



STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES May 28, 2014

1. **Call to order**—9:06 a.m.
EAHCP Program Manager, Nathan Pence, called role and established that there was a quorum of the Stakeholder Committee.
2. **Public Comment.**
No public comment.
3. **Receive report from the Program Manager on general updates about the Habitat Conservation Plan.**

Nathan Pence provided Committee members with the following information:

- **Stakeholder Committee Membership.**
EAHCP staff distributed to the committee a full list of all 27 stakeholders and their alternates.
- **National Academy of Science meeting update.**
The National Academy of Science (NAS) held two meetings to assess selected aspects of the Habitat Conservation Plan program. The final meeting to be held in August will be closed sessions held in Washington D.C. EAHCP program expects to receive the first draft of the final report by the end of 2014.
- **Incidental Take Permit- Provision M information.**
According to the Incidental Take Permit, once springflows reach 130 cfs at Comal and 120 cfs at San Marcos, all habitat restoration activities must stop. The City of New Braunfels and the City of San Marcos/Texas State University are preparing variance request letter to be submitted and approved by the USFWS. On Thursday, May 29, EAHCP staff and permittees will be meeting with USFWS staff to speak about variance approval.
- **River and Index Well levels.**
Mr. Pence reported that current river and index well levels most likely will shift up in response to recent rainfall, which will allow HCP restoration activities to continue.
- **Biological Monitoring Update.**

Due to low-flows in the spring systems, the biological monitoring program is very important. BIO-WEST has provided weekly memos describing the status of both systems. Generally, habitat is in good health. Both spring run one and two in the Comal Springs system have lost significant flow or have gone dry. These spring conditions have resulted in lost habitat for covered invertebrates.

4. Stakeholder Committee role.

EAHCP Director, Alicia Reinmund-Martinez, gave a presentation to describe the role of the Stakeholder Committee. Program Manager, Nathan Pence, discussed the basic goal of this presentation was to establish the Stakeholder's role in Adaptive Management Process decisions as stated in the Funding and Management Agreement.

5. To nominate and elect officers for the Stakeholder Committee.

Alicia Reinmund-Martinez explained the procedure of electing new officers. A new Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary of the Stakeholder Committee were up for nomination and election. The Stakeholder Committee's Operational Rules required a 75 percent agreement of the Stakeholder Committee (20 members) for the election.

Chairman Con Mims opened the nominations: Steve Raabe and Myron Hess were nominated as Chair. After split decision, Myron Hess withdrew from election and Steve Raabe was elected by acclamation with no objections. The Committee elected Myron Hess as Vice-Chair with no objections and elected Dianne Wassenich as Secretary with no objections.

6. Staff Report: J-17 Outlook/Forecast presentation.

Jim Winterle from the Edwards Aquifer Authority presented an update on Edwards Aquifer (San Antonio Pool, index well J-17) levels and probability of future conditions. Mr. Winterle predicts that the J-17 level will be at 631.5 feet at October 1 which will trigger VISPO. Discussion followed.

The Committee asked a few questions regarding future conditions. Committee members from the San Antonio Water System (SAWS) mentioned they had a slightly different approach to the J-17 forecast, which was to be presented at the ASR Advisory meeting following the Stakeholder Committee Meeting.

7. Staff Report: 2014 Drought Outreach Workgroup update.

Mr. Pence presented information about the creation of the Implementing Committee's Drought Outreach Workgroup and the products they produced, including a press packet with press releases. Mr. Pence expected the Work Group to finish by June 4. The committee requested to have the press packets available online.

8. Staff Report: Presentation of Voluntary Irrigation Suspension Program Options (VISPO) overview.

Mr. Pence presented the background on VISPO and the program's triggers. Data gathered last year showed that VISPO approached the trigger near October 1. However, VISPO did not trigger and Mr. Pence stated that this year may be very similar to last year. As a recent

Implementing Committee meeting, the Committee decided to keep VISPO intact rather than make premature changes and risk losing the confidence of the agricultural community.

Secretary Dianne Wassenich gave an example of a rancher, and VISPO participant, whom would be a great spokesperson for procuring future agreements. Some general comments were expressed about concerns and a discussion about the reasoning for the Implementing Committee decision. Vice-Chairman Hess spoke about the importance of continual improved knowledge on models and various scenarios. Additionally, a discussion followed about conducting a holistic Adaptive Management process that analyzes HCP programs as a whole rather than singling out one program such as VISPO.

9. Staff Report: Presentation on Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) 10-year rolling average recharge trigger and ASR update.

Mr. Pence presented information based on current conditions of ASR and the potential of triggering in future years based on the 10-year rolling average of recharge. He discussed general triggers and where current conditions are in relation to past data. Mr. Pence presented various scenarios with possible recharge levels that could result in ASR triggering.

10. Provide directive to the Program Manager.

Vice-Chairman Hess began facilitating a discussion. Comments about the conditions of ASR will be known by 2016/2017 and will require some creative thinking at that time for future implementation. Discussion followed about SAWS ASR pumping.

Con Mims suggested creating two work groups of the Stakeholder Committee to brainstorm possible recommendations. Con Mims made a motion for the implementation of these brainstorming work groups to find ways to secure water. The motion was reworded by agreement of Con Mims and Dianne Wassenich, who seconded his motion.

The motion was: "Consider one work group that consists of two sub-work groups- a VISPO sub-work group and an ASR sub- work group - to have a charge constructed between EAHCP Program Manager, Chairman, and Vice-Chairman." The Committee discussed the need for work group members to disclose their interests in either ASR or VISPO as part of the first meeting of the work group.

Carol Patterson mentioned the potential need for a new program to find water leases in various other locations. A discussion followed to provide a clear charge to the workgroup in order to secure additional water. There was no objection to the creation of the work group.

Radar Gilleland discussed the financial implications of an insufficient price on water and the competition in the market. The Committee discussed the complications inherent in these programs and the charge given to these work groups.

The Committee took a ten minute recess in order of the Program Manager, Chair and Vice-Chair to discuss the membership and charge.

Vice-chairman Hess reconvened the committee and Mr. Pence read the recommended membership:

ASR/VISPO Work Group Chair - Myron Hess

ASR Sub-Work Group: Steve Raabe (Vice Chair) Buck Benson, Jim Bower, Doris Cooksey, Gena Leathers, Earl Parker, Patrick Shriver, Julia Velez.

VISPO Sub-Work Group: Adam Yablonski (Vice Chair), Myron Hess, Bruce Alexander, Radar Gilleland, Myron Hess, Rick Illgner, Ray Joy Pfannsteil.

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

The next meeting of the Stakeholder Committee will be Thursday, August 21 to be held before the meeting of the Implementing Committee. Both meetings will be held at the New Braunfels Civic Center.

The recommendations from the ASR/VISPO Work Group will be the main discussion item. Other topics of discussion will be the Regional Water Conservation Program

12. Questions from the public.

There was no public comment.

13. Adjourn- 11:57 a.m.


Secretary- Dianne Wassenich