

Arroyo Colorado Outreach and Education Workgroup

Texas AgriLife Extension Conference Room

Attendees:

Josh Oyer, Tx Stream Team

Xavier Peries, AgriLife Extension

Don Hockaday, UTPanAm

Juan Enciso, AgriLife Extension

Kyle Ohaver, TPWD (Estero Llano Grande)

Javier Guerrero, TAMUK

Jaime Flores, TWRI

Cecilia Wagner, TWRI

Amanda Engledow, TWRI

Ludy Saenz, LRGVDC

Marcie Oviedo, LRGVDC

Ruben Saldana, AgriLife Extension

Meeting Summary

Welcome and Introductions..... Jaime Flores, TWRI

Project Discussion:

Grant Workshop Feasibility..... Jaime Flores, TWRI

- Initial planning was sparse – lots of date changes and too rushed.
- Several workshops were already taking place, but were not related to water and dedicated to the Arroyo Colorado
- Went thru TDA Rural Economic Development group as they had experience in putting these type of workshops on and they had funding for a lunch sponsor/facilities
- Marcie, Javier and Jaime will lead group to put together the plan for a future event (possible spring event?)

New O&E Materials-319 Grant?..... Jaime Flores, TWRI

- TCEQ recently printed 1500 copies of Little Waterway with a Big Job and 1500 copies of the Arroyo WPP Executive Summary
- Jaime has all of them
- Possibility to get Arroyo WPPs printed thru TSSWCB
- Discussed possibility to get caps/t-shirts with Arroyo logo in the past. Jaime re-brought up the subject. Typical cost range \$5 to \$6 per cap and \$12 on T-shirt. We also had an Arroyo Colorado button that Jaime recently handed out at the school presentations. The buttons were some of the left over items from the Arroyo Colorado pachanga.
 - Look at grant funds for this or sponsorship dollars to cover cost.
 - **Possibly put something small in a 319 grant**
 - **Or write a separate proposal to its own grant program. Look for a grant program to seek (private foundation or EPA Environmental Grant)**

Road Signage Permit Letter-Storm Water Task Force Javier Guerrero, TAMUK

- Installed 10 road signs last year, but one or two was removed because we did not have the correct permit for TxDOT. TxDOT and Arroyo Partnership worked together to get a blanket permit to install road signs in the Arroyo Colorado. The permit states that each individual city will follow our blanket permit and will install and maintain signs on their own accord.
- Cities involvement: at the last stormwater task force meeting (ordinance meeting), the city of Alton planned to draft a letter to use for submission to TxDOT under the Arroyo Partnership's blanket permit. Stormwater task force currently has \$3500 for signs. This does not include all the cities as some are reviewing locations and will determine if they

have funds to provide. The City of Weslaco will make the signs so they are offering labor – total cost is ~\$100/sign with the city of Weslaco providing labor.

- Part of the deal with TxDOT is that we are able to place a sticker on the signs that provide a number to call if illegal dumping is seen

Arroyo Colorado Outreach Activities:

Classroom Presentations Jaime Flores, TWRI

- As part of the MS4 stormwater management program, one of the BMPs in the plans for the cities was to conduct classroom presentations (O&E). Stormwater taskforce is going into K-12 classrooms and providing info on water quality and various aspects. They also provide the teachers curriculum and suggest a field day component, which last year was the storm drain marking event
- First classroom presentation will be next week (in Harlingen). Kyle will be working with the group now too and going into classrooms

Estero Llano Grande-AC Classroom Presentations Kyle Ohaver, TPWD

- Teachers and students visit the Estero Llano Grande wetland to teach and help prepare for the state testing. Used the park to set up a workshop to teach difficult topics from the classroom. Had 8 stations at the park at first event. **Now wanting a pamphlet that the Park can provide to teachers to advertise their ability to educate in a hands-on fashion.** Park will focus on nature side of things, but obviously station would be geared toward water quality and Arroyo Colorado.
- A good tie to this would be all of the local science fairs – give the kids a good idea of what are important local issues that they could address.

Arroyo Colorado-Trash Bash Cleanup Jaime Flores, TWRI

- In discussion about a possible clean up, we discovered that the cities already have their own trash bash in April so we are coordinating with them.
- Working with James Matz to get a coordinated event. Even want to include Arroyo City and have boats in the water.
- Javier received contacts from one of the teachers, who is adopting a highway. Could we have a group that ‘Adopts the Arroyo’?

O&E Project Updates:

Texas Stream Team Monitor Workshop.....Josh Oyer, Texas Stream Team

- Hosting a Stream Team Monitoring training workshop on Nov 21.
- Provide training and certification on two levels: Core parameters – DO, pH, Temp, Secchi disk, field observations and Bacteria parameter where you can be certified in monitoring E. coli.
- Training will be from 8 to 5 at Citrus Center
- No cost – it is a free event funded thru TCEQ and EPA
- Would like to cap it at 26 participants
- **Event will likely fill up so don’t know if we need a news release advertising the event prior to it. Josh will let us know if he wants press before the event.**
- **Definitely want a news release promoting the event after the fact. Get Jaime or Rod to take pictures.**

Storm Water Task Force Scholarships & Teacher Stipends..... Javier Guerrero, TAMUK

- Stormwater task force providing scholarships to students for studying engineering at TAMUK. Task Force provided 3 scholarships in spring 2009 (one from Mission, two from Harlingen). Currently open to the following ISDs: Donna, Harlingen, Mission, La Feria, La Joya, San Benito, Santa Rosa, Wesalco, Alamo, Pharr, San Juan, McAllen, Palmhurst, Alton and Palmview.

Upcoming Grants and Potential Projects

Grants Awarded & New Proposals.....Cecilia Wagner, TWRI

- Upcoming proposals: TCEQ 319 and TSSWCB 319 (both due in November); and EPA Environmental Education Grant (due in December)

BWET Grant Update Don Hockaday, UTPA

- This year, only plan to fund 2 proposals in the Gulf of Mexico for \$100K each. Want the proposal to be more hands on and more field work involved.

Other Business Jaime Flores, TWRI

- Stormwater Task force is hosting a 8 hour course, “Developing and Implementing Soil Erosion management plans in construction sites,” on Friday, Oct 23 in Laredo (20 registered).
- A second course will be developed that will target Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan that is provided by construction site managers.
- The 9th annual stormwater conference will work with “StormCon,” a national stormwater conference. The StormCon conference will be August 1–5, 2010 in San Antonio, TX.

Next Meeting Date/Adjourn..... Jaime Flores, TWRI

- January 12, 2010 from 3 to 5 pm