

GROUNDWATER ISSUES SUBCOMMITTEE  
OF THE  
TEXAS GROUNDWATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE  
RECORD OF MEETING  
Second Quarter Meeting, Fiscal Year 2022

Meeting Date: December 15, 2021  
Meeting No.: 28

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  
David Gunn  
Ken Rainwater  
Guy Fipps  
  
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)  
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

Stanley Aniagu  
Abiy Berehe  
Alan Cherepon  
Lorrie Council  
Jason Godeaux  
Grant Gibson  
Cindy Hooper  
Peggy Hunka  
Leah Martinsson  
Scott Underwood

### Affiliation

### Program

TCEQ Toxicology Division  
TCEQ Water Availability Division  
TCEQ Water Availability Division  
TCEQ Radioactive Materials Division  
TCEQ Water Availability Division  
TCEQ Water Availability Division  
TCEQ Water Availability Division  
TCEQ Water Availability Division  
TAGD  
TCEQ Water Availability Division

### Interested Parties

Dustan Compton  
Margaret Cook

### Affiliation

Tarrant Regional Water District (TRWD)  
Houston Advanced Research Center (HARC)

## MEETING HANDOUTS

1. Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Groundwater Issues (GWI) Subcommittee Meeting Agenda, December 15, 2021
2. TGPC GWI Subcommittee Meeting Record, September 15, 2021
3. TGPC Agricultural Chemicals (AgChem) Task Force (TF) Status Report, December 15, 2021
4. Proposed FY22 Pesticide Monitoring Plan
5. TGPC Publications Status Report, December 15, 2021
6. *EPA Administrator Regan Announces Comprehensive National Strategy to Confront PFAS Pollution* article, October 18, 2021, <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-administrator-regan-announces-comprehensive-national-strategy-confront-pfas>
7. *Construction approved for first public-private brackish water treatment plant in Texas* article, September 27, 2021, <https://www.bicmagazine.com/departments/engineering-construction/Texas-first-PP-brackish-water-plant/>
8. *NMSU researcher studies groundwater pumping effects on rivers as a Fulbright Scholar* article, December 4, 2021, <https://www.lcsun-news.com/story/news/education/nmsu/2021/12/04/nmsu-researcher-studies-groundwater-pumping-effects-rivers/8867138002/>
9. Final Draft *ET Networks and the Protection of Groundwater Supplies and Quality* white paper

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

1. N/A

## MEETING RECORD OF DECEMBER 15, 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

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 teleconference or videoconference at no cost.

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ), Co-Chair of the GWI Subcommittee, called the meeting to order at approximately 9:35 AM CST and then called the roll of GWI Subcommittee members. The representatives from the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) and Bureau of Economic Geology of The University of Texas at Austin (UTBEG) were not present at the meeting.

Lynne Fahlquist (USGS), who was retiring at the end of December 2021, was recognized for 21 years of support and service to the TGPC and its Subcommittees.

### 3. STATUS REPORTS

#### Agricultural Chemicals Task Force

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

- The proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Pesticide Monitoring Plan was reviewed which contained plans for only Cooperative Monitoring and atrazine analysis (and possibly 2,4-D, as the budget allowed) due to a reduced grant budget over recent years;
- Sampling by TWDB was anticipated to include the Ogallala, Dockum, Pecos Alluvium, Fredericksburg, and Antlers aquifers;
- The TCEQ Interagency Pesticide Database (IPD) had been updated with 2021 Cooperative Monitoring data and USGS data from the past two years, and this data was submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) electronically;
- A table-top display of TGPC information was provided at the annual Texas Plant Protection Association conference in Bryan on December 7 – 8, 2021, with a focus on pesticides from the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) grant work in 2021;
- The Pesticides of Interest Tracking System (POINTS) Pesticide Assessment Database for Texas had been updated and uploaded into the U.S. EPA Central Data Exchange FIFRA Grant Database website, along with all of the updated IPD, TCEQ Public Drinking Water, and TCEQ Source Water Quality Monitoring pesticide data for 2021; and,

- The next Region 6 U.S. EPA/States/Tribes pesticide Spring meeting was scheduled for April/May 2022, and it was scheduled to be hosted by Louisiana, but no specific date had been set and it was anticipated to be conducted virtually.

#### TGPC Publications

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

- *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report – 2021* (“*Joint Report*”, SFR-056)
  - Work on the *2021 Joint Report* would begin in January 2022.
- *Groundwater Assessment for the 2022 Texas Integrated Report for Clean Water Act Sections 305(b) and 303(d)* (“*Texas Integrated Report*”)
  - GPAT staff were preparing this biennial groundwater assessment and a draft should be available in January 2022; the groundwater assessment would then be transmitted to the TCEQ Water Quality Planning Division for inclusion in the *Texas Integrated Report*.
- *Activities and Recommendations of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee: Report to the 88th Legislature* (“*Legislative Report*”, SFR-047)
  - The next *Legislative Report* would be prepared in advance of the 88th Legislature.

#### 4. SET FUTURE MEETING DATE

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

#### 5. DISCUSS CURRENT GROUNDWATER ISSUES

##### Oil and Gas Produced Water

There was no discussion of this topic at the meeting.

##### Emerging Contaminants

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) reported that the U.S. EPA had recently announced a comprehensive national strategy to confront Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) pollution which committed the EPA to quickly set enforceable drinking water limits for these chemicals (<https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-administrator-regan-announces-comprehensive-national-strategy-confront-pfas>). Additional measures included:

- Establishing a new national testing strategy that required PFAS manufacturers to provide the agency with toxicity data and information on categories of PFAS chemicals;
- An increase in monitoring, data collection, and research; and,
- Continued efforts to build the technical foundation needed on PFAS air emissions to inform future actions under the Clean Air Act.

It was also announced that the TCEQ Drinking Water Standards Section had received funds for PFAS sampling of Public Water Supply (PWS) systems in FY 2022.

## Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR)

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

## Abandoned Water Wells

Leah Martinsson (TAGD) reported on a recent *Texas Monthly* article about Lake Boehmer which was created by an abandoned water well near the small community of Imperial in west Texas.

## Brackish Groundwater

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) reported that construction had been approved for the first public-private brackish water treatment plant in Texas (<https://www.bicmagazine.com/departments/engineering-construction/Texas-first-PP-brackish-water-plant/>). The brackish water desalination plant would provide fresh drinking water to the residents of Alice in south Texas. The Seven Seas Water Group would finance, design, build, operate, and maintain a Brackish Water Reverse Osmosis (BWRO) plant on land owned by the city. The plant would have an initial production capacity of three million gallons per day (MGD) with expansion options.

## Evapotranspiration Networks

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

## Others

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) reported that a New Mexico State University professor was studying the effects of groundwater pumping on rivers (<https://www.lcsun-news.com/story/news/education/nmsu/2021/12/04/nmsu-researcher-studies-groundwater-pumping-effects-rivers/8867138002/>). The modeling would guide policy for groundwater pumping and land-use management to improve water quality and inform appropriate adaptation to climate change. The researcher believed that disconnection of river and groundwater due to groundwater pumping causes increased seepage into river beds and decreased river flow. David Villarreal (TDA) noted that there currently was a major water rights lawsuit between New Mexico and Texas regarding groundwater pumping and its effect on the Rio Grande River.

Rosario Sanchez (Agrilife Research) reported that the Second International United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Conference on Transboundary Aquifers took place on December 6 – 9, 2021, the International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre (IGRAC) had just published an updated map of transboundary aquifers of the world ([https://www.un-igrac.org/sites/default/files/resources/files/TBAMap\\_2021\\_0.pdf](https://www.un-igrac.org/sites/default/files/resources/files/TBAMap_2021_0.pdf)), and the transboundary aquifers between the U.S. and Mexico that they have been working on were included in this updated map. In addition, they were currently working with RRC on the discovery of a new freshwater transboundary aquifer in west Texas. Natalie Ballew (TWDB) added that they were also investigating this new aquifer.

## 6. BUSINESS DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

### *Draft Opportunities and Challenges in Aquifer Storage and Recovery White Paper*

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) reported that Ken Rainwater (TTU) hoped to finish this white paper in the spring of 2022.

### *Draft Abandoned Water Wells and the Challenges They Pose White Paper*

David Gunn (TDLR) reported that they were still short-staffed and the white paper's author did not have an update of the *Abandoned Water Wells and the Challenges They Pose* white paper for review at this meeting.

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

Guy Fipps (AgriLife Extension) reviewed the final draft of the *ET Networks and the Protection of Groundwater Supplies and Quality* white paper and its two recommendations. David Van Dresar (TAGD) proposed, David Villarreal (TDA) seconded, and all remaining members approved the final draft of ET Networks white paper. The white paper would be presented to the TGPC for approval at their next meeting. Guy Fipps (AgriLife Extension) was thanked for his six months of effort on this white paper.

Guy Fipps (AgriLife Extension) reported that the Water Conservation Advisory Council (WCAC) would be discussing ET networks at their meeting the next day and that GWI Subcommittee members could contact him for more information.

### Discussion of White Papers Under Development

There was no discussion of this topic at the meeting.

## 7. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Scott Underwood (TCEQ) announced that the TCEQ Water Well Report Viewer (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/gis/waterwellview.html>) had recently been updated with the addition of scanned legacy maps that displayed plotted water wells from the 1970s and 1980s by county.

David Gunn (TDLR) announced the Texas Ground Water Association (TGWA) Annual Convention on January 25 – 28, 2022 in Frisco.

## 8. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment at the meeting.

9. ADJOURN

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:34 AM CST.