

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE  
OF THE  
TEXAS GROUNDWATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE  
RECORD OF MEETING  
Fourth Quarter Meeting, Fiscal Year 2010

Meeting Date: June 24, 2010  
Meeting No.: 26

Place: TCEQ Campus, Bldg F  
Room: 3202A

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## MEETING ATTENDANCE

<u>Subcommittee Members</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Bruce Lesikar (Co-Chair)	Texas AgriLife Extension Service (TAES)
Diane Boellstorff	TAES
Kathy McCormack (Co-Chair)	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
Alan Cherepon	TCEQ
Katherine Flannery	TCEQ
Linda Ruiz McCall	Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)
Michael Hare	Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA)
Donna Long	Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB)
W.L. Stribling	Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR)

## MEETING HANDOUTS

1. June 24, 2010 Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Public Outreach and Education (POE) Subcommittee Meeting Agenda
2. March 24, 2010 TGPC POE Subcommittee Meeting Record
3. Draft Public Outreach and Education Activities section of the *Activities and Recommendations of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee – Report to the 82nd Legislature (“TGPC Legislative Report”)*
4. Draft Recommendations for the *TGPC Legislative Report*
5. Outreach Events Status Report, June 2010
6. Draft *Have Radionuclides Been Detected in Texas Groundwater ?* Frequently Asked Question (FAQ)
7. D. Gunn’s feedback on draft *Have Radionuclides Been Detected in Texas Groundwater ?* FAQ
8. Agenda for TWDB Public Awareness and Outreach meeting on June 30, 2010
9. TWDB’s *Developing a Water Conservation Public Awareness Program: A Guide for Utilities* ([http://www.wateriq.org/documents/public\\_awareness\\_utilityguide.pdf](http://www.wateriq.org/documents/public_awareness_utilityguide.pdf))
10. TGPC Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Announcement to the Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts (TAGD)
11. Results of the TAGD Website Survey
12. *So What Does It Cost ?* – Costs Associated with Various Outreach Methods
13. Google Analytics report on TGPC website activity, June 1 – 20, 2010
14. Draft Groundwater Protection Survey ([https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/TGPC\\_Survey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/TGPC_Survey))
15. Draft Abandoned Water Well Identification Online Training Module
16. Draft New Specific Activities for Issue E in the *TGPC POE Groundwater Educational Outreach Plan Implementation Strategy (“Implementation Strategy”)*, [http://www.tgpc.state.tx.us/subcommittees/POE/TGPC\\_POE\\_EduOutreachPlan\\_ImplStrat03Oct2007.pdf](http://www.tgpc.state.tx.us/subcommittees/POE/TGPC_POE_EduOutreachPlan_ImplStrat03Oct2007.pdf))
17. Revised Specific Activities for Issue F in the *Implementation Strategy*
18. Issues H & I Suggestions for the *Implementation Strategy*
19. 2010 Water-related Conferences in Texas, June 2010

## MEETING RECORD OF JUNE 24, 2010

### 1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Bruce Lesikar (TAES), Co-Chair of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Public Outreach and Education (POE) Subcommittee, called the meeting to order at approximately 1:37 PM CDST. TGPC POE Subcommittee members were introduced. There were no concerns with the record of the previous meeting.

### 2. REVIEW AND APPROVE DRAFT POE ACTIVITIES SECTION OF THE *ACTIVITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TEXAS GROUNDWATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE – REPORT TO THE 82ND LEGISLATURE (“TGPC LEGISLATIVE REPORT”)*

The draft Public Outreach and Education Activities section of the *Activities and Recommendations of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee – Report to the 82nd Legislature (“TGPC Legislative Report”)* was reviewed. Katherine Flannery (TCEQ) proposed, Linda Ruiz McCall (TWDB) seconded, and all remaining TGPC POE Subcommittee members approved the draft section with the understanding that final numbers (e.g., for conferences and visitors, plugging demonstrations and attendees, water well screening events and samples, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), TGPC GovDelivery subscribers, and TGPC website activity statistics) may be updated prior to publication submission later in 2010.

### 3. DISCUSS AND APPROVE POE SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE *TGPC LEGISLATIVE REPORT*

The draft Recommendations for the *TGPC Legislative Report* were reviewed. Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) proposed, Donna Long (TSSWCB) seconded, and all remaining TGPC POE Subcommittee members approved support for the Recommendations listed as bullets 3, 4, and 5 under Item 1 regarding:

- Protect Groundwater Quality through Education Programs;
- Develop Education and Training Programs for Groundwater District Management; and,
- Establish an Abandoned Water Well–Plugging and Education Fund.

### 4. STATUS REPORTS

Recent and Upcoming Outreach Events – TAES Water Well Screening Events, TAES Abandoned Water Well Closures, TGPC Booth

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

- TAES Water Well Screening Events
  - Four since the previous TGPC POE Subcommittee meeting (176 samples)
  - One planned through September 2010
- TAES Abandoned Water Well Closures
  - None since the previous TGPC POE Subcommittee meeting

- One planned through July 2010
- TGPC Booth
  - Two since the previous TGPC POE Subcommittee meeting (358 estimated attendees)
  - One planned through August 2010

Photos of the TGPC Booth at the TCEQ Environmental Trade Fair were passed around the table. Linda Ruiz McCall (TWDB) offered to bring TGPC material to the 10th Annual Environmental Health Sciences Summer Institute for K-12 educators in July 2010 (<http://k12summerinstitute.mdanderson.org/home/>).

## 5. SET FUTURE MEETING DATE

The next TGPC POE Subcommittee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 15, 2010, at 1:30 PM, in TCEQ's Building F, Conference Room 3202A.

## 6. REVIEW, DISCUSS, AND APPROVE DOCUMENTATION

### Popular Press Articles

#### Oil and Gas Waste Disposal Wells and Water Quality

The *How are Oil and Gas Waste Disposal Wells Regulated ?*, *What are the Construction Standards for an Oil and Gas Waste Disposal Well ?*, and *What is the Permitting Process for an Oil and Gas Waste Disposal Well ?* Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) were not discussed at the meeting.

#### Have Radionuclides Been Detected in Texas Groundwater ?

The TGPC POE Subcommittee reviewed the updated Figure in the draft *Have Radionuclides Been Detected in Texas Groundwater ?* FAQ. While it was an improvement (e.g., "Figure 7.21" was removed from the embedded paragraph, the symbols were changed from blue/green/red to white/gray/black, and the two aquifer layers were removed), additional suggestions were made regarding the Figure and text:

- Provide multiple maps:
  - One for each of the five aquifers mentioned in the text – these would indicate which sample points are in which specific aquifer; and,
  - One for the state overall.
- Use different symbols for the three categories (in addition to the white/gray/black colors) – it is still hard to distinguish the "not detected" locations in the revised Figure.
- Expand the "naturally occurring" content.
- Provide additional references where well owners can find more information. Recycle some of the content used in the *Landowner's Guide to Plugging Abandoned Water Wells* (TCEQ RG-347), [http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm\\_exec/forms\\_pubs/pubs/rg/rg-347.html](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm_exec/forms_pubs/pubs/rg/rg-347.html), such as:
  - "...consult with a licensed well contractor, the Well Driller/Pump Installer/Abandoned Well Referral Program of the TDLR, or the local GCD (if one exists in your area)."

- “The water well driller’s report includes details on your well’s construction and the local geology. If you don’t have this report, you may be able to obtain it from one of the following:
  - TCEQ Water Well Report Viewer: [www.tceq.state.tx.us/goto/findwell](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/goto/findwell)
  - TDLR State of Texas Well Report Submission and Retrieval System: [134.125.70.235/drillers-new/index.asp](http://134.125.70.235/drillers-new/index.asp), 512-936-0871
  - TWDB Water Information Integration and Dissemination (WIID): [http://wiid.twdb.state.tx.us/index\\_explain.asp](http://wiid.twdb.state.tx.us/index_explain.asp)
  - Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts (TAGD): [www.texasgroundwater.org](http://www.texasgroundwater.org), 512-590-1422”
- Define “radionuclides” – does this term include gross alpha radiation, combined radium 226/228, beta emitters, and/or uranium ?
- Define “maximum acceptable limit” – is it the same as “Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)” ?
- Obtain feedback on the next version of the draft FAQ from David Murry in TCEQ’s Radioactive Materials Division and from Jon Brandt at the Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC).

Linda Ruiz McCall (TWDB) agreed to bring a revised draft of this FAQ to the next TGPC POE Subcommittee meeting.

#### TGPC POE Groundwater Educational Outreach Plan Implementation Strategy

The agenda for TWDB’s Public Awareness and Outreach meeting on June 30, 2010, as well as TWDB’s *Developing a Water Conservation Public Awareness Program: A Guide for Utilities*, were shared with TGPC POE Subcommittee members. Various topics related to the *TGPC POE Groundwater Educational Outreach Plan Implementation Strategy (“Implementation Strategy”*, [http://www.tgpc.state.tx.us/subcommittees/POE/TGPC\\_POE\\_EduOutreachPlan\\_Impl\\_Strat03Oct2007.pdf](http://www.tgpc.state.tx.us/subcommittees/POE/TGPC_POE_EduOutreachPlan_Impl_Strat03Oct2007.pdf)) were then discussed.

#### TGPC Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Announcement to the Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts (TAGD)

The email that David Van Dresar (TAGD) sent to TAGD’s distribution list announcing the TGPC’s FAQs webpage was shared with TGPC POE Subcommittee members. A similar announcement may be sent to the state’s Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), non-TAGD Groundwater Conservation Districts (GCDs), TAES County Offices, and Education Committees of Texas Geological Societies.

#### Results of the TAGD Website Survey

The TGPC POE Subcommittee reviewed David Van Dresar’s (TAGD) summary of his survey regarding TAGD websites. Of the 36 GCDs that responded, eight did not have a website. The main issues affecting TAGD website design and maintenance were funding, time, training, and staff. Additional issues included software upgrades, unreliable servers, lack of content, and online data input to the website.

Diane Boellstorff (TAES) suggested that a website template could be provided to the GCDs that needed one. Alan Cherepon (TCEQ) asked if TAGD, TAES, or TWDB could apply for a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant in order to fund TAGD website development. Donna Long (TSSWCB) offered to introduce Linda Ruiz McCall (TWDB) and David Van Dresar (TAGD) to the Texas AgriLife Research Blackland Research and Extension Center grant coordinator.

#### Costs Associated with Various Outreach Methods

A handout listing outreach material costs (e.g., radio public service announcements, bus and movie theater advertisements, giveaways, and printed material) from a U.S. EPA-sponsored workshop was shared with TGPC POE Subcommittee members.

#### Google Analytics

A free Google Analytics (<http://www.google.com/analytics/>) account has been set up for the TGPC website, and activity statistics are currently being collected on seven webpages (the homepage, Meetings, POE, FAQs, Water Wells, Groundwater Contamination, and Groundwater Information). The tracking of individual FAQ downloads is also planned. The TGPC POE Subcommittee reviewed the basic report for June 1 – 20, 2010 which provided information on:

- Site usage (e.g., number of visits, average time on site)
- Visitors (e.g., number of unique visitors, browser, country of origin)
- Traffic sources (e.g., search engine, referring sites, keywords)
- Page views

#### TGPC's Plugging Abandoned Water Wells Content for Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) Shoot the Bull Radio Program

Michael Hare (TDA) reported that he had met with TDA personnel involved with their 90-second "Shoot The Bull" radio spot. They need agriculture-related content of about 200 words to work up into a brief "conversation" with the TDA Commissioner. Michael Hare gave them the two abandoned water well publications that the TGPC POE Subcommittee had produced earlier this year (*Landowner's Guide to Plugging Abandoned Water Wells*, TCEQ RG-347, [http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm\\_exec/forms\\_pubs/pubs/rg/rg-347.html](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm_exec/forms_pubs/pubs/rg/rg-347.html), and *Plugging Abandoned Water Wells*, TAES L-5413, <https://agrilifebookstore.org/>), and they may prepare a draft script for our feedback. Michael Hare agreed to forward the five example scripts that he had received to Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) to email to the TGPC POE Subcommittee. If a script on abandoned water wells is successful, the TGPC POE Subcommittee could continue to work with TDA in developing additional agriculture/groundwater scripts (e.g., any of the TGPC FAQ topics, any of the TGPC website daughter page topics, National Groundwater Awareness Week in March, education for new landowners regarding wellhead protection, TAES water well screening events and abandoned well closure demonstrations, etc.).

Donna Long (TSSWCB) noted that TSSWCB funds EnviroCast on the websites of major television networks in Dallas and Houston

(<http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/managementprogram/envirocast>), and perhaps some of these scripts could be recycled for this “Shoot The Bull” media.

### Draft Groundwater Protection Survey

Linda Ruiz McCall (TWDB) reviewed the six-question groundwater protection survey that she had drafted in Survey Monkey. In this example survey, Linda Ruiz McCall showcased the various formats available for questions (multiple choice, comment/essay, rating scale, matrix of choices, and single/multiple/descriptive text). Subsequent discussion included the following comments:

- Kathy McCormack (TCEQ):
  - The potential survey audience(s) should be identified first (e.g., (selected ?) SWCDs, GCDs, TAES County Offices, and Education Committees of Texas Geological Societies).
  - The survey should include a question about the audience’s potential groundwater-related interests and issues.
  - Before sending/posting the survey, the TGPC POE Subcommittee should think about what it will do based on the survey’s responses.
- Donna Long (TSSWCB):
  - Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) stakeholder groups could be a potential survey audience.
- Bruce Lesikar (TAES):
  - Survey questions could include:
    - Are you using the TGPC FAQs ?
    - How would you rank the TGPC FAQs ?
    - What additional FAQs topics are of interest to you ?
  - Different surveys could be developed for different audiences.
- Alan Cherepon (TCEQ):
  - Survey questions could be made more open-ended; for example, “What is of interest (or an issue) to you ?”

Linda Ruiz McCall (TWDB), Kathy McCormack (TCEQ), and Alan Cherepon (TCEQ) agreed to bring a revised survey to the next TGPC POE Subcommittee meeting.

### Abandoned Water Well Identification Online Training Module

Several times in the past, David Gunn (TDLR) has given a presentation on abandoned water wells to TCEQ and GCD staff. The TGPC POE Subcommittee reviewed a six-slides-per-page version of this presentation and discussed whether it could be posted on a website. The consensus was that multiple, shorter, more-focused modules should be developed, and that key learning objectives for the public included helping them understand:

- The issue of abandoned water wells;
- How to identify and report an abandoned water well;
- How to report a plugged water well; and,
- How to use the TWDB WIID system (and possibly the TCEQ Water Well Report Viewer and TDLR State of Texas Well Report Submission and Retrieval System).

Diane Boellstorff (TAES) suggested that a *How Do You Use the WIID System ?* FAQ could be developed. Alan Cherepon (TCEQ) suggested that parts of this presentation could be given at GCD symposiums and water well driller and pump installer conferences, as well as to staff in TAES County Offices and realtors. W.L. Stribling (TDLR) agreed to share this feedback with David Gunn (TDLR) and revisions may be available at the next TGPC POE Subcommittee meeting.

#### Other Revised and New Specific Activities

New Specific Activities for Issue E (Access to TGPC Agencies'/Organizations' Groundwater Program Information and General Groundwater Information), revised Specific Activities for Issue F (TEX\*A\*Syst), and suggestions for Issues H (Education for Domestic Water Well Owners: Quality) and I (Education for Domestic Water Well Owners: Quantity) were available for TGPC POE Subcommittee members. More discussion of these items is planned for the next TGPC POE Subcommittee meeting.

#### 7. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The current "2010 Water-related Conferences in Texas" handout was available for TGPC POE Subcommittee members.

#### 8. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

#### 9. ADJOURN

Bruce Lesikar (TAES) adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:13 PM CDST.