

Meeting Minutes
Lower Colorado Regional Water Planning Group Regular Meeting
January 15, 2020
LCRA Dalchau Service Center
3505 Montopolis Drive, Austin, Texas
10:00 a.m.

Members Signing In:

Jim Brasher, GMA 15	Robert Ruggiero, Small Business
John Burke, Water Utilities	Paul Sliva, Agriculture
Jim Luther, Counties	Mitchel Sodek, GMA 8
Ron Fieseler, GMA 9	Emil Uecker, Alternate for Counties
Lauri Gillam, Municipalities	Byron Theodosios, Counties
Karen Haschke, Public Interest	Jim Totten, GMA 12
Barbara Johnson, Industries	Paul Tybor, GMA 7
Jason Ludwig, Electric Generating Utilities	Jennifer Walker, Environmental
Teresa Lutes, Municipalities	David Wheelock, River Authorities
Ann McElroy, Environmental	Ron Ellis, Non-Voting, Alternate for TWDB
Doug Powell, Recreation	David Bradsby, Non-Voting, TPWD
Mike Reagor, Municipalities	Rob Barthen, Non-Voting, TDA

Voting Members Absent:

Daniel Berglund, Small Business
David Caldwell, GMA 10
Charles Olfers, Agriculture
James Sultemeier, Counties, Alternate attended
David Van Dresar, Water Districts

Consultants/Support/Visitors/Other:

Jordan Furnans, LRW Water	Carol Olewin, Alternate for Public Interest
Daniel Bulosas, CTWC	David Villarreal, TDA
Miguel Morales, Austin Water	Christiane Alepuz, CAPCOG
Melissa Alderson, TPWD	Richard Hoffpauir, Hoffpauir Consulting
Blake Neffendorf, City of Buda	Joe Trungale, TES
Earl Foster, Lakeway MUD	Rebecca Batchelder, LCRA
Charlie Flatten, HCA	Cindy Smiley, Smiley Law
Martin Handly, SWCA	David Lindsay, Alternate for Recreation
Christianne Castleberry, Alternate for Water Utilities	

Quorum:

Quorum: Yes
Number of voting members or alternates representing voting members present: 21
Number required for quorum per current voting membership of 25: 13

Formal Actions Taken:

1. The Lower Colorado Regional Water Planning Group (LCRWPG) approved the recommended candidates for the Executive Committee and Officers.

2. The minutes from the November 13, 2019 Lower Colorado Regional Water Planning Group meeting were approved as presented.
3. The LCRWPG approved the inclusion of the City of Austin's Longhorn Dam Operations Improvements strategy as a recommended water management strategy in the plan.

Regular Meeting:

1. **Call to Order** – Chairman John Burke called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.
2. **Welcome and Introductions** – Chairman John Burke welcomed all to the meeting.
3. **Report on Nominating Committee Recommendations** –
 - a. Discuss and take action on election of Executive Committee and Officers: Anne McElroy, Committee Chair, reported that the Nominating Committee recommendations for the Executive Committee are as follows:
 - John Burke, Chair
 - David Wheelock, Vice Chair
 - Teresa Lutes, Secretary
 - Ron Fieseler, Member-at-Large
 - Jason Ludwig, Member-at-Large
 - Byron Theodosius, Member-at-Large

Ms. McElroy also noted that all recommended candidates have agreed to serve and have been approved by the Nominating Committee. Chair Burke called for nominations from the floor and there were none. Paul Tybor made a motion to approve the recommended candidates, Ron Fieseler seconded, and the motion was approved by the LCRWPG.

4. **Receive public comments on specific issues related to agenda items numbers 7 through 13** – None.
5. **Attendance Report** – Teresa Lutes presented attendance report information, which was included in the members' packets for review. The budget report from LCRA was also included in the members' packets for review.
6. **Approval of Minutes from the November 13, 2019 regular meeting** –The LCRWPG approved a motion by Teresa Lutes and seconded by Barbara Johnson to approve the minutes as presented from the regular November 13, 2019 meeting.
7. **Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)** –
 - a. Update on regional water planning activities and schedules: Ron Ellis, TWDB, informed the LCRWPG that the 2020 SWIFT application cycle opened in December 2019, and the Board will be accepting applications until February 2020. The applications are being accepted for water management strategies included in the 2017 State Water Plan. The TWDB is also currently accepting applications for agricultural water conservation grants. Public comment periods for the state flood financing, flood planning, and flood region rules ends February 3rd. The TWDB is also currently working to update the Regional Water Planning rules—these rules go to the board on February 13th, after which there will be a public comment period.

Mr. Ellis also noted that there is a planned Regional Water Planning Group chairs conference call on January 22nd.

8. Committee Reports – Committee Chairs

- a. Legislative and Policy Committee: Alicia Smiley, AECOM, provided an update on the Legislative and Policy Committee meeting held on December 11, 2019. At that meeting, the Committee met to discuss proposed edits to sections of Chapter 8, including:
- Inflows to Highland Lakes (8.1.10)
 - Management of Surface Water Resources: Inter-Basin Transfers and Model Linking (8.1.1)
 - The Municipal Industrial Conservation (8.1.7)
 - Reuse (8.1.8)
 - Recommended Improvements to the Regional Planning Process (8.1.12)
 - Radionuclides in the Hickory and Marble Falls Aquifers (8.1.13)
 - Planning for Droughts Worse than the Drought of Record (New)

Policy items that have already been presented to the LCRWPG include Groundwater, Potential Impacts to Agricultural and Rural Water Supplies, Agricultural Water Conservation, and Brush Management.

- b. Other Committee reports, as needed – None.

9. **Presentation and discussion of draft legislative/policy recommendations ready for RWPG review. Take action as needed.** – Alicia Smiley, AECOM, presented on draft legislative/policy recommendations ready for LCRWPG review. The Inflows to Highland Lakes policy was reviewed and updated by David Lindsay and Rebecca Batchelder, and now includes discussion on rainfall-runoff trends. This policy also requests a hydrologic study of the watershed providing inflows to the Highland Lakes. The Municipal/Industrial Conservation policy was updated by Teresa Lutes and includes minor languages and updated information since the last regional water planning cycle. Ms. Lutes also provided some minor language changes to the Reuse policy. Ann McElroy asked what happens to the recommendations that are included in the plan and Alicia responded that the TWDB reviews them. Ron Fieseler wanted to know how studies recommended in a policy would be funded and it was noted that it seems they would largely be funded by the TWDB if the study recommendations were to be acted upon by the state.

10. Consultant Status Report –

Progress to date: Jaime Burke, AECOM, presented on the consultant's efforts since the last LCRWPG meeting. Updated drafts of Appendix 1B, Chapter 3, Chapter 4, Chapter 9, and Chapter 7 have now been sent to the LCRWPG for review. Water management strategies are almost complete, with all scoped strategy write-ups completely drafted and only addressing comments and incorporating into Chapter 5 as remaining tasks. Implementation spreadsheets were sent to WUGs; AECOM has received 17 surveys so far. Jennifer Walker asked how many surveys total were mailed out, and Jaime responded that all WUGs received one, so about 70-80 surveys.

- a. Upcoming effort: Ms. Burke then outlined AECOM's upcoming efforts, which include updating and finishing draft Chapters 5, 6, 10, 8, and 11. Work also needs

to be completed to incorporate received comments into draft chapters, to develop an executive summary, and to perform database entry (DB22) of Water Management Strategies.

11. Discussion of draft 2021 Plan chapters out for review and comments received. Take action as needed. – Jaime Burke, AECOM, informed the group that draft chapters 1-4 are out for review by the LCRWPG. Comments have been received for some chapters, and AECOM is working to incorporate those. Comments can still be sent in for draft chapters. Ron Fieseler asked Jaime how long we would have to get comments in on the draft chapters, and she said the best would be prior to the February 5th meeting, but if that is unlikely, then just as soon as possible. Mr. Fieseler also wanted to know if any input from the rice farming community was collected for Appendix 1B. David Lindsay, who participated in drafting the appendix updates, noted that he worked with LCRA to update the information since the last cycle and others will have a chance to review the updates and much of last cycle's information is still included in the appendix. There was also discussion about the Pecos Valley Aquifer, Johnson City water needs, steam electric projects, and draft Table 4-10.

12. Presentation and discussion of updates to water management strategies since last Region K meeting. Take action as needed – Jaime Burke, AECOM, presented on strategy updates. LCRA has requested strategy removal for the Alternative Groundwater Importation from Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer and all of its Fayette Power Project strategies from the list of “recommended” and “alternative” strategies. These strategies will be moved to the “considered” strategies category. For the Bertram WMS water source, after further discussion, AECOM is changing Bertram's reservoir source back to the Ellenburger-San Saba. Mitchell Sodek agrees that the way this strategy is now in the plan is the correct way to represent it, pending additional information.

For the Llano Shortage in the near-term timeframe, AECOM updated the reduction for Llano's drought management strategies to meet demands after conservation is applied. The emergency water purchase strategy volume would then be reduced to 177 ac-ft/yr.

For Austin's water management strategies, AECOM added O&M costs to strategies with sub-WUG level costs (Austin Blackwater and Greywater Reuse, Austin Onsite Rainwater and Storm Water Harvesting, Austin Community-Scale Stormwater Harvesting. Revised Water Supply Infrastructure Development / Expansion strategy). Teresa Lutes also explained that a Longhorn Dam Operations Improvements strategy was included as a recommended strategy in the 2016 Plan but had heretofore had not yet been brought to the group in this planning cycle. The Longhorn Dam Operations Improvements strategy is to be included in the revised Water Supply Infrastructure Development/Expansion strategy. Jennifer Walker commented that although the impacts to the environment for the Longhorn Dam strategy will likely be minimal, it should be noted that there might be some small impacts. The project team will work to address this comment in the draft strategy write-up. Teresa Lutes motioned to approve the Longhorn Dam Operations Improvements strategy as a recommended strategy for the plan, Barbara Johnson seconded, and the LCRWPG approved the motion.

To update the Brush Management water management strategy, AECOM located research showing the impacts of brush management on deep drainage. This information was used that to calculate potential additional benefits to local groundwater volumes from brush management in an amount up to 2,000 acre-feet of water. Based on this projection, that yield was allocated proportionally by geographic area to four counties in the Region K area. David

Wheelock asked if AECOM had looked at what other regional planning groups had done for brush management strategies; Jaime said that they haven't had a chance to do extensive investigation, but that some groups include it as a strategy with no yield. Ann McElroy wanted to know why San Saba County wasn't included as one of the counties receiving yield from the brush management strategy; Jaime explained that they didn't have enough data for San Saba to create a yield estimate, but could add some language about brush management in San Saba in the text.

For Rainwater Harvesting, Jaime explained that they clarified catchment and household savings and added actual cost of large-scale, single family rainwater harvesting systems. For Drip Irrigation for Non-Rice Crops, that strategy was updated to include San Saba, but they could not locate planted acres of grapes for Gillespie. Several strategies are still in progress, including Groundwater Importation: Hays County Pipeline Groundwater Importation: Alliance Regional Water Authority Pipeline.

13. Presentation and discussion of cumulative impacts modeling. Take action as needed.

– Joe Trungale, TES, shared a presentation on cumulative impact modeling. TWDB requires an analysis of what the cumulative impacts of the recommended water management strategies would be to the Colorado River and Matagorda Bay. Water management strategies that were included in the cumulative impacts model were:

- a. Austin Return Flows
- b. Downstream Return Flows (Pflugerville)
- c. Import Return Flows from Williamson County
- d. Austin Off-Channel Reservoir
- e. Austin Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR)
- f. LCRA Enhanced Recharge and Conjunctive Use
- g. LCRA Excess Flows Off-Channel Reservoir
- h. LCRA Mid-Basin Off-Channel Reservoir
- i. Baylor Creek Reservoir
- j. LCRA Prairie Conservation Reservoir

Joe explained how these strategies were modeled and then presented results of the cumulative impacts model runs.

Teresa Lutes noted that the City of Austin Aquifer Storage and Recovery strategy is planned to pull water from Austin Water's potable system, so planned diversion locations would conceptually be from Lake Austin and upstream. Joe said he would review the model and make any corrections that may be needed in the modeling to reflect that assumption. Jennifer Walker asked how this data would be used in the plan; Jaime explained that the results would be included in Chapter 6, likely as a table or an appendix.

14. Agenda items for next meeting –

- a. Location and date of next meeting: The next two meetings will be held on February 5 and February 18, 2020 at the LCRA Redbud Center.
- b. Other Committee meetings: – None.

15. New / Other Business (time permitting) – Jaime Burke, AECOM, explained that for the Initially Prepared Plan (IPP), the LCRWPG is required to hold a public hearing. In the past, the LCRWPG has also held public meetings prior to the public hearing. The plan needs to be available to the public and noticed 30 days prior to the public hearing. Jennifer Walker suggested that we continue to hold public meetings, and plan to one up-basin and one down-basin.

16. Public Comments – None.

17. Adjourn – The meeting was adjourned by Chairman John Burke at 12:42 pm.