



MAY 11, 2016 MEETING MINUTES

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At this meeting, the following business may be considered and recommended for Work Group action:

1. Call to Order.

9:05 a.m. Steve Raabe called the meeting to order. Nathan Pence introduced Chad Furl, new Chief Science Officer at EAHCP, who was formerly with UTSA, and before that, the Department of Ecology in Washington State.

2. Public Comment.

No public comment.

3. Recap of Work Group Meeting #3.

Nathan Pence presented a recap of Meeting #3. The Work Group approved Alternative #3 Scope of Work. The Work Group agreed on nutrients of concern. Real time stations provide some of the most useful data – recommendation is to add one station per system. Stormwater – continue the baseline, sampling once per year, concluded that alternating years to include golf course pesticide sampling (adding atrazine), also include PDS sampling. Groundwater – recommendation to remove from the EAHCP due to EAA doing the same sampling and to remove duplication. Tissue sampling conducted alternate years that are opposite from sediment sampling. Tissue program is not committed to specific species, but EAHCP will engage subject matter experts (SMEs) for sampling recommendations; SMEs to include professors who have conducted sampling and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Chad Furl will lead the tissue sample process.

4. Discussion and possible recommendation of staff-proposed changes to the nutrient monitoring program for the EAHCP Expanded Water Quality Monitoring Program (Attachment 1).

Alicia Reinmund-Martinez reviewed the nutrient sampling information. Last meeting established that nutrients of concern are nitrate, ammonia and soluble reactive phosphorous (SRP). Question left after the last meeting was if we should reduce the detection limit of SRP since there have been 95% non-detects. Alicia Reinmund-Martinez and Bob Hall met with Dr. Weston Nowlin who provided the graph on SRP. Weston recommends 3-5 micrograms/liter (instead of 50). The price is the same for lab results regardless of what the detection limit is.

Steve Raabe asked if the contractors would charge more to collect; Nathan Pence indicated that he hasn't heard there would be additional costs, but will confirm that there is no additional cost. Alicia Reinmund-Martinez made the recommendation that the current nutrient sampling conducted for the EAHCP program be discontinued, and continue to use the nutrient monitoring that is done by the BioMP and GBRA's Clean Rivers Program, with the recommendation that the BioMP reduce the SRP detection level to 3-5 micrograms/liter. Michael Urrutia asked if they would filter in the lab, or filter in the field. Alicia said that SRP sampling is a step before total phosphorous sampling analysis in the lab – it is more costly to do total phosphorous than it is to do SRP. Bob Hall said SRP has to be filtered in the lab.

Ben Schwartz said that we should move forward with staff's recommendation.

Michael Urrutia asked if we tell the lab 3 or 5 micrograms/liter. Nathan Pence said that they have no choice but to give them 5 because the lab stated that they could not guarantee 3 micrograms/liter. Daniel Large said that phosphorous analysis has a range in the lab no matter what. He recommended we set at range of 3 -5 micrograms. Nathan Pence said we can work on that when we get a quote from the lab. Recommendation is that it be set at “at least 5 micrograms/liter.”

Ben Schwartz made a motion to change detection limit to at least 5 micrograms per liter in the BioMP. Michael Urrutia seconded. Consensus.

*Ben Schwartz asked about the issue of lowering the detection limit for ammonia from 100 micrograms/liter to something else. Alicia Reinmund-Martinez said that EAHCP does not monitor that and would have to look at GBRA’s Clean Rivers data. Ben Schwartz stated that ammonia doesn’t stick around long. If we have detects, it could be a sign of other problems. He didn’t have a recommendation, but said that Weston Nowlin was concerned about the 100 micrograms/liter. Daniel Large said the Groeger report does discuss ammonium. Nathan Pence said that he doesn’t know why we couldn’t have the BioMP contractor pull a lower detection limit on ammonia at the same time as SRP detection. Daniel Large said that the lab that does SRP does ammonia as the same package. Michael Urrutia said that if we are looking for contribution of sewer lines (leaks), it is going to be higher than 100 micrograms/liter. That is why CRP uses that detection limit. **Nathan Pence said staff will research ammonia conditions, and appropriate detection limits, similar to the SRP issue. The WQWG will review this new information at the next meeting.***

5. Discussion of synergies and integration between monitoring programs.

Nathan Pence started the conversation about synergies. In depth conversation about synergies will continue with the two Work Groups during the May 20th meeting. Nathan Pence reviewed the slides and staff recommendations. Nathan Pence said that Jacquelyn Duke stated that the group is not doing a before and after monitoring for our riparian restoration work, with the point that it may not be within the BioMP where that is done, but in the riparian restoration work plans. This is an example of a possible synergy to consider.

Melani Howard suggests including Riparian review in the RBAs. Nathan Pence suggested this should be added to the “Other Possible Synergies slide. This should be discussed at the next meeting.

Ben Schwartz – riparian conditions, staff mentioned “light.” Tom Hardy had data all down the river prior to the restoration. Nathan Pence said that there are stretches of the river that are not good for restoration because of the shade. He said BIO-WEST may have some information on this. Nathan Pence said at the next meeting we will have a map of monitoring sites and biological reaches. As well as a table that shows when they are collected. Also a recommendation to give the work groups a starting point of how feasible it is to link those together.

Ken Diehl asked if BIO-WEST does any detailed observation on changes in the system over the 15-year period – recreation uses, nutria-impacts, etc. Nathan Pence said yes. Bob Hall said they do as well. They take photos from each site N/S/E/W. You can go through time looking at photos from a given point and see how it has changed (example, Landa Lake and Aquarena Springs). Ken Diehl asked about impacts during peak recreational use periods. Nathan Pence said that BIO-WEST has wanted to put this into reports, but did not want to put the opinions and anecdotal evidence without real data. Dianne Wassenich with the San Marcos River Foundation, said her volunteers conduct periodic counts of the number of recreational users in the river counts.

Ken Diehl said that he is looking for dead zones for example. Nathan Pence says they pick up changes in flora and fauna and that is recorded, but does not want to speculate on a cause for the change in

flora and fauna, unless there is data that can confirm the point source. If anyone wants the data, there is a lot of it. But, EAHCP needs to stay objective.

6. Presentation and discussion of the Draft Report.

Ben Schwartz asked if there will be two reports or one. Nathan Pence indicated that there would be two reports because of the different level of dialogue each group had, and wants to represent that the work groups had unique discussions. There will be one cover page, but two separate reports.

7. Consider future meetings, dates, locations, and agendas.

Joint Meeting of the 2016 Expanded Water Quality & Biological Monitoring Work Groups, Friday, May 20, 2016, 9-12 p.m., San Marcos Activity Center (Multipurpose Room)

Rebecca Leonard will adjust the invite to reflect that the next meeting will be from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Recommendations will go to the Implementation and Science Committees to be reviewed and adopted, and none of the recommended changes will be implemented until January 2017.

8. Questions and comments from the public.

No comment.

9. Adjourn.

10:15 a.m. Steve Raabe concluded the meeting.