

GROUNDWATER ISSUES SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE
TEXAS GROUNDWATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE
RECORD OF MEETING
Third Quarter Meeting, Fiscal Year 2026

Meeting Date: March 4, 2026
Meeting No.: 45

Place: videoconference
Room: N/A

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MEETING ATTENDANCE

Subcommittee Members

Kathy McCormack (Co-Chair)
Chris Heiligenstein (Co-Chair)
Rebecca Storms
Omar Valdez
David Villarreal
T.J. Helton

Adam Foster
Justin Thompson

Chris Hooyboer
Linzy Foster

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 State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB)
Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts (TAGD)
Bureau of Economic Geology of The University of Texas at Austin (UTBEG)
Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR)
United States Geological Survey (USGS)

Agency Staff

Katie Brice
Alan Cherepon
Kristin DeBone
Jennifer Delgado
Dan Hannah
April Hoh
Cindy Hooper
Natalie Houston
Peggy Hunka
James LaManna
Pecos McDonald
Eric Simon
Scott Underwood
Scout Vanderwal

Affiliation

Program

TCEQ Water Availability Division
TCEQ Water Availability Division
TCEQ Water Quality Planning Division
RRC
TCEQ Radioactive Materials Division
TCEQ Water Availability Division
TCEQ Water Availability Division
USGS
TCEQ Water Availability Division
TCEQ Water Supply Division
TDLR
TCEQ Water Availability Division
TCEQ Water Availability Division
DSHS

Interested Parties

Lorrie Council

Affiliation

Ground Water Protection Council (GWPC)

MEETING HANDOUTS

1. Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Groundwater Issues (GWI) Subcommittee Meeting Agenda, March 4, 2026
2. TGPC GWI Subcommittee Meeting Record, December 3, 2025
3. TGPC Agricultural Chemicals (AgChem) Task Force (TF) Status Report, March 4, 2026
4. TGPC Publications Status Report, March 4, 2026
5. Oil and Gas Produced Water news article, <https://www.mrt.com/business/oil/article/texas-produced-water-permits-21362783.php>
6. TWDB Brackish Groundwater report, <https://www.twdb.texas.gov/groundwater/bracs/studies/Woodbine/index.asp>

MEETING RECORD OF MARCH 4, 2026

1. PRE-MEETING REMINDERS

Before the meeting started, Chris Heiligenstein (RRC) 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 videoconference or teleconference at no cost.

Chris Heiligenstein (RRC), Co-Chair of the GWI Subcommittee, called the meeting to order at approximately 9:31 AM CST and then called the roll of GWI Subcommittee members. The representatives from Texas A&M AgriLife Research (AgriLife Research), Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service (AgriLife Extension), and Texas Tech University (TTU) were not present at the meeting.

3. STATUS REPORTS

Agricultural Chemicals Task Force

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

- The updated TCEQ Interagency Pesticide Database (IPD) and Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 pesticide monitoring results from the TCEQ Public Drinking Water program and TCEQ Source Water Protection program were uploaded into the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Central Data Exchange – Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) Grant Database website. An updated IPD report was still being prepared to replace the previous 2008 report. Numerous potential errors were identified with the USGS data between 2019 and 2025, and this was being investigated and corrected as needed.
- On December 9 – 10, 2025, Alan Cherepon (TCEQ) attended and staffed a tabletop display at the annual Texas Plant Protection Association Conference in Bryan, Texas. The TGPC exhibit booth included FIFRA grant-related information. This conference focused on water resources and agriculture.
- The Pesticides of Interest Tracking System (POINTS) database was no longer in service. Should this change, updates would be provided annually in December.
- The 2026 U.S. EPA/States/Tribes FIFRA Spring grant meeting would be hosted by New Mexico, most likely in May 2026.

TGPC Publications

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

- *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report – 2025* (“*Joint Report*”, TCEQ publication SFR-56-25)
 - Work on the 2025 *Joint Report* was in progress.
- *Activities and Recommendations of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee: Report to the 90th Legislature* (“*Legislative Report*”, SFR-47/26)
 - The TGPC Legislative Report Subcommittee was reactivated during the January 2026 TGPC meeting and would prepare the draft report for delivery by December 31, 2026.

Cindy Hooper (TCEQ) also reported on the following groundwater-related TCEQ publications:

- *Groundwater Assessment* (TCEQ publication AS-465/26) for the 2026 *Texas Integrated Report of Surface Water Quality for Clean Water Act Sections 305(b) and 303(d)* (“*Texas Integrated Report*”)
 - The 2026 *Groundwater Assessment* was being prepared and would be completed by April 2026.
 - The published report would be provided to TCEQ’s Water Quality Planning Division for inclusion in the 2026 *Texas Integrated Report*.
- *Priority Groundwater Management Areas and Groundwater Conservation Districts, Report to the 90th Texas Legislature* (“*PGMA/GCD Legislative Report*”, SFR-53/26)
 - Work on the *PGMA/GCD Legislative Report* would be initiated in the summer of 2026.

Adam Foster (TAGD) asked if the *PGMA/GCD Legislative Report* was published by the TGPC. Cindy Hooper (TCEQ) indicated that this joint TCEQ/TWDB report was published through TCEQ.

4. SET FUTURE MEETING DATE

The next TGPC GWI Subcommittee meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, June 3, 2026, at 9:30 AM CDT and it was planned as a videoconference.

5. DISCUSS CURRENT GROUNDWATER ISSUES

Oil and Gas Produced Water

State Senator Charles Perry recently reported that TCEQ would be issuing permits for the land application of treated oil and gas produced water in about a year (<https://www.mrt.com/business/oil/article/texas-produced-water-permits-21362783.php>).

Emerging Chemical and Biological Contaminants

James LaManna (TCEQ) reported that:

- The District of Columbia Court of Appeals had notified the U.S. EPA that they can not proceed with specifying Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) for only perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonate (PFOS) – they needed to proceed with the MCLs and human health Hazard Indexes (HIs) for PFOA, PFOS, and four additional per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). The U.S. EPA anticipated releasing an updated rule for just PFOA and PFOS in the summer of 2026.
- A proposed rule for perchlorate was available for review and comments were due by March 7, 2026. Very few Public Water Systems (PWSs) in Texas have detections of this contaminant – they would need to monitor for perchlorate for four quarters initially, and then once every nine years thereafter.

Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR)

Dan Hannah (TCEQ) reported that TCEQ rules had been adopted addressing Senate Bill (SB) 616 which was related to Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) projects that transect a portion of the Edwards Aquifer. This bill affected ASR injection wells in Williamson County east of Interstate Highway 35 and in Medina County. These wells needed to fully penetrate the Edwards Aquifer, the target storage formation had to fully underlie the Edwards Aquifer, and the injected water had to be of drinking water quality. In addition, ASR activity was picking up recently with some permit applications coming in for Bell County.

Abandoned Water Wells

There was no discussion of this topic at the meeting.

Groundwater Quality Monitoring

Rebecca Storms (TWDB) reported that:

- Planning for their FY 2026 water quality sampling season was nearing completion, their Springs Monitoring Program activities would start that month, and their well sampling activities would begin by April 2026.
- They were targeting four major aquifers to sample this season (Carrizo-Wilcox, Hueco-Mesilla Bolson, Pecos Valley, and Seymour Aquifers), as well as a few minor aquifers located near these major aquifers. TWDB is on a four-year cycle for sampling all of the major and minor aquifers in the state, and, with the assistance from other entities across the state, water levels are monitored in all of the major and minor aquifers every year.
- They were also tentatively planning on a follow-up springs study with TPWD where they would visit up to four previously-sampled spring locations twice this season.
- Staff had been working with TCEQ on obtaining PWS raw groundwater data to upload into the TWDB Groundwater Database.

David Villarreal (TDA) asked about the groundwater contaminants for which TWDB monitored. Rebecca Storms (TWDB) indicated that they monitored for naturally-occurring contaminants (e.g., metals, nutrients, alkalinity, Total Dissolved Solids (TDS), etc.), plus atrazine through the TWDB/TCEQ Cooperative Monitoring Program, but that anthropogenic contaminants like PFAS and microplastics and nanoplastics (MNPs) were outside of their scope of work.

Brackish Groundwater

In October 2025, TWDB published Report 392, a characterization of the geospatial distribution of brackish groundwater in the Woodbine Aquifer. The final report, a four-page summary, and GIS files were available on their website (<https://www.twdb.texas.gov/groundwater/bracs/studies/Woodbine/index.asp>). They found that this aquifer contained almost 73 million acre-feet of slightly saline groundwater and close to 48 million acre-feet of moderately saline groundwater.

Evapotranspiration Networks

Rebecca Storms (TWDB) reported that:

- The TexMesonet Advisory Committee submitted their 2025 Recommendations Report to the TWDB Executive Administrator on December 21, 2025. The recommendations were related to TWDB and partner stations, improving data availability and product dissemination, and establishing a formal partnership with the Texas Department of Emergency Management (TDEM). Lauren Bos (TWDB, lauren.bos@twdb.texas.gov) could be contacted for a copy of the report.
- Since September 2025, TexMesonet had installed four weather stations within GCD boundaries (i.e., Wintergarden, Uvalde County, Saratoga, and Southeast Texas).

David Villarreal (TDA) asked if the recommendations from the TexMesonet report had been shared with the TGPC Legislative Report Subcommittee or Water Conservation Advisory Council (WCAC, <https://savetexaswater.org/>). Rebecca Storms (TWDB) was not aware of whether this information had already been shared, but she indicated that it certainly could be.

Others

Rebecca Storms (TWDB) reported that the application period for their GCD grants was still open and would close on March 13, 2026. Information could be found on their website (https://www.twdb.texas.gov/about/contract_admin/request/index.asp).

David (TDA) reported that the Texas Produced Water Consortium (TxPWC, <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/research/tx-water-consortium/>) was currently very active with a number of monthly work group meetings.

6. BUSINESS DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

Discussion of White Papers Under Development

There was no discussion of white papers at the meeting.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Linzy Foster (USGS, lfoster@usgs.gov) announced that their websites were currently undergoing a lot of updates and that she could be contacted if anyone was having trouble finding specific information.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment at the meeting.

9. ADJOURN

Chris Heiligenstein (RRC) adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:11 AM CST.