

Arroyo Colorado Habitat Workgroup

Estero Llano Grande World Birding Center

3301 S. FM 1015, Weslaco, Texas 78596

October 20, 2011

2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Attendees:

Ronnie Ramirez, TSSWCB

Allen Berthold, TWRI

Jaime Flores, TWRI

Kim Jones, TAMUK

David Salinas, Weslaco

Donny Valdez, TWRI

Tony Reisinger, TX Sea Grant

Ashley Alexander, TSSWCB

Jimmy Stout, TPWD

Leo Gustafson, USFWS

MEETING AGENDA

Welcome and Introductions..... Tony Reisinger, TX Sea Grant

Red Tide Update Tony Reisinger, TX Sea Grant

Red tide first detected in second week of September. Initially found traces of red tide in the Brownsville ship channel near the San Martin outfall and transported in the LLM through South Bay and out through Santiago Pass and into the Gulf of Mexico.

- red tide usually blooms in gulf in fall and is transported in by tide. Associated with droughts and has been more frequent recently.
- when waves break, it breaks the cells and releases toxins into the air
- 1986 killed 22 million fish and we have lost 3 million this year
- can be taken up in shellfish and we shouldn't eat shellfish when blooms occur.
- has been blamed for the death of a miniature dachshund on mustang island
- cell counts inshore are very high in laguna madre
- some evidence has been seen very close to the bay
- fish kills have occurred between the Port of Brownsville up to the mouth of the Arroyo Colorado
- no effect on shrimp and crabs
- red tide hangs out around san martin outfall because it likes high nutrients
- latest satellite shots from NOAA have also been ground truthed
- unsure of the relationship between drought and red tide TPWD website - red tide ... update coastal naturalist Facebook cite

Arroyo Colorado Watershed Protection Plan

Vegetation and Tree removal from Arroyo Colorado Jaime Flores, TWRI

Vegetation and Tree removal from AC

IBWC meeting was 3 weeks ago and Jaime verified information. IBWC has begun clearing again at Ramsey Park. Now they are going to target live trees but only invasive species. They have purchased a wood chipper. All measurements have been shot and the information is going to be put into the model. Next spring, other live trees will be removed.

- Started at Ramsey yesterday (10-19-11). Results from the model are not expected until the end of the year.

Vegetation and Tree removal sub-committee Jaime Flores, TWRI

Laura sent out minutes from the last meeting but the sub-committee has not met again.

Project Updates and Discussions:

LID Project Kim Jones, TAMUK

TCEQ project managers are in the RGV for a 2-3 day tour of the LID project sites. Two of those sites, Valley Nature Center and Cameron County Drainage District have a wetland incorporated into the design of the LID project.

- as the projects develop, we can get input from the committee on plant type etc.
- There are 2 small wetlands in McAllen that are close to schools. Schools can use the sites for educational outreach to promote LID as well as an outdoor classroom for science teachers
- TCEQ knows (has observed) that cities are energetic about the projects.
- Some of the projects are shovel ready but none will break ground until after the end of the year.

Port of Harlingen Wetland ProjectAllen Berthold, TWRI

Current project is nearing the end. POH officials have informed us that any future POH expansion will be on the project site; thus, eliminating the chance to move forward with future phases on that site. However, the port has another site where future projects may be possible. TWRI and APAI will meet with the POH Authorities Board to discuss possibilities of projects, including a 150 acre site of natural habitat.

CIAP-Ramsey Park Wetland Project.....Allen Berthold, TWRI

TWRI, TAMUK and Harlingen Parks/Recreation department are working together on a CIAP grant that was awarded earlier this year. The grant will be used to design and construct new wetlands at Ramsey Park and connect them to the existing wetlands already at the Park. HWWS are installing a water line from the Harlingen WWTP to Ramsey Park. The water line will provide 3 MGY of treated effluent to fill the wetlands throughout the year. The water will also be used to provide water to other parks in the park system for similar projects.

Available Grants/Potential StudiesAllen Berthold, TWRI

TWRI has submitted an Arroyo Bacterial Source Tracking Project to TSSWCB. Also, a project has been submitted to TCEQ to update the ACWPP. Finally, TWRI has submitted an article to GLO to help develop a methodology for assessing aquatic life.

Other Business Jaime Flores, TWRI

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

January 19, 2012