

**Meeting of the Proposed Edwards Aquifer  
Recovery Implementation Program (RIP)  
Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority, River Annex  
Seguin, Texas  
August 9, 2007  
Notetaker: Jodi Minion**

**W. E. West, Jr., Guadalupe Blanco River Authority: Welcome**

**Robert Potts, EAA: Steering Committee Appointment Report**

Appointments:

- Scott Smith, CPS
- Joseph Aceves, Bexar County
- Gary Middleton, SCTWAC
- Bruce Alexander, City of Castroville- public utility west of Bexar County
- Buck Benson, representing Alamo Cement, industry permit holder
- Roger Biggers, New Braunfels Utility
- Rader Gilleland, EA Irrigation permit holder
- Ray Joy Pfannstiel, Guadalupe County, agriculture producer

Statutory spaces that need to be designated:

- SARA- Will appoint at their next meeting (August 15th)
- TCEQ- needs to be represented and they also need to appoint two positions; they are meeting on Aug. 22<sup>nd</sup>
- TWDB- will appoint on August 27<sup>th</sup> at board member
- Bexar Met- Will appoint at meeting on August 22<sup>nd</sup>
- Texas Living Waters- still monitoring how this process is going to play out; withholding making an appointment for now
- Guadalupe Recreational interest- will be appointed by TPWD at their next meeting

**Joy Nicholopoulos, USFWS: Response to Information Requests**

Introduces Adam Zerrenner, moved from the DC Office and is the new Supervisor of the Austin Ecological Services Field Office

Discussion on Section 4 and Section 6 requirements for a RIP process

- There are no requirements under these sections for a specific process
- Recovery plans (newer ones) have an implementation section

Question and Answer Session

Recovery team

- Information on EARIP website and members will be posted to listserv

- Recovery team does not typically interface with HCP process. The HCP process follows parts of the recovery plan, but the recovery plan is not regulatory and the HCP is.
- A presentation from recovery team was suggested
- Interface between Recovery Team and RIP process is removed; they interface more through documentation, than through face to face contact
- There is overlap between recovery team members and RIP participants

#### Federal Funding

- USFWS does not traditionally provide funding for these processes.
- In other RIPs, most funding of the funding was funneled through the Bureau of Reclamation. The USFWS considers USGS as a possible option for the passage of federal funds.
- If fed funding will come to this group, the group needs to consider how and through which agency? This might be a topic for a subcommittee.
- The soonest federal funding could be allocated would be the 2009 budget.

#### Science Committee

- Past science committees had hydrology and biology components that had direct input into the process
- The Recovery Team develops priority activities, based on best available science, and the advisory committee implements these activities

#### **Adam Zerrenner, USFWS: Update from Austin Office**

He is working with an internal USFWS team to analyze the effects of SB 3 on the listed species.

USFWS is also doing a legal review of the legislation and hopes to have an update by the next meeting

#### Possible short course on ESA?

- Group is interested
- Anna can use the listserv to organize a short course on the ESA
- GBRA offered to host this course

#### Question and Answer

#### Legislation Analyses

- Two pronged analysis:
  - 1) How do the new caps affect spring flows and how does that compare to previous caps?
  - 2) What are the potential effects on listed species? The key aspects here are running models (working with USGS with modeling aspect- USGS is prepared to get moving on this once they meet with USFWS)

- Consequences of these analyses (impacts) will be addressed through this RIP process
- This review cannot address the inclusiveness of this process

#### Take and Jeopardy

- Jeopardy is not likely to occur before take. Jeopardy is survival and recovery of the species. Once we know the take, then there is the jeopardy analysis.
- Anything mitigated for the take is covered by HCP
- The incidental take permit cannot be authorized by jeopardy- that is the limitation
- Explanation of jeopardy given
- It is very unusual to have jeopardy and take numbers set by the courts

### **Mary Q. Kelly: Report from Operational Guidelines Committee**

#### Method

- Ad hoc
- Working within the bounds of a parallel process between GEARS and the Steering Committee

#### Intent

- To provide a venue for all voices
- This document hopes to provide a way to allow GEARS to better influence Steering Committee decisions

#### Review of Draft of Proposed Guidance Document for Group of Edwards Aquifer Region Stakeholders

- Please submit comments to draft in writing to Mary Kelly

#### Question and Answer

#### Voting section/protocol

- Add a timeline in voting section
- Quorum might be too small; does not represent what one thinks of when they think of consensus

#### Representation

- Revising the Steering Committee to be representative might be a better route
- MOA might not pass within proof of representation
- Will this group accept the Steering Committee?
- GEARS should influence the Steering Committee through subcommittees in order to feel represented and to have a Committee we are all comfortable with

### **Myron Hess: Report on MOA Sub-Committee**

MOA is drafted and has been sent for review among committee members.

GEARS needs to come to a consensus on that what consensus is

### **Bob Shaw, TAMU: Report on Program Manager Search Committee**

Descriptive language of the position will be posted on the web in TAMU format.

Modifications is current document

- Deadline of application was changed from Sept 2200 to Sept 2007
- Substitution of work experience for academic experience is reasonable

Applicants do not have to be a TAMU person or hired through TAMU. If the hiring process expands to other institutions, two announcements might need to go out. If the person is hired outside the TAMU system, the money needs to go to the other institution.

Question and Answer

TAMU hiring process

- TAMU is flexible (interim positions, federal employees, etc.) but they will have to involve Human Resources
- Human Resources can handle position turn over; there needs to be a protocol for this
- Insulation of position goes as far as the Steering Committee providing funding
- Might consider including language in description about this hiring flexibility
- TAMU cannot provide certain assurances; the Committee can choose to contract out different employment institution if they want

Type of person wanted for position

- The kind of person that doesn't need the protection
- Person should have political and technical qualifications to ride on

Position selection process

- Application deadline is Sept 30, selection deadline is Oct 30
- Due to impending deadlines, this process will move forward before the full Committee is appointed
- The subcommittee will review the candidates; the Steering Committee will look over those reviews and make their recommendations to TAMU and human resources
- Several people have contacted TAMU about the position already

Position Announcements

- Will be announced on various websites and through the TAMU system

- Please forward the link and description to whomever you think might be interested

### **Robert Potts, EAA: Report on Budget and Funding**

#### Review of Budget

Funding language provided in legislation- 5 entities are named

- They have also asked SARA, GBRA, SAWS to consider supporting this process.
- Asking for \$25000 each (of 8 entities, total) per year to start the process

#### Question and Answer

##### Administrative costs

- Are much higher if the Committee chooses to use a contractor, rather than TAMU
- Support staff provided in budget- one student

##### Other Funding Anticipated

- Research
- Staff (one student) and office facilities are already included

### **Robert Potts, EAA: Update from Steering Committee**

#### Deadlines and priorities

- Steering Committee will be up and running by December. Most will be appointed by August.
- Hiring of program manager and funding by the end of October 2007
- Appointment of science subcommittee by end of 2007 (will be taking names)
- MOA needs to be signed by end of the year (USFWS, and entities named in Legislation)

#### Question and Answer

##### Funding Logistics

- Need to consider logistics of how you will handle money
- Anna will add this to their agenda

### **Anna Munoz- Wrap up and announcements**

#### Upcoming meeting dates/times

- September 6th; Host: SAWS in San Antonio
- October 18<sup>th</sup>; Host: possibly GBRA
- November: 8<sup>th</sup>; Host: San Marcos
- December 13<sup>th</sup>; Host: SAWS
- January 2008 and beyond: regular schedule is every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month

### September Meeting Agenda Items

- MOA subcommittee
- USFWS report on their progress

### October Meeting Agenda Item

- Bring in recovery expert

### Listserv

- Listserv is now set so when you hit “reply” you only reply to the sender
- Anna is working on making a weekly report available

### **Meeting adjourned**