

RWPG Chairs Conference Call Meeting Notes

Type of Meeting: RWPG Chairs Conference Call (CCC)

Date of Meeting: January 26, 2022

Location of Meeting: Microsoft Teams

TWDB Staff in Attendance: Sarah Backhouse, Katie Dahlberg, Temple McKinnon, Ron Ellis, Lann Bookout, Kevin Smith, William Alfaro, Elizabeth McCoy, Sabrina Anderson, Kimberly Rhodes

Number of Planning Group Members in Attendance: 15 regions represented

Senators/Representatives/Other VIPs in Attendance: N/A

Report filed by: Sarah Backhouse

Report filed on: February 23, 2022

Agenda Items Discussed:

1. Introductions, Opening Comments, and Agenda Order

Sarah Backhouse welcomed participants, introduced the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) staff presenting today and indicated that the RWPG representatives will be noted in the meeting notes. Sarah also provided an update on the new TWDB Office of Planning. She indicated that the meeting was being recorded and that written notes will be provided.

RWPG participants:

A – Ben Weinheimer (Chair) and Dustin Meyers (Panhandle Regional Planning Commission)

B – Stacey Green and Danna Bales (Red River Authority)

C – Kevin Ward (Chair)

D – Jim Thompson (Chair)

E – Annette Gutierrez (Rio Grande Council of Governments)

F – John Grant (Chair), Cole Walker and Audra Hoback (Colorado River Municipal Water District)

G – Aaron Abel (Brazos River Authority)

H – Mark Evans (Chair)

I – Kelley Holcomb (Chair)

J – Jonathan Letz (Chair)

K – Annette Keaveny (Lower Colorado River Authority), Teresa Lutes and Sara Eatman (City of Austin)

L – Tim Andruss (Chair)

M – no representative

N – Scotty Bledsoe (Chair)

O – Aubrey Spear (Chair) and Courtney McNeely (South Plains Association of Governments)

P – Philip Spenrath (Chair)

Consultant Participants: Stephanie Moore (Intera), Lauren Gonzalez (Black & Veatch), Heather Harris (Carollo)

Handout A: [Sixth Cycle of Regional Water Planning working schedule](#)

2. Sixth Cycle of Regional Water Planning Activities and Timelines

Sarah Backhouse provided an update on initial activities for the 6th planning cycle. Slides covering the following items may be found online [here](#).

- a) Proposed revisions to Regional and State Water Planning rules:
Sarah provided the timeline of Board approval of the proposed rules, public comment period, and estimated approval date of the final rules. Sarah noted where the proposed rules can be found on the TWDB website and provided an overview of the proposed revisions.
- b) Interregional Planning Council:
Sarah reminded the RWPGs that the deadline to submit RWPG nomination for the Interregional Planning Council has been extended to April 22, 2022. Regions should take action and submit their nomination by this date, as well as submit the requested supporting information. The anticipated TWDB Board appointment of the Council is anticipated to occur in June. Sarah also noted that TWDB's assistance to the Council will, out of necessity, be limited in comparison to last time but the TWDB will of course assist with the logistics of the first meeting. Kelly Holcomb asked for input on how busy or how much work the Council will be doing this cycle. Temple McKinnon clarified that the TWDB will assist with orienting the new Council to the accomplishments and recommendations from the first Council but would not be able to help with committees and will be adaptable as much as we can. Temple asked for feedback from the Council on what assistance would be helpful. Aubrey Spear also asked for clarification on if the meeting will be virtual or in person. Meetings will be virtual to the extent they can under the Texas Open Meetings Act. Mark Evans asked for clarification on the timing of the report this cycle. The Council report will be due March 2024.
- c) Contract amendments for full project cost and scope of work:
Sarah discussed the preparation of the contract amendment materials for the 2026 Regional Water Plans that will incorporate a full, anticipated contract funding amount for each region, a full scope of work, and updated contract guidance documents. We anticipate seeking TWDB Board approval to authorize and execute the contract amendments this summer. An important difference from last cycle is that RWPGs will not have to submit a second funding application. A more detailed timeline will be provided regarding these contract amendments this Spring and the RWP Planners will coordinate with the RWPGs on the appropriate agenda item
- d) Updates to educational material:
Sarah informed the RWPGs that the TWDB is updating planning educational materials such as the member guide, administrative guidance for RWPG designated political subdivisions, FAQs, and one-pagers. Where possible we are incorporating feedback we received from the member survey last year to improve these documents and once they are updated we'll send notification to RWPG members. Aubrey Spear noted that water planning and flood planning could both benefit from hearing success stories of how to increase participation from project sponsors and the public. Sarah will work on compiling success stories to share with the Chairs.

3. Projections Development

Katie Dahlberg provided a presentation on the 2026 Regional Water Plan Projections Methodology. Katie's presentation covered an overview of the projections process, the projections data release schedule, and the projections methodologies for non-municipal water demands (Irrigation, Livestock, Manufacturing, Mining, and Steam Electric Power), population, and municipal water demand. Katie also provided a demonstration of the interactive dashboard. Katie is available to provide a region-specific presentation to all the planning groups and planning groups should coordinate with their regional water planner to set that up. Please see the links below for a copy of the presentation slides and a link to the recorded presentation:

- [Projection methodology presentation slides](#)
- [Projection methodology presentation recording](#)

4. Chairs Discussion

Kelly Holcomb asked whether TWDB has the staff available to provide the region-specific presentations. Sarah noted that Katie or her staff will attend so long as there is not a scheduling conflict. If they are not able to present in person, a recording of the region-specific presentation will be made available to present during the RWPG meeting. Kevin Ward noted that he is looking forward to seeing the improvements for this planning cycle.

5. Wrap-up and next call topics and date

The next RWPG Chairs Conference Call meeting will be scheduled in the summer of 2022. Potential topics include updates on the contract amendments, projections, and the state water planning database.