

GROUNDWATER ISSUES SUBCOMMITTEE
 OF THE
 TEXAS GROUNDWATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE
 RECORD OF MEETING
 Fourth Quarter Meeting, Fiscal Year 2021

Meeting Date: June 2, 2021
 Meeting No.: 26

Place: videoconference
 Room: N/A

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MEETING ATTENDANCE

Subcommittee Members

Kathy McCormack (Co-Chair)
Chris Heiligenstein (Co-Chair)
Natalie Ballew
Eric Lawrence
David Villarreal
David Van Dresar
Maria D. (Rosario) Sanchez Flores
Bridget Scanlon

David Gunn
Ken Rainwater
Diane Boellstorff

Lynne Fahlquist

Affiliation

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC)
Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)
Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)
Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA)
Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts (TAGD)
Texas A&M AgriLife Research (AgriLife Research)
Bureau of Economic Geology of The University of Texas
at Austin (UTBEG)
Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR)
Texas Tech University (TTU)
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service (AgriLife
Extension)
United States Geological Survey (USGS)

Agency Staff

Abiy Berehe
Alan Cherepon
Lorrie Council
Guy Fipps
Grant Gibson
Cindy Hooper
Peggy Hunka
Scott Underwood
Leslie Vallecillo

Affiliation

Program

TCEQ Water Availability Division
TCEQ Water Availability Division
TCEQ Radioactive Materials Division
AgriLife Extension
TCEQ Water Availability Division
TCEQ Water Availability Division
TCEQ Water Availability Division
TCEQ Water Availability Division
TCEQ Water Availability Division

Interested Parties

Margaret Cook
Celine Cuellar

Affiliation

Houston Advanced Research Center (HARC)
TTU

MEETING HANDOUTS

1. Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Groundwater Issues (GWI) Subcommittee Meeting Agenda, June 2, 2021
2. TGPC GWI Subcommittee Meeting Record, March 10, 2021
3. TGPC Agricultural Chemicals (AgChem) Task Force (TF) Status Report, June 2, 2021
4. TGPC Publications Status Report, June 2, 2021
5. TGPC GWI Subcommittee *Charge*, https://tgpc.texas.gov/wp-content/themes/responsive/subcommittees/gwissues/GWI_SubComm_Charge10Jul2019.pdf
6. Final draft *How is Groundwater Quality Affected by Wellhead Impacts from Flooding during Natural Disasters?* white paper – markup
7. Final draft *How is Groundwater Quality Affected by Wellhead Impacts from Flooding during Natural Disasters?* white paper – clean
8. Draft *ET Networks and the Protection of Groundwater Supplies and Quality* white paper
9. Final draft TGPC GWI Subcommittee Fiscal Year 2022 – 2023 *Activity Plan*

The following item was also on display on the handout table:

1. N/A

MEETING RECORD OF JUNE 2, 2021

1. PRE-MEETING REMINDERS

Before the meeting started, Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) provided the attendees with some tips that would facilitate a productive videoconference.

2. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, on March 16, 2020, in accordance with section 418.016 of the Texas Government Code, Governor Abbott suspended various provisions of the Open Meetings Act that require government officials and members of the public to be physically present at a specified meeting location. Pursuant to that suspension, the public was not be able to attend this meeting in person but was able to attend via videoconference at no cost.

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ), Co-Chair of the GWI Subcommittee, called the meeting to order at approximately 9:36 AM CDT and then called the roll of GWI Subcommittee members. The representatives from the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) were not present at the meeting.

3. STATUS REPORTS

Agricultural Chemicals Task Force

Alan Cherepon (TCEQ) reported on the Agricultural Chemicals Task Force:

- During the annual TCEQ Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) grant readiness review on April 26, 2021, the spectrophotometer stopped working. It was sent in for repair and TCEQ was waiting on a purchase order for the work. The cooperative monitoring analyses were on hold until the repairs could be made.
- The Region 6 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)/States/Tribes pesticide Spring meeting was held virtually May 17-18, 2021, and it was hosted by New Mexico. There was nothing specific to groundwater in the meeting, but the agenda and a meeting summary were available upon request. The next meeting was scheduled for October 2021, and it was typically hosted by Region 6 U.S. EPA in Dallas, but no specific date had been set.

TGPC Publications

Cindy Hooper (TCEQ) reported on the following TGPC publications:

- *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report – 2020* (“*Joint Report*”, SFR-056)
 - TCEQ staff were finalizing the content of the 2020 *Joint Report* and anticipated sending the report to publication in June 2021.
- Groundwater Assessment for the *2022 Texas Integrated Report for Clean Water Act Sections 305(b) and 303(d)* (“*Texas Integrated Report*”)
 - TCEQ staff would begin work on the Groundwater Assessment portion of this biennial report in September 2021.

- *Activities and Recommendations of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee: Report to the 88th Legislature* (“Legislative Report”, SFR-047)
 - The next *Legislative Report* will be prepared in advance of the 88th Legislature.
- *Landowner’s Guide to Plugging Abandoned Water Wells* (“Plugging document”, RG-347)
 - The updated publication was available at https://www.tceq.texas.gov/assets/public/comm_exec/pubs/rg/rg-347.pdf.

4. SET FUTURE MEETING DATE

The next TGPC GWI Subcommittee meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, September 15, 2021, at 9:30 AM CDT and it was planned as a videoconference.

5. DISCUSS CURRENT GROUNDWATER ISSUES

Hydraulic Fracturing

There was no discussion of this topic at the meeting.

Oil and Gas Produced Water

Ken Rainwater (TTU) reported that a bill relating to the creation and activities of the Texas Produced Water Consortium (Senate Bill 601 / House Bill 3096) had passed both houses during the current Texas legislative session.

Emerging Contaminants

Lynne Fahlquist (USGS) reported that, although their National Water-Quality Assessment (NAWQA) Project was being sunsetted, some form of monitoring using the existing sampling networks would continue. They had completed some sampling of groundwater for PFAS in the High Plains area of Texas, and she would share information about that report when it was available.

Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR)

Discussion of this topic occurred during the Business portion of the meeting.

Abandoned Water Wells

Discussion of this topic occurred during the Business portion of the meeting.

Wellhead Impacts After Natural Disasters

Discussion of this topic occurred during the Business portion of the meeting.

Brackish Groundwater

Natalie Ballew (TWDB) reported that they were about to wrap up their brackish groundwater study for the Hill Country Trinity Aquifer and the report should be published before the next TGPC GWI Subcommittee meeting.

Desalination

There was no discussion of this topic at the meeting.

Endangered Species

There was no discussion of this topic at the meeting.

Coal Ash from Power Plants

There was no discussion of this topic at the meeting.

Anthropogenic Mixing of Groundwater

There was no discussion of this topic at the meeting.

Others

There was no discussion of this topic at the meeting.

6. BUSINESS DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

TGPC GWI Subcommittee *Charge*

As required by the GWI Subcommittee's current *Activity Plan* (https://tgpc.texas.gov/gwissues/activity_plans/TGPC_GWI_FY2020_2021_ActivityPlan_10Jul2019.pdf), Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) presented the TGPC GWI Subcommittee *Charge* for its annual review and discussion. Chris Heiligenstein (RRC) had agreed to continue as Co-Chair for the next Fiscal Year and no additional changes were suggested, so the *Charge* would remain in effect.

Bridget Scanlon (UTBEG) joined the meeting at approximately 10:06 AM CDT and was present for the remainder of the meeting.

Final Draft *How is Groundwater Quality Affected by Wellhead Impacts from Flooding during Natural Disasters?* White Paper

Diane Boellstorff (AgriLife Extension) reviewed the final draft of the *How is Groundwater Quality Affected by Wellhead Impacts from Flooding during Natural Disasters?* white paper. David Van Dresar (TAGD) proposed, David Gunn (TDLR) seconded, and all remaining

members approved the final draft of the Wellhead Impacts white paper. The white paper would be presented to the TGPC for approval at their next meeting. Diane Boellstorff (AgriLife Extension) was thanked for her year of effort on this white paper.

Rosario Sanchez (AgriLife Research) left the meeting at approximately 10:18 AM CDT and was absent for the remainder of the meeting.

Draft Opportunities and Challenges in Aquifer Storage and Recovery White Paper

Ken Rainwater (TTU) reported that TCEQ staff, a TTU intern at TCEQ, and UTBEG staff would be developing the Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) white paper this summer. An initial draft of the white paper was expected at the next meeting.

Draft Abandoned Water Wells and the Challenges They Pose White Paper

There was no update on the Abandoned Water Wells white paper.

Draft ET Networks and the Protection of Groundwater Supplies and Quality White Paper

Guy Fipps (AgriLife Extension) reviewed an initial draft of the ET Networks white paper and requested feedback from the members. An updated draft of the white paper would be provided at the next meeting.

Final Draft TGPC GWI Subcommittee Fiscal Year 2022 – 2023 Activity Plan

As required by the GWI Subcommittee's Charge (https://tgpc.texas.gov/wp-content/themes/responsive/subcommittees/gwissues/GWI_SubComm_Charge10Jul2019.pdf), Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) presented the final draft of the TGPC GWI Subcommittee Fiscal Year 2022 – 2023 *Activity Plan*. David Gunn (TDLR) proposed, Natalie Ballew (TWDB) seconded, and all remaining members approved the final draft of the *Activity Plan*. The *Activity Plan* would be presented to the TGPC for approval at their next meeting.

Discussion of White Papers Under Development

There was no discussion of this topic at the meeting.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements at the meeting.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment at the meeting.

9. ADJOURN

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:46 AM CDT.