



## MEETING MINUTES

November 19, 2015

**1. Call to order.**

Todd Votteler was not present. GBRA did not have representation. All others members were present or represented. Juan Guerra was present for Andy Sansom, Texas State University.

**2. Public comment.**

No comment.

**3. Approval of October 15, 2015 Implementing Committee meeting minutes.**

Darren Thompson, SAWS, identified a change to item 9, replace language about “completion of project” to “bid of project.” Revised minutes can be found at eahcp.org.

**4. Receive report from the Program Manager on general topics related to the implementation of the Habitat Conservation Plan and operation of the Implementing Committee.**

- Summary of Flood Impacts to EAHCP Restoration in the Comal and San Marcos springs systems.  
Nathan Pence, EAHCP Program Manager, reported the current status of springflows and Index Well levels as well as reported on the work done to assess the impacts of the October flood. Mark Enders, City of New Braunfels, reported on the direct impacts of the flood on the Comal River system. Melani Howard, City of San Marcos/Texas State University, reported on the direct impacts of the flood on the San Marcos River system. Both Mr. Pence as well as Tom Taggart, City of San Marcos, explained the impacts to the EAHCP projects. Mr. Pence communicated that the ITP does not require mitigation of Take in the event of a flood but rather only drought directly or indirectly caused by pumping. Mr. Taggart explained that the impacts could have been far worse had it not been for EAHCP projects.
- ASR Operations by SAWS  
SAWS is currently storing at 20 MGD. HCP total storage is 17,974 AF as of October 19<sup>th</sup>. All HCP water made available to SAWS was stored as of mid-October. Mr. Pence reported that EAA has been receiving calls for 2016 leasing.
- Budget Update – There was no discussion.
- National Academy of Sciences October 2015 Meeting Summary  
Mr. Pence summarized the most recent visit if the NAS committee. Roland Ruiz, EAA, expressed concern about the tone of the discussion during the October 29<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- 2015 EAHCP Annual Report Timeline  
Mr. Pence summarized the current timeline of deliverables for the 2015 Annual Report.

**5. Presentation and discussion on an EAA summary of well permitting and pumping history from 2008 to 2014.**

Earl Parker, EAA, reported the background of EAA regulatory pumping framework as well as the pumping summary of 2008 through 2014. Mr. Parker showed despite the highest Critical Period Reductions (35% in San Antonio Pool and 44% in Uvalde Pool), total pumping was below authorized volume by more than 50,000 acre-feet. For 2015, estimated Critical Period Reductions are expected to be approximately 20% for both San Antonio and Uvalde Pool. The full presentation can be found at [eahcp.org](http://eahcp.org).

It was recommended for the presentation in the future to include a breakout depiction of VISPO contribution to water conserved/pumped tables and to show recharge rankings (e.g., 2008 was the 8<sup>th</sup> lowest year on record for recharge). It was asked approximately how much water was associated with exempt wells; Mr. Parker stated he did not know offhand but could find out for the Committee.

**6. Presentation and possible approval of a proposed Scope of Work to evaluate methodologies and develop timelines for the EAHCP restoration of native vegetation in the San Marcos and Comal ecosystems as it pertains to achieving the Biological Goals.**

Mr. Pence provided the Committee a background of how the FMA describes the Adaptive Management process in terms of the proposed Scope of Work. The Scope of Work described an analysis of current Biological Goals and Objectives of native aquatic vegetation restoration in the San Marcos and Comal systems.

The presentation included additional language to be included in the Scope of Work to provide flexibility for the Program Manger as well as the Implementing Committee to resolve any conflicting recommendations between the two contractors selected for this analysis. Mr. Taggart discussed the rationale for including additional flexibility in the Scope of Work to provide a compromise between the two researchers selected for the analysis. Mr. Pence explained how the funding for this contract will come out of the Program Management budget specifically allocated for Adaptive Management.

Steve Ramsey motioned to adopt the Scope of Work to produce a contract to be executed. Seconded by Juan Guerra. There were no objections.

**7. Presentation of and possible approval authorizing the EAHCP Program Manager to submit a letter to USFWS informing them about operational issues and future plans related to: 1) the evaluation of native aquatic vegetation restoration, 2) the source of data for calculating the compliance of Texas wild-rice coverage, and 3) the delay in implementing the flow manipulation in the Old Channel of the Comal River.**

Mr. Pence presented the details of a letter to USFWS is to inform them of approaching Adaptive Management Decision Making as well as:

1. The vegetation analysis being done in both San Marcos and Comal springs systems.
2. The reference to TWR coverage numbers from BIO-WEST Inc. and not USFWS.
3. The requirement to increase in flows to the Old Channel of the Comal, described in the HCP, could be harmful. An analysis will be done to determine the best step forward. The letter will request concurrence to the delay in increased flows to the Old Channel so scour will not occur.

Steve Ramsey, City of New Braunfels, asked whether staff has communicated Old Channel flow manipulation subject to USFWS. Mr. Pence said that this motion is to initiate the process to submit formal communication, but there had already been conversation with USFWS prior to developing this request.

Adam Zerrenner with USFWS stated that the EAHCP is doing well and reassured the Committee current work and potential changes are routine and acceptable.

Tom Taggart motioned to approve authorizing the EAHCP Program Manager to submit a letter to USFWS regarding the 1) evaluation of native aquatic vegetation restoration, 2) the source of data for calculating the compliance of Texas wild-rice coverage, and 3) the delay in implementing the flow manipulation in the Old Channel of the Comal River. The motion was seconded by Darren Thompson. There were no objections.

**8. Presentation and discussion about a strategic approach for optimizing EAHCP research programs.**

Mr. Pence presented the rationale of the Applied Research Work Group based on the NAS Recommendations Review Work Group. The EAHCP conducts research in a variety of different programs including Applied Research, Ecological Modeling, Refugia and Hydrologic Modeling. Mr. Pence described the need was to provide the most productive way to conduct research between all programs within the EAHCP in a collaborative way. Mr. Taggart recommended the importance of cross referencing all research between various programs in the Annual Report.

**9. Presentation and possible adoption of the Report of the 2015 Applied Research Work Group for implementation.**

Mr. Pence introduced the Work Group's chair, Dr. Tom Arsuffi, to present the Work Group report. Dr. Arsuffi began by commending the Implementing Committee for putting together a Work Group membership that provided productive discussion as well as a great product. Details of the report can be found at eahcp.org.

Darren Thompson motioned to adopt the Applied Research Work Group report. Seconded by Steve Ramsey. There were no objections.

**10. Presentation and possible direction authorizing the EAHCP Program Manager to initiate a phased approach for procuring a database for EAHCP data and for conducting a statistical analysis of EAHCP data.**

Alicia Reinmund-Martinez, EAHCP Director, presented the details of building an EAHCP database and statistical analysis plan. The full presentation can be found on eahcp.org.

Mr. Taggart said he thought this type of work is very important. He suggested staff begin developing the details to insure long-term administrative success. He also asked about the funding source of this database as well as the "usability" of the product.

Mr. Pence answered that the work will be done through the 2016 funds through various line items dependent on budget expectations. The Scope of Work will include long-term management training for in-house employees. In terms of a usable database, Mrs. Reinmund-Martinez

described various examples of a user friendly interface in addition to a full data center to allow simple searching.

Juan Guerra, Texas State University, asked if a multi-year project cost will be established. Mr. Taggart continued by stating that database management is important in planning for year to year activities.

Juan Guerra motioned to approve the Program Manager to move forward in developing a database management and statistical analysis contract. Tom Taggart seconded. There were no objections.

**11. Presentation and possible action to approve the amended 2015 EAA Funding Application to be submitted to the EAA Board.**

Mr. Ruiz presented the summary of the 2015 EAA Funding Application to reflect changes to the overall budget to account for NAS invoices received this year for last year's work. All budget increases are within the overall budget.

Tom Taggart motioned to approve the amended 2015 EAA Funding Application as presented. Darren Thompson seconded. There were no objections.

**12. Consider future meetings, dates, locations, and agendas.**

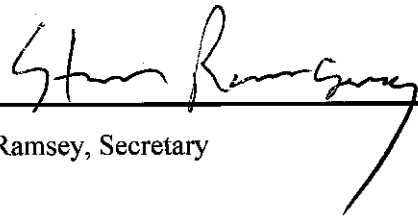
Joint Meeting, December 17, 2015 at the Edwards Aquifer Authority.

- Summary of 2015 work
- Introduction of the Adaptive Management Process

**13. Questions from the public.**

No comment.

**14. Adjourn. 11:55 am**



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Steve Ramsey, Secretary