

January 21, 2014

Dear Members of the Panhandle Regional Water Planning Group:

The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) is tasked to proactively lead in the planning, financial assistance, conservation, and development of water for Texas. As part of implementation of House Bill 4, passed by the Texas Legislature in 2013, the newly appointed Texas Water Development Board Members selected me to lead the agency as Executive Administrator. With my past experience representing Texas initiatives on both the state and federal levels, I'm honored to join TWDB's experienced staff and serve Texans in conserving and developing water for Texas.

With the passage of Proposition 6, Texans invested billions of dollars to ensure progress of future water-supply development; and HB 4 outlines an aggressive schedule to adopt rules and develop project prioritization criteria.

The agency has begun to implement the provisions in HB 4 and prepare to develop needed rules to begin funding eligible projects after rule adoption. An agency rule team has been created to work with stakeholders and facilitate the public process to develop rules and definitions for minimum criteria for prioritization of projects seeking financial assistance from TWDB.

This past December, the regional water planning groups (RWPG) were instrumental in meeting one of the initial goals in HB 4 by submitting uniform standards to TWDB for regional prioritization of water-supply projects. As RWPGs continue regional prioritization of projects from the 2011 Regional Water Plans and begin to work on 2016 plans, I wanted to clarify a provision in HB 4 requiring projects seeking financial assistance to be included in the approved State Water Plan. Because of this requirement, a RWPG may want to amend its adopted 2011 regional plan in order for additional or new projects to be eligible for SWIFT funding prior to TWDB adoption of the 2017 State Water Plan. Any project amended into a 2011 regional water plan must also be amended into the 2012 State Water Plan by following the statutory provisions for amending regional plans as outlined in Chapter 16, Texas Water Code, and receive TWDB approval.

Additionally, I've implemented a reorganization of the agency's structure to emphasize program development, project implementation and completion, improved communication, and process transparency. Regional planning and development teams were organized by geographic area allowing staff to develop a deeper understanding of which programs are best suited to meet an area's identified needs. Our goal is to provide improved customer service and consistency by

Our Mission : **Board Members**

To provide leadership, planning, financial assistance, information, and education for the conservation and responsible development of water for Texas : Carlos Rubinstein, Chairman | Bech Bruun, Member | Mary Ann Williamson, Member
: Kevin Patteson, Executive Administrator

Members of the Panhandle Regional Water Planning Group

January 21, 2014

Page 2

offering project applicants and owners one team to work with. I've also created an Agriculture and Rural Ombudsman position to ensure agriculture and rural communities have a direct point-of-contact to assist with planning and project inquiries. I hope you find these changes positive and resourceful as you work to plan, conserve, and develop new water-supply projects.

As progress continues on HB 4 implementation, we are working to meet the following deadlines:

- January 23, 2014: Post a schedule for work sessions around the state in which the public can participate
- June 1, 2014: Receive draft project prioritizations from the regional water planning groups' 2011 Regional Water Plans
- September 1, 2014: Receive final project prioritizations from the regional water planning groups' 2011 Regional Water Plans
- December 1, 2014: Submit a SWIFT Implementation Report to the Governor, Lt. Governor, and Legislature

If you have any questions or concerns about the SWIFT process, please don't hesitate to contact me or Todd Chenoweth at 512-463-7847. I look forward and value your active participation as regional water planning group members in implementing the SWIFT.

Sincerely yours,



Kevin Patteson
Executive Administrator