



MEETING MINUTES

UPPER NECHES RIVER BASIN STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, JUNE 26, 2014 1:30 PM
NORMAN ACTIVITY CENTER
526 E. COMMERCE STREET, JACKSONVILLE, TX 75766

Attendees:

Brian Sims	Angelina & Neches River Authority (ANRA)
Dyan Stanford	Angelina & Neches River Authority (ANRA)
Stephanie Hector	Angelina & Neches River Authority (ANRA)
Jeremiah Poling	Angelina & Neches River Authority (ANRA)
Lucas Gregory	Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI)
Allison Fischer	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
Joe Martin	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
Mike Prater	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
Leah Taylor	Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Research (TIAER)
Monty D. Shank	Upper Neches River Municipal Water Authority (UNRMWA)
Travis Tidwell	Meadows Center for Water and the Environment

I. Welcome & Introductions

Mr. Brian Sims welcomed everyone to the meeting and began with a brief overview of what will be discussed on the agenda today. He noted that ANRA's function in the basin, which covers 17 counties, is composed of three major divisions: General Administration, Field Operations Division, and Environmental Division.

II. Overview of the Clean Rivers Program

Mr. Sims provided a brief history of the Clean Rivers Program (CRP), explaining that CRP was established in 1991 by the legislature to monitor, maintain, and improve water quality. The Upper Neches Basin is split between ANRA and Lower Neches Valley Authority (LNVA). The Upper Neches Basin's portion of the CRP budget is \$329,766, which is reduced from previous years. Many agencies, due to budget cuts, are reducing

the number of sample sites; however, ANRA is adjusting salary allocations to allow for more sites to be sampled.

III. ANRA's Water Quality Monitoring Program

Mr. Sims explained the breakdown of monitoring sites within the Upper Neches Basin. ANRA will be monitoring 40 sites per quarter, which is an increase from the 26 previous sites in the past. TCEQ will be monitoring 36 sites, and LNVA will be monitoring 6 sites within the upper portion of the basin. The added sites for ANRA come from the following: two sites on Lake Striker, two tributaries to Lake Striker – Bowles Creek and Johnson Creek, Ayish Bayou, two tributaries of the Attoyac Bayou – Lake Naconiche and West Creek, two Cedar Creek locations from the City of Lufkin, two Hurricane Creek locations from the City of Lufkin, Bayou Carrizo, and two sites on Jack Creek.

Mr. Sims highlighted ANRA's being awarded a 319 grant for on-site sewage facility support and remediation. He discussed the characteristics of the project along with its goals and objectives. Based on this project, ANRA will begin monitoring 5 sites beginning in FY 2015 that were previously monitored within the Attoyac Bayou WPP. Those sites include: Naconiche Creek at FM 95, Big Iron Ore Creek at FM 354, Waffelow Creek at FM 95, Terrapin Creek at SH 95, and Attoyac Bayou at FM 138.

Mr. Joe Martin asked if Mr. Sims knows what the bacteria levels were previously. Mr. Sims stated that they were above the primary contact recreation limit, but below the secondary contact recreation limit. Mr. Martin asked if the additional tributary sites from the Attoyac Bayou project will be listed in 2015, but Mr. Lucas Gregory replied that he does not think that they will.

Mr. Sims completed his presentation by noting the equipment and accredited tests that have been added as a result of the grant.

IV. Texas Stream Team Volunteer Monitoring Program

Mr. Travis Tidwell presented information regarding Texas Stream Team, which is funded by an EPA 319 grant. There are two branches within Texas Stream Team – education and outreach along with water quality monitoring. There are three phases within the water quality training provided by Texas Stream Team – demonstration by an instructor, trainees measure with instructor guidance, and trainees measure and compare with the instructor who does not help. Once certified, individuals monitor sites monthly.

Mr. Tidwell explained the parameters measured, advanced training offered, and then how the data is utilized once it is collected. He noted that Texas Stream Team is now implementing a paddling program to encourage paddlers to get involved since they can monitor locations that those on land cannot reach.

V. Recreational Use Attainability Analysis for Kickapoo Creek, Neches River Above Lake Palestine, Prairie Creek, Mud Creek, and West Mud Creek

Ms. Leah Taylor explained her work for the TIAER in conducting Recreational Use Attainability Analysis (RUAA) to determine if primary contact recreation is appropriate or if another category should be assigned. Currently, Prairie Creek, Kickapoo Creek in Henderson County, Mud Creek, West Mud Creek, and the Neches River above Lake Palestine are all not meeting the water quality standard for primary contact recreation. Three components of a RUAA are historical information review, interviews, and field surveys. Ms. Taylor discussed RUAA survey sites within the 5 creeks listed for bacteria impairment and provided pictures taken at those sites. Field surveys are planned for the coming weeks and months and Ms. Taylor discussed those with attendees.

VI. Attoyac Bayou Watershed Protection Plan

Mr. Lucas Gregory explained his project regarding the Attoyac Bayou Watershed Protection Plan (WPP). The goal of the project was to collect data in order to foster lower levels of *E. coli*. Altogether there were 14 sites tested, which *E. coli* was found to be above water quality standards, but not to a great degree. Mr. Gregory discussed what a load duration curve is and how the project looked to possible causes being septic systems and/or animals. An RUAA was conducted and Mr. Gregory explained the findings from that analysis.

Mr. Tidwell asked what the dividing line is between being classified as a secondary contact recreation 1 and a secondary contact recreation 2. Mr. Martin explained that contact would have to be pretty infrequent, with there being lots of debris and difficulty in getting through an area. Mr. Tidwell asked if Mr. Gregory's project area is a secondary contact recreation 2. Mr. Gregory explained that his area is considered primary contact recreation, but he hopes to recommend it being altered to a secondary contact recreation 1.

Bacteria Source Tracking results were discussed through the use of pie charts. Mr. Martin questioned why some were listed with a decimal, such as .5. Mr. Gregory noted this could occur when a coyote cross-references a cow, it just depends on how they match in the library. Mr. Sims asked if non-avian is split further or if it is kept together. Mr. Gregory explained that they are kept together in order to keep the confidence of the report elevated.

Mr. Gregory noted that their findings lead to a WPP. He highlighted the chapters they have created within their WPP and noted that they plan to submit it to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for review next week. The EPA will then begin reviewing it for the next thirty to sixty days. Mr. Tidwell noted that there is a chapter on field days and monitoring. Mr. Gregory agreed and stated that the stakeholders wanted

training and field data included within the report.

VII. ANRA's FY 2014 Basin Highlights Report

Mr. Sims noted that Mr. Martin is in town this week and gave him the floor. Mr. Martin informed those in attendance that he is in town this week to give presentations on RUUA projects on five streams: three around Lufkin, one in San Augustine, and one at East Fork Angelina. He noted that they will begin field work in those areas this weekend.

Mr. Sims explained that ANRA normally provides a draft Basin Highlights Report in April for review, but since the meeting was postponed, the final copy is now available. He explained where individuals can go to retrieve a copy of the report, or who they can contact at ANRA in order to receive more.

VIII. Steering Committee Member Recommendations and Concerns

Mr. Sims opened the floor for comments, concerns, and/or goals. Mr. Gregory asked how the watershed planning process is going. Allison Fischer stated there were no new projects, and Mr. Sims agreed noting that most are now covered under RUAs being conducted by TCEQ or the TSSWCB. The meeting was concluded at 3:00 p.m.

