



MEETING MINUTES

March 11, 2015

Available at eahcp.org

1. Call to Order: 9:00 am

Members of this committee include: Tom Arsuffi, Doyle Mosier, Charles Kreitler, Jacquelyn Duke, Jackie Poole, Floyd Weckerly, Chad Norris, Glenn Longley, Janis Bush, Conrad Lamon, and Robert Mace.

Robert Mace was unable to attend. A quorum was present.

2. Public Comment.

No Comment

3. Approval of minutes from the February 11th Science Committee meetings.

Charlie Kreitler moved to approve the February 11th minutes. Conrad Lamon seconded. There was no objection.

4. Receive Report from the EAHCP Program Manager.

- Springflow and Index Well update
Shaun Payne, HCP Coordinator, presented the month's springflow and index well levels.
- National Academy of Sciences update
Nathan Pence, Program Manager, explained the NAS report and the process to review the report. Conrad Lamon asked specific questions about implementation details and the Ecological Model.

5. Presentation of "2014 Report on: Borehole Colonization Traps within Spring Run 1 of the Comal River."

Chad Norris and Randy Gibson presented information about a study done in partnership with USFWS to analyze the presence of Comal Springs Riffle Beetles in interstitial spaces. Presentation can be found on the eahcp.org website.

Conrad Lamon asked specifically about how this study will provide valuable information to the goals of the EAHCP. Discussion followed.

6. Presentation of the 2014 Applied Research results: Comal Springs Riffle Beetle (CSRB) Plastron Use During Low-Flow.

Parvathi Nair gave a presentation summarizing the results of the CSRB Plastron study. Full presentation can be found on the eahcp.org website.

Various questions pertaining to the findings were asked by the Science Committee. The results showed a better understanding of the appropriateness of surrogate use in CSRB studies and general resistance of the plastron.

7. Presentation of the 2014 Applied Research results: Effects of Low-Flow on CSRB Survival.

Michael Edwards and Taylor Jones presented the results of the CSRB survival study. Full presentation can be found on the eahcp.org website.

Questions pertaining to specific events including a die-off of beetles were discussed.

- 8. Presentation on the development of the Finite Element and MODFLOW Hydrologic models.**
Jim Winterle, EAA staff, presented the details of the Hydrologic modeling development. Full presentation can be found on the eahcp.org website.

First, Mr. Winterle presented the details produced by the MODFLOW model at this point. The Committee asked various questions and had comments about details. Charlie Kreitler and Conrad Lamon mentioned their approval of the significant improvements this model has experienced.

Second, a summary of the Finite Element report was given. The Committee asked questions pertaining to the number of goals that were not met.

General comments were made about the future of the development of the models as well as how certain NAS recommendations will be addressed. Discussion followed.

- 9. Presentation and possible action to recommend the 2015/2016 Ecological Model Scope of Work for the Implementing Committee approval and presentation on capabilities of the Ecological Model.**

Ed Oborny, BIO-WEST Inc., presented their Ecological Modeling Scope of Work. Presentation can be found on the eahcp.org website.

The Committee discussed the next steps for the Ecological Model.

Dr. Longley moved to recommend to the Implementing Committee to approve the 2015/2016 Ecological Modeling Scope of Work. Dr. Lamon mentioned that as long as the NAS recommendations are given reasonable consideration for further model development, he has no real issue. Dr. Arsuffi seconded. There was no objection.

- 10. Presentation of the 2014 Biological Monitoring Reports.**

Ed Oborny, BIO-WEST Inc., provided the Science Committee a summary of the Biological Monitoring Report for the Comal system and San Marcos system. Mr. Oborny provided data for specific species being monitored throughout 2014. Presentation can be found on eahcp.org website.

- 11. Presentation and possible action to provide input on the proposed 2015 Applied Research methods: Ludwigia Plant Competition.**

Casey Williams, BIO-WEST Inc., presented the objectives and proposed methods for the Ludwigia Plant Competition study.

Dr. Arsuffi mentioned the important terminology clarification with using “interference competition” rather than “resource competition.” Discussion followed.

Presentation can be found on the eahcp.org website.

Janis Bush asks several questions about the spacing and details about competition details. Discussion followed.

- 12. Presentation and possible action to provide input on the proposed 2015 Applied Research methods: CSRB Habitat Connectivity.**

Taylor Jones, BIO-WEST Inc., and Weston Nowlin, Texas State University, presented the objectives and proposed methods for the CSRB Habitat Connectivity study. Presentation can be found on the eahcp.org.

Dr. Nowlin described a preliminary study attempting to compare the Freeman Aquatic Building at Texas State University and San Marcos Aquatic Resource Center as well as testing surrogates for appropriateness.

Ms. Jones presented the details to the Habitat Connectivity study. Dr. Longley and Dr. Kreidler made commits to clarify the assumptions made about the survival and habitat preferences. Discussion followed.

Dr. Nowlin described lateral habitat connectivity as well as a riffle beetle diet studies. Discussion about appropriateness of “connectivity” as a study title and necessity of specific study requirements in the HCP compared to scientific opinion on possible studies. Discussion followed.

There was a conversation about the Science Committee supporting a resolution to increase numbers of individuals placed on a USFWS permit for a contractor.

13. Presentation and possible adoption of the Process to Select Applied Research Studies.

EAHCP Program Manager, Nathan Pence, presented a proposed process change in developing Applied Research studies for bid. Discussion about potential brainstorming opportunity as well as various edits to the process proposed. Discussion followed.

Additionally, Melani Howard, City of San Marcos, mentioned a potential change in the level of detail the Science Committee will receive about specific mitigation and minimization measures.

14. Future agenda items.

- 2014 Applied Research study – CSRB Occupancy Modeling and Population Estimate Within the Comal Springs System, New Braunfels, Texas
- 2015 Applied Research methods – Algae Dynamics
- Summary of NAS *Review of the Edwards Aquifer Habitat Conservation Plan: Report 1*
- San Marcos Water Quality Protection Plan and Sessoms Creek Remediation Plan
- 2016 Applied Research prioritization
- Applied Research Development Process

15. Questions and comments from the public.

16. Adjourn. 4:26 pm