

GROUNDWATER ISSUES SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE
TEXAS GROUNDWATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE
RECORD OF MEETING
Second Quarter Meeting, Fiscal Year 2023

Meeting Date: December 7, 2022
Meeting No.: 32

Place: videoconference
Room: N/A

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MEETING ATTENDANCE

Subcommittee Members

Kathy McCormack (Co-Chair)
Chris Heiligenstein (Co-Chair)
Natalie Ballew
David Villarreal
T.J. Helton

Leah Martinsson
Bridget Scanlon

David Gunn
Linzy Foster

Affiliation

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC)
Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)
Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA)
Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB)
Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts (TAGD)
Bureau of Economic Geology of The University of Texas at Austin (UTBEG)
Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR)
United States Geological Survey (USGS)

Agency Staff

Stanley Aniagu
Abiy Berehe
Hailey Davidson

Kristin DeBone
Adam Foster
Grant Gibson
Jason Godeaux
James Harcourt
Cindy Hooper
James LaManna
Scott Underwood

Affiliation

Program

TCEQ	Toxicology Division
TCEQ	Water Availability Division
TCEQ	Program Support and Environmental Assistance Division
TCEQ	Water Quality Planning Division
TDLR	
TCEQ	Water Availability Division
TCEQ	Water Availability Division
RRC	Oil and Gas Division
TCEQ	Water Availability Division
TCEQ	Water Supply Division
TCEQ	Water Availability Division

Interested Parties

Diana Nichols
Jennifer Miller

Affiliation

Kelly Hart & Hallman, LLP
Brazos River Authority

MEETING HANDOUTS

1. Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Groundwater Issues (GWI) Subcommittee Meeting Agenda, December 7, 2022
2. TGPC GWI Subcommittee Meeting Record, September 7, 2022
3. TGPC Agricultural Chemicals (AgChem) Task Force (TF) Status Report, December 7, 2022
4. Proposed FY23 Pesticide Monitoring Plan
5. TGPC Publications Status Report, December 7, 2022
6. Draft *TGPC GWI Subcommittee Fiscal Year 2024 – 2025 Activity Plan*
7. Hydrogeology Journal, October 14, 2022, *Groundwater quality: global challenges, emerging threats and novel approaches*, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10040-022-02542-0>
8. Draft *Abandoned Water Wells and the Challenges They Pose* White Paper (original and TAGD feedback)
9. Draft *Prioritizing New Drinking Water Infrastructure Funding in Texas* White Paper (mark-up and clean)

MEETING RECORD OF DECEMBER 7, 2022

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

The TGPC approves all Subcommittee products and designated TGPC members attending this Subcommittee meeting participated as an employee or representative of their agency or organization, not as a designated TGPC member. Therefore, this Subcommittee meeting was not subject to the Open Meetings Act and it was held 100% virtually. The public was also able to attend this meeting via videoconference or teleconference at no cost.

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ), Co-Chair of the GWI Subcommittee, called the meeting to order at approximately 9:34 AM CST and then called the roll of GWI Subcommittee members. The representatives from the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Texas A&M AgriLife Research (AgriLife Research), Texas Tech University (TTU), and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service (AgriLife Extension) were not present at the meeting.

3. STATUS REPORTS

Agricultural Chemicals Task Force

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) reported on the Agricultural Chemicals Task Force:

- The proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Cooperative Groundwater Pesticide Monitoring program activities between TWDB and TCEQ included the continued monitoring for atrazine and possibly some 2,4-D, on-going monitoring in the Panhandle of Public Water Supply (PWS) systems with previous high atrazine detects (but only if the budget allowed), and providing the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with available Texas water pesticide monitoring data.
- In early FY 2023, the FY 2022 end-of-year report and the updated TCEQ Interagency Pesticide Database (IPD) was sent to U.S. EPA Region 6 along with updated 2022 pesticide water sample results from TCEQ's Public Drinking Water and Source Water Protection programs.
- A table-top display and staff providing information on the TGPC, including pesticide information and data, was set up at the annual Texas Plant Protection Conference in Bryan on December 6 – 7, 2022.
- The U.S. EPA Region 6 pesticide meeting was held in a hybrid format (virtually and in Dallas) on October 25 – 26, 2022, and water quality remained a lower priority issue compared to climate change and environmental justice. At this meeting, Alan Cherepon (TCEQ) reported a summary of his work conducted in FY 2022.

TGPC Publications

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

- *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report – 2022 (“Joint Report”, SFR-56)*
 - Work on the *2022 Joint Report* would commence in January 2023.
- *Activities and Recommendations of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee: Report to the 88th Legislature (“Legislative Report”, SFR-47)*
 - The TGPC *Legislative Report* for the 88th Legislature was provided to TCEQ’s Intergovernmental Relations program for distribution to elected officials and the report would be published on the TGPC and TCEQ websites in December 2022.

Cindy Hooper (TCEQ) also reported on the following groundwater-related TCEQ publication:

- *Priority Groundwater Management Areas and Groundwater Conservation Districts, Report to the 88th Legislature (“PGMA/GCD Legislative Report”, SFR-53/22)*
 - Work on the *PGMA/GCD Legislative Report* was in progress between TWDB and TCEQ, and TCEQ planned to distribute the report to legislative leadership in early January 2023.

4. SET FUTURE MEETING DATE

The next TGPC GWI Subcommittee meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, March 8, 2022, at 9:30 AM CST and it was planned as a videoconference.

5. DISCUSS CURRENT GROUNDWATER ISSUES

Oil and Gas Produced Water

Bridget Scanlon (UTBEG) reported that she and Natalie Ballew (TWDB) would be on the Oil and Gas Produced Water panel at the Water for Texas 2023 conference on January 23 – 25, 2023.

Emerging Contaminants

David Villarreal (TDA) reported that:

- Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination (especially in container linings) was an on-going issue;
- *Giardia* infections were being reported at a higher rate than normal in Lake Travis;
- *Cryptosporidium*, *Cyclospora*, and other fecal contamination (i.e., the common food/water-borne pathogens) were still in the news; and,
- Microplastics was becoming a bigger issue.

Bridget Scanlon (UTBEG) inquired about a TCEQ database containing PFAS information. James LaManna (TCEQ) indicated that he was compiling that information and would be obtaining the required approvals before sharing it.

Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR)

Natalie Ballew (TWDB) reported that they would be giving a presentation on ASR at the next TGPC meeting on January 11, 2023.

Abandoned Water Wells

David Gunn (TDLR) reported that they had recently identified eight new abandoned water wells in northeast Texas, and that anyone can report and track an abandoned water well through the TDLR Abandoned Well Reporting database (<https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/abwells/default.aspx>).

Brackish Groundwater

Natalie Ballew (TWDB) reported that their *Brackish Groundwater in the Hill Country Trinity Aquifer and Trinity Group Formations, Texas* (Report 388, September 2022, https://www.twdb.texas.gov/publications/reports/numbered_reports/doc/R388-Hill-Country-Trinity-Brackish-Resources.pdf?d=13798.5) had been published.

Evapotranspiration Networks

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) reported that Guy Fipps (AgriLife Extension) had provided some updates on this topic before the meeting:

- The TGPC had approved a white paper about evapotranspiration (ET) networks on January 12, 2022, and that white paper included three recommendations;
- The Water Conservation Advisory Council (WCAC, <https://savetexaswater.org/>) was finalizing its report to the 88th Legislature which included three ET recommendations; and,
- He had been told that, with legislative budget approval, TWDB would allocate \$900,000 to the effort of supporting a statewide ET network as part of the TexMesonet.

Natalie Ballew (TWDB) reported that they had a Data Modernization package which included the TexMesonet as part of their legislative appropriations request. Leah Martinsson (TAGD) added that the WCAC ET network recommendations had more details regarding the proposed TWDB implementation than those in the TGPC legislative report, but they were intended for the same purpose.

Chris Heiligenstein (RRC) left the meeting at approximately 9:59 AM and was absent for the remainder of the meeting.

Others

There was no discussion of this topic during the meeting.

6. BUSINESS DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

Draft TGPC GWI Subcommittee Fiscal Year 2024 – 2025 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 an initial draft of the *TGPC GWI Subcommittee Fiscal Year 2024 – 2025 Activity Plan* and noted that there was a related groundwater quality journal article in the handouts. There were several suggestions regarding new groundwater-related issues, and the draft *Activity Plan* would be reviewed and discussed again at the next meeting.

James Harcourt (RRC) left the meeting at approximately 10:28 AM and was absent for the remainder of the meeting.

Draft Abandoned Water Wells and the Challenges They Pose White Paper

Adam Foster (TDLR) presented an updated draft of the *Abandoned Water Wells and the Challenges They Pose* white paper and requested additional member feedback, especially specific instances where abandoned water wells had caused known problems. Leah Martinsson (TAGD) indicated that they would be able to share several examples, and also suggested that the white paper's recommendation regarding a comprehensive statewide survey of abandoned water wells could be a TDLR/TAGD joint effort. An updated draft of the white paper would be presented at the next meeting.

Adam Foster (TDLR) left the meeting at approximately 10:39 AM and was absent for the remainder of the meeting.

Draft Prioritizing New Drinking Water Infrastructure Funding in Texas White Paper

Bridget Scanlon (UTBEG) presented an updated draft of the *Prioritizing New Drinking Water Infrastructure Funding in Texas* white paper and requested additional member feedback. Several other contaminants to include in the white paper were suggested, and the EPA's recommended environmental justice tool was discussed. An updated draft of the white paper would be presented at the next meeting.

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) left the meeting at approximately 10:48 AM, returned at approximately 10:49 AM, and was present for the remainder of the meeting.

Draft Potential Impacts of Unregulated Private Water Systems in Child Care Operations White Paper

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) reported that Margaret Willis (DSHS) had received TCEQ feedback on the initial outline of the *Potential Impacts of Unregulated Private Water Systems in Child Care Operations* white paper, she was working on an initial draft of the white paper, and it would be presented at the next meeting.

Discussion of White Papers Under Development

Cindy Hooper (TCEQ) reported that they were still having internal discussions about a possible *Joint Report* white paper and there may be something to review at the next meeting.

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) reported that an update on the white paper regarding private water well disinfection Best Management Practices (BMPs) may be available at the next meeting.

Bridget Scanlon (UTBEG) left the meeting at approximately 10:57 AM, Stanley Aniagu (TCEQ) left the meeting at approximately 10:59 AM, and they were absent for the remainder of the meeting.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Natalie Ballew (TWDB) announced that Kristie Laughlin (TWDB) was their new Brackish Groundwater Program manager.

Linzy Foster (USGS) announced that they had recently published several groundwater-related reports plus a new web app and water cycle diagram, and that information was emailed to Subcommittee members after the meeting.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment at the meeting.

9. ADJOURN

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:10 AM CST.