

**SULPHUR RIVER BASIN AUTHORITY
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, JULY 23, 2009**

Present:

Jim Thompson, SRBA President	George Frost, Maud, TX
Jennifer Delk, TCEQ	Bill King, Texarkana Water Utility
Ben Valencia, Tribune	Gary Smith, Texarkana Water Utility
Kristi Jordan, Texarkana Gazette	Mike Smith, SARP Community Watershed
Dan Boyles, Murray, Thomas, & Griffin	Paul Hammons, Hooks, TX
J. D. Phillips, Texarkana Water Utility	Jay Wommack, Texarkana, TX
James Presley, FUSE	Molly Clements Berridge, Texarkana, TX
Paul Prange, ATCOG	Dr. Jane Morris, New Boston, TX
Ashley Baker, Texarkana, TX	Molly Beth Malcolm, TC Board Member
Shirley Shumake, DeKalb, TX	Marie Martin, Sec. for Representative Frost
Ethan McBride, Texarkana, TX	Mike Buttram, Texarkana College
Kirby Hollinsworth, SRBA Board Member	Patricia Harman, Texarkana College
Nancy Rose	

Agenda Item #1: Call to Order and Roll Call – 1:40 P.M.

The meeting was called to order by Jim Thompson, SRBA President at 1:40 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 17, 2008

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

Agenda Item #3: Report on Texas Stream Team

Victoria Kirvin, TC student and Texas Stream Team member, introduced the members of her Summer Youth Program group for this summer. The girls explained the tests conducted and the equipment used to collect data on area streams. Victoria presented results of monitoring conducted at local creeks and described the clean-up efforts at these water bodies (Cowhorn Creek, TC Wetlands, and Spring Lake Park).

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

Bill King, representative from Texarkana Water Utility, presented a brief report on the status of Wright Patman Lake indicating that the lake was now at a normal level for July. A report on the cultural resources study was not available at this time.

Agenda Item #5: Report on TMDL of Lake Wright Patman & Report on Water Quality Stimulus Money

Paul Prange, ATCOG Environmental Resource Planner, reported that due to changes in the water department at TCEQ, the TMDL at Lake Wright Patman has been halted. The new director at TCEQ wanted to review all projects before implementation. After review, this project was selected for non-funding status. Perhaps the TMDL project will be reinstated later.

The ATCOG did receive stimulus money in the amount of \$25,000 to purchase and maintain water quality test kits. Delores McCright, TC professor of Biology, is the contact for this project and will be provided materials for the TC Stream Team and the community.

Agenda Item #6: 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 Lake Wright Patman, Days Creek, Anderson Creek, Rock Creek, White Oak Creek, and two sites on Rice Creek that committee members had expressed concerns about. He described conditions found in May when water levels were so high that completion of some work was not possible at that time due to flood conditions.

Agenda Item #7: Review of Basin Highlights Report/Summary Report & Web Page

Dr. Mike Buttram discussed the new Basin Highlight/Summary Report prepared this spring and requested input and comments from citizens and committee members. The Summary Report is prepared every five years and includes an Executive Summary with a synopsis of report contents. All in attendance were provided a copy, but the full report is also available online at the SRBA website.

Agenda Item #8: Question and Answer Period

Molly Berridge asked if there was any monitoring being conducted in Fannin County. Dr. Buttram replied that there were no studies being conducted by SRBA, but Dallas had inquired about previous studies. Molly commented that it bothered her that Dallas had access to data that was paid for by the SRBA as they did not have to do their own data collection to pursue their interests.

George Frost commented that considering the recent drought years, an additional dam on the Sulphur would have caused an “ecological disaster”. Bill King responded that it would have cost more to treat the available water. Due to the low water conditions, IP had to dredge and extend their access to the water.

George Frost (referring to the 2007 Water Development Plan) asked how we could harvest more water than actually comes into the Lake Wright Patman with the addition of more lakes with dams. He concluded that there would not be enough water for a growing Texarkana. There was some discussion regarding Texarkana having a “grandfathered” claim to the waters in the lake.

George Frost asked if raising the level of the lake would help to provide better water quality. Bill King replied that less treatment would be required. Exclusions-flash flood conditions and minimum flow will always need more treatment. He also commented that the TWU intake is currently not in the best place – it needs to be moved 300-400 feet out into the lake.

Dr. Jane Morris asked if the results of the study on Rice Creek were available and reminded the audience that leachate from the New Boston landfill enters Rice Creek. Mike Buttram replied that the results would be posted on the internet at the completion of the monitoring this year.

Mike Buttram addressed the steering committee and asked for additional advice on what monitoring they want done in the basin. There was a general discussion about the effects of a reservoir in Fannin County.

Dr. Jane Morris commented that the agenda of the new director in the water department at TCEQ is different from the previous director. Jennifer Delk responded by stating that the focus on some projects has shifted. Many projects have been rescheduled due to priorities. She also said that the department is trying to determine how to evaluate these older lakes in East Texas.

Dr. Jane Morris stated that some of the issues at Cowhorn Creek have been positively affected by volunteer efforts.

Mike Smith, with S. E. Aquatic Resources, announced a meeting regarding the Red River Compact Project to be held on the 3rd floor of the Miller County Courthouse on Wednesday, July 29, 2009 at 2:00 P.M. A general invitation to attend was extended to all present.

There being no further questions or comment, the meeting was adjourned at 2:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Patricia L. Harman on July 30, 2009.