

RWPG Chairs' Conference Call

Type of Meeting: RWPG Chairs' Conference Call

Date of Meeting: October 22, 2018

Location of Meeting: TWDB Offices SFA Building Room 540E

TWDB Staff in Attendance: Temple McKinnon, Sarah Backhouse, Matt Nelson, Kevin Kluge, Sabrina Anderson, Ron Ellis, Laura Bell, Lann Bookout, William Alfaro, Elizabeth McCoy, Melinda Smith, Yun Cho, and Jennifer White

Number of Planning Group Members in Attendance: 15 regions represented

Senators/Representatives/Other VIPs in Attendance: TWDB Director Kathleen Jackson

Report filed by: Elizabeth McCoy

Report filed on: October 23, 2018

Agenda Items Discussed:

1. Introductions, opening comments, and agenda order

Sarah Backhouse welcomed participants, took a roll call of representatives from each regional water planning group (RWPG) and introduced the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) staff present. She indicated that written notes of what was covered under each agenda item will be provided.

TWDB Director Kathleen Jackson welcomed the chairs and thanked them for their work and support of water planning and implementation of water infrastructure projects. Director Jackson provided a brief update on the success of the recent State Water Implementation Fund for Texas (SWIFT) funding cycle and welcomed feedback on ways to improve planning, technical support assistance, and data availability.

RWPG participants:

A – Dustin Meyer (Panhandle Regional Planning Commission)

B – Randy Whiteman, Stacey Green, and Danna Prichard (Red River Authority of Texas)

C – Kevin Ward (chair) and Howard Slobodin (Trinity River Authority)

D – Richard LeTourneau (chair)

E – Jesus Reyes (chair)

F – John Grant (chair)

G – Gail Peak (vice-chair)

H – Mark Evans (chair)

I – None

J – Johnathon Letz (chair)

K – John Burke (chair) and Rebecca Batchelder (Lower Colorado River Authority)

L – Suzanne Scott (chair), Steve Raabe and Cole Ruiz (San Antonio River Authority)

M – Tomas Rodriguez (chair)

N – Carola Serrato (co-chair)

O – Kelly Davila (South Plains Association of Governments)

P – Phillip Spenrath (chair)

Handouts:

- A. [Working Timeline for the Fifth Cycle of Regional Water Planning](#)

2. Conservation Planning Tool

Kevin Kluge provided an overview of the Municipal Water Conservation Planning Tool, which will be available in December 2018. The intent of the tool is to provide utility staff with an estimate of water savings from various activities when developing their conservation plans (due May 2019) as well as to assist RWPG consultants with calculating potential volumes in municipal conservation water management strategies (WMS). RWPGs are not required to use this tool in their WMS analysis. The tool is based on a Microsoft Excel application that includes the following features:

- Pre-loaded TWDB Board adopted population projections approved for the 2021 Regional Water Plans (RWPs), 2016 water use data, and 2016 water loss data for 462 utilities;
- Allows for the use of alternative base data and projected data in lieu of pre-loaded data or for utilities without pre-loaded data;
- Allows users to view a menu of possible municipal conservation activities, from which users can select activities and the levels of participation;
- Allows users to develop and save different conservation scenarios based on base data, projected data, selected activities, and levels of participation;
- Generates an estimate of water savings and costs of the selected conservation activities for 5- and 10-year increments (2024 and 2029), and decadal increments out to 2070; and
- Generates an estimate of water savings from conservation activities implemented in the previous year that can be used in the utility's annual conservation report.

If you have any questions, please contact [Kevin Kluge](#) or [John Sutton](#).

3. 5th cycle initiatives and general timelines

Sarah Backhouse provided updates on the following items:

- a) Updated working schedule
 - i. The working schedule ([Handout A](#)) was recently updated to reflect items for the socioeconomic impact analysis timeline and the upcoming Uniform Standards Stakeholder Committee meeting. The schedule is posted on the TWDB website on the [Fifth Cycle Working Documents webpage](#).
 - ii. There will be one more contract amendment initiated by the TWDB to increase the contractual committed funds to the full study cost amount. These are anticipated to be issued early fall of 2019.
- b) Technical memorandums
 - i. Administratively complete letters have been sent out for the technical memorandums. A pdf copy of each RWPG's technical memorandum is posted [online](#).
 - ii. Staff in TWDB's Water Science and Conservation Office are reviewing methodologies and availabilities presented in the technical memorandums and State Water Plan (SWP) database to date. The agency is taking an opportunity to review data earlier this planning cycle to identify any concerns in the data or methodologies. Any comments on the draft data will be provided informally to the RWPGs at the end of the year for consideration during plan development. This is to give RWPGs the opportunity to address any potential issues prior to submittal of the initially prepared plan (IPP).
- c) Uniform costing tool/drought management tool
 - i. TWDB contracted with HDR to update the Uniform Costing Tool for use in the 5th cycle. A draft deliverable of the updated tool was completed this summer, and the final version will be available by the end of the year. In the absence of detailed, project-specific cost estimates, RWPGs are required by contractual guidance to utilize this tool for costing WMS projects. The updated tool will address bugs and errors in the previous version and include updated cost data and improved functionality. The user guide will be

- updated and posted online when the final tool is available. Use of the tool is described in Section 5.5.1 of [Exhibit C, General Guidelines for Fifth Cycle of RWP Development](#).
- ii. TWDB is also developing a simplified drought management impact tool, which will be available in the fall of 2019, as it will utilize data from the socioeconomic impact analysis that will be conducted at that time.
 - iii. Section 5.5.3 of Exhibit C specifies costs that may not be allowed in RWPs. Costs included in RWPs should only be associated with infrastructure required to increase water supply volumes delivered to an entity either as new supply or through demand reduction. Examples of infrastructure costs not allowed and listed in Exhibit C include purple pipe distribution projects and maintenance of existing facilities.
- d) SWP Amendment #3
- i. The third amendment to the 2017 SWP will go to the TWDB Board for consideration of approval in December. A notice and a copy of the proposed amendment will be sent out in early November. This SWP amendment will incorporate a minor amendment to the 2016 Region L RWP that was approved by the Board this summer.
- e) General reminders
- i. A few RWPGs have not submitted a request for a Task 5A notice to proceed for WMS evaluations. Sarah reminded participants that a notice to proceed must be issued by the TWDB prior to reimbursement, and that the RWPG must also approve submitting the request. For planning groups that are submitting their Task 5A notice to proceed requests in multiple phases, consultants should only work on strategies that have been included in approved scopes to date.
 - ii. The Best Management Practices Guide for RWPG Political Subdivisions is a living document and is being updating as necessary. The document is posted on the [Fifth Cycle Working Documents webpage](#) under the Administrative Documents section. The website notes when the document was last updated, and the most recent changes to the document are highlighted in yellow.
 - iii. If there is a need for further RWPG educational or training materials for your region, or any additional information that may be helpful for TWDB to provide, please let us know.

4. Interregional Coordination and Data Sharing Tools

Sabrina Anderson gave an overview of a few of the tools developed recently to facilitate sharing of data and information among planning groups:

- a) DB22 overallocation checks
 - i. The TWDB has tools in place to prevent the over-allocation of sources in the regional water planning data. The data entry application includes water balance calculations where water can be deducted from the sources of supply. These calculations act as an early warning of over-allocations. When a supply is over-allocated, the numbers are highlighted in a red box and consultants receive notifications of over-allocations.
 - ii. Once data entry is complete for this planning cycle, the application will be closed to consultants, and TWDB will run final data checks to ensure that all over-allocations are resolved statewide. If any over-allocations remain, TWDB will work with consultants who manage the related data to help resolve the over-allocation.
- b) Source balance/shared source reports
 - i. Sarah Backhouse emailed a source information spreadsheet on October 2, which provides a snap shot of the 2022 RWP data. The first tab shows remaining source existing availability that has not been allocated to entities or water user groups (WUG). The second tab includes sources that are shared by more than one region as existing

- WUG supply. Data can be filtered by source name to see the regions using the source and their share of the overall existing supply in decades 2020 and 2070. The purpose of this spreadsheet is to provide source information so that regions can discuss options for WMSs if a source is not fully allocated.
- ii. Some of these surpluses may have been allocated to WUGs since that email was sent. If you would like an updated copy of the spreadsheet, please contact [Sabrina Anderson](#) and [Laura Bell](#).
- c) Data visualization map
- i. To assist with data review and communication, TWDB designed an interactive map that links directly to the DB22 database and displays WUG needs and surpluses across the state. The map can be accessed at the following link: <http://arcg.is/15S8De>.
 - ii. Map points are color coated to show WUG surpluses or potential shortages. Map points may be stacked on top of each other because data is represented by WUG geographic split. County aggregated WUGs like irrigation or mining, are also stacked because they are represented by the middle of the county they are associated with.
 - iii. Clicking on a WUG map point will display a table containing the calculated WUG potential water needs and surpluses at the WUG split level. The table displays a column for the percentage of potential WUG split needs as share of their demand. If a map point represents more than one WUG split, click the arrow at the top right of the pop-up information box to scroll through to other WUG data. Detailed instructions are included in the map explaining how to use the map's functions.
- d) Shared regional projects
- i. Sarah Backhouse sent an email on October 8 to remind regions to consider regional WMS projects, as required by statute.
 - ii. Please make sure that the consideration of such projects is clearly documented in the plans. If there's any information that TWDB might be able to provide to assist in this effort, please let Sarah know.

5. Socioeconomic Impact Analysis and Timeline

Yun Cho provided updates on the following items:

- a) Peer review methodology
 - i. Earlier this year, TWDB received external peer review of the socioeconomic impact analysis methodology and report template by staff of the Comptroller's office (Data Analysis and Transparency Division) and by BBC Research & Consulting firm. Both parties state that the overall approach and methodology for the impact analysis is sound and suggested selective improvements but no major changes to the existing methodology.
- b) RWPG comment period
 - i. A summary of the peer review and proposed enhancements was provided to the RWPGs on September 26 with a comment period through October 19. No comments were received.
- c) Process and timing for TWDB to provide socioeconomic impact reports
 - i. TWDB has historically developed a socioeconomic impact report on behalf of the RWPGs. If a RWPG chooses to request TWDB perform the impact analysis for this planning cycle, the RWPG must take action on the request and submit the request to their PM via email no later than July 2019. This will allow the socioeconomic impact reports to be subject to the IPP public comments period under the draft plans. The impact analysis will be performed on identified needs as of (5/31/2019). It should be

noted that any significant changes made to identified needs after this date will not be reflected in the impact reports. In that case, RWPGs may add additional context and discussion to the RWP at their discretion.

6. Uniform Standards Stakeholder Committee

Temple Mckinnon provided an update on the Uniform Standards Stakeholder Committee meeting.

- a) Update on planning/logistics of the November 28 meeting
 - i. Meeting will be held at 9:00 am on November 28 in the Stephen F. Austin Building at 1700 N. Congress Ave, Austin. Additional details will be sent out in the next few weeks.
 - ii. Parking permits will be provided for the day of the meeting. Be advised there is construction in the Capital Complex and limited parking may be available.
 - iii. Suzanne Schwartz will facilitate the meeting and has emailed RWPG chairs to schedule pre-meeting calls to discuss concerns, expectations, and informational needs for the meeting.
 - iv. Please let Suzanne or Sarah know if you have a delegate coming in your place.
 - v. Please review orientation materials sent out by Sarah and Suzanne:
 1. House Bill 4 Excerpts
 2. [Uniform Standards](#)
 3. January 2015 Final Facilitator Meeting Notes
 4. [Uniform Standards Committee Activities Summary](#)

7. Regional Round Robin

Representatives from each region provided the following updates:

A – At the last Region A meeting in August, the RWPG reviewed and approved their technical memorandum. Region A is working on Task 5A and looking at feasible WMSs. The next Region A meeting is scheduled for February 2019.

B – The next Region B meeting is scheduled for February 2019. Region B recently approved their technical memorandum and is working on executing a contract amendment to incorporate Task 5A scope of work.

C – No update.

D – No update.

E – The next Region E meeting will be held on November 8.

F – No update.

G – Region G is working on Task 5A notice to proceed approval.

H – The next Region H meeting will be held October 31. The meeting will include discussion of preparations for the upcoming legislative session and a presentation from the Galveston Bay Foundation on their 2018 Report Card.

I – No update.

J – The next Region J meeting will be held on October 24.

K – The next Region K meeting will be held on October 24.

L – The next Region L meeting will be held on November 1. The meeting will include discussion of a Task 5A notice to proceed request and a request to amend demand and population projections.

M – The next Region M meeting will be held on November 7.

N – No update.

O – The next Region O meeting will be held on November 15. The meeting will be a work session with presentations on agricultural irrigation and conservation methods.

P – No update.

8. Wrap-up and next call topics and date

Sarah Backhouse inquired when the Chairs would like to schedule the next conference call. Tomas Rodriguez (Region M) expressed a preference for mid-January 2019. Sarah will be sending poll for dates prior to scheduling the next call.