

MINUTES OF MEETING
GROUNDWATER AVAILABILITY WORKGROUP
BRAZOS G REGIONAL WATER PLANNING GROUP
 December 12, 2003

In accordance with notice sent to each member of the Regional Water Planning Group and posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act (copy of notice attached as Exhibit A), a meeting of the Brazos G Groundwater Availability Group convened at 10:00 a.m., Friday, December 12, 2003, in the central office of the Brazos River Authority, 4600 Cobbs Drive, Waco, Texas. Attendance was as follows:

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

Mark Bryson
 Horace Grace
 Kent Watson

NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

Mike McGuire
 David Meesey, TWDB

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT

Terry Kelley

OTHERS PARTICIPATING

Teresa Clark, Brazos River Authority
 David Dunn, HDR
 Keith Hansberger, Lost Pines GCD
 Dr. Robert Kier, Consultant for Lost Pines GCD
 Larry Land, HDR
 Marcia Russo, Brazos River Authority
 Lisa Tschirhart, Brazos River Authority

PUBLIC PRESENT

See attached sign-in sheet (Exhibit B)

Notice of Meeting –

Kent Watson conducted the meeting. Mr. Watson said that each Workgroup member received notice of this meeting and a copy of the meeting agenda by e-mail dated December 3, 2003 (copy of agenda attached as Exhibit C). He noted that the public meeting notice had been properly posted as required by law and that confirmations of timely posting were received.

Attendance and Announcements –

Mr. Watson noted that Terry Kelley was absent from the meeting.

Consider approval of Draft Minutes of October 24, 2003 –

Mr. Watson stated that each member of the workgroup received a copy of the minutes of the October 24, 2003, Groundwater Availability Workgroup meeting (copy attached as Exhibit D) as prepared in preliminary form by e-mail dated December 3, 2003. He asked if there were any comments or corrections.

Mike McGuire stated that on page four, paragraph four, the word “cap” needed to be changed to “tap”. Ms. Clark stated that on the same page, last paragraph where it said “re-gaining” it needed to be “gaining”. Mr. Bryson then stated that on page four there was a reference to “Caddo Bluff” and it should be “Calvert Bluff”.

It was then moved by Horace Grace and seconded by Mark Bryson:

THAT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Brazos G RWPG Groundwater Availability Workgroup held on October 24, 2003, be approved with the above mentioned corrections.

The **MOTION CARRIED** with no dissenting votes.

Public Input**Public questions and comments on agenda items or water planning issues (limited to 5 minutes each) -**

Mr. Watson stated that the public would have an opportunity to speak on the agenda items after they are presented. Mr. Watson also reminded everyone of the Open Meetings Act limitations. He noted that the Workgroup is limited in its ability to participate in discussions or deliberations by the provisions of the Open Meetings Act. He said that the Group could not deliberate or discuss issues that are not posted on the meeting notice.

HDR –**Update by HDR on water availability estimates for the Dockum, Seymour and Edwards-Trinity Plateau Aquifers –**

Mr. Watson called on David Dunn with HDR to address the group and to introduce Larry Land. Mr. Dunn stated that at the last Groundwater Availability Workgroup meeting the Group requested that HDR review the estimates on the Dockum, Seymour and Edwards-Trinity Plateau Aquifers. He stated that Mr. Land had reviewed the estimates and made some revisions. He then introduced Mr. Land to give the presentation.

Mr. Land stated that the first area to be discussed would be the Western Sub-region. He stated the approach taken was to look at the water level information from the TWDB's data base and compare that with precipitation and historical pumping records from 1950 through 2000. He then explained his findings for the Western Sub-region in detail (see attached Exhibit E).

It was then moved by Mike McGuire and seconded by Mark Bryson:

THAT THE GROUNDWATER AVAILABILITY WORKGROUP accept the estimates as presented and recommend them to the full Group at the February, 2004 meeting.

The **MOTION CARRIED** with no dissenting votes.

Water availability estimates from HDR for the Northern Edwards Balcones Fault Zone Aquifer –

Mr. Watson called on Mr. Land to present this information (see attached Exhibit F). Mr. Land stated that this presentation would be on the Central Sub-region. Mr. Land proceeded to present the information.

Mr. Meadows, of the Brazos River Authority, asked since the numbers Mr. Land had recommended were less than what was actually occurring, did he consider what positive impact that would have on the aquifer. Mr. Land replied that he didn't think it would have much of a positive affect, but he said it would keep the region out of trouble.

Mr. Bryson asked from a planning perspective, if there was a spread out well field in the future, could the 2006 Water Plan projected number for Williamson County jump from 10,000 acre-feet to 15,000 acre-feet? Mr. Land stated he expected so. Mr. Bryson stated that 5,000 acre-feet would be a large chunk of a yield for a reservoir that may be built near Williamson County.

Mr. Meadows stated that each time the pumping is increased, it decreases the in-stream flows. He further stated that if in-stream flows continue to be an issue in the future, his concern was that groundwater may be taken from surface water. He thought HDR needed to look at the impact on surface water availability and surface water permits as well as the potential loss in wetlands, ponds and habitat.

The Group agreed that the 10,000 acre-feet for Williamson County was an issue of concern to them and wanted to have that on record. Mr. Bryson stated that he wanted to be sure that there was a way to increase the Williamson County figure from 10,000 acre-feet if needed.

Mr. Grace said he would like for the Group to recommend a Groundwater Conservation District be established in Williamson County.

It was then moved by Horace Grace and seconded by Mark Bryson:

THAT THE GROUNDWATER AVAILABILITY WORKGROUP accept the numbers recommended by HDR as presented and recommend them to the full Group at the February, 2004 meeting.

The **MOTION CARRIED** with no dissenting votes.

Mr. Watson then called for a brief recess at 10:20 a.m. The meeting resumed at 10:30 a.m.

Water availability estimates from HDR for the Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer –

Mr. Land presented the information on the Southeastern Sub-region (see attached Exhibit G). He stated that HDR re-distributed the pumping loads between the Simsboro and the Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifers. Mr. Land went on to explain the changes made.

Mr. Land then presented a spreadsheet of numbers to reflect the current pumping (see attached Exhibit H). This spreadsheet included pumpage numbers, by county, from 1980 through 1999. He said he supplied the numbers so that the groundwater availability workgroup members could factor them into their deliberations if they chose to.

Mr. Watson noted that of the eight counties included in the Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer, six of those counties have Groundwater Conservation Districts and four of those Groundwater Conservation Districts were represented at this meeting. Mr. Watson said he would like to hear any comments these Groundwater Conservation Districts had on the recommended revised numbers.

Bill Riley, with the Brazos Valley Groundwater Conservation District, said he liked the numbers and felt they were in the ballpark. Mr. Riley stated he was concerned with the allocation of water between the Carrizo-Wilcox and the Simsboro. He also expressed concern for the local impacts and what the numbers really mean on the ground. He said he would like to see the numbers reflect local impacts.

Lloyd Behm, with the Bluebonnet Groundwater Conservation District, said he appreciated that HDR increased the estimates for Grimes County from zero to 5,000 acre feet per Bluebonnet's request. Mr. Behm stated it was important that both the districts and the regional planning groups work together to manage this resource.

Gary Westbrook, with the Post Oak Savannah Groundwater Conservation District, said it was important to have flexibility in the estimated numbers. Mr. Westbrook said it was important to have numbers to base on and work with, but at the same time have the flexibility to manage those numbers.

Monique Norman, attorney for the Brazos Valley Groundwater Conservation District, said they have to protect the existing users. Ms. Norman stated that as wells are drilled in the future and the population grows, they may be able to allow more storage to be taken out. She felt this had to be a slow process so as not to jeopardize the existing wells.

Keith Hansberger, with Lost Pines Groundwater Conservation District, stated that the current figure of 45,000 acre-feet would put them in a bind. Mr. Hansberger also stated that they did not feel there was that much water available and that was why Dr. Kier, consultant for Lost Pines, was there to address the Group today.

Mr. Meadows, with Brazos River Authority, stated that he would like the same consideration for this agenda item as was made on agenda item 5.2 related to the interaction of the ground and surface water data.

The Group agreed to hold off on any motion at this point until they hear from Lost Pines Groundwater Conservation District on agenda item 5.4.

Lost Pines Groundwater Conservation District –

Presentation by Lost Pines Conservation District on the Lee/Bastrop County GAM results –

Mr. Watson called on Keith Hansberger, with Lost Pines Groundwater Conservation District to introduce Dr. Robert Kier. Mr. Hansberger said they are in the process of developing a management plan with Dr. Kier as the consultant. Mr. Hansberger then introduced Dr. Kier. Dr. Kier gave a brief biography on himself then proceeded with the PowerPoint presentation (See attached Exhibit I).

Mr. Grace stated that he heard from other districts that Region G was moving much faster than the other regional water planning groups. He asked whether that was true, and if so, why. Mr. Meesey stated that Region G was moving a little faster than the other regions. He said this was due to the size of the region. Region G has more counties and more water user groups, therefore, it needed to have the base line work done quicker due to the fact that Region G needs to meet the needs of so many more entities. He stated this process was true for all the regions, but more true for Region G. Mr. Meesey said that what Dr. Kier just explained was something that a lot of regions are wrestling with as far as availability concept and sustainability. He stated that these issues are being raised in several regions and it was important.

Dr. Kier said he was opposed to using water from the aquifers for non-essential use. He agreed, however, that there was a need for a drought management plan for use in an emergency situation. Members of the Group asked what his definition of non-essential use was. Dr. Kier said that would include watering grass, washing cars, filling swimming pools, etc.

The Group further discussed the numbers for the Carrizo-Wilcox and the issues brought up by Dr. Kier. Mr. Meesey suggested that the Group will need a lot of time to discuss these numbers at the next regular meeting in February, 2004.

It was then moved by Horace Grace and seconded by Mark Bryson:

THAT THE GROUNDWATER AVAILABILITY WORKGROUP accept the numbers as presented by HDR and recommend them to the full Group at the February, 2004 meeting.

New business to be considered at the next meeting – The Group did not set a date for an additional meeting.

Adjournment – There being no further business before the Group, Mr. Watson adjourned the meeting at 12:50 p.m.

KENT WATSON, Chair
Groundwater Availability Workgroup