

MINUTES
HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM WORKGROUP
March 9, 2007
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

IODP Room C-126
Texas A&M University

Attending the meeting were Karen Meador, Meridith Byrd, Liz Singhurst, Alex Nunez, Janet Nelson (TPWD), Christine Kolbe (TCEQ), Lisa Campbell, Dan Roelke, Leslie Schwierzke (TAMU), and Michael Lee (USGS.) Attending by videoconference were Cliff O'Neal, Andy Tirpak, Winston Denton, and Jan Culbertson (TPWD.) Attending by teleconference were Cindy Contreras (TPWD) and Dave Buzan (PBS&J.)

Updates:

Bloom Updates

A bloom of *Prorocentrum* was reported last month in Matagorda Bay. No effects have been seen in oysters collected.

Golden Alga Update

Golden alga is blooming along the Brazos River, including Possum Kingdom, Lake Granbury, Lake Whitney, Lake Brazos and the river below College Station. It has also been reported on a private near Hearn. The Red River basin is clear at this time, but Mountain Creek in the Colorado Basin is affected. Counts are going up everywhere except the Pecos.

The ponds and small reservoirs guidance document is available at <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/water/enviroconcerns/hab/ga/research/index.phtml>.

On Wednesday, March 14 there is a meeting of researchers whose projects are funded by TPWD state wildlife grant money. The researchers will present their findings to TPWD's Golden Alga Task Force. The Task Force plans to hold an international golden alga researchers' meeting in late 2008 or early 2009. Several Task Force members will attend the 4th North American Reservoir Symposium in Atlanta in June to give a joint presentation with counterparts from Arizona regarding golden alga.

Winston collected water samples from the Brazos on Thursday. He has concerns that they might contain golden alga but no fish kills have occurred yet.

Volunteer Red Tide Monitoring

Jeff Paternoster of NOAA was scheduled to be in Texas last month to hold 3 trainings in Lake Jackson, Rockport, and South Padre Island. Texas Master Naturalist chapters were eager to participate. However, due to budget problems Jeff had to cancel the trip. The budget problems are fixed and Meridith and Jeff are ready to reschedule the trainings. Meridith will contact the Master Naturalist chapters to find a time period that works well and then reschedule the trainings accordingly. Lisa has video of all

the *Karenia* species that she is willing to lend for the trainings. Lisa has also offered to be another resource to confirm suspected blooms.

Red Tide Fact Card

It is finished! Many thanks to Chris Kolbe for handling the printing (100,000 copies.) Meridith will distribute copies to anyone who wants them, including agency offices, chambers of commerce, hotels, etc.

Coastal *P. parvum* Monitoring

Initial plans were to sample along the coast and have TPWD's lab at the A.E. Wood Fish Hatchery analyze the samples using PCR. However, Loraine Fries noted that the lab's PCR has not been yielding acceptable results. The method can be used right now for presence-absence analysis but not quantitative. Meridith talked to Dave Sager about this and he recommended doing presence-absence surveys this year and a full-scale survey next year. He has written an amendment to the State Wildlife Grant for next year allowing money for the samples to be sent off to PhycoTech for quantitative analysis. PhycoTech analysis runs a few hundred dollars per sample.

Aerosol Monitoring Workshop

NIEHS will hold a Brevetoxin Aerosol Workshop on April 17 in conjunction with the Texas Bays and Estuaries meeting (April 18-19.) Tracy has lined up an entire day of speakers focusing on human health effects of brevetoxin. Registration is available on UTMSI's website and a block of rooms has been reserved at the Plantation Suites in Port Aransas. The goal of the workshop is for Florida researchers to bring Texas HAB workers up to date on the ongoing brevetoxin research.

Karen Meador brought up the Mission-Aransas National Estuarine Research Reserve that was recently established and is now bringing research money to the mid-coast.

Lisa Campbell gave a presentation on her automated early warning systems for HABs, the FlowCAM and Flow CytoBot. She mentioned that having a NERR was a condition for receiving the research money. Ed Buskey of the MANERR is planning 4 monitoring platforms for the Flow CytoBots.

Dan Roelke gave a presentation on his Lake Granbury golden alga research.

TexHAB Group Goals

Meridith asked for recommendations of goals from the group and will send an e-mail to the distribution list soliciting suggestions for goals. She described her vision of the group as building relationships between agencies and entities, researchers, and other people in the Texas HAB community. Outreach initiatives (such as the red tide fact card) should also be a focus of the group. Liz Singhurst mentioned that she'd like to see more incorporation of human health issues, such as blue-green algae, in the future. Chris Kolbe noted that TCEQ's source water group (Sean Ables) did toxin monitoring of blue-greens but that the study is running behind. \$375,000 was given to Ables' project for a multi-year study of major water sources. Liz suggested asking Sean Ables to present his findings to the group at a future meeting.

Karen suggested using the group to facilitate better red tide response, such as in pulling in more outside (as in outside of TPWD) resources to help with response. Can we call different agencies for sampling help? The Coast Guard Auxiliary, Galveston Bay Estuary Program, Coastal Bend Bay and Estuary Program, Galveston Bay Foundation, Texas Cooperative Extension, GLOs Beach Watch and TCEQ were all suggested as places to look for outside assistance. A suggestion was floated to have a coordination meeting regarding red tide response and inviting folks from all aforementioned entities to attend.

Action Items

1. Meredith will reschedule the SEPMN volunteer trainings.
2. Meredith will e-mail the TexHAB distribution list asking for goals.
3. Meredith will work toward more coordination for the next red tide event.

Next Meeting

The next TexHAB meeting will be held in June at TAMU-Galveston.