

Lower Colorado Regional Water Planning Group Meeting

**January 8, 2014
Texas State Capitol
Legislative Conference Room E2.002
1100 Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas 78701
10:00 a.m.**

Members Signing In

Jim Barho, Environmental
Jim Brasher, GMA 15
John Burke, Water Utilities
John Dupnik, GMA 10
Ron Fieseler, GMA 9
Ronald Gertson, Small Business
Karen Haschke, Public Interest
Barbara Johnson, Industries
Brenton Lewis, Municipalities
Bill Luedecke, GMA 8
Teresa Lutes, Municipalities
Bill Neve, Counties
Doug Powell, Recreation
Robert Ruggiero, Small Business

Haskell Simon, Agriculture
James Sulzemeier, Counties
Byron Theodosios, Counties
Paul Tybor, GMA 7
David Van Dresar, Water Districts
Jennifer Walker, Environmental
David Wheelock, River Authorities
David Bradsby, Non-voting, TPWD
David Kercheval, Non-Voting, TDA
David Meeseay, Non-voting, TWDB
Jim Totten, Alternate, GMA 12
John Hoffman, Alternate, Electric Utilities
Lauri Gillam, Alternate, Municipalities

Voting Members Absent

Joe P. Cooper, GMA 12, alternate attended
Joe King, Electric Utilities, alternate attended

Billy Roeder, Agriculture
Brandon Wade, Municipalities, alternate attended

Consultants/Support/Visitors/Other

Jeff Fox, COA, Municipalities Alternate
Lawrence Brown, TSSWCB
Meghan Rousel, USGS
Scott Swanson, LaCosta Environmental
Clay Schultz, TWDB
Bill Littler, Vanir
Michael Simmang, Lost Pines Groundwater
Director Bech Bruun, TWDB
David Yager, TWDB
Ed Yanoshita, Corix Utilities
David Lindsay, CTWC, Recreation Alternate
Kodi Sawin, Sawin Group
Asher Price, Statesman
Jon Schnautz, Representative Straus' Office
Heather Cooke, Austin Water
Marian Hog, Johnson City
Allison Smith, Representative Workman's Office
Drema Gross, Austin Water
Lauri Gillam, City of Pflugerville
Susan Roth, Susan Roth Consulting
Augusto Villalon, Freese & Nichols
Jacob Cottingham, Representative Howard's Office

Merry Klonower, TWDB
K. Myers, City of Fredericksburg
C. Bailey, City of Fredericksburg
Charles Flatten, Hill Country Alliance
Emily Seaervight
Marcus Richardson, Student
Lann Bookout, TWDB
Robert Howard, Bluebonnet Coop
Jo Karr Tedder, CTWC
Donna Klaeger, Burnet County Judge
George Russell, City of Marble Falls
Ron Anderson, LCRA
Jaime Burke, AECOM James
Kowis, Consultant
Krystal Cantu, LCRA
Danielle Martin, Austin Water

Quorum

Quorum: Yes

Number of voting members or alternates representing voting members present: 24

Number required for quorum per current voting membership of 25: 13

Formal Actions Taken

1. Motion to renew the seven voting members whose terms expired in 2014 passed.
2. Motion to elect 2014 Lower Colorado Regional Water Planning Group (LCRWPG) Officers and Executive Committee as nominated by the Nominating Committee passed.
3. Motion to approve the minutes as presented from the October 9, 2013 meeting passed.

Regular Meeting:

1. Call to Order – Chairman John Burke called the meeting to order.
2. Welcome and Introductions – John Burke
3. Attendance Report – Teresa Lutes asked members to review the report from the October meeting.
4. Discuss and take action on election of renewing voting member representatives whose terms would expire this year – John Burke brought the group's attention to the seven members whose terms were expiring; Jim Barho, John Burke, Ronald Gertson, Doug Powell, Robert Ruggiero, Paul Tybor, and David Van Dresar. Mr. Fieseler moved to renew these members' terms. The member's terms would be renewed for five years advancing their term expiration date to 2019. Motion passed.
5. Region K Planning Group Officer Elections – Barbara Johnson announced that the Nominating Committee is nominating John Burke for Chair, Jim Barho for Vice-Chair, and Teresa Lutes for Secretary as officers for 2014. Three members were also nominated to serve at-large on the executive committee; David Wheelock, from Travis County representing River Authorities, Haskell Simon, from Matagorda County representing Agriculture, and David Van Dresar from Fayette County representing Groundwater Districts. The motion to elect the 2014 Lower Colorado Regional Water Planning Group (LCRWPG) Officers and Executive Committee as nominated by the Nominating Committee passed unanimously.
6. Texas Water Development Board Presentations:
 - a. TWDB Board Member Bech Bruun was introduced to the group. He addressed the group and thanked everyone for their work, including Jennifer Walker and John Burke for their work on State Water Implementation Fund for Texas (SWIFT)/HB4 process, and invited the group to use TWDB and the new Board as a resource.
 - Haskell Simon commented that he would like to see a provision for the public to share information and provide input in the rule making. Bruun responded that details are still being developed and they are planning on seeking input. Simon expressed appreciation and asked that he send thanks to the new Board for David Meeseey's work with the group.
 - b. TWDB Rural and Agricultural Ombudsman Doug Shaw was introduced by Mr. Meeseey, who recalled to the Regional Water Planning Group (RWPG) that he has worked with the group before as part of the planning staff. Mr. Shaw explained that he was appointed to represent Texas rural and agricultural public interests. He's been with TWDB for about 8 years, grew up on a dairy farm in a small Texas town and studied Agriculture Economics at Tarleton State. He reached out to anyone who would like to meet with him or to have him attend an event to contact him, as his role is to bring rural and agricultural interests to the TWDB to make sure their voices are heard.
 - c. TWDB Communications - David Meeseey presented progress since the passing of Proposition 6, and upcoming work. The SWIFT Advisory Committee will give direction

and rules based on stakeholder uniform standards for prioritization and distributing funds.

- Upcoming actions for the regional water planning groups (RWPGs) are as follows: TWDB posts instructions for using SWIFT March 1; RWPGs submit draft prioritization for 2011 Plan projects June 1; final prioritization to be submitted Sept. 1; TWDB reports to Governor and legislature Dec. 1 every even-numbered year. Draft Regional Plans due May 1 2015, projects must be in plan to be eligible for loans mid-2015.
- RWPGs must consider decade of project need, feasibility, viability, sustainability, and cost-effectiveness in prioritization of projects. TWDB will give highest consideration to projects that serve a large population, urban and rural areas, and provide regionalization or meet a high percentage of needs. TWDB must consider local financial contribution, capacity to repay, ability to leverage state financing with local and federal funding, and emergency of need of the applicant, as well as whether the project is ready to proceed, effects of the project on water conservation and loss prevention, and priority ranking from the RWPG.
- Jennifer Walker asked whether projects must be in the new plan or the currently approved plan to be eligible for funding. David Meesey responded that the way it is written, the projects must be in in the current approved plan at the time funds become available. If the money becomes available before the draft plan becomes approved, the projects must be in the current approved plan. Ron Feiseler asked about how funding may be affected when the new plan replaces the current plan. David Meesey responded that it is possible that some plans may need to be amended to include projects to allow for funding, but that it is still early in the rules and program development process to say for sure. Ronald Gertson asked if there will be an annual prioritization process in the future. Mr. Meesey stated that since it is still early in the program and rules development process this is not known for sure. He said there are some circumstances where some prioritization will be necessary, such as alternate projects replacing recommended strategies that will need to be ranked. Chairman Burke told the group that he has related to Director Bruun foreseeable complications due to the timelines for SWIFT funding and how they relate to the regional water planning process timelines, and that the process and timelines need to be smoother and more expeditious. Jennifer Walker mentioned that prioritization is part of the development of the new plan and as funding becomes available and future plans are approved, the prioritization process will likely become better reflective of current realities, especially as relates to the on-going drought, than reflected in the current (2011) plan.

7. Consent Agenda:

- a. Approval of Minutes from the October 9, 2013 meeting – John Burke moved to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. There were no corrections suggested and the motion passed.
 - b. Financial/Budget Report – David Wheelock reported that the balance as of December 1st in the LCRWPG account was \$1,683.71, and in the grant account was \$131,081.31.
8. HB4 Regional Chairs update – Chairman Burke asked if anyone would like to be on the Prioritization Committee. Voting members on the committee are: Jennifer Walker, John Burke, Teresa Lutes, Barbara Johnson, John Dupnik, Ronald Gertson, David Wheelock, Karen Haschke, Jim Barho, Doug Powell, Brandon Wade, David Van Dresar, and Robert Ruggiero, and Haskell Simon are; Non-voting members on the committee are: David Meesey and David Bradsby. Jeff Fox, Jaime Burke, and Virginia Wilkinson, will also indicated that they would be involved in the Prioritization Committee and process. Jim Barho thanked Chairman Burke and Jennifer Walker for all their work on this issue. Jaime Burke showed the water management strategy spreadsheet for use in the prioritization process that the TWDB provided (Jeff Fox has emailed this spreadsheet to the group). Ideally prioritization needs to be done before the April meeting to meet the June 1

deadline. Mr. Meeseey mentioned that there is some regional water planning group funding available for the additional Consultant time needed to spend on this effort.

9. City of Austin Update on Conservation and Reclaimed Water Management Strategies – Teresa Lutes introduced Drema Gross as the Division Manager for Austin Water Conservation.
 - Ms. Gross provided an overview of the City's water conservation and reclaimed water program water management strategies. A copy of the City of Austin's presentation will be made available on the Region K web-site. Regulations practiced by the City of Austin include water use restrictions, including permanent no more than twice per week watering restrictions plus additional watering restrictions that are part of Austin's Drought Contingency Plan, embedded in City Code for design and construction, such as efficient plumbing and landscaping and beneficial use of stormwater. Operations savings come from programs like the five-year, \$125 Million Renewing Austin Initiative, which uses leak detection, improves repair times, and replaces aging water lines.
 - The reclaimed water system currently uses about 5,000 acre-feet per year and plans on rapidly expanding and targeting high use areas, like the recently connect to the University of Texas Campus. Capital costs listed in the 2011 Region K Water Plan are estimated at \$302 Million, with the total project cost around \$429 Million. Austin has been investing \$6-8 Million a year in the reclaimed system, but the more opportunity they have to increase that amount, the faster they can bring it online. An area of near-term projects in central Austin have been identified as potentially good candidates for the 20% conservation funding. Initially, two areas to focus on for potential Proposition 6 funding consideration in Austin are reclaimed and water main replacement projects, since they are in the plan and require capital investment in infrastructure.
10. Weather Update and Outlook – Bob Rose (LCRA, Chief Meteorologist)
 - 2013 rainfall departure from normal in Texas was mostly normal, with few places above and below normal. The drought monitor indicates improving conditions, but water supply has not improved. A member of the audience commented that the years before 2012 were drier than normal, to which Mr. Rose agreed. Some lakes were built in the preceding wet years of the 80's and 90's, so our idea of normal lakes may be skewed by those wet years in which they were built. Near normal rainfall is projected for the spring, some models are showing slightly above normal rainfall for summer.
 - Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO) situation is similar to the 1950's, with another predicted 15 years to go in this pattern. La Nina occurs much more often than El Nino in this pattern. The Atlantic has been in a warm phase since the mid 90's, which usually indicates drier weather. This is the first time since the 1950's that the Atlantic and the Pacific are in phases that cause dry weather at the same time. The Atlantic may start to trend cooler in the next 3-5 years, which could give us a break in the current dry pattern. Currently the Pacific is neutral, not trending toward El Nino or La Nina, but may begin trending toward El Nino toward this fall. Mr. Rose predicts that the long term drought pattern will continue across our region unless an El Nino develops. David Van Dresar asked why more hurricanes did not develop over the fall due to the warm Atlantic. Mr. Rose answered that other atmospheric conditions such as dry air coming out of Africa combined with high wind shear lessened the likelihood for storms to develop.
11. LCRA Update on Off-Channel Reservoir Project and groundwater project at Lost Pines Power Park – David Wheelock presented progress on the Off-Channel Reservoir (OCR) and Lost Pines Groundwater Project.
 - The OCR will be built to store 40,000 ac/ft and add 90,000 ac/ft of firm yield for municipal and industrial use, and increase efficiency and reliability for agricultural use. It is located on land currently used as crop farmland and has a natural drainage site near LCRA's most upstream pump station (Lane City) in the LCRA's Gulf Coast Irrigation Division irrigation system. Water will be pumped from the river when available into a ring dike structure and discharged into a canal or the river when needed for firm, agricultural, or environmental use. The footprint is about one mile wide and two miles long, and 40 feet deep. The cost estimate

of construction is about \$215 Million and Operations and Maintenance (O&M) costs are \$19 Million, about \$206 per ac/ft for the firm yield portion of the project.

- The Corps of Engineers 404 permit is pending, LCRA has made a filing with the Corps of Engineers on delineation of wetlands, and submitted an application to TCEQ for the amendment to the Gulf Coast water right to store water in the OCR. Construction is planned to begin in late summer - early fall 2014. Authorization for the next phase of funding is on the LCRA Board agenda for the February-March time-frame. Ronald Gertson asked if LCRA is seeking HB4 funding for this project; David Wheelock responded that he is not sure at this point. There is another site option and its possible there could be future projects.
- Lost Pines groundwater: LCRA was granted 5 permits in 2013, 2 are wells completed and 3 are in construction. This will replace water currently being diverted from the Highland lakes for Lake Bastrop to cool the power plant. Cost is estimated at \$1.5 Million per well. LCRA is in negotiations for additional land to be used to procure additional groundwater.

12. Other Committee Updates/Reports, as needed. Take action as necessary.

- a. Water Modeling Committee – Teresa Lutes, Committee Chair, announced that, as planned, the Committee will be meeting immediately following this Region K meeting adjourns to review preliminary model results.
- b. Prioritization Criteria Committee – Jennifer Walker, Committee Chair, clarified that the total number of voting members on the committee is 14, so the meetings will need to be posted.
- c. Others as needed – Ronald Gertson asked the group if they wanted to include a chapter on legislative recommendations and changes in the Plan, and if so, the group will need to decide who wants to Chair and be on the committee. Barbara Johnson volunteered to be the Chair, Ronald Gertson, Vice-chair; members include John Dupnik, Jim Brasher, Bill Neve, John Burke, and Teresa Lutes.

13. Consultant Status Report. Take action as necessary. – AECOM

- a. Summary of Major Items at October Region K Meeting: Final population and demand projection recommendations from TWDB were presented, as well as presentations on the cutoff model, the conservation and drought survey, the HB4 stakeholder committee, and a lower basin comparison to the rest of the basin presentation.
- b. Work Progress Since Last Meeting: Water Modeling Committee met and discussed LCRA downstream water rights modeling and modification the cutoff model. Committee plans to meet again to discuss further. Water Conservation and Drought Survey was sent out. HB4 stakeholder committee met. Consultants from Regions G and L met with Forestar (groundwater) to discuss a groundwater strategy in Hays County. TWDB split demand data by basin; AECOM is reviewing those numbers for water needs analysis. AECOM began evaluation of conservation and drought management strategies based on survey results.
- c. Update on Population and Demand Projections: Basin delineation spreadsheet from TWDB was handed out.
- d. Update on Drought and Conservation Survey: Thus far there has been a 50% response rate. Jennifer Walker asked for a list of those who had not yet responded, Jaime Burke agreed to send that out. Of the 49 responses, 19 have no plans for emergency sources of water, 42 have implemented one or more types of conservation, 23 have implemented voluntary drought management measures, and 23 implemented mandatory drought management measures in 2011. This data will be used to support recommended conservation and drought management strategies in the 2016 Plan under development.
- e. Update on Potential Water Management Strategies: Three strategies were requested from Burnet County and a request was received from Forestar to import groundwater from Lee to Hays County. This would serve communities in Region K, but coordination would be needed with Regions G and L. A strategy evaluation has been requested from the Water User Group (WUG) before the RWPG would move forward. Jennifer Walker,

Jaime Burke, and John Dupnik discussed permitting amounts and modeled available groundwater (MAG) availability.

- f. Schedule and Upcoming Work: Water Needs Analysis in progress, Task 4D Scope of Work target due date March 1, draft prioritization due to TWDB June 1, Technical Memorandum due August 1, Initially Prepared Plan due May 1, 2015, Final Adopted Plan due Nov. 2, 2015. Surface water availability modeling results planned to be presented at the next RWPG meeting, groundwater availability data for non-MAG areas to be finalized.
14. Presentation on Burnet County water supply strategies – Judge Donna Klaeger introduced Susan Roth, who presented three regional water plans requested to be included in the 2016 Region K Plan. 1) East Lake Buchanan: construct deep surface water intakes to replace groundwater due to radionuclides present. 2) Buena Vista: connect to privately owned Buchanan water treatment system and decommission Inks Lake treatment plant. 3) Marble Falls: construct new plant with intake location at Max Starke Dam. Comments: Ed Yanoshita with Corix commented on the relationship between Corix and Burnet County and that they are trying to take advantage of various opportunities and potentially leveraging funding with the Proposition 6 SWIFT program. David Van Dresar asked about quantity of water supply and savings these strategies will have, Susan Roth said the strategies are still at a high level and those details are yet to be developed. David Van Dresar clarified that it appears to essentially be an exchange of groundwater for surface water. Judge Klaeger commented that these plans came out of a disaster relief plan and said that there is not a choice to stay on groundwater. They are simply asking that these strategies be included in the plan to be eligible to receive funding. Jim Barho commented that it is important to get additional, more detailed, information on the construction timeline and amount of supply to Region K soon in order for timely prioritization. David Wheelock reported that there are about 20 contracts and 21,000 ac/ft per year is currently contracted for in the Burnet County area. The County's role has to be an advocate for these types of solutions. Ronald Gertson commended the work that has been done by Burnet and Llano Counties to bring together the right people and should be an example for the rest of the region. Judge Klaeger added that it is important to include all options in the Plan.
 15. Presentation by Central Texas Water Coalition (CTWC) – David Lindsay presented many factors influencing the drought, including oceanic temperatures, rainfall and temperature trends, evaporation and streamflow drying trend. CTWC feels that statistical and behavioral analyses developed and used in business have revealed a new normal for inflows since 2008. Current stored water commitments are about equal to inflows to the Highland Lakes reservoirs, causing the lakes to be unable to recover. CTWC asserts that the implications of this new normal and low lake levels mean that new water supply resources, focus on conservation, and better understanding of hydrology and factors decreasing inflows are all needed. Inflows are not making it into the lakes even though the rainfall is near normal.
 16. Agenda items for next meeting – none. To be held on Wednesday, April 9th at the Dalchau Service Center. Note that the incorrect next meeting date was listed on the 2014 meeting list included in the packet.
 17. New / Other Business – Jennifer Walker passed out information on an upcoming water conference.
 18. Public Comments – none.
 19. Adjourn