



Science Committee Meeting Minutes

February 26, 2014 The San Marcos Rec Hall

1. Call to Order- 9:12 AM

Members of this committee present include: Tom Arsuffi, Doyle Mosier, Charles Kreidler, Floyd Weckerly, Chad Norris, Glenn Longley, Miguel Acevedo, and Robert Mace.

There was a quorum present.

2. Public Comment.

No comment

3. Approval of Minutes from the August 14, 2013.

Doyle Mosier moved to approve the minutes, Floyd Weckerly seconded the motion. There was no objections, thus the motion was passed.

4. Approval of Minutes from the February 5, 2014.

Floyd Weckerly moved to approve the minutes, Chad Norris seconded the motion. There was no objections, thus the motion was passed.

5. Receive Report for the EAHCP Program Manager on general topics related to the science of the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP).

Nathan Pence informed the committee about the drafted Operational Agreement and a clarification of quorum rules. This agreement will be discussed in more length by the HCP Director Alicia Reinmund-Martinez in the next agenda item.

Nathan discusses the tabling of the New Braunfels Bank Stabilization Design Presentation (Agenda item 8) for a later meeting. Additionally, the San Marcos Sand Bar Removal Presentation will be expanded as discussed in the last meeting, and re-visited at a later meeting. Thom Hardy will identify additional information in the model as well as provide background for Sessom Creek based on the San Marcos Water Quality Protection Plan (WQPP).

A discussion about the acquisition of proposed 2015 Applied Research topics by way of solicitation memo and application form to best provide a clear and uniformed description of various projects. Dr. Arsuffi requested a conceptual diagram of how various projects fill in to the holistic vision of the EAHCP. Additionally, Charlie Kreidler requests additional information of himself and Robert Mace on the VISPO and ASR projects and how they are being implemented.

Nathan updated the committee on the National Academies meeting.

Nathan discussed the plan for the next Science Committee meeting on April 8th. He proposed a two-day meeting with the committee to discuss a variety of important items. An option will be available on a doodle poll.

6. Presentation and review of proposed Operational Procedures of the Science Committee.

Alicia Reinmund-Martinez presented the draft Operational Procedures of the Science Committee as requested in the last meeting. In review of the EAHCP's Financial Management Agreement, and legal counsel, a quorum will constitute as 8 members. The committee will also observe a 3 absence rule of resignation.

A discussion about use of video or phone conferencing being allowable began. The Implementing Committee felt that this would not be allowed to happen. Through this discussion a reconsideration of the "Non-virtual" means of meeting participation be addressed. In addition, a possible reconsideration of alternates. Also, due to the committee's lack of involvement in implementation but strictly advisory, certain liberties may be made if approved by Implementing Committee and EAA General Manager.

Miguel Acevedo joined the committee late and previous minute approvals were re-approved.

7. Review 2014 Applied Research project methodologies.

The methodologies of four of the six Applied Research Projects were presented.

Dr. Bonner from Texas State University, in conjunction with BIO-WEST, presented the methods for Fountain Darter Fecundity Study, and Fountain Darter Predator Study. General support of the studies was given. Some suggestions are listed below:

1. FD Fecundity
 - a. Multi-regression rather than ANOVA; allow a look at multiple variables.

2. FD Predator

- a. Add more prey variety to adequately observe FD threat.
- b. Implement a larger experimental unit
- c. Collect (not purchase) crayfish for experiment
- d. A question of accuracy of the low-flow rates being used.
- e. Comment on completing Phase 1 then completing the experimental design.

Jake Jackson from BIO-WEST presented the methods for the Fountain Darter Movement study. Committee Comments are listed below.

- a. Use linear model to incorporate all variables
- b. Need a higher level of analysis, not the K-S model. Butch will provide additional recommendations.
- c. Pond Study
 - i. Start in patch and no-patch
 - ii. Consider FD density
 - iii. Consider how distance matters
 - iv. Consider stringing patches together

Rachel Barlow from Zara presented the methods for the Comal Springs Riffle Beetle Distribution Study. Recommendations included general Scope of Work update to establish a population estimate to be more important (“population abundance model estimates”). Also, if funds remain after population estimate, a consideration of quick deployment of a “conditioning-curve.” In addition to said updates to the SOW suggestions for deploying 425 spring opening traps and collect all lures all three times. Ultimately this SOW was not intended to be a test of lures, but a test on the pre-conditioning of the lures. It was said that they should go back to the mapping work that has already been done.

Break for lunch at approximately 1:00 pm

8. Presentation of additional information on the City of New Braunfels Bank Stabilization Project.

This item was table for a later meeting.

9. Ecological Model Update. Brought out agenda order.

Ed Oberney presented for Dr. Ward on the Ecomodel progress. Some discussion about experimental design mentioned questions on how they will be comparing their finding and what the “minimum error” will be. Miguel Acevedo stressed the need for a margin of error and uncertainty analysis. Ed also mentioned a design to revamp the model of the San Marcos system according to various work upstream.

10. Presentation on the Take Estimate and Habitat Disturbance determination by BIO-WEST.

Ed Oberney presented the design and methods used to provide an Incidental Take Assessment. A request to have the Comal Springs Riffle Beetle to include the Western Shore of Landa Lake; Ed mentioned the Western Shore was included. Also, a discussion was had about the use of a 1m² design of population being expanded to 2 or 3m². A general agreement was obtained and Doyle motions to accept BIO-WEST’s assessment. Dr. Glen Longley seconds and all were in favor. Let the record show Chad Norris was absent at the time of the voting but supports this report and the methods used. Dr. Arsuffi wanted a little discussion about the use of Wild Rice as FD habitat. A general agreement that if the numbers to include these areas as occupied would be negligible than it would be fine to leave them out.

11. Consider future meetings, dates, locations, and agendas

A doodle-poll will be constructed to provide options for the week of April 7th or April 14 and to assess whether we should have a long single day or back-to-back days of meeting.

12. Adjourn at approximately 3:00 pm