



MEETING MINUTES

April 7, 2015

Available at eahcp.org

1. **Call to Order.**

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

Floyd Weckerly and Robert Mace were unable to make the meeting. A quorum was present.

2. **Public Comment.**

No comment

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

Jacquelyn Duke motioned to approve the minutes. Chad Norris seconded. There were no objections or edits.

4. **Receive Report from the EAHCP Program Manager.**

- Springflow and Index Well update
Shaun Payne, EAHCP Coordinator, presented the April J-17 index well levels and springflow conditions.
- Comal Springs riffle beetle Recovery Sampling
Bob Hall, EAA, presented the sampling results of CSRFB Recovery
- Use of surrogate species in Applied Research
Nathan Pence provided an update on discussions with USFWS about using CSRFB in Applied Research.
- Refugia Research presentation
Weston Nowlin, Texas State University, provided a presentation about the proposed Refugia Research. A more detailed presentation regarding Research Methods will be brought to the committee in May.

5. **Presentation of 2014 Applied Research results – CSRFB Occupancy Modeling and Population Estimate Within the Comal Springs System, New Braunfels, Texas.**

Rachel Barlow, Zara Environmental, presented the results of the 2014 Applied Research study.

Questions pertaining to the statistical modeling were made by the committee. There were issues with the data and determining the significance for understanding the CSRFB.

The full presentation is available at eahcp.org.

6. **Presentation and possible action to provide input on the proposed 2015 Applied Research methods – Algae Dynamics**

Casey Williams, BIO-WEST, presented the proposed methodology for the 2015 Applied Research study.

The committee had questions pertaining the information proposed to be gathered and in what way this will inform the HCP and the Ecological Modeling effort.

The full presentation is available at eahcp.org.

7. Presentation on the summary of NAS Review of the Edwards Aquifer Habitat Conservation Plan: Report 1.

Nathan Pence, Program Manager, gave the committee an overview of the NAS Review and the next steps in developing an Implementation Plan.

The full presentation is available at eahcp.org.

8. Presentation on the San Marcos Water Quality Protection Plan (WQPP) and Sessoms Creek Remediation Plan.

Melanie Howard, City of San Marcos/Texas State University, presented the Sessom Creek Remediation Plan with the assistance of Tom Hegemier, RPS-ESPEY and John Gleason, John Gleason LLC, presented the details of the WQPP.

There were many questions pertaining to the budget and differentiation of these two efforts by the committee.

The full presentation is available at eahcp.org.

9. Open Committee Discussion: Applied Research.

Mr. Pence introduced the brainstorming session and the continued inclusion of an open discussion in future meetings.

Alicia Reinmund-Martinez began the discussion by introducing each individual who provided their question for possible Applied Research Fundamental Questions.

First, the committee discussed aspects of the proposed questions relating primarily on the Comal Springs Riffle Beetle.

The committee decided to identify the gaps in knowledge about the species of interest for future studies:

- Food source of the Comal Springs Riffle Beetle (CSRB) (possibly a stable isotope study).
- Dissolved Oxygen and Temperature tolerance (over a long term for adult and larval stages).
- CSRB Genetics- Potential differentiation in various springs in the Comal spring system based on hydrologic separation (potential effects and/or distinctions of system hydrology and species genetics).
- Voltinism aspects of the CSRB (number of instars)

Following the discussion, the committee recommended these topics be combined into one study question that encompasses factors that influence the CSRB as well as observe its life history. Tom Arsuffi motioned to approve the recommendation. Glenn Longley seconded. There were no objections.

The committee continued to discuss various aspects of the information necessary to better understand the CSRB and what factors to include in the RFPs.

The committee began to discuss the Comal Springs Salamander and the information necessary to better understand this covered species.

A primary point of discussion is to settle the genetic make-up of the Comal Springs Salamander before a population estimate is attempted.

Tom Arsuffi moved to approve the question to specify a concentration on analyzing the taxonomic status of the Comal Springs Salamander. Janis Bush seconded. There were no objections.

The remaining Fundamental Questions were discussed in terms of how existing data could be analyzed to acquire important information through a model. Thus, no further questions were determined as necessary for Applied Research funding through the discussion.

A comment was made that the restoration and monitoring happening in the system could be utilized as ways to collect and analyze data to measure success and or fill information gaps about the covered species.

A request to have a separate meeting to discuss and determine what statistical analysis can be done with existing data and what questions could be answered.

Dr. Longley moved to make a recommendation to utilize some of the Applied Research Funding. Seconded by Janis Bush. No objection by the committee. Additionally, the committee mentioned those who are awarded the monitoring and restoration contracts should be expected to analyze their findings.

10. Presentation and prioritization of potential 2016 Applied Research Fundamental Questions.

This agenda item was successfully achieved during the previous item.

11. Staff Report: Next Steps on the 2016 Applied Research Process.

Alicia Reinmund-Martinez gave the committee a summary of the next steps of the Applied Research program.

12. Staff report: 2016 Work Plan approval process.

Mrs. Reinmund-Martinez provided the Committee a brief reminder of the process necessary in approving the 2016 Work Plans.

13. Presentation of the EAA Work Plans and possible action to recommend to the Implementing Committee.

Bob Hall presented the 2016 Applied Research and Biological Monitoring Work Plans.

Chad Norris mentioned that he would like to see Spring Run 1 added in the monitoring program for CSRB for low-flow as well as routine.

Geary Schindel, EAA, presented the 2016 Water Quality Monitoring Work Plan.

There were several questions pertaining to the Water Quality Monitoring Work Plan and how Science Committee recommendations, as well as the recommendations found in the NAS Report 1, will be included in 2016.

The full presentations are available on the eahcp.org website.

Dr. Longley moved to approve the 2016 EAA Work Plans. Charlie Kreidler seconded. There were no objections.

Charlie Kreidler mentioned that he would like to see additional analysis of the findings of the Water Quality monitoring program. It was determined that additional data would be required for a proper trend analysis.

14. Future agenda items.

- The next Science Committee Meeting is scheduled for May 6th and the San Marcos Activity Center.
- Discussion pertaining to the necessary analysis of existing data.
- Committee input on the draft Applied Research RFPs.
- City of San Marcos/Texas State and City of New Braunfels 2016 Work Plans.

15. Questions and comments from the public.

Dianne Wassenich mentioned that Saturday will be the Texas wild rice festival and the film Yakona will be shown accompanied by a live orchestra.

16. Adjourn.