

PANHANDLE WATER PLANNING GROUP

Minutes

July 15, 2004

A meeting of the Panhandle Water Planning Group (PWPG) was held on Thursday, July 15, 2004, at 1:30 p.m. in the PRPC Board Room, 415 West Eighth Avenue, Amarillo, Potter County, Texas.

Mr. C.E. Williams, Chairman, presided.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Nolan Clark, USDA-ARS; Dan Coffey, City of Amarillo; Vernon Cook, County of Roberts; Charles Cooke, TCW Supply, Inc.; William Hallerberg; Gale Henslee, Xcel Energy; Denise Jett, ConocoPhillips Petroleum; David Landis, City of Perryton; Temple McKinnon, Texas Water Development Board; Charles Munger, TWPD Canyon Fisheries Lab; Grady Skaggs, County of Oldham; John Sweeten, Texas Ag. Experiment Station - TAMU Ag. Res. & Ext; Rudie Tate; C.E. Williams, Panhandle Ground Water Conservation District; Bruce Ho – Designated Alternate – Janet Tregellas; Cole Camp – Designated Alternate – Rusty Gilmore; Kent Satterwhite – Designated Alternate – John Williams; Tonya Kleusken – Designated Alternate – Inge Brady.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Steve Jones, Texas Department of Agriculture; Mickey Black, USDA-NRCS; Richard Bowers, North Plains Ground Water Conservation District; Inge Brady; Jim Derington, Palo Duro River Authority; B. A. Donelson, First State Bank; Rusty Gilmore, Rita Blanca Well Service; Bobbie Kidd, Greenbelt Municipal & Industrial Water Authority; Dean Looper; Frank Simms; Janet Tregellas; John Williams, Canadian River Municipal Water Authority;

OTHERS PRESENT:

Fran Bretz, TAES; Janet Guthrie, HUWCD; Stefan Schuster, FNI; Steve Stevens, Mesa Water; Cindy Loeffler, TPWD; Beverly Gattis, STAND; Steve Amosson, TCE; Jennifer Ashley, Senator Kel Seliger's Office; Jason Henegan, TPWD; Pam Allison, Cindy Cockerham, Senator Kel Seliger's Office; Cindy Loeffler, TPWD.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. C. E. Williams called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. and noted that a quorum was present.

2. ESTABLISH ATTENDANCE & RECOGNIZE DESIGNATED ALTERNATES

Four Designated Alternates were recognized: Tanya Kleuskens for Inge Brady; Cole Camp for Rusty Gilmore; Bruce Ho for Janet Tregellas; Kent Satterwhite for John Williams.

3. RECOGNIZE NEW LIAISON – REGION B

No action.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Dr. Nolan Clark stated that under Item 4, first paragraph, last sentence, the final two words should be “Region B” rather than “Region A”. Temple McKinnon stated that under Item 13, first paragraph, last agency name should be TPWD rather than TWDB.

Vernon Cook made the motion to accept the minutes with these corrections. Nolan Clark seconded the motion; motion carried by unanimous vote.

5. SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING – UPDATE AND ACTION

Jarrett Atkinson stated that the Executive Committee was authorized by the Planning Group at the last meeting to work with the TWDB to negotiate and make budget adjustments for the Supplemental Scope of Work. He stated that the Executive Committee had agreed that the first task (update to the groundwater modeling) will be performed by the TWDB, and that the remaining three tasks would be done by the PWPG and its contractors. Due to this, the total Supplemental Funding contract will be decreased to \$123,000 rather than offered \$149,993. The three tasks that will be performed by the Planning Group will be: Surface Water Availability, Natural Gas Price Impact vs. Irrigation Demand and the Inter-Regional Work with Region O.

The TWDB will not have any funding available for the work until September, 2005. Due to this, the Planning Group must cash flow the three tasks by using the previously allocated planning money and possibly local funds. The TWDB will reimburse the PWPG for all funds spent under the supplemental contract, once funds are released. C.E. Williams persuaded the TWDB’s legal staff to agree to an addition to the contract amendment stating, “The Contractor shall be liable for the completion of these required tasks up to and including the Initially Prepared Plan in an amount not to exceed our currently committed funds. Further work on the Plan beyond the Initially Prepared Plan shall be contingent upon receipt of additional funds.” Mr. Williams also noted that the Planning Commission is comfortable with that language.

C.E. Williams said that the Executive Committee feels that they can accomplish everything the Planning Group wishes to accomplish by having the TWDB do the update to the groundwater modeling.

6. PRESENTATION – TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT

C.E. Williams introduced Ms. Cindy Loeffler, Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD). Ms. Loeffler said that it is the responsibility of the TPWD to protect fish and wildlife resources in Texas. She explained that the Regional Water Planning Groups have a new requirement in the second round of planning to conduct a quantitative environmental assessment and that a management tool has been developed by TPWD to analyze potential alteration of environmental flows. She said that the TPWD will review regional and state water plans and provide assistance upon request but will not mandate to the Regional Water Planning Groups. She offered the tool to the PWPG to assist in meeting environmental flow analysis requirements of quantitative environmental assessment. Further, she stated that the TPWD is seeking input from the Regional Water Planning Groups and other experts on ways to modify methodology for specific regions. Listing environmental factors to include: 1) environmental water needs; 2) wildlife habitat; 3) cultural resources; 4) bays, estuaries, and arms of the Gulf of Mexico; and 5) other factors as deemed relevant by the Regional Water Planning Group. She provided TPWD WAM tool methods.

Ms. Loeffler explained that the TPWD has identified 228 stream segments that meet one or more criteria for the designation of *ecologically significant*. She listed the criteria as: 1) biological function; 2) hydrologic functions; 3) riparian conservation areas; 4) high water quality/exceptional aquatic life uses/high aesthetic value; and 5) threatened or endangered species/unique communities. Ms. Loeffler gave the Planning Group the opportunity to add additional stream segments to be designated as ecologically unique.

She said that Senate Bill 1 and 2 set out the kind of information that regional water plans must contain about changes in flow amounts and about the adequacy of the resulting flows to meet environmental water needs and protecting natural resources in the long term. A new requirement for this round of planning requires the TWDB to determine, before approving a regional water plan that it is consistent with long-term protection of the state's natural resources.

Ms. Loeffler said that although the TPWD is given 120 days to comment on the Plans submitted, that really is not enough time and they plan to stay in touch with consultants and Water Planning Groups.

She covered TWC Section 16.051 and 16.053 along with additional wording added after SB2.

Stefan Schuster then addressed a letter received by the RWPGs from several environmental organizations. Part of the letter questioned the use of WAM Run 3 in planning for regional water needs. Mr. Schuster stated that the TWDB requires that WAM Run 3 be used in water availability studies for the Plan.

7. **COMMITTEE ACTIONS**

There were no committee actions.

8. **OTHER BUSINESS**

- A. Temple McKinnon, Texas Water Development Board reported that Region B will have their next meeting on 8-9-04. She said that the TWDB Task Force will issue a report on 8-2-04 and that Public Comment will be due by 8-23-04
- B. Next meeting of the PWPG will be held on 8-12-04.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Planning Group, the meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.