

**OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES OF THE SCIENCE COMMITTEE
OF THE EDWARDS AQUIFER HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN PROGRAM**

I. THE SCIENCE COMMITTEE

- A. PURPOSE – The purpose of the Science Committee is to provide recommendations on any adaptive management decision to ensure protection of the Covered Species as provided in the Edwards Aquifer Recovery Implementation Program (Program).
- B. DUTIES - The Science Committee will have the role in the Adaptive Management Process (AMP) and the Program as described in this Subsection, as follows:
 - a. consult with, advise and make recommendations to the Program Manager, the Implementing Committee and the Stakeholder Committee on any AMP Decision upon request;
 - b. provide independent and unbiased advice based on their best scientific judgment so that all AMP Decisions will be made consistent with the best scientific and commercial data available; and
 - c. participate in the meetings of the Science Review Panel and provide to the Panel such information as requested by that Panel or the Implementing Committee.
- C. COMPOSITION - The Parties, through the Implementing Committee, will establish and, in conjunction with the Stakeholder Committee, appoint an Adaptive Management Science Committee (Science Committee). To the extent possible, the Science Committee will be comprised of an odd number of not fewer than seven or more than eleven members, as determined by the Implementing Committee, who have technical expertise in one or more of the following areas: (a) the Edwards Aquifer or its management; (b) the Comal Springs and River as defined by Subsection 3.4.2 of the HCP; (c) the San Marcos Springs and River as defined by Subsection 3.4.3 of the HCP; or (d) the Covered Species.
- D. VOTING MEMBERS - The Implementing Committee and the Stakeholder Committee will each select an equal number of members of the Science Committee and will coordinate with one another in making selections in order to ensure balance and proper coverage of areas of expertise. The Implementing Committee and the Stakeholder Committee will jointly select one additional member of the Science Committee. Each member appointed to the Science Committee will be authorized to vote and such appointed member will become a member of the Science Committee on the date that the Program Manager receives the written acceptance of the appointment. No member of the Science Committee may designate an alternate to act for that member in the member's absence.
- E. TERM OF OFFICE OF MEMBERS - A Committee member's term will begin on the date that the Program Manager receives written acceptance of the appointment of the members and continues until written acceptance of the appointment of a successor has been received by the Program Manager.
- F. ELECTION AND DUTIES OF OFFICERS - The Science Committee will elect a chair person and a vice chair and adopt procedures to govern its activities.

- G. VACANCIES, RESIGNATIONS AND REMOVAL IN MEMBER POSITIONS - In the case of a vacancy on the Science Committee, the committee, or committees, which made the initial appointment for that position, will appoint a replacement member.
- H. SUBCOMMITTEES - The Science Committee may be organized into subcommittees as jointly determined by the Program Manager and Implementing Committee.

II. MEETINGS OF THE SCIENCE COMMITTEE

- A. REGULAR MEETINGS - The Science Committee will meet at any time upon the request of the Program Manager, the Implementing Committee, or the Stakeholder Committee.
- B. NOTICE OF MEETINGS - The Program Manager will provide reasonable advance notice of the meetings via email to each member of the Science Committee and will post notice of any meeting on the EAA website.
- C. MEETING LOCATION - Meetings will be conducted at the official offices of the EAA or at any other location agreed upon by the Science Committee.
- D. OPEN MEETINGS - Meetings will generally be open to the public, but, with good cause, may be closed to the public at the request of the Program Manager or any two members of the Science Committee. Meetings of the Science Committee are not subject to the Texas Open Meetings Act, but the Committee and Program Manager will make reasonable efforts to provide notice of its meetings and conduct them open to the public as though they were subject to the Texas Open Meetings Act.
- E. QUORUM - A quorum for any meeting of the Science Committee will be three-fourths of the total number of members for whom the Program Manager has received the notification of acceptance described in Subsection 7.9.1.b of the Funding and Management Agreement.
 - a. If a quorum of the Science Committee is not present at a meeting, the Members present may postpone a decision or vote until a quorum is present, or may make a decision or take a vote while noting in the motion the number of Members present.
- F. MEETING AGENDAS – Agenda items for the Science Committee should include brief objectives for each agenda item and should identify supporting documentation by order of importance, i.e. high, medium or low priority. If appropriate, documents presented to the Science Committee for review, should include supporting historical documentation and peer-reviewed research relevant to the program being discussed.

The agenda will include items related to the following:

- a. Proposed Routine AMP Decisions - Requests by the Program Manager, the Implementing Committee, or the Stakeholder Committee for an evaluation or recommendation on a proposed Routine AMP Decision may be made to the entire Science Committee or the appropriate subcommittee of the Science Committee. However, for any proposed Routine AMP Decision that has significant potential to affect the overall well-being of a Covered Species, the decision-maker (the Program Manager or the Implementing Committee, as appropriate) will, if time allows, consult the Science Committee for input prior to making

a decision or, if that is not possible, as soon as possible after making the decision and will adjust the decision as appropriate.

- b. Other AMP Decisions - For any proposed Nonroutine or Strategic AMP Decision, the Implementing Committee will seek a recommendation from the entire Science Committee prior to taking action on the proposed decision.
 - c. Applied Research - The Program Manager will regularly inform the Science Committee of plans related to the applied research activities described in the HCP, including, but not limited to, Subsections 6.3.4 (applied research facility), 6.3.5 (Texas wild-rice enhancement) and 6.3.6 (monitoring and reduction of gill parasites), and, unless exigent conditions require otherwise, seek comments and recommendations from the Science Committee with regard to the research plans before the plans are implemented. The Program Manager will also inform the Science Committee and the Science Review Panel of the findings and results of the research activities
 - d. Other – Science Committee members may request additional agenda items as needed to provide additional information helpful to the decision making process. The Science Committee may request any presenter or outside expertise that may be beneficial to understanding a certain issue presented to the Committee.
- G. CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS - The Science Committee and its subcommittees will operate to the maximum extent achievable by a collaborative process designed to achieve consensus.
- H. VOTING; EFFECT OF ABSTENTIONS - In the absence of full consensus on any evaluation or recommendation, the Science Committee will provide a written summary of competing positions to the Program Manager or the Implementing or Stakeholder Committees, as may be appropriate. Each member of the Science Committee will have one vote towards consensus until participation is resigned, or forfeited by absence from three consecutive meetings.
- I. ACTION BY THE SCIENCE COMMITTEE – The Science Committee may act by motion or resolution adopted by the Committee.
- J. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS –
- a. Meetings of the Science Committee will be presided over by the Chair.
 - b. Business may be considered in accordance with the current version of Robert’s Rules of Order.
 - c. The Program Manager, or his delegee, will be the Parliamentarian and will decide issues of parliamentary procedure.
- K. MINUTES –
- a. Actions (consultations, advice and recommendations) taken in meetings of the Science Committee will be incorporated in written minutes taken by the Program Manager or his delegee. A copy of the minutes will be sent with the agenda and submitted to approval to the Members at the next regular meeting of the Science Committee.
- L. VIDEO OR TELE-CONFERENCING
- Member attendance at a Science Committee meeting via video (i.e. Skype) or tele-conferencing is allowed, as long as the member seeking to participate remotely has a good cause, and participates for the full duration of the meeting. The member shall provide the Program Manager or his delegee at least two week advance notice of the “good cause” reason for his/her absence from the meeting.

- a. Participation for the full duration of the meeting is required to vote in a consensus, motion or resolution on any action before the committee.
- b. Members will be allowed to participate by video or tele-conferencing up to two times during each calendar year.
- c. The Program Manager or his delegee shall take all appropriate action in order to make appropriate arrangements for the remote participation of the member to ensure that the member and the committee are able to effectively communicate with one another, and that the public is able to hear the proceedings of the committee. If the Program Manager finds that such arrangements are not reasonably possible, the Program Manager will promptly advise the member seeking remote meeting participation and the Chairman that such participation will not be available.