

**SULPHUR RIVER BASIN AUTHORITY
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, JULY 17, 2008**

Present:

Jim Thompson, SRBA President

Jennifer Delk, TCEQ

David Nabors, Paris, TX

Sharon Nabors, Paris, TX

Max Berry, TSSWCB

Molly Berridge, Texarkana, TX

Sarah Khoury, Texarkana College

Brett Jackson, Texarkana College

Greg Bischof, Texarkana Gazette

Paul Prange, ATCOG

J. D. Phillips, Texarkana Water Utility

Bill King, Texarkana Water Utility

Gary Smith, Texarkana Water Utility

George Frost, Maud, TX

Doug Wadley, International Paper, TX

Mike Bransford, Corps of Engineers

Shirley Shumake, DeKalb, TX

Dr. Jane Morris, New Boston, TX

Patricia Harman, Texarkana College

Mike Buttram, Texarkana College

Agenda Item #1: Call to Order and Roll Call – 1:30 P.M.

The meeting was called to order by Jim Thompson, SRBA President at 1:30 P.M. Mr. Thompson asked that each person in attendance state their name and who they represent.

Agenda Item #2: Approval of Minutes for July 19, 2007

Shirley Shumake moved that the minutes be accepted as presented. Molly Berridge seconded the motion. The motion carried with the approval of all present.

Agenda Item #3: Report on Lake Wright Patman Flood Level

Mike Bransford, representative from the Corps of Engineers, presented a report on the status of Wright Patman Lake and Jim Chapman Lake.

Key items of discussion regarding Wright Patman Lake were the number and types of parks and camping areas available, a brief summary of the history of the lake, and an explanation of the periodic dewatering and repair of the stilling basin last completed in July of 1999. This preventative maintenance is scheduled approximately every ten years and is due following inspection in July of 2009.

Jim Chapman Lake also undergoes periodic maintenance of the stilling basin and will be inspected this year in July to determine if repairs are needed.

Shirley Shumake asked Mr. Bransford at what level the lake would be maintained in the future. Mr. Bransford replied that the level would be maintained at about 227 feet. Raising the level of the lake would require a decision by the owners – the City of Texarkana.

Sarah Khoury asked if the City of Texarkana plans to retain water rights on Wright Patman Lake. Mr. Bransford deferred the response to that question to the next presenter, Bill King of Texarkana Water Utilities.

Agenda Item #4: Report on Wright Patman Lake Water Level

Bill King, Texarkana Water Utility, addressed a number of issues. The lake is currently at a level just over 227 feet and drinking water levels are fine.

A cultural resources study is still being pursued as this is one of the preliminary steps required prior to raising the level of the lake.

The spill reported in the Texarkana Gazette in Elliott Creek should not affect the waters in the reservoir as the spill was contained and tests have shown no evidence of elevated fecal coliform.

At this time the City plans to retain water rights on lake.

David Nabors asked about volumetric studies on the lake to determine sedimentation rate and inquired as to when the last study was done. Mr. Bransford answered that inquiry with information about the nature of sedimentation in older lakes. Although Wright Patman Lake was designed to last 100 years, it is about 60 years old with sedimentation appropriate for a lake of that age.

Dr. Jane Morris asked what the finding sources were for the cultural resources study. Mr. King replied that the Federal Government and the City of Texarkana through the Texarkana Water Utility provides funding for the study.

Molly Berridge inquired as to what the studies include. Mr. King said that the main objective of the cultural resources study would be locating and how best to preserve Indian artifacts in the area.

George Frost asked how you could harvest more water than actually comes into the lake (he was referencing figures published in a book). Mr. King said that reports were probably not actual figures but average values and that the amount of water the lake could actually yield would have to be calculated using pan evaporation studies and flow rates.

Agenda Item #5: Report on Soil Conservation

Mr. Kenny Crawford of the USDA was unable to attend, therefore no report was presented.

Agenda Item #6: Report on the Fish Kill at Bringle Lake

Adam Wisenant of Texas Parks and Wildlife was unable to attend, therefore no report was presented.

Added Agenda Item: TMDL Project on Wright Patman Lake

Paul Prange of the Ark-Tex Council of Governments reported that the Ark-Tex COG had been contacted by TCEQ regarding a TMDL project on the lake. They are in the beginning stages of planning the project with Parson's and are also revising the contract with TCEQ to include more participation with stakeholders. The contract was to last through August of 2009, but with contractual changes being made, the contract should extend into 2010. There will be a stakeholders meeting before implementation of project.

Molly Berridge asked who the stakeholders were. Mr. Prange's response was that this included International Paper, the Corps of Engineers, all landowners, and anyone else that has a vested interest in the lake.

Molly Berridge additionally inquired who Parson's Infrastructure was. Mr. Prange replied that they are a consultant firm in Austin that is located near TCEQ headquarters.

Molly Berridge also asked if Parson's had been selected by TCEQ. Mr. Prange replied that Parson's selection was the result of a bidding process.

Dr. Jane Morris asked if the TMDL was a study to address dissolved oxygen issues and if this interest was due to a crisis situation. Mr. Prange replied that the study would include the DO parameter and focus on maintenance of lake, not necessarily a crisis situation.

Agenda Item #7: Hear Report on Current Monitoring in Basin

Dr. Mike Buttram of Texarkana College discussed current monitoring going on in the Sulphur River Basin. His PowerPoint presentation provided maps of the basin with the locations of all sites being monitored. These sites include three routine sites on Wright Patman Lake, Days Creek, Anderson Creek, Smackover Creek, Horse Creek, Rock Creek and White Oak Creek. He described conditions found in May when water levels were so high that completion of some work was not possible due to flood conditions. He commented that White Oak Creek is included on the 303d list and was noted to have elevated conductivity and phosphate levels. This prompted a question from Mr. David Nabors. He inquired if the elevated levels were due to the site being downstream from a water treatment facility. Dr. Buttram replied that these values were no greater than the results of analyses of waters from Days Creek that are also below a treatment facility.

Mr. Nabors also asked if the cloudy, sediment laden condition of waters in White Oak Creek could be due to runoff after timber harvesting. Dr. Buttram replied that this was possible, but the waters coming out of Century Lake that feed White Oak Creek looked the same. Molly Berridge commented that there should be a buffer zone left adjacent to streams when timber is harvested to limit excessive sediment in runoff.

Dr. Buttram also announced the streams that are included in next year's studies. These are the 3 lake sites, Days Creek, Anderson Creek, Rock Creek and White Oak Creek (all repeats from this year), and the addition of 2 sites on Rice Creek, a stream that committee members have expressed concerns about.

Dr. Jane Morris asked if the studies would include aquatic life. Dr. Buttram confirmed that biological studies would be conducted including benthics, fish, and habitat assessment.

David Nabors asked if there had been any differences noted in aquatic life on White Oak Creek. Buttram replied that he found good fish populations, but benthics were probably limited due to scouring.

Dr. Jane Morris stated that she was pleased that the study on Rice Creek was being expanded and reminded the audience that leachate from the New Boston landfill enters Rice Creek.

Molly Berridge asked if any sites in Fannin County were included. Dr. Buttram replied that there were none.

Agenda Item #8: Review of Basin Highlights Report & Web Page

Dr. Mike Buttram discussed the new Basin Highlight Report prepared this spring and requested input and comments from citizens and committee members. All in attendance were provided a copy.

Molly Berridge asked who was keeping up the website and commented that she had some problems viewing links. Dr. Buttram replied that he was responsible for maintenance of website and that the problem with links would be resolved by downloading a program update.

Agenda Item #9: Question and Answer Period

Sharon Nabors announced that the power plant in Paris, TX was going to double in size. She suggested that the flow on Auds Creek be monitored.

Shirley Shumake asked where the last flood gauge was located and additionally asked what would be involved in getting an additional gauge on Sulphur River @ 259. Mr. Bransford said that he would check and get back with that information.

David Nabors asked what effect locating a municipal solid waste dump near Cuthand/Blossom would have on these streams. This project is currently in the permit process with TCEQ. He also asked if the streams would be monitored. Ms. Delk replied that they would indeed have to have a permit and that the regional group in Tyler would keep this entity on their radar and monitor. She said that she would check into this matter when she returned to Austin.

There being no further questions or comments, the meeting was adjourned at 2:55 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Patricia L. Harman on July 25, 2008.