
A	6/3/99	Giddings	Lee	Public Meeting at High School	1
A	6/8/99	Elgin	Bastrop	Economic Development Commn.	10,6
A	6/16/99	Lexington	Lee	Public Meeting at High School	1
Q	6/18/99	Lago Vista	Travis	City of Lago Vista	7
Q	6/21/99	Village of Hills	Travis	Horst Creek MUD	11
A	6/22/99	Elgin	Bastrop	City Council	7
P	6/22/99	San Saba	San Saba	Property Owners Assn	1
A	6/23/99	Bastrop	Bastrop	Bastrop County Water Council	12
A	6/24/99	Bastrop	Bastrop	Builders Association	10
A	7/6/99	Bastrop	Bastrop	Commissioners Court	3
Q	7/7/99	Lakeway	Travis	Lakeway MUD	11
P	7/13/99	San Saba	San Saba	San Saba Co SWCD	2
Q	7/24/99	Briarcliff	Travis	Village of Briarcliff	7
A	7/29/99	Elgin	Bastrop	Public Meeting	1

Table 7.2: LCRWPG Presentations to Civic and Special Interest Groups (continued)

Presenter *	Date	City	County	Community Group	Type of Group**
Q	7/29/99	Bee Cave	Travis	Village of Bee Cave	7
T	8/1/99	Fredericksburg	Gillespie	Gillespie Co Visioning 20/20	1
A	8/3/99	Austin	Travis	AARO	10,6
A	8/23/99	Giddings	Lee	Commissioners Court	3
S	8/31/99	Llano	Llano	Hill Country Livestock Raisers Assn Bd.	2
E	9/8/99	Buchanan Office	Llano	Buchanan Lake LCRA Advisory Panel	8
K	9/9/99	Eagle Lake	Colorado	Lions' Club	1
Q	9/15/99	Point Venture	Travis	Travis Co WCID Point Venture	11
O	9/16/99	La Grange	Fayette	Fayette Co Water Council	1
O	9/16/99	*	Fayette	Fayette Co Water Council	9
D	9/20/99	Burnet	Burnet	KBAY radio 104.9	1
D	9/20/99	Burnet	Burnet	KBUC radio 92.5	1
D	9/20/99	Burnet	Burnet	KHLB radio 106.9	1
E	9/20/99	Buchanan Office	Llano	Inks Lake LCRA Advisory Panel	8
A	10/25/99		Milam	SWMilam Co.WSC Bd of Directors	11
S	11/1/99	Llano	Llano	Llano Co. Soil & Water Cons. Dist.Bd.	2
M	11/8/99	Austin	Travis	Save Barton Creek Assn	5
M	11/9/99	Austin	Travis	UT LAMP (Sr.Continuing Educ)	1
O	12/2/99	Fayetteville	Fayette	Fayette County Taxpayers Assn.	1
O	1/1/00	La Grange	Fayette	Fayette County Taxpayers Assn.	1
L	1/5/00	Goldthwaite	Mills	Goldthwaite City Council	7
L	1/10/00	Goldthwaite	Mills	Mills Commers Court	3
A	1/11/00		Lee	Lee Co WSC Board of Directors	11
A	1/13/00		Fayette	Public Meeting	1
Q	1/17/00	Lakeway	Travis	Lakeway City Council	7
A	1/18/00		Brazos	Brazos Co COG/County Judges	3
O	1/18/00	La Grange	Fayette	*	*
O	1/19/00	La Grange	Fayette	Fayette County Water Council	9
Q	1/20/00	Lago Vista	Travis	Lago Vista City Council	7
Q	1/22/00	Marble Falls	Burnet	Highland Lakes PAC Directors	1
L	1/24/00	Goldthwaite	Mills	Mills Commissioners Court	3
L	1/24/00	Goldthwaite	Mills	Fox Crossing Water Dist	11
L	1/25/00	Goldthwaite	Mills	Fox Crossing Water Dist	11
Q	2/1/00	Lago Vista	Travis	Lago Vista Lions Club	1
Q	2/2/00	Lakeway	Travis	Lakeway Men's Breakfast Club	1
Q	2/3/00	Lago Vista	Travis	Highland Lakes Group Directors	1
Q	2/8/00	Jonestown	Travis	Jonestown Water Supply Co. Directors	11
H	2/10/00	Austin	Travis	Barton Sprgs/EdAqCD	11
H	2/15/00	San Marcos	Hays	Hays Co. Commissioners	3
H	2/17/00	N.Hays Co.	Hays	Citizens Alliance of N. Hays Co.	1
A	2/24/00		Lincoln	Lincoln Co WSC Annual Meeting	11

Table 7.2: LCRWPG Presentations to Civic and Special Interest Groups (continued)

Presenter *	Date	City	County	Community Group	Type of Group**
A	2/29/00			969 VFD Public Meeting	1
H	3/1/00	Buda	Hays	GBRA I-35 Water Mtg	9
A	3/2/00	Bastrop	Bastrop	Aqua WSC Annual Meeting	11
H	3/2/00	Austin	Travis	City Council of Austin	7
H	3/8/00	Buda	Hays	Buda Citizens Committee	7
Q	3/15/00	Lake Travis	Travis	Lake Travis Chamber of Commerce	10
Q	3/22/00	Lakeway	Travis	Lakeway Homeowners Assn	1
A	3/23/00		Milam	Public Meeting	1
T	4/1/00	Fredericksburg	Gillespie	Leadership Fredericksburg	1
G	4/6/00	Columbus	Colorado	Colorado Co. Republicans	12
Q	4/16/00	Austin	Travis	Radio KJFK "Dockside" Program	1
A	4/24/00		Milam	SW Milam Co.WSC Annual Mtg	11
A	4/28/00		Lee	Lee Co WSC Annual Meeting	11
A	5/3/00	La Grange	Fayette	Public Meeting	1
G	5/3/00	Garwood	Colorado	Garwood Lions Club	1
Q	5/7/00	Austin	Travis	Radio KJFK "Dockside" Program	1
A	5/10/00		Milam	Public Meeting	1
Q	5/30/00	Austin	Travis	Radio KJFK "Dockside" Program	1
Q	6/7/00	Lakeway	Travis	Travis Co Alliance of Cities	7
A	6/29/00	Smithville	Bastrop	Chamber of Commerce	10, 6
A	7/5/00	Bastrop	Bastrop	Chamber of Commerce	10, 6
Q	7/17/00	Lakeway	Travis	City Council	7
A	8/10/00	Bastrop	Bastrop	Bastrop County Realtors Assn.	10, 12
Q	8/17/00	Kingsland	Travis	Neighborhood Association	1
Q	8/22/00	Kingsland	Travis	Hill Country Builders	10
Q	9/12/00	Kingsland	Travis	Lions Club	1
O	9/20/00	Round Top	Fayette	South Central Board of Realtors	10
Q	10/25/00	Kingsland	Travis	Methodist Men' Club	1
<b>* PRESENTERS CODING:</b>					
A	J. Burke		K	R. Gertson	
B	H. Simon		L	D. Henry	
C	R. Goss		M	J. Marsden	
D	J. Barho		N	C. Martinez	
E	Q. Martin		O	R. Macaulay	
F	D. Armentrout		P	S. Reinhard	
G	S. Balas		Q	C. Rowland	
H	S. Bowlin		R	M. Smith	
I	R. Dickerson		S	B. Stewart	
J	R. Gangluff		T	P. Tybor	
<b>** GROUP TYPE CODING:</b>					
1	General public		7	Municipalities	
2	Agricultural interests		8	Recreation interests	
3	County government		9	River Authority contacts	
4	Electric power		10	Small business	
5	Environmental		11	Water utilities/districts	
6	Industries		12	Other	

## 7.4 OPINION SURVEYS

The Planning Group conducted four surveys to gain an overview of the spectrum of opinion regarding issues and problems from a variety of stakeholders. The methodology and findings of each are reported below.

### 7.4.1 Scoping Phase Survey

One of the initial tasks of the Lower Colorado Regional Water Planning Group was to determine an appropriate scope of services and issues to focus on for its work. Among the tasks undertaken to accomplish this was the use of a mail survey that covered all 14 counties within the region, which prompted a total of 126 responses.

The survey queried stakeholders regarding the types of water supply problems and threats they foresaw, as well as their initial preferences for solutions in their communities. The survey also asked about the existence of conservation, drought management, and water supply plans. Respondents were also asked open-ended questions eliciting opinions of the most pressing issues to be addressed.

While the responses were disproportionately from the northern half of the region, several universal issues were mentioned:

- Population growth placing increasing demands on water supplies—especially on aquifers in areas dependent on groundwater—coupled with concern about the sustainability of these resources. Even in the southern end of the region, development encroaching from the Houston Metropolitan Area has begun to prompt concern.
- Export of Colorado River water outside of the basin has been perceived as a threat by many stakeholders.
- Adequate flows for instream uses and maintaining the health of coastal bays and estuaries.
- Recycling of wastewater flows as a means of making better use of resources; and the associated impact to potentially reduce anticipated instream flows available to downstream users.

Several respondents mentioned support for rainwater harvesting, the difficulties of small systems, areas where no water conservation district has been formed yet, the need to take economic impacts of recreational uses into account, and the importance of conservation (all public water systems are now required to have plans phased in, although when the study was conducted many did not).

Table 7.3 presents the water issues and problems for the RWPG's assessment of the relevant county and regional issues based on the survey summary responses as well as the planning group members' own knowledge of the region.

These issues remained important throughout the planning effort, although they were not always at the forefront of discussion. For example, the population projections prompted strong concerns in many jurisdictions within the region, especially growth in the "County-Other" category within the Hill Country counties.

Table 7.3: LCRWPA Water Issues and Problems

County	City/Area	Issue/Problem
Bastrop	Bastrop	Lack of dependability of alluvium aquifer during severe drought.
	Aqua WSC	Inadequacy of water distribution system to meet high growth.
	County Wide	Over development of Carrizo-Wilcox aquifer by new water users within and outside of county + C23.
Blanco	County Wide	Inadequacy of Trinity Group aquifer to meet water needs of rapidly growing rural population.
	Blanco	Lack of dependability of Blanco River Dams during severe drought.
Burnet	County Wide	Inadequacy of Trinity Group aquifer to meet water needs of rapidly growing population.
Colorado	County Wide	Inadequacy of Colorado River to meet long-term irrigation water needs.
Fayette	County Wide	Local inadequacy of local groundwater to meet domestic water needs.
	County Wide	Poor quality groundwater for some rural water users.
Gillespie	County Wide	Inadequacy of local aquifers to meet water needs of rapidly growing pop.
	County Wide	Groundwater quality deterioration.
	Fredericksburg	Inadequacy of local aquifers to meet water needs of rapidly growing pop.
Hays	Northern	Inadequacy of Trinity Group and Barton Springs /Edwards aquifers to meet water needs of rapidly growing population. Threats to water quality from development in the contributing and recharge zones of the Barton Springs /Edwards aquifer.
Llano	County Wide	Inadequacy of local groundwater to meet water needs.
	Llano	Lack of dependability of Llano River Dams during severe drought.
Matagorda	County Wide	Inadequacy of Colorado River and Gulf Coast aquifer to meet irrigation water needs.
Mills	County Wide	Inadequacy of Colorado River and aquifers to water needs.
	Goldthwaite	Inadequacy of off-channel storage reservoirs to meet water needs.
	County Wide	Periodic high salinity of Colorado River water.
San Saba	County Wide	Inadequacy of groundwater to meet water needs of growing rural population.
	County Wide	Poor quality groundwater for some rural water users.
Travis	Rural Areas	Inadequacy of local groundwater to provide water for growing rural pop.
	All Municipalities	Assured water supply for long-term future growth. Water and Wastewater Infrastructure expansion.
	Southwest	Inadequacy of Barton Springs-Edwards aquifer to provide water for growing suburban/rural population. Threats to water quality from development in the contributing and recharge zones of the Barton Springs /Edwards aquifer.
Wharton	County Wide	Inadequacy of Colorado River and Gulf Coast aquifer to meet irrigation water needs
Williamson	Austin	Assured water supply for long-term future growth. Water and Wastewater Infrastructure expansion.
All Counties	--	Export of Colorado River Water Outside the basin. Adequate flows for instream flow and estuarine inflow needs. Water reuse and return flows.

### 7.4.2 Unique Stream Segments and Reservoir Sites Survey

In addition to the four public meetings shown below in Table 7.4 Public Meetings and Hearings, the Unique Stream Segments and Reservoir Sites Committee (USS/RSC), led by LCRWPG member Jim Barho, mailed more than 800 surveys to stakeholders throughout the region to obtain public opinion on specific recommendations for potential USS/RS designations. Stakeholders included Lake/River Advisory Panel members, Water Councils, environmental groups, local government officials, and county extension agents.

The survey asked respondents to prioritize the criteria for establishing ecologically unique river and stream segments (criteria: contribution of segment to biological, hydrological, riparian conservation, water quality/exceptional aquatic life/aesthetic, and threatened and endangered species/unique communities factors). The survey also asked for suggestions for specific stream segments to be considered, as well as for sites uniquely suited for reservoirs.

The committee received 57 responses, including several from organizations such as the Bastrop County Environmental Network (BCEN), the Burnet County Water Council, the Bull Creek Foundation, and the Fox Crossing Water District, among others.

Survey respondents identified many of the committee's initial listing of 20 potential stream segments and 29 potential reservoir sites.

The criteria prioritization question elicited a broad range of opinion, but overall the average scores for each of the five criteria (with 1 representing the top priority and 5 representing the lowest priority) were as shown in Table 7.4:

Table 7.4: USS/RS Criteria Prioritization

Criterion	Mean Ranking
Hydrological Function	2.00
Water Quality	2.17
Biological Function	2.92
Riparian Conservation	3.21
Threatened & Endangered Species/Unique Communities	4.46

### 7.4.3 Benefit Prioritization Survey

The members of the public who attended a monthly RWPG meeting in Columbus on 10 November 1999 were offered the opportunity to complete a feedback form that asked them to prioritize the benefits that might be gained from a new Regional Water Plan or to specify other benefits not yet envisioned by the Planning Group.

Fourteen surveys were returned, with the following results (Table 7.5). Because a "1" indicated first priority, the higher the average number, the higher the priority.

Table 7.5: Regional Water Plan Benefit Prioritization

Benefit	Mean Ranking	Standard Deviation*
Protect water quality	2.8	2.6
Conservation	3.9	2.5
Seek ways to use new technologies to improve water supplies	4.4	3.0
Affordability; low water rates	5.1	2.3
Maintaining a diversity of living options--rural, semi-rural, suburban, and urban	5.7	3.1
Environmental protection	5.7	3.3
Preserve water within the region, rather than sharing the resource or selling water to neighboring regions	6.5	3.0
Water resources for recreation and amenities to enhance our quality of life	6.8	1.8
A reliable, unrestricted water supply to support the economy	7.1	2.9
Address the needs of the hundreds of small water systems	7.4	2.7
Other (please specify: <i>erosion control in the watershed to prevent silting of lakes and reservoirs</i> )	<i>one suggestion</i>	

\* The standard deviation indicates how far individual rankings were from the average, that is, how much people disagreed about the appropriate ranking. The larger the standard deviation, the broader the disagreement there was regarding what ranking a benefit should have.

The summary above shows that this group of respondents on average placed the highest priority on protecting water quality, promoting conservation measures, and seeking ways to use new technologies to improve water supplies. By the same token, relatively low average priority ranking was assigned to addressing the needs of small water supply systems, helping to ensure a strong economy, and protecting and enhancing recreational opportunities.

Respondents were in most agreement regarding the relative ranking that protecting recreation and amenities and promoting conservation measures should have. In other words, people generally agreed that conservation merits high priority and that recreational or quality-of-life uses should have relatively low priority.

#### 7.4.4 Water User Group Service Area and Type Survey

In late 1998, the LCRWPG mailed surveys to more than 300 water utilities and large-volume independent water user groups throughout the region requesting that they provide or confirm information regarding the size and boundaries of their service areas, and the types of customers they serve. This gave these core stakeholders an opportunity to communicate directly with the RWPG and to fill in data missing from existing records.

Seventy-three responses were received, many with accompanying maps, as well as verbal descriptions of the nature of the service area or groups served. Reporting and planning information has been updated to reflect these responses.

**7.5 STAKEHOLDER FUND-RAISING**

To further involve the broad range of stakeholders affected by the regional water planning effort, the LCRWPG mailed a fund-raising letter to all water user groups that consume more than 1,000 acre-feet of water annually, as well as to County Judges and municipalities throughout the region. Planning Group members followed up these letters with personal telephone calls and contacts to increase the interest of these stakeholders in the public process.

In addition to the substantial contributions made by the organizations represented on the Regional Water Planning Group itself, a total of more than \$30,000 in cash and in-kind contributions were donated. This money was used to fund public involvement activities such as the additional public meetings the Planning Group hosted (SB 1 guidelines requires a minimum of one hearing).

This fund was used to place display ads for the final public meetings and the public hearing in 26 newspapers and to place 40 spots on two radio stations with wide coverage. Meeting costs for the final meetings were also defrayed by these funds. Some funds remained, which the LCRWPG voted to pass on to the incoming Planning Group.

The list below indicates organizations and individuals who made monetary and/or in-kind contributions to this effort.

County	Contributing Entity
Bastrop	Bastrop County WCID #2
Bastrop	City of Elgin
Bastrop	City of Bastrop
Bastrop	Bastrop County
Bastrop	City of Smithville
Blanco	Blanco County
Burnet	Capitol Aggregates, LTD.
Burnet	City of Bertram - Water Department
Burnet	Cold Spring Granite (Texas Granite Corp.)
Colorado	City of Columbus
Fayette	Fayette Water Supply Corp.
Fayette	City of Schulenburg
Gillespie	City of Fredericksburg
Gillespie	Gillespie County
Gillespie	Tully Currie
Hays	Cimarron Park Water Co., Inc.
Hays	Dripping Springs Water Supply Corp.

County	Contributing Entity
Llano	City of Llano
Matagorda	HL&P (STP Nuclear Operating Company)
Matagorda	Minze Agriculture Partnership
Matagorda	Matagorda County
Matagorda	Celanese, LTD
Matagorda	City of Bay City
Matagorda	Texas Brine Company, LLC
Mills	Don or Martha Burnham
Mills	City of Goldthwaite
Mills	Mills County
San Saba	City of San Saba
San Saba	Waco Creek Ranch
San Saba	Richland Special Utility District
Travis	AquaSource Inc./Central Texas
Travis	Austin White Lime Company
Travis	Arroyo Doble Water System Inc.
Travis	Arlene Bolm Fitzpatrick, et al.
Travis	Creedmoor-Maha Water Supply Corp.
Travis	City of Austin
Travis	City of Rollingwood
Travis	Coca-Cola Enterprises
Travis	Travis County WCID #10
Travis	Travis County WCID #17
Travis	Travis County WCID #19
Travis	Travis County WCID #19
Travis	Travis County WCID # 20
Travis	Lakeway M.U.D.
Travis	Village of Bee Cave
Travis	City of Lago Vista
Travis	City of Lakeway
Travis	University of Texas at Austin
Travis	Hornsby Bend Water Utility Co.
Travis	Jonestown Water Supply Corp.
Travis	Barton Creek Water Supply
Travis	Hurst Creek MUD
Travis	River Place MUD
Travis	Windermere Utility Company
Travis	Onion Creek Country Club
Travis	Travis County WCID
Travis	Lost Creek M.U.D.

<b>County</b>	<b>Contributing Entity</b>
Travis	Glenlake Water Supply Corp.
Travis	Motorola
Wharton	Jochetz Farm, Charlie F. Jochetz, et al.
Wharton	County of Wharton
Wharton	Macha Farms, Leroy Macha, et al.
Wharton	City of Wharton
Wharton	SWK Land Co.
Wharton	Wharton County WCID #2
Williamson	Anderson Mill M.U.D.
Williamson	Williamson County
Williamson	Manville Water Supply Corp.

## 7.6 INTERNET WEB PAGE AND FACT SHEETS

Internet communications included the listing of meeting locations and times, providing draft chapters of the LCRWPG's Initially Prepared Regional Water Plan, and technical background data that will comprise appendices to the Lower Colorado Regional Water Plan once it is completed. As this report goes to press, LCRA continues to develop web content related the regional and interregional planning process.

A basic fact sheet developed by the TWDB describing the SB 1 planning process and the Lower Colorado Region (Region K) was used in presentations and was available at LCRWPG meetings and hearings. Once outlines of the proposed strategies for meeting many of the region's water supply shortages had been adopted, the LCRA prepared two fact sheets explaining the features of the proposal.

Examples of the initial fact sheet and the proposed strategies fact sheet appear in Appendix 7A.

## 7.7 IRRIGATION WATER SUPPLY WORKING GROUP

Because irrigated agriculture at the lower end of the Colorado River Basin was identified early on as one of the use groups to suffer water supply shortages that the Lower Colorado Regional Water Plan would need to remedy, a special working group was formed. This group included representatives from the Coastal Plain counties of Matagorda, Wharton, and Colorado.

The RWPG members involved in the working group held their first meeting with irrigators in August 1999 to describe the projected water supply shortfalls during drought-of-record conditions. At this meeting they also began to narrow the range of alternative approaches for devising workable strategies to those that the irrigators felt had a good chance of practical application.

The Planning Group members also invited agricultural experts to participate in the meetings and to work directly with them in seeking solutions. After the initial meeting with irrigators, RWPG members continued to consult with experts to work toward quantifiable means of eliminating the projected shortages.

A second major meeting was held with the Irrigation Water Supply Working Group on 8 May 2000 to review and prioritize strategies and economic data. This enabled both the participating LCRWPG members and the irrigation stakeholders to discuss issues related to the proposed solution and to begin to develop a broader view of its implications.

## **7.8 PUBLIC HEARINGS AND OTHER PUBLIC MEETINGS**

In addition to the meetings shown earlier in Table 7.1, several meetings were held for the primary purpose of gaining public input and answering questions from the public. This included four public hearings (one of which was required by SB 1) and three public meetings for comment on the *Initially Prepared Draft Plan*, and one public hearing as required by SB 1. All of these are summarized in Table 7.6 below.

The public hearings were advertised throughout the region in legal ads as required by SB1. For the public hearing and public meetings for review and comment on the *Initially Prepared Draft Plan*, display advertisements were placed in more than a dozen newspapers throughout the region and 40 radio spots were purchased. In addition, news releases were issued and personal contacts made with publications to garner further coverage. A printed copy of the public hearing presentation appears in Appendix 7A.

LCRA sponsored an additional series of eight meetings throughout the region to explain the concepts and features of the *Initially Prepared Draft Plan* for which it provided its own publicity, a video, and other materials. Reporting from LCRA meetings for which information was available is included in Table 7.6 below.

Table 7.6: Public Hearings and Other Public Meetings

Date	Location	Sponsor	# Attending	Comments
5/27/98	M.D. Anderson Science Park, Bastrop Co.	LCRWPG	44	Attracted participants from throughout the region;
6/3/98	City of Burnet, Burnet Co.	LCRWPG	110	Support for brush control; concern about hidden agendas;
6/17/98	City of Eagle Lake, Colorado Co.	LCRWPG	20	Concern about agricultural water supplies;
8/11/99	Bay City, Matagorda Co.	USS/RSC*/ LCRWPG	36	Concern about how designation as a unique stream segment/reservoir site might affect property rights;
9/22/99	City of Burnet, Burnet Co.	USS/RSC*/ LCRWPG	98	Concern regarding how property rights and taxation would be affected by USS/RS designations; some support for unspecified water storage at the upper end of the region.
11/4/99	Texas Parks & Wildlife HQ, Travis Co.	USS/RSC*/ LCRWPG	15	Suggestions for Barton Creek, portions of Onion Creek as potential USS designations;
11/10/99	City of Columbus, Colorado Co.	USS/RSC*/ LCRWPG	160	Strong opposition voiced to designation as Cummins Creek or Shaw's Bend as potential reservoir sites;
7/18/00	LCRA Western District Complex	LCRA	N/A	N/A
7/20/00	Hinze's Bar-B-Que, Wharton Co.	LCRA	N/A	N/A
7/24/00	City of Burnet, Burnet County	LCRA		Mistrust of San Antonio and durability of a water contract with it. Some support for financing improvements within region.
7/25/00	City of Lakeway Activity Center, Travis Co.	LCRA		Support exists, but conditional on ensuring no environmental damage and on limiting total. Concerns that growth is taken for granted, conservation plans may not work. Lakeway Mayor supports plan.
7/27/00	City of La Grange, Fayette Co.	LCRA	130	General support in hopes of it being "insurance" against development of Shaws Bend. Concerns regarding groundwater mining causing subsidence, other impacts. Prefer Bay City diversion.

Date	Location	Sponsor	# Attending	Comments
7/28/00	Bay City, Matagorda Co.	LCRA	38	Concerned about aquifer mining subsidence. Unsure of ability to limit San Antonio's access to groundwater. Fear serious impact to bays and estuaries.
8/13/00	McKinney Roughs Complex, Bastrop Co.	LCRWPG	28	Question regarding ownership of water and financial gain of those owning land covered by off-channel reservoirs
8/21/00	LCRA Western District Complex	LCRA	N/A	N/A
8/28/00	Travis County Precinct 2	LCRA	N/A	N/A
9/13/00	City of Bastrop, Bastrop Co.	LCRWPG		Support for the plan from most of those commenting. Concerns regarding groundwater production of groundwater in Lee and Bastrop counties and its potential impact on water levels. Concerns about the discrepancies between analyses of models of the Carrizo aquifer and the competing methodologies used.
9/20/00	City of Wharton, Wharton Co.	LCRWPG		Groundwater impact concerns, especially the inability to predict impacts. Concerns regarding groundwater districts and related taxation. Impacts on City of Wharton flood control and groundwater issues. Suggestion to consider constructing reservoirs in Hill County.
9/23/00	City of Lakeway Activity Center, Travis Co.	LCRWPG	30	Questions about how the numbers add up given the combination of "new sources".
9/27/00	City of Burnet, Burnet Co.	LCRWPG	155	Concern for limiting San Antonio's access and the size and permanence of transfers. Concern for property rights, LCRA encroachment and expanding purview.

*\*Unique Stream Segments and Reservoir Sites Committee of the Planning Group*

Examples of fact sheets, frequently asked questions regarding the proposed strategies, additional detail regarding news coverage, and a printed copy of the public hearing presentation appears in Appendix 7A.

***APPENDIX 7A:  
EXAMPLE MATERIALS***

- Example Web Page
- Initial General Fact Sheet with Frequently Asked Questions
- Proposed Strategy Fact Sheet (Sharing Resources)
- Environmental Protection Fact Sheet
- LCRWPG Survey Letters and Questionnaires
- General Presentation Materials
- Public Hearing Presentation
- Public Hearing Notice

***LOCATED IN VOLUME II OF THE LCRWPG REGIONAL WATER PLAN - APPENDICES***

*LCRWPG ADOPTED PLAN*

***APPENDIX 7B:  
PUBLIC COMMENTS AND LCRWPG RESPONSES***

***LOCATED IN VOLUME II OF THE LCRWPG REGIONAL WATER PLAN - APPENDICES***