

Science Committee Meeting Minutes

November 29, 2012 8:00 a.m.

San Marcos Activity Center, San Marcos, Texas

1. Welcome and Introductions

A quorum was present for all purposes.

Members of the Committee present: T. Arsuffi, D. Mosier, C. Kreidler, J. Duke, J. Poole, F. Weckerly, C. Norris, G. Longley, and J. Bush. Robert Mace was unable to attend. Jenna Cantwell facilitated the discussion for the Committee.

2. Provide a brief background on the history of the HCP and the role of the Science Committee

Robert Gulley, Program Manager discussed the role of the Science Committee in the HCP identifying four primary responsibilities of the committee: 1. Participate in the adaptive management process, 2. Applied Research development, 3. Phase II specific activities as outlined in program documents, and 4. Other ad-hoc science issues as assigned.

Public Comment: Cheryl Gilpin requested that the Science Committee be released from the control of the Stakeholders and the EAA board, encouraging them to focus on the science related to HCP projects.

3. Discuss proposed walking path in the City of New Braunfels

Nathan Pence discussed the issue that the Science Committee was being asked to consider and the procedural background for that issue. Steve Ramsey from the City of New Braunfels and John Waugh from the San Antonio Water System presented their perspectives on the utility and rationale for the walking path as part of the riparian restoration in the area of Spring Run 3. After much discussion Glenn Longley made a motion to provide the following recommendation:

The walking path does not offer advantage to the species or a long-term financial benefit in the area of Spring Run 3, and is, therefore, not recommended at this time.

Jackie Poole seconded the motion. There were no objections; thus, the motion passed.

Glenn Longley made a second motion that the Science Committee express:

General concern regarding the benefit of hillside restoration along Spring Run 3, and request that the Implementing Committee refrain from any hillside restoration activities in that area pending completion of a scientific evaluation and assessment of the work. This assessment, which currently is part of the work plan, should then be returned to the Science Committee for further discussion. In-stream activities may continue as planned.

Doyle Mosier seconded this motion. There were no objections; thus, the motion passed.

4. Receive Report from Ed Oborny and Thom Hardy on Ecological Modeling

Jenna Cantwell provided brief background on the status of Ecological Modeling. Ed Oborny and Thom Hardy discussed the draft Ecological Modeling memorandum. They briefly discussed the

seven questions outlined in their memo, the proposed schedule for addressing those questions through simple models, and an assessment of current existing knowledge for each question. Members of the Science Committee suggested that the memorandum address the relationship between research and science being conducted through applied research and other mediums and how they interact with the model. Members of the Science Committee also expressed concern that the schedule provided is ambitious, but Ed and Thom emphasized that they believed the schedule is realistic and possible.

With respect to the Scope of Work, the Science Committee suggested that the various models be managed by one entity to ensure that common links are identified to maximize utility and applicability to research and the future intentions of the models. While the various members of the committee had differing perspectives on what the priority items for 2013 should be, they generally agreed that the right questions were proposed and specifically recognized the large amount of work that had been contributed to the development of the questions and the expertise already involved which contributed additional support to the proposed questions.

The Science Committee was given until the close of business on December 5th to submit additional comments to the draft memorandum.

5. Applied Research Facility

Nathan Pence presented on the status of the Applied Research Facility and relevant activities to date for that program. Floyd Weckerly had some recommendations for ways to improve the matrix that had been distributed, and EAHCP staff agreed to distribute a revised matrix to the Committee on November 30. The Science Committee expressed strong interest in being involved in the development of the research experiments throughout the process for use in the facility, and EAHCP staff assured that the Science Committee would be involved in experimental design at future meetings.

The Science Committee has until the close of business on December 7th to complete the updated matrix and return it to EAHCP staff for compilation and review. Collected comments will then be used by EAHCP staff to develop the elements of the Applied Research facility. EAHCP staff will additionally make the BIO-WEST proposals for 2013 Applied Research work available to the Committee on December 3rd or when they become publically available.

6. Appoint officers for the science committee

Tom Arsuffi made a motion to appoint Doyle Mosier as the Chair of the Science Committee, Glenn Longley seconded the motion. There were no objections; thus the motion passed. Glenn Longley made a motion to appoint Tom Arsuffi as the Vice-Chair of the Science Committee, Floyd Weckerly seconded the motion. There were no objections; thus the motion passed.

7. Discuss future meeting dates and locations

2013 meeting dates are: Feb. 13, May 9, August 14, and November 13. The February meeting will discuss operational rules and procedures, Applied Research activities for 2013, scopes of work for the Ecological Modeling component, and possibly other items. The meeting will be held in San Marcos.

Public Comment: Jose Hidalgo expressed four issues that the Science Committee should address on behalf of himself and Cheryl Gilpin: 1. Review the year 1 sediment island removal project. A TCEQ feasibility study indicated the island should not be removed; 2. review the aeration of water in Landa Lake. There are concerns that the aeration will benefit harmful life forms that thrive in stagnant water; 3. as homework, please review the 9 City of New Braunfels projects' objectives from a broad view and let EAHCP staff know if you have any pressing concerns that should delay them; and 4. discuss increase Comal River monitoring and make a recommendation on the best regime for baseline data.