

Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC)
Groundwater Issues (GWI) Subcommittee Annual Report
October 19, 2016

This Annual Report is provided as per the TGPC GWI Subcommittee (“Subcommittee”) Charge¹.

Fiscal Year 2016 Results

- The Subcommittee met four times during the past fiscal year (October 21, 2015; January 13, 2016; April 20, 2016; and, June 22, 2016).
 - Starting with the June 22, 2016 meeting, the Subcommittee now meets on the same day as the TGPC Public Outreach and Education (POE) Subcommittee, and both Subcommittees meet a month before TGPC quarterly meetings.
 - This new Subcommittee meeting schedule facilitates presentation of Subcommittee products at TGPC meetings (i.e., inclusion of Subcommittee products on the TGPC meeting agenda for discussion and approval).
- TCEQ staff generated summaries of seven groundwater-related topics for initial review by the Subcommittee. The Subcommittee subsequently added nine specific issues to its meeting agenda which are discussed at every meeting:
 - Water Supply Enhancement Program
 - Hydraulic Fracturing
 - Freshwater Mussels
 - Emerging Contaminants
 - Saline Groundwater Trends and Impacts in Texas
 - Agricultural Chemicals
 - Priority Groundwater Management Areas (PGMAs)
 - Border Groundwater
 - Others

¹ http://tgpc.state.tx.us/wp-content/themes/responsive/subcommittees/gwissues/GWI_SubComm_Charge22Apr2015.pdf

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- The Subcommittee established its Agricultural Chemicals Task Force and approved its members:
 - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
 - Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)
 - Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA)
 - Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB)
 - Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts (TAGD)
 - Texas A&M AgriLife Research (AgriLife Research)
 - Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service (AgriLife Extension)
 - United State Geological Survey (USGS)
- The Subcommittee established formal status reports for its Agricultural Chemicals Task Force and the TGPC's publications.
 - The standard format facilitates ease of Subcommittee review and discussion during its meetings, and these summaries of activities and plans provide transparency and are documented in the record of the meeting.
- The Subcommittee's Agricultural Chemicals Task Force reported on:
 - Fiscal Year 2015 groundwater pesticide cooperative and TCEQ monitoring results;
 - Fiscal Year 2016 monitoring plans; and,
 - Updates on the TCEQ Interagency Pesticide Database (IPD), POE activities, the Pesticide Monitoring Plan (PMP) for the Implementation of the *Texas State Management Plan for Prevention of Pesticide Contamination of Groundwater* Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP), the Pesticides of Interest Tracking System (POINTS) Pesticide Assessment Database, and US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) pesticide-related meetings and conferences.

- The Subcommittee tracked the status of the TGPC's six official publications:
 - Groundwater Assessment for the *2016 Texas Integrated Report for Clean Water Act Sections 305(b) and 303(d)* (“*Texas Integrated Report*”);
 - *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report – 2015* (“*Joint Report*”, TCEQ publication SFR-056);
 - *Activities and Recommendations of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee: Report to the 85th Legislature* (“*Legislative Report*”, TCEQ publication SFR-047);
 - *Texas Groundwater Protection Strategy* (“*Strategy*”, TCEQ publication AS-188);
 - *Landowner’s Guide to Plugging Abandoned Water Wells* (Plugging document, TCEQ publication RG-347); and,
 - *Texas Groundwater Protection Committee* (TGPC trifold brochure, TCEQ publication GI-088).
- Discussion and possible revision of the TGPC Groundwater Classification System, the last major roadblock to updating the *Strategy*, did not take place.
 - The new *Strategy* is now envisioned to be a dynamic document modeled around the topics being discussed in the Subcommittee.
 - This procedural document would not only identify and evaluate groundwater issues, but it would also outline the processes by which information is exchanged and recommendations are made in order to protect the groundwater resources in the state.
- The Subcommittee identified three initial topics for white paper development – Brush Control, Freshwater Mussels, and PGMA. After they are approved by the Subcommittee, they will be presented to the TGPC. The TGPC may then issue a policy statement about these groundwater issues and/or include some of the recommendations from the white papers in future *Legislative Reports*.
 - Team leaders and members for each topic were identified.
 - A white paper outline was approved.
 - A draft PGMA white paper was presented and discussed.

Fiscal Year 2017 Plans

- White papers on various groundwater issues will continue to be developed and discussed. After Subcommittee approval, they will be presented to the TGPC for final approval prior to being posted on the Subcommittee’s webpage².
- As per its Charge, the Subcommittee will prepare its biennial Activities Plan. The target date for completion of the Activities Plan is the June 2017 Subcommittee meeting, with presentation to the TGPC at its July 2017 meeting. The Activities Plan “should include procedures for:
 - Coordinating groundwater monitoring efforts;
 - Management plan development, if needed;
 - Data review efforts;
 - Developing recommendations for regulatory programs;
 - Maintaining the IPD; and,
 - Potential educational outreach efforts, coordinated with the POE Subcommittee.”¹
- After completion of the 2017 regular Legislative session (i.e., at the June 2017 Subcommittee meeting), the Subcommittee should begin work on development of the new *Strategy*.

² <http://tgpc.state.tx.us/tgpc-subcommittees/tgpc-groundwater-issues-subcommittee/>