

**A Meeting of the
Wastewater Infrastructure Work Group
Formed under the
Arroyo Colorado Watershed Steering Committee**

**Wednesday October 19, 2005
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

**TX A&M - Citrus Center
Rio Red Conference Room
Weslaco, TX**

Attendees:

Alex	Gonzales	Donna ISD
AMADO E	SALINAS	MILITARY HIGHWAY WSC
Bart	Hines	Alan Plummer & Associates
Chris	Caudle	TCEQ - Region 15
Darrell	Gunn	City of Harlingen
David	Garza	City of Pharr
David	Salinas	OMI
Dr Jude A	Benavides	UT Brownsville
Estevan	Pena	City of Mercedes
Francisco	Chavez	City of Weslaco
George	Lasado	Military Highway WSC
Hector	Jahomi	City of San Benito
Javier	Garcia	SEC
Javier	Gomez	City of San Juan
Javier	Hinojosa	McAllen
Jim	Chapman	Sierra Club
Joe	Lopez	City of Rio Hondo
Kay	Jenkins	TX Parks & Wildlife/Habitat Work Group
Laura	De La Garza	Arroyo Colorado Watershed Coordinator
Lino	Rodriguez	City of San Juan
Loretta	Mokry	Alan Plummer & Associates
Ludy	Saenz	Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council
Marcie	Ovido	Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council
Marco	Pedraza	City of McAllen
Martha	Mccla	City of San Benito
Neil	Haman	TX Water Development Board
Richard	Eyster	TX Department of Agriculture
Sam	Maldonado	City of Pharr
Samuel	Gallegos	City of San Benito
Steve	Benn	TX Parks & Wildlife/Las Palomas WMA
Earlene	Lambeth	TCEQ
Roger	Miranda	TCEQ

Laura De la Garza, The Arroyo Colorado Watershed Coordinator opened the meeting with a welcome and introductions. She then turned the meeting over to Roger Miranda, the Project Manager and Wastewater Infrastructure Work Group leader. Roger reminded the group that system reviews have been done on each wastewater plant in the Arroyo watershed looking at self-reported data, extensive file reviews have been done and then meetings with each facility operator to assess needs, understand the problems each facility faces and to get ideas on plans for the future. The purpose for conducting the individual meetings was to gather information to design a plan for the wastewater portion of the WPP that would address problems and reduce

loadings. Positive feedback was received from the cities and different utilities from the individual meetings.

Roger stated that they had hoped to have the second draft of the WWI portion of the plan ready but that the reason it was behind schedule is that the TCEQ is looking at the legal standing of watershed protection plans (WPPs). WPPs are a relatively new vehicle for water quality improvement and the TCEQ is evaluating how to incorporate them into their regulatory structure. They could be considered as a state Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) where the Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), Implementation Plans (IPs) go, or passed as a resolution which is not legally binding, or they could be made a watershed rule which would require a lengthy public comment and legal process. No decisions have been made as these and a few other legal options are considered.

The WWI component of the plan is in draft form and not much has changed between the first and second drafts. The proposed measures have not changed but the table of content has and currently waiting for legal clearance before sending out. Copies of the table of contents were passed out. In short, there are seventeen (17) direct discharges, five (5) of which will have permit changes because of new construction or improvements of existing facilities. Five (5) entities have fairly firmly agreed to enhanced treatment and four (4) plans to increase re-use programs that will reduce nutrient loading. The plan will have a section on loading reductions in terms of quantitative measures starting with the year 2000 in order to include what has been done since that time in terms of reduced non-point source (NPS) pollution, and the increased treatment in terms of pounds of BOD, nutrients, and total suspended (TSS). Proposed actions will follow.

The theme within the WWI plan will be 5-year intervals, 2000-2005 (historical), 2005-2010 (short-term), and 2010-2015 (long-term). The year 2000 is a good benchmark because the first TMDL study concluded in 1998, and EDAP started in 1999 with major actions happenings after 2000. The NPS section of this part of the plan is not related to municipal discharges but related to industrial type situations. Originally this section was in the habitat section and there needs to be discussion on where to put this, habitat or WWI portion.

Roger reminded the group that this is a voluntary plan and two municipalities will have no action items and that is acceptable because it is voluntary which will be updated periodically. One of the largest portions of the plan is to install polishing pond(s) to each of the facilities. The City of La Feria was one of the pioneers in the Valley to begin this practice. Another added incentive for the City of La Feria is that they worked with their planning department to make it a nature preserve, providing habitat and quality of life.

Loretta Mokry with Alan Plumber and Associates, Inc. was next to present, "Natural Treatment System Options for Polishing Treated Wastewater Effluent and Providing Multiple Barrier Protection for Water Quality". The group present was very interested and asked many questions.

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10 :00 OPENING (Laura De la Garza)

- Welcome
- General Housekeeping (facilities, refreshments, breaks, meeting format)
- Introductions

10:10 PROGRESS OF WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE (WWI) PLAN (Roger Miranda)

- Draft Wastewater Infrastructure (WWI) Plan
 - Comments on Draft Plan
 - Local Efforts to Date
 - Schedule for Completion of Final Draft

10:30 PRESENTATION (Loretta Mokry, Alan Plumber and Associates, Inc.)

“Natural Treatment System Options for Polishing Treated Wastewater Effluent and
Providing Multiple Barrier Protection for Water Quality”

11:10 BREAK

11:20 ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION OF ARROYO WWI PLAN COMPONENTS

- Detailed Description of Proposed Actions and Measures
 - Structural
 - Institutional
- Estimating Technical and Financial Assistance Required
- Identification of Funding Sources
- Estimating Load Reductions
- Criteria for Verifying and Assessing Load Reductions
- Effluent Monitoring
- Storm Water
- Information and Education Component
- Identification and Tracking of Milestones
- Schedule for Implementation

11:45 REMAINING ISSUES

- Future Growth

11:55 CLOSURE (Roger Miranda)

- Expected Outcomes for Next Meeting

12:00 END OF MEETING