



Clean Rivers Program
Upper Neches River Basin Steering Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday June 21st, 2023 2:30 PM

Attendees:

Jeremiah Poling	Angelina & Neches River Authority
Andrew Henry	Angelina & Neches River Authority
Kelli Bunton	Angelina & Neches River Authority
Kimberly Wagner	Angelina & Neches River Authority
Luna Yang	Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI) Agrilife
Duncan Kikoyo	Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI) Agrilife
Katrina Smith	TCEQ
Melissa McKelvy	TCEQ
Kiran Freeman	TCEQ
Cori Edson	Keep Whitehouse Beautiful
Jeff Lauman	Texas Railroad Commission

1. Welcome and Introductions:

Mr. Jeremiah Poling with Angelina & Neches River Authority (ANRA) welcomed everyone, introduced the audience to the speakers, and listed off agenda items. He then gave a brief overview of ANRA's different divisions (administration, field operations, and environmental) along with the Authority's jurisdiction. Mr. Poling introduced Mr. Andrew Henry Clean Rivers Program Coordinator for ANRA.

2. Overview of the Clean River Program:

Mr. Andrew Henry explained the Clean Rivers Program through a brief breakdown of the history, goals, and annual budget allocations for CRP.

3. Updates to ANRA's Water Quality Monitoring Program and the 2023 Basin Highlights Report:

Mr. Henry presented an overview of water monitoring in the Neches Basin, mentioned changes to the monitoring schedule, described parameters that are collected, and gave details about of the segmented watersheds in our jurisdiction. Next, Mr. Henry talked about the 2023 Basin Highlights Report (BHR) and the newly listed impaired waters in the upper/middle Neches Basin.

4. TMDL and Clean Water Act Project Updates:

Mr. Poling presented an update on the Kickapoo Creek Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) on behalf of Leah Taylor from The Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Research who was unable to attend. Kickapoo Creek is impaired for elevated bacteria levels. In the time since the most recent public meeting the WPP has been completed and sent to EPA for final approval.

Mr. Poling also presented a brief update on La Nana Creek WPP on behalf of other TWRI staff unable to attend. It was explained that the La Nana Creek WPP was in its final phases of development, and was nearly complete with EPA acceptance. La Nana Creek is impaired for elevated bacteria levels.

Mr. Duncan Kikoyo from TWRI gave an update on Ayish and West Mud Creek. He explained that the West Mud Creek watershed and Ayish Bayou are both impaired for elevated bacteria in water. Mr. Kikoyo also mentioned that the TCEQ has given approval for the team to move forward with the next phase of the Ayish project.

Ms. Luna Yang from TWRI presented update on Cedar Creek in the City of Lufkin area that is impaired for elevated bacteria in water. The uppermost portion of cedar creek was added to the project, and the project documents were updated accordingly.

4. Education and Outreach Updates:

Mrs. Kimberly Wagner presented an update on education and outreach. Gave a brief update about our updated website, logo and noted we have increased traffic on multiple social media sites. Mrs. Wagner gave an update on CRP coloring and activity books, and noted version 2.0 is currently being planned. She presented new meetings and partnerships with other organizations in our jurisdiction, and talked about the successes and processes of the “Stash your Trash!” litter campaign.

Guest Speakers:

Ms. Edson, President of Keep Whitehouse Beautiful (KWB), gave brief update on what she does in the community, and explained Keep Whitehouse Beautiful was started by a teacher in 1990. Among other efforts, KWB has worked to engage schools and students in litter cleanup efforts in the community.

Open discussion for Steering Committee Member recommendations and concerns:

There was general discussion regarding the litter campaign and recycling. Some cities have stopped accepting glass due to costs and there are efforts to reuse glass containers rather than throwing them away when recycling is unavailable.