

## Science Committee Meeting Minutes

May 09, 2013 9:00 a.m.

San Marcos Dunbar Center, San Marcos, Texas

**1. Call to Order--establish that all Science Committee members are present or represented**

A quorum was present for all purposes.

Members of the Committee present: T. Arsuffi, D. Mosier, C. Kreitler, J. Poole, F. Weckerly, C. Norris, G. Longley, J. Duke, and J. Bush. Robert Mace was unable to attend. Nathan Pence facilitated the discussion for the Committee.

**2. Public Comment**

None.

**3. Approval of Minutes from the Science Committee meeting of April 3, 2013**

Floyd Weckerly moved to approve the minutes of April 3, 2013. Jackie Poole seconded the motion. There were no objections; thus the motion passed.

**4. Receive Report from the Program Manager**

Jenna Cantwell reported that the final Science Committee vacancy should be filled following the May 16, 2013 meeting of the Implementing Committee. She additionally reported that HCP staff had been in contact with the National Academy of Science regarding the establishment of the Science Review Panel and that it is likely that the first meeting of this group will occur in late 2013. The Science Committee will be encouraged to attend this meeting for a meet and greet style informational session with the Science Review Panel.

**5. Presentation of the City of New Braunfels 2014 Work Plans and take possible action on a recommendation to the Implementing Committee regarding these plans.**

Zachary Martin presented the 2014 Work Plans for the City of New Braunfels with support from Thom Hardy as needed and with input regarding 2013 Conservation Measure status from Ed Oborny. After discussion, the Science Committee requested the following clarifications and corrections:

*5.2.2.1 Old Channel Restoration:* Provide more context for Table 4-6 in the Work Plan for clarification purposes. This could be accomplished by a reference or citation in the Work Plan to the relevant HCP sections.

*5.2.2.2/5.2.2.3 Aquatic Vegetation Restoration:* Collect data in a format to allow for measure of success and determine best restoration methods.

*5.2.5 Non-Native Animal Species Control:* Provide more clarification on 2014 activities addressing aquarium dumping and efforts to restrict live-bait usage in the river. Identify indicators to assess how removal is benefiting the endangered species. Encourage the

development of a strong public education and outreach program in support of the component (may wish to reference campaigns for the zebra mussel species).

*5.2.8 Native Riparian Habitat Restoration (Comal Springs Riffle Beetle):* For this component verify the difference between activities in potential habitat vs. occupied habitat for consistency with program documents. Monitoring prior to restoration and after restoration should establish absence/presence to measure success of restoration.

*In General:* Provide more detail in the Work Plan regarding project follow-up and how success will be quantified following implementation of the activities listed. Where warranted, include experimental design to support future Work Plan development and monitor rates of success. Include more information on efforts being taken to address education and public outreach to ensure the general public is aware of the programs taking place. Also appropriate references to the HCP should be included where called for.

*Public Comment:* There was discussion about the 20% coverage of restoration aquatic planting and success measures of non-native animal species removal. There was discussion regarding whether or not the non-native species control conservation measure conformed to the HCP.

## **6. Presentation of the City of San Marcos 2014 Work Plans and take possible action on a recommendation to the Implementing Committee regarding these plans.**

Melani Howard presented the 2014 Work Plans for the City of San Marcos with support from Thom Hardy as needed. After discussion, the Science Committee requested the following clarifications and corrections:

*5.3.1/5.4.1 Texas Wild-Rice Restoration:* Provide HCP citation/reference to the 12,000m<sup>2</sup> goal for Texas Wild-Rice coverage.

*5.3.6 Sediment Removal:* Consider the relationship between non-native vegetation and the rate of sediment disposition to understand how the two are related.

*5.3.8 Control of Non-Native Plant Species:* Consider including information about the reproductive cycle of elephant ears, including how long their seeds are viable.

*5.3.3 Management of Floating Vegetation Mats and Litter:* Include Sessom Creek in areas targeted for litter removal in 2014.

*5.4.6 Sessom Creek Sand Bar Removal:* Analysis and determination by Meadows Center (Thom Hardy) establishing appropriate action regarding the sand bar removal or modification should be presented to the Science Committee. The turbidity report required by TPWD should be presented to the Science Committee when complete.

*5.7.1 Native Riparian Habitat Restoration:* Be sure to actively plant as non-natives are removed to limit the impacts of erosion.

*5.7.6 Impervious Cover:* When developed, the WPP and WQPP should be provided to the Science Committee.

*5.7.4 Mitigating Impacts of Contaminated Runoff:* The designs for the established BMPs should be presented to the Science Committee. It is important to measure runoff prior to BMP installation and after BMP installation to measure success.

*5.4.9 Management of Golf Course and Grounds:* Consider acquiring the Audubon Certification for Golf Courses to comply with high environmental standards.

*In General:* Provide more detail in the Work Plan regarding project follow-up and how success will be quantified following implementation of the activities listed. Include more information on efforts being taken to address education and public outreach to ensure the general public is aware of the programs taking place.

7. *Public Comment:* Science Committee should review the WPP and WQPP. Consider the use of straw mats to prevent erosion in riparian restoration. Chemical application to athletic fields should be of equal concern to the Golf Course.

## **8. Consider future meeting dates, locations, and agendas**

Future meetings are scheduled for June 12, 2013 (San Marcos Activity Center) and August 14, 2013 (San Marcos Dunbar Center).