

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

UPPER NECHES RIVER BASIN
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2009
FREDONIA HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTER
1:30 P.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:

Mike Prater	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (Tyler Region)
Natalie Bell	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (Central Office)
R. Justin Daniel	City of Nacogdoches
Louis Bronaugh	ANRA Board of Directors
Monty Shank	Upper Neches Rural Municipal Water Authority
Jeff Lauman	Texas Railroad Commission, Kilgore
Anne Tindell	Citizen of Nacogdoches
Ken Awtry	Piney Woods Resource Conservation & Development
Greg Conley	TX Parks and Wildlife (TPWD)
Lucas Gregory	TX Water Resources Institute (TWRI)
Aaron Wendt	Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB)
Mitch Conine	Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB)
Anthony Castilaw	Castilaw Environmental Services
Trey Anderson	Castilaw Environmental Services

The ANRA staff in attendance included Clean Rivers Project Manager: Matt Romig, General Manager: Kelley Holcomb and Office Manager: Teresa Trotter.

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. The Clean Rivers Program video produced by the TCEQ in late 2007 was then shown to the group.

Mr. Romig gave recognition to the ANRA Environmental Laboratory which has conducted all routine sample analyses for the Clean Rivers Program (with the exception of chlorophyll-a and metals) and other water quality monitoring programs in the basin since FY2004. The ANRA Laboratory is now compliant with and has been operating under an interim certification under the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program.

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 is 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 state water quality inventories and basin assessment reports.

II. Basin Highlights Report

The Draft 2009 Upper Neches Basin Highlights Report is an annual report which reviews the previous year's 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. The data review and water body rankings in the Draft report are based on the TCEQ's 2008 Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List dated December 21, 2007.

III. Work Plans and Allocation of Resources

Mr. Romig's presentation included a review of the FY 2008-2009 CRP workplan and budget. The total FY 08-09 CRP contract amount is \$349,164 and the CRP annual allocations were \$174,582 for FY 2008 and \$174,582 for FY 2009.

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, 24-hour monitoring at 4 stations three times per year, and Bacteria and in-stream flow monitoring at 1 station 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 and Summary Reports.

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 FY 2009-2010 CRP workplan and budget. The Upper Neches River Basin is allocated \$358,164 over the next two years. The funds must be split over the two year contract period.

IV. Basin-wide Water Quality Monitoring Assessment and Coordination

Mr. Romig provided an overview of the TCEQ's 2008 Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List. Mr. Romig mentioned that the 2008 Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List contains 1 new listing for elevated bacteria levels in the Neches River above Lake Palestine, 2 de-listings for Neches River below Lake Palestine (bacteria criteria met) and Lake Sam Rayburn (listed in error for low D.O.). Parameters for other listings in the basin include bacteria, pH concerns, metals in water, and depressed dissolved oxygen. ANRA will be conducting additional metals in water sampling during FY 2009. 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 09 monitoring schedule includes 24 routine monitoring stations, 1 monitoring station looking at bacteria and stream flow, and 4 stations being monitored over a 24-hour period. 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 which lists the sampling locations, responsible agency, type of monitoring and parameter categories. He briefly discussed the types of monitoring on the schedule

The FY09 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 (CWQM) Stations in the basin. This includes one station that is now up and running on Lake Palestine. The station planned for the Upper Angelina River Arm of Sam Rayburn Reservoir run into some problems involving access to the area in which the station needs be located. The

Angelina River just above Lake Sam Rayburn can be extremely difficult to navigate especially when the water level is low. The water level in that area also tends to fluctuate quite a bit during times of heavy rains and flooding. This extreme change in water level could be damaging and even detrimental to a fixed monitoring station. Given the input from the steering committee members as well as TCEQ water quality monitoring staff, it has been decided that the CWQM station for the upper Angelina arm of Sam Rayburn will be cancelled until a more suitable location has been found.

V. Review and discuss the 2008 water quality inventory and 303(d) list

The TCEQ's 2008 Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List was released in draft form on 12/01/2007, and the final version was approved by the EPA on 07/09/2008. Mr. Romig mentioned that the 2008 Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List contains 1 new listing for elevated bacteria levels in the Neches River above Lake Palestine, 2 de-listings for Neches River below Lake Palestine (bacteria criteria met) and Lake Sam Rayburn (listed in error for low D.O.). Parameters for other listings in the basin include bacteria, pH concerns, metals in water, and depressed dissolved oxygen.

The 2008 Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) List can be found at the following web address:

<http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/compliance/monitoring/water/quality/data/08twqi/twqi08.htm>
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VI. Special Project to address high bacteria levels in the Attoyac Bayou watershed presented by Lucas Gregory with the Texas Water Resources Institute at Texas A&M University

The TX State Soil and Water Conservation Board is currently reviewing an application for grant funds to address high bacteria levels in the Attoyac Bayou watershed.

The proposed approach is to collect additional data in the watershed and try to determine the cause and source of bacteria and better characterize the hydrology and the current elevated E. coli levels present. We will also be assessing the true use of the water body. It is currently designated as a primary contact recreation site which may or may not be the true use. The ultimate goal will be to develop the watershed protection plan to reduce the E. coli levels in the water.

The parties that are currently involved in this proposal are the Texas Water Resources Institute at TX A&M University, Stephen F. Austin State University, the Angelina & Neches River Authority, Castilaw Environmental Services, and the Piney Woods Resource Conservation & Development.

One of the key tasks will be to coordinate the stakeholder and local citizen involvement. Other tasks will be to conduct a watershed survey, update the GIS information that is

currently available, conduct surface water quality monitoring, recreational use analysis, and the development the watershed protection plan.

VII. Comments

Mr. Romig was asked to explain more on the Public Outreach Program mentioned on the video. He responded that this is a volunteer monitoring program that is now called the Texas Stream Team. This program allows volunteers to collect samples after being given training and equipment by either Mr. Romig or the Texas Stream Team out of San Marcus. Another component of the Public Outreach Program is disseminating information through talks with schools, civic groups and public meetings, such as this one.

There was a general discussion to answer the question of gas drilling and spills impacting the Angelina and Neches river basin. Mr. Jeff Lauman with the Texas Railroad Commission gave an informative overview of these activities in our area. He also complimented Mr. Romig and ANRA's Clean Rivers Program on the good job that they do, especially within their budget constraints.

Mr. Holcomb spoke with the group to answer the question on the standing of Lake Columbia. The EIS should be ready for submittal in the upcoming months and ANRA hopes to hear a decision on the permit from the Corps of Engineers by the end of the year.

There were no further questions or comments. The program was concluded at 3:20 PM.