

PANHANDLE WATER PLANNING GROUP

Minutes

November 19, 2009

A meeting of the Panhandle Water Planning Group (PWPG) was held on Thursday, November 19, 2009 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; Grady Skaggs, County of Oldham; David Landis, City of Perryton; Janet Guthrie, Hemphill County UWCD; Tomas Marek for John Sweeten, Texas Ag. Experiment Station – TAMU Ag. Res & Ext; Steve Walthour, North Plains Groundwater Conservation District; Cole Camp, Pika International Inc.; Vernon Cook, County of Roberts; Kendall Harris, Mesquite Groundwater Conservation District; Charles Cooke, TCW Supply, Inc.; Rusty Gilmore, Rita Blanca Well Service; Bill Hallerburg; Tom Bailiff, Greenbelt Municipal & Industrial Water Authority; Jim Derrington, Palo Duro River Authority; Gale Henslee, Xcel Energy; Ben Weinheimer, Texas Cattle Feeders Association; C.E. Williams, Panhandle Ground Water Conservation District; John Williams, CRMWA; Angela Kennedy for Angela Masloff, Texas Water Development Board; Simone Kiel, Freese & Nichols; Van Kelly, Intera;

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Emmett Autrey, City of Amarillo; Joe Baumgardner; Janet Tregellas; Denise Jett, ConocoPhillips; Kent Satterwhite, CRMWA; Steve Jones, TDA; Mickey Black, USDA; Charles Munger, TWPD;

OTHERS PRESENT:

Steve Stevens, Mesa Water; Bob Hardin, R.W. Hardin & Assoc.; Greg Stanton, USGS; Marty Jones, Sprouse Law Firm, Mina Johnson, League of Women Voters; Joyce Hensley, League of Women Voters; Spencer Schnier, Freese & Nichols

STAFF PRESENT:

Kyle Ingham, Local Government Services Director; Jonathan Ellis, Local Government Services Program Specialist

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. C. E. Williams called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m. and took roll call, it was noted that a quorum was present.

2. **ESTABLISH ATTENDANCE & RECOGNIZE DESIGNATED ALTERNATES**

Two Designated Alternates were recognized: Thomas Marek for Dr. John Sweeten, and Angela Kennedy for Angela Masloff.

3. **CONSIDER – THE MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR MEETING HELD JULY 13, 2009**

Charles Cooke made the motion to accept the minutes. Grady Skaggs seconded the motion; motion carried by unanimous vote.

4. **DISCUSS – REVIEW AND CONSIDER THE QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Nolan Clark, Treasurer, presented the most current PWPG financials for review of the entire PWPG. He detailed the 2009 local contributions to date as well as the September 2009 local water report and the September 2009 state water report. In his description, Mr. Clark detailed where the funds were going as well as for what purposes. Vernon Cook made a motion to approve the financials. William Hallerburg seconded the motion; motion carried by unanimous vote.

5. **DISCUSS – UPDATE TO WWW.PANHANDLEWATER.ORG**

Kyle Ingham spoke of the extensive updates to the panhandle water website and spoke to how members might utilize the newly updated site. Mr. Ingham stated that notices, minutes, attachments, and reports would be posted on this website. Mr. Ingham proceeded to walkthrough these various new aspects of the website. Janet Guthrie made the comment that she thought the site was great but that the color scheme could be hard on one's eyes.

6. **DISCUSS – NOVEMBER 11, 2009 PUBLIC HEARING FACILITATED BY THE TEXAS WATER DEVELOPMENT BOARD REGARDING THE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AREA #1'S ADOPTED DESIRED FUTURE CONDITION FOR THE OGALLALA AQUIFER.**

Kyle Ingham presented a summary of the Public Hearing regarding GMA #1 and the challenging of the GMA #1's proposed DFC. Mr. Ingham described the speakers and stances of each party involved, both among the petitioners who issued the challenge and the respondent districts of the GMA #1. After Mr. Ingham concluded his summary, Janet Guthrie and Steve Walthour each had one correction to Mr. Ingham's synopsis which were noted. Mr. Walthour noted that on February 17, 2010 will be the Water Development Board's hearing on this issue. Mr. Ingham added that ten business days after that public hearing the TWDB will still hear affidavits and general comments relating to this issue, the public hearing being the hearing on November 11, 2009. There was discussion of the implications of this time period and if it might be completed in time to affect the regional water plan.

7. **DISCUSS – CLOSEOUT OF INTERM OGALLALA RECHARGE STUDY**

Kyle Ingham gave a summary of this item. In 2007, the PWPG began a study of the recharge rates of the Ogallala Aquifer in Roberts and Hemphill Counties. Dr. Bridget Scanlon of the Bureau of Economic Geology was the primary researcher on the project. In December of 2008 the PWPG adopted the initially prepared plan and after a few minor modifications requested by TWDB the final plan was adopted by the PWPG

on July 14, 2009 and submitted to TWDB. On August 26, 2009 the TWDB issued a letter declaring the Interim Study acceptable with 60 days to close out the financials. This report was found to be acceptable and administratively complete according to a letter received by PRPC on September 2, 2009.

8. DISCUSS – UPDATE OF OGALLALA AQUIFER SUPPLIES AND WATER NEEDS

Simone Kiel spoke to the completing of drafts for chapters two and three of the regional water plan. At the completion of chapter three the Group gave some direction on revision, specifically those changes were tasked to the modeling committee. Ms. Kiel spoke to the result of collaboration with the modeling committee. This collaboration led to three additional GAM runs. The contract for these additional tasks was presented and the purpose and findings of these runs were presented. Further Ms. Kiel spoke to the direction given by the modeling committee being in line with the proposed 40/50/80 DFC of the GMA #1 JPC. Ms. Kiel elaborated on specific points of supply and considerations in estimating supply such as the Rita Blanca and Dockum aquifers and how they might affect estimations of the Ogallala supply. Ms. Kiel presented a map with revised estimated storage of the Ogallala and progression of those storages over the next 50 years. Further Ms. Kiel described the updates to the supply estimates to be provided to user groups and resulting changes in numbers. Ms. Kiel proceeded to show a general comparison of supply and demand on a county by county basis indicating those counties which would have shortages. In summary, Ms. Kiel indicated that they had identified 27 user groups which were looking at shortages. 99% of the shortages are attributed to irrigation in 2010 and 84% in 2060. Ms. Kiel indicated that the draft chapter 3 is still a draft and is still being worked on. Ms. Kiel asked members to alert her to changes which needed to be made in the chapter as they reviewed the draft.

9. DISCUSS – WATER MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES (INCLUDING AGRICULTURE AND MUNICIPAL STRATEGIES)

Ms. Kiel spoke to water management strategies which were identified for water users in the region with a projected water shortage. Water management strategies were developed for agriculture, municipal, and other identified users with needs. Ms. Kiel said this is still a draft and what the Group has before it is essentially an analysis of potential feasible water management strategies and what might be recommended by the various water groups with water shortages. Ms. Kiel said today she was primarily going to address the municipal shortages and the shortages for whole-sale water providers. Ms. Kiel presented suggestions and recommended strategies for each municipality which projected shortages. Further, Ms. Kiel spoke to plans by some entities to address possible shortages including new wells and expanding existing fields. Ms. Kiel indicated that the majority of the cities are going the option of developing additional groundwater. After answering questions of clarification on municipal supply and demand, Ms. Kiel moved onto speak of whole-sale water providers supply and demand issues. Ms. Kiel did make it known that conservation is recommended to all municipal users in addition to proscribed water management strategies. Ms. Kiel proceeded to go down the list of entities with shortages and possible strategies specific to each.

Ms. Kiel asked Dr. Nolan Clark to speak to the agriculture demands and possible water management strategies. Dr. Clark conveyed the findings from the Ag committee and their meeting on November 9, 2009. Dr. Clark spoke to supply and demand trends for

agriculture demands and where possible water management strategies could be utilized or have been utilized. Dr. Clark focused on irrigation and six counties with irrigation shortages. Dr. Clark described the coordination with Texas Agrilife in developing this information. Dr. Clark presenting findings regarding what strategies are most viable and those not as viable, further the effectiveness and implementation of each of these strategies including concerns such as cost of implementation and changes in yield. Dr. Clark indicated that the Ag committee had developed an implementation schedule for these strategies. Further the Ag committee developed annual projected savings as a result of these strategies both on an individual basis and when combined, further what amount of user groups or producers have implemented what strategies and what group of users have yet to adopt a certain strategy. Dr. Clark spoke to changes in crops. Specifically, the effect of implementing drought resistant seed resulting in greater water use due to perception of greater possible yield was discussed among members. Dr. Clark indicated that not all of these strategies have equal impact, some have very little impact like tillage modification and others like biotechnology changes have greater impact. There was discussion between members regarding the costs associated with implementation of certain strategies as well as the extent of water savings resulting from strategies. Furthermore the impact both on the scale of a single water user group as well as a region was investigated. Dr. Clark described again some timelines for implementation. There was time allowed for questions and several for clarification were asked. Furthermore the receptiveness of producers to some of the techniques were discusses, it was suggested that education would have to play a significant role in these strategies, not just on the strategies themselves but the need for them as a whole. C.E. Williams thanked Dr. Clark for his analysis and report.

10. DISCUSS – STATUS REPORT ON THE NORTHERN OGALLALA GAM UPDATE

Van Kelly from Intera informed on this issue. He described his firm's activities since July including his extensive coordination with the modeling committee. At the August 7, 2009 modeling committee meeting there was an extensive conversation and the utilization of the GMA #1 proposed DFC for planning purposes, furthermore three additional runs were to be completed to answer questions which arose at that meeting. The minutes of that meeting were included for perusal. Mr. Kelly gave an update as to the progress being made on the development of this latest GAM update following the discussions at that meeting. Mr. Kelly spoke to specific changes and functions of the latest model in response to voiced concerns and issues. Mr. Kelly expressed a desire and hope to have a completed model in January.

11. DISCUSS – STATUS REPORT ON THE LAKE MEREDITH STUDY

Ms. Kiel spoke to a change in staff and that Spencer Schnier has taken over the work on the Lake Meredith study with which Freese and Nichols were tasked. Mr. Schnier from Freese & Nichols presented his latest findings. Mr. Schnier said that what is decreasing the levels in lake Meridith is decrease stream flow from the Canadian River and regarding that decrease he has been investigating seven causes: lack of rain, evaporation, increased infiltration, decreased spring flow, increased water use, increase in stock ponds, and the spread of salt cedar. While there is not a clear single factor to the decrease in water there are clear factors which are not contributors. The two which have been found to not contribute to the decrease in flow include: lack of

rain and evaporation. In presenting these conclusions Mr. Schnier informed on the research which had been done and some history of the site.

12. LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

Ms. Kiel spoke to the history of the PWPG recommendations. In both the 2001 and 2006 Regional Water Plans legislative recommendations were identified by the region. The Group reviewed these recommendations from the 2006 Regional Water Plan. Ms. Kiel spoke to several which might need some changes and updates and asked the members to consider possible revisions and rewordings to some items. Among the specific measures Ms. Kiel discussed were: state-sponsored water availability for minor aquifers; funding for implementation of water supply strategies; clarification of the significance of designating unique reservoir sites and stream segments; allow development of alternative near-term scenarios for systems that have less than 3,300 population; and including reservoir sites in future water plans. Ms. Kiel provided members with her email for submission of any additional recommendations.

13. DISCUSS AND ACTION AS NEEDED – APPROVE THE WATER NEEDS FOR SUBMITTAL TO THE TWDB FOR THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC STUDY

Ms. Kiel presented the most recent water needs list. One of the components of the 2011 Regional Water Plan Update is the evaluation of the socio-economic impacts of projected water supply shortages. The PWPG can request to TWDB to conduct this study, and the results are included in the Initially Prepared Plan. As required for this planning cycle the water supply shortages must be approved by the PWPG prior to submittal to TWDB for the socio-economic analysis. The presented list detailed these shortages. There was discussion between members on various aspects of accuracy of this list. Ms. Kiel discussed how these numbers were developed. C.E. Williams asked about the timeline for submitting this and Angela Kennedy said that the socio economic study does not need to be included in the IPP. After discussion between Ms. Kiel, Mr. Walthour, Mr. Williams, and Dr. Clark it was determined that this recommendation should be moved to the January meeting. Dr. Clark indicated that he would like to reconsider the legislative recommendations, he suggested that a sub-committee be formed which would formally revise the recommendations and add and remove certain recommendations. Dr. Clark, Mr. Walthour, Judge Cook, and Mr. Hallerburg all indicated a willingness to serve on that committee. It was indicated that the meeting and recommendations of this sub-committee should be completed before the January meeting of the full PWPG.

Scheduling was discussed. The following meeting dates were set:

December 17th – The legislative committee will meet.

January 19th – The full PWPG will meet in the afternoon and the modeling committee in the morning.

February 22nd – A February meeting of the full PWPG was scheduled to adopt any changes deemed necessary at the January meeting, also so as to be after the TWDB hearing on February 17th.

14. REGIONAL REPORTS – REGION B AND REGION O

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15. REPORT OR COMMENTS FROM TWDB PERSONNEL

Kent Satterwhite was not present. Angela Kennedy was asked to give a report. Ms. Kennedy gave a very brief report on Region O. Ms. Kennedy introduced herself and her areas of expertise and indicated that she would be taking over Angela Masloff's responsibilities while Ms. Masloff was on maternity leave.

16. OTHER BUSINESS, CLOSING COMMENT FROM CHAIRMAN AND BOARD MEMBERS

Andrew Weinberg from the audience introduced himself and indicated that he was with the Texas Water Development Board. He indicated that he had begun work on a project for Ogallala recharge as such he wanted to introduce himself since this Group had experience in this area and indicated that he would most likely be working with some of the members in some capacity so he wanted to introduce himself. Mr. Weinberg gave a summary of his project and his efforts up to this point as well as preliminary findings.

Mr. Ingham indicated that the Texas Water Law Conference was on December 9th and 10th. This will be at Austin.

17. ADJOURN

C.E. Williams adjourned the meeting at 4:08 p.m.