



**Watershed Coordination Steering Committee
Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board
Wharton Regional Office**

**Meeting Summary
Thursday, June 8, 2006**

Attendance

Persons present:

Steven Johnston	*Galveston Bay Estuary Program
Debbie Magin	*Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority
Todd Running	*Houston-Galveston Area Council
Sylvia Balentine	*Lavaca-Navidad River Authority
David Cowan	*Lower Colorado River Authority
Susan Meckel	Lower Colorado River Authority
Steve Lusk	*San Antonio River Authority
Arthur Talley	*Texas Commission on Environmental Quality – TMDL Program
Allison Woodall	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality-Clean Rivers Program
Sherri Serna	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality-319 Program
Nikki Dictson	Texas Cooperative Extension – Texas Watershed Steward Program
Dwight Head	Natural Resources Conservation Service-Zone 3
Richard Eyster	*Texas Department of Agriculture – Pesticide Program Division
Shane Harrington	*Texas Forest Service
David Sager	*Texas Parks and Wildlife Department-Inland Fisheries
Susan Benner	Texas Sea Grant
Kendria Ray	Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board
Aaron Wendt	Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board
Brian Koch	Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board

**WCSC member*

Committee agencies not represented:

Brazos River Authority
Brazos Valley Council of Governments
Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program
Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission
Lower Neches Valley Authority
Natural Resources Conservation Service – Zone 4
Nueces River Authority
South East Texas Regional Planning Commission
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality- Clean Rivers Program
Texas General Land Office
Texas Parks and Wildlife-Coastal Fisheries
Texas Water Development Board
Texas Water Resources Institute
Trinity River Authority

Call To Order

Brian Koch opened the sixth meeting of the Watershed Coordination Steering Committee (WCSC) of the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) Wharton Regional Office (WRO). Self-introductions of those in attendance were made. The meeting was held at the Colorado County Agriculture Building in Columbus, Texas and was lightly attended by steering committee members and invited guests.

Update on Watershed Coordinator Activities

Brian Koch gave an overview of Watershed Coordinator activities since the previous meeting on March 9, 2006.

- Attended the Clean Rivers Program meetings for the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority and the Sabine River Authority
- Attended workgroup and partnership meetings for the Dickinson Bayou Watershed Partnership
- The second and third issues of the Coordinated Watershed Planning in Southeast and South Central Texas Newsletter sent out

Brian Koch invited the groups that presented their WPPs at the March 9 WCSC meeting to give a follow-up on the projects.

- Dickinson Bayou WPP, Susan Benner TCE Watershed Coordinator
 - April 19 partnership meeting, well attended
 - Surveyed the group about issues that they identified previously, and broke it down to each workgroup
 - Each issue was prioritized by the participants
 - Land use being development was the highest concern for the work group, and the entire group at the meeting
 - The group was asked to list their activities using the bayou
 - May 22 they had a boat tour along the bayou to see what was happening as far as development and bulkheading, and alternative bank stabilization
 - Working on draft outline of the watershed plan, using EPA 9 elements
 - Work groups will be meeting again soon
 - Pictures, surveys, and more at: www.dickinsonbayou.org
- Upper San Antonio River WPP, Steve Lusk SARA
 - Held a second meeting, with 40-45 people in attendance
 - Went over some on the ground observations resulting from what the participants marked on the maps from the previous meeting, they provided the maps again at the second meeting, mainly identifying sewers in the street
 - Monitoring is still ongoing and the major point source is the zoo, but migratory birds using the zoo are a major contributor, causing seasonal fluctuations, other contributors are two storm drain tunnels
 - Results from BST showed 13% Unknown, 17% Sewage, and 70% animals
 - Draft WPP due in July, next meeting July 24th

- Bastrop Bayou WPP, Todd Running HGAC
 - Draft risk assessment in complete, is currently under review from GBEP
 - The project has been approved by EPA, and look to have a workplan completed by September
 - 40% match required, actually have more than the requirement
 - Brazoria County is in the process of installing watershed signs along the roads where they cross the bayou, and tributaries
 - Distributing Bastrop Bayou brochures at libraries and other public places
 - Looking to have a stakeholder meeting during the summer to kick-off the project
 - Lake Jackson is annexing land to pull them into the watershed, and they are getting positive reaction from the city
- HGAC also spoke briefly about a use attainability study for Buffalo and White Oak Bayous which is currently under a TMDL for bacteria and the designated use is for contact recreation. The goal is to answer if these urban bayous can support contact recreation. Their research has shown that 99% of the bacteria are coming from stormwater, 40% of that is human sources. Harris County and the City of Houston are partnering with the Medical Center to fund some of this project, and to look at some epidemiology background to assist with the project.

Update on Plum Creek

Brian Koch gave an update on the progress of the Plum Creek Watershed Protection Plan.

- April 10, 25, and 26th, the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership held their first three public meetings to “Kick Off” the project with 116 combined attendance at the meetings
- May 9, PCWP held their first steering committee meeting in Lockhart, identifying steering committee members and work groups
- Discussions at the meeting included watershed planning and implementation, ground rules for the steering committee, additional stakeholders representing entities such as row crop farming, developers, oil and gas production, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and more city employees or councilmen
- Also, pollutants of concern and their potential sources, workgroup formation, and proposed workgroups were discussed.
- The workgroup formation and proposed workgroup discussion led the steering committee to have five workgroups:
 - Stormwater/ Urban NPS
 - Agriculture NPS
 - Wastewater Infrastructure
 - Outreach and Education
 - Water Quality and Habitat.
 - Industry
- GBRA/TSSWCB proposal for additional monitoring in Plum Creek, the goal is to supplement the data collected previously, to identify pollution sources along the creek and its tributaries through targeted monitoring.
- Next PCWP Steering Committee Meeting June 20, 6-8:30pm Lockhart State Park Recreation Hall
- Steering Committee will sign the ground rules for the partnership.
- Members will select what work groups they will participate on and select the meeting times.
- Discussions on what the work group’s role will be and what they need to accomplish during the work group meetings.

Discussion on Leveraging Additional Funding Sources

Brian Koch led a discussion on leveraging different funding sources for water quality improvement projects.

- TSSWCB/TCEQ Clean Water Act §319(h)
- Coastal Impact Assistance Program
- Coastal Zone Management 6217
- Other Funding Opportunities, NRCS-Cooperative Conservation Partnership
US EPA-Targeted Watersheds Grant, and Regional Geographic Initiative

Path Forward

- Plum Creek Watershed Partnership Steering Committee meeting June 20 in Lockhart
- Newsletter Articles
- Priority Assessments
- Next WCSC meeting September 7, 2006
- LCRA did a flyover of the basin assessing solid waste dumps along the river and tributaries, and made a video for outreach to help fix the problem, they would like to feature the video at a future WCSC meeting to increase awareness of the project

Adjournment

Brian Koch thanked those in attendance for their active participation in working toward successful coordination of watershed protection planning activities in southeast and south central Texas.