

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

Meeting Date: March 8, 2017  
Meeting No.: 9

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  
Larry French  
Emily Hall  
David Villarreal  
Linda Ruiz McCall

Alberto Jimenez  
Cindy Loeffler  
Lynne Fahlquist  
Ken Rainwater

### 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)  
Bureau of Economic Geology of The University of Texas  
at Austin (UTBEG)  
Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR)  
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)  
United States Geological Survey (USGS)  
Texas Tech University (TTU)

### Agency Staff

Leon Byrd  
Peggy Hunka  
Allison Jenkins  
Lauren Pulliam  
Hayden Ross  
L. Scott Underwood  
Jessica Uramkin  
Marcia Workman

### Affiliation

TCEQ  
TCEQ  
TCEQ  
TCEQ  
TCEQ  
TCEQ  
TCEQ  
TCEQ

### Program

Water Availability Division  
Water Availability Division  
Toxicology Division  
Water Quality Planning Division  
Water Availability Division  
Water Availability Division  
Water Quality Planning Division  
Water Availability Division

### Interested Parties

Carla Phillips  
William Phillips

## MEETING HANDOUTS

1. Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Groundwater Issues (GWI) Subcommittee Meeting Agenda, March 8, 2017
2. TGPC GWI Subcommittee Meeting Record, December 14, 2016
3. TGPC Agricultural Chemicals (AgChem) Task Force (TF) Status Report, March 8, 2017
4. TGPC Publications Status Report, March 8, 2017
5. Nicot, J.-P., Larson, T., Darvari, R., Mickler, P., Uhlman, K. and Costley, R. (2017), *Controls on Methane Occurrences in Aquifers Overlying the Eagle Ford Shale Play, South Texas*. National Ground Water Association (NGWA), *Groundwater*. doi:10.1111/gwat.12506
6. Nicot, J.-P., Larson, T., Darvari, R., Mickler, P., Slotten, M., Aldridge, J., Uhlman, K. and Costley, R. (2017), *Controls on Methane Occurrences in Shallow Aquifers Overlying the Haynesville Shale Gas Field, East Texas*. NGWA, *Groundwater*. doi:10.1111/gwat.12500
7. Nicot, J.-P., Mickler, P., Larson, T., Clara Castro, M., Darvari, R., Uhlman, K. and Costley, R. (2017), *Methane Occurrences in Aquifers Overlying the Barnett Shale Play with a Focus on Parker County, Texas*. NGWA, *Groundwater*. doi:10.1111/gwat.12508
8. *Texas Groundwater Protection Committee Groundwater Issues Subcommittee Charge*, April 22, 2015
9. Draft *Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Groundwater Issues (GWI) Subcommittee Fiscal Year 2018 – 2019 Activity Plan*
10. Examples of the Top 100 TGPC Google Analytics keywords, January 1, 2016 – February 8, 2017

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

1. TGPC Public Information Act Policy

## MEETING RECORD OF MARCH 8, 2017

### 1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Peter Pope (RRC), Co-Chair of the TGPC GWI Subcommittee, called the meeting to order at approximately 9:37 AM CST. GWI Subcommittee members were introduced. The representatives from the Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts (TAGD), Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB), and Texas A&M AgriLife Research (AgriLife Research) were not present at the meeting, and the representative from UTBEG was not present at the beginning of 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 was planned for late spring or early summer 2017 (wells in the Panhandle, as well as cooperative monitoring with TWDB);
- Cooperative and Pollinator Protection monitoring results from 2016 had been entered into the TCEQ Interagency Pesticide Database (IPD) and sent to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Region 6 EPA;
- 2014 – 2016 USGS pesticide data had been downloaded, but some assistance was still needed from USGS; and,
- An EPA Region 6 Pesticide meeting was scheduled for May 2-4, 2017 in Louisiana.

David Villarreal (TDA) reported that the U.S. EPA had recently announced some new mandates related to performance measures for the pesticide grant shared by TCEQ (responsible for water quality aspects) and TDA (responsible for compliance and education aspects), and he asked whether TCEQ had changed any of its reporting parameters in order to comply with these new guidelines. Al Cherepon (TCEQ) indicated that they had not made any changes.

Lynne Fahlquist (USGS) reported that they would be sampling for pesticides in 75 Public Water Supply (PWS) wells in the Edwards, Trinity, and Edwards-Trinity Plateau Aquifers in 2017.

Linda Ruiz McCall (UTBEG) arrived at approximately 9:45 AM CST and was present for the remainder of the meeting.

#### TGPC Publications

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) reported on the following TGPC publications:

- Groundwater Assessment for the *2018 Texas Integrated Report for Clean Water Act Sections 305(b) and 303(d)* (“*Texas Integrated Report*”):
  - The 2018 report preparation would be initiated in the fourth quarter of FY 2017.

- *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report – 2016* (“*Joint Report*”, TCEQ publication SFR-056):
  - TCEQ staff had started working on the *Joint Report* and it was anticipated to be complete by April 1, 2017.
- *Activities and Recommendations of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee: Report to the 85th Legislature* (“*Legislative Report*”, TCEQ publication SFR-047):
  - The report was published and distributed to the Texas Legislature on December 15, 2016.

### 3. SET FUTURE MEETING DATE

The next TGPC GWI Subcommittee meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, June 7, 2017, at 9:30 AM CDT, in TCEQ’s Building F, Conference Room 2210.

### 4. PRESENTATION

What is the Interagency Pesticide Database (IPD) ?

Alan Cherepon (TCEQ) gave the GWI Subcommittee a presentation on the IPD, including its background, data sources, structure, immunoassay (IA) screening, limitations, uses, example maps, monitoring activity over time, and conclusions. The IPD is listed in the *Texas Groundwater Protection Committee Groundwater Issues Subcommittee Charge* (“*Charge*”) and the draft *Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Groundwater Issues (GWI) Subcommittee Fiscal Year 2018 – 2019 Activity Plan* (“*Plan*”).

Emily Hall (DSHS) expressed interest in obtaining a copy of the IPD. David Villarreal (TDA):

- Suggested that “groundwater” be included in the IPD name in order to indicate that it does not include any surface water or drinking water sources;
- Commented that the IPD does not include many of the newer pesticides (e.g., fipronil); and,
- Asked whether additional sources of information (e.g., the oil and gas industry, municipalities, river authorities, etc.) on pesticides in groundwater (e.g., anti-biofoulants, antimicrobials, etc.) might be considered for inclusion in the IPD.

Alan Cherepon (TCEQ) indicated that the IPD did include a few IA screening analyses of newer pesticides (e.g. glyphosate and imidacloprid), and that other local/regional/state entities may be contacted for additional groundwater sampling information.

### 5. DISCUSS CURRENT GROUNDWATER ISSUES

#### Water Supply Enhancement Program

Ken Rainwater (TTU) indicated that he could assist in the development of a white paper on the TSSWCB’s Water Supply Enhancement Program (WSEP). David Villarreal (TDA) asked whether brush control may have alleviated some of the impacts of the recent wildfires in the Panhandle. Ken Rainwater did not think there had been any significant brush management in that area by the TSSWCB.

## Hydraulic Fracturing

Linda Ruiz McCall (UTBEG) reviewed their three recent papers on methane occurrences in the aquifers overlying Texas shale plays which indicated that they were naturally occurring. Lynne Fahlquist (USGS) reported that they had similar findings.

## Emerging Contaminants

Emily Hall (DSHS) reported that they had so far been unsuccessful in contacting the new Interstate Technology Regulatory Council (ITRC) Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFASs) Team leaders, but that they would be willing to draft a white paper on the health impacts of PFAS-contaminated groundwater for the GWI Subcommittee.

## Saline Groundwater Trends and Impacts in Texas

Larry French (TWDB) reported that:

- Initial House Bill 30 studies related to their Brackish Resources Aquifer Characterization System (BRACS) had been completed and the reports were online (<http://www.twdb.texas.gov/innovativewater/bracs/index.asp>); and,
- A groundwater model of the Lower Rio Grande Valley in support of desalination plant development should be completed by the end of 2017.

Linda Ruiz McCall (UTBEG) asked about possible names for brackish aquifers. Larry French (TWDB) reported that a north-central Texas brackish aquifer may be named the Cross Timbers Aquifer if it is designated as a minor aquifer.

## Agricultural Chemicals

David Villarreal (TDA) reported that they anticipated the widespread use of mosquito pesticides in surface water in the upcoming summer season.

## Border Groundwater

Lynne Fahlquist (USGS) reported that they were finalizing the Hueco-Mesilla Bolson Aquifer (near El Paso) report. Larry French (TWDB) reported that they would be completing a common border aquifers summary report by the middle of this year highlighting their hydrogeological aspects and management approaches.

## Others

Cindy Loeffler (TPWD) reported that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) was “interested in learning about proactive efforts to conserve [four] species [of freshwater mussels in Texas] and their habitats, and to remove threats” by May 1, 2017. David Villarreal (TDA) reported that the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts (CPA) Interagency Task Force on Economic Growth and Endangered Species was planning on doing public outreach regarding freshwater mussels.

Linda Ruiz McCall (UTBEG) added that referring to freshwater mussels as the “livers of the rivers” was a good way to communicate their importance to the public.

The GWI Subcommittee took a meeting break 10:53 – 11:02 AM CST. A quorum of designated TGPC representatives/alternates was not present at the meeting.

## 6. BUSINESS DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

### TGPC GWI Subcommittee Charge

The GWI Subcommittee performed an initial review of their *Charge* ([http://tgpc.state.tx.us/wp-content/themes/responsive/subcommittees/gwissues/GWI\\_SubComm\\_Charge22Apr2015.pdf](http://tgpc.state.tx.us/wp-content/themes/responsive/subcommittees/gwissues/GWI_SubComm_Charge22Apr2015.pdf)) and did not have changes to recommend to the TGPC. A final review of the *Charge* would be done at the next meeting.

### Draft TGPC GWI Subcommittee Fiscal Year 2018 – 2019 Activity Plan

The GWI Subcommittee reviewed the draft *Plan*. As possible additional groundwater issues to consider, Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) provided a list of the top 100 TGPC website keyword searches during January 1, 2016 through February 8, 2017. Ken Rainwater (TTU) added that there were a number of groundwater-dependent small water systems that are out of regulatory compliance, and the Texas Drinking Water Watch (<http://dww2.tceq.texas.gov/DWW/>) data format is difficult to work with. Members agreed to include three additional topics (Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR), abandoned water wells, and failing septic systems) in the *Plan* and GWI Subcommittee meeting agendas. A final review of the *Plan* would be done at the next meeting.

### Draft Texas Groundwater Protection Strategy Update

Cindy Loeffler (TPWD) suggested that the GWI Subcommittee conduct a survey (e.g., on the TGPC website) in order to obtain public input on groundwater issues and public comment on any draft *Texas Groundwater Protection Strategy* (“*Strategy*”, TCEQ publication AS-188) update. Linda Ruiz McCall (UTBEG) recalled that the POE Subcommittee had surveyed various groups in the past regarding TGPC FAQs and groundwater issues, and this process (perhaps through the TGPC GovDelivery subscription list) should be included in the *Strategy* update.

## 7. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements at the meeting.

## 8. PUBLIC COMMENT

Carla Phillips addressed the GWI Subcommittee and indicated that she lived west of San Marcos, she was concerned with groundwater quality, water wells, and initiatives there to extract groundwater for agriculture or development use in the future, and she wanted to learn more about how these groundwater extraction requests would be vetted and approved.

GWISubcommittee members provided the following feedback to Carla Phillips:

- David Villarreal (TDA) suggested that she attend the next Region K Water Planning Group meeting for additional information;
- Linda Ruiz McCall (UTBEG) suggested that she learn more about the Priority Groundwater Management Area (PGMA) for that area; and,
- Larry French (TWDB) noted that they had recently contracted with the Southwest Research Institute to study the Trinity Aquifer (particularly the eastern boundary) and how it may interact with the Edwards Aquifer which may lead to an upgrade of the Groundwater Availability Model (GAM) in that area, and that she would be welcome to become involved in this study as a stakeholder.

## 9. ADJOURN

Peter Pope (RRC) adjourned the meeting at approximately 12:12 PM CST.