

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE
TEXAS GROUNDWATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE

RECORD OF MEETING

Fourth Quarter Meeting, Fiscal Year 2021

Meeting Date: June 2, 2021
Place: Virtual Videoconference
Meeting No. 70

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Subcommittee Members

Diane Boellstorff (Co-Chair)
Peggy G Hunka (Co-Chair)
David Van Dresar
David Villarreal
David Gunn
Rebecca Storms
Lynne Fahlquist

Affiliation

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service (AgriLife Extension)
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts (TAGD)
Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA)
Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR)
Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)
U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)

Other Agency Staff

Guy Fipps
John Smith
Abiy Berehe
Alan Cherepon
Grant Gibson
Cindy Hooper
Kathy McCormack
Scott Underwood
Leslie Vallecillo

Affiliation / Program

AgriLife Extension
AgriLife Extension
TCEQ / Water Availability Division (WAD)
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MEETING HANDOUTS

1. Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Public Outreach and Education (POE) Subcommittee Meeting Agenda, June 2, 2021
2. TGPC POE Subcommittee Meeting Record, March 10, 2021
3. Outreach Events Status Report
4. Texas Well Owner Network (TWON) Training Activities Schedule
5. Google Analytics reports on TGPC website activity
6. Discuss Draft FAQ on preparing water wells before a flood
7. Discuss Draft FAQ on real estate transactions and water wells

MEETING RECORD OF JUNE 2, 2021

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Diane Boellstorff, Co-Chair of the TGPC POE Subcommittee, called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m. Due to COVID-19 this meeting was held via a videoconference using the Microsoft Teams platform.

STATUS REPORTS

Recent and Upcoming Outreach Events

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

- Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service (AgriLife Extension) Water Well Screening:
 - John Smith reported that sampling trip for west Texas was completed on May 8, with 21 samples collected in Van Horn on May 4, and 75 samples collected in Odessa on May 7-8. Planned water well screenings include Wise County on June 14th, Jack County on June 15th, Montague County on June 16th, and hopefully Falls County and Martin sometime in the summer.
- TGPC Exhibit Booth
 - There were no booth events for this quarter. The Virtual Exhibit Booth will most likely be removed from the standing agenda but may still be discussed in future meetings.

TWON Training Activities

John Smith (AgriLife Extension) reviewed the TWON training schedule. As with the one-hour events, there have been two one-day events in the previous quarter: one in Midland on May 7, 2021, and another in Georgetown on May 17, 2021. He also stated that the four-hour training events have been very well received. AgriLife Extension has planned training events occurring June 17-18, July 21, and sometime in the fall.

TGPC Website Activity Statistics

Peggy Hunka (TCEQ) reviewed the Google Analytics activity report on the TGPC web page, which included a comparison to the previous quarter of FY2021. The TGPC web page has seen an increase of 37.85 percent in new users. There has been a decrease in the bounce rate and the number of sessions per user. An increase in the interest in direct, referral, and social traffic was also detected. In this discussion, Ms. Hunka and Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) also mentioned the root cause of a spamming incident and how they planned on gathering more information on the matter.

Virtual Booth

This topic was discussed earlier.

ANNOUNCE FUTURE MEETING DATE

The next TGPC POE Subcommittee meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, September 15, 2021, at 1:30 PM CST. At this time, the videoconference format is expected to remain for the next meeting.

REVIEW, DISCUSS AND APPROVE DOCUMENTATION

TGPC Groundwater Educational Outreach Plan Topic Updates (see: https://tgpc.texas.gov/POE/TGPC_POE_GW_EduOutreachPlan10Sep2013.pdf):

Abandoned Wells

David Gunn (TDLR) reported no new information but said that they were getting questions about cisterns. TDLR has no jurisdiction over cisterns or hand-dug wells and it was suggested that an FAQ on them would be helpful. David Gunn said he would write a draft.

Texas Evapotranspiration Networks

Guy Fipps (Texas AgriLife) reported that the ET FAQ does need to be updated and draft was sent for review. The FAQ will be emailed to members prior to the next meeting for review. Mr. Fipps also reported that the Galveston Bay Foundation received a US EPA Gulf of Mexico grant to further the Water My Yard program in the Houston area. There will be a multi-media event held this summer, and Kathy McCormack suggested monitoring the analytics for the Water My Yard website to see how effective this outreach will be.

Septic Tanks

No report.

Publications

AgriLife Extension Reprints

There are no reprints needed at this time.

FAQs and Fact Sheets:

- Discussion on FAQ for preparing water wells before a flood
 - Alan Cherepon (TCEQ) prepared a draft and had sent it to several subcommittee members for review and comment. Dr. Boellstorff provided some suggestions on the draft, Ms. McCormack suggested adding a paragraph at the end of the FAQ that mentions the TGPC, and Rebecca Storms (DSHS) pointed out a grammatical error. Dr. Boellstorff suggested all members send the draft over to Mr. Cheperon within a week so it can be forwarded to Ms. Hunka before the reminder of the next meeting.

- Discuss FAQ for real estate transactions and water wells
 - No report was given as Joel Pigg was not present. Dr. Boellstorff asked that any member who would like to be included in the FAQ let her know. Rebecca Storms pointed out the TWDB Groundwater Data Viewer link appearing twice on the document

- Discuss Possible new FAQs and Fact sheets
 - Mr. Cherepon and Mr. Gunn suggested having a new FAW for hand dug wells.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Hunka reported that severe drought is entering the west side of Texas just like the western part of the United States. She also requested that if anyone with new information to report for the upcoming conferences to let her know.

David Van Dresar (TAGD) reported that the Groundwater Summit is occurring from August 31st through September 2nd in San Antonio. It is an in-person event however there will be options for online attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 2:33 p.m.