

RWPG Chairs Conference Call Meeting Notes

Type of Meeting: RWPG Chairs Conference Call (CCC)

Date of Meeting: August 28, 2019

Location of Meeting: TWDB Offices SFA Building Room 500I

TWDB Staff in Attendance: Matt Nelson, Temple McKinnon, Sarah Backhouse, Sabrina Anderson, Ron Ellis, William Alfaro, Elizabeth McCoy, Yun Cho, Kevin Smith, and Laura Bell.

Number of Planning Group Members in Attendance: 13 regions represented

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

Report filed by: Elizabeth McCoy

Report filed on: September 4, 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)

B – None

C – Glenn Clingenpeel (Trinity River Authority)

D – Richard LeTourneau (Chair)

E – Jesus Reyes (Chair)

F – John Grant (Chair)

G – Wayne Wilson (Chair)

H – Mark Evans (Chair)

I – Kelley Holcomb (Chair)

J – Jonathan Letz (Chair)

K – John Burke (Chair)

L – Suzanne Scott (Chair)

M – None

N – None

O – Aubrey Spear (Chair)

P – Neil Hudgins (Vice-chair)

2. New Regional Water Planning Requirements

Sarah Backhouse provided an update on House Bill (HB) 807 implementation and requirements for the 2021 regional water plans (RWP).

a) HB 807 RWP requirements and TWDB guidance

- i. HB 807 added five new requirements that RWPGs must address: 1) identifying counterproductive or unnecessary drought responses, 2) setting gallons per capita per day goals for municipal water user groups (WUG), 3) providing an

- assessment of aquifer storage and recovery if the planning area has significant needs, 4) assessing the progress of regionalization, and 5) RWPG recommendations to improve the planning process.
- ii. [TWDB guidance](#) was issued in June to assist RWPGs in meeting the additional requirements this planning cycle. Since rules are not yet in place to address HB 807 requirements, TWDB guidance was crafted to be flexible and accommodate a variety of approaches. Next cycle, formal guidance will be incorporated into the contract guidance.
 - iii. Rulemaking timeline: Proposed rules are expected to go to the TWDB Board in November. Final rules will be considered in the spring of 2020.
 - iv. Preliminary input was received from seven entities or persons. This information will inform the rulemaking and guidance updates for the next planning cycle.
- b) Chair's feedback on addressing requirements
- i. Sarah opened the floor for discussion of how RWPGs are approaching the new requirements. Not hearing any discussion, Sarah noted that the TWDB is available if RWPGs need assistance or guidance on how to address requirements.
- c) Interregional Planning Council
- i. A letter from the TWDB Executive Administrator (EA) was sent to the RWPGs in July. The letter outlines the purpose of the council as required by HB 807. The TWDB Board will appoint the council based on the RWPG's nominations. Council appointments are anticipated to occur at a January TWDB Board meeting.
 - ii. Please remember to submit council nominations to Sarah Backhouse following RWPG selection. The EA letter notes what to include in your submittal.
 - iii. TWDB has offered to support the council. Please email Sarah with any thoughts on the TWDB's support role, as well as goals or timelines of the council.
 - iv. Mark Evans, Region H, asked where RWPGs could nominate more than one member for the council. Sarah clarified that although RWPGs may nominate more than one member, ultimately the TWDB Board will appoint one member from each RWPG to serve on the council.

3. New Flood Planning Process

Matt Nelson gave an update on flood planning implementation and opportunities for stakeholder input.

- a) Stakeholder input regarding Senate Bill 8
 - i. Senate Bill 8 creates the framework for the first state flood plan in Texas through the creation of regional flood planning groups that will be supported by the TWDB. This process will be analogous to the regional water planning process.
 - ii. TWDB is seeking stakeholder input and would value comments from RWPG members based on their experience with the regional water planning process. In particular any feedback on the size of the flood planning groups, interest category representation, how to run a large group, and basic parameters to set up a flood planning group would be valuable.
 - iii. The [Flood Implementation Issues for Stakeholder Consideration and Request for Feedback](#) document provides a list of additional items for public consideration. The deadline to provide comments is August 30.
 - iv. For additional information, you can sign up for [TWDB flood program emails](#).

- b) Chair's feedback
 - i. Kelly Holcomb, Region I, asked if it would be a conflict of interest to serve on a RWPG and flood planning group at the same time. Matt Nelson suggested that it would not be a conflict and noted that the flood planning groups will need good leadership and there is a potential for membership overlap with the RWPGs.

4. 5th cycle initiatives and general timelines

Sarah Backhouse provided updates on the following items:

- a) Status of contract amendments to commit additional funds
 - i. The final contract amendment to commit funds to the total study cost will begin routing the first week of September. Most RWPGs have taken action on this.
 - ii. TWDB will now use DocuSign to route and execute amendments, which should streamline processing.
- b) Status of recommendations from the Drought Preparedness Council (DPC)
 - i. The DPC mailed a recommendations letter to the RWPGs in August. Several regions noted they had not received a copy of the letter. An electronic copy of the DPC letter was emailed out to all RWPGs after the call and is available to [download here](#).
 - ii. The DPC letter recommends that RWPGs
 - 1. follow the drought chapter template provided by the TWDB, and
 - 2. develop a region-specific model DCP for all WUG categories that account for more than 10 percent of demands in any decade.
 - iii. The [drought chapter template](#) was provided to RWPGs in April. A spreadsheet that identifies WUG categories that meet the 10 percent demand threshold the DPC has identified will be provided to each RWPG.
- c) Clarification on emergency interconnects information in RWPs
 - i. Some RWPGs have had questions regarding what to include in the RWPs, what should be considered confidential, and how to handle this information.
 - ii. Contract guidance and the [drought chapter template](#) specify that at a minimum, the RWP should include a description of the methodology used to collect emergency interconnect information and a list of who is connected to whom.
 - iii. Detailed location information and descriptions of facilities should be considered confidential and excluded from the plan. TWDB defers to the RWPGs to determine whether any additional information that is collected should be considered confidential or not.
 - iv. If a RWPG chooses not to evaluate interconnects in any further detail than the minimum requirement, it does not have to submit a separate confidential report. Not all RWPGs submitted confidential information last cycle and TWDB has not utilized the submitted confidential information to date.
- d) Initially prepared plan (IPP) and final plan deadlines and upcoming TWDB materials
 - i. IPPs are due March 3, 2020. Final plans are due October 14, 2020.
 - ii. TWDB is preparing IPP review material and will provide the following documents to the RWPGs this fall:
 - 1. A version of the IPP Review Checklist that will be used by the TWDB to document the IPP review.
 - 2. A schematic to help RWPGs understand the plan submittal and public

comment periods.

3. A public notice summary document to assist political subdivisions with the different public notice requirements for the IPP, public hearings, and adoption of the final plan.
- iii. Please let us know if there's anything else that may be of use to the RWPGs.
- e) Implementation survey, infrastructure financing survey (IFR), and prioritization
 - i. The implementation survey template was provided to the RWPGs in June. The template includes water management strategies (WMS) and water management strategy projects (WMSPs) that were recommended in the 2016 RWPGs and should be used to collect implementation and impediment data for Chapter 11 of the RWP. Survey data collected to date should be included with the IPPs.
 - ii. The IFR survey and the prioritization survey are based on recommended WMSPs in the 2021 RWPGs. TWDB will provide these surveys in the spring of 2020 after the IPPs are submitted.

5. Round 6 initial timeline

Sarah Backhouse provided updates on the following items:

- a) Estimated timeline for Round 6 kickoff
 - i. The sixth cycle of regional water planning will kick off immediately following final plan deliverables next year. The RFA process for initial funding is expected to start at the end of 2020. There will be certain actions the RWPG will need to take in advance of the RWPG's administrator submitting funding applications. More details on the timing and necessary actions will be provided next year.
 - ii. TWDB is evaluating funding for the next cycle. Please contact Sarah Backhouse with any concerns you have on funding limitations for your RWPGs. RWPG grant allocations are estimated based on a formula funding tool utilizing data from the most recent planning cycle as well as base allocations for each task. However, if there are certain tasks for which you feel that funding is not adequate, we would encourage you to provide Sarah with an estimate of a reasonable increase and associated justification. Matt clarified that there are no guarantees funding will be increased, however, the TWDB has not requested an increase in funding from the Legislature for a long time, so it is something we are considering.

6. Socioeconomic Analysis and Drought Tool Update

Yun Cho provided updates on the following items:

- a) Socioeconomic analysis reports
 - i. Impact model runs for the socioeconomic analysis are being finalized, and staff are preparing to write the 16 regional reports.
 - ii. Final reports will be available to the RWPGs by early December so that the reports can be included in the IPPs. This is the first time the reports have been made available for inclusion in the IPP.
 - iii. Later this year, socioeconomic impact data will be added to the interactive [Planning Data Dashboard](#) to provide the public and RWPGs a user-friendly way to review and provide feedback on the socioeconomic analysis.
 - iv. Upon request, a TWDB staff economist will be available between November and March to present the results of the socioeconomic analysis at RWPG meetings. If

your group is interested in this presentation, please let your project manager know the preferred meeting date. We will coordinate with the RWPGs to cover as many regions as possible.

- b) Drought management costing tool
 - i. The drought management costing tool will be available by the end of September.
 - ii. This tool uses the socioeconomic impact model to estimate impacts on residential users of municipal utility WUGs and is customized for each municipal WUG based on water price and quantity information available through the Texas Municipal League.
 - iii. The tool will be an Excel table that will allow users to select the WUG and desired target percentage of water demand reduction for each decade depending on the utilities' drought management practice.
 - iv. A final costing summary table will include decade specific target percentages of water reduction, associated water volumes, and an estimate of the monetary impact for each WUG. A User Manual and explanation of how to interpret results will also be available.

7. DB22 (State Water Planning Database) Activities

Sabrina Anderson provided an update on TWDB data assistance.

- a) Recent and upcoming data assistance to consultants
 - i. The Water Supply & Strategy Analysis (WSSA) team has been assisting consultants as existing WUG supply data is finalized for the socioeconomic analysis.
 - ii. WSSA is developing several new RWP database reports for this planning cycle. Most of the WMS related reports will be available to the consultants this September. The last few will be available in October.
 - iii. WSSA is assisting consultants as they prepare for WMS and WMSP data entry by providing data reports and custom queries as requested. This fall, the team will begin reviewing data and flagging any data issues that arise.
 - iv. Closer to the IPP submittal date, WSSA will perform DB22 application data checks for each region to make sure all data issues have been addressed and there are no overallocations. The DB22 data entry task is not complete until all data checks have been corrected or have an approved data check appeal.
 - v. Once IPPs are submitted to the TWDB, consultant access to the DB22 application will be closed to allow for a thorough review of the static dataset. Consultants will still be able to review data through reports. If data updates are required after the IPP submittal, WSSA will review any proposed changes and update the database as necessary.

8. Region Round Robin

Sarah Backhouse invited regional representatives to share updates with the group. No regional updates were given.

9. Wrap-up and next call topics and date

Call frequency was discussed, and it was noted that the preferred call frequency was twice a year. The next RWPG Chairs Conference Call meeting will be scheduled for January 2020

in order to touch base before the IPP due date.