

TEXAS CLEAN RIVERS PROGRAM FOR THE RIO GRANDE BASIN

UPPER RIO GRANDE 1 COORDINATED MONITORING MEETING (El Paso/Hudspeth Counties)

March 29, 2016

1:00 p.m.

El Paso, Texas

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Participants

Jose Mendoza, El Paso Community College

Aida Mauricio, El Paso Electric Company

Robin Cypher, TCEQ Surface Water Quality

Sarah Eagle, TCEQ Clean Rivers Program

Marty Kelly, TPWD- Austin

Arturo Leyva, TCEQ Region 6

Kyle Douglas-Mankin, USGS-NMWSC

Alex Graziano, USGS- NMWSC

Carlos Rincon, US EPA Region 6

Stanley Mubako, UTEP- CERM

Angel Bustamante, El Paso Water Utilities

Andres Garcia, USIBWC Clean Rivers

Leslie Grijalva, USIBWC Clean Rivers

Meeting Notes:

- Leslie Grijalva opened the meeting and began with introductions from all participants.
- Leslie went into an explanation of the 303d list, and what segments in this reach are impaired. She then went into detail as to what the impairments are for (parameters), and how long they have been on the list.
- Discussion of 303d list sparked conversation on the bacteria counts around the Sunland Park WWTP.
 - Dr. Rincon contacted Gilbert Tellez, who is in charge of infrastructure repairs along the border, for information on the upgrades to the plant.
 - Sunland Park WWTP infrastructure upgrades have not been done yet. Looking at summer 2016 before they get done.
- Segment 2308

- Only segment in the basin that is non-contact recreation. This is the channelized portion of the river.
- How are we going to deal with this?
- Robin asked what had caused the bacteria to spike in this segment.
- Leslie explained that this segment includes stations in the concrete channelized portion of the river. This portion of the river is not supposed to carry water. When it does, it is stormwater runoff that brings in trash, and also wastewater effluent. The water is not clean.
- Robin will look into the historical data for these stations and will get back to Leslie with her opinion about how they should be monitored. We may be able to administratively de-list if everything is storm-flow related.
- When discussing the bacteria impairment, a question was asked as to what kind of bacteria we were referring to. The indicator for bacteria in Texas is E.coli.
- EPCC: Tracking E.coli types, also tracking antibiotic resistant organisms (modeling after a study in Costa Rica).
- UTEP: collaborating with EPCC. Also doing PCP projects and endocrine disruptors.
- USGS monitors at Courchesne Bridge, monthly, and continuous monitoring of conductivity and temperature.
 - USGS has an extensive surface water monitoring network throughout NM.
 - Where can we get this data?
- UTEP: Dr. Hargrove's assistant professor here, new, look at what projects they are working on and he will get back to me.
- Coordinated Monitoring Schedule was discussed next. Leslie gave an overview of the format for the CMS printout. She reminded everyone that there is a data gap in the Forgotten Stretch because Site 20648 remains off the schedule for now.
 - No current monitoring in Forgotten Stretch.
 - Even when there was, no 48 hour parameters (due to remoteness of site).
 - Marty: Is there any way we can get around the NELA accreditation requirements?
 - Robin: There are exceptions (in-house sampling), but not approved for CRP.
- Could we partner with CILA and/or an educational institution in MX to monitor the Forgotten Stretch?
 - Look into this through IBWC EMD monitoring.
- Region 6, TCEQ, explained there is no change to their monitoring schedule from last year.
- San Eli site was discussed. Leslie asked if there were still access issues. TCEQ verified that the access issues are still there, in large part due to overgrown vegetation.
 - Banks are still steep and unstable.
 - Lots of dense vegetation
 - Staff cited safety concerns
 - Arturo suggested that we sit down with the regional office to discuss site re-assessment.
 - Leslie stated that a re-evaluation of the site the previous year had determined that this site was still unsafe, and CRP has kept it off the schedule. Proposed a joint site-visit with TCEQ, USIBWC CRP, and the USIBWC's Safety and Security office.
 - If the site is determined to be unsafe, we can select a new site together.

- Site at Alamo Grade was discussed. TCEQ, Region 6, said they are not monitoring this station. The IBWC added this station back for FY16 and has had no issues.
- Site at Fort Quitman still remains a remote site. However, it carries enough water for sampling, and the USIBWC CRP would consider adding it back quarterly.
- TCEQ is also having issues shipping out of the parks. Discussed what we were thinking of at the Upper 2 CMM.
- USDA (with Dr. Hargrove from UTEP): Working on 5-yr project, Water Resources in the Rio Grande and Effects of Climate Change. Also working with NMSU, Juarez, TX A&M Agrilife Extension.
- Leslie spoke about the reported fish kill in Ascarate Lake in January 2016.
 - TPWD received water samples from Ascarate Lake fish kill, and confirmed golden algae cells. Marty confirmed this. Will get the report to CRP when it goes through the proper chain of command.
- NWIS (USGS water quality data)
- UTEP did not attend the meeting, so their schedule will be kept the same.
- CRP did general overview of handouts and publications available and closed meeting. Meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM.
- No YSI training given because no sampling partners in attendance.

AGENDA

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| 1:00 | Welcome/Introductions |
| 1:10 | Discussion on various water quality topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of TCEQ's Integrated Report/303d list • Identification of water quality issues, data gaps, sources • Ongoing research and projects in the area addressing issues |
| 2:00 | Monitoring Schedule <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of statewide Coordinated Monitoring Schedule (CMS) http://cms.lcra.org/ - current and FY 2017 monitoring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ San Eli, Fabens, and Fort Hancock stations ○ Update/discussion on safety and security issues • Issues with current sites, if any • Potential future projects and potential new sites |
| 2:40 | Other announcements and information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential projects or ongoing projects of interest in the basin • 2016 Basin Highlights Report for the Rio Grande Basin <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watershed Characterization Report |
| 2:50 | Final comments and adjourn |
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- 3:00 USIBWC CRP Partner Refresher Training and Monitoring Guidance Updates
- Answer questions and review monitoring procedures as needed.
- 3:30 Adjourn refresher training portion
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