

Arroyo Colorado Wastewater Infrastructure Work Group
September 20, 2007, 10:00 am to 12:00 noon

Meeting Summary

Participants

Darrell Gunn – Harlingen Waterworks System
Mikki McCarthy – San Juan EDC
Jesus Carrillo – City of San Juan
Lino Rodriguez – City of San Juan
David Garza – City of Pharr
Ruben Saldana – Texas Cooperative Extension
Lee Clapp – TAMU Kingsville
Gilbert Rodriguez – TCEQ Region 15
Keith Pyron – CH2M Hill
Heather Harris – CH2M Hill
Amado Salinas – Military Highway WSC
Laura De La Garza – Texas Water Resource Institute
Cecilia Wagner – Texas Water Resource Institute
Megan Meier – Texas Water Resource Institute
Roger Miranda – Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

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

- Self-introductions were made.
- David Garza of the City of Pharr, asked about the possibility of putting treated wastewater into irrigation canals for reclaim water use. He asked that we encourage TCEQ to think out of the box and that there needs to be leadership on this issue.

Arroyo Colorado Watershed Protection Plan:

Review ACWPP Implementation StatusLaura De La Garza, TWRI

- Habitat – working on final full application for a feasibility/site suitability study for regional wetlands
- TPWD is working on a drainage ditch demonstration project – pertains to suitable plants
- Ag NPS assessment project is ongoing. Currently, awaiting approval of the QAPP for data collection and analysis – edge-of-field and drainage ditch sampling should begin this fall
- Ag – ongoing BMP education by the TCE agents,
- O&E – Physical watershed model completed will be here tomorrow
- Volunteer Monitoring – 15 sites established in LRGV
- Working on three CMP grant applications due October 10th. Working with the City of Rio Hondo on getting them a nature center for O&E, includes a fishing pier, pavilion, and kiosk, phased approach doing the design and permitting first. Includes a preliminary assessment for the development of a small wetland system to treat part of their effluent.
- VISTA Grant applications to get additional people to LRGV to work on developing O&E programs
- Working with TAMUK on NPS conference scheduled for Oct 18-19

- Newsletter going to print this week

Review of Wastewater Components of the ACWPP.....Roger Miranda, TCEQ

- Pollution Reduction Plan (PRP) as a side agreement, part of the ACWPP
- Three components to the PRP
 - Institutional Controls
 - Wastewater Infrastructure Improvements
 - Enhanced Treatment
- Review of 2006-2007 Accomplishments
 - La Feria 30/90 plant on way to elimination (awaiting final permit so can begin construction)
 - San Benito 30/90 plant eliminated, new plant in operation
 - Mercedes 30/90 plant eliminated in 2005
 - Donna 20/20 to 10/15 permit issued in 2006
 - Alamo 30/90 plant, discussing options for improved treatment
 - Pharr, 10/15 to 7/12 by end of 2008, great foresight
 - Harlingen WWS will phase out plant #1 by the end of 2007, 6.1 MGD of 10 MGD capacity
 - Amado Salinas of MHWSC waiting on funding then will submit permit change application for Progreso Plant
- What next?
 - Review permit commitments in PRP, asked that the work group leader be kept informed and to let them know of any changes
 - Discuss progress in achieving goals
 - Revise commitments as necessary

Leadership ReviewRoger Miranda, TCEQ

- Roger can no longer serve as work group leader
- Local leadership is important
- Dr. Lee Clapp and Laura De La Garza nominated to serve as the new work group leaders pending approval from the Steering Committee

Project Updates:

Enhanced WWI Projects.....Roger Miranda, TCEQ

- Issue of permitting and funding
- Enhanced treatment projects for San Benito, La Feria, and San Juan progressing because of desire for project. Value recognized in providing enhanced treatment and the amenities of parks and trail for recreation and education. Laura stated that the City of Mercedes had pulled-out of project (correction necessary, the City of Mercedes is still considering participating in project).
- City of La Feria and San Benito not represented at meeting however Laura informed the group that they are awaiting final permitting of new outfalls.
- Mikki McCarty discusses progress being made by City of San Juan
 - TAMU Kingsville as partner
 - San Juan expanding project, will include an ecological classroom. Curriculum working in City of Corpus Christi schools with an increase in grades.

Project Discussions:

Monitoring Roger Miranda, TCEQ

- New permit reporting requirement
- Monitoring commitments in PRP to reduce uncertainty in models
- Currently, do not have critical data for nitrates, phosphates, TKN
- Synthetic time series used in 2003 model are probably not adequate
- A need to keep track of loading from point discharges
- Flows in enhanced treatment projects need to be measured to help determine how well they are hitting load reduction targets
- Will not have to do extra monitoring indefinitely
- EPA may require fecal coliform monitoring at WWTFs soon.

David Garza stated that WWT Plant operators are all professionals and that there is a problem because they are not considered professionals. He recommends that TCEQ look at education for operators..

Permitting Issues..... Roger Miranda, TCEQ

- Did not intend to be a permit issue for enhanced treatment projects.
- Permits must consider:
 - 210 Reuse
 - Modification of discharge route
 - Water rights
 - Jurisdictional wetlands
- Options were review and it was determined best to amend permits for second outfall
- Permit amendment considered a major amendment:
 - Notification of landowners
 - Description of additional outfall
 - Change description of discharge route
- Sum of flows and pollutant mass should not to exceed permit limits
- Second outfalls allows ability to shut off flows if need be
- The need for the permit modification a big disappointment to Roger, but ultimately, necessary

Discuss/Prioritize Future Funding Needs and Sources Roger Miranda, TCEQ

- Funding for current enhanced treatment projects (3 in total so far) doubled from original contract
- Wastewater infrastructure work group to assist in obtaining funding
- EDAP money dried-up but will be restored in 2008
- USEPA and NADBank have decreased grant funding (i.e., BIEF funds)

Other Business Laura De La Garza, TWRI

- Regular SC meeting scheduled, Oct 25, 2007, Jan. 24, April 24, July 24, Oct. 23, 2008

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