

GROUNDWATER ISSUES SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE
TEXAS GROUNDWATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE
RECORD OF MEETING
Fourth Quarter Meeting, Fiscal Year 2016

Meeting Date: June 22, 2016
Meeting No.: 6

Place: TCEQ Campus, Bldg F
Room: 2210

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MEETING ATTENDANCE

Subcommittee Members

Kathy McCormack (Co-Chair)
Chris Moore (Co-Chair)
Alan Cherepon
Larry French
Deba Dutta
David Villarreal
T.J. Helton

John Tracy
Linda Ruiz McCall

Cindy Loeffler

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 A&M AgriLife Research (AgriLife Research)
Bureau of Economic Geology of The University of Texas at Austin (UTBEG)
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)

Agency Staff

Abiy Berehe
Leon Byrd
Mike Chadwick
Cindy Hooper
Peggy Hunka
Lauren Pulliam
Toni Red
L. Scott Underwood
Jessica Uramkin
Marcia Workman

Affiliation

Program

TCEQ Water Availability Division
TCEQ Water Quality Planning Division
TCEQ Water Availability Division
TCEQ Water Availability Division
TCEQ Water Quality Planning Division
TCEQ Water Availability Division

Interested Parties

Damian Kemper

Affiliation

Self

MEETING HANDOUTS

1. Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Groundwater Issues (GWI) Subcommittee Meeting Agenda, June 22, 2016
2. TGPC GWI Subcommittee Meeting Record, April 20, 2016
3. TGPC Agricultural Chemicals (AgChem) Task Force (TF) Status Report, June 2016
4. TGPC Publications Status Report, June 2016
5. Draft Priority Groundwater Management Area White Paper
6. Texas Groundwater Conservation Districts (June 2016) map
7. Priority Groundwater Management Areas (PGMAs) map and TGPC Frequently Asked Question (FAQ), January 2016
8. *Priority Groundwater Management Areas, Overview and Frequently Asked Questions*, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service publication B-6191, available at <https://agrilifebookstore.org/>

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

1. TGPC Public Information Act Policy

MEETING RECORD OF JUNE 22, 2016

1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chris Moore (RRC), Co-Chair of the TGPC GWI Subcommittee, called the meeting to order at approximately 1:09 PM CDST. GWI Subcommittee members were introduced. Representatives from the Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts (TAGD) and the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) were not present at the meeting.

2. STATUS REPORTS

Agricultural Chemicals Task Force

Alan Cherepon (TCEQ) reported that:

- There had been one Agricultural Chemicals Task Force meeting (via email, phone, or in person) since the last GWI Subcommittee meeting;
- With four staff, TWDB was in the process of Cooperative sampling 310 sites in 2016:
 - Major aquifers: Ogallala, Pecos Valley, and Hueco-Mesilla Bolson; and,
 - Minor aquifers: Dockum, Edwards-Trinity (High Plains), West Texas Bolson, Igneous, Capitan Reef Complex, Rustler, Marathon, Hickory, Marble Falls, and Ellenburger-San Saba.
- TCEQ had screened 60 cooperative monitoring samples for atrazine and glyphosate using immunoassay (IA) analysis techniques, but the IA analyses for imidacloprid and pyrethroids on these samples were not successful;
- TCEQ was preparing to collect samples from approximately 21 springs and shallow wells in the Austin to San Antonio area and eastward the week of June 27, 2016, with some emphasis on screening for imidacloprid near apiaries as part of the national pollinator protection effort; samples would be IA screened for atrazine, glyphosate, imidacloprid, pyrethroids, and 2,4-D, and one lab method would be used on the samples at the DSHS laboratory in Austin;
- He attended the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)/States/Tribes semi-annual pesticide meeting in Albuquerque, NM, on May 10 – 11, 2016;
- A new United States Geological Survey (USGS) interactive, online map (<http://nawqatrends.wim.usgs.gov/Decadal/>) that includes pesticides was available;
- The United States (U.S.) Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) had released a Draft Ecological Risk Assessments for Triazines with a 60-day comment period ending on August 5, 2016; and,
- The annual National Pollinator Week was June 20 – 26, 2016.

TGPC Publications

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

- Groundwater Assessment for the *2016 Texas Integrated Report for Clean Water Act Sections 305(b) and 303(d)* (“*Texas Integrated Report*”):
 - TCEQ staff had completed the draft Groundwater Assessment and it would be posted on the TCEQ website along with the other surface water assessment reports; and,
 - The *Texas Integrated Report* is a biannual report to the U.S. EPA.

- *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report – 2015 (“Joint Report”, TCEQ publication SFR-056):*
 - TCEQ staff were working on the 2015 *Joint Report* and it would be completed by the end of July 2016.
- *Activities and Recommendations of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee: Report to the 85th Legislature (“Legislative Report”, TCEQ publication SFR-047):*
 - The Legislative Report Subcommittee updated the draft report and it would be presented at the July 2016 TGPC meeting; after the Committee’s approval, the final draft report would be routed for upper management review and concurrence at the TGPC member agencies;
 - TCEQ staff would send the final report to Agency Publications after the October 2016 TGPC meeting; and,
 - The final report would be distributed to the Legislature in December 2016 before the session begins on January 10, 2017.
- *Texas Groundwater Protection Strategy (“Strategy”, TCEQ publication AS-188):*
 - No change in status.
- *Landowner’s Guide to Plugging Abandoned Water Wells (Plugging document, TCEQ publication RG-347)*
 - No change in status.
- *Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC trifold brochure, TCEQ publication GI-088)*
 - No change in status.

3. SET FUTURE MEETING DATE

The next TGPC GWI Subcommittee meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, September 14, 2016, at 9:30 AM CDST, in TCEQ’s Building F, Conference Room 2210.

4. PRESENTATION – CURRENT PRIORITY GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AREA (PGMA) UPDATE

Mike Chadwick (TCEQ) presented the following aspects of PGMA’s to GWI Subcommittee members:

- The definition of a PGMA;
- The types of critical groundwater problems that could influence the creation of a PGMA;
- The process that is followed for creating a PGMA; and,
- The status of the seven existing PGMA’s in the state.

This presentation provided valuable background information for the draft PGMA white paper discussion later in the meeting.

David Villarreal (TDA) left at 1:50 PM CDST, returned at 1:55 PM CDST, and was present for the remainder of the meeting.

5. DISCUSS CURRENT GROUNDWATER ISSUES

Brush Control

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) announced that TSSWCB had recently released a report on the impact of brush control on groundwater levels in the Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer (<http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/en/media/20160504>).

Hydraulic Fracturing

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) announced a recent publication, *Temporal Variation in Groundwater Quality in the Permian Basin of Texas, A Region of Increasing Unconventional Oil and Gas Development*, Science of the Total Environment, Volume 562, 15 August 2016, pages 906–913, <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969716308476>.

Linda Ruiz McCall (UTBEG) reported that they were establishing a seismic monitoring network (TexNet) in the state. Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) noted that Mike Young (UTBEG) would be giving a presentation on a “Seismic Monitoring Network Across Texas” at the Industry Council on the Environment (ICE) monthly meeting (<http://ice-texas.org/2016/04/monthly-meeting-july-21-2016/>) on July 21, 2016 in Austin (free for state employees).

Freshwater Mussels

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) announced that registration information was available for the 2016 Texas Mollusk Symposium on August 8 – 11, 2016 in Dallas. There did not appear to be a website for this conference.

Emerging Contaminants

Chris Moore (RRC) reported that he was investigating a possible presentation on perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) at a future GWI Subcommittee meeting.

Saline Groundwater Trends and Impacts in Texas

Larry French (TWDB) reported that they were responding to House Bill 30 regarding a brackish water production zone study, and that they were holding a stakeholders meeting on the Gulf Coast Aquifer that same afternoon. There had been, and would continue to be, a series of stakeholder meetings across the state, and the report would be done by the end of 2016.

Agricultural Chemicals

Alan Cherepon (TCEQ) reported that the issue of neonicotinoids and pollinator protection is currently of great concern to the U.S. EPA. David Villarreal (TDA) noted that pesticides tend to be more of a surface water problem than a groundwater problem, and Alan Cherepon added that USGS data confirms this.

Priority Groundwater Management Areas (PGMAs)

Discussion of this topic was moved to the Business portion of the meeting.

Border Groundwater

John Tracy (AgriLife Research) reported that the final activity plan for the next year for the Transboundary Aquifer Assessment Program (a joint effort between the Water Resource Institutes and USGS Water Science Centers in Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas) would be discussed in a final meeting during the following week. In addition, a group at Texas A&M University had submitted a proposal to help build policy and planning capacity in Mexico for engaging in transboundary aquifer management. This is a program with the U.S. Department of State where money can only be spent on the undeveloped country's side of the border.

Others

Larry French (TWDB) reported that there had been a recent publication on an evaluation of groundwater management in Texas. This paper reviewed economic options regarding groundwater management policy and storage volumes. John Tracy (AgriLife Research) added that this was a capstone graduate student project, and he did not expect much follow-up action on it.

6. BUSINESS DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

Draft Priority Groundwater Management Area (PGMA) White Paper

Mike Chadwick (TCEQ) presented a draft PGMA white paper and valuable feedback was provided by GWI Subcommittee members. The draft PGMA white paper would be updated and brought back for additional discussion at the next GWI Subcommittee meeting.

T.J. Helton (TSSWCB) left at 2:33 PM CDST, returned at 2:38 PM CDST, and was present for the remainder of the meeting.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jessica Uramkin (TCEQ) announced that the 2017 Request for Grant Applications (RFGA) would open on July 1, 2016 for projects that address nonpoint source (NPS) pollution problems across the state.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

9. ADJOURN

Chris Moore (RRC) adjourned the meeting at approximately 3:02 PM CDST.