

RWPG Chairs' Conference Call Meeting Notes

Type of Meeting: RWPG Chairs' Conference Call (CCC)

Date of Meeting: January 29, 2019

Location of Meeting: TWDB Offices SFA Building Room 540E

TWDB Staff in Attendance: Temple McKinnon, Sarah Backhouse, Matt Nelson, Bill Billingsley, Ron Ellis, Lann Bookout, William Alfaro, Elizabeth McCoy, Aaron Waters, Yun Cho, and John Barnard

Number of Planning Group Members in Attendance: 12 regions represented

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

Report filed by: Aaron Waters

Report filed on: February 8, 2019

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 asked for approval of agenda items and indicated that written notes of what was covered under each agenda item will be provided.

RWPG Participants

A – C.E. Williams (Chair) and Dustin Meyers (Panhandle Regional Planning Commission)

B – Russel Schreiber (Chair)

C – Kevin Ward (Chair), Howard Slobodin (Trinity River Authority)

D – Richard LeTourneau (chair)

E – None

F – None

G – Gail Peak (Vice-Chair)

H – Mark Evans (Chair)

I – None

J – None

K – John Burke (Chair)

L – Steve Raabe (San Antonio River Authority)

M – Tomas Rodriguez (Chair)

N – Scott Bledsoe III (Co-Chair), Carola Serrato (Co-Chair)

O – Aubrey Spear (Chair)

P – Phillip Spenrath (Chair)

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

Handout B: [Designating Unique Stream Segments and Unique Reservoir Sites](#)

Handout C: [Texas Water Service Boundary Viewer](#)

2. 5th cycle initiatives and general timelines

Sarah Backhouse provided updates on the following items:

- a) Working schedule depicted by [Handout A](#)
 - i. No changes to schedule since previous RWPG CCC. The TWDB is still aiming to issue the fall contract amendments in September, which will commit the remaining funds for each of the regions.
 - ii. Regarding the Task 5A notice-to-proceed requests, contract amendment requests are taking time to process, but RWPGs should submit ASAP after planning group approval. Strategies cannot be evaluated until Task 5A SOW is approved. Two regions have yet to submit their notice-to-proceed requests.
 - iii. The Initially Prepared Plan (IPP) is due just over a year from now, on March 3, 2020. Sarah reminded the Chair's to work with the administrators and consultants to allow enough meetings to accomplish plan development. The IPP Review checklist, a review checklist that will be available in advance of submittals, is forthcoming from the TWDB, and a schematic of the submittal, public comment, and review periods to assist RWPGs. The TWDB is requesting feedback on additional items needed by the RWPGs to assist in preparing for the IPP submittal.
- b) Reminder of socioeconomic impact analysis timeline
 - i. Project managers have discussed the socioeconomic analysis timelines in RWPG meetings, but RWPGs need to take action to request analysis by the TWDB. May 31st is the cutoff date for needs that will be utilized in the TWDB analysis. This date is necessary so that staff can begin performing the analysis and preparing the reports for delivery to the RWPGs by the end of the year. If source availability, supply, or demand data changes after this date, updated needs will not be captured in the analysis.
 - ii. RWPGs may address any differences in the narrative of their report if they choose but the TWDB does not have the resources to conduct the analysis multiple times or at a later date.
 - iii. The TWDB must receive the planning groups request by July of this year. After planning group approval, please submit the request to your project manager via email. We are still aiming to issue the reports by the end of 2019 for the reports to be included in the IPP.
- c) [Technical memorandum](#) informal review comments regarding groundwater and surface water sources
 - i. The TWDB's Groundwater and Surface Water staff have reviewed the data and methodologies in the Technical Memorandums. This was done to allow a more thorough review of source data and methodologies, provide a longer timeline for planning groups to consider the agency's comments prior to the IPP submittal, and to reduce comments on the IPPs.
 - ii. These will be issued as informal comments, once internal review has completed, and will not require response from the RWPGs.
- d) Timeline for recommendations from the Drought Preparedness Council (DPC)
 - i. RWPGs must take into consideration recommendations from the DPC.
 - ii. The DPC is aiming to approve recommendations at their next meeting, however the next meeting has yet to be scheduled. The TWDB will notify RWPGs with updates.
- e) General reminders

- i. Sarah reminded the group about recent emails:
 1. January 2, 2019: The Uniform Costing Tool and Conservation Planning Tool are available online. The uniform costing tool is required if no local project specific data is used, the conservation tool is optional.
 2. January 15, 2019: State Water Planning Database (DB22) Water Management Strategy (WMS) reminder email sent from Sabrina Anderson to consultants reiterated contractual obligations about data entry and provided the training videos available to assist with data entry. Consultants are welcome to contact Sabrina at any time for assistance with data entry.
 3. October 2, 2018: The Regional Data Visualization Map is available for use. This map displays working data for each region showing water shortages and surpluses at the split water user group (WUG) level. It is connected live to DB22 and will always show current working data.
 4. October 8, 2018: Regional projects are a required consideration by statute. The TWDB will be reviewing IPPs to ensure that the regions have documented such consideration and why such strategies might not be recommended.
 5. As an additional reminder, the assessment for surface water supplies for WMS evaluations must use TCEQ WAM3 unless a hydrologic variance requested and approved by the planning group and the TWDB.

3. Uniform Standards Stakeholder Committee Meeting Feedback

Temple McKinnon thanked the Chairs for participating in the SHC meeting and requested feedback.

- a) The target date for the Board to consider approving changes to the Uniform Standards is Feb 25th, 2019.
- b) Requests from meeting
 - i. Should TWDB develop educational materials to help public understanding? Carola Serrato asks if materials were for public or other groups and Temple clarifies request was for public, however, TWDB is open to develop materials as needed
- c) Questions related to Stakeholder Committee procedure
 - i. Next meeting will be held in 2021. Should TWDB keep standing items on the Chairs' Conference Call to discuss issues or wait until 2021? Are face to face meetings the most efficient?
 - ii. Temple requests feedback. Hearing no comment from Chairs during call, Temple requests additional feedback via email.

4. Educational Material

Sarah Backhouse reviewed a new guidance document developed by the TWDB related to Unique Stream Segments (USS) and Unique Reservoir Sites (URS).

- a) This is available online and in [Handout B](#).
 - i. The information sheet on Designating USSs and URSs was recently finalized and will be distributed via PMs in the RWPG meetings. This document provides an overview of what the designations mean, the criteria associated with recommending a site, how sites are designated, and what information must be

- included in the regional water plans (RWPs).
 - ii. USS and URS guidelines should be reviewed before being incorporated into RWPs. The Texas Legislature ultimately makes the designations, and planning groups may recommend sites for designation in their regional water plan. There are different requirements for plan material regarding the recommendations depending on if you're recommending a USS or URS. The TWDB expects plans to be specific about what is being recommended, and this is addressed on page 2 of the information sheet.
 - iii. The TWDB hosted [Educational Information](#) page on the website posts all one-pagers and informational documents. Requests for additional guidance materials that RWPGs would like to be developed should be sent to Sarah or project managers.
- b) Chair's feedback
- i. Russel Schreiber asks about the mechanism by which the USSs or URSs designated in the RWPs become recognized by legislators. Temple clarified that the TWDB includes them in the state water plan (SWP) and recommendations are based on RWPs. Legislation is then developed and passed as bills only if legislators decide to move forward with the designation. During this process, RWPGs have worked with local legislators to help develop bills. However, the TWDB doesn't work with legislators to advocate for bills designating USSs or URSs. Figures 2.2 and 2.3 in the 2017 SWP show URSs that have been designated and those recommended for designation, respectively. TWDB will send additional information out after the meeting.

5. Public Water System Viewer

Bill Billingsley introduced and described the new Public Water System Viewer application. He also mentioned that his group, Water Use Survey, has consolidated with Water Supply and Strategy Analysis to form the Water Use and Planning Data Department.

- a) Overview and purpose of the application, available on-line and described in [Handout C](#)
 - i. Historically, there has not been a complete map of the 4,500+ public water systems in the state. While several mapping applications exist, they do not represent the actual retail water service areas or include all the systems.
 - ii. This new application is working to collect and provide a high-resolution digital map of the most up-to-date and best data available on the water service areas for all active community Public Water Supply's (PWS) within Texas. These maps can be downloaded as shapefiles. Service collects information on water service boundaries to project populations managed by utilities. This application defines a water service boundary as all areas where retail customers are currently served by the system. The application will show service area of WUG and utilities, detailing all water providers for which we have good data.
 - iii. The initial layer for the boundaries were developed through a research grant for the TWDB about 10 years ago. This layer was created using a conglomerate of different data sources, including governmental and self-reported boundaries. This initial layer is meant to simply provided systems a starting point, however, there are many systems with missing or overlapping boundaries. The TWDB

requests all water systems to review and verify boundaries each year when reporting water use in the Editor Version of the application that is accessible through the Water Use Survey and ONLY accessible by qualified personnel of the system that has access to the survey.

- iv. The application will be open to editors from January through July of every year during the water use survey data collection cycle. Once the boundary editing period is closed, no changes will be made until the following year
- v. The application is also available to the public to view system boundaries. It is updated nightly and will include any updates of those submitted boundaries that TWDB staff have reviewed for inaccuracies before posting. Each system's boundary will display the last updated date. The data on the public version also provides PWS-specific data from the TCEQ Drinking Water Watch as well as the system's previous years water use survey data. Water loss audits will be included in later versions.
- vi. In future phases, we also hope to have a WUG layer. When a specific WUG is selected from the online map, we hope for it to visually display data through graphs and charts to show both historical and projected data by WUG utility to include GPCD, water sources, larger customers, etc. all in one place.
- vii. For additional questions, please contact Daniel Rice (Application Administrator/GIS Analyst) at 512-463-6867.

6. Region Round Robin

Representatives from each region provided the following updates:

A - Upcoming meeting being held March; Task 5a notice-to-proceed was received and WMS evaluation continues. Initial chapters of the RWP are currently under review, while chapters 4-7 are in development. All tasks are on schedule.

B - All tasks are on schedule, no additional comments.

C - All tasks are on schedule, no additional comments.

D - Next RWPG meeting to be held on February 6th, 2019. All other tasks are on schedule.

E - No update

F - No update

G - RWPG member openings will be voted on during next meeting, to be held in March. All other tasks are on schedule.

H - Next RWPG meeting to be held on February 6th, 2019. During this meeting the group will update and review water supply alternatives and vote on new members. All other tasks are on schedule.

I - No update

J - No update

K - Next RWPG meeting to be held on April 24th, 2019. Previous actions found USSs to be designated in RWP. All other tasks are on schedule.

L - Next RWPG meeting to be held on January 31st, 2019. At that meeting, the RWPG will evaluate the next block of scope and WMSs. The group is also considering modifications to population demands and projections from TWDB. All other tasks are on schedule.

M - No update

N - Next RWPG meeting to be held on February 7th, 2019. At that meeting, the group will

discuss drought responses, designate a subcommittee to discuss USSs, vote in new members, and request socioeconomic analysis from the TWDB. All other tasks are on schedule.

O - Next RWPG meeting to be held February 20th, 2019. The previous was a working session with no actionable items, largely considered to be a successful format. All other tasks are on schedule.

P - No update

7. Wrap-up and next call topics and date

The next RWPG Chairs Conference Call meeting will be schedule after the 86th legislative session ends. Topics for next meeting will be developed during this time and will include legislative updates which affect the regional water planning process.