

Science Committee Meeting
November 29, 2012 8:00-5:00

Agenda and Objectives

8:00 Welcome and Introductions

Item 1: Provide a brief background of the History of the HCP and the role of the Science Committee

Objective: Ensure that the Science Committee understands the history of the Edwards Aquifer Habitat Conservation Plan, the various agreements supporting its implementation, and the role of the Science Committee in Adaptive Management and the implementation of the HCP.

Item 2: Discuss proposed walking path in the City of New Braunfels

Background: The City of New Braunfels is proposing a small permeable walking path be put along the western bank of Spring Run 3 to channel pedestrian traffic and prevent destruction to restored riparian habitat that is being established in this area.

Objective: Discuss and evaluate the potential benefit of including a walking path in the area of Spring Run 3 in the City of New Braunfels. Determine if the inclusion of the proposed walking path presents an advantage to the Endangered Species and offers a long-term financial benefit to the success of the HCP.

Supporting Documents: Brief description of the walking path element of the restoration project

Item 3: Receive Report from Ed Oborny (BIO-WEST) and Thom Hardy on Ecological Modeling

Background: Section 6.3.3 of the HCP contemplates the development of a predictive ecological model to evaluate potential adverse ecological effects from covered activities, and to the extent such effects occur, to quantify their magnitude. In developing an Ecological Modeling Work Plan for 2013, it was not clear whether a single modeling platform or multiple smaller models were better suited to the HCPs needs. For this reason, an expert panel was pulled together in late August to discuss the development of this model. The expert panel recommended that an assessment of current available information be conducted as well as an identification of existing small models prior to a decision being made regarding the final modeling platform. The EAA contracted with BIO-WEST and Thom Hardy to do this preliminary work.

Objective: The Science Committee will provide comments to improve the final report to be submitted by BIO-WEST and Thom Hardy. This item also will provide as a foundational update for the Science Committee to ensure they understand the goals of the Ecological Modeling element of the HCP.

Supporting Documents: Ecological Modeling 2013 Work Plan, Memo from Robert Gulley discussing the Ecological Modeling meeting held on August 28, and the draft Ecological Modeling report prepared by BIO-WEST and Thom Hardy

Item 4: Applied Research Facility

Background: At the August 31, 2012 meeting of the Science Committee, a “wish-list” for the Applied Research facility was developed. This list was discussed with engineers from the USFWS Albuquerque office who analyzed that the costs associated with the list. Before proceeding further, we wanted to identify appropriate facilities based on the needs of the experiments set out in the HCP.

Objective: Review the various elements of applied research identified in the HCP. Identify the ideal environment for conducting each experiment and the relative quantity of each required to complete the HCP experiments (field, experimental channel, or laboratory).

Supporting Documents: Memo from Nathan Pence outlining the issues to be addressed at this meeting and an applied research matrix to guide discussion

Item 5: Appoint officers for the Science Committee

Objective: The HCP staff will coordinate with the elected Chair of the Science Committee in advance of all meetings to discuss desired objectives and prepare the chair to successfully lead the meeting. The Committee may also determine if additional officers are desired.

Discuss future meeting dates and locations