

GROUNDWATER ISSUES SUBCOMMITTEE
 OF THE
 TEXAS GROUNDWATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE
 RECORD OF MEETING
 Fourth Quarter Meeting, Fiscal Year 2017

Meeting Date: June 7, 2017
 Meeting No.: 10

Place: TCEQ Campus, Bldg F
 Room: 2210

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MEETING ATTENDANCE

Subcommittee Members

Kathy McCormack (Co-Chair)

Peter Pope (Co-Chair)

Alan Cherepon

Janie Hopkins

Deba Dutta

David Villarreal

Thomas Helton

David A. Van Dresar

John Tracy

Linda Ruiz McCall

Christopher Braun

Affiliation

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)

Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC)

TCEQ

Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)

Texas Department of State Health Service (DSHS)

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)

Bureau of Economic Geology of The University of Texas
at Austin (UTBEG)

United States Geological Survey (USGS)

Agency Staff

Abiy Berehe

Devin Herd

Peggy Hunka

Lauren Pulliam

Amanda Scott

L. Scott Underwood

Jessica Uramkin

Marcia Workman

Affiliation

TCEQ

TCEQ

TCEQ

TCEQ

TCEQ

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TCEQ

TCEQ

Program

Water Availability Division

Water Quality Planning Division

Water Availability Division

Water Quality Planning Division

Water Availability Division

Water Availability Division

Water Quality Planning Division

Water Availability Division

Interested Parties

Beth Hood

Sarah Schlessinger

TAGD

TAGD

MEETING HANDOUTS

1. Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Groundwater Issues (GWI) Subcommittee Meeting Agenda, June 7, 2017
2. TGPC GWI Subcommittee Meeting Record, March 8, 2017
3. TGPC Agricultural Chemicals (AgChem) Task Force (TF) Status Report, June 7, 2017
4. TGPC Publications Status Report, June 7, 2017
5. Draft Appendix 1. Texas Groundwater Protection Committee Membership
6. USGS News Release, *Unconventional Oil and Gas Production Not Currently Affecting Drinking Water Quality*, May 31, 2017
7. *Texas Groundwater Protection Committee Groundwater Issues Subcommittee Charge*, April 22, 2015
8. Final Draft *Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Groundwater Issues (GWI) Subcommittee Fiscal Year 2018 – 2019 Activity Plan*
9. Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC) Hydraulic Fracturing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs, <http://www.rrc.texas.gov/about-us/resource-center/faqs/oil-gas-faqs/faq-hydraulic-fracturing/>)
10. TCEQ and UTBEG feedback on RRC Hydraulic Fracturing FAQs
11. A Typical Class II Injection Well cross-sectional diagram (<http://www.rrc.texas.gov/media/24203/injectionwelllg.jpg>)
12. TCEQ feedback on A Typical Class II Injection Well cross-sectional diagram

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

1. TGPC Public Information Act Policy

MEETING RECORD OF JUNE 7, 2017

1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ), Co-Chair of the TGPC GWI Subcommittee, called the meeting to order at approximately 9:34 AM CDT. GWI Subcommittee members were introduced. The representative from the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) was not present at the meeting. There were no concerns with the minutes from the previous meeting.

2. STATUS REPORTS

Agricultural Chemicals Task Force

Alan Cherepon (TCEQ) reported on the AgChem TF:

- There had been one AgChem TF meeting (via email, phone, or in person) since the last GWI Subcommittee meeting;
- Pesticide monitoring in the Panhandle was planned for June 19 – 23, 2017, and cooperative monitoring with TWDB had begun and would continue through the summer in one major and four minor aquifers (Gulf Coast, Queen City, Sparta, Yegua-Jackson, and Brazos River Alluvium);
- 2014 – 2016 USGS pesticide data had been downloaded and entered into the TCEQ Interagency Pesticide Database (IPD) representing 135 wells (94 of which were new), 236 new samples, and the addition of 26,907 analytes;
- He had participated in the TGPC exhibit counter at the annual TCEQ Environmental Trade Fair on May 16 – 17, 2017 in Austin;
- He had attended a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 6 pesticide meeting on May 2 – 4, 2017 in New Orleans, Louisiana, which included topics such as the U.S. EPA budget, a new end-of-year report template, and dealing with the Zika and West Nile viruses; and,
- He had attended a U.S. EPA Pesticide Regulatory Education Program (PREP) Water Quality training session on May 16 – 19, 2017 in St. Paul, Minnesota, which included topics such as the Pesticides of Interest Tracking System (POINTS) Pesticide Assessment Database, USGS pesticide monitoring programs, and atrazine degradates determination and interpretation.

David Villarreal (TDA) reported that:

- If the recent Texas House Bill 572 became law, there would again be funding for agricultural waste pesticide collection events across the state, and that they would be the lead agency implementing the program (working with TCEQ and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service); and,
- Training for the mandatory U.S. Food Safety Modernization Act for produce suppliers was being implemented at TDA, and that they were looking for laboratories with which to partner in order to run the microbial sampling and testing.

TGPC Publications

Abiy Berehe (TCEQ) reported on the following TGPC publications:

- *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report – 2016* (“*Joint Report*”, TCEQ publication SFR-056):
 - TCEQ staff were working on the 2016 *Joint Report* and it was anticipated to be complete by mid-July 2017.

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) requested that GWI Subcommittee members review Appendix 1 (TGPC member list) of the draft 2016 *Joint Report* and provide any updates.

3. SET FUTURE MEETING DATE

The next TGPC GWI Subcommittee meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, September 13, 2017, at 9:30 AM CDT, in TCEQ’s Building F, Conference Room 2210.

4. DISCUSS CURRENT GROUNDWATER ISSUES

Water Supply Enhancement Program

Thomas Helton (TSSWCB) reported that:

- Their draft Water Supply Enhancement Program (WSEP) white paper was on hold due to the former WSEP coordinator’s departure from the agency, but that Johnny Oswald (TSSWCB) and Ken Rainwater (Texas Tech University) would be working on it for the GWI Subcommittee;
- Their Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 – 2019 WSEP Request for Proposals (RFPs) had been due by June 1, 2017; and,
- Their 2017 *State Water Supply Enhancement Plan* was approved on January 19, 2017 (http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/files/docs/brush/statebrushplans/State%20WSE%20Plan%20Jan%202017_0.pdf).

David Villarreal (TDA) asked about the TSSWCB Giant Cane (*Arundo donax*) Eradication Program (http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/files/docs/brush/RGCCEP_FS_20161014.pdf). Thomas Helton (TSSWCB) indicated that state grant funding treated a number of miles along the Rio Grande River for primarily a few landowners, and that there was funding in the new state budget for more of this work.

Hydraulic Fracturing

Christopher Braun (USGS) reported that an article had recently been published (*Unconventional Oil and Gas Production Not Currently Affecting Drinking Water Quality*, <https://www.usgs.gov/news/unconventional-oil-and-gas-production-not-currently-affecting-drinking-water-quality>) which indicated that unconventional oil and gas (UOG) production was not currently affecting the quality of groundwater used for drinking water in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas.

Emerging Contaminants

David Villarreal (TDA) reported that the environmental impacts of pharmaceuticals, personal care products, and nanoparticles, as well as food and water terrorism (e.g., spore and cyst microbial contamination), had also been discussed at the U.S. EPA Region 6 pesticide meeting on May 2 – 4, 2017 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) noted that Emily Hall (DSHS) and Deba Dutta (DSHS) had previously indicated that they were willing to develop a draft white paper for the GWI Subcommittee regarding the health impacts of PFAS-contaminated groundwater.

Saline Groundwater Trends and Impacts in Texas

There was no discussion of this topic at the meeting.

Agricultural Chemicals

There was no discussion of this topic at the meeting.

Border Groundwater

John Tracy (AgriLife Research) provided an update on the Transboundary Aquifer Assessment Program, and reported that new publications regarding a transboundary aquifer in Arizona and Sonora were available online (<https://wrrc.arizona.edu/TAAP>). In addition, an initial publication describing all of the transboundary aquifers along the Texas and Mexico border was recently available (<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/gwat.12533/full>). John Tracy indicated that he would be willing to give a presentation regarding transboundary aquifers to the GWI Subcommittee, as well as work on a draft white paper on this topic. David Villarreal (TDA) noted that groundwater withdrawals on either side of the Rio Grande River could impact the habitat for the proposed as endangered Texas Hornshell (*Popenaias popeii*).

Aquifer Storage and Recovery

John Tracy (AgriLife Research) reported that Gretchen Miller (AgriLife Research) was mapping Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) locations in the state.

Linda Ruiz McCall (UTBEG) indicated that they would be willing to draft a white paper on ASR (especially regarding flood control and the conjunctive use of groundwater and surface water) for the GWI Subcommittee. Deba Dutta (DSHS) offered to assist with this effort, as well.

Abandoned Water Wells

There was no discussion of this topic at the meeting.

Failing Septic Systems

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) reported that a recent *Texas Water Journal* article (*Evaluation of Potential E. coli Transport from On-site Sewage Facilities in a Texas Watershed*, <https://journals.tdl.org/twj/index.php/twj/article/view/7041>) referenced previous research which showed that “when high water tables are present near drainage pipes, anaerobic systems have the ability to directly contaminate groundwater.” Kathy McCormack indicated that she would be willing to work with various TCEQ experts to draft a white paper on On-site Sewage Facilities (OSSFs) in the state for the GWI Subcommittee.

Others

There was no discussion of other topics at the meeting.

The GWI Subcommittee took a meeting break at approximately 10:48 – 10:55 AM CDT. A quorum of designated TGPC representatives/alternates was present at the meeting, and they were reminded not to discuss TGPC business during the break.

5. BUSINESS DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

TGPC GWI Subcommittee Charge

The GWI Subcommittee performed a final review of their *Texas Groundwater Protection Committee Groundwater Issues Subcommittee Charge* (“Charge”, http://tgpc.state.tx.us/wp-content/themes/responsive/subcommittees/gwissues/GWI_SubComm_Charge22Apr2015.pdf) and did not have any changes to recommend to the TGPC. The *Charge* would be reviewed again at the GWI Subcommittee’s Fourth Quarter meeting in FY 2018.

Final Draft *TGPC GWI Subcommittee Fiscal Year 2018 – 2019 Activity Plan*

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) presented the final draft of the *Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Groundwater Issues (GWI) Subcommittee Fiscal Year 2018 – 2019 Activity Plan* (“Plan”). David A. Van Dresar (TAGD) proposed, Deba Dutta (DSHS) seconded, and all remaining GWI Subcommittee members approved the *Plan*. The *Plan* would be presented to the TGPC for approval at their July 19, 2017 meeting.

Draft *Texas Groundwater Protection Strategy Update*

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) suggested that a Task Force be formed in order to prepare a draft update of the *Texas Groundwater Protection Strategy* for review at the next GWI Subcommittee meeting. Peter Pope (RRC), John Tracy (AgriLife Research), and David A. Van Dresar (TAGD) volunteered to assist with this Task Force.

Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC) Hydraulic Fracturing Frequently Asked Questions

Peter Pope (RRC) reviewed their Hydraulic Fracturing FAQs and Class II injection well cross-sectional diagram. GWI Subcommittee members provided their feedback on these popular press items, and Peter Pope indicated that they would work on updating them, as needed.

Thomas Helton (TSSWCB) left at approximately 11:41 AM CDT, returned at approximately 11:46 AM CDT, and was present for the remainder of the meeting.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jessica Ramkin (TCEQ) announced that they had released their 2018 Request for Grant Applications (RFGAs) on June 1, 2017 for projects that addressed nonpoint source (NPS) pollution problems across the state, and that applications would be accepted until July 31, 2017.

Sarah Schlessinger (TAGD) announced that their annual Texas Groundwater Summit would be held on August 29 – 31, 2017 in San Marcos.

John Tracy (AgriLife Extension) announced that Kevin Wagner (AgriLife Extension), their alternate representative to the TGPC and a long-time TGPC supporter, would be taking a new position as Director of the Oklahoma Water Resources Center.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment at the meeting.

8. ADJOURN

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:47 AM CDT.