



MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, August 6, 2014

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Members of Edwards Aquifer Habitat Conservation Plan (EAHCP) Science Committee include: Tom Arsuffi, Doyle Mosier, Charles Kreidler, Jacquelyn Duke, Jackie Poole, Floyd Weckerly, Chad Norris, Glenn Longley, Janis Bush, and Robert Mace. At this meeting, the following business may be considered and recommended for committee action:

1. Call to order- 9:09 am

Tom Arsuffi, Doyle Mosier, Charles Kreidler participating via Skype, Jacquelyn Duke, Jackie Poole, Floyd Weckerly, Chad Norris, and Glenn Longley were present. A quorum was confirmed.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Approval of Minutes

Dr. Weckerly motioned to approve both the May 8, 2014 and the May 12, 2014 minutes. The motion was seconded by Dr. Longley. There was no objection.

4. Project Manager Report

Nathan Pence, EAHCP Program Manager provided the following updates:

- The National Academy of Science (NAS) meeting in August will be a closed meeting in Washington D.C.
- The 2015 meetings dates will be compiled soon. The committee was asked if they had any specific input on meeting dates.
- The Stakeholder and Implementing committees have expressed interest in a field tour. There will be a tour date sometime this fall.
- Alicia Reinmund-Martinez, Director of the EAHCP reported that the Science Committee Nomination Work Group unanimously decided to recommend Dr. Conrad Lamon to the Science Committee. This recommendation will be presented to the Implementing Committee for their consideration at their next meeting on August 21.
- Nathan Pence, discussed the future approach the EAHCP staff will bring materials to the Science Committee. Future meetings with the committee will focus on asking for scientific input rather than formal approval.
- The 2015 Applied Research RFPs will be distributed soon. To prevent any conflict of interests, Science Committee members will be prohibited from being considered for any Applied Research project from this date forward.

5. Water Quality Monitoring Presentation

EAA staff gave a presentation about the status of the 2014 Water Quality monitoring program. Powerpoint slides are posted on the Science Committee meeting website.

6. Biological Monitoring Presentation

Ed Oborny with Bio-West presented the results of the 2013 and 2014 Biological Monitoring program. Powerpoint slides are posted on the Science Committee meeting website.

There were specific comments from the committee about pursuing subsurface sampling near dry spring runs. The committee had questions pertaining to the continued representativeness of the Rio Vista to I-35 reach. Mr. Oborny explained the reduction of vegetation after Rio Vista dam construction was completed.

7. Provision M of ITP Presentation

Alicia Reinmund-Martinez gave a presentation about Provision M of the Incidental Take Permit and what EAHCP staff is requesting from the Science Committee. Powerpoint slides are posted on the Science Committee meeting website.

8. San Marcos System Activities

Melani Howard from the City of San Marcos/Texas State University gave a presentation of a list of activities found to be appropriate to continue at any flows. Powerpoint slides are posted on the Science Committee meeting website.

Ms. Howard and the Science Committee provided the following comments and feedback:

- Sessom Creek Sand Bar Removal- a finite project. Will not begin until flow normalizes above 120 cfs.
- Bank Stabilization- complete but maintenance will continue.
- Riparian Restoration- a finite project but maintenance is long term.

Question about the methods of riparian restoration and how moving forward, how San Marcos/Texas State University can mitigate the woody debris. Jackie Poole requested a clarification on the methods used in the protection of riparian restoration.

The level of maintenance experienced in recent days can give reason to take maintenance on the bank stabilization at a case-by-case basis. Dr. Duke stated that if maintenance is done on a continual basis, rather than only at flows above 120 cfs, there would be less negative impact. The longer maintenance is left undone the more negative impact the system would experience.

- Invasive plant species removal- If work is stopped then the work already completed will be reversed. Jackie Poole discussed the increased sediment when removing plants like elephant ears. Dr. Duke made the distinction about maintenance of elephant ears on the banks of the river is much less disruptive than large scale removal elsewhere. This would be a project that would not include beginning new areas of concern, just maintenance of previously removed stands. (Maintenance and Gardening).
- Floating Vegetation and litter collection- Melani Howard mentioned this program is specifically important in low-flow conditions. Doyle Mosier mentioned including a net downstream to collect any lost vegetation to limit increased disturbance - manage loss of

mats going downstream. This particular project does not disrupt wild rice stands but rather leaving vegetation mats could cause excess damage.

- Invasive species removal- spear fishing and bow fishing would not necessarily disrupt sediment. The committee stated that this particular project may not be effective enough to continue as it currently stands. Yet, there is not a concern in low flows.
- Dredging- obvious disturbance of sediment. Not considered for clarification.
- Aquatic Vegetation Planting- To significantly lower the disturbance of sediment the removal of vegetation should not be considered. There was a recommendation to continue maintenance with extra thought to be done on what plants are considered and where these plants are going. All areas for maintenance will be represented by vegetation maps.
- Conservation Crew - Education, litter removal.
- State Scientific Area (SSA) maintenance and maintenance of riparian areas. Committee agrees with Dr. Kreitler that this is a maintenance activity that is particularly important once flows drop (high use during summer times). SSAs are actually required to be placed at 120 cfs so preventing the maintenance of these barriers would harm broader goals.
- Household Hazardous Waste- No particular reason to suspend this project at any flow.
- Golf Course Management- No particular reason to suspend this project at any flow.
- Reducing Non-native species- No particular reason to suspend this project at any flow.
- Spring Lake Activities- Research Programs, Diving Classes, Boating. All programs are up for clarification except for boating.
- Clarification that the following activities should go on at any flow (short term or long term):
 - i. Texas Wild-Rice Enhancement and Restoration: Should continue planting using discretion at all flows. No objections.
 - ii. Management of Recreation in Key Areas: should continue due to the importance at low flows. No objections.
 - iii. Management of Aquatic Vegetation and Litter Below Sewell Park: More critical at low flow.
 - iv. Prohibition of Hazardous Materials Transport Across the San Marcos River and its Tributaries: unable to disrupt sediment.
 - v. Reduction of Non-Native Species Introduction: Continue at all flows.
 - vi. Control of Non-Native Plant Species: Gardening and maintenance only.
 - vii. Texas Wild-Enhancement and Restoration: Gardening and maintenance only.
 - viii. Management of Recreation in Key Areas: Continue at all flows.
 - ix. Management of Vegetation: Gardening and maintenance only.
 - x. Diversion of Surface Water: Continue at all flows.
 - xi. Research Programs in Spring Lake: not effected by flows due to the location. Motion for Dr. Hardy to pull together a list of current and future research project. No objections.
 - xii. Management of Golf Course and Grounds: Needs to continue. No possible disruptive.
 - xiii. Reduction of Non-Native Species Introduction: Continue at all flows.
 - xiv. Control of Non-Native Plant Species: Continue at all flows.
 - xv. Control of Harmful Non-Native and Predator Species: Continue at all flows.
 - xvi. State Scientific Areas: Continue at all flows.

- xvii. Expanded Water Quality Monitoring: Continue at all flows.
- xviii. Septic System Registration and Permitting Program: Continue at all flows.
- xix. Minimizing Impacts of Contaminated Runoff: Continue at all flows.
- xx. Management of Household Hazardous Wastes: Continue at all flows.

9. Comal System Activities

Zackary Martin from the City of New Braunfels gave a presentation of a list of activities found to be appropriate to continue throughout any flows. Powerpoint slides are posted on the Science Committee meeting website.

Zac Martin and the Science Committee provided the following comments and feedback:

- Gill Parasite- a request to continue water column sampling. Tom Arsuffi stated that this specific problem will only become more apparent at lower flows thus could increase the need for continued sampling. Dr. Longely stated that contractors should use the most non-intrusive way as possible.
- Non-native species removal- No reason to suspend.
- Decaying Vegetation Removal and DO management- recommendations to continue maintenance only.
- Riparian Improvements: CSRB Habitat- Restoration and maintenance of slope along water line to protect CSRB habitat. Recommendations to continue maintenance of this project with additional prudence to include protection of runoff (ex. mulch sock) in case of major rain event.
- Bank Stabilization- Because the Old Channel is managed at 50 cfs until system drop below 80 cfs it may give a reason to continue work in the Old Channel despite full system flow drop. Dr. Kreidler did mention the concern that flows may drop below 80 cfs, which may affect the Old Channel, while construction is underway. The committee ultimately decided to put this project on hold till flow conditions normalize above 130 cfs.
- Flow Split Management- manipulation of the system will never disrupt sediment due valve use. The committee agrees to maintain this project despite flows.
- HCP Internal projects which include the hazardous waste program, golf course management plan, education and signage, and hazardous materials transportation routes is requested to continue despite flows.
- Floating Vegetation- typical methods do not include any walking or disruption of sediment.
- The following programs should be continued at all flows:
 - i. Flow-Split Management in the Old and New Channel.
 - ii. Native Aquatic Vegetation Restoration and Maintenance.
 - iii. Management of Public Recreational Use of Comal Springs and River Ecosystems.
 - iv. Decaying Vegetation Removal and Dissolved Oxygen Management.
 - v. Control of Harmful Non-Native Animal Species.
 - vi. Monitoring and Reduction of Gill Parasites.
 - vii. Prohibition of Hazardous Material Transport Across the Comal River and its Tributaries.
 - viii. Reduction of Non-Native Species Introduction and Live Bait Prohibition.

- ix. Litter Collection and Floating Vegetation Management.
- x. Management of Golf Course Diversions and Operations.
- xi. State Scientific Areas.
- xii. Expanded Water Quality Monitoring.
- xiii. Management of Household Hazardous Wastes.

10. Future Meeting dates

Sessom Creek Sand Bar removal methodology up for committee comment.

11. Questions from the public

There were no comments.

12. Adjourn- 1:22 pm