

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE  
OF THE  
TEXAS GROUNDWATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE  
RECORD OF MEETING  
Fourth Quarter Meeting, Fiscal Year 2020

Meeting Date: June 10, 2020  
Place: Virtual Teleconference  
Meeting No. 66

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Subcommittee Members

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Peggy G Hunka (Co-Chair)  
Chris Muller  
Rebecca Storm  
David Villarreal  
Julia Stanford  
Claire Satterwhite  
Leslie Bruce  
David Van Dresar  
Evelyn Reategui-Zirena

Affiliation

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service (AgriLife Extension)  
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)  
Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)  
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Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA)  
Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts (TAGD)  
Texas Department of Licensing and Registration  
Texas Railroad Commission  
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Program

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Interested Party

Lynne Fahlquist

Affiliation

U.S. Geological Survey

**MEETING HANDOUTS**

1. Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Public Outreach and Education (POE) Subcommittee Meeting Agenda, June 10, 2020
2. TGPC POE Subcommittee Meeting Record, March 4, 2020
3. Outreach Events Status Report, June 2020
4. Texas Well Owner Network (TWON) Training Activities Schedule
5. Google Analytics reports on TGPC website activity, March 1 - May 31, 2020
6. Draft Fact Sheet, "Drinking Water Problems: Arsenic"
7. April 2020 Update to RG-347, "Landowner's Guide to Plugging Abandoned Water Wells"
8. News article, "Brush Country Groundwater Conservation Water Well Plugging Program"
9. 2020 Water-related Conferences in Texas

## MEETING RECORD OF June 4, 2020

### CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Peggy Hunka (TCEQ), Co-Chair of the TGPC POE Subcommittee called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. Due to COVID-19 this meeting is being held for the first time ever via a teleconference. Housekeeping measure for the teleconference were discussed.

The minutes from the March meeting were reviewed and no changes were made.

### STATUS REPORTS

#### Recent and Upcoming Outreach Events

The current Outreach Events Status Report (available on the POE Subcommittee webpage, <https://tgpc.texas.gov/tgpc-subcommittees/tgpc-public-outreach-and-education-subcommittee/> under the “Additional Resources” heading) was reviewed:

- Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service (AgriLife Extension) Water Well Screening Events
  - There were no screening events in the past quarter.
  - Four events were scheduled for July 2020 but at this time there is only one event scheduled. AgriLife is working with the location to determine if and how this event might be held. There was some discussion about conducting activities during COVID-19.
- TGPC Exhibit Booth
  - The National Groundwater Awareness Week poster was displayed at the State Capitol and at the offices of TGPC member agencies during the week of March 10.
  - Currently there are no plans for the TGPC booth because of COVID-19 affecting groundwater activities and conferences.
- Julia Stanford (TAGD) mentioned that TAGD is still moving forward with their annual Groundwater Summit, but that could change, and updates will be posted on their web site.

#### TWON Training Activities

Diane Boellstorff (AgriLife Extension) reviewed the TWON schedule. In the past quarter there were no events or workshops due to COVID-19. At present there is one scheduled in Levelland in July, and several that are planned to be scheduled in the future. There is a lot of interest in training events and workshops. There was some discussion about how to possibly hold in-person events or hold a combined in-person and virtual event. Diane Boellstorff also noted that hurricane season could have an impact on training. There have been over 10,038 samples or attendees at TWON events since April 2011, with 27 during the previous quarter.

#### TGPC Website Activity Statistics

Peggy Hunka (TCEQ) reviewed the Google Analytics activity report on the TGPC website for the period March 1 through May 31, 2020. Peggy noted that the peak activity occurred in March near the time of the last POE meeting. She also noted that there were several Facebook referrals to the page. A question was asked whether the site's traffic was higher than before COVID-19 and it appears to be similar. There was some discussion about utilizing social media as part of outreach activities.

## ANNOUNCE FUTURE MEETING DATE

The next TGPC POE Subcommittee meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, September 9, 2020. At this time the meeting is planned for 9:00 AM CDST, but Abiy Berehe (TCEQ) noted the time could vary depending on whether the Legislative Subcommittee meets. At this time the teleconference format is expected to remain for the next meeting as well. There was some discussion about whether meetings could be a combined format of in-person and virtual in the future.

## REVIEW, DISCUSS AND APPROVE DOCUMENTATION

Educational Outreach Plan topic updates were discussed (see: [https://tgpc.texas.gov/POE/TGPC\\_POE\\_GW\\_EduOutreachPlan10Sep2013.pdf](https://tgpc.texas.gov/POE/TGPC_POE_GW_EduOutreachPlan10Sep2013.pdf)):

**Abandoned wells** - David Van Dresar (TAGD) did not have any updates at this time. Peggy Hunka (TCEQ) found a news article about the Brush Country Groundwater Conservation Water Well Plugging Program that had a cost sharing program to assist well owners in plugging abandoned wells.

**Texas Evapotranspiration Networks** - David Villareal (TDA) stated that the Water Conservation Advisory Council has discussed this and would support the network in the narrative of its legislative recommendations and noted that this may be discussed during the TGPC Legislative Subcommittee meeting following this meeting.

**Septic tanks** - Dianne Boellstorff (AgriLife Extension) indicated that she had seen an article that speculated with people at home more, on-site septic systems are likely seeing more use than normal. David Villareal (TDA) provided some input and there was additional discussion about possible impact to septic systems and wastewater treatment facilities due to COVID-19 as well as to increased use in general.

## Publications

**AgriLife Extension Reprints** - Diane Boellstorff (AgriLife Extension) discussed AgriLife's draft arsenic fact sheet that members of the Subcommittee had provided input on. This fact sheet was included in the handouts and will next go through AgriLife's Ag Comm for minor edits prior to reprinting. She noted that the fact sheet will be available for in person programs and electronically, and they plan to provide a Spanish-language version as well. The fact sheet was also discussed in the next item "FAQs and Fact Sheets."

## **FAQs and Fact Sheets**

1. Diane Boellstorff (AgriLife Extension) led a discussion regarding the draft AgriLife Extension Fact Sheet: *Drinking Water Problems: Arsenic*. She noted that a slight edit to the text had been made based on a comment, and the graphic was also updated based on comments received. The map on page 2 includes county boundaries but not names, and colors were revised based on the concentration of arsenic in the well: any anything over the drinking water standard is shown in black; results above the detection limit but less than the drinking water standard are in red; and green indicates non-detect. Diane asked the Subcommittee to let her know if any additional edits are needed.

**Action:** David Van Dresar made a motion to use the printing allocation print the final draft of the arsenic fact sheet. Motion was seconded by Evelyn Reategui-Zirena

(DSHS) and approved by the Subcommittee. Peggy Hunka (TCEQ) led a discussion about the recently revised *Landowner's Guide to Plugging Abandoned Water Wells, RG-347*. The document was updated to include current links and will soon be posted on the web. At the last meeting the Subcommittee discussed reviewing the document to see if additional changes were needed since it hadn't been looked at since 2010 so it is provided as a handout for today's meeting for members to review. If anyone has edits before the next meeting send them to Peggy and she will revise for discussion and review at the next meeting.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS and PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments.

Kelly Mills thanked the members for participating in the teleconference and for their continued participation.

#### **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 9:53 a.m.