

**MEETING MINUTES
ANGELINA & NECHES RIVER AUTHORITY
CLEAN RIVERS PROGRAM**

UPPER NECHES RIVER BASIN
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 2007
FREDONIA HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTER
10:00 A.M.

I. Welcome & Introductions

Matt Romig welcomed everyone and introduced the Angelina & Neches River Authority (ANRA) staff and allowed the Steering Committee Members and guests in attendance to introduce themselves. The following is a list of the members and guests in attendance:

Greg Bryant	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), Austin
R. Justin Daniel	City of Nacogdoches
Amanda Romig	City of Nacogdoches
Matthew McBroom	Stephen F. Austin State Univ.- College of Forestry
Worth Whitehead	Rusk Soil and Water Conservation District #447
Andy Kuklish	Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB)
Walter West	Sam Rayburn Friends
Mike Norris	City of Tyler
Jeff Lauman	Texas Railroad Commission, Kilgore
Anne Tindell	Resident Nacogdoches County
Adrian Van Dellen	Area Resident
Art Crowe	TCEQ, Tyler Region
Rob Cook	TCEQ, Tyler Region
Mike Prater	TCEQ, Tyler Region
Christine Diamond	Lufkin Daily News
Douglas McCoy	City of Diboll
Kenneth Williams	City of Diboll
Billy Sims	KSA Engineers
Charlie Luse	City of Alto

The ANRA staff in attendance included Clean Rivers Program Coordinator, Matt Romig and General Manager, Kenneth Reneau.

Matt Romig reviewed the meeting agenda and asked for any questions prior to beginning the presentation.

Mr. Romig provided an overview of the Texas Clean Rivers Program (CRP) which is a state-wide watershed management program. Maps showing the 23 river and coastal basins in Texas, ANRA's Upper Neches River Basin study area, and the designated stream segments in the basin

were presented.

Mr. Romig talked about the recent accomplishments achieved through the CRP Steering Committee. This included recognition of Mr. Walter West's previous efforts which resulted in the planning of a continuous water quality monitoring station in the upper Angelina River arm of Sam Rayburn Reservoir. Mr. Romig also recognized the ongoing efforts of the Lake Palestine volunteer water quality monitoring group which has been conducting water quality monitoring on Lake Palestine for 4 years. Mr. Romig also gave recognition to the ANRA Environmental Laboratory which has conducted all routine sample analyses for the Clean Rivers Program and other water quality monitoring programs in the basin since FY2004. The ANRA Laboratory will be prepared to apply for certification under the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Certification.

The City of Tyler got involved in the Clean Rivers Program in Sept. 2003 and they have been monitoring four stations in the upper basin around the City of Tyler. They bring samples to the ANRA laboratory on a quarterly basis. Since Tyler's monitoring program is included in ANRA's Upper Neches basin-wide Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP), the data will be entered into ANRA's database and submitted to the TCEQ along with other CRP data. This allows the data collected by the City of Tyler to be included in future state water quality inventories and basin assessment reports.

II. Work Plans and Allocation of Resources

Mr. Romig's presentation included a review of the FY 2006-07 CRP workplan and budget. The total FY 06-07 CRP contract amount is \$349,164 and the CRP annual allocations were \$174,582 for FY 2006 and \$174,582 for FY 2007.

A CRP workplan summary was presented and included some the activities in each task. The following six tasks were discussed along with a brief review of the deliverables that will be completed in each task.

Task 1: Progress Reports, Cost Accounting Reports, Vouchers, TCEQ Fiscal Review

Task 2: Coordinated Monitoring Meeting, QAPP amendments, NELAC Status Report.

Task 3: Water Quality Monitoring - CRP quarterly monitoring includes 24 routine stations, 7 routine stations on Lake Sam Rayburn monitored 9 times a year. Diurnal monitoring at 2 stations biannually and Bacteria and in-stream flow monitoring at 2 stations 6 times per year.

Task 4: SWQM data files, web postings, coordinated monitoring schedule, TCEQ request forms.

Task 5: Data Analysis and Reporting - annual Basin Highlights Report

Task 6: Stakeholder Participation & Public Outreach - CRP steering committee meetings, Public outreach activities, volunteer monitoring activities, water quality presentations, and ANRA website postings and updates.

Mr. Romig briefly discussed the development of the upcoming FY 2008-2009 CRP workplan and budget. The handout showed the FY 2006 and FY 2007 budget allocations for all planning agencies in the Texas Clean Rivers Program. The Neches River Basin is allocated \$698,328 over the next two years. The funds are split evenly between ANRA and the LNVA (Lower Neches River Authority) in Beaumont.

III. Basin Highlights Report

The 2007 Upper Neches Basin Highlights Report is an annual report which reviews the CRP activities in the basin, provides a status of the water quality in the basin, and includes an update on water quality projects in the basin. A link to the report was e-mailed to the ANRA Steering Committee Members and posted to ANRA's website prior to the meeting, so it could be reviewed and any questions or comments could be discussed at the meeting. Several copies of the report were also made available at the meeting.

Mr. Romig talked about the different types of monitoring in the basin, and the parameters that are analyzed. Then he went on to talk about the water quality data review which takes up the majority of the report. The data review and water body rankings in the Draft report are based on the TCEQ's 2004 Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List dated Nov. 23, 2004. Fish symbols are used to rank the water quality of each water body included in the 2004 assessment. If a water body received four fish, it was considered Exceptional, three fish is considered Good, two fish is Fair, and one fish is considered Poor. There is also an Unknown category represented by a large question mark where insufficient or no data is available for a water body. The information in the Final version of ANRA's 2007 Basin Highlights Report will be based on the TCEQ's 2006 Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List which is currently in its draft form.

IV. Basin-wide Water Quality Monitoring Assessment and Coordination

Mr. Romig provided an overview of the TCEQ Draft 2006 Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List (released March 19, 2007) and provided copies of the Draft 303(d) List pertaining to the Upper Neches river segments in the handout packets. The period of record for the targeted assessment was December 1999 to February 2004. Mr. Romig mentioned that the Draft 2006 Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List is currently in a 30 day public comment period ending on April 18, 2007. The parameters on the 303(d) List for the basin segments include bacteria, lead in water, zinc in water, low pH, mercury in fish tissue, and depressed dissolved oxygen. All impaired waterbodies are Category 5C with a D ranking which means additional data and information will be collected before a TMDL is scheduled.

Mr. Romig presented information on the basin monitoring activities. They include ANRA's monitoring programs, the City of Tyler monitoring program, and the TCEQ regional offices monitoring program (Tyler & Beaumont). ANRA's current FY 07 monitoring schedule includes 24 routine monitoring stations, 7 additional stations on the Sam Rayburn Reservoir, and 2 intensive monitoring stations looking at bacteria. Maps were shown depicting the locations of these monitoring stations. A graphic was presented showing the parameters being monitored by ANRA and the City of Tyler. Mr. Romig presented another map showing all the stations being

monitored in the basin. Then he went on to explain the coordinated monitoring schedule (handout provided) which lists the sampling locations, responsible agency, type of monitoring and parameter categories. He briefly discussed the types of monitoring on the schedule: Routine monitoring (RT) is quarterly baseline monitoring, Special Studies (SS), Diurnal (DI) 24 hour measurements, Intensive Study (IS) monitoring is designed to target specific areas and/or better characterize water quality, and TMDL (TM) monitoring to support a TMDL project.

FY07 Coordinated Monitoring Schedule is available to view on the web (with Maps) at: <http://cms.lcra.org>

Mr. Romig also reported on the Continuous Water Quality Monitoring Stations in the basin. This includes a station planned for Lake Palestine near the City of Tyler's raw water intake and the station planned for the Upper Angelina River Arm of Sam Rayburn Reservoir. Both of these stations are scheduled to be installed by the end of the year. Handouts were provided.

Mr. Romig then provided a report on the Abitibi Grant Funds Project administered by ANRA. Grant funds were provided by Abitibi to install on-site wastewater treatment systems for low-income families around Lake Sam Rayburn. This project has completed 37 new septic systems and 2 system repairs to date. The remaining funds will support the installation of 5 additional new systems. A map was also presented that showed the locations of the systems installed under this project.

V. Basin Objectives, Priorities, and Other Water Quality Issues

Mr. Romig explained the need for input and feedback from the steering committee to determine the objectives and priorities for the basin. Mr. Bryant pointed out that it is very important for the steering committee members and stakeholders to make recommendations and requests to the staff at ANRA and TCEQ.

Mr. Romig asked for recommendations for new basin objectives and priorities to be emailed to him at mrromig@anra.org or to call him at 936-633-6435

A recommendation was made by Mr. Walter West to have some means of posting steering committee questions and suggested topics of discussion to the ANRA website prior to the meeting. Mr. Romig suggested some type of forum or posting section that may be added to the ANRA website. Mr. Bryant suggested that ANRA compile a list of topics and concerns throughout the year and send it out to all of the steering committee members prior to the meeting each year.

Mr. West also asked why it took so long to get the 2006 303(d) list out to the public. Mr. Bryant said that the TCEQ lost some of its database tools needed for this task and that the adoption of a new database delayed the process.

Mr. Adrian Van Dellen showed some photos taken a Lake B.A. Steinhagen of a suspicious metallic-like substance leaching out of the soil. Mr. Romig suggested that this be shown to LNVA and/or the TCEQ Beaumont region since it falls within the boundary of the Lower

Neches Basin.

Mr. Van Dellen asked if there was a schedule available for fish tissue sampling. Mr. Art Crowe with the TCEQ said that all fish tissue sampling for the current year would show up on the online coordinated monitoring schedule.

Mr. Jeff Lauman suggested that ANRA look at dropping some of the metals that are not of great concern in this area, such as silver, and adding mercury for FY2008 metals monitoring.

Mr. Lauman asked if the TCEQ had an emergency response team to deal with hazardous spills affecting water quality. Mr. Rob Cooke said that they do not and that a contractor would need to be called immediately to begin the clean-up process.

Mr. Lauman also suggested that ANRA develop a “wish list” on the website to help prioritize the needs of the program and also look to private industry for additional funding.

Ms. Anne Tindell asked if, among all of the negative findings in the basin, were there any success stories. Mr. Greg Bryant commented that “the more we look, the more we find” and yes there are success stories, but once a water body is listed on the 303(d) list, it is very difficult to get it removed.

Ms. Tindell also commented that she takes Boy Scouts canoeing and wanted to know if there was some risk to the kids with the widespread bacteria problems in the area. Mr. Romig said that there is always some risk of bacteria in natural water bodies and that it is a good idea not to swim in these waters after a rain event because more bacteria gets washed into the water.

Mr. Daniel with the City of Nacogdoches suggested that Lake Nacogdoches may also benefit from a continuous water quality monitoring station since the lake is a source of drinking water for the City of Nacogdoches.

Ms. Christine Diamond recommended having someone from the Health Department attend the meetings in the future to help answer some of the “Health Advisory” related questions pertaining to Fish Advisories for mercury in fish tissue.

Mr. Romig and Mr. Bryant thanked everyone for attending the meeting and providing their valuable input.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.