



Arroyo Colorado Watershed Partnership Agricultural Issues Workgroup

Harlingen Irrigation District Pump House
Trevino Road
Harlingen, Texas

April 19, 2011 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Attendees

Enrique Perez
Allen Berthold
Ashley Alexander
Tim Cawthon
Jaime Flores

Wesley Valerius
Jaime Longoria
Donnie Valdez
Brad Cowan

Meeting Notes

➤ **Welcome and Introductions**

- Ronnie Ramirez, TSSWCB – Meeting was called to order at 9:05 am

➤ **Arroyo Colorado Watershed Protection Plan Implementation Update**

- *Jaime Flores, TWRI – Addressed the audience on numerous ideas for future grant proposals. It was discussed that salinity is becoming an issue from the irrigation water. Also, continued monitoring is needed. It was discussed that a cost-shared metering program would benefit the producers as well as conserve water.*

➤ **Financial Incentive Opportunities in the Arroyo Colorado Watershed**

- *Donnie Valdez, TWRI – Presentation on “Financial Incentive Programs Available to Producers”. In his presentation, Mr Valdez spoke about different programs offered by State and Federal Agencies that assist growers with certain BMP implementation geared towards financial assistance.*

➤ **Soil Testing Campaign Update**

- *Donnie Valdez, TWRI – 575 soil samples were collected in the TRI – County area. Donnie will work closely with members of the TSSWCB staff to complete a map showing all sites.*

➤ **Landowner Involvement in Financial Incentive Programs**

- *Wesley Velerius - of the Harlingen Area is a agricultural producer that farms over 1,600 ac. He’s been growing since 1995 - Grain, Corn, Cotton and Hay. In 2011, Mr. Valrius produced close to 30,000 hay bales that are shipped as far north as Dallas. Mr. Valerius has received cost-share funds thru the Arroyo Colorado Project. Mr Velerius spoke about*

the long term value of farm improvements that have resulted from using cost-share program funding to implement BMP's.

➤ **Grants Update**

- Allen Berthold, TWRI - covered different proposals awaiting approval.
 - o Opportunities/Needs
- Other Business
- Allen Berthold, TWRI – Handed out Survey to be completed by the workgroup.

➤ **Other Business**

- Cuts in funding from NRCS have slowed the adoption of BMPs.
- Discussion on how, when and where to hold next meeting so that more growers could attend. Ideas presented were a more central location, add meeting to a field day, or conference and add a guest speaker to draw growers. Meeting should be scheduled around crop schedule so farmers can attend.

➤ **Adjourn/Lunch**

- Thank You to the TSSWCB Harlingen Regional Office for donating lunch!