

Arroyo Colorado Outreach and Education Workgroup

September 11, 2007

4:00 pm to 6:00 pm

Meeting Summary

Welcome and Introductions.....Laura De La Garza, TWRI

Tony Riesinger, TCE

Ruben Saldana, TCE

Laura De La Garza, TWRI

Kris Shipman,

Katie Sternberg, KTB

Sky Lewey, Nueces RA

Eric Elman

Elizabeth Heise, UTB

Jason Pinchback, TxWatch

Marcy and Lupe, Development Council, with bookmarks

--will distribute along with other materials in a bag at schools

--hand them out at recycling and clean up events (have grow green info they hand out too)

Arroyo Colorado Watershed Protection Plan:

Watershed Protection Plan Implementation Status.....Laura De La Garza, TWRI

--habitat workgroup: planning field trip to look at regional wetland sites

--ag workgroup: studies are proceeding

--Rocky Freund and TCEQ updating water quality monitoring

O&E Project Updates:

Keep Texas Beautiful (KTB).....Katie Sternberg, KTB

--part of plan

--Texas Waterway clean up program funded by TCEQ

----offers free supplies and support for volunteer clean up; planning guide and promotional assistance; educational materials; any size group; year round program; any location

----need 6 weeks advance notice (especially if customized posters are needed)

----have 100 clean-ups registered during this 6 month period

----Eric trying to organize clean-up for lower Rio Grande region

----program covers any inland waterway (only excludes coastline)...is lower Laguna Madre under KTB or GLO?

--storm drain stenciling (mainly through TCEQ)

Physical Watershed Model Sky Lewey, Nueces RA

--finishing touches on model

--being picked up next week and bringing to Laura by 9/21

--aluminum frame so lighter weight and more durable than wooden frame

--maybe have press event/release at unveiling of model (need to credit Jude Benavides and Anthony Reisinger)...maybe have press release 3-4 days before event

Texas Watch Activity Jason Pinchback, Texas Watch

- event on 9/22
 - 750 announcements distributed
 - monitoring demonstration in the morning
 - use the NPS model
 - sponsored lunch
 - permitting activities in wetlands, work group updates, drainage issues, general info. on WPP, summary of volunteer monitoring...
 - IDEA academy in Donna workshop
 - discussed having unveiling of model on Friday before event (maybe at UTB because they have good press dept. that could get the word out)
 - August 31st...back to school kickoff booth at UTB with Tony Riesinger (will send more info/pics)

Project Discussion:

Eric Elman project

- waterfall on Arroyo (~6 ft drop)
- maybe create white water park
- could be used for 1st responder training too (flooding issues in valley); interest from Homeland security office and Red Cross officials in valley (have to go to east Tx to get training now)
- irrigation district 9 owns it; it's not a weir but an irrigation siphon that's 100 years old and has cracks in it and needs money to fix it (would be up to re-designing it for park purposes if we could get other 1/2 of money from homeland security)
- provide aeration of water downstream (water quality improvement)
- aesthetically nice

TCEQ TMDL Outreach Project/Grow Green.....Laura De La Garza, TWRI
Ruben Saldana, TCE

- Allan Watts of TCEQ (Laura met with)
- Distribute money to TMDL watersheds for NPS outreach
- Need to build contact list
- One project that will be promoted is the GrowGreen project (Ruben)
 - City of Austin and TCE created to mitigate pollution in public areas within city
 - multi-faceted campaign...provide training for retailers/nurseries (like Lowes, Home Depot) that sale pesticides/fertilizers for urban environment, media campaign, etc.
 - program has expanding and other cities are starting to implement similar programs
 - need to update materials
 - extension agents can be used as a distribution network
- One Star foundation/Americorps grant dealing with water (Ruben mentioned applied for in west Texas and RFP out)

VISTA Grant Application..... Kris Shipman, TPWD

- federal corporation for national community service program

- differs for americorps...VISTA would create soup kitchen and getting volunteers but americorps would serve the soup
- vista is domestic version of Peace Corps
- empowering communities and reducing poverty; can say ACWPP projects improves ecotourism which reduces poverty
- can apply any time of year
- Katie Dooley...coordinator for valley (thought project would be good VISTA project)
- need someone to be in charge and need office space/computers
- pay \$10,000 per vista member and get 2 free...money go towards vista living allowance and training to work on vista project
- vista projects typically last 3 years
- could help with stenciling storm drains and other O&E projects

CMP Grant – Rio Hondo Project.....Laura De La Garza, TWRI
 --integrating comments from CMP reviewers
 --split into 2 proposals
 1. public access with dock and pavilion
 2. wetland suitability with outreach and education
 --need to contact city/county because they will need to be lead on proposals

CMP Grant – Pesticide Education in Coastal Zone.....Megan Meier, TWRI
 --use it but not under the ACWPP

Discuss/Prioritize Future Funding Needs and SourcesCecilia Wagner, TWRI

Review of Other Potential Grants.....Megan Meier, TWRI

Other Business/ Meeting ScheduleLaura De La Garza, TWRI

--Arroyo newsletter out for review and distributed end of September

New O&E Work Group LeadershipLaura De La Garza, TWRI

--maybe newly hired extension assistant could be new work group leader

--next meeting October 16th (4-6pm)

--Tuesdays the week before steering committee meeting

--KTB coastal event in March in Edinburg and other KTB event in February; could use model

Next Meeting Date/Adjourn.....Laura De La Garza, TWRI