

**SULPHUR RIVER BASIN AUTHORITY
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JULY 14, 2010**

Present:

Michael Russell, SRBA President

Jennifer Delk, TCEQ

Greg Bischof, Texarkana Gazette

Mike Bransford, LWP - COE

J. D. Phillips, Texarkana Water Utility

James Presley, FUSE

Yvonne Lubujinski, ATCOG

Annette Quinn, ATCOG

Shirley Shumake, DeKalb, TX

Mike VanBuskirk, TCEQ

Wendell Davis

Marjorie Chandler

Bill King, Texarkana Water Utility

Delores McCright, Texarkana College

Nick Barber, Texarkana College

Nathan Drake, Texarkana College

Jay Wommack, Texarkana, TX

Molly Clements Berridge, Texarkana, TX

Dr. Jane Morris, New Boston, TX

David Neeley, SRBA

Nancy Rose, SRBA

Mike Buttram, Texarkana College

Patricia Harman, Texarkana College

Agenda Item #1: Call to Order and Roll Call – 1:30 P.M.

The meeting was called to order by Michael Russell, SRBA President at 1:30 P.M. Mr. Russell asked that each person in attendance state their name and who they represent.

Agenda Item #2: Approval of Minutes for July 23, 2009

President Russell stated that with no suggested changes, the minutes were approved as presented.

Agenda Item #3: Report on Texas Stream Team & Volunteer Monitoring

Delores McCright, TC professor of Biology, is the contact for this project and provides materials and training for the TC Stream Team and the community. Students that participate in the project select their own streams and develop a monitoring plan.

Nick Barber, TC student and Texas Stream Team member, reported on his involvement with the program. During the past school year, over 50 individuals were trained, including 32 that trained for *E. coli*. Tests required for training include D.O., pH, conductivity, & secchi disc readings with all data submitted to TCEQ. Monitoring required over 2000 mile of travel and 1035 hours of effort. The next training session is scheduled for September 18, 2010 at 9 AM.

Nathan Drake, TC student and Texas Stream Team member, reported on the annual Texas Stream Team & River Institute Meeting on June 26, 2010. The Texarkana College team was recognized for their volunteer efforts.

Delores McCright, team leader, wrapped up the discussion with a historical summary of the TC volunteer efforts. This group has provided 19 years of monitoring data that includes comparisons of urban streams vs. ponds and other area water bodies. Her opinion is that conditions, in general, are fine, and that the seasonal changes observed are normal. She additionally commented that the drought in this area has affected natural vegetation and that

citizens should not allow activities that would reduce the amount of available water in this region.

Molly Berridge commented that she thought it was appropriate to connect cultural and economic issues with the amount of water available.

Agenda Item #4: Report on Water Grants - ATCOG

Yvonne Lubujinski, ATCOG representative, is the new provider for water grants. She reported that TCEQ has raised limits that define “impairments” and that if limits are raised, some bodies will be delisted as “impaired”. The current focus for grants is more on education regarding water quality management activities (conservation, lawn care, household chemicals, pet waste, and ways to prevent contamination of water). Information is available at www.atcog.org. Grants are due in early September.

Agenda Item #5: Report on Current Monitoring in the Basin

Mike VanBuskirk, TCEQ aquatic scientist in the Tyler office, discussed aquatic life assessments being carried out on 2 Texarkana streams; Cowhorn Creek and Swampoodle Creek. His PowerPoint presentation outlined the reasons for the study and what types of information were being collected to carry out this assessment (chemical analyses, physical evaluation including habitat assessment, and biological evaluation that includes benthic and fish surveys). This is a 2 year study that will require 4 visits for habitat, biological, and chemical studies and 10 sets of twenty four hour D. O. readings and flow measurements.

There was some discussion of regional standards and how ecoregions have standards that are tailored for each depending on available data. Originally the standards were “statewide” rather than regional. Historical data is compared to tailor these regional standards.

Dr. Mike Buttram of Texarkana College discussed current monitoring going on in the Sulphur River Basin. His PowerPoint presentation provided maps of the basin with the locations of all sites being monitored. He stated that each year was a long-term project that required considerable effort that involved planning the project, submitting a written proposal and development of a QAPP, conducting the actual monitoring, and submission of the resulting data to TCEQ. Final reports are posted on the website at www.sulphurr.org.

Agenda Item #6: Review of Basin Highlights Report & Web Page

Dr. Mike Buttram discussed the new Basin Highlights Report prepared this spring and requested input and comments from citizens and committee members. All Summary and Highlights reports are also available online at the SRBA website.

Agenda Item #7: Question and Answer Period

Molly Berridge asked if there was any monitoring being conducted in Fannin County. Dr. Buttram replied that there were no studies being conducted by SRBA, but Dallas had inquired about previous studies.

Dr. Jane Morris asked if there were any special study results for Rice Creek available and reminded the audience that leachate from the New Boston landfill enters Rice Creek. She stated that citizens were concerned about the land fill and that the problem w/Rice needs more attention. She requested that Rice Creek undergo a special study on par with the study at Days Creek. Dr. Buttram and Delores McCright agreed that additional studies could be arranged to address this issue.

Mike Buttram announced that the monitoring results would be posted on the internet at the completion of the monitoring this year.

There being no further questions or comment, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Patricia L. Harman on August 17, 2010.