

TO: Board Members

THROUGH: Kevin Patteson, Executive Administrator
Robert E. Mace, Ph.D., P.G., Deputy Executive Administrator, Water Science and Conservation
Les Trobman, General Counsel

FROM: Mark Wentzel, Team Lead, Instream Flows

DATE: December 1, 2015

SUBJECT: Amendment to Fiscal Year 2016 Joint Funding Agreement with the U.S. Geological Survey for Water Resources Investigations

ACTION REQUESTED

Authorize the Executive Administrator to amend the Fiscal Year 2016 Joint Funding Agreement with the U.S. Geological Survey for the Water Resources Investigations data collection program to include up to \$1,000,000 of additional funding for new streamflow gages and/or modification of existing gages.

BACKGROUND

Water data provides the foundation upon which Texas builds its water plans and manages its water resources. It has long been recognized that adequate water data is necessary in order to know how much water is available for use or how drought, flood, or additional use may affect current users and environmental resources. The very first U.S. Geological Survey streamgage in Texas was installed 126 years ago on the Rio Grande near El Paso. The State-Federal Cooperative Program for Water Resources Investigations started shortly thereafter with the first jointly funded gage being installed in 1915.

The Fiscal Year 2016 Joint Funding Agreement with the U.S. Geological Survey was authorized by Board approval at the August 26, 2015, meeting of the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB). At that time, TWDB committed \$627,870 from General Revenue to be combined with \$363,735 from the U.S. Geological Survey to provide a total of \$991,605 of funding for the data collection program in Fiscal Year 2016. Board action also authorized the contract to be amended by an amount not to exceed \$100,000 if additional funding became available. A contract between the U.S. Geological Survey and TWDB was executed with the available funding, supporting data collection at 53 streamflow and 35 lake level gages for the period from September 1, 2015, to August 31, 2016.

In November 2015, TWDB identified additional funds in the amount of \$55,000 to be dedicated to streamflow gaging. As authorized by the original board action, the Joint Funding Agreement with U.S. Geological Survey was amended to include this additional funding to support the installation of two new streamflow gages. The contract amendment was executed on November 17, 2015, bringing the total amount of funding for water data collection through this contract to \$1,046,605.

KEY ISSUES

Approval of this board item would authorize the Executive Administrator to add these funds to the Joint Funding Agreement for additional streamflow gages and/or modification of existing streamflow gages. Costs for installation of new streamflow gages or modification of existing gages vary, depending on location. The exact number of new or modified gages that will be provided by this funding will be negotiated with the U.S. Geological Survey.

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive Administrator recommends approval of this item.

This recommendation has been reviewed by legal counsel and is in compliance with applicable statutes and Board rules.