



SEPTEMBER 9, 2016 MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to order – 9:00 am

Members present included: Tom Arsuffi, Jacquelyn Duke, Conrad Lamon, Glenn Longley, Doyle Mosier, Chad Norris, Jackie Poole, and Floyd Weckerly. Janis Bush participated via phone.

2. Public comment.

No comment.

3. Approval of June 22, 2016 Science Committee meeting minutes.

Dr. Duke motioned to approve the minutes. Dr. Longley seconded. There were no objections.

4. Receive report from the Program Manager.

• **Springflow and Index Well Update**

Dr. Chad Furl, Chief Science Officer, provided a brief hydrologic update for the region.

• **Introduction of new EAHCP staff member**

Dr. Furl introduced Kristina Tolman as the new HCP Coordinator.

5. Presentation, discussion, and possible recommendation of the Nonroutine Adaptive Management proposal related to the submerged aquatic vegetation Conservation Measures in the Comal and San Marcos to the Stakeholder Committee.

Nathan Pence, EAHCP Program Manager, provided a presentation to the Science Committee regarding the Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Analysis and the Nonroutine Adaptive Management proposal. The committee took a 15-minute break during this agenda item. A full summary of the Science Committee's discussion is provided as a section within the Scientific Evaluation Report (a report produced by the Committee pursuant to the Nonroutine AMP procedures laid out in the Funding & Management Agreement). Dr. Longley motioned to recommend the Nonroutine AMP proposal as presented, with the inclusion of the following Science Committee recommendations:

(1) That species names in EAHCP documents and processes be identified whenever possible;

(2) That consideration of community assembly rules is incorporated in the future, where appropriate, in activities involving ecological issues within the Comal and San Marcos systems (e.g., the selection of SAV species);

(3) That the dynamic nature of the Comal and San Marcos rivers as natural systems is considered in the future, such as by considering expressing goals as +/- ranges, or some other means;

(4) That establishing an experimental reach as a control, in which EAHCP restoration activities would be suspended, is investigated as a possible project; and

(5) That the relatively resilient nature of the fountain darter in the face of habitat fluctuations be recognized.

Provided the recommendations as stated above, Dr. Weckerly seconded Dr. Longley's motion to recommend the Nonroutine AMP proposal. There were no further comments. All were in favor. Motion passed.

6. Presentation and possible endorsement of an expedited process to prepare and to submit the Nonroutine Adaptive Management Scientific Evaluation Report to the Stakeholder Committee.

Dr. Duke motioned to endorse the expedited process to prepare and submit this Nonroutine AMP Scientific Evaluation Report to the Stakeholder Committee. Dr. Weckerly seconded Dr. Duke's motion. All were in favor. Motion passed.

7. Discussion of the proposals received for the EAHCP 2017 Applied Research Program.

Dr. Furl provided an update to the Science Committee concerning the proposals received for the 2017 Applied Research Program and the Science Committee's review process. A summary of points of discussion concerning each project is provided below.

▪ ***Evaluation of the effects of sedimentation on Comal Springs riffle beetle:***

Mr. Norris mentioned that there has been a lot of research done on the Comal Springs riffle beetle (CSRB) habitat preferences. He concluded that the proposed field study would not provide significant information for the EAHCP. Dr. Arsuffi communicated issues with the specific methodologies on both laboratory and field experiments in the proposal received. Mr. Pence asked the committee whether this project should be pursued in 2017. The committee supported tabling this study to pursue more important research on other topics related to the CSRB.

▪ ***Statistical analysis of the San Marcos & Comal Springs aquatic ecosystems biomonitoring dataset:***

The committee discussed the proposals received and how they determined their criteria for evaluation. Dr. Weckerly stated that the proposal provided him the impression that it is important to understand the relationship between different aspects of the system, as well as an understanding of how the data can communicate the information. Dr. Arsuffi found issue with all the proposals regarding the lack of a literature review specifically.

8. Presentation of the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Sampling the Comal Springs Riffle Beetle (CSRB).

Bob Hall, Sr. Project Coordinator, presented the CSRB SOP that has been developed in order to streamline and bring synergy to CSRB data collection efforts. Dr. Lamon mentioned that it could be helpful to collect information on the data collectors' company/organization affiliation. The committee had questions about the general goals and various specifics of the data form. There were no issues with the form or the SOP. The final SOP will be posted on eahcp.org.

9. Consider future meetings, dates, locations, and agendas. – November 10, 2016 at the San Marcos Activity Center (Multipurpose Room).

10. Questions and comments from the public.

None received.

11. Adjourn. - 11:55 a.m.