



May 15, 2014 Implementing Committee Meeting Minutes

Members of this committee include: Roland Ruiz (EAA), Steve Ramsey (New Braunfels), Tom Taggart (San Marcos), Chuck Ahrens (SAWS), Andrew Sansom (Texas State University), and Todd Votteler (GBRA). At this meeting, the following business may be considered and recommended for committee action:

1. **Call to order-- 9:03 a.m.**
All Committee members were present or represented. Mr. Juan Guerra represented Texas State University.
2. **Public Comment.**
No comment.
3. **Approval of minutes from the April 17, 2014 Implementing Committee meeting.**
Chuck Ahrens moved for approval of meeting minutes, Roland Ruiz seconded the motion. There were no objections.
4. **Receive report from the Program Manager on general topics related to the implementation of the Habitat Conservation Plan and operation of the Implementing Committee.**

Nathan Pence, HCP Program Manager, provided the Committee with the following updates:

- **Science Committee Update:**
The Science Committee reviewed all science related work plans. Science Committee member, Miguel Acevedo, officially resigned from the committee and the Implementing Committee will need to select his replacement. Staff will discuss the process and timeline for this effort at the May 29 meeting.
- **National Academy of Science (NAS) Update:**
On May 12th and 13th the NAS committee held their second meeting at the Edwards Aquifer Authority (EAA). These meetings were very productive. EAA staff and contractors provided essential background information and responded to several questions from the committee. One important aspect of the meeting was the background of EAA's two separate groundwater models. Tom Taggart asked if there is a record of requests for information from NAS. Mr. Pence said staff will compile a comprehensive list for the record.
- **Voluntary Irrigation Suspension Program Options (VISPO) and Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) leases update:**
Mr. Pence presented the updates provided in Attachments 2 and 3. Tom Taggart asked for more clarification on the ASR tables.

- **River Flows and Water Levels:**
Mr. Pence presented a Powerpoint slide to show Springflows and Index well levels. This presentation showed the 10-day change in springflows and index well levels in 2013 and historical average levels. Chuck Ahrens asked if there are any adjustments for the J-27 well. Roland Ruiz responded and discussion followed.
- Per Andy Sansom's request, Mr. Pence and HCP staff spoke with Texas Water Development Board about water infrastructure money allocated for conservation through Proposition 6. A presentation will be provided to the committee at a later date.
- Mr. Pence updated the committee on HCP staff conversations with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding the Annual Report.
- Mr. Pence provided a summary of the current Biological monitoring activities including monitoring at low flow conditions. The summary included a positive report in the San Marcos system and signs of compromises to invertebrate habitat in the Comal system. Discussion followed.

5. Staff Report: Provision M of the Incidental Take Permit- Variance Requests.

Mr. Pence discussed the definition of Provision M of the Incidental Take Permit (ITP). As of May 1st, both systems dipped below the flow thresholds established in the ITP. As a result, all restoration and riparian activities stopped in both the San Marcos and Comal Springs systems on May 2. USFWS requested Variance Request memorandums in order to proceed with restoration activities.

The City of San Marcos/Texas State University and the City of New Braunfels Variance Request memorandums were provided to the Implementing Committee for review. USFWS told HCP staff to proceed with EAA Applied Research activities already underway this year but wait on the restoration activities until they make their decision on both the New Braunfels and San Marcos/Texas State University variance requests. Tom Taggart brought up the possibility that contractors may start calculating increasing costs due to such delays in project completion.

Mr. Taggart and Mr. Pence also agreed that the process in providing these variance memos can be done in advance in future years. The variance request memos included information on the dates the restoration projects will start and stop again after being granted the variance.

6. Staff Report: Incidental Take Forecast.

Nathan Pence provided a presentation showing five different possibilities of future incidental take.

7. Staff Report: Presentation on ASR 10-year rolling average recharge trigger.

Nathan Pence provided the committee with a presentation about ASR and the current 10-year rolling recharge average. Discussion occurred about how the recharge data is collected. Mr. Pence stated in his opinion that by averaging recharge over 10-years for years up to 2018, if the drought continues with low yearly recharge levels, ASR will likely be triggered within the next few years.

8. Staff Report: Presentation on status Groundwater Model Status and Development.

As requested by members of both the Science Committee and the NAS Committee, staff felt it beneficial to the Implementing Committee to receive a groundwater model update. Nathan Pence clarified that the HCP staff recognizes the requirements of transparency as mandated by the Funding and Management Agreement (FMA). Geary Schindel and Jim Winterle, both of EAA, provided a presentation on the Groundwater Model development.

9. Staff Report: 2015 Work Plan approval process.

HCP Director Alicia Reinmund-Martinez presented the timeline of approval for the 2015 Work Plans.

10. Presentation of the EAA 2015 Work Plans.

Nathan Pence clarified that the overview of the EAA Work Plans does not include the Refugia Work Plan. This Work Plan will be brought back to the Implementing Committee once the EAA and USFWS finalize it. Overall costs in the last table reflected the differences each Work Plan has in relation to table 7.1. The Voluntary Irrigation Suspension Program Opportunity budget does not reflect the cost if implementation commences.

The presentations included brief summaries of the following EAA Work Plans: Program Management, Aquifer Storage and Recovery, Regional Water Conservation Program, Voluntary Irrigation Suspension Program Opportunity, Biological Monitoring, Water Quality Monitoring, Ecological Model, Applied Research, and Stage V Critical Period Management.

Discussion on the Work Plans and proposed budget included the following:

- Roland Ruiz clarified that not every dollar amount allocated towards HCP from the EAA is included in Table 7.1 of the HCP.
- Steve Ramsey asked if the dollar amount for operations and maintenance in ASR was included in table 7.1. He also asked specifically about how staff would interpret and react to long-term water quality data collection.
- Tom Taggart suggested to display the year-to-year increases in the budget. He also asked about how habitat is included in the Ecological Model. Bob Hall, EAA staff, described there will be a one-year lag in the habitat calculation in the model.

11. Presentation from the City of New Braunfels on the MS4/LID programs.

Steve Ramsey provided the Implementing Committee a presentation of the City of New Braunfels' MS4 and LID program. The City's MS4 letter of intent was approved by their City Council and will be given to the TCEQ. This presentation was to provide the Implementing Committee with information about how the MS4 program relates to HCP LID components.

Chuck Ahrens asked for this action item to be tabled in order to review further. There was no objection and this agenda item will be placed on the next meeting's agenda.

12. Approval of 2014 DOW suggested press releases.

Nathan Pence provided the Implementing Committee with a background of the Drought Outreach Workgroup. Mr. Pence provided the Implementing Committee with the two press releases provided to the Workgroup. These press releases included specific information about the triggering of Provision M of the HCP as well as a separate press release to give general positive information about HCP activities.

Chuck Ahrens commented on how it would be important for the Drought Outreach Workgroup to see the final draft before committee approval in order to not set an inappropriate precedent. Tom Taggart agreed with comments made by Mr. Ahrens. Discussion followed. Mr. Pence proposed that he would request the Implementing Committee's approval on the press releases after the Drought Outreach Workgroup approves them on May 21. There were no objections. Steve Ramsey mentioned the importance of releasing these messages in a timely manner and to allow time for Implementing Committee members to notify City Councils and other officials before the release.

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

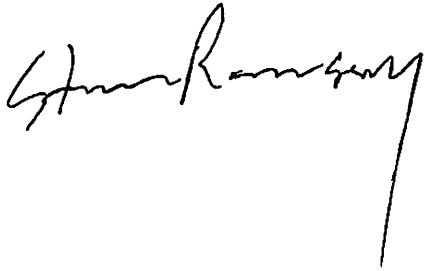
The next Implementing Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 29th at the New Braunfels' Civic Center.

EAHCP STAFF

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14. **Questions from the public.**
No questions or comments.

15. **Adjourn-** 12:07 pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Ramsey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, vertical tail stroke extending downwards from the end of the name.