

# Arroyo Colorado Habitat Workgroup

Estero Llano Grande World Birding Center  
3301 S. FM 1015, Weslaco, Texas 78596

October 23, 2014

2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

## Attendees:

Jaime Flores, TWRI  
Ashley Gregory, TWRI  
Stephanie Mahathey, ACAS  
Tim Cawthon, TCEQ  
Liana Lerma, TPWD

Willy Cupit, TPWD  
Briana Saenz, TAMUK  
Esmeralda Sanchez, La Feria  
Paula Rodriguez, La Feria  
Sonny Philips, La Feria

## MEETING AGENDA

**Welcome and Introductions**.....Dr. Kim Jones, TAMUK

### Phase II of the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Protection Plan

Update of the ACWPP..... Jaime Flores, TWRI

#### ACWPP Update Timeline

The WC updated the group on the timeline. So far we are keeping up with all tasks in the timeline and the Update is progressing as planned. We also discussed the SWAT and CE QUAL W2 Model. We are planning to have modeling results presented at the next meeting.

#### Harlingen Aeration Structure Project Update

Jack Brown has submitted the revised drawings to the IBWC. The WC spoke with Rodolfo Montero, IBWC Mercedes, and he mentioned that he thought the permit required from the IBWC to proceed with the project will be granted fairly soon.

#### La Feria Tio Cano Lake Drainage/Wetland Project

The City of La Feria gave a presentation on the Tio Cano Lake project. This area was flooded during Hurricane Dolly for over six months. This project will consist of developing 460 acres next to a 440 acre USFW managed property. The project will consist of providing infrastructure to drain the affected area and move the water to a wetland area that is owned by the USFW. The WG agreed to include this project in the AC WPP Update.

#### Hickory Hill Park Stormwater Detention Project

The City of Harlingen is proposing to develop this project. The project area is undeveloped land used for farming which is adjacent to residential areas.

Park will serve an estimated population of 65,665 people

The detention facility will drain an area of approximately 201 acres

Proposed Location Located west of Bass Boulevard and north of Expressway 83, approximately 46 acres (11 acres owned by the City and 35 acres to be acquired).

Proposed Improvements Create a park to include trails, pond, birding observation stations, wetlands, playground area, restrooms & parking areas to incorporate LID features (permeable pavements, green roofs, rainwater tanks, bio-swales)

Excavate a tiered detention facility. To include a controlled discharge to a drainage ditch located to the west of the detention facility. The WG decided to include this project in the ACWPP Update.

**Palm Valley Stormwater Ponds and Drainage Rehabilitation Project**

These ponds serve as the SW collection and drainage system for the city as well as water hazards for the Golf course. Over time, the ponds have silted in and have lost the original storage capacity. The city is planning to dredge the ponds and SW discharge pipe in order to restore the holding capacity of the ponds. The WG decided to include this project in the ACWPP Update.

Alternative/Unconventional BMP’s based on Modeling

**Project Updates and Discussions:**

CIAP-Ramsey Park Wetland Project.....Dr. Kim Jones, TAMUK

Dr. Jones gave the group an update on the project. TAMUK had completed the latest draft of the wetlands and were scheduled to conduct infiltration tests throughout the wetlands/proposed wetlands area to determine the soil characteristics and if the areas could hold water. If the infiltrations rates are too high, it may be necessary to install a liner (clay, bentonite, HDPE). The City of Harlingen is scheduled to begin construction sometime in Spring.

**Available Grants/Potential Studies** ..... Jaime Flores, TWRI

TWRI/City Of San Benito submitted CMP grant for San Benito Wetland Phase II.

**Other Business** ..... Jaime Flores, TWRI

2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Save the Arroyo Fiesta ..... Jaime Flores, TWRI

The Arroyo Colorado Conservancy hosted the Second Annual “SAVE THE ARROYO” Fiesta on October 9, at the Dargel Boats Showroom in Donna, TX. The Fiesta was a huge success with approximately 125 people attending the event. People began showing up at 6 o’clock sharp and filled the showroom by 6:30. The Fiesta started with Dr. Jude Benavides, Arroyo Colorado Steering Committee Chairman, thanking our sponsors and supporters and giving a presentation on the role that the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Partnership plays in the community and how we can help other organizations achieve their project goals. We continued by giving out several door prizes generously donated by “Flipside Fishing” and “Hook Line and Sinker” and conducting a “Bucket Auction” and “Silent Auction”. During the auctions, we had an excellent homemade BB-Q dinner consisting of Brisket, fajitas, sausage, rice and beans. Everyone was having a great time as we

announced the winners of the auction items and you could literally feel the anticipation and excitement building as the time came to draw the winner of the boat. In the end, the lucky winner was Mary and Julian Bentancourt of La Feria, TX. Julian only purchased one ticket the day before the Fiesta. When he bought the ticket, he stopped and said, "I am going to let my wife fill out the ticket stub because I never win anything and she is lucky, she always wins". Well Julian was right and now they are the proud owners of a brand new 186 Dargel Skout! They had Dargel install a "Power Pole", Shallow water anchor, and picked up the boat Monday morning. They were so excited. Mr. Bentancourt had just retired 4 months ago after working for 35 years for the same company. Congratulations to the Bentancourts! I hope you enjoy the boat for years to come and enjoy your retirement.

**Next Meeting Date/Adjourn.....**Dr. Jones, TAMUK

Next meeting scheduled for February 19, 2015.