



MEETING MINUTES

UPPER NECHES RIVER BASIN STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MAY 30, 2018 1:00 PM
TEXAS FORESTRY ASSOCIATION
1903 ATKINSON DRIVE, LUFKIN, TX 75901

Attendees:

Jeremiah Poling	Angelina & Neches River Authority (ANRA)
Dylan Coleman	Angelina & Neches River Authority (ANRA)
Dyan Stanford	Angelina & Neches River Authority (ANRA)
Matthew McBroom	Stephen F. Austin State University (SFASU)
Cheryl Scott	Stephen F. Austin State University (SFASU)
Dania Grundmann	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
Becca DuPont	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
Mike Prater	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
Adrian T. Van Dellen	Sentinels
Lucas Gregory	Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI)
Amy Uyen Truong	Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI)
Ed Rhodes	Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI)
Leah Taylor	Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Research (TIAER)
Michael Jones	Texas Stream Team
Chris Crenshaw	Nacogdoches Soil and Water Conservation District
Don Lymbery	Angelina County Judge - Elect
Sally Sowell	Diver's Depot

I. Welcome & Introductions

Mr. Jeremiah Poling, with Angelina & Neches River Authority (ANRA), welcomed everyone to the meeting and began with a brief overview of discussion topics on the agenda. He explained the operations of ANRA and its structure.

II. Overview of the Clean Rivers Program

Mr. Poling provided a brief history of the Clean Rivers Program (CRP), noting its funding sources and purpose. ANRA's CRP budget by category was presented and it was noted that a majority of funds relate to personnel expenses to carry out the work of the Program. The presentation highlighted ANRA's water quality monitoring activities in the Upper Neches River Basin.

III. Updates to ANRA's Water Quality Monitoring Program and The 2018 Basin Highlights Report

ANRA currently monitors 40 stations for conventionals, bacteria, and field parameters, and one for bacteria and field parameters. Due to an increase in analysis costs, ANRA will be discontinuing the testing of Chlorophyll-A and Pheophytin-A on 19 of the monitored sites for the remainder of this contract period. Chlorophyll-A will still be monitored at the most downstream site on each segment, at dam sites on reservoirs and upstream/downstream of treatment plants. A map listing sampling sites was discussed. Mr. Adrian Van Dellen asked if sites on the map noted in purple were being eliminated, but Mr. Poling explained those sites were being increased to all sample parameters, not just bacteria as in the past. Mr. Don Lymbery questioned which group monitors the 103 E. site, which Mr. Poling noted is conducted by TCEQ Region 10 out of Beaumont.

IV. Updates on Nonpoint Source Grant Projects in the Neches River Basin

Ms. Amy Truong provided an update on the Attoyac Bayou Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) Projects to include monitoring being done and meetings and educational opportunities that have come up recently. Currently the project is looking to work in agriculture-based programs with the help of Nacogdoches Soil and Water Conservation District. On-Site sewage facilities replacement is also ongoing through a project with Pineywoods Resource Conservation and Development.

Ms. Cheryl Scott presented information on her thesis work pertaining to results of Best Management Practices (BMPs) that have been implemented as part of the Attoyac WPP. Ms. Scott conducted routine monitoring at multiple locations in the Attoyac watershed and noted the results. Many sites saw improvements, but based upon her research, more time is needed to thoroughly evaluate the effectiveness of the BMPs. One suggestion to help bolster progress would be the implementation of a feral hog bounty program. Mr. Lymbery questioned if samples were taken from the same location at the same time of year each time. Ms. Scott explained that samples were collected from the same locations each time, but the collection was monthly rather than yearly.

Mr. Lucas Gregory presented information on the Angelina River Water Quality Characterization project. The project is looking at the watershed of the Angelina River above Lake Sam Rayburn, and will review existing data, collect new data, and will attempt

to describe potential causes and sources of pollution, provide education to the public, and establish a path forward for improving the water quality in the watershed.

Mr. Gregory discussed the upcoming project opportunities within the Basin relative to the middle and lower portions. Jack Creek will more than likely be listed again on the 303d list. The projects for the middle and lower portion of the Basin are still in the early stages, but the projects are expected to have similar methods and goals as the other projects currently ongoing in the basin.

Mr. Ed Rhodes explained the La Nana Bayou Project and highlighted that ANRA collects data monthly through this project, and also recently collected some exploratory and intensive E. coli samples along the length of the waterbody to try and identify hotspots. Mr. Lymbery asked when La Nana Creek started being called a Bayou, to which Mr. Gregory replied the TCEQ lists the waterbody as a Bayou, so that is what the project labels it. It is not uncommon to have locals use a slightly different name from the “official” name for waterbodies.

V. Texas Stream Team Program

Mr. Michael Jones presented information on the Texas Stream Team and the programs offered through this group. The Texas Stream Team now utilizes a new data viewer and community forum that can be accessed by the general public through their site. Mr. Van Dellen asked how Stream Team data is used in conjunction with the Clean Rivers Program. Mr. Jones explained that Stream Team data is shared with TCEQ to act as a supplement to what is collected through Clean Rivers Program monitoring. Mr. Mike Prater encouraged Stream Team monitoring because the data collected helps the TCEQ and Clean Rivers Program to direct their efforts. Group discussion then highlighted the benefits of the program promoting public involvement and education about water quality.

VI. Open Discussion for Steering Committee Member Recommendations and Concerns

Mr. Poling noted that ANRA is in the process of building a new Central Office and Laboratory and once completed, ANRA hopes to bring Chlorophyll-A testing in house. Mr. Van Dellen requested ANRA’s process related to TPDES permitting. Mr. Poling explained that ANRA does keep track of discharge permits, but is not involved with setting limits for facilities. Mr. Van Dellen asked if treatment plants are targeted with regards to monitoring. Mr. Poling responded that areas near plants are monitored as precautionary, but no plants are targeted. Mr. Gregory stated that when his organization is conducting a characterization of an area, discharge monitoring reports are reviewed.

Ms. Sally Sowell asked what has the biggest impact on E.coli in the area. Mr. Gregory stated the largest impact is not known, but it has been found that feral hogs are a huge problem for the area. Ms. Sowell questioned if there is an agency that oversees invasive

species. Mr. Gregory agreed there is an organization over animal/plant inspections. Ms. Sowell requested an update on the giant salvinia issue in area waters. Mr. Poling stated that he had seen its presence now is in Lake Nacogdoches. Mr. Van Dellen asked if weevils had helped to fight off the fast-growing fern. Mr. Poling noted that weevils had helped efforts. Dr. Matthew McBroom highlighted research being done by Stephen F. Austin State University to fight off this problematic plant for Texas.

No further discussion occurred. The meeting was closed at 2:24 PM.