

GROUNDWATER RESEARCH SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING RECORD

TIME AND DATE:

9:00 AM, April 27, 2005

LOCATION:

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality Campus, Building F, 2nd Floor, Meeting Room 2210, 12100 Park 35 Circle, Austin, Texas 78753.

PURPOSE OF MEETING:

Regular business meeting

AGENCIES/ENTITIES REPRESENTED:

Bureau of Economic Geology [BEG]
Texas Agricultural Experiment Station [TAES]
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality [TCEQ]
Texas Department of Agriculture [TDA]
Texas Water Development Board [TWDB]
United States Geological Survey [USGS]
Steve Walden Consulting

ATTENDEES:

Bridget Scanlon	BEG, Co-chair of the GW Research Subcommittee of the TGPC
Allan Jones	TAES, Co-chair of the GW Research Subcommittee
Mary Ambrose	TCEQ, Chairman of TGPC
Radu Boghici	TWDB
Alan Cherepon	TCEQ
Richard Eyster	TDA
Lynne Fahlquist	USGS
Joseph L. Peters	TCEQ

IN AUDIANCE:

John Meyer	TCEQ
Steve Walden	Steve Walden Consulting

MEETING SUMMARY:

Dr. Scanlon called the meeting to order at about 9:05 AM. The meeting started with everyone introducing themselves.

Dr. Scanlon introduced the first topic which would be to look at the white paper template we worked on at the last meeting. At the last meeting the attendees were divided into three subgroups, each group gathering together to develop what they thought were the essential points to be covered in a white paper. Since the last meeting, Dr. Scanlon combined the best features

from the work of the subgroups. She provided a copy to each of the attendees. A copy is attached to these minutes.

Dr. Scanlon asked if anyone had any additions or changes that they wanted to propose for the template. It was suggested that *Project Scale* be included as a subheading under the Methodology heading and that *Who Is to Perform the Research* be discussed as a subheading under the Cooperation Among Agencies heading.

Ms Ambrose brought up the subject of what a white paper is meant to accomplish. It enables collaboration between a research entity and a funding entity on a needed project.

The questions arose as to whether the white papers should be posted on the TGPC website or should they be collected as hardcopy in a notebook. It was determined that it would be useful to have both the notebook and website posting.

The discussion turned to the actual white papers that need to be composed. The priority projects are those listed as priority needs in the *Report to the Legislature*. They include the following research related topics.

1. Groundwater Availability Model (GAM) Funding
2. Data Collection to Support the GAM Program
3. Expanded Funding for Groundwater Sampling for Water Quality and Water Availability
4. Ambient Groundwater Monitoring for Inorganic Constituents
5. Research on Characterization of Brackish Water and Disposal of Desalination Reject Water in Saline Aquifers and Depleted Oil and Gas Reservoirs
6. Collaborative Agricultural and Hydrogeologic Studies on Nitrate in Texas Groundwater

Dr. Jones volunteered to work on item 5. He proposed that he put together a group consisting of members from the TWDB and University community to work as a team.

At this point in the meeting Dr. Scanlon gave a presentation entitled *California's Ambient Groundwater Monitoring Program and Applicability to Texas*. The presentation focused primarily on the dating of groundwater through the use of tritium and helium-3 analyses. One of the reasons to know groundwater age is the premise that young water is more vulnerable to contamination than old water. The advantage of analyzing for both tritium and helium-3 is that you can get an actual date for each sample, because you are measuring both the parent and daughter product. This is called the Tritium-Helium Age. By analyzing for both tritium and helium-3 one can get a more accurate calculation. The TWDB is doing only tritium analysis.

After the presentation the discussion continued on the conditions in California and the usefulness of knowing the age of groundwater. For example from the age gradient one can estimate the recharge rate. This type of analysis would be useful in Texas, also. It would give information that could be applied in the GAM program as well as in other areas. Perhaps a pilot program can be initiated in Texas similar to the California program.

Ms. Fahlquist introduced two USGS publications that were pertinent to the discussion. The first WRI 2003-4166, *Framework for a ground-water quality monitoring and assessment program for*

California, and the second Fact Sheet 2005-3022, Assessing the vulnerability of public-supply wells to contamination from urban, agricultural, and natural sources.

At the end of the meeting Ms. Ambrose indicated that there was a need to have an easily accessible central location with information on all the active groundwater research projects especially basic information of what the research is and who is performing it. This would help eliminate any duplications of effort and could engender cooperative efforts.

The meeting ended at approximately 10:06 AM.

Information Item: The decision was made at the TGPC meeting in the afternoon that the next meeting date for the TGPC, the ACS, and the GWRS will be August 11, 2005. The GWRS meeting will take place at 9:00 AM, at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality Campus, Building F, 2nd Floor, Meeting Room 2210, 12100 Park 35 Circle, Austin, Texas 78753.

Minutes prepared by Joseph L. Peters, June 2, 2005.

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References: *Activities of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee – Report to the 79th Legislature*

WRI 2003-4166, *Framework for a ground-water quality monitoring and assessment program for California*

Fact Sheet 2005-3022, *Assessing the vulnerability of public-supply wells to contamination from urban, agricultural, and natural sources.*

Handout: White Paper Template with changes suggested during meeting

Project Title

Statement of Problem (include background, existing research, shortfalls of existing research)

Objectives of Research

Benefits of Study

Methodology (include problem scale: local, regional, statewide)

Project Duration/Cost Estimate

Deliverables

Cooperation among agencies (include who is to perform research)

Funding Sources