

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE
 OF THE
 TEXAS GROUNDWATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE
 RECORD OF MEETING
 Second Quarter Meeting, Fiscal Year 2013

Meeting Date: December 4, 2012
 Meeting No.: 36

Place: TCEQ Campus, Bldg F
 Room: 2210

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MEETING ATTENDANCE2

MEETING HANDOUTS.....2

MEETING RECORD OF DECEMBER 4, 20123

1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS 3

2. STATUS REPORTS 3

Recent and Upcoming Outreach Events – AgriLife Extension Water Well

Screening Events and Abandoned Water Well Closures and the TGPC Booth 3

TWON Training Activities and Handbook 3

TGPC Website Activity Statistics 3

3. SET FUTURE MEETING DATE 4

4. PRESENTATION – EVAPOTRANSPIRATION NETWORKS IN TEXAS..... 4

5. REVIEW, DISCUSS, AND APPROVE DOCUMENTATION..... 4

Popular Press Articles 4

Review and Update of Existing TGPC Frequently Asked Questions 4

TWON Fact Sheets..... 4

6. DISCUSSION OF CURRENT GROUNDWATER ISSUES..... 5

7. TGPC POE GROUNDWATER EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH PLAN UPDATES5

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS 6

9. PUBLIC COMMENT 6

10. ADJOURN 6

MEETING ATTENDANCE

Subcommittee Members

Diane Boellstorff (Co-Chair)

Guy Fipps

Kathy McCormack (Co-Chair)

Alan Cherepon

Cary Betz

Peter Pope

Michael Hare

Mel Davis

Jana Lloyd

David Gunn

Affiliation

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service (AgriLife Extension)

AgriLife Extension

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)

TCEQ

TCEQ

Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC)

Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA)

Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB)

TSSWCB

Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR)

MEETING HANDOUTS

1. December 4, 2012 Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Public Outreach and Education (POE) Subcommittee Meeting Agenda
2. September 20, 2012 TGPC POE Subcommittee Meeting Record
3. Outreach Events Status Report, December 2012
4. Texas Well Owner Network (TWON) events list, 11/28/2012
5. *TWON Well Owner's Guide to Water Supply*, AgriLife Extension publication B-6257 (<https://agrilifebookstore.org/>)
6. Google Analytics report on TGPC website activity, September 17 – November 29, 2012
7. Draft *How is Pesticide Contamination of Private Water Wells Prevented ?* Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) update
8. Diane Boellstorff (AgriLife Extension) feedback on draft *How is Pesticide Contamination of Private Water Wells Prevented ?* FAQ update
9. Drought 2012 – U.S. Drought Monitor, Texas as of November 27, 2012; U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook November 2012 – February 2013; Public Water Supply Systems Affected as of November 28, 2012
10. 2012 – 2013 Water-related Conferences in Texas, December 2012

MEETING RECORD OF DECEMBER 4, 2012

1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Diane Boellstorff (AgriLife Extension), Co-Chair of the TGPC POE Subcommittee, called the meeting to order at approximately 1:38 PM CST. POE Subcommittee members were introduced. There were no concerns with the record of the previous meeting.

2. STATUS REPORTS

Recent and Upcoming Outreach Events – AgriLife Extension Water Well Screening Events and Abandoned Water Well Closures and the TGPC Booth

The current Outreach Events Status Report (available on the POE Subcommittee webpage, <http://www.tgpc.state.tx.us/subcommittees/POE/POE.htm>, under “Additional Resources”) was reviewed:

- AgriLife Extension Water Well Screening Events
 - Three since the previous POE Subcommittee meeting (393 samples)
 - Three planned through April 2013
- AgriLife Extension Abandoned Water Well Closures
 - None since the previous POE Subcommittee meeting
 - None planned at this time
- TGPC Booth
 - Two since the previous POE Subcommittee meeting (560 estimated attendees)
 - Two planned through January 2013

Diane Boellstorff (AgriLife Extension) indicated that Water Well Screening Events would include tests for arsenic and radionuclides beginning in January 2013, and also noted that Live Oak Groundwater Conservation District (GCD) cost-shares abandoned water well closures.

TWON Training Activities and Handbook

Diane Boellstorff (AgriLife Extension) reviewed the TWON schedule of completed, confirmed, tentatively scheduled, obligated, and suggested water well screening events and workshops. Over 1,880 samples have been processed at these events since April 2011. The recently published *TWON Well Owner's Guide to Water Supply* (“TWON Handbook”) was also distributed to POE Subcommittee members.

TGPC Website Activity Statistics

The Google Analytics report on TGPC website activity for September 17 – November 29, 2012, including statistics on the website's visitors, visit duration, page depth, browsers, visitor flow, traffic sources, entrance keywords, and landing pages was provided to the POE Subcommittee. As usual, website visitation over the last quarter peaked after the GovDelivery email announcing the TGPC meeting on October 10, 2012.

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) also showed mockups of the redesigned TGPC website (home page and an inner page) to POE Subcommittee members.

3. SET FUTURE MEETING DATE

The next TGPC POE Subcommittee meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, March 6, 2013, at 1:30 PM CST, in TCEQ's Building F, Conference Room 3202A.

4. PRESENTATION – EVAPOTRANSPIRATION NETWORKS IN TEXAS

Guy Fipps (AgriLife Extension) provided the POE Subcommittee with a summary description of evapotranspiration (ET) and a history of ET networks in Texas. The High Plains ET Network was established around 1993 and discontinued in September 2010 due to lack of funding for its 17 weather stations and personnel. However, it has recently received a two-year grant from North High Plains Planning Groups to re-activate its website (among other activities), but no long-term funding is available. The TexasET Network (<http://TexasET.tamu.edu>) began in 1994 and it currently has 27 weather stations; although it is self-funded through revenue from short courses and contracts/grants and depends on local sponsors to cover the costs of the weather stations, there has been an increase in interest from cities and municipal water districts over the past year. Guy Fipps recommended that funding be dedicated for support of a state-wide ET Network and information dissemination program; one approach would be to include evaporation measurements in a state-wide system of environmental monitoring stations (e.g., the Oklahoma Mesonet system, <http://www.mesonet.org/>).

Cary Betz (TCEQ) left at approximately 2:31 PM CST and was absent for the remainder of the meeting.

5. REVIEW, DISCUSS, AND APPROVE DOCUMENTATION

Popular Press Articles

Review and Update of Existing TGPC Frequently Asked Questions

Michael Hare (TDA) reviewed the draft *How is Pesticide Contamination of Private Water Wells Prevented ?* FAQ update. Peter Pope (RRC) proposed, Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) seconded, and all remaining POE Subcommittee members approved the updated FAQ with the changes discussed at the meeting. This update will replace two of the existing pesticide-related FAQs (*How is Pesticide Contamination of Groundwater Prevented in Agricultural Areas ?* and *How is Pesticide Contamination of Groundwater Prevented in Urban Areas ?*).

TWON Fact Sheets

Diane Boellstorff (AgriLife Extension) reported that two TWON Fact Sheets would be delivered to TSSWCB by December 31, 2012 for review. The POE Subcommittee would be asked to review draft versions of these documents prior to December 31, 2012 and provide feedback via email.

6. DISCUSSION OF CURRENT GROUNDWATER ISSUES

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) reviewed the current drought maps which forecast the development, persistence, or intensification of drought conditions across most of the state through February 2013. Diane Boellstorff (AgriLife Extension) noted the recent restriction of junior surface water rights in the Brazos River Basin.

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) referenced two *Science News* articles in the September 8, 2012 issue (Vol. 182 #5,

http://www.sciencenews.org/view/issue/id/343253/title/September_8_2012_Vol182_5): *Global Groundwater Use Outpaces Supply – Measure reveals unsustainable use of world’s aquifers*, and *The Facts Behind the Frack – Scientists weigh in on the hydraulic fracturing debate*. Peter Pope (RRC) reported that information regarding their recent proposed rules related to on-lease recycling of produced water and/or hydraulic fracturing flowback fluid could be found on their website (<http://www.rrc.state.tx.us/>).

7. TGPC POE GROUNDWATER EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH PLAN UPDATE

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) reported on a suggestion from the Texas Agencies for Communication and Outreach (TACO) meeting on October 9, 2012 that the POE Subcommittee focus on a just few topics in the update of its *TGPC POE Groundwater Educational Outreach Plan* instead of the wide range of topics that were previously addressed (both the *Plan* and its associated *Implementation Strategy* are available at <http://www.tgpc.state.tx.us/subcommittees/POE/POE.htm>). Questions which should be addressed include:

- What is the most important groundwater-related message that needs to be delivered ?
- What is our most important audience ?
- How do we get that message to that audience ?

Additional suggestions from the TACO meeting were to try to regionalize this message, especially by partnering with similar-minded local groups (e.g., Groundwater Conservation Districts), develop three sub-points that reinforce this message, and have one example or success story for this message (e.g., collaboration is a great human interest story).

Recommendations related to the public outreach and education of landowners and local governments in the *Activities and Recommendations of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee – A Report to the 83rd Legislature*

(http://www.tceq.texas.gov/assets/public/comm_exec/pubs/sfr/047_12.pdf) include:

- Abandoned water wells;
- Brush control to increase groundwater yield;
- Texas Well Owner Network;
- Texas High Plains Evapotranspiration Network; and,
- Groundwater quality.

Alan Cherepon (TCEQ) suggested that the POE Subcommittee could develop an FAQ regarding desalination of brackish groundwater.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Guy Fipps (AgriLife Extension) announced the South Texas Irrigation Conference and Expo in Hondo on January 31, 2013. One session was scheduled to discuss an Edwards Aquifer Authority (EAA) voluntary irrigation program (i.e., a dry-year water allocation buy-out system).

The current “2012 – 2013 Water-related Conferences in Texas” handout (found at <http://www.tgpc.state.tx.us/subcommittees/POE/POE.htm> under the “Additional Resources” heading) was also available for POE Subcommittee members.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

10. ADJOURN

Diane Boellstorff (AgriLife Extension) adjourned the meeting at approximately 3:30 PM CST.