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## AGENDA ITEM MEMO

**BOARD MEETING DATE:** December 17, 2024

**TO:** Board Members

**THROUGH:** Bryan McMath, Executive Administrator  
Ashley Harden, General Counsel  
Rebecca Trevino, Chief Financial Officer  
John T. Dupnik, P.G., Deputy Executive Administrator, Water Science & Conservation

**FROM:** Mindy Conyers, Ph.D., Manager, River Science & Hydrosurvey  
Carla G. Guthrie, Ph.D., Director, Surface Water

**SUBJECT:** Rate schedule for the Hydrographic Survey Program

### **ACTION REQUESTED**

Consider authorizing the Executive Administrator to approve the rate schedule for the Hydrographic Survey Program.

### **BACKGROUND**

The purpose of the Hydrographic Survey Program is to conduct surveys to determine reservoir storage capacity, sedimentation rates and levels, projected water supply availability, and potential mitigative measures, as well as to conduct bathymetric studies and collect information on water-bearing formations (Texas Water Code Section 15.804). To date, the program has surveyed 108 (or 57 percent) of the 188 major water supply reservoirs (those with greater than 5,000 acre-feet of storage capacity) in the state. In total, however, the program has conducted 196 surveys on 116 unique reservoirs, including major water supply reservoirs and those used for other purposes, providing crucial information on reservoir storage capacity and the rate of loss in capacity due to sediment deposition.

Since last providing a report of the program in December 2022, the TWDB has entered contracts to conduct surveys on 5 reservoirs totaling 57,559 surface acres, with earned receipts equaling \$286,764. Three of the five surveys were for major water supply reservoirs, and four of the five included both volumetric and sedimentation services.

#### **Our Mission**

Leading the state's efforts  
in ensuring a secure  
water future for Texas

#### **Board Members**

Brooke T. Paup, Chairwoman | L'Oreal Stepney, P.E., Board Member | Tonya R. Miller, Board Member  
Bryan McMath, Executive Administrator

TWDB administrative rules for the Hydrographic Survey Program (31 Texas Administrative Code Chapter 377) and state law (Texas Water Code Section 15.804(b)) allow the TWDB to charge fees based on a rate schedule that recovers costs associated with the program, including capital equipment and personnel salaries. The rate schedule is reviewed and presented for approval at least once every two years by the Executive Administrator.

### **KEY ISSUES**

In December 2022, the below rate schedule was approved by the Board for conducting volumetric and sedimentation surveys as well as for additional tasks that are consistent with the Texas Administrative Code and Texas Water Code Section 15.804. Additional approved rate charges equal \$400 per person per day for office work and \$800 per person per day for field work. The rate schedule follows reasonable and equitable cost-recovery principles, as outlined in 31 Texas Administrative Code Chapter 377.

The cost of a volumetric survey is determined by the area of the reservoir in acres at conservation pool elevation (the base rate) plus a navigational hazard fee to account for delays in data collection due to submerged trees and vegetation, sand bars, marinas, boat docks, and piers, etc. (Figure 1).

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Volumetric Survey Rate} &= \text{Base Rate} + \text{Navigational Hazard Fee} \\ \text{Base Rate} &= (\$1.40 \times \text{Area}) + \$23,500 \\ \text{Navigational Hazard Fee} &= 0.05 \times \text{Base Rate} \end{aligned}$$

*Figure 1. Formula for determining the cost of a volumetric survey.*

The cost of a sedimentation survey is based on the base rate for a volumetric survey plus \$6,000 for collecting and analyzing a minimum of 12 sediment cores (Figure 2).

$$\text{Sedimentation Survey Rate} = (0.35 \times \text{Volumetric Survey Rate}) + \$6,000$$

*Figure 2. Formula for determining the cost of a sedimentation survey, when a volumetric survey is being conducted.*

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Executive Administrator recommends reapproval of the Hydrographic Survey Program's existing rate schedule until a subsequent review is deemed necessary or the two-year required review period has elapsed.